Act 1240 Digital Learning Waiver Request

Status: **Submitted to ADE DESE**

🏛 Hermitage School District (0601000)

School Year 2021-2022

> ⓘ New Digital Learning Waiver requests can not be created after May 1st. Existing drafts and revisions will continue to be reviewed.

Applications will be reviewed in the order received. Incomplete applications will be returned to the district.

A notification letter will be sent to the superintendent at the email address listed above upon approval by the Arkansas State Board of Education.

NOTE: The approved application must then be posted on the district website - State Required Information.

District:

LEA #:	0601000
Superintendent:	Tracy Tucker
Email:	tracy.tucker@hermitageschools.org
Phone:	(870) 463-2246
Duration Requested (not to exceed five years):	5 Years (School year 2021-2022 to 2026-2027)

The proposed waiver(s) will apply to the following schools:

LEA(s)	Grades/Courses	Interaction	Delivery	Platforms
0601007 - Hermitage High School	9-12	Asynchronous Synchronous	Virtual (Online) / Remote (Distance)	LMS

Waivers

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
Attendance			6-18-213(a)(2)	

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
				HSD is requesting a waiver for on-site attendance. This waiver allows for students to attend Virtual Learning through HSD as provided by Virtual Arkansas.
				Students in Virtual Learning will be considered absent if assignments in the Canvas platform are not completed within the week they are assigned. Students are allowed 3 absences per 9-week period. When a student reaches the 4th absence in a 9-week period, Virtual Learning approval will be revoked and the student must immediately return to on-site learning.
				Occasionally, extenuating circumstances may require longer periods of time to complete assignments or take assessments. These emergency situations will need to be coordinated with the building principal for PRIOR APPROVAL to ensure that their attendance is not negatively impacted. The building principal may be reached by phone at the high school at (870) 463-2235 or (870) 463-2246 or via email at mistie.mcghee@hermitageschools.org.

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
Class Size Number of students:	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812(a)(2)	We are not requesting additional waivers for the class size. The Virtual Teacher provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning, and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load. Copies of the current DESE Rules are found at this link: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88
Teaching Load Number of students: Teacher of Record provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load.	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812	

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
				We are not requesting additional waivers for the teaching load.
				Virtual Teachers provide virtual instruction to only students who are remote learners, participating full-time in Virtual Learning. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning, and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load.
				Copies of the current DESE Rules are found at this link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88?usp=sharing

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
Six Hour Instructional Day (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)	1-A.4.2		6-16-102; 6-16-126	We are requesting the six hour instructional day waiver. The daily schedules for students will include 6 hours of learning; however, it may not take students the entire allotted time to successfully engage with the learning, as students will be learning at their own pace and place. Virtual Learning students will attend scheduled synchronous learning, while at other times they will work independently and asynchronous on their own established time frame and schedule.
Clock Hours	1-A.2			

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
				We are requesting this waiver. The daily schedules for students will include 6 hours of learning; however, it may not take students the entire allotted time to successfully engage with the learning, as students will be learning at their own pace and place. Virtual Learning students will attend scheduled synchronous learning, while at other times they will work independently and asynchronous on their own established time frame and schedule. Some students may not meet the 60-hour requirement for seat time for .5 credit or the required clock hours might not be needed to successfully master the course content standards.

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
Recess (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)	1-A.4.3	DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index, Section 7.11	6-6-102(a)(5)	We are not requesting this Physical Activity and Nutrition waiver.

Virtual Learning students will be encouraged to participate in some type of supervised physical activity daily. The Child Nutrition department at HSD will provide meals to students that meet all mandatory regulations for healthy meals. Virtual Learning students will be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities offered by HSD. Outside of this, given the fact that students will be learning remotely, it will not be possible for Virtual Learners to be held accountable for meeting these requirements. |

Digital Model

Please complete the following application with responses describing the school and district digital programming.

Interaction / Delivery

What are the ways teachers and students will interact with digital content (Synchronous or Asynchronous)? Please describe instructional expectations and participation for students.

HSD will participate in the Virtual Arkansas 9-12 courses to power our Virtual Learning option. HSD will contract with Virtual Arkansas for both the content and teacher for the courses provided to HSD Virtual Learning students.

Virtual Arkansas is a "high touch" virtual learning experience that harnesses the benefit of synchronous or "live" instruction married with aligned asynchronous courses. This allows for students and instructors to develop relationships, address needed "just-in-time" instruction, and flexibility with learning. At the High School level, students are required to attend all Zoom sessions each week for every content area (2 are offered per content area), and may request additional one:one Zoom sessions as needed. Empirical data has shown students who attend Zoom are shown to be more successful than students who do not attend Zoom.

Students and teachers are also able to communicate 24/7 via the CANVAS LMS messaging or the SIS email system that is monitored by Virtual Arkansas. Teachers are expected to reply to students within 24 hours of a student communication during the school week. Students are expected to read and interact with messages in their courses on a daily basis during the school week.

