



Act 1240 Digital Learning Waiver Request

Status: **Submitted to ADE DESE**

Russellville School District (5805000)

School Year 2021-2022

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 #: 5805000
Superintendent: Thomas Gotcher
Email: mark.gotcher@rsdk12.net
Phone: (479) 968-1306
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
5805017 - Crawford Elementary School 5805019 - London Elementary School 5805024 - Russellville High School 5805023 - Russellville Jr. High School 5805021 - Sequoyah Elementary School	K-12/ all	Asynchronous Synchronous	Virtual (Online) / Remote (Distance)	LMS
5805018 - Dwight Elementary School 5805020 - Oakland Heights Elem. School 5805026 - Russellville Intermediate School 5805022 - Russellville Middle School 5805025 - Center Valley Elem. School				



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.
				<p>This waiver would allow us to create an attendance policy to track our digital students using a time tracking system that is built into Buzz. This system logs their activity time and what they are doing every time a student logs in. This will help us track engagement also. Students are required to complete and submit anywhere from 1-5 lessons (depending on the subject matter) in a subject per week. This will take an average of 6 hours per day to achieve. Any student meeting this requirement is present for the week. Buzz provides a report that we review weekly to check student activity and time in the system for attendance. We will take attendance on a weekly basis. Every Monday it will be checked for the week before.</p> <p>If a student has not logged in for a total of 10 days, is not meeting the weekly time requirement, and is failing 50% of their courses, the parent will receive a communication from the school stating they are in danger of violating our attendance policy.</p> <p>If a student has not logged in for a total of 20 days, is not meeting the weekly time requirement, and is failing 50% of their courses, the parent will receive a communication from the Pope County Juvenile Parole Office and court action could result if the situation is not remedied.</p> <p>If a student does not log into the Buzz platform for 10 consecutive school days, they are dropped from the program which is the same as our District policy for if a student does not attend school for 10 days.</p>



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)	Not applying. Based on the current rules for distance and digital learning, we believe our courses would fall under large group instruction and therefore would not need a class size waiver. DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING DISTANCE AND DIGITAL LEARNING May 2020 6.07



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.
<p>Teaching Load Number of students:</p> <p>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.</p>	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812	<p>Not applying.</p> <p>Based on the current rules for distance and digital learning, we believe our courses would fall under large group instruction and therefore would not need a teaching load waiver.</p> <p>However, below are the maximum numbers we plan to abide by in order to ensure students are provided the adequate time with each teacher needed to offer the greatest chance of success:</p> <p>K-2- 30 students 3-5- 40 students 6-12- 200 students</p> <p>DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING DISTANCE AND DIGITAL LEARNING May 2020 6.07</p>
<p>Six Hour Instructional Day (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)</p>	1-A.4.2		6-16-102; 6-16-126	



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.
				<p>This waiver will be used to allow students to have more freedom of time based on their instructional needs. Some students work faster than others so this gives the ability to allow the flexibility of time for the learning process. Most students will spend 6 hours a day learning virtually but it would be possible for a student who is accelerated in their learning to complete a day's work in less time. Enrichment is also built in for these students though.</p> <p>Students are able to log in to the program and work on the curriculum 24/7.</p> <p>Based on Buzz (Lincoln Learning) estimates, it will take students 1 hour per lesson. It should take students around 6 hours to complete their daily work. Some students could finish before that or after that depending on the speed they work.</p> <p>1-A.4.2 Except where otherwise allowed by law, each public school shall provide a planned instructional day that averages no less than six (6) hours per day or thirty (30) hours per week. Any day in which fewer than six (6) hours of instructional time is provided to students shall be counted as one-half (1/2) of a school day if at least three (3) hours of instructional time is provided to students. Any day in which fewer than three (3) hours of instructional time is provided to students shall not be counted as part of a school day. (S/P)</p>



