



## DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

# 2020 District Conversion Charter School Application

**Submission Deadline: August 1, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.**  
Applications will not be accepted after this time.



### **Academies at Rivercrest High School**

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Name of the Proposed Charter

Any application that is substantially incomplete will not be forwarded to the authorizer for consideration. An application will be considered substantially incomplete if it does not provide enough information to enable staff at the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide a meaningful review.

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Charter School Office  
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## General Information

Name of Proposed Charter School: Academies at Rivercrest High School

Grade Level(s) for the School: 9-12

Student Enrollment Cap: 500

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Grades to be Offered at the Charter	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Enrollment Cap at the Charter	500	500	500	500	500

Name of School District: Rivercrest School District

Charter Site Address	1700 West State Highway 14
City	Wilson
Zip	72395
Date of Proposed Opening	August 16, 2021
Superintendent	Sally Bennett
Phone	870-655-8633

**1. Provide the mission statement of the proposed school.**

The mission of the Academies of Rivercrest High School is to produce students who are future-ready by providing the academic and technical skill sets to succeed in both skilled jobs and post-secondary formal learning opportunities through an environment of collaboration and innovation.

**2. Explain how the mission statement was developed.**

An advisory group made up of current Rivercrest employees, students and parents met to discuss the vision, mission, and focus of the charter and how it would differentiate from what is in place at the school currently. Discussion was held amongst the group in regards to implementation of a school-wide agriculture program that will serve the current students, reach new students, and fill a work-force need in our community. Discussions have been ongoing about programs of study, potential students and their needs, and how this will support academics in core subject areas

**3. Briefly describe the key programmatic features that the school will implement in order to accomplish the mission.**

The Rivercrest School District (RSD) proposes to establish a conversion public charter high school focused on defined pathways for student success. The Academy Model will specifically serve students in grades 9-12.

- Freshman Academy – This will serve as a pivotal year for students to build capacity for project based learning and pathway exploration. All freshmen will participate in this academy prior to selecting their future pathway.
- Agriculture Academy – This will prepare students for a wide range of opportunities available in our region. The curriculum will be designed to incorporate agriculture into every area of instruction. Internships, real-world experiences, and industry certifications will be provided through partnerships with Arkansas Northeastern College, University of Arkansas Extension Office and Research, Greenway, Farm Bureau, and local farmers.
- Tech Academy – This will use the EAST initiative as the springboard for high tech integration. EAST provides for student-led, technology-driven, collaborative service-based learning. The curriculum will reflect current technology trends to include the solar farm on campus as well as support the high tech components of the Agriculture Academy. Robotics and coding will further enhance learning opportunities for students.
- Colt Academy – This will be the general education pathway that will follow a more traditional approach to education. Though a more traditional path, experiential opportunities will be provided to engage students in their individual learning paths.
- Virtual Academy - This will provide flexibility in where, when, how, and what learning opportunities in which students engage. Students may work at a pace that compliments their lifestyles while adhering to high standards of academic rigor of the subject matter. This allows the Rivercrest School District to better serve students whose academic needs cannot be met through a traditional learning environment. Students who would benefit from the virtual model would

be those that are currently homeschooled, homebound, and those that want to accelerate their learning. The Virtual Academy will use Lincoln Learning as the digital content provider.

Students will be allowed and encouraged to explore options and pathways in multiple academies regardless of pathway declaration. Each academy, while independent, will provide unique educational experiences and opportunities. For example, a student who is on an agricultural pathway can participate in tech academy and virtual academy courses and experiences that support and enrich the agriculture curriculum.

**4. Describe how the parents or guardians of the enrolled students and other members of the community will be involved with the school to positively impact the charter school's educational programs.**

Regular communication between the home and school plays a pivotal role in the academic success of students. Parents and community members have long supported the educational programs at Rivercrest. Our administration, teachers, and staff work with a variety of people including industry leaders, local college leaders, other schools and educational institutions, local government officials, and legislative leaders to ensure that our students understand careers that are essential to our local economy. Our goal is to have these community members and leaders on our campus to lend their expertise in their respective trade to our students in order to increase student exposure to the various career opportunities in Mississippi County.

In addition to access to online grade reporting, parents and guardians will be directly involved in the formulation and implementation of individualized student success plans. This allows for students to reflect on academic successes and challenges in a timely manner so that supports can be provided. Parents and guardians will be informed on a regular basis regarding student performance. A family and community involvement advisory committee will consult and plan additional activities to grow and sustain parent and community engagement.

