

**Arkansas Department of
Education**

**District Conversion Charter School
2018 Application**

SCORING RUBRIC

PRE-APPLICATION MATERIALS

The Arkansas Department of Education requires that all applicants submit a Letter of Intent, outlining a general description of the proposed charter school.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A Letter of Intent was filed with Arkansas Department of Education on time and included all the necessary information

Fully Responsive

PART B EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Arkansas Department of Education requires all applicants to include an executive summary.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A mission statement (with content to be evaluated for Prompt #2 of Part C); and
- The key programmatic features of the proposed charter school

Fully Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Consider providing a more succinct statement that captures the school mission.
- Explain how the mission statement was developed.
- Describe the transportation plan to provide students and/or parents access to the weekly orientations.
- Provide the online screener that will be used once students are enrolled.
- Confirm that the community projects will be compulsory for all students.

Applicant Response:

- Inspire Students...Prepare Graduates...Engage Community is the mission of Mena Public Schools. To inspire students, Mena High School and Mena Middle School implemented Google Classroom and blended learning in core subjects this year. Mena Public Schools' focus will be to prepare graduates for success in college or career tech paths by providing rigorous curriculum.
- During public meetings, school personnel strive to inform community members concerning education initiatives such as blended learning and a virtual academy. Community comments and suggestions are always encouraged and recorded. The district developed this mission by disaggregating test data; student, teacher, and parent surveys; enrollment numbers; and public meetings. The need to reach students choosing to Home School was very evident from home school data.
- Parents will be offered the opportunity to bring their child/children to the Mena Public Schools virtual academy or participate in a live meeting via the Internet. Transportation to Mena Public Schools will be the responsibility of the parent. The district will be responsible for transportation to field trips.
- The district plans to use an online curriculum company for the first two years. The company provides online assessments through targeted, standards-based fixed-form and adaptive assessments. These assessments offer high-quality data that help identify what students know and where learning breaks down throughout the school year. This will allow educators to access, analyze, and take action on data.
- Community projects will be incorporated into appropriate units of study. Students must participate in the community projects in order to receive full credit for the unit of study. Field trips may be recorded and students unable to travel will have the opportunity to view the recorded trip.

Remaining Concerns:

- The following statement provides additional concerns, "Field trips may be recorded, and students unable to travel will have the opportunity to view the recorded trip."

PART C NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED CHARTER

C1: PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS

All districts must conduct a public hearing before applying for a district conversion or limited charter school to assess support for the school's establishment. Applicants are asked both to document the logistics of the hearing and to include a narrative of the hearing results.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A thorough description of the results of the public hearing;
- Evidence of public support exhibited at the hearing;
- Documentation of required notice published to garner public attention to the hearing; and
- Documentation of required notices about the hearing being sent to the community, certified school personnel, and parents of all students enrolled at the public school for which the school district initiated the application

Fully Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions

- Describe the plan to increase parent and community support.

Applicant Response:

- Parents will help develop the Student Success Plan and receive weekly updates on their child's progress toward goals stated in his/her plan through face-to-face meetings or live online meetings. Parents will be given opportunities to participate in family assignments and community projects along with their student. Communication with parents on a weekly basis will promote parent involvement.
- Establishing community/business partnerships will build community support. Asking community based clubs to allow students to work alongside club members would build community support. Field trips and community projects will improve student understanding of community needs and provide students a chance to practice good citizenship skills. Involving business leaders in units of study on careers would allow students to make choices in future career goals.

C2: EDUCATIONAL NEED

The Educational Need section should explain the need for a charter school in the proposed location and the innovative educational option offered by the charter school.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Valid, reliable, and verifiable data substantiate an educational need for the charter; and
- Innovations that would distinguish the charter from other schools

Fully Responsive

C3: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

The Academic Achievement Goals section should define the performance expectations for students and the school as whole and support the charter's mission.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Specific goals in reading and mathematics that are clear, measurable, and attainable;
- Valid and reliable assessment tools to be used to measure the goals; and
- Attainment of the goals demonstrate that the charter is meeting the identified educational need for the school and fulfilling its mission

Fully Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- **Provide goals for science.**
- **Explain the rationale for only having 75% of students to report on their PBL experiences.**
- **Explain the rationale for selecting 60% as the proficiency threshold for the goals related to the state mandated assessments.**
- **In regards to the goal related to the ACT exam, explain why the baseline target year is 2021-2022 and indicate a threshold for the annual increase.**
- **Verify that the SSP team will consist of student, teachers, parent, and administrators.**
- **Explain the rationale for not having a goal tied directly to the achievement of economically disadvantaged students given the description of educational need for the charter in response to Prompt #2.**