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.
Clock Hours	1-A.2			<p>Students in a virtual setting where learning is synchronous and or asynchronous will learn in their own time, place, and pace. This may mean that 120 hours of seat time or clock hours per credit may not be needed to master the course standards. Completing will be based on mastery of standards instead of seat time.</p> <p>Our courses are 150-180 lessons which are estimated at 1 hour per lesson. That means each course would be 150-180 hours which meets this requirement for 120 clock hours.</p> <p>1-A.2 A high school unit of credit shall be awarded for a course which meets for a minimum of 120 clock hours unless the public school district awards units of credit based on subject matter competency in compliance with the public school district's approved plan under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-216. (S/P)</p>



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)	Request to waive the DESE rules governing physical activity standards for students in a virtual setting. Students will be assigned lessons that support physical activities while learning asynchronously; however, it will not include synchronous supervision. Student schedules will include suggested breaks to ensure students have time in their day for the physical activity. 1-A.4.3 At least forty (40) minutes of instructional time per school day shall be used for recess for students attending public elementary schools, in accordance with the Division's nutrition and physical activity standards

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.



LEA INSIGHTS

We started the process of looking at adding a virtual school option for students three years ago during the 2018-2019 school year.

There are students in our district who have chosen to take different paths, such as homeschooling, ARVA, Connections Academy, private school, and others. There are various reasons for these decisions, but all are looking for a different environment than the traditional public school environment. Our desire is to create a virtual alternative that will meet the needs and desires of those parents and students so they will want to continue or come back to the Russellville School District. We want to provide an environment that works for families that may want flexibility of time and pace, more of a one on one environment, and students who struggle with the traditional school environment. In creating the Russellville Cyclone Virtual Academy (RCVA), we believe we can offer a great alternative to the traditional school model which will give our families more options within RSD. We provide dedicated teachers and a building where students can come and work one-on-one with their teachers as a need arises. We also have a dedicated administrator and secretary so we can offer a high level of support to our students and families.

Teachers and students will interact both synchronously and asynchronously. Our digital learning platform allows students to work asynchronously by completing lessons whenever they want from wherever they want. Teachers and students will also interact synchronously through Google Meet meetings throughout the day where all students are interacting with the teacher at the same time. These meetings are used for whole group instruction to teach certain concepts and to provide question and answer sessions. We also hold Google Meets that are small groups and one-on-one to help students with misconceptions and for students who are behind on certain concepts (RTI). Lesson expectations are in place that must be met by all students each week. However, students can move faster than that pace if they desire.

Virtual Meetings Schedule

Kindergarten Google Meets: Mondays 9:00 am (Literacy Lesson), Tuesdays 9:00 am (Literacy Lesson), Wednesdays scheduled times (Small Group Assisted Learning and Guided Reading Lessons), Thursday 9:00 am (Math Lesson), Fridays 1:00 pm (Story Time)

1st Grade Google Meets: Mondays 10:00 am (Literacy Lesson), Tuesdays 10:00 am (Literacy Lesson), Wednesdays scheduled times (Small Group Assisted Learning and Guided Reading Lessons), Thursday 10:00 am (Math Lesson), Fridays 1:00 pm (Story Time)

2nd Grade Google Meets: Mondays 1:00 pm (SEL Lesson), Tuesdays 1:00 pm (Literacy Lesson), Wednesdays scheduled times (Small Group Assisted Learning and Guided Reading Lessons), Thursday 1:00 pm (Math Lesson), Fridays 1:00 pm (Story Time)

3rd Grade Google Meets: Mondays through Fridays 9:15 am-9:45 am (Math), Mondays through Fridays 10:00 am-10:30 am (ELA), Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00 pm-2:30 pm (Science)

4th Grade Google Meets: Mondays 9:15 am-9:45 am (Math), Mondays 10:00 am-10:30 am (ELA), Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:15 am-9:45 am (ELA), Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 pm-2:30 pm (Science) Wednesdays 10:00 am-10:30 am (Math)



LEA INSIGHTS

Thursdays 2:00 pm- 2:30 pm (Science), Wednesdays 10:00 am- 10:30 am (Math),
Wednesdays 9:15 am-9:45 am (ELA), Fridays 9:15 am-9:45 am (ELA), Fridays
10:00 am-10:30 am (Math)

5th Grade Google Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:45 am-11:15 am (Math),
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:45 am- 11:15 am (ELA), Fridays 10:45 am-11:15 am
(Science)

3rd-5th Grades also have scheduled intervention times to meet with struggling
students via one-on-one or small groups on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1-
3 pm.

