



DISTRICT WAIVER ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

District Name: Bald Knob School District

Superintendent: Melissa Gipson

Email Address: melissa.gipson@baldknobschools.org

Phone Number: 501-724-3273 **Date Waivers Granted:** 11/13/2017

School Year Waivers Implemented: 2018-2019

Name of Charter School(s) Attended by District Students

Arkansas Virtual Academy

Waiver Topic: Allowable first day of school

Briefly explain the original rationale used when the waivers were requested and describe how the use of the waivers have impacted the district, specifically students and teachers, by waiver topic. Consider including any unintended benefits or consequences that have developed from the district's utilization of its waivers and any stakeholder feedback that the district has received. Please attach any data collected that demonstrates changes in the district.

The district obtained the above waiver to provide more equal days in the semesters of a school year. When days within a semester are relatively equal, semester length classes have opportunity for equity in instruction. Full year classes with balanced days allow for semester tests to be administered before the Christmas Holiday. This assists students by allowing them to test in close proximity to the instruction rather than following the lengthy holiday. Students also remain focused on instruction in the days prior to the holiday because the tests for the classes are eminent.

The waiver allowing school to begin earlier increases the chance that the school year will end in the month of May. When school continues into June, it is more difficult to keep students engaged in the learning. Students are also able to enter into the summer job market early to secure employment. The students who need summer school or wish to take summer colleges courses can enter those learning arenas.

Students who engage in activities that require practice in late summer are already on campus. The earlier start date diminishes the hardship on parents for transporting students. Every day that school is in session allows students without transportation to engage because they can now ride the school bus. This allows for more equitable access to school activities.

Provide a description of how the waivers have impacted school growth and student achievement. Please attach any data collected that demonstrates changes in the district.

In the 2018-2019 school year, we had 86 days in the first semester and 92 days in the second semester. That day count met our goal for more equal semesters.

Please see the following quotes from our various stakeholders:

From Ms. Dana McKinney, "Having similar day counts in each semester the courses that I teach allows me to pace the instruction and testing."

From Mr. Wesley Roberts, "The waiver allowed us to conduct semester test before the Christmas Holiday for 2018-2019 fall semester. The semester tests were administered December 17-20, 2018 and are projected to be administered May 20-24, 2019."

From Mr. Brent Roberts, "My students came to ACT Prep classes in late May and early June. This allowed them to attend these prep classes and take the ACT early. Some of my students would not have attended these prep classes if we had them later in the summer because they need to work."

Submit completed forms to Kelly McLaughlin by email at kelly.mclaughlin@arkansas.gov.

Questions should be directed to Kelly McLaughlin by email at kelly.mclaughlin@arkansas.gov or by phone at (501) 682-2130.