



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY  
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

## **Act 1240 District Waiver Request**

<b>District:</b>	<b>Van Buren School District</b>
<b>LEA Number:</b>	1705000
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Dr. Harold Jeffcoat
<b>Email:</b>	harold.jeffcoat@vbsd.us
<b>Contact for Waiver:</b>	Karen Allen, Assistant Superintendent
<b>Contact Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:kallen@vbsd.us">kallen@vbsd.us</a>
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	479-474-7942
<b>Date Received by DESE:</b>	

**The following documents must be submitted with the waiver request:**

- 1. Board resolution approving the waiver request**
- 2. Evidence of stakeholder involvement, including teachers and student families**

## Waiver Request #1

<b>Topic:</b>	Teacher Apprenticeship Program
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load</li> <li>• A.C.A. § 6-17-812 “Compensation for teaching more than the maximum number of students permitted.”</li> <li>• AR Standards for Accreditation 1-A.5</li> </ul>
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	5 years
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	Future School of Fort Smith
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b>	Van Buren School District Elementary Schools (6 total) Grades Kindergarten through 5th

**1. Provide a detailed rationale explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation or increase equitable access to effective teachers. Include information about the problem or obstacle, if any, the waiver will help the district overcome.**

The Van Buren School District is requesting this ACT 1240 waiver in order to participate in the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith (UAFS) Teacher Apprenticeship Program. By partnering with UAFS, the Van Buren School District (VBSD) hopes to increase our ability to recruit and retain highly effective elementary teachers while addressing our current teacher shortage issues.

With the approval of this waiver request, VBSD will partner with UAFS to place two interns in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Central Elementary School. One will fill a vacant position (unable to be filled with a qualified teacher) and one will assume the teaching responsibilities of the mentor teacher’s classroom. The mentor will work directly with both interns providing support and feedback through modeling, coaching and observation. Both interns will be compensated with a .5 first year teaching contract for the duration of one semester.

In order to provide this more focused, hands-on experience, the interns and mentor teacher will be provided multiple layers of support from school and district leadership. Interns will be participating in administrator led, weekly grade level team meetings with other 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. Additional release time from the classroom will be regularly scheduled specifically for the interns and mentor teacher to discuss content, instructional strategies, student data, lesson planning, etc. The District’s Director of Learning Services for Elementary along with the building administrators will meet periodically and as needed with the mentor teacher to provide strategies for coaching and reflective practice. In addition to the support provided by the District, the intern will be provided support from the UAFS assigned supervisor. Interns and the mentor teacher will receive consistent support from the Executive Director of the School of Education and from the UAFS Educational Renewal Zone (ERZ) Director. Both the Executive Director and the ERZ Director will make regular visits to the classroom and hold support meetings as needed.

The UAFS Teacher Apprenticeship Program is a model of internship which enhances not only the intern’s instructional practice, but also the district’s qualified teacher pool, the mentor’s leadership capacity and the partnership between school districts and higher education. VBSD looks forward to the opportunity of implementing this model for the current semester at Central Elementary School and at other elementary schools in the future.

**2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.**

Students assigned to classrooms with a Teacher Apprenticeship Program intern and mentor teacher will have the benefit of having an additional teacher in their classroom for at least half of the school day. The mentor teacher along with the interns will be focused on building strong instructional practice and measuring student achievement. A highly collaborative team will be created as the mentor and interns plan, practice and reflect together. Additionally, the mentor teacher will be available to create and model a more personalized learning experience for students by having the time to provide individual and small group instruction to address learning loss.

**3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.**

The VBSD will monitor the effectiveness of the Teacher Apprenticeship Program through multiple sources of data which may include:

- Regular and timely feedback from the mentor teacher and interns;
- Observational data from school and district administrators, UAFS intern supervisor and Executive Director, and ERZ Director;
- Classroom student achievement data including formative assessment data, observational data, reading levels, etc.;
- Survey data from teachers, students and parents; and/or
- Staffing data.

## Waiver Request #2

<b>Topic:</b>	
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b>	

- 1. Provide a detailed rationale explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation or increase equitable access to effective teachers. Include information about the problem or obstacle, if any, the waiver will help the district overcome.**
  
- 2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.**
  
- 3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.**