6th Grade Google Meets: Mondays 9:00 am (Weekly Welcome Meet), Tuesdays,
Thursdays and Fridays 1:00 pm (Math), Wednesdays 9:00 am (Social Studies),
Wednesdays 1:00 pm (Science), Wednesdays 3:30 pm (Adv. Science), Thursdays
9:00 am (ELA)

7th Grade Google Meets: Mondays 10:00 am (Weekly Welcome Meet), Tuesdays,
Thursdays and Fridays 10:00 am (Math), Wednesdays 9:30 am (Social Studies),
Wednesdays 1:30 pm (Science), Thursdays 9:30 am (ELA)

8th Grade Google Meets: Mondays 11:00 am (Weekly Welcome Meet),
Wednesdays 10:00 am (Social Studies), Wednesdays 2:00 pm (Science),
Thursdays 10:00 am (ELA)

High School (9th-12th) Google Meets: Mondays 1:00 pm (Weekly Welcome
Meet), Wednesdays 10:30 am (Social Studies), Wednesdays 2:30 pm (Science),
Thursdays 10:30 am (ELA)

For 9-12th grade, we also plan to offer Virtual Arkansas courses to expand our
course catalog. This will allow our students to enroll in courses we cannot offer
at Cyclone Virtual Academy. All answers in this application pertaining to Virtual
Arkansas were provided by Virtual Arkansas staff. 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 provided the opportunity to attend two Zoom sessions per week, per
content area, and request additional one:one Zoom sessions as needed. While
Zoom sessions are not required, they are highly encouraged as empirical data
has shown students who attend Zoom are shown to be more successful than
students who do not attend Zoom. Students/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.



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.

Our delivery approach is virtual (online) using the Buzz Learning Management System. We also have a brick and mortar building where teachers are housed and students can come to the building to get face-to-face instruction as needed. We provide virtual and face-to-face technology training for parents and students.

For our Virtual Arkansas courses, we 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 have opportunities to engage in synchronous learning through live scheduled Zoom meetings with their teacher. All learning will take place online.



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.

RCVA teachers will be 100% dedicated to remote instruction and will not serve in a dual role. This will cover all of the core classes, math, science, english, and social studies and any elective that these teachers are certified for.

A few of the electives in which RCVA does not have a certified teacher for, such as K-8 art and music, we would use teachers from the other RSD schools as the teacher of record. They will be given dedicated time (one period per day) to the courses. The courses are already built by teachers with certifications in those areas. RCVA teachers will help aid those teachers as facilitators in these asynchronous electives.

For supplemental services such as GT, the teacher may serve both in person and virtual students but not at the same time. They will be given specific time in their work day to work with virtual students.

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



Teachers will interact with students daily following a consistent schedule during regular school hours. Interactions will be provided synchronously and asynchronously.

Each student will have RCVA teachers assigned to them. The teachers' role is to support the student with their online education at RCVA. This includes monitoring student progress, attendance, and engagement and making recommendations for student intervention when needed.

For students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade, the teacher will conduct weekly check-ins with each student to discuss progress and provide daily instruction as well as small group intervention. In addition, teachers in grades kindergarten through second, will hold required daily virtual phonics/early literacy lessons.

Each student in grades 5-12 will have a homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher's role is to support the student with their online education. This includes monitoring student progress, attendance, and engagement and making recommendations for student intervention when necessary.

Each teacher will schedule weekly Google Meets to offer instruction, RTI, and Question and Answer sessions. These meetings are required for students who are not passing the course and encouraged for students who are passing the course. There is one regular meeting per week per subject. There are two mandatory RTI meetings per week for Math and Literacy. These are for students who are failing the course or have identified areas of deficit based on common formative assessments. Teachers reach out to all students weekly to provide feedback and to set up meetings with students who need extra help (RTI). In order to communicate with parents and students, teachers use text (Google Voice, Remind 101), email, phone calls, virtual meetings, and face-to-face meetings.