In addition to the Virtual Learning teacher, HSD will employ a Virtual Learning facilitator that will monitor student learning progress. Those student grades that fall below a "C" average will require intervention from the facilitator, in consultation with the principal, to raise the grade. This intervention could be: attending additional synchronous learning opportunities, daily check-ins with the facilitator regarding work completion for the class, or on-site tutoring. At the end of the semester, any student receiving a "D" or "F" in any Virtual Learning course will be required to return to on-site learning for the remainder of the year.

What delivery approach will the school or district utilize to meet the needs of both teachers and students (i.e., virtual (online) / remote (distance) or blended (hybrid)? Please explain.

HSD students in grades 9-12 will utilize online virtual remote learning through Virtual Arkansas. Virtual Arkansas utilizes a synchronous and asynchronous approach or true blended model to online learning. Students will engage in their digital coursework through the CANVAS Learning Management System (LMS). Students will also have opportunities to engage in synchronous learning through live scheduled Zoom meetings with their teacher. All learning will take place online.

The HSD Virtual Learning Facilitator will also serve as a resource for both teachers and students in meeting the needs of teachers and students in the virtual learning environment.

Will teachers be dedicated to primarily remote instruction or serving in a dual role, teaching both remote and in-person learners?
Â *If teachers will serve in a dual role, describe whether it will be simultaneously, meaning remote and in-person at the same time with course/schedule specific considerations.

HSD students in grades 9-12 will be using Virtual Arkansas for its delivery of instruction for our 100% virtual students. Virtual Arkansas provides a fully certified Arkansas teacher of record while we provide the facilitator. A trained, classified facilitator will be utilized by the school district. Virtual Arkansas provides training and support for facilitators via the Facilitator Coordinator. This model is a true blended model with synchronous targeted instruction partnered with asynchronous course content and activities.

HSD has used Virtual Arkansas for the past 7 years. HSD employs a full-time paraprofessional/aide that is dedicated to serving students and is responsible for supervising all areas of learning and communication between our students and Virtual Arkansas. This paraprofessional reports directly to the Principal and has received training from Virtual Arkansas to clearly identify staff responsibilities for student learning and the paraprofessional role in student success. This paraprofessional is in frequent communication with the HHS Principal and/or Counselor to ensure that the needs of students are being met, to communicate areas of student needs for academic success, and to ensure that the school has communication with parents, as needed, for optimal student success. This facilitator constantly monitors student progress and attendance and reports to Virtual Arkansas and the Principal, as needed.

The HSD Virtual Learning facilitator will also be responsible for scheduled times, sessions, and space for the assessments that students must take on-site, in collaboration with the principal. Students will sign in at the high school office so that we know students are on campus. They will leave their cell phones in the office and will report to the established testing location. The Principal will work with the Virtual Learning facilitator to timely schedule and staff the assessment opportunities for students.

Describe the expectation for teacher instruction, interaction, and frequency with virtual students.

For students utilizing Virtual Arkansas courses, teachers actively monitor their courses, provide synchronous sessions and maintain regular communication via the LMS and SIS messaging systems. Each week, Virtual Arkansas teachers send a grade report to the student and parent/guardian, and initiate further contact with students demonstrating difficulties with course content. Students are required to attend all Zoom sessions. Virtual Arkansas teachers are continuously provided PD and support for providing engaging and relevant synchronous instruction, according to the rules and regulations from DESE, at a minimum.

Those student grades that fall below a "C" average will require intervention from the facilitator, in consultation with the principal, to raise the grade. This intervention could be: attending additional synchronous learning opportunities, daily check-ins with the facilitator regarding work completion for the class, or on-site tutoring. At the end of the semester, any student receiving a "D" or "F" in any Virtual Learning course will be required to return to on-site learning for the remainder of the year.

If utilizing district waivers for **class size**, what supports will the district put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the district monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed class size in digital learning settings?

We are not requesting additional waivers for class size.

The Virtual Teacher provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning, and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load.

Virtual Arkansas partners with schools to ensure student success. In cases where districts are using Virtual Arkansas, teacher training and support is solely the responsibility of Virtual Arkansas. Partnership with the schools regarding providing a facilitator and communication back and forth pertaining to students is an ongoing part of the support expected in this model (synchronous/asynchronous) of instruction.

HSD chose to limit the participation in Virtual Learning to 10, which is in excess of the number of parents/students that expressed interest in the survey released in January, 2021.

Students will apply for participation in Virtual Learning. The application will be found on the district webpage under the tab for American Rescue Plan Act information. Those meeting the minimum requirements will be eligible to become a Virtual Learner through these offerings from HSD and Virtual Arkansas.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
Special Education - The IEP team will recommend if virtual learning is appropriate for a SPED student.

504 - The 504 team will recommend if virtual learning is appropriate for the 504 student.
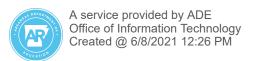
English Language Learner - The LPAC team will recommend if virtual learning is appropriate for the ELL student.

Gifted and Talented - Students will have the opportunity to participate in accelerated, Pre-AP, or AP courses.