Applicant Response:

- PCVA students will perform with proficiency in science. Annual ACT Aspire Science assessments will be given to students in grades 3-10. Performance levels will be compared to the National percentage of Science readiness levels. Sixty percent of PCVA students will score ready or exceeding in science.
- The district expectation will be that 100% of PCVA students will participate in the PBL experience. A realistic benchmark of 75% will be set for students to report on their PBL experience.
- At the present time, the state has not established Annual Measurable Objectives. Until the state establishes proficiency thresholds, the district set PCVA percentages at 60% which is higher than the 2017 state averages.
- The baseline needs to be amended to 2020-2021 to establish a 3-year average. The threshold for annual increase will be 10%.
- The SSP will be made up of students, teachers, parents, and administrators.
- Our goal is for economically disadvantaged PCVA students to reach the achieving level in Literacy, Math, Science, English, and writing. The target will be an annual 5% decrease between all students and economically disadvantaged students scores.

Remaining Concerns:

- The rationale for only having 75% of students to report on their PBL experiences remains unclear.

C4: SCHEDULE OF COURSES OFFERED

The Schedule of Courses Offered section should describe the schedules for a week at the elementary level and courses offered at each grade at the secondary level.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Evidence that the charter school meets minimum state requirements of courses offered at appropriate grade levels

Partially Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Verify the number of required courses for graduation.
- Clarify how and when oral communications will be offered.
- Confirm that physical education will be a full credit course.
- Provide an 8th grade curriculum.

- Confirm the understanding that oral geography is not currently an approved course and that the charter, if approved, will work with the ADE to receive course approval or otherwise provide an appropriate revision.
- Confirm an understanding that Career Orientation, Keyboarding, and Coding are required to be taught the 7th or 8th grade and describe when those courses will be offered.
- Confirm an understanding that physical education is required for 7th grade and describe when that course will be offered.
- Confirm an understanding that physical activity/recess is required for K-5 and describe when and how that will be offered.

Applicant Response:

- Students who graduate from Mena High School are required to have 23 credits.
- Oral Communications may be taken at grades 9-12 or when a student has completed course work to be considered a ninth grader. The online curriculum provider offers Oral Communications and the course may be offered through Virtual Arkansas.
- Physical Education will count as a half credit and Health and Safety will count as a half credit. Health and Safety will be offered separately from Physical Education along with an additional Physical Education period.
- Grade 8 curriculum will be offered in 2018-2019 and consists of Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Health, and Career Orientation with a six week unit of study on Coding. Keyboarding will also be offered in Grade 8.
- Mena School District understands that oral geography is not currently an approved course and if the charter is approved will work with ADE to receive course approval or provide an appropriate revision.
- Physical Education is required for seventh grade and 40 minutes of PE will be offered through the online curriculum provider.
- Physical activity is required for K-5 and will be offered through the online curriculum provider.

Remaining Concerns:

- It remains unclear when and how K-5 recess will be offered.
- It remains unclear if Oral Communications will be offered for the full year or just for one semester.
- It remains unclear that physical education will be taught in the 8th grade.
- It remains unclear that Arkansas history will be taught for a semester class in either the 7th or 8th grade.

C5: PROGRAMS AND METHODS TO SUPPORT CORE CLASSES

The Programs and Methods to Support Core Classes section should describe the curriculum for core classes.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A clear description of curriculum, including programs and instructional methods to be used in core classes; and
- An explanation of how the district will pay for all costs associate with the curriculum

Fully Responsive

C6: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Educational Program section should describe the educational foundation of the school and the teaching and learning strategies that will be employed.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A clear description of the proposed educational program, including but not limited to the foundational educational philosophy and curricular and instructional strategies to be employed;
- An educational program with ample resources to ensure that students achieve academic goals and excel;
- A description of the grade levels and maximum enrollment, by year, if the charter plans to grow over time; and
- A clear explanation of how the key program features will be afforded

Fully Responsive

C7: CHARTER MODEL

Evaluation Criteria:

- Specific reasons why it is critical for the district to have a charter school rather than implementing the plan outlined in the application on an existing traditional campus

Fully Responsive

C8: AUTONOMY

Evaluation Criteria:

- A clear description of all the ways in which the charter school will have more autonomy than traditional schools in the district, specifically pertaining to personnel, budget, day-to-day operations, and the school calendar

Fully Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Provide additional information regarding the certification of teachers once the hiring process begins.