For students who are not engaging, we start with an email to ask the students and parents how things are going and encourage them to engage. We also try to set up a Google Meet with the parent and student to discuss how things are going at home and see how we can help them. If that doesn't work, we text and make a phone call. If the student is still not engaged, we mail them a letter to discuss what is going on and remind them of the agreement they signed to stay in the program. Finally, if they are still not engaged, we conducted a home visit. All of these steps are followed before we return a student to onsite instruction for not meeting the requirements to stay in the program.

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 teachers send a grade report to the student and parent/guardian, and initiate further contact with students demonstrating difficulties with course content. Students are highly encouraged but not required to attend all Zoom sessions. Teachers are continuously provided PD and support for providing engaging and relevant synchronous instruction.



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?

Based on the current rules for distance and digital learning, we believe our courses would fall under large group instruction and therefore would not need a class size waiver.

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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?

Based on the current rules for distance and digital learning, we believe our courses would fall under large group instruction and therefore would not need a teaching load waiver.

However, if we need this waiver, below are the maximum numbers we plan to abide by in order to ensure students are provided the adequate time with each teacher needed to offer the greatest chance of success:

K-2- 30 students

3-5- 40 students

6-12- 200 students

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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.)

We will use Buzz for all courses taken through RCVA.

The Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) will be utilized for Virtual Arkansas courses.

GT services will be provided using Google Classroom.

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.

Lincoln Learning content will be the base for most of our K-12 content courses. We also supplement with the following:

K-2

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness daily video lessons: These lessons provide students with daily phonemic awareness and phoneme manipulation skills.

Epic: Digital library for students to be able to enjoy reading on their own. This program meets students on their specific learning level and promotes fluent reading with accuracy, speed, and prosody.

Phonics first: Phonics curriculum used to help students become fluent readers and writers. This curriculum/ method uses multisensory activities to help students grow in word formation and knowledge.

Social Emotional Learning lessons: Teachers use Zones of Regulation Curriculum and GUIDE for life to teach embedded lessons in Lincoln Learning along with Google Meet Lessons every week focused on the Social and Emotional needs of students.

95% Percent Group-Multisyllable Routine Cards : This is used for Literacy Intervention

Istation Reading and Math: Used for State Testing and an option for Intervention for Students that are struggling.

The Six-Minute Solution: A Reading Fluency Program: We are using this for Literacy Intervention

Digital Empowering Writers lessons periodically to supplement the writing from Lincoln Learning.

3-5

Epic is used to support reading comprehension through guided reading, literature discussion, and independent student reading. Read alouds on Epic model fluent reading with accuracy, speed, and prosody.

Generation Genius is a k-8 teaching resource that brings school science standards to students through well developed educational videos. It is also paired with activities, interactive quizzes, and reading material. It offers DIY activities that students can do at home with their family and friends. Each lesson involves specific content vocabulary.

Engage NY Math Curriculum is used to expand student knowledge of strategies related to math concepts.

CGI Math is also used to extend mathematical thinking and view other solution strategies of peers.

Khan Academy is used to supplement Lincoln Learning lessons with videos that are elaborate guides for standards based lessons (in addition to teacher created lessons and Google Meet lessons).

Jamboard is used in literacy as an interactive learning tool to support reading comprehension, vocabulary, word analysis and syllabication, morphology, and figurative language with books read together. Virtual field trip links are added to connect virtual experiences with texts, as well as build relationships with students. 3rd ELA Jamboard

Jamboard is also used in math instruction as an interactive learning tool to support number sense, concept development, scaffolding of skills, and engagement



LEA INSIGHTS

Engagement

Prodigy is used to engage students in mathematics and to give students a personalized program that identifies deficits in concepts. It takes students back to work on areas of deficits and then scaffolds them to more difficult skills. The teacher takes Prodigy diagnostics and Lincoln Learning progress to create learning opportunities on Google Meets as a whole class, small groups, and one on one meetings.

6-12

Khan Academy is used to supplement Lincoln Learning lessons with videos that are elaborate guides for standards based lessons (in addition to teacher created lessons and Google Meet lessons).

Newsela Articles are used to supplement Lincoln Learning lessons. These articles provide a real-world connection and information about topics that are related to the content the students are working on.

iCEV is used as supplemental material in the Business Courses. iCEV provides interactive coursework and real-world projects and activities.

