



# Act 1240 Digital Learning Waiver Request

Status: **Submitted to ADE DESE**

Rivercrest School District (4706000)

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 #:** 4706000  
**Superintendent:** William Crowder  
**Email:** william.crowder@smccolts.com  
**Phone:** (870) 655-8633  
**Duration Requested (not to exceed five years):** 1 Year  
(School year 2022-2023 to 2023-2024)

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

LEA(s)	Grades/Courses	Interaction	Delivery	Platforms
4706069 - Rivercrest Elementary School	K-6	Asynchronous Synchronous	Virtual (Online) / Remote (Distance)	LMS
4706070 - Rivercrest Junior High	7-8	Asynchronous Synchronous	Virtual (Online) / Remote (Distance)	CMS



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.
<b>Attendance</b>			6-18-213(a)(2)	<p>K-6 TRVP (TRVP) All instruction will be synchronous, and students will be required to meet daily. However, a district may determine that the needs of a student with extenuating circumstances would be better met with asynchronous instruction. In these cases, attendance will be taken through the evidence of completed assignments. Monitoring of synchronous and asynchronous interaction will occur on a daily basis, but a waiver is needed for the manner in which attendance is calculated.</p>
				<p>7-8 Instruction will be synchronous and asynchronous. Attendance will be taken based on evidence of completed assignments.</p>
<b>Class Size</b> Number of students:	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812(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>K-6 TRVP</p> <p>A waiver is being requested due to the anticipated student:teacher ratio in K-6 classes- -30:1 (K-2) and 50:1 (3-6).</p> <p>7-8</p> <p>We are not requesting additional waivers for the teaching load for 7-8.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Virtual concurrent credits will be provided by Arkansas Northeastern College.</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.
<p><b>Teaching Load</b> Number of students:  150</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	We are not requesting this waiver.
<p><b>Six Hour Instructional Day</b> (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>K-6 TRVP</p> <p>All students learn at a different pace, based on age as well as background. Virtual learning allows the flexibility for class times to be conducted based on age and appropriate time limits. Six-hour instructional day guidelines will exceed age-appropriate screen time limits. A waiver for the 6-hour instructional day will be utilized to provide instruction within the parameters of the recommended screen times.</p>
				<p>7-8</p> <p>We are requesting the six hour instructional day waiver. Research shows students in grades 7-8 benefit from a shortened instructional day when learning virtually. 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.</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>K-6 Tri-Region The standard for clock hours does not apply to K-6, therefore we are not requesting a waiver for clock hours.</p> <p>7-8 We are requesting the clock hour waiver. 100% virtual students are working to master standards which takes a broad range of time. With Virtual Arkansas' asynchronous and synchronous approach, student learning may not equal a total of 120 clock hours.</p>
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)	<p>K-6 Tri-Region is requesting a waiver for the requirement to provide forty (40) minutes of recess due to the fact that instruction is 100% virtual.</p> <p>N/A for grades 7-8. Virtual Arkansas does provide PE and Health as an offering for 7-8 grade students.</p>

Digital Model

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



## Interaction / Delivery

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



The K-6 TRVP will primarily be a synchronous model for K-6 core instruction. The synchronous model will allow for structured learning, increased interaction, and direct instruction for virtual students. This model will also allow for improved student-teacher relationships and targeted learning for all students. An asynchronous option will be made available to students with extenuating circumstances and at the discretion of participating districts. The virtual lessons will be made available to asynchronous students on a weekly basis.

**Teachers:** Teachers are expected to upload all resources and materials at least one day prior to the virtual lessons. Teachers will teach daily virtual lessons for core instruction for students in the synchronous environment. virtual lessons will be recorded so students can revisit the lessons for a refresher, or if the student missed a virtual lesson.

Requirements for the Science of Reading will be ensured by embedding and supplementing into the curriculum a DESE-approved core literacy program that effectively addresses phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The K-2 courses set the foundation for the youngest learners with exposure to Concepts of Print, Decoding, Language and reading comprehension through teacher-led lessons taught in a systematic, explicit, and sequential way. The curriculum for K-2 will target and monitor the students' progression towards mastery of word recognition (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight word knowledge) via formative assessments and other progress-monitoring tools such as DIBELS. During instructional time, the teacher will model decoding skills that students will need to master, such as phonological awareness activities including advanced phonemic awareness tasks, grade level standards based syllable types and syllable breaking patterns, letter-sound correspondences (sound walls/phoneme-grapheme mapping skills), and morphemic units. Students will practice and participate in activities during synchronous lessons, and then they will have independent practice opportunities throughout the day. Students will be assessed using diagnostic assessments and level one components in grades K-2. Those results, as well as classroom observations/assessments will determine the need for additional interventions. These interventions will be daily with a virtual teacher or virtual paraprofessional in either one-to-one or small group instruction.