**5. Describe the results of the public hearing, which was held for the purpose of assessing support for the establishment of this public charter school. Provide copies of supporting evidence in the appendix.**

A public hearing was held on Monday, July 20, 2020, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Due to the Covid-19 public health crisis, the meeting was held virtually on the Zoom platform. Parents and community members heard a presentation from Assistant Superintendent Harry Alvis.

Everyone in attendance was supportive of the idea of establishing a conversion charter. They were encouraged by the community support demonstrated by the preliminary meeting that was held on January 31, 2020. The January meeting was hosted by Rivercrest and attended by area superintendents (Blytheville and Manila), representatives from Greenway, Arkansas Northeastern College, APSRC, University of Arkansas Northeast Research and Extension Center, Crowley's Ridge, mayor of Wilson, Farm Bureau, and several local businessmen and farmers. All in attendance expressed a willingness to support this endeavor and were excited for the potential for

our area students as well as meeting the direct needs of the local economy. Questions revolved around the different academies and if admission to each of the academies had different requirements and if the status of charter, especially the virtual academy, changes the attendance requirement.

**6. Explain the educational need for the charter in light of the academic performance by the district, the campus proposed to be converted and the schools in the same feeder pattern as the proposed charter. Explain other significant factors. Provide the source for information presented.**

Rivercrest School District is a consolidated school district located in southern Mississippi County and consisting of over 300 square miles. RSD lies in a rural portion of the Arkansas Delta. The district has a population of approximately 1200 students from preschool through twelfth grade. The uniqueness of RSD is reflected by the diversity of communities it serves. Mississippi County contains 476,502 acres of farmland. Of those acres, 98% is used as cropland. According to United States Census data, 41.75% of the residents in Mississippi County are employed in fields related to agriculture, farming, production, and related fields. The Academies of Rivercrest High School intends to focus on trades and skills that are in high-demand for employment opportunities in the region.

Of our current student population in the Rivercrest School District, 72% are considered economically disadvantaged (ESEA), and 25.7% of all Mississippi County residents live in poverty (US Census Bureau).

The 2019 School Report for Rivercrest High School shows that RHS was below the state average in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. The 2018-2019 percent proficient in ELA for all students was 30.9%. The 2018-2019 percent proficient in mathematics for all students was 20.8%. The letter grade for RHS dropped from a C in 2018 to a D in 2019. Further investigation into the data shows that cohort groups are also performing below state averages.

Rivercrest High School struggles with many of the same problems that exist in many Mississippi Delta schools. Student engagement, remediation rates, test scores, attendance, graduation rates, college readiness, college completion rates, and post-secondary remediation rates are concerns held by parents, teachers, students, community members, and other stakeholders. In order to address these concerns, Rivercrest High School has partnered with Solution Tree to initiate Professional Learning Communities within the building. The implementation of the PLC process during the 2019-20 school year was a driving force behind the significant growth that was projected by NWEA Map interim tests. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we were not able to administer the state-required summative tests. Rivercrest superintendent, Sally Bennett, served on the Guiding Coalition for the DESE Back-to-School Playbook. That experience, along with the PLC initiative, rigorous course offerings in AP, honors, concurrent credit opportunities with Arkansas Northeastern College and Arkansas State University, regular courses, internship opportunities, support and guidance from Crowley's Ridge Educational Cooperative, school board

support and guidance, and community and industry resources aid in the successful implementation of the Academies of Rivercrest High School and continue student growth and engagement.

- 7. Describe the innovations that will distinguish the charter from other schools in the geographical area to be served by the charter. Consider noting if the innovations described are considered research-based best practices and/or if these innovations have been successful in other educational programs. The applicant may list as few or as many innovations as they deem appropriate for their proposed charter.**

The Academies at Rivercrest High School will focus on project-based instruction and learning. Project-based learning promotes collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. These strategies will aid students as they fulfill the goals and requirements of the Academies at Rivercrest High School.

#### **GOALS and REQUIREMENTS**

1. Completing a minimum of one program of study from multiple options within each Academy.
2. Completing at least one Career Development Event.
3. Completing a summative program project with their assigned team of learners that will be collaborative in nature.
4. Securing employment or an internship with an employer that is related to the student's Academy of emphasis.
5. Complete a minimum of one industry recognized certification in your program of study when applicable.
6. Completion of "7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens workshop. Preferably in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

The requirements were chosen specifically to correlate with the skills needed to succeed in any work environment. Implementation of With the proposed charter, flexibility will allow for experiential learning opportunities within the regular school environment as well as out in the community. Students would tour local industry. Students could meet with local industry leaders to learn about the importance of communication skills and then practicing those with literacy teachers. Students would meet with the same industry leaders to learn about STEM skills that are required or in high demand and then participate in math and science labs that address those essential skills. Students could, through their summative project, work with local industry and community members to address real-world situations within the community in real-time. This type of instruction and activity is designed to prepare students for civic and community engagement. Guest speakers, job site visits (both virtually and in person), and other career exploration activities will assist students in making connections between the classroom and work/life/post-secondary education.