Dyslexia, Speech, OT/PT - Students will be scheduled a specific time for therapy based on their needs.

If a student is in Virtual Learning and receives direct services, the student will join class daily through a synchronous digital platform. If needed to meet educational needs, HSD teachers may work with parents and administration to deliver in person instruction during a specified period of time.

HSD requires weekly check-ins with students for social/emotional support by a member of the school's Behavior and Attendance Team (either the counselor, social worker, dean of students, or principal). These check-ins may be in person

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HSD will also make students and parents aware of opportunities for additional support provided by the state for learning loss. This information will be posted on our website under the American Rescue Plan Act tab at the top of the homepage.

If utilizing district waivers for **teaching load**, what supports will the district put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the district monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed teaching loads in digital learning settings?

We are not requesting additional waivers for teaching load. The Virtual Teacher provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning, and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load.

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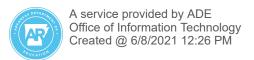
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Technology / Platforms

Identify the learning management system/content management system that schools and districts will use? (Canvas, Buzz, Google Classroom, etc.)

HSD Virtual Learning will utilize Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) for the 9-12 Digital Program.

The learning management system will be layered with a supplemental software called Genius. Genius is a registration, progress monitoring, and reporting tool which provides a daily snapshot of each student's progress, attendance, and engagement level. Students are assigned a color code each day that identifies them as 1) Green (present, on pace, on target, engaged), 2) Yellow (has fallen below the threshold in attendance, pace, target, or engagement), 3) Red (has fallen below the lower threshold in attendance, pact, target, or engagement. Virtual Staff (Teacher, Paraprofessionals, Coordinator) will have access to these reports and use them to provide praise, encouragement, support, and resources.

Describe the digital content that will be available to students, including any digital curriculum and supports that are available to teachers. If the district is using a content management system (CMS), please specify grades levels and subjects that the CMS will address.

Virtual Arkansas provides access to over 100 courses in grades 9-12 which are designed and written by subject matter experts (SME's) and who are Arkansas Certified teachers. Virtual Arkansas courses and content are designed and developed using the Arkansas State Standards, Quality Matters standards, and the National Standards of Quality of Online Courses as their foundation. This process includes an internal review of the courses by Quality Matters certified online course reviewers. Courses are designed to be fully ready for student interaction and teachers have all the content needed to effectively provide support and instruction to students.

The digital content will be available to students within a platform that provides creation, publication, and student progress tracking capabilities. Students will have access to age-appropriate, engaging lessons, and tools that support learning, including text to speech, audio and translation, text and picture dictionaries, and more. Digital content combines direct-instruction videos featuring expert, virtual teachers with rigorous assignments, performance tasks, and assessments to engage students and ensure subject-area mastery. The digital content features self-paced learning, which allows students to spend more time on what they need and less on the content they've already mastered. If a student needs additional support to master a learning goal, the digital instruction is designed to provide point-in-time resources and support.
The digital content gives Virtual Teachers the resources they need to close learning gaps, plan lessons, execute goals, measure success, and intervene to help students grow. Virtual teachers receive initial and ongoing training on the digital content which includes, navigating the digital content, customizing courses and assessments, troubleshooting, adding activities, planning instruction, and designing interventions. Virtual facilitators receive initial and ongoing training to support the students assigned to them. Virtual teachers and virtual facilitators will have ongoing support from the Virtual Arkansas Facilitator Coordinator, Virtual Arkansas Specialists and Administration, Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative, Southeast Education Service Cooperative, and Dawson Education Service Cooperative Content Specialists, and Virtual Campus Coordinator.

The K-12 Counselor, Principal, and Student Services Coordinator will review the Student Success Plans, student registration information, and state requirements for graduation prior to determining appropriate courses to place in each student's schedule.

What video communication software is required for any remote student? Please describe the video communication software the teacher will use to facilitate live conferences between two or more participants.

Students will be utilizing Zoom video conferencing software to participate in synchronous learning sessions with their teacher. The Zoom software is downloaded to the district provided device. The Virtual Arkansas teacher will utilize Zoom to facilitate synchronous sessions with students during scheduled Zoom sessions during the week. ZOOM provides a suite of teaching and learning features which include recording, polling, break-out rooms, whiteboard with collaborative and annotation tools, chat, translations, screen sharing, hand raising, reaction emoticons, and remote control option. The remote control option is where the Virtual Teacher is given permission to take control of the user's computer screen to provide navigation and technical support. The Zoom link and Zoom schedule is placed in a common location within each course and communicated with students and virtual facilitators.

Virtual Arkansas provides this information on students expectations for Zoom meetings:

1. The environment from which the student attends the Zoom session should be appropriate and conducive to learning. Please be aware of the following expectations
regarding the Zoom environment:
 a. During live Zoom sessions, the background should be appropriate and not distracting. There should not be any visible offensive material.
 b. Background noise should be minimal or non-existent during Zoom sessions.
 c. Students should not eat or drink while in a Zoom session.
 d. Other individuals not enrolled in the class should not be present during the Zoom session.
 e. Pets should not be visible during a Zoom session.
2. The student should be dressed appropriately, according to the local school handbook, just as if the student was attending class on-campus.
The teacher may remove a student regardless of where the student is located during the live Zoom session if that teacher feels the student is not dressed appropriately, displaying offensive behavior, or if distractions are considered inappropriate and interfering with other students who are in attendance.