Applicant Response:

- PCVA personnel will follow the hiring procedures of the Mena School District. All licensed teachers will complete an application and be interviewed by district administration. The district will seek certified teachers with appropriate licensure levels/subject areas as the PCVA staff increases.

Remaining Concerns:

- It remains unclear why the applicant is requesting teacher licensure waivers if the applicant plans to hire licensed teachers.

C9: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Evaluation Criteria:

- Meaningful and realistic ways to involve licensed employees and parents in developing and implementing the school improvement plan, identifying performance criteria, and evaluating the effectiveness of the improvement plan; and
- A plan that addresses how the charter school will improve student learning and meet the state education goals

Fully Responsive

C10: CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

The Curriculum Alignment section should define the process by which the charter will ensure that the curriculum aligns with Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and state standards.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Evidence that the applicant has a process to ensure all curriculum materials, used in the educational program, align with the Arkansas Department of Education’s curriculum frameworks and the Common Core State Standards

Fully Responsive

C11: STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services section should describe how the school will address specific services for its student body.

Evaluation Criteria:

A description of the ways in which the following services will be provided to students **even in each area for which a waiver is requested:**

- A guidance program that will serve all students;
- A health services program that will serve all students;
- A plan for a media center for use by all students;
- Sound plans for educating special education students that reflect the full range of programs and services required to provide such students with a high quality education;
- A transportation plan that will serve all **eligible** students;
- An alternative education plan for eligible students, including those determined to be at-risk and to offer access to one or more approved Alternative Learning Environments;
- A plan to serve students who are English language learners; and
- Plans for a gifted and talented program for eligible students

Fully Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions

- **Confirm that the charter, if approved, will comply with all state and federal special education provisions.**
- **Confirm that a licensed special education teacher will oversee the individualized education plan (IEP) process and provide instruction to students with IEP’s.**
- **Explain who will provide guidance and support to the special education teacher on required documentation and implementation of student IEP’s.**
- **Confirm that a full continuum of special education services will be provided.**
- **Confirm that special education students will be provided with all allowable accommodations on state assessments.**

- Describe how students with dyslexia will be accommodated and explain who will oversee those accommodations.
- Explain how transportation will be provided for students for the weekly face-to-face meetings.
- Provide a more detailed description of the Alternative Learning Plan.
- Confirm that Mena School District plans to obtain a waiver of Gifted and Talented student services for PCVA through this application process and not for the entire district through the Act 1240 District Waiver Request process.
- Confirm the understanding that students must be identified by a licensed Gifted and Talented teacher for the Gifted and Talented program.
- Confirm the understanding that Gifted and Talented services are more than acceleration and explain how the social and emotional needs of Gifted and Talented students will be met.
- Confirm that the vendor will be aligned with the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks.

Applicant Response:

- PCVA will comply with all state and federal special educations provisions.
- A licensed special education teacher will oversee the individualized education plan (IEP) process and provide instruction to students with IEP's.
- The LEA Special Education Supervisor will provide to the special education teacher on required documentation and implementation of student IEP's.
- A full continuum of special education services will be provided.
- Special education students will be provided with all allowable accommodation on state assessments.
- The district dyslexia specialist will provide screenings and services to students who qualify.
- Parents will provide transportation to the weekly face-to-face meetings or attend the meetings through live online options.
- The onsite Alternative Education program offers curriculum through blended learning opportunities using Google Classroom. Classroom teachers offer face-to-face learning opportunities and facilitate students. A Student Action Plan similar to the Student Success Plan is created for each student by a committee of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Life skills, such as cooperation and social etiquette, are taught as part of this program. Behavior goals, such as attendance and job related skills, are also included. Students work toward meeting the goals set up in their Student Action Plan and earn rewards when they attain certain levels in their plan.
- Mena School District plans to ask for a waiver of Gifted and Talented student services for PCVA through our application and not for the entire district. The district will offer G/T services to PCVA students and parents who want to participate in the district's established G/T program.
- PCVA students will be identified by a licensed Gifted and Talented teacher.
- Gifted and Talented services are more than acceleration and gifted students often have social and emotional needs that must be met. The district provides time for

G/T students to work together on collaborative projects during the school day and allows students to choose projects from a wide variety of topics. Quiz bowl competitions are organized at the school level as well as the educational cooperative level where G/T students from different schools compete against one another. Gifted and Talented students have the opportunity to participate in science fairs at the Dequeen Mena Education Cooperative. These activities promote the development of social skills and allow G/T students to spend time with their peers.