Virtual Arkansas courses 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.



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.

Google Meet: This communication software makes it easy to start a secure video meeting. Students can join from any modern web browser or download the app. We can have up to 250 participants, unlimited meetings, meeting length is 24 hours, live closed captions, screen share, presentation mode, adjustable layouts, recording meetings, hand raise, polls and Q and A, breakout rooms, attendance reports, noise cancellation, and many more features. Our district pays for G Suite Enterprise.

Virtual Arkansas Courses: 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. The Zoom link and Zoom schedule is placed in a common location within each course.

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.

Students will be given a Chromebook (K-7th) or a laptop (8-12th grade). They will also be given a hotspot if they do not have internet or poor internet connectivity. Students will also be provided a mouse and headphones. Most of the Buzz materials can be printed, so we will print materials for any student who needs them. Students can go to any RSD school and use the internet if needed. Local libraries also allow students to use the internet. They can also come onsite to RCVA to access the internet if needed.

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.



Teachers check in with students daily to discuss curricular, physical, and mental needs through phone calls, email, text, video conference, and face to face. Teachers hold Monday meetings to touch base with students and give a brief overview of the week. K-2 teachers teach Zones of Regulation lessons on Monday teaching students how to identify their emotions and strategies of self regulation. 3rd- 12th Grade teachers hold meetings on Monday to check in with students. All teachers interact with the students in these meetings by asking questions to get them talking and interacting with each other. The teachers also check on the students to see how they are doing at the start of each Google Meet. Throughout the week, K-12 teachers also do one on one Google Meet Sessions to actively listen and support students on their social and emotional needs.

We have purchased and created various SEL resources to meet the social, emotional, safety, and wellness needs of our students. We have purchased Zones of Regulation Curriculum to help K-5 students learn about their emotions and provide them resources on how to regulate their emotions. We have created a Google Form to do Daily Check-ins with students to identify what Zone they are feeling and what tool they plan to use to help them regulate that feeling. We also allow students to provide confidential feedback on any concerns they would like teacher support on. Teachers call and set up meetings to help students with their specific emotional needs based on their check-ins. (see picture example of Google Form we plan to use for Check-ins). Part of our curriculum also includes social emotional learning, physical education, and mental health needs. Teachers have embedded SEL lessons and resources into the Buzz system for students each week. All of the same services the students at school receive will be available to virtual students such as, school counselors, counseling services, social workers, nursing services, and mental health professionals. We have a district food program that students can take part in if they do not have access to adequate meals. The Food Services Director and Special Services Director will work with the Digital Learning Supervisor to ensure these services are provided.

We are also in a unique position in virtual of being able to give individualized audio and video feedback to students on their lessons. Not only does Buzz allow audio and video feedback to be easily recorded, but the nature of virtual leaves teachers with more time than teachers in the classroom to focus on lesson feedback (teachers are not in charge of student behavior and classroom management or duties). This feedback can be very highly personalized. Many virtual teachers are starting to incorporate Screencastify and Screencastomatic to walk through a student's submitted assignments. Teachers can easily print Google Docs and Slideshows into applications like Microsoft OneNote. Then with a video recorder showing video of the teacher's face, use a pen tablet to make corrections, notes, and give general encouragement to students to do better, in a setting where students are able to pay attention to the feedback without the embarrassment of being corrected in front of peers. Parent and student feedback has verified that students really like this personalized audio and video feedback when it is given. They talk about the way it helps the student feel connected to the teacher.

Virtual Arkansas teachers are trained to employ actions and behaviors to ensure



LEA INSIGHTS

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 partnering school including the facilitator and counselor 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.

We use daily grades to monitor daily engagement. During Google Meets, teachers dive deeper into the lessons to discuss the content and engage students. Teachers also use programs, like Kahoot, to engage and check for understanding after a lesson has been taught. Teachers check on students overall grades each week to determine who needs extra support. If a student needs extra support, their teacher will reach out to the student and parent through email to explain that they must participate in a Google Meet or live meeting to help them catch up or improve their academic success. If the teacher does not reach the parent through email, they will text, call, and send out a mail communication. If we still can not engage the student, the Digital Learning Supervisor will send a letter and make a phone call. The District Security Officer will also conduct a home visit if necessary. The teacher provides the interventions with the student through Google Meetings and live meetings. Parent conferencing takes place daily to support their technology and curricular needs of how to help their students. Multisensory learning is embedded in daily Google Meetings to engage students.