If a student is removed from a live session, the teacher will document the incident immediately and send that documentation to their remote facilitator. The remote facilitator will then contact an administrator or school official and provide the documentation of the incident.

Describe the technology access (device and connectivity) that will be provided to each digital learning student to ensure each student receives a free public education.

HSD will provide each student with a Chromebook to access their work on Virtual Arkansas at the beginning of the school year. HSD will also provide a WiFi hotspot if students do not have another internet option readily available. Additionally, WiFi hotspots are found on the High School campus for student use 24/7.

HSD employs a full-time technology coordinator who will be available to help students as needed with technology issues. This coordinator is available each school day between 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM. Additionally, HSD office staff and principals may be able to assist and can be reached at the HSD main phone line at (870) 463-2246. Email addresses will be provided to Virtual Learning students at the beginning of the school year in the Guidance Document.

Student Supports

Describe the manner and frequency the district or school will use to monitor the wellness and safety (food security, physical, mental health, etc.) of students in a total remote setting. (This may be in-person, video communication, etc.). Identify supports available to assist students within the district.

HSD will provide a mandatory Orientation held via Zoom for parents and students enrolled in Virtual Learning prior to the first day of school. This time will be used to make sure students know how to access Canvas, school district email, how to communicate when they need help, how to seek help when struggling with learning or attendance, how to request help with technology, etc. and will allow time for parents and students to ask questions and seek further information.

HSD will provide meals (breakfast and lunch) to all Virtual Students, which will be available for pickup in the circle drive behind the high school on a weekly basis, most likely Wednesday, dependent upon food delivery truck schedules. Meals will be offered in accordance with current rules and procedures from ADE-CNU.

HSD requires weekly check-ins with students for social/emotional support by a member of the school's Behavior and Attendance Team (BAT, either the counselor, social worker, dean of students, or principal). These check-ins may be in person or by video communication. If concerns are noted, appropriate action will be taken by the BAT or the district Student Services team.

The School Nurse, Social Worker, Counselor, Student Services Coordinator, and those over special programs (ELL, GT, etc.) will be available to Virtual Students. The HSD Virtual Facilitator will, once again, bridge the gap between HSD staff and students. District email will be utilized for communication, in addition to face-to-face visits when students are on-site for assessments.

The HSD Virtual Learning facilitator will be the communication link between the school, the student, the parents, and Virtual Arkansas. HSD employs a full-time paraprofessional/aide that is dedicated to serving students and is responsible for supervising all areas of learning and communication between our students and Virtual Arkansas. This paraprofessional reports directly to the Principal and has received facilitator training from Virtual Arkansas to clearly identify staff responsibilities for student learning and the paraprofessional role in student success. This paraprofessional is in frequent communication with the HHS Principal and/or Counselor to ensure that the needs of students are being met, to communicate areas of student needs for academic success, and to ensure that the school has communication with parents, as needed, for optimal student success. This facilitator constantly monitors student progress and attendance and reports to Virtual Arkansas and the Principal, as needed.

The HSD Virtual Learning facilitator will also be responsible for scheduled times, sessions, and space for the assessments that students must take on-site. The Principal will work with the Virtual Learning facilitator to timely schedule and staff the assessment opportunities for students.

HSD uses an educational safety software program, Go Guardian, which helps school staff track student use of and interaction upon technology. This software helps school staff monitor appropriate and inappropriate use of the Internet by users. Administration receives a daily report of usage, as well as an alert if an

users. Administration receives a daily report of usage, as well as an alert if an inappropriate or unauthorized site has been accessed or attempted to access. This software is helpful in HSD making sure our students are as safe as possible when on technology issued from the district.

Virtual Arkansas teachers are trained to employ actions and behaviors to ensure the physical and mental health of students. Virtual Arkansas uses a variety of methods of communication to do this and partners with schools to ensure students are cared for. When a situation arises where intervention is determined to be needed beyond what can be done virtually, Virtual Arkansas will contact the HSD facilitator and/or counselor or Principal to step in to provide intervention. Virtual Arkansas teachers are trained to report any suspected maltreatment/abuse to the Department of Health Services. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas provides ongoing professional development to their teachers to support SEL strategies.

Describe the manner and frequency the district or school will use to monitor the academic and student engagement in a virtual setting. Describe the additional supports available for students struggling with engagement.

 HSD will be selective when allowing students to participate in Virtual Learning, as we have found that student learners must have certain skills to be successful in this type of environment, based upon our use of Virtual Arkansas in our high school for the past 7 years. The minimum requirements that students must meet to participate in Virtual Learning include:

Student did not have below a 70% in any course during the previous school year (quarter or semester), and

Student was not referred to the court system through a FINS filing or other action due to school attendance or performance issues, and

Student did not refuse to sit for or participate in mandated assessments, either from the district or the state during the previous school year.