- The vendor confirmed the PCVA curriculum will be aligned with the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks.

Remaining Concerns:

- It remains unclear if a Gifted and Talented waiver is needed given that a licensed teacher will identify and provide services to the G/T students.
- It remains unclear how fully virtual students will be identified and placed with the current onsite ALE program.

C12: ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

The Annual Progress Reports section should define how the academic progress of individual students and the school as a whole will be measured, analyzed, and reported.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A timeline for data compilation and completion of an annual report to parents, the community and the authorizer, **separate from the district's annual report to the public**, that outlines the school's progress; and
- A plan for dissemination of the annual report to appropriate stakeholders

Fully Responsive

C13: ENROLLMENT CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

The Enrollment Criteria and Procedures section should describe how the school will attract and enroll its student body, including any criteria for admission and enrollment. Applicants must also provide assurances for a random, anonymous lottery selection process.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A student recruitment plan that will provide equal opportunity for all parents and students to learn about and apply to the school;
- An enrollment and admissions process that is open, fair, and in accordance with applicable law; and
- A process for, and a guarantee of, a random, anonymous lottery process should there be more student applications than can be accommodated under the terms of the charter

Partially Responsive

Concerns and Additional Questions

- Confirm that enrollment is not dependent upon students and parents meeting with PCVA staff and signing a commitment letter.
- Provide a step-by-step description of the random and anonymous process that will be used should there be more student application than can be accommodated under the terms of the charter.

Applicant Response:

- Initial enrollment will not be dependent upon students and parents meeting with PCVA staff and signing a commitment letter but will be determined on a first come, first serve basis. In the event that the enrollment cap is reached, selection of students for the virtual academy will be attained through a random and anonymous process.
- Applications to attend PCVA will be posted on the Mena Public Schools website, sent home with interested students, and made available at each campus office. Deadlines for submitting applications will be printed on the application. Each application received at the Central Office will be date and time stamped and numbered in order of the date it was received. Parents will be notified of acceptance via the email address provided in the application and given directions for enrollment procedures along with deadlines for enrollment. After the enrollment deadline ends, parents will be contacted by the PCVA coordinator up to three times to confirm the parent's intent to enroll their child/children. If no contact is made within the three attempts, the applicant's space will be filled with the student application next in line. Once students have successfully enrolled in PCVA, they will be accepted the following year and each year after. They will not be subjected to reapplying unless they drop before the end of a year. Current PCVA students' siblings will be accepted as well. The remainder of available spots will be open to new applicants. If there are more new applicants than PCVA has space for, any opening that occurs will be filled

according to the time and date stamped on submitted applications. This would eliminate the need for an anonymous, random lottery.

Remaining Concerns:

- It remains unclear if the applicant plans to use a random and anonymous process in the event that the charter is oversubscribed.

C14: PRIOR CHARTER INVOLVEMENT

Evaluation Criteria:

- A complete Prior Charter Involvement Template for each individual connected with the proposed charter; and
- Accurate data in each Prior Charter Involvement Template, including active links to assessment data

Fully Responsive

C15: STAFFING PLAN

The Staffing Plan section should describe the job duties of the school administrator(s) and other key personnel. This section should also describe the professional qualifications which will be required of employees.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A job description for the school administrators and other key personnel, including but not limited to counselors and teachers;
- An outline of the professional qualifications required for administrators, teachers, counselors, and others; and
- A staffing plan that clearly outlines both the types and numbers of positions to be filled at the school and salary scales for such positions

Fully Responsive

C16: ARKANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOL COMPUTER NETWORK ASSURANCES

The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Assurances section should provide documentation of the applicant's understanding of and participation in the required state finance and educational data reporting system.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Assurance that the charter school will participate in APSCN and will comply with all state statutory requirements regarding the APSCN finance and educational data reporting system

Fully Responsive

C17: FACILITIES

The Facilities section should identify and describe the facilities to be used by the school and any changes to be made to the facilities.

Evaluation Criteria:

- An identified facility appropriate to meet the needs of the school over the term of its charter;
- A realistic plan for remodeling or adapting a facility, if necessary, to ensure that it is appropriate and adequate for the school's program, the school's targeted population, and the public;
- Evidence that the school understands the costs of securing and improving a facility and has access to the necessary resources to fund the facility plan; and
- A sound plan for continued operation, maintenance, and repair of the facility

Fully Responsive

C18: FOOD SERVICES

This section should describe how the school will address food services for its student body.

