



# District Waiver Request

**DISTRICT:**

RURAL SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, 6905000

**SCHOOL:**

Rural Special Elementary and High School, 6905001 and 6905002

**WAIVER CONTACT:**

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**SUPERINTENDENT:**

Dr. Delena Thompson

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**WAIVER TOPIC:**

Superintendent

**SCHOOL YEAR(S):**

2026-2027

**GRADE(S):**

K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

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**STANDARD/STATUTE/RULES REQUESTING WAIVED:**

Standard 4-B.1

**BRIEF OVERVIEW**

The newly formed Rural Special School District under ACT 919 is requesting a waiver from employing a full time Superintendent until the district can establish itself financially.

**Provide a detailed rationale explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation, or increase access to effective teachers.**

The Rural Special Steering Committee, composed of eight community members, was established to oversee the logistical planning required to form a new district. The committee conducted a comprehensive review of standards, financial considerations, transportation, food service, and local tax calculations. Through this extensive analysis, it was determined that the proposed district may lack sufficient funding to support a full-time Superintendent position. This concern was raised during meetings with DESE in January, at which time it was recommended that the district consider pursuing a waiver from this standard, at least during the initial phase of implementation.

**Provide a detailed explanation of how the intent of the requirement being waived will be upheld.**

A retired Superintendent with extensive experience in consolidated districts has been engaged to support the District during this transitional period. The District intends to retain this individual for the first two years of

reestablishment at an estimated 0.6–0.75 FTE. In addition, a full-time K–12 principal will be employed on a 240-day contract to provide leadership support and address operational needs as they arise. Current standards allow for a superintendent to serve as a part-time principal for the 200 students we will be serving. This administrative model enables this leadership team to focus on high-impact responsibilities such as instructional leadership, staff development, compliance, and strategic planning without overextending limited financial resources.

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

A part-time superintendent position is a strategic and fiscally responsible approach for a startup school during its initial phase of development. Allocating a partial position allows the school to prioritize direct investments in classroom instruction, student support, and essential startup resources while ensuring strong executive leadership and oversight. The impact on student learning is expected to be positive, as more funding can be directed toward hiring and retaining high-quality teachers, maintaining smaller class sizes, and providing targeted academic interventions. The school board will conduct periodic evaluations of the effectiveness, including progress toward strategic goals and the overall condition of school operations. They will include feedback from staff, families, and other stakeholders to assess the accessibility and responsiveness of leadership. This phased approach ensures that leadership structure evolves in alignment with the district's needs while maintaining a strong focus on student learning and organizational effectiveness.