Additionally, a team of teachers and administrators will review applications to ensure that students exhibit a majority of the following characteristics, which exemplify a successful virtual learner:

Being able to manage their time,

Being able to communicate their needs, problem-solve, work with others online, and use email and other communication platforms proficiently,

Being able to study and complete assignments independently,

Being able to motivate themselves to acquire knowledge and skills and fulfill those tasks assigned to them,

Being able to succeed in class because of a solid foundation in reading, writing, math, and computer literacy skills, and

Being able to proficiently use technology, including connecting to the Internet, creating documents, using technology tools to assist with learning, and identifying appropriate resources for learning.

Grades will be monitored at least 8 times per year at 4 to 5 week intervals by building administration. Parent contact will be made if a student has a failing grade at any checkpoint. During this parent contact, a plan will be established to improve the student's achievement. At this point, the student will be monitored on a weekly basis until a passing grade is achieved. In the event that a student fails one or more virtual courses during a semester, they will be required to return to on-site instruction.

HSD has access to the Virtual Arkansas SIS and the CANVAS LMS to monitor students in real time. Virtual Arkansas teachers will initiate intervention when a teacher determines a student isn't actively engaging or successfully mastering the content. In cases where needed, Virtual Arkansas will involve the partnering school through the facilitator, first. Virtual Arkansas will contact administrators if the initial intervention is not successful.

Parent/Teacher (in this case, HSD Virtual Learning Facilitator) Conferences will be used specifically to identify needs that students might have that the district can seek support for from other sources or avenues.

Describe the Academic Response to Intervention plan for remote (virtual) students, including additional supports and personnel.

All HSD students are monitored through the RtI process. Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions will be provided to all virtual students through synchronous methods either in person or by video communication during their scheduled class period each day with the proper interventionists. Students will be required to either come onto campus or join their class digitally each day for their appropriate intervention block.

Additionally, Virtual Arkansas teachers have been trained to identify and intervene with immediacy when a student is determined to not be successful. They are trained to deliver Tier 1 and 2 interventions and, if those are not successful, reach out to the partnering school regarding additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions. Virtual Arkansas also has a PLC structure designed to address intervention with targeted intervention meetings that occur in the 4th and 7th weeks of the 9 weeks.

HSD requires weekly check-ins with students for social/emotional support by a member of the school's Behavior and Attendance Team (either the counselor, social worker, dean of students, or principal). These check-ins may be in person or by video communication.

HSD will also make students and parents aware of opportunities for additional support provided by the state for learning loss. This information will be posted on our website under the American Rescue Plan Act tab at the top of the homepage.

Describe the district or school's formative assessment plan to support student learning.

All graded assessments worth 100 points or more will be taken on the Hermitage High School campus. Students will coordinate a date and time with their Virtual Arkansas facilitator. They will sign in and sign out through the high school office, where they will leave their phone if they brought it with them. They will report to the Virtual Arkansas classroom to take their assessments with the Virtual Arkansas facilitator present.

Virtual Arkansas courses have periodic formative assessments, checks for understanding, and pre-tests to determine students' mastery of learning throughout the modules of a course that are aligned to the summative module assessments. There are varied methods of assessment utilized both through the asynchronous course with open ended discussions/assessments, choice response activities, multiple choice, and hybrid assessments (open ended and multiple choice). Teachers also use weekly live Zoom sessions to do informal formative checks to ensure clarity for students on asynchronous learning tasks.

Describe how dyslexia screening and services will be provided to digital learning students.

HSD has a district evidence-based plan containing programs that are approved to support students that have been identified with characteristics of dyslexia. HSD will ensure that all dyslexia law requirements are met for all virtual learners. Dyslexia screening and services, as approved by DESE and following the Dyslexia Resource Guide from DESE, will be provided to all virtual students through synchronous methods either in person or by video communication with the proper interventionists. Virtual Learning students will be required to be onsite at the Hermitage High School campus for screening and progress monitoring. Dyslexia Interventionists will coordinate with the HSD Virtual Learning Facilitator, Principal, student, and parents to schedule and communicate plans for screening and progress monitoring.

Virtual Arkansas provides accessibility tools to support students with dyslexia including ReadSpeaker that will read any text in the course to students. Virtual Arkansas will provide the needed accommodations/modifications per the individual 504 plan uploaded into the SIS by partnering school.

Link to District Dyslexia Information -
https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1236213/Copy_of_DYSLEXIA_copy_for_website.docx.pdf

Information in 2021-2022 Virtual Learning Folder -
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88?usp=sharing

Describe how Gifted and Talented supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

All current 9-12 grade Virtual Arkansas teachers will deliver the GT Program Option of Secondary Course Content (I.C, pg 21, GT Program Approval Standards). These teachers have completed Secondary Course Content training and will provide copies of training certificates and quarterly documentation of differentiation to participating districts, as required in the description of this program option in GT Program Approval Standards. Virtual Arkansas will ensure that any new hires will also complete this required training in order to provide this GT program option. Training and differentiation documentation will be obtained by contacting Kirsten Wilson, Virtual Arkansas Director of Curriculum and Instruction. An approved teacher of the gifted (licensed GT coordinator/GT teacher), employed by the participating school district maintains oversight of the students' activities at a minimum by collecting differentiation documentation on at least a quarterly basis and meeting with identified students monthly, as required by I.C.3 from GT Program Approval Standards.