RCVA 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.

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



LEA INSIGHTS

K-2nd grade creates intervention plans for each student. This plan is based on Buzz (Lincoln Learning) scores, Istation testing, Google Meet Assessments, and Dibels. The students who need RTI will get on Istation 30 minutes, twice a week for each subject needed. Small group Google Meetings are held for literacy and math each week for two 30 minute sessions. One on one, point in time, Google Meet sessions are held for students struggling with a certain skill or concept. For 3rd-12th grade, each week, skill deficits are identified and small group Google Meet sessions are created for students to attend based on the needs of each student. Students are required to attend these meetings. Students then re-assess the skill they are weak in and the data is compared to determine if improvement has been made or if further intervention is needed.

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. RCVA facilitators will reach out to the student to set up intervention times with RCVA teachers to ensure students receive the help they need. This help will come through Google Meetings and or live meetings. The students' success will be evaluated every 2 weeks to determine if Tier 2 or 3 interventions need to continue. 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.



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

Students work through daily lessons on Buzz which include formative assessments. Other formative assessments teachers use include elevator pitches, Kahoot, Nearpod, and think/pair/share in Google Meets. Teachers use these formative assessments to determine if a student is ready to move on to a new skill or needs more time and practice in the same skill. If a student still needs more time in the same skill they are offered Google Meet time with the teacher, additional resources, and the ability to go back through the same resources to spend more time to understand the skills or concepts. The formative assessment is then given to the student again to see if they have learned the skill or concept and the process begins again.

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 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.



LEA INSIGHTS

All K-2 students are given level 1, initial screeners selected from the Arkansas Dyslexia Resources Guide.

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness - DIBELS: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) (K-2) and Istation ISIP: Phonemic Awareness (K-1)

Sound symbol recognition: DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) Correct Letter Sounds (CLS) (K-2) and Istation ISIP: Letter Knowledge (K-1)

Alphabet Knowledge: DIBELS: Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) (K-2)

Decoding Skills: DIBELS: Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) Whole Words Read (WWR) (K-2)

Rapid Naming: Arkansas Rapid Naming Screener (AR-RAN) (K-2)

Encoding Skills: Word Journeys: Kindergarten Inventory of Spelling (KIDS) (K), Istation ISIP: Spelling (1-2)

Performance criteria (i.e. cut-points, benchmarks) are used to determine if students are unlikely to achieve reading goals without receiving additional targeted intensive support. If the initial screener indicates a deficit area from the initial screener, level II Mississippi Dyslexia Screener is administered. Our school-based decision making team uses these norm-referenced tests when identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia.

Our RTI process combines prevention and intervention with ongoing assessment in a systematic approach to identify students' instructional needs and appropriate learning supports.

Dyslexia services are provided by certified instructors utilizing state approved programs, this may include multiple virtual meetings to meet each student's needs. These services will be delivered synchronously. A few of the programs we use are listed here: Barton Reading and Spelling Program and Brainspring: Phonics First and Structures.

The Russellville School District will ensure the dyslexia law requirements are met for all virtual learners.

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.



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

K-2 (Whole Group-ALL)

Some lessons in the Lincoln Learning Curriculum are upper level and in-depth enough to observe potential gifted characteristics.

GT lessons are taught every Friday (K-2nd) through Google Meets by the RCVA certified teachers. We have a tracking document we use to log these lessons. We have four collection dates this year. This data is used to seek out 2nd graders of high potential who may not be referred by their classroom teacher and/or parent.

3rd-5th (Identified GT Students only)

These students receive 150 minutes of services each week. The services are provided through Google Meets (virtual meetings) using Google Classroom and are taught by certified GT teachers. The GT lessons are based on activities that lend themselves to virtual learning and meet the criteria for GT.

6th-12th (Identified GT students and Advanced Learners)

Advanced courses in the four content areas: ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies/History) for each grade level: 6th-9th.