- 8. In the following table, list the goals of the charter. The goals should be measurable and related to the mission statement. For each goal, include the instrument for measuring performance and the date the goals will be**

assessed.

GOAL	Instrument for Measuring Performance	When Attainment of the Goal Will Be Assessed
In years 2022-2027, the goal will be to increase the prior year's number of students meeting readiness by 5% each year.	Reading, English, Mathematics, and Science sections of the ACT Aspire.	Spring 2020 – set baseline data Assess goal progress each July (2022-2027) of charter.
The goal will be to increase the number of students reading on grade level.	Star interim assessments.	Spring 2020 – set baseline data Assess goal progress each May (2022-2027) of charter.
Increase the number of students leaving Algebra 1 ready for success in upper level math classes.	Star interim assessments.	Spring 2020 – set baseline data Assess goal progress each July (2022-2027) of charter.
A minimum of 90% of all students will earn at least one industry recognized certificate before graduation.	Industry-recognized certifications.	Assess goal progress each June (2022-2027) of charter.
Students will secure employment, an internship, college admission, or college placement in a skilled trades area upon graduation.	Student success plans.	Assess goal progress each July for a minimum of 4 years after graduation.

**9. Explain how the attainment of the goals will demonstrate that the charter is meeting the identified educational need for the school and fulfilling its mission.**

The goals are aligned to the vision and mission of the Academies at Rivercrest High School. By meeting these goals, students will have fulfilled successful learner outcomes and they will be ready to secure employment or to enroll in post-secondary degree or trade certification program.

1. By improving performance on state-mandated tests in reading and mathematics, students will be in a better academic position to perform at a high level on the ACT or Accuplacer test to gain access to additional educational opportunities.
2. By completing a program of study, students will learn skills in additional areas and they will understand the importance of making and actualizing a goal.
3. By obtaining industry-recognized certifications, students will be able to ensure employers and college admission staffs that they are qualified for the jobs or educational programs to which they apply.
4. By requiring students to secure employment or an internship during their time as a student gives the student real-world experience in time management, planning, scheduling, and communication.

**10. For elementary charter schools, provide a proposed daily schedule for all grade levels indicating the classes that will be provided for a one week time period. For secondary schools, provide required and elective courses for every grade level. If the school plans to phase in grade levels, include expansion grade levels by year with courses to be offered.**

**Language Arts (6 Units Required)**

<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Grades Offered</b>	<b>Credit Unit</b>
English 9	9-12	1
Honors English 9	9-12	1
English 10	9-12	1
Honors English 10	9-12	1
English 11	9-12	1
English 12	9-12	1
Professional Communications	10-12	1
Critical Reading	10-12	1
Composition I ENGL 1013	11-12	1
Composition II ENGL 1023	11-12	1

**Total Language Arts Units – 10****Science (5 Units Required)**

<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Grades Offered</b>	<b>Credit Unit</b>
Physical Science	9-12	1
Honors Physical Science	9-12	1
Biology	10-12	1
Honors Biology	10-12	1
AP Biology	10-12	1
Anatomy and Physiology	11-12	1
Chemistry	11-12	1
AP Chemistry	11-12	1
AP Physics	11-12	1

**Total Science Units – 9****Fine Arts (3.5 Units Required)**

<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Grades Offered</b>	<b>Credit Unit</b>
Sr High Band	9-12	1
Vocal Music	9-12	1
Music Appreciation	9-12	0.5
AP Music Theory	10-12	1
Art 1	9-12	1
Visual Art Appreciation	9-12	0.5
Digital Photography I	10-12	1
Digital Photogrphy II	11-12	1

**Total Fine Arts Units – 7**

### Social Studies (4 Units Required)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Credit Unit
Economics	9-12	0.5
Civics	9-12	0.5
World History	10-12	1
U.S. History	11-12	1
World Geography	10-12	1
AP US History	11-12	1
AP World History	10-12	1
African American History	9-12	0.5
Arkansas History	9-12	0.5