Teachers will interact with synchronous students on a daily basis and will remind students to attend virtual lessons, pull small groups, and/or work 1:1. These requests will be based on student needs identified by robust grading practices. Teachers will routinely monitor asynchronous students' engagement and academic progress throughout the week and regularly interact with those students via videos, electronic communications, and other means available. Teachers will be available for additional support during their office hours so that synchronous and asynchronous students (and their parents/caregivers) can communicate with the teachers as the need arises. Turnaround time for responses from teachers is a maximum of one business day. All teachers will have daily designated office time for support.

**Students:** Regular attendance to the virtual lessons is crucial to the academic growth of the students; therefore, it is expected that students will attend and complete 178 days of instructional content. Days missed due to illness or other events will be made up through small group instruction, asynchronous lesson review or other methods deemed to be in the best interest of the student If





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review, or other methods deemed to be in the best interest of the student. If additional time or support is needed, the student and/or caregiver should contact the teacher during his or her office hours

Asynchronous students are expected to follow the policy set by their districts regarding the standards for completion of work in a timely manner.

All students have a variety of options for connecting synchronously with our teachers--email, office hours, etc. Students also have their teachers' phone numbers.

(<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/learning-services/digital-learning-k-12>)  
7-8

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. 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. Any asynchronous instruction and Zoom sessions will be monitored by school level. The expectation for completion of work will follow the local policy on submission time and makeup work. 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.

The K-6 TRVP will utilize online virtual (remote) learning through Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Zoom. The program will provide instruction using a model that is primarily synchronous with an asynchronous option. Students will engage in digital coursework through Google Classroom. All students will have the opportunity to participate in virtual lessons sessions for synchronous learning with the teacher. All virtual lessons sessions will be recorded using Zoom, housed in Digital Sandbox, and linked in Google Classroom so that asynchronous students will have access to the digital content. All learning and instruction will be virtual.

Rivercrest School District will utilize online virtual remote learning through Virtual Arkansas for grades 7-8. 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.

Students participating in virtual instruction will be allowed to participate in all field trips, academic competitions, and other special enrichment functions that occur. These opportunities will be communicated through webpage and social media announcements. Students will receive all communication in email.

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.



The K-6 TRVP delivery of instruction for K-6 students will be 100% virtual/remote. The K-6 TRVP will provide Arkansas certified teachers of record for virtual learners. The K-6 TRVP teachers will be solely dedicated to remote instruction. The K-6 TRVP will have Arkansas certified teachers as the instructors for all course content via the Google Classroom CMS. This program is a model of synchronous, targeted instruction for course content and enrichment, with an asynchronous option.

The K-6 TRVP teachers will work in tandem with districts' point-of-contact personnel for their virtual students. These designees will be referred to as the Campus Connection Coaches (CCCs). Training and support will be provided to the TRVP teachers and district CCCs throughout the year.

Responsibilities of the CCCs may be to:

Monitor progress in real-time,

Serve as an ambassador for the district,

Advocate for their students and families,

Serve as a support seeker,

Serve as the first line of communication and contact for parents and students for the district,

Provide information technology support, and overall help,

Partner with the virtual staff to provide support for the students,

Enroll students, coordinate orientation activities, facilitate on-site sessions, and build relationships with families,

Address issues that tend to be "high touch"

Act as the local "face" of the virtual campus and bridge interactions between the virtual campus and district

RSE will utilize one elementary para-professional as needed for CCC.

Rivercrest School District 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. For 7th-8th grade students, the high school has a full time designated classified personal for Virtual Arkansas/ ANC Concurrent credit. 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. The Virtual Arkansas/ ANC Concurrent paraprofessional will have a single role to facilitate online learning.



interaction, and frequency with virtual students.