9th Grade begins AP US History. This is offered through Virtual Arkansas.

10th-12th Grade AP courses are offered through Virtual Arkansas. Concurrent Credit is offered through ATUCC.

All current Virtual Arkansas teachers have been trained with the GT Secondary Course Content training and have support for gifted learners provided within the course as well as a representation of those learning offerings for documentation for partnering schools. New hires will also be expected to attain this training if they do not already have it. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas provides student perception surveys sent out each semester asking for student feedback on their learning experience. A parent perceptions survey will be conducted as well. Teachers are also encouraged to do informal surveys with students regarding the course learning experience throughout the year.

The Russellville School District will ensure that GT Program Approval Standards are met for all virtual learners.



Describe how English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL / ESL) supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

K-4 we have two ESL endorsed teachers. One of the teachers has 12 graduate hours toward TESOL certification, and the other teacher has her masters degree in TESOL. They serve on the LPAC committees. They meet in small groups with ESL students to offer English language development and scaffolds within their sessions.

5-12th we have an ESL endorsed teacher. All teachers monitor and serve on the LPAC committees and have been informed of the accommodations and modifications. Each teacher takes into account the language level of their students and meets with their students to modify work as needed. These meetings can be in person or virtual.

The ESL Supervisor serves as a resource for our teachers, provides training, and reviews LPACs with teachers.

Virtual Arkansas provides accessibility tools to support ESOL/ESL and will provide the needed accommodations/modifications per the individual LEP uploaded into the SIS by partnering schools.

The Russellville School District will ensure that all LPAC requirements are met for virtual students.

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



Special Education students are provided the same level of educational support in the digital environment as those who are in-person. Accommodations, modifications, and other supports are reviewed upon entry into RCVA to ensure any changes that need to be made to meet their new environment. Students are provided a special education teacher who works with them digitally through virtual meetings and digital content. This teacher will be located at RCVA and only works with virtual students. Folders of students with special education are managed by district designees to continue the tracking of progress and evaluation timelines. District designees hold all conferences in conjunction with RCVA staff for referrals, re-evaluations or any other needed SPED conference. These conferences will be held in the same manner as they are held for onsite students. We will have a SPED designee on the RCVA campus. Students and parents will be encouraged to come to campus for the meetings but they can be conducted virtually if that is what the parent chooses. RCVA teachers will take part in the conferences.

Virtual Arkansas teachers will provide information for evaluations and conferences when requested. RSD 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.



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.

Buzz has a toolbar that allows all or part of the screen to be read to the students. It has a built in dictionary, translator, highlighter, note pinning tool, and more.

A bank of videos and help document resources has been created and provided to the teachers to assist students in digital learning classes. We have a digital learning technician who trains and supports parents and students with digital learning needs.

We also have a Digital Learning Supervisor who supports teachers with assisting 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.



LEA INSIGHTS

The Digital Learning Supervisor coordinates PD for teachers on-going learning in the area of digital content and instructional support. Teachers are provided links to APSRC workshops and training sessions that are specific to the Buzz platform and Lincoln Learning content. Arch Ford and DESE digital learning training and workshop links are also provided to teachers. These workshops are targeted to the specific needs of digital instructional strategies and resources. Budget money is set aside to purchase materials and training for teachers as needed.

Surveys, observations, and teacher feedback are used to determine PD needs. Buzz PD will be provided every year. PD offered at Arch Ford based on engaging online learners will be provided every year. Social Emotional Learning PD will be provided each year, with a focus on digital learners.

Virtual Arkansas provides robust online teacher training and development for all new teachers entering the field of online teaching. All Virtual Arkansas teachers are provided both directed/scheduled and embedded professional development activities, book studies, and weekly collaborative teams. Virtual Arkansas provides a team of instructional and digital content experts for just-in-time support for all teachers. Virtual Arkansas also has a team of technology support specialists to assist with any technology issues.

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?

The Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Directors, and Instructional Facilitators, all devote time to RCVA to help teachers with curriculum and lesson planning support. The district provides financial support to ensure RCVA has the resources needed for effective instruction.