HSD has a history of encouraging our students taking courses, including AP and concurrent credit courses, with Virtual Arkansas to select any course in the catalog as available for this school year. This practice will continue with students enrolled in Virtual Learning. Rebecca Mills, Virtual Arkansas AP Coordinator, will provide documentation of required AP teacher training and copies of approved AP syllabi for each course the district provides.

The participating district will ensure all requirements from GT Program Approval Standards will be maintained for virtual services.

Referrals - The District Gifted and Talented Coordinator will solicit information from the Virtual Teachers needed for the Gifted and Talented identification process.

All requirements from the Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards will be met for virtual students.

LINK TO DISTRICT PROGRAM APPROVAL APPLICATION here -- https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88?usp=sharing

Describe how English for Speakers of Other

Languages (ESOL / ESL) supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

HSD will ensure that all requirements of the District English Learner plan are met for on-site and remote learners, including ELPA21 screening and summative assessment provided by the district. Communication with families will be in a language, whether written or verbal, and manner that families will understand and will be provided via the HSD Interpreter.

All ELL accommodations are determined by the districts' Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee (LPAC) and will be shared with the virtual platform providers who will ensure accommodations are provided so that English Learners have access to the core curriculum via providing integrated supports. The district will regularly communicate with the virtual platform provider regarding the ELL students' progress and make any necessary adjustments to needed accommodations and supports.

For students choosing HSD 9-12 Virtual Learning, the District ELL Coordinator will communicate with students and the HSD facilitator, as well as Virtual Arkansas teachers, to monitor progress of identified students, to see how they're doing, as well as stay connected with their parents and families. Zoom will be the primary communication tool, but phone calls or face-to-face meetings could occur, especially if interpretation is needed.

Virtual Arkansas provides an accessibility tool called ReadSpeaker to support ESOL/ESL. The student selects the ReadSpeaker tool in the language that the student needs the content provided to them. Virtual Arkansas provides the needed accommodations/modifications per the individual LEP uploaded into the SIS by partnering schools. Accommodations will be uploaded to the SIS by the remote facilitator. The district ESOL/ESL coordinator may be accessed through the remote facilitator to assist the student in any needed support. The district will provide a bilingual para to assist in any needed communication that may need to take place between the parent of the ESOL/ESL student and the teacher and/or remote facilitator.

Students who are ESOL/ESL and are also enrolled in the migrant program will also have additional support from the Migrant Coordinator. This coordinator provides resources and support to families of migrant students by ensuring that their educational, personal, nutritional, and other needs are met. (Examples includes providing school supplies, clothing, technology, tutoring, interpretation services, connecting with state and local resources, etc.) The Migrant Coordinator will connect with students at least monthly but more often if needed via Zoom or face-to-face either at their homes or on-site to help facilitate student success in Virtual Learning.

Describe how all Special Education services and supports will be provided to digital learning students, including the process for special education evaluations and conferences.

Virtual Arkansas teachers will provide information for evaluations and conferences when requested. HSD will upload the modification/accommodation sheet to the Student Information System (SIS) within the first 10 days of school or enrollment if enrollment occurs after school begins. Virtual Arkansas courses are designed in such a way that all applicable accommodations/modifications can be met in the course in conjunction with services provided by the partnering school.

Special Education programs delivered in a virtual learning environment will follow all IDEA/Arkansas Rules and Regulations for Special Education. Information discussed during meetings will be documented and placed in the student's file. All modifications/accommodations will be provided according to students IEP. During virtual learning, students who have been identified as needing special education services will be served through Zoom or other communication platforms. Based on progress monitoring data, students needing Special Education services may be required to meet face-to-face with district special education certified staff.

Virtual Teachers use curriculum and instructional strategies that include the following evidence-based practices, including Universal Design for Learning, which is designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities:
1. Provide explicit instruction,
2. Model learning strategies,
3. Make instruction accessible, and
4. Provide tools to support learning, provide appropriate feedback, and capitalize on technology.

The digital curriculum and learning management system provide accommodations for Special Education students and families. These accommodations include addressing multiple learning preferences, accommodations for assessments, video captions/transcripts, color and contrast considerations, read-aloud and translation tools, multiple means of representation of key concepts (verbal, concrete manipulative, numerical, graphical, and symbolic.)

For Special Education students with language challenges, Virtual Teachers can enable Canvas' embedded ReadSpeaker tool, a robust language-support, feature. This tool allows students to hear on-screen text read aloud. Students and families will be supported in using the tools during asynchronous learning through the initial course orientation and the Virtual Teacher will facilitate the usage of the tools, as needed, during synchronous learning.