TRVP teachers will provide daily, synchronous instruction for virtual students. In cases where asynchronous instruction is required due to extenuating circumstances or absence, the teacher will make contact with the virtual student concerning the asynchronous content. Synchronous students will be required to attend daily sessions each week, and asynchronous students are expected to view all virtual lessons sessions each week. Research shows that students who attend virtual lessons are more successful than students who do not attend virtual lessons sessions. Virtual lessons provide for real-time direct instruction with individual and small groups of students using voice-over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing. These daily sessions allow teachers and synchronous students to interact with one another in real-time in a virtual classroom. In addition, virtual sessions will be recorded and saved for asynchronous students to view using a flexible schedule based on personalized student need. Synchronous students may also revisit these recorded sessions at a later date if they have scheduling conflicts or want to refresh themselves on the topics covered. Parents will also have access to these lessons in order to support their child with any additional activities or tasks.

Requirements for the Science of Reading will be ensured by embedding and supplementing into the curriculum a DESE-approved core literacy program that effectively addresses phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The K-2 courses set the foundation for the youngest learners with exposure to Concepts of Print, Decoding, Language and reading comprehension through teacher-led lessons taught in a systematic, explicit, and sequential way. The curriculum for K-2 will target and monitor the students' progression towards mastery of word recognition (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight word knowledge) via formative assessments and other progress-monitoring tools such as DIBELS. During instructional time, the teacher will model decoding skills that students will need to master, such as phonological awareness activities including advanced phonemic awareness tasks, grade level standards based syllable types and syllable breaking patterns, letter-sound correspondences (sound walls/phoneme-grapheme mapping skills), and morphemic units. Students will practice and participate in activities during synchronous lessons, and then they will have independent practice opportunities throughout the day. Students will be assessed using diagnostic assessments and level one components in grades K-2. Those results, as well as classroom observations/assessments will determine the need for additional interventions. These interventions will be daily with a virtual teacher or virtual paraprofessional in either one-to-one or small group instruction.

The 3-6 courses continue to dive deeper into language comprehension, word recognition, and skilled reading. During this time, the teacher will model strategies to analyze words by teaching morphological units such as common prefixes, suffixes, Greek and Latin roots and the etymology of words. As an extension of prior learning, students will practice with syllable division of multisyllabic words. Vocabulary will be taught using morphology and background knowledge using various strategies: discussion, videos, student research and read-alouds. Comprehension will be supported by reading texts with accuracy, using common strategies such as: comprehension monitoring, summarizing, analysis of reading passages for text structures, and verbal reasoning. Instruction will occur synchronously five days a week and in real



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reasoning, instruction will occur synchronously five days a week and in real time.

This instruction will occur daily and synchronously to ensure that the foundational literacy skills of word recognition (“bottom of the rope”) are developed and supported on a regular basis, as well as the skills of language recognition (“top of the rope”)

Teachers, parents, and students will be able to communicate using the Google Classroom CMS or via email. TRVP teachers are expected to monitor students and provide timely grading and robust feedback on assignments for students, parents/caregivers, and District CCCs. Teachers will communicate regularly with the district CCCs and provide access to their students’ progress so that the CCCs can fulfill their responsibilities in helping to ensure student success.

Teachers will send a Welcome message via Gmail and/or Google Classroom message prior to the course start date.

Teachers will complete the grading of assessments within 2-3 business days

Teachers will complete the grading of portfolio items within 4-5 business days.

Communication between virtual teachers, parents, and students will be addressed via age-appropriate means, such as Gmail and/or Google Classroom messages. All student and teacher communication is captured and logged.

Students and parents can request meeting times through the Gmail and/or Google Classroom messages, pop into virtual lessons, or meet during the teacher’s set office hours. Virtual teachers will also pull small groups or work 1:1 with students based on needs.

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?

The following student: teacher ratios will be followed:

Core Courses

Early Elementary School (K-2): The average student-to-teacher ratio for early elementary school core courses is (30:1).

Upper Elementary School (3-6): The average student-to-teacher ratio for upper elementary school core courses is (50:1).

Non-Core subjects will be integrated into the elementary instructional day. The district will utilize a Connections Coach to coordinate with the coop to ensure class size supports are in place and monitor and ensure students are successful.

Connection Coach will coordinate with district if support is needed.

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.



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?

The K-6 TRVP will not utilize district waivers for teaching load. The following student-teacher ratios will be followed:

Core Courses

Early Elementary School (K-2): The average student-to-teacher ratio for early elementary school core courses is (30:1).

Upper Elementary School (3-6): The average student-to-teacher ratio for upper elementary school core courses is (50:1).

Support for the teachers and students, especially in the K-3 classes, will be addressed by splitting the students into two groups (an a.m. and a p.m. session). This will allow the teacher to focus on smaller groups of students and better meet their needs. The TRVP teachers will monitor the students' progress and engagement with the lessons to ensure they are receiving the appropriate support necessary to be successful. The TRVP teachers will meet regularly with the TRVP Coordinator to evaluate the students' progress and determine if additional supports are needed for students, as well as additional supports they feel they may need as the teacher.

