



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION

Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Bismarck
LEA Number:	3001000
Superintendent:	Susan Kissire (2024/2025--Tristan Knoedl)
Email:	susan.kissire@bsd-lions.net
Contact for Waiver:	Kimberly Turner
Contact Email:	kimberly.turner@bsd-lions.net
Contact Phone:	501-865-4888, ext. 4
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 Wavier 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, ROTC, 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.

BISMARCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2024-2025 Regional Early Start Date Waiver

WHEREAS the Bismarck School District Board of Directors met in a regular, open, and properly-convened board meeting on January 30, 2024, in Bismarck, AR; and

Whereas 4 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 District approves of a school start date of Bismarck School for the 2024-2025 school year.

ADOPTED in regular session by the Board of Directors of the Bismarck School district January 30, 2024.

PRESIDENT

x 

New Payment Link for School Meals

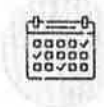
Beginning 11/28/23, BSD will be using a new system for online payments for school meals. Go to <https://lincconnect.com/> to create your account and connect your students. You will need your student's 4 digit lunch number.



Schools



Grades



Calendar



Athletics



Cafeteria

DISTRICT QUICK LINKS

- [2023-24 Bismarck School Calendar - Approved](#)
- [2023-24 Bismarck Football Schedule](#)
- [2023-24 Bismarck Basketball Schedule](#)
- [High School Menus](#)
- [Elementary & Middle School Menus](#)
- [Free/Reduced Lunch Application](#)
- [Home Access Link \(HACL\)](#)

20
MAR

Spring Break

20
MAR

Spring Break

20
MAR

Spring Break

Type here to search

37°F Sunny 7:59 AM 1/30/2024



School Board Meeting Tuesday, January 30, 2024 @ 5:00pm [View Slideshow Link for School Meeting](#)

School Board Meeting Tuesday, January 30, 2024 @ 5:00pm



Dear Parents/Guardians:

The member school districts of the Dawson Education Service Cooperative are collectively and separately requesting a waiver from A.C.A. 7-10-106, which establishes the first allowable day of class as the Monday of the week that contains August 14. For the 2024-2025 school year that date will be Monday, August 19. We would appreciate approval for the early start date for the list of 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 19.

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 start day is August 19, which under the law will be – the fall of 2025. 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 63 days while the spring semester will be 64 days, a difference of 1 day. With the waiver the fall semester will be 64 days and the spring semester 67 days, a difference of only 3 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 that exam, 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.

This waiver will give greater assurance of school ending in late May rather than extending into June. Some research indicates a decrease in learning with the extended 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 these 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, cheerleaders, GATE, Student Council, and National Honor Society, as well as others.

Please contact us with any questions or comments.

Thank you!

Susan Kilsire
Superintendent

Exciting news! Thanks to the generous support from Arkansas (Blue Cross and Blue Shield) we're thrilled to announce that our school is one of 20 selected to create a learning room for students. This dedicated space will provide a peaceful retreat for those in need of a place to recharge and find inner balance. Stay tuned as we embark on this journey with our incredible students, and keep you updated on our progress!



6:03



Early Start Waiver Input



Questions Preview Respons...



Share



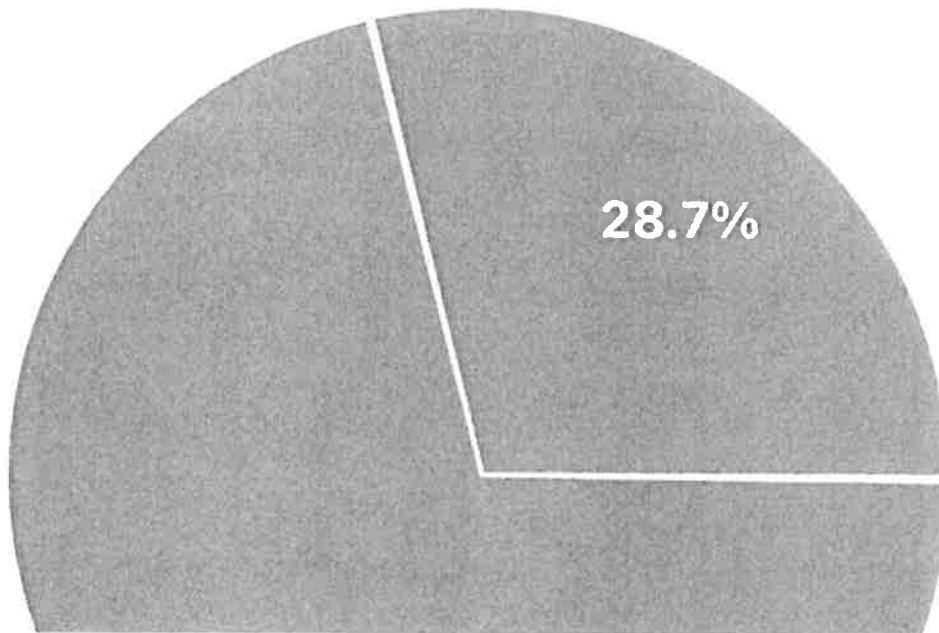
Are you a licensed/certified or classified staff member?

80 responses



- Licensed/certified
- Classified

91.2%^{90%}



71.2%



Made with
FormApp



80 responses
71.2% J
28.7% C

Personnel Policy Committee

Meeting 1/12/24

Agenda

9/27% Y
8.8% N

1. Review old minutes from 4/13/23.

2. New Business

a. In preparation for the upcoming calendar, review data from the 4 day school week.

b. Early start date options for 24-25 school year.

c. Propose that the three Monday's in May 2025 be used as "make up" days for the 24-25 calendar instead of adding days to the end of the year.

d. Review PPC members' terms and make plans for voting for new members.

e. Set dates for meetings for the remainder of the 23-24 school year.

3. Adjourn

April - elections



Susan Kissire <susan.kissire@bsd-lions.net>

Fwd: [Transcript View] Student State-ID: 5884187017

1 message

Elizabeth Brown <elizabeth.brown@bsd-lions.net>

Thu, Jan 11, 2024 at 2:39 PM

To: Susan Kissire <susan.kissire@bsd-lions.net>

Thank you,

Elizabeth Brown
Bismarck Middle School Counselor

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Triand Support <support@triand.com>

Date: Wed, Jan 10, 2024 at 12:08 PM

Subject: [Transcript View] Student State-ID: 5884187017

To: <alicia.robertson@bsd-lions.net>, <crysitie.green@bsd-lions.net>, <elizabeth.brown@bsd-lions.net>, <kimberly.turner@bsd-lions.net>, <mecca.chandler@bsd-lions.net>, <nindley@arca.connectionsacademy.org>, <rachel.kratz@bsd-lions.net>

Hello Registrar,

The transcript of the following student enrolled at your location:

Student	State-ID	Grade	School	District	State
Lilith Thomas	5884187017	07	Bismarck Middle School	Bismarck School District	AR
			LEA: 3001002	LEA: 3001000	

Has been viewed by:

User	Email	School	District	State

1/23/24, 6:36 PM

Bismarck School District Mail - Fwd: [Transcript View] Student State-ID: 5894187017

Elizabeth Brown - elizabeth.brown@bsd-lions.net
Rachel Kratz - rachel.kratz@bsd-lions.net
Alicia Robertson - alicia.robertson@bsd-lions.net

Triand, Inc.
P.O. Box 2769
Inverness, FL 34451

<http://my.triand.com>
support@triand.com
fax: 866-413-1149

© Copyright 2001-2021 Triand, Inc. All rights reserved.