The Principal and Special Education Supervisor will ensure that the HSD Special Education teacher has a daily period, or more than one if needed, for the purpose of providing direct support for those students in Virtual Learning with an IEP, as needed to meet this requirement. Zoom will be used as a communication tool for the virtual delivery of direct support for students. The HSD Speech Pathologist will provide services to students as needed to meet the requirements of the student's IEP. This direct support will be provided via Zoom

requirements of the student's IEP. This direct support will be provided via Zoom. OT and PT services will be provided on-site to students and will be provided, if possible, on days when students come onto campus to take necessary school and state mandated assessments.

| Describe common and frequently used digital accommodations that the district or school has provided to general education teachers to assist students in digital learning classes. | Virtual Arkansas courses meet the guidelines of IDEA and Section 508. All courses are evaluated for accessibility using Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas utilizes embedded tools including ReadSpeaker to provide for students who need content read aloud. Virtual Arkansas also follows the Universal Design for Learning Principles to eliminate both visible and invisible barriers to learning. |

Teacher Supports

Describe district and school supports to provide on-going digital content and instructional supports for teachers.

All Virtual Arkansas teachers receive training on and have access to digital software/resources to ensure courses are adaptable to include interactive video tutorials, narrated text, concept maps, digital slide presentations, and usage of images. Interventions may be provided using online tools and assistive technology. Online tools and assistive technology will be available to Virtual general education teachers. Tools will include an interactive whiteboard, annotation tools, mirror image setting, text-to-speech translators, and speech-to-text transcribers.

Virtual Arkansas courses meet the guidelines of IDEA and Section 508. All courses are evaluated for accessibility using Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas utilizes embedded tools including ReadSpeaker to provide for students who need content read aloud. Virtual Arkansas also follows the Universal Design for Learning Principles to eliminate both visible and invisible barriers to learning.

HSD will employ a Virtual Arkansas facilitator that will be responsible for communicating needs of students or teachers to the Principal for additional support in meeting the demands of virtual instruction. HSD will also make the Instructional Facilitators for Literacy and Mathematics, the ELL Coordinator, the Migrant Coordinator, the GT Coordinator, the Counselor, the Dyslexia Interventionists, the Social Worker, the Interpreter, and the Technology Coordinator to the Virtual Arkansas teachers that need assistance in reaching the needs of HSD students.

Identify the daily or weekly amount of time teachers will need to develop and plan for instruction based on options selected and digital supports provided. How will the district support teachers with digital content and planning?

HSD will be utilizing Virtual Arkansas for our digital content and digital instruction solution. The Virtual Arkansas teachers will be scheduled with a minimum of two hundred (200) minutes each week for each teacher to schedule time for conferences, instructional planning, and preparation. Virtual Arkansas teachers will utilize curriculum developed by Arkansas subject matter experts (SME's) aligned to Arkansas standards. Schools will provide a facilitator or facilitators, depending upon the number of students, to aid Virtual Arkansas teachers as they provide instruction to the students. Virtual Arkansas will provide training to the partnering school's facilitator(s) and ongoing support to facilitator(s) through Virtual Arkansas' Facilitator Coordinator. Prior to the start of school, Virtual Arkansas will support Virtual Teachers with digital content and planning through training on the primary digital content. This training includes guides for recommended pacing, adding supplemental content, and navigating the platform. This digital content and planning component will be supported by Virtual Arkansas.

District Supports

Describe how the district will ensure equitable access to opportunities for success for digital learner's needs (poverty, homelessness, migrant, foster care, and military connected students) A link (URL) to the district equity plan may be acceptable if it meets this criteria.

HSD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disabililty in any policies, procedures, practices, or educational opportunities, including admissions, educational services, financial aid and employment. HSD students shall not be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educaitonal program or activity within the District on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

HSD provides all remote learners equitable access to virtual instruction. HSD will provide the following to ensure equitable opportunity:
-Federal and state funds to provide equitable access to education,
-Support services for Special Education, EOSL/ESL, Migrant, 504 and G/T,
-Access to technology and devices, (All students will be issued a Chromebook, be provided hotspot locations for connectivity, and will be provided WiFi devices for connectivity, although the district can not ensure connectivity due to trees, cabling, and cell service at student's homes.)
-Access to the Virtual Arkansas and Canvas platforms for digital learning,
-Access to assistance in solving any technology issue that the student may encounter, and
-Support services for student success. (Mental health, nutrition, language, health, counseling, social worker, etc.)

HSD will require a weekly check-in for all virtual students. This check-in will be with a member of the school's Behavior and Attendance Team (either the counselor, social worker, dean of students, or principal). This check-in will either be face-to-face or by video communication. The purpose of the check-in is to ensure that the students social/ emotional or other needs are being met.

In the event that the student has needs beyond academic needs, the Behavior and Attendance Team will develop a plan to ensure that these needs are met. Students may be referred to the District Student Services Team for additional action by the District.