**Total Social Studies Units – 7**

### Mathematics (6 Units Required)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Credit Unit
Algebra I	9-12	1
Honors Algebra I	8-12	1
Geometry	10-12	1
Honors Geometry	9-12	1
Algebra II	10-12	1
Honors Algebra II	10-12	1
Honors Pre-Cal	11-12	1
Quantitative Literacy	9-12	1
Technical Math	10-12	1
AP Calculus	11-12	1
AP Computer Science Principles	11-12	1
Advanced Topics in Mathematics	11-12	1

**Total Mathematics Units – 12**

### Career and Technical Education (9 Units Required)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Credit Unit
Survey of Business	9-12	1
EAST I	9-12	1
EAST II	9-12	1
Family Consumer Science	9-12	1
Lifespan Development	9-12	1
Dynamics of Human Relationships	9-12	1
JROTC I	9-12	1
JROTC II	10-12	1
JROTC III	11-12	1

JROTC IV	12	1
UPSKILL Coding	9-12	1
Agri Business Management	10-12	1
Survey of Ag Systems	9-12	1
CASE Plant Science	10-12	1
Greenhouse Management	11-12	1
Advanced Ag Leadership and Communications	11-12	1
Youth Apprenticeship	9-12	1

**Total CTE Units - 16**

**Other Courses (4.5 Units Required)**

Course Name	Grades Offered	Credit Unit
Health and Wellness	9-12	0.5
Personal Fitness for Life	9-12	0.5
Physical Education	9-12	1
Yearbook	9-12	1
Psychology	9-12	0.5
Sociology	9-12	0.5
Abnormal Psychology	10-12	0.5
American Sign Language I	10-12	0.5
American Sign Language II	10-12	0.5

**Total Other Courses Units – 5.5**

High School Course Requirement Checklist	Units Listed
Language Arts (6 Units Required)	10
Science (5 Units Required)	9
Fine Arts (3.5 Units Required)	7
Social Studies (4 Units Required)	7
Mathematics (6 Units Required)	12
Career and Technical Education (9 Units Required)	16
Other (4.5 Units Required)	5.5
<b>Total (38 Required)</b>	<b>66.5</b>

**11. Describe the educational program to be offered by the charter school. Include a description of the curriculum, programs, and instructional methods used to support core classes. The curriculum should be aligned with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education curriculum standards.**

All courses will follow the appropriate Arkansas curriculum standards as set forth by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. Staff will utilize the PLC process to create a guaranteed and viable curriculum. PLC coaching will be provided by district leaders, building leaders, academic coaches, and Solution Tree. Ongoing support and professional development will be critical as the school implements levels of the High Reliability Schools Framework, Science of Reading, and more to meet the needs of our students.

Personalized learning pathways will be developed following Level 5 recommendations

in High Reliability Schools. Student Success Plan data will be used to place students in core literacy and math courses based on multiple data points. Placement will not be based solely on the grade level of the student. Additional data will be used to determine mastery of grade-level content. Students could potentially be accelerated through other course offerings such as Algebra 1 or Honors English 9.

The primary focus of the charter is to increase experiential learning opportunities for each and every student regardless of their educational path. Because of this focus, teachers will use a project-based instructional approach in all classes where appropriate.

Local industry leaders have emphasized the need for written and verbal communication skills among new employees. These local industry leaders would briefly explain this need to groups of students through live and virtual sessions. Teachers would then immediately follow up with explicit, targeted practice of these skills. Additionally, teachers will spend three days together each summer in order to align their instruction to ensure that all teachers have an instructional vision that is aligned and focused on student success.

**12. Describe how the key features of the program will be afforded.**

Specific Item, Program or Service	Estimated Cost	Funds Used to Pay for Item, Program or Service
Professional Development for teachers, instructors, administration and staff.	\$20,000.00	, District and federal funds will be used. CSP grant funds, if awarded, will be used. Once the charter school is open, all professional development costs will be paid by the district.
Furniture, fixtures, equipment, and computer hardware/software	\$250,000.00	If CSP grant funding is not awarded, district and federal funds will be used to purchase this material in phases over several years.
Salaries –non-certified adjunct instructors	\$15,000.00	Current Rivercrest High School teachers will be re-assigned to the Academies at Rivercrest High School. Non-certified adjunct instructors will be paid a flat rate of \$1000-\$2000 per course per semester they teach.
Travel related expenses	\$5,000.00	District and federal funds

(Staff) – travel to visit other charter schools.		will be used. CSP grant funds, if awarded, will be used.
Travel related expenses (Student) – Job site visits, college and career related events, educational opportunities at Arkansas Northeastern College	\$5,000.00	District and federal funds will be used. CSP grant funds, if awarded, will be used.