Teaching load will not exceed 150 students

We are not requesting additional waivers for teacher 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.

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.

## Technology / Platforms



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

Students in the K-6 TRVP will use Google Classroom as the CMS. At home or wherever the Internet is accessible, this user-friendly online system connects students with their lessons, teachers, and resources.

The Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) will be utilized through Virtual Arkansas. This LMS is supplemented with the Student Information System (SIS) Genius. Genius is a registration, progress monitoring, and reporting tool which provides a daily snapshot of each student's progress, attendance, and engagement level.

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.





The K-6 TRVP will use a curriculum that has been developed in conjunction with DESE that is based on Arkansas Academic Standards and current state initiatives such as Science of Reading, AR Math QuEST, and GPS. Google Classroom will be utilized to deliver K-6 core content. Courses consist of direct instruction, videos, rigorous assignments, performance tasks, and assessments to engage all students. The Virtual option teachers can monitor student progress using the grading and monitoring tools available in Google Classroom, as well as 3rd party data reporting tools that operate with Google Classroom content. Reading instruction is crucial in the overall success of students. Core literacy instruction will be aligned to the Science of Reading and use an approved core program with the recommended considerations for supplemental resources. Resources will be aligned to state initiative goals and will include teacher materials and/or programs that will support virtual instruction. Some items used may include the digital version of the Wilson Reading System, Heggerty Digital Curriculum, and other more traditional resources such as decodable texts and reader class sets. Materials may also include manipulatives such as pointers, markers, dry-erase boards, and counters. The content and resources will effectively address phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The curriculum for K-2 will target and monitor the students' progression towards mastery of word recognition (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight word knowledge) via formative assessments and other common assessments such as DIBELS.

TRVP will collaborate with participating districts and purchase the needed instructional materials, programs, and teacher supplies.

Virtual Arkansas provides access to 139 courses in grades 7-8 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



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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.

Virtual learning with Arkansas Northeastern College takes place with Jenzabar and/or BrightSpot.

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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.



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The K-6 TRVP teachers and students will be utilizing ZOOM/Google Meet for all synchronous learning opportunities. These sessions allow teachers and students to interact with one another in real-time in a virtual classroom. In addition, Zoom/Google Meet sessions may be recorded and saved for students who are asynchronous or those who need to revisit at a later date. Zoom/Google Meet allows teachers to monitor students' progress and invite those students who are struggling with a particular lesson or concept to a Zoom/Google Meet session targeted toward that content. In addition, if a subset of students is moving quickly through their lessons and demonstrating mastery of the lesson objectives through their assessments, invite them to a Zoom/Google Meet session to engage beyond the material covered in the lesson by sharing their writings and collaborating in small groups. 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.

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.

Each 100% virtual student will be assigned a district device. Students who do not have reliable internet service will be provided with a district-issued hotspot. District: Devices will be distributed to all students. Wi-Fi will be available on each campus.

## 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.

The K-6 TRVP teachers are trained to employ actions and behaviors to ensure the physical and mental health of students. Google Classroom 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 the district will be notified. Teachers are trained to report maltreatment/abuse to the Department of Health Services. Additionally, appropriate professional development such as G.U.I.D.E. for Life will be provided to teachers to support SEL strategies. Wellness and safety will be monitored with synchronous students via strategies such as visual "check-ins," conferring during the lessons, and monitoring the students' participation and completion of work. Teachers will monitor asynchronous students via observations of the students' work habits (e.g., a change in work quality and/or quantity), regular communications with the students and parents, and any other indications that a student may be struggling (e.g., lack of participation for prolonged periods of time). 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.

Grab and go lunches will be provided for all virtual students.

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.



Rivercrest School District has access to the Google Classroom in order to monitor students in real-time. Teachers will initiate intervention when it is determined a student isn't actively engaging or successfully mastering the content. Regular and frequent assessment will be utilized to identify struggling students. Students who demonstrate lack of achievement will participate in conversations with TRVP and their district to arrive at solutions to the lack of progress. In cases where needed, teachers will involve the partnering school through the CCC. Rivercrest School District will provide a CCC. This point of contact will monitor virtual student progress, welfare, and attendance through Google Classroom provided reports (gradebook, student performance to proficiency, mastery of objectives, user activity, test analytics, enrollments, student course enrollment, course details, and user details). The CCC will report any issues or concerns on academics, welfare, engagement, etc to the building principal to handle, based on school district policy. The CCC will also set up a regular communication schedule with the virtual teachers regarding the progress of virtual students.