LINK TO BOARD POLICY 4.11 - EQUITABLE ACCESS here:
https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/858341/Section_4_-_STUDENTS_-_FINAL-_July_18__1_.pdf

All students are expected to test (statewide summative assessments) onsite as per DESE guidance. Provide an overview of how the district may communicate to parents and test digital learning students at a district site.

Virtual Arkansas requires trained proctors for major assessments. HSD's plan for students to take proctored assessments stipulates that HSD will administer all assessments (including state assessments) on the Hermitage High School campus. Students and parents will be notified of the dates and times for state testing through multiple means including the website, emails, phone calls, and the district messaging system. The HSD Virtual Learning Facilitator will supervise students taking school assessments, with the Principal providing additional support as needed. The District Testing Coordinator and Principal will work together to follow the DESE requirements for the administration of state-mandated assessments, including scheduling, staff supervision, and student accommodations.

Districts partnering with Virtual Arkansas will sign a memorandum of understanding to acknowledge this requirement. Communication with parents will include teacher emails, information posted within the announcement section of the learning management system, information via the learning management system with push notifications, and using the learning management system parent application.

Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the digital option(s) and the fidelity of implementation as described within this application.

Virtual Arkansas provides the partnering school with access to the SIS and CANVAS LMS. Facilitators are trained to pull grades from the SIS weekly to monitor student progress. Additionally, parents can access student grades through the Canvas App. Teachers send weekly reports via the SIS messaging that is sent to both student and parent email.

The 7-12 virtual option will be closely monitored for effectiveness by the District Superintendent, District Central Office Staff, and District Principal in partnership with Virtual Arkansas, and the Executive Director of Virtual Arkansas, along with Virtual Arkansas Academic Leadership team. Components that affect student achievement are addressed below.

Teacher Effectiveness: Virtual Arkansas will follow Arkansas Teacher Effectiveness Support System along with the National Standards for Online Teaching for teacher evaluations with scheduled and non scheduled virtual classroom visits.

Curriculum Effectiveness: The content in the learning management system will be reviewed formally on an annual basis through the Quality Matters K-12 Standards for Quality by Quality Matters trained virtual staff to ensure Arkansas standards and International standards for quality are being met. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas is in the process of having a variety of courses reviewed by Quality Matters to earn the Quality Matters Certification.

Student Achievement: Student learning will be monitored through formative and summative assessments. This monitoring will be in the form of a Professional Learning Community composed of Virtual Arkansas Teachers and Administration.

Data Sources: Monitoring, assessing, reflection on data (inferences and next steps). Parent, student, and staff (virtual) surveys will be conducted at least once per year to monitor the effectiveness of the services.
HSD will continually monitor individual student academic progress and achievements through iReady assessments, state assessments, and other school-based assessments deemed necessary. HSD will compare growth and readiness of virtual students and on-site students in order to monitor the effectiveness of the virtual program. HSD leadership will provide the HSD Board of Directors with an update once per semester of available data points used to assess student success in Virtual Learning.

Virtual Arkansas provides the partnering school with access to the SIS and CANVAS LMS. The HSD Virtual Learning facilitator is trained to pull grades from the SIS weekly to monitor student progress. Additionally, parents can access student grades through the Canvas App. Virtual teachers send weekly reports via the SIS messaging to both student and parent email.

Describe how the teacher(s) will engage families into the digital learning process. (District may link the District Engagement Plan if digital learning is included. The plan must address how the district will support parents/students with digital tools and resources)	Virtual Arkansas provides parent/guardian informational webinars throughout the school year for families of students in Virtual Arkansas courses. Virtual Arkansas teachers communicate course and grade updates weekly to parents/guardians with provided email addresses. Parents/guardians are also given access to the Parent Canvas App which allows them to monitor their students activity and grades within the course. Family engagement is highly valued and encouraged throughout the year by providing regular Virtual Arkansas updates, emails from teachers, just in time meetings at the local level, and up to date information on the Virtual Arkansas website, including the Virtual Arkansas Parent Guide (https://www.virtualarkansas.org/293342_2).
	HSD will provide tutorials for parents on use of provided technologies and the provided learning management platform. These tutorials will be linked to the HSD website, www.hermitageschools.org. The district will communicate with families through the school messaging system, the Hermitage School District APP, the Hermitage School District website, and the Hermitage Schools Information Page on Facebook. The main point of contact between students, parents, and the district for communication and student services will be the HSD Virtual Learning Facilitator.
Provide the URL to evidence of the local school board's approval of the waiver request(s).	https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1223700
Provide a URL to evidence of stakeholder feedback regarding the waiver request(s) and the district communication plan regarding digital learning program(s).	https://forms.gle/U5Ks9KgqgmRzvMWJ6

Policies

LEA INSIGHTS

Please provide a link (URL) to the attendance policy for digital learning students.	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88
Please provide a link (URL) to the discipline policy for digital learning students.	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88
Please provide a link (URL) to the grading policy for digital learning students.	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-yIQhdfmIuuN5G5TTIMHOOJc7Og1NL88

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