**13. Explain why a charter school is necessary to better meet student academic needs instead of a traditional district school.**

The charter model planned for Rivercrest connects the student to the community and opportunities within Mississippi County. It is our duty to help the students understand that a strong quality of life exists in their community and there are many local and global possibilities. Local business and industry depend on a pipeline of talent that will not leave and take their skills to another part of the state.

The Academies at Rivercrest High is committed to providing increased access to career exploration, providing support and care to our student population, and supporting students in developing a plan for future success. Community partnerships will help students realize post-secondary potential that allows them to stay in Mississippi County and thrive. It allows students to see the impact that Mississippi County business and industry has across the globe.

Personalized learning is the crux of the Academies. The goal is to meet each student’s individual learning needs by creating a unique learning environment that is project-based, career-focused, and self-paced. Charter school designation will allow us to reach more students in the community. Students who need to support their families financially, homebound students, students who have medical conditions or other health concerns, students who need to move at their own pace to accelerate their learning, students who would like to participate in industry level internships, and students who desire to complete college level coursework while students at the Academies at Rivercrest High School.

**14. Explain how the charter school will have more autonomy than traditional schools in the district in the following areas:**

**a. Employing personnel**

As needed, the leadership of the charter school will have the ability to select new employees, both certified and classified. The district will also seek a waiver in the charter application to allow the employment of Arkansas Qualified Teachers who are

not licensed teachers for the purpose of part-time adjunct instructors. We will use current members of the Rivercrest High School faculty. Any openings will be filled by the administrative team after using a team-driven application and interview process.

**b. Developing and controlling the charter school budget**

Following the recommendations of the school improvement committee, building-level leadership, and federal programs coordinator, the superintendent and the district leadership team will establish budget priorities for the school. Rivercrest is a fiscally sound district and will work collaboratively with building leadership to maintain the fiscal strength of the district.

**c. Managing day-to-day charter school operations**

Building-level leadership will have the autonomy to determine day-to-day routines and management needed for success at Academies at Rivercrest High.

**d. Developing and controlling the school calendar**

The calendar for the Academies at Rivercrest High School will mirror the calendar for the entire Rivercrest School District. However, the school improvement team will have input in conjunction with the district leadership team and district PPC to establish a school calendar that best meets the needs of students.

**e. Other areas of autonomy to be afforded to the charter**

School and district leadership will continually seek both long-term and short-term ways to serve students and their needs through increased program offerings, curriculum revision, and community/industry partnerships.

**15. Describe the school improvement plan by addressing the following:**

- a. Explain how and how often the licensed and non-licensed employees and parents of the students to be enrolled in the charter school will be involved in developing and implementing the school improvement plan, identifying performance criteria and evaluating the effectiveness of the improvement plan.**

The school improvement plan will be evaluated at least annually to ensure that outcomes are still aligned with the vision and mission of the school, make changes and additions to academic programs, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall charter school. The evaluation will include the superintendent, federal programs coordinator, faculty members, students, parents/guardians, community members, and industry professionals to ensure that all perspectives are represented and considered. After the evaluation, the plan will be submitted to the school board to review and approve. It will also be posted on the district website for review by parents and

community members.

- b. Describe a plan for school improvement that addresses how the charter school will improve student learning and meet the stated educational goals.**

Strengths of the district include PLCs, use of data in decision making, community partnerships, and the belief that every student can be successful. The current and future school improvement plans will address the needs of students through the following:

1. Outline of goals and expected outcomes based on student needs.
2. Identify supports and interventions that will be provided to the students.
3. Identify professional development needs for staff members.
4. Define the timeline for monitoring and evaluating interventions for effectiveness.
5. Evaluate and modify the family and community engagement plan annually.
6. Develop and implement a research-based literacy plan to meet the needs of our students.

- 16. Describe the ongoing process that will be used to ensure all curriculum materials used in the educational program are aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards as adopted, and periodically revised, by the State Board of Education.**

The alignment of curriculum at Rivercrest falls within the scope of Professional Learning Communities. A team of lead teachers, instructional facilitator, and principal provide a regular schedule, structure, and protocols for the work of PLCs. The work of PLCs is supported by lead-teachers, building-level leadership, and district level leaders. Curriculum will be evaluated throughout the school year and at the conclusion of each school year to ensure that we are meeting our intended student learning outcomes. Curriculum revision and evaluation has been a key component of the PLC at Work process with Solution Tree. Additionally, teachers will spend three days together each summer in order to align their instruction to ensure that all teachers have an instructional vision that is aligned and focused on student success.