The Virtual option will provide training and support for the Campus Connection Coach. Appropriate training will be provided by the K-6 TRVP. The Campus Connection Coach is Shantele Raper, Assistant Superintendent and support personal as needed

Rivercrest School District will support students that struggle with academics and engagement by providing additional support as needed. This will include teachers scheduling one on one virtual sessions.

Rivercrest School District has access to the Virtual Arkansas Genius 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 the administrator or request the administrator to be contacted if the initial intervention is not successful.



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

K-6 Tri-Region Virtual teachers will be 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. Virtual teachers will make phone calls to offer support. Students may be asked to join additional intervention sessions and/or watch recorded sessions. Teachers may use office hours for interventions. Tutoring or other 1:1 support may be provided to ensure academic progress. If those interventions are not successful, the virtual teacher will reach out to the partnering CCC regarding additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions.

District will provide the support with the appropriate expert and deliver in the brick and mortar location or virtually, based on need.

Additionally, Virtual Arkansas teachers have been trained in the RTI process to identify and intervene with immediacy when a student is determined to not be successful. They are trained to deliver Tier I and II interventions and, if those are not successful, reach out to the partnering school regarding additional Tier II or Tier III 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.

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



In the K-6 TRVP, formative assessment will be used to support learning. For example, periodic formative assessments, checks for understanding, and pre-tests aligned to the summative assessments. A variety of assessments will be utilized through the course with open-ended discussions/assessments, choice response activities, multiple-choice, and hybrid assessments(open-ended and multiple choice). Assignments will be aligned to SoR, QuEST, and GPS, and will include recognized assessments such as DIBELS, PAST, etc.

Formative assessments will occur in real time for all synchronous students. Asynchronous students will be given the same formative assessments and will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that students' understanding and needs are being met. Based on the results of routine formative assessments, the teachers will determine students' needs and how to best meet those needs through practices such as additional small group work, re-teaching core content, and modifications of tasks to promote mastery.

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. These strategies of formative assessment, both formal and informal, are utilized in order to guide the RTI process and methods of intervention.



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

The K-6 TRVP provides accessibility tools to support students with dyslexia. Phonological awareness and phonics strategies will be embedded in synchronous daily lessons to improve fluency for dyslexic students. The virtual teacher will monitor students for possible learning difficulties and notify the CCC. The CCC will follow-up with appropriate school district procedures. 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. "The district will ensure all requirements of the dyslexia law are met for on-site and virtual learners." Rivercrest School District will adhere to the protocols of dyslexia screeners and therapy programs regarding the use of a virtual format.

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





From Krystal Nail, DESE: Each local district will be responsible for providing and documenting K-12 GT Services in accordance with requirements from GT Program Approval Standards.

Each district will provide details about GT Services they will provide in their district digital learning plan. Individual districts will solicit referrals for GT from the virtual teachers and follow their local district's procedures for determining the most appropriate placement for students. Referrals could come from other sources such as other students, parents, or self-referrals, etc. and will be processed in accordance with the district's GT identification and placement procedures.

"The district will ensure that all requirements from GT Program Approval Standards will be met for virtual learners."

All current 7-8 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. The following AP courses will also be available to 9th-12th grade students through Virtual Arkansas: (AP ART HISTORY, AP COMPUTER SCIENCE A, AP ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, AP PSYCHOLOGY, AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION, AP ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION, AP UNITED STATES HISTORY). 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.

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



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

K-6 TRVP teachers will provide all accommodations and modifications as stated on LPACS.

“The district will ensure all requirements of the District English Learner Plan will be met for on-site and virtual learners.”

The district 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 and manner families will understand.

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 your virtual option, complete the following to describe how ELD services will be provided:

K-8

Instruction will be inclusion /embedded.

ELL coordinator will be responsible for reviewing all ELL student progress.

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



K-6 TRVP teachers will provide all accommodations and modifications as stated on district-developed IEPs and 504s. They will participate in conferences, as needed in the capacity of a general education teacher.

“ The district will ensure special education services will follow all rules and regulations for virtual students.”

Virtual Arkansas teachers will provide information for evaluations and conferences when requested. Rivercrest School District 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,
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.



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.

Assisted technology will be utilized as necessary for student achievement. All Virtual 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.

