



# Arkansas Department of Education

## *Division of Elementary and Secondary Education*

Johnny Key, Secretary

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner

Article XIV, § 1 of the Arkansas Constitution requires the State to provide a general, suitable, and efficient system of free public schools, meaning a substantially equal opportunity for an adequate education. To meet this obligation, it is expected that all school districts offer, at a minimum, relevant and engaging onsite learning opportunities each day of the 5-day school week (4 if voted on by the Board because that is an exception allowed by statute). *Lake View* solidified the duty of the State to provide all public school children with a substantially equal opportunity for an adequate education. School districts not affording onsite educational opportunities each day creates inequity that impedes the State from ensuring its responsibility is met.

Since schools closed for onsite instruction in March, it has been the stated goal for districts to return to onsite instruction this fall. Because of the importance that education plays in the lives of children, families, and communities, it is critical that school districts provide an option for a full week of onsite educational opportunities for every student, unless otherwise advised by the Arkansas Department of Health.

Arkansas Ready for Learning provides guidance and support for onsite learning to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread, while recognizing that the school day schedule will not necessarily reflect a pre-COVID traditional school day. The waivers approved by the State Board for districts choosing to implement the Ready for Learning model were granted, in part, to provide districts the flexibility to offer virtual options to meet students' and parents' needs. The premise of this model is that schools will reopen to full-day onsite instruction, then pivot to online or remote learning when necessary in consultation with the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas Department of Education. Districts are encouraged to provide additional options for parents and students that allow for flexible schedules and virtual learning options, but must first provide an onsite option where students can access educational resources, school meals, and other needed support daily.

IF	THEN	ADDITIONAL OPTIONS
If the district provides 5 days of on-site student-teacher interaction	Then the district may also provide additional options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjustment to the typical school day schedule, including the number of hours on-site (less than 6 hours) if the teacher is working with remote students (remainder of each day) provided that onsite students can remain on campus to receive needed academic interventions, guided instruction, or therapy.</li> </ul>
If the district provides 4 days of on-site student-teacher interaction  *Districts that operate on a 4 day school week as authorized under A.C.A. § 6-10-117 would not be required to open facilities for the 5th day	Then the district must be open on the 5th day for students to participate as needed or to access needed resources for instruction, interventions and therapy  The district may also provide additional options.	
If the district provides 3 days of on-site student-teacher interaction	Then the district must open on the 4th and 5th days for students to participate as needed or to access needed resources for instruction, interventions and therapy  The district may also provide additional options.	