- 17. Describe the manner in which the school will make provisions for the following student services, even in each area for which a waiver is requested:**

- a. Guidance program**

Currently, one full-time counselor serves students in grades 9-12 and one career and college coach serves grades 7-12. The counselor and career coach will participate in a PLC to ensure the alignment of the guidance program. The district has 3 full-time counselors and a college and career coach. Students will be served through the school counselor located on the campus of Rivercrest High School. The career and college coach will work with students to develop student success plans and transition

plans.

**b. Health services**

Students will continue to have access to health services. A school nurse is shared between the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade building and the high school building. The nurse is stationed in the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade building.

**c. Media center**

Students of the charter would be served and continue to have access to the media center located in the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade building.

**d. Special education, including appropriate state assessments for special education students**

All students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be provided special education services. Certified teachers will work with students individually, in small groups, and indirectly, as stated in their IEP. Students receiving special education services will continue to take state-mandated assessments. The Rivercrest School District will comply with all special education regulations. Current services are in compliance with all state and federal requirements and will continue with charter status.

**e. Dyslexia services**

The current dyslexia protocols will continue into the proposed charter. Students will be served by a qualified dyslexia interventionist if, after screening, it is determined that the student displays tendencies of dyslexia.

**f. Transportation**

Transportation to school, from school, field trips, to Arkansas Northeastern College, etc. will be provided by Rivercrest School District. The Rivercrest School District will comply with all transportation regulations.

**g. Alternative education**

Currently, Rivercrest has an ALE site on campus that serves students in grades 7-12. ALE programming will include opportunities in the key programmatic areas of the charter. As students continue to be exposed to these opportunities, we believe that it will entice our at-risk students to re-engage with school.

**h. English Language Learner (ELL) instruction, including appropriate state assessment for English Language Proficiency**

Using our current resources and programs of study, the Academies will continue to

provide instruction and supports to English Language Learners to maximize academic success. Instruction will be individualized using their student success plans to assist students and teachers in the fulfillment of student goals.

**i. Gifted and talented program**

Utilizing students' success plans and personalized learning plan, the gifted and talented teacher will coordinate appropriate services for gifted and talented students. Multiple advanced placement courses and concurrent credit courses will be available to Academy students.

**18. Describe the enrollment criteria and student admission, recruitment and selection processes for the proposed public charter school.**

The Academies at Rivercrest High School will remain the only source of instruction for students in grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve. Therefore, the school will enroll every eligible student who seeks admission, including students who enroll by legal transfer or school choice. The enrollment cap of 500 should provide ample room for all students seeking admission. If future growth nears the enrollment cap, Rivercrest School District would petition the state charter authorizer for an increase in the enrollment cap. If the petition is denied, Rivercrest would use a random number generator to determine simple random sampling. Siblings of currently enrolled students would be given priority. Students enrolling under school choice or legal transfer would be accepted according to the statutory provisions that govern those areas.

**19. It is affirmed that a random, anonymous student selection method will be utilized in the event that more students apply for admission to the public charter school than can be accommodated under the terms of the charter, except as allowed for in Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306 (14)(C).**

Yes

No

**20. Name any district personnel, and/or leaders of the proposed charter who have any prior involvement in the operation of one or more other charter schools. Describe their experience.**

Superintendent Sally Bennett – Mrs. Bennett was the Principal at the Academic Center of Excellence in Osceola and later served as Assistant Superintendent of the Osceola School District.

21. Summarize the job descriptions of the school director and other key personnel by completing the information fields below for each position. Specify the salary range, qualifications, and job duties to be met by professional employees (administrators, teachers, and support staff) of the program.

<b>ADMINISTRATORS</b> Superintendent/Director, CEO/CFO/COO, Principal, etc.	
<b>Reports to</b>	Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent
<b>Salary Range</b>	\$59,000 - \$71,500
<b>Education Required</b>	Master's degree in Educational Leadership or equivalent
<b>Certification Required</b>	Valid building administrator license for high school grade levels
<b>Experience Required</b>	At least 5 years as a classroom teacher.
<b>Job Duties</b> List up to 5 key duties	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supervise and evaluate instructional staff and programs to ensure increased student achievement.</li> <li>2. Analyze student achievement data and collaborate with instructional staff to make adjustments to curriculum and instruction to promote student achievement.</li> <li>3. Maintain a culture of high standards and expectations for all students and instructional staff.</li> <li>4. Participate in and provide effective professional development.</li> <li>5. Implement the mission and vision of the district and school.</li> </ol>