## Teacher Supports

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



The K-6 TRVP will address the support for professional development for online teachers and might address how this support aligns with the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching. Professional Development offered by the Tri-Region Cooperatives is approved by the Arkansas Department of Education and counts towards the required 36 hours of Professional Development required for teachers each year. Additional continuous learning requirements for certification are generally met through graduate-level course work and/or additional external training opportunities. Trainings focus on developing virtual classroom management, digital pedagogy, data-driven instruction, techniques for supporting social-emotional health of students in a virtual space, techniques for supporting diverse learning groups (exceptional students, gifted students, language learners), and techniques to support a mastery-based instructional model to ensure students have multiple pathways and opportunities to successfully master learning standards. Through direct access to content specialists and Team Digital specialists at each co-op, continuous professional development will be available to all TRVP teachers. Rivercrest School District will be utilizing Virtual Arkansas as our digital content and digital instruction solution. 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. As part of the Professional Learning Community process, Virtual Teachers will use student data to drive a continuous plan-do-check cycle of improvement. If there is a support need beyond what the Virtual teacher can provide, the Virtual Campus Coordinator will facilitate the support. On-going and job-embedded support will occur throughout the school year based on student achievement data and classroom observations.



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 K-6 TRVP will, at a minimum, follow the guidelines and policies set by the state of Arkansas in regards to teacher planning time (40 minutes per day). Rivercrest School District 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.

The local school/district will provide all appropriate testing and support services for all students. Virtual teachers will provide the appropriate testing data, classroom instructional services (as outlined by the appropriate documentation, ie, the IEP), and accommodations as necessary.  
River-crest\_-\_Section\_427\_of\_GEPA.pdf

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FBncDJSFUra66xqUYuxSiCh3U-8lZZ8VPdz0Lf0QOoo/edit?usp=sharing>

The district will ensure equitable access by ensuring all students have access to technology, (Including hot spots) meals, instructional support, home visits as identified. This includes poverty, ELL, homeless and migrant.

We plan to use Federal funds to integrate technology in all classrooms, hire additional instructional support staff, provide materials and supplies to support supplemental programs, support programs for a safe and drug free school, and provide staff professional development. We ensure that no student or teacher will be denied participation based on gender, race, national origin, disability or age.

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.



All virtual students will be required to participate in statewide summative and school/district required testing (NWEA MAP, Istation, etc..) at the building/district site. These tests will be conducted and monitored by the school/district personnel. All testing data will be shared by the school/district for analysis. Virtual staff will participate by communicating with parents and students, as needed, to ensure a smooth assessment.

Rivercrest School District will follow DESE guidance for all testing. Expectations to test with cohort will be communicated with parents. Accommodations for small group and individual testing will be provided in compliance with DESE guidance as needed to ensure all students test.

Virtual Arkansas requires trained proctors for major assessments. Rivercrest School District's plan for students to take proctored assessments includes: Following state guidance for all testing procedures, including remote testing, small group/individual testing and expectations for all students to test as permitted.

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

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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.





TRVP will utilize students' formative assessments, parent communications, conferences, surveys, students' summative data, and district collaboration to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the digital option and the fidelity of implementation by conducting surveys of parents, schools, and students. 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 7-8 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.

District Assistant Superintendent will monitor student progress at least every three weeks.



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)

All students and caregivers will be required to attend an orientation either face-to-face or virtually prior to the start of the school year. TRVP teachers will also provide technology training and support, as well as parent/teacher conferences. Virtual teachers will provide parents and/or families access to their child's Google Classroom assignments and announcements, and parents will have access to the student's grades. (Handbook: <https://bit.ly/3e5KNeb>)  
Districts will provide classroom support in the form of technology, instructional materials and supplies, and grade updates.  
2021-22 District Parent and Family Engagement Planpdf  
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](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/drive/folders/1imzO2UhEZAwwZh\\_Jt5GRsAbhzLhT29zn](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1imzO2UhEZAwwZh_Jt5GRsAbhzLhT29zn)

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

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10AjjY6jczh4Q9NGk0OuUyMbJHIAvLO>

## Policies

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

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iQMl5PUJM8kkh0GGhLPvOSji82f73jyh>

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

[https://www.rivercrestcolts.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC\\_ID=1524819&type=](https://www.rivercrestcolts.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1524819&type=)



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

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12ZJpMj0y2oUv\\_-00tJb6y-MiCOq\\_g-DX](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12ZJpMj0y2oUv_-00tJb6y-MiCOq_g-DX)

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