Teachers will need at least 1 hour per day to develop and plan for instruction. Teachers will have built in time, once a week, to collaborate with grade levels teams and content level experts (Instructional Facilitators).

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.



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.

Students are not denied entry into the virtual program based on race, creed, color, home status, poverty level, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

RSD will not allow technology to be a barrier to any student who wants to be a part of the virtual campus. Wireless hotspots and Chromebooks are provided to any student who does not have internet access. All students and parents are provided technology training. The school district has a food program for students who may not have adequate food to eat. Our District Director of Special Services meets with families in special circumstances to ensure supply needs are met.

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.

Summative assessments will be given on an RSD campus. Parents and students will be notified of testing dates and times using the Thrillshare all call system, emails from grade level teachers, and letters mailed out from RCVA. Students will be grouped by grade levels and required accommodations. We will use a sign-in/sign-out system for parents dropping off and picking up students in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Parents who do not wish to bring their students onsite to test will first be contacted by the Building Test Coordinator. The BTC will outline the safety protocols that are being implemented to ensure student safety during testing. Those safety protocols include testing in a large, open area such as an auditorium, adequately spaced tables at least six feet apart, seating charts, encouraging students and staff to wear masks, and disinfecting tables and equipment between testing sessions. Bathroom breaks will be taken before testing in small groups to maintain social distancing. Cohort groups will be tested separately at morning and afternoon sessions to also allow for adequate social distancing. Parents will be allowed to visit the testing site upon request. Parents who still do not wish to bring their students for onsite testing will be referred to the District Testing Coordinator. If a parent refuses to bring their student to testing they will not be allowed to participate in RCVA the following school year.



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.

We will use the Danielson Framework for Remote Teaching (https://drive.google.com/file/d/12E8jkr10F7kRVa4KvKSwmNHuAEvMB_Op/view?usp=sharing) to ensure teachers and administrators are performing their job roles effectively. Teachers will review grades with students weekly and RTI groups are set up the following week for students who are struggling with the skills from the week before. The Digital Learning Supervisor will monitor achievement data every 4.5 weeks and share the results with the District Leadership Team. The team will provide feedback and support to RCVA based on student results.

Statewide summative assessment data will be reviewed by the Digital Learning Supervisor and staff, to monitor, evaluate, and improve our curriculum. We will also use the Arkansas State Standards to monitor alignment and evaluation.

We will send out an annual survey in the Spring of each year to gather stakeholder feedback about the program. We will analyze and compare the data from year to year to see if stakeholders feel we are making yearly improvement.

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.

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)



We use an “all call” system to inform parents/students of important information. We also send emails, phone calls, and text messages through Google Voice or Remind 101. Parents/students are mandated to participate in a training within 1 week of enrolling in the virtual program. In this training meeting they learn how to use the Buzz system, they are given the RCVA contact information, a Chromebook, and a hotspot if needed. Teachers communicate (email, text, phone calls, postal letters) with parents/students weekly about their progress. If a student drops below 60% in any RCVA class a mandatory conversation will take place to come up with an “action plan” for that class. The student and learning coach must participate in the action plan in order to continue in RCVA. This action plan could include mandatory Google Meets, on-site meetings, a daily work schedule, a weekly progress check in time, etc. If the learning coach and student do not participate in the action plan, they could be subject to removal from RCVA at the end of each progress report time period (every 4.5 weeks).

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).

Provide the URL to evidence of the local school board's approval of the waiver request(s).

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HifC82lROa4xKgS0fjMqkYQy0kvEZjzt/view?usp=sharing>

Provide a URL to evidence of stakeholder feedback regarding the waiver request(s) and the district communication plan regarding digital learning program(s).

RCVA Parents- https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_w82JOAavE6tjWAu526a9

Policies



Please provide a link (URL) to the attendance policy for digital learning students.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/10oCW9dy8sm_R4vS1g4FH8S-hz9JXjJ-b

Please provide a link (URL) to the discipline policy for digital learning students.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/10oCW9dy8sm_R4vS1g4FH8S-hz9JXjJ-b

Please provide a link (URL) to the grading policy for digital learning students.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/10oCW9dy8sm_R4vS1g4FH8S-hz9JXjJ-b

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