<b>TEACHERS</b> Classroom, Special Education, Gifted and Talented, Instructional Facilitator, Technology Specialist, etc.	
<b>Reports to</b>	Principal and Assistant Principal
<b>Salary Range</b>	\$35,300 - \$51,050
<b>Education Required</b>	Bachelor's degree or higher.
<b>Certification Required</b>	Valid teaching license or enrollment in state-approved alternative licensing program.
<b>Experience Required</b>	none

<b>Job Duties</b> List up to 5 key duties	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborate with PLC to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment with Arkansas standards and frameworks.</li> <li>2. Analyze student data to ensure student learning at the mastery level.</li> <li>3. Incorporate project-based learning into unit planning and instruction.</li> <li>4. Assist with facilitating internships and collaboration with business/industry leaders.</li> <li>5. Participate in professional development.</li> </ol>
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<b>SUPPORT STAFF</b> Secretary, Nurse, Bus Driver, etc.	
<b>Reports to</b>	Administrative staff -
<b>Salary Range</b>	\$16,450 - \$33,500
<b>Education Required</b>	Varies by specific position
<b>Certification Required</b>	Varies by position
<b>Experience Required</b>	None
<b>Job Duties</b> List up to 5 key duties	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that facilities, buses, and office communications provide the environment necessary for maximum student engagement.</li> </ol>

**22. It is affirmed that the Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Financial Management System, provided by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, shall be the original and official accounting systems of record for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for all financial transaction records and reporting (including, but not limited to, payroll processing and wage and tax reporting to the IRS ATRS, DFA, etc., accounts payable, fixed assets, personnel budgeting, and budgeting). APSCN shall be used to record all private, as well as, local, state, and federal revenues and expenditures.**

Yes

No

**23. It is affirmed that the Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Student Management System, provided by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, shall be the original and official student management system for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for all student management areas (including, but not limited to, systems administration, demographics, attendance, scheduling, report cards, discipline, medical, Cognos reporting, and Statewide Information System reporting).**

Yes

No

**24. Describe the facilities to be used. Give the present use of the facility.**

The Academies at Rivercrest High School will use the current facilities that house the current Rivercrest High School as well as facilities at Arkansas Northeastern College for skilled trade classes.

**25. The facility will be in compliance with all requirements for accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and all other state and federal laws and local zoning ordinances.**

Yes

No

**26. If the facility does not currently meet these requirements, provide a list of items that will need to be addressed to bring the facility into compliance. Also include a statement of permissible uses for the facility from the local zoning authority, and whether there are any alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility.**

Our current facility meets the requirements. Rivercrest School District is located in a rural area of southern Mississippi County. There are no alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility.

**27. Describe the manner in which the school will make provisions for food services. State whether the proposed charter school will apply to participate in the federal National School Lunch program or other federal nutrition programs.**

Rivercrest will elect to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) beginning the 2020-2021 school year where all students in the district will be provided a breakfast and a lunch at no charge. At minimum, it will continue through the 2024-2025 academic year. With 72% of the student population qualifying for free/reduced lunch programs, Rivercrest will continue to ensure all students, especially students from homes of poverty, have access to the nutrition programs on campus.

**28. Explain how the success of the charter school will be ensured if changes in leadership occur.**

The success of the Academies at Rivercrest High School is not determined by any one superintendent, administrator, or school board. This charter is designed to be an integral part of the future of Mississippi County. The local community and industry leaders share in the mission of the charter and the vision of what education can and will be for our students. They see the needs in our community and are committed to providing the educational experiences needed not to only prepare our students for the ever changing world, but to prepare them to meet the needs of Mississippi County. The mission and vision is focused, feasible, necessary, and supported by the community. The Academies at Rivercrest High School has clarity of direction regardless of a change in leadership.

Rivercrest School District has established a building leadership team. This team consists of department heads, teachers who are certified as building administrators, and teachers who are currently enrolled in a program to obtain building administration licensure. These teachers have attended professional development, participated in book studies, and other community events to develop their leadership skills. As leadership positions open, members of this group will have skills that prepare them to step into leadership roles.

**29. Describe the potential impact of the proposed public charter school on the efforts of affected public school district(s) to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.**

Rivercrest School District will continue to operate in compliance with all applicable Arkansas laws and will continue to operate in a manner that maintains a desegregated school district and does not impede any district's ability to maintain a desegregated school district. Rivercrest School District is not under any court orders concerning the desegregation of schools.

