



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Magnet Cove
LEA Number:	3003000
Superintendent:	Danny Thomas
Email:	danny.thomas@magnetcove.k12.ar.us
Contact for Waiver:	Danny Thomas
Contact Email:	danny.thomas@magnetcove.k12.ar.us
Contact Phone:	501-332-5468
Date Received by DESE:	

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

Topic:	School Start Date
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	A.C.A. 6-10-106
Duration Requested:	5 years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Virtual Academy
Schools, Grades or Classes the Waiver Will Apply To	K-12
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Equitable Access to Effective Teachers

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 member school districts of the Dawson Education Service Cooperative are collectively and separately requesting a waiver from A.C.A. 6-10-106, which establishes the first allowable day of class as the Monday of the week that contains August 19. For the 2024-2025 school year that date will be Monday, August 19. We would appreciate approval for the early start date for the listed schools in our region giving public schools the equity afforded to Charter Schools.

The specific waiver being requested is to allow the applying school districts to set their individual district's first day of class to be "no earlier than Monday, August 12."

The law as presently constructed results in a wide swing in the allowable opening date of school. At the earliest, it can be August 14, which was the case this year— fall of 2023. The latest possible first day is August 20 which, under the law will be — the fall of 2029. This waiver would allow the school to open next year and years to follow on the same relative date as this year.

The advantages of this waiver are several:

- The fall and spring semesters would be closer to the same length. Without this waiver, the fall semester will be 84 days while the spring semester will be 94 days, a difference of 10 days. With the waiver the fall semester will be 91 days and the spring semester 87 days, a difference of only 4 days. The more unbalanced the semesters are, the greater the issue for classes that are one semester in length.
- The alternative solution for unbalanced semesters is to not end the fall semester until after Christmas break. This results in final exams shortly after two weeks out of school, and the possibility of exams being repeatedly postponed due to winter weather.
- This waiver will give greater assurance of school ending in late May rather than extending into June. Some research indicates a decrease in learning past the Memorial Day Holiday.
- Beginning school earlier automatically results in more days of instruction before spring testing. More days of instruction will result in higher test scores,

• Activities such as football will begin next fall on the same relative date as they did this fall, with or without the waiver, Therefore a large number of students will already be on campus to practice and prepare for their activities, regardless of the opening date of school. In addition to students who play football, this would include students who participate in groups such as golf, tennis, cross country, volleyball, band, cheer, dance, Student Council, and National Honor Society, as well as others.

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

The school districts will create a calendar with an earlier start date which will provide them with more flexibility throughout the school year. The school year will remain the same length. It simply allows a district to continue with a school calendar structured as closely as possible to the current one and avoids the dramatic change to the calendar which must result without the waiver.

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

The district will monitor student assessment results and student attendance data related to the earlier start date to determine the effectiveness of the early start date.

MAGNET COVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2024-2025 Regional Early Start Date

WHEREAS the Magnet Cove School District Board of Directors met in a special, open, and properly-convened board meeting on February 8, 2024, in the boardroom of the Central Office; and

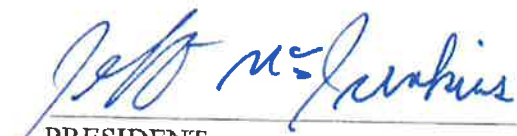
Whereas three members were present, a quorum was declared by the chair; and

WHEREAS A.C.A. § 6-10-106 requires the first day of the school year for student attendance in the public elementary and secondary schools of the State of Arkansas shall be:


- (i) On or after the Monday of the week in which August 19 falls;
 - (ii) Not earlier than August 14; and
 - (iii) Not later than August 26.
- (B) The date for beginning the school year shall be determined by the board of directors of the school district.
- (C) Labor Day shall be celebrated as a school holiday in all the school districts of the state, and school shall not be held on that date.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Magnet Cove School District approves of a school start date of August 12, 2024, for the 2024-2025 school year.

ADOPTED in special session by the Board of Directors of the Magnet Cove School District on February 8, 2024.



PRESIDENT

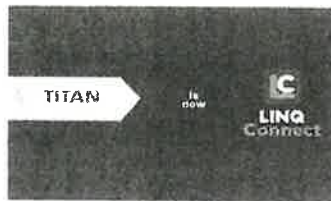


SECRETARY

Facebook browser window showing the Magnet Cove School District page. The page includes a navigation menu on the left with options like 'Manage Page', 'Professional dashboard', 'Insights', 'Ad Center', 'Create ads', 'Settings', 'More tools', and 'Meta Business Suite'. The main content area features a 'Photos' section with a grid of images, including one titled 'Celebrating Edna Mae Young, Sr.' and another 'JUNIOR ADULT CHAMPIONSHIP'. A post from 'Magnet Cove School District' is visible, titled 'Attention Panther Parents/Guardians', with text: 'We need your assistance in choosing a school start date for the 2024-2025 school year. The survey will remain open through Friday, February 2nd. (Edited To Add: The state has pushed the regular school start date back to August 19, 2024. We have the option to apply for a waiver that would enable us to start school on August 12, 2024. The earlier date would provide the district with additional time to make up any missed days due. See more'. Below the text is a graphic for the '2024-2025 SCHOOL CALENDAR SURVEY'.

The district is seeking feedback to gauge interest in a school start date for the 2024-2025 school year as early as August 12, 2024. This would allow the district to consider calendar options with an end date before Memorial Day in May 2025. In order to even consider this option, we need community and staff feedback expressing interest in the earlier start date. This is NOT a vote in support of the early start calendar nor is it the final school calendar. This is simply a step in the district obtaining a waiver to be able to consider the earlier start date. The survey will remain open through next Friday, February 2nd.

[Click Here to Take the Survey](#)



If you have any questions about LC, please contact Jordan Adams by phone at 501-771-1144 or email jordan.adams@magnetcove.k12.ar.us

Panther Pride Runs Deep!



School Calendar Survey Graphs

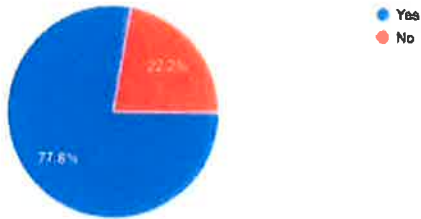
1 message

Mollie Martin <mollie.martin@magnetcove.k12.ar.us>
To: Danny Thomas <danny.thomas@magnetcove.k12.ar.us>

Tue, Feb 6, 2024 at 2:31 PM

Do you support an early school start date for the 2024-2025 school year as early as August 12, 2024?

234 responses



What is your role at Magnet Cove School District?

234 responses