30. Complete the following table showing all sections of Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated (Education Code) and State Board of Education rules, including the *Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts*, from which the public charter school seeks to be exempted in order to meet the goals of the school. Identify the specific statute, rule, or standard requested to be waived by title and number if applicable. Provide a rationale for each waiver requested that explains how the waiver will assist the charter in achieving the previously stated goals (see prompt #4), and explain how those goals will be achieved if the waiver is not granted.

<b>Waiver Topic #1</b>	Teacher Licensure and Certification
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	6-15-1004 Qualified Teachers in Every Public School Classroom 6-17-309 Employment and Assignment Certification Waiver 6-17-401 Teacher's License Requirement
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	4-D.1 Teacher Licensure Requirements 15.03.1 Licensure and Renewal
<b>ADE Rules</b>	Rules Governing Educator Licensure – 2-1.0, 2-2.0, 2-3.0, 2-4.0
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	<p>This waiver is requested in order to allow the Academies at Rivercrest High School to hire industry professionals who hold industry-recognized certifications but do not hold an Arkansas Teaching License for the positions of non-core subject classroom teaching positions only on a part-time basis. Any courses or instruction provided to special education students will be supported by a fully licensed special education teacher. If the teacher is hired for full-time employment, they would have to meet requirements for licensure in the state of Arkansas. Any individual hired as a result of this waiver will be required to successfully complete a criminal background check and child maltreatment registry check.</p> <p>If the waiver is not granted, it will limit our goal of providing instruction by those that are experts in the field.</p>

<b>Waiver Topic #2</b>	Planned Instructional Day
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	6-16-102 School Day

<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	1-A.5.2 Curriculum and Instruction
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	With each student having a personalized learning path, Rivercrest School District is requesting a waiver of the Planned Instructional Day requirements. With options for acceleration, enhancement, and/or enrichment that meet all curriculum requirements, instruction may be provided in less than 6 hours per day or 30 hours per week. However, the full 6 hours per day or 30 hours per week will still be offered.

<b>Waiver Topic #3</b>	Clock Hours
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	1-A.2 Curriculum and Instruction
<b>ADE Rules</b>	Section 14.03
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	By providing relevant and meaningful instruction in various value-added diploma pathways, the teaching of simultaneous and/or embedded courses, and to allow the integration of graduation credit courses with other courses as necessary, Rivercrest requests the seat time waiver. The granting of this waiver will not create a dilution of the coursework required to meet all necessary standards and frameworks for the affected courses. Rivercrest is not seeking to waive any graduation requirements

<b>Waiver Topic #4</b>	Teacher Minimum Salaries
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	6-17-2403 Minimum Teacher Compensation Schedule 6-17-902 Arkansas Teachers' Salary Law 6-17-919 Arkansas Teachers' Salary Law
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	6.01, 6.02, 6.03 Licensed Employee Minimum Salary
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	Any adjunct instructor hired to provide part-time instruction will be paid a flat rate between \$1000 and

	<p>\$2000 per course per semester. Since these positions are part-time, Rivercrest requests this waiver of the minimum teacher salary requirements. This flexibility will allow us to recruit and hire instructors that are experts in the field they are teaching. Nothing in this waiver should imply or assume that this waiver of the Arkansas minimum teacher salary requirements will apply to full-time, traditional classroom teachers.</p> <p>If this waiver is not granted, Rivercrest would be unable to afford to pay skilled trade instructors.</p>
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<b>Waiver Topic #5</b>	Teacher Professional Development
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	6-17-704 Professional Development Plan
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	4-G.1 Professional Development
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	<p>This waiver is requested for part-time adjunct instructors because the professional development they receive will be completed through the industry-specific certification programs in which they are employed.</p> <p>This waiver request does not apply to traditional classroom teachers. Likewise, this waiver does not apply to the required training in Child Maltreatment Mandated Reporter (6.04.1), Human Trafficking, Parent Involvement (6.04.2), or Teen Suicide Awareness and Prevention (6.04.3).</p> <p>If this waiver is not granted, the 36 hour professional development requirement would deter many otherwise qualified people from applying for adjunct employment.</p>

<b>Waiver Topic #6</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

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<b>Waiver Topic #7</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #8</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #9</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #10</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	

<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #11</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #12</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #13</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #14</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	

<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #15</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #16</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #17</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #18</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	

<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #19</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #20</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attach documentation to demonstrate that each of the following requirements of Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-302 was met:
  - a. The notice of the public hearing was published on a weekly basis for at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the date of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the school district in which the school will likely be located.
  - b. The notice of the public hearing was not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.
  - c. The last publication date of the notice was no less than seven days prior to the public meeting.