Evaluation Criteria:

- A food service plan that will serve all eligible students; and
- A management plan that reflects a clear understanding of federal law and requirements if the charter school plans to participate in the National School Lunch program

Fully Responsive

C19: SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAM

The Sustainability section should describe the applicant's plan to ensure continued success of the charter school over time.

Evaluation Criteria:

- The plan to ensure the sustainability of the charter in the future

Fully Responsive

C20: IMPACT ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Desegregation Assurances section should describe the applicant's understanding of applicable statutory and regulatory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Assurance that the charter school will comply with all applicable federal and state statutory and regulatory requirements regarding the creation and maintenance of desegregated public schools; and
- An outline of the potential impact of the proposed charter school on those desegregation efforts already in place in affected public school districts

See Legal Review

C21: WAIVERS

The Waivers section should discuss all waivers requested from local or state law.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Each law, rule, and standard by title, number, and description for which a waiver is requested;
- A rationale for each waiver request; and
- An explanation of the way that each waiver would assist in implementing the educational program of the charter and/or fulfilling the charter's mission

See Legal Review

Polk County Virtual Academy 2017 District Conversion Application

1. School Year

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106

Due to the any time, any place, and any pace availability of on-line learning, this waiver from the school calendar and schedule will meet the needs of individual students. Students who need extended time to complete their classes will be accommodated as well as students who can accelerate their learning.

Legal Comments: Will school be operating on a 12-month calendar? If so, a waiver of this section is not necessary as § 6-10-108 already allows for a 12-month calendar.

Applicant Response: *PCVA will operate on the same nine month calendar as Mena Public Schools.*

Remaining Legal Issues: ADE Legal is unsure why a waiver of this section is necessary if the conversion charter school will be operating on the same calendar as Mena Public Schools.

2. School Day

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-102

Sections 10.01.4 and 14.03 of the Standards for Accreditation

Individual student knowledge and skills determine the amount of time needed to complete courses. With on-line learning options, students can accelerate or pace their learning to fit individual needs.

Legal Comments: None

3. Mandatory Attendance

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-211

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-213(a)(2)

ADE Rules Governing Mandatory Attendance for Students in Grades 9-12

Students enrolled in our on-line curriculum need the opportunity for self-paced learning and a choice to learn outside the traditional brick and mortar school. Students will have the opportunity to choose the hours and days to complete their classes that best fits their personal needs. Completion of courses will validate the student's efforts to progress from one level to the next level of learning.

Legal Comments: Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-211 has been repealed so a waiver is not necessary.

Polk County Virtual Academy

Red=Waivers not previously requested, need additional discussion, or have remaining issues

Green=Waivers previously granted, no remaining issues

Information provided by Applicant is in italics.

Additionally, § 6-18-213(a)(2) no longer requires the visual presence of students for attendance (Act 867 of 2017) making this waiver no longer necessary for Applicant to achieve its stated goals.

Applicant Response: *The Mena School District is no longer requesting a waiver for mandatory attendance for students in grades 9-12.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None

4. Gifted and Talented Education

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-42-101

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-2208(c)(6)

Sections 18, 18.01, and 18.02 of the Standards for accreditation

ADE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards

The Mena School District will offer Gifted and Talented services to any PCVA student whose parent request the student be tested for the program. If the student is identified as G/T, the student may attend the grade-level appropriate program.

Legal Comments: A waiver of § 6-42-101 is not necessary, but a waiver of § 6-42-109 is necessary in order to effectuate this waiver.

Applicant Response: *The Mena School District will report annually to the Arkansas Department of Education the extent to which it is providing educational opportunities specifically designed to meet the educational needs of Gifted and Talented children. A waiver from §6-42-109 is no longer being requested.*

Remaining Legal Issues: Only a waiver of § 6-42-109 is necessary to effectuate these waivers, not a waiver of § 6-42-101 et seq. as requested.

5. School Nurse & Media Services

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-706

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-103

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-104

Sections 16.01, 16.02, and 16.03 of the Standards of Accreditation

Section 3.01.6 of the ADE Rules Governing Public School Student Services

PCVA students will participate in an on-line curriculum and will not need a school nurse or a media specialist. If students are on campus for field trips or community service projects, they will have access to the nurse. PCVA students will have access to all media centers if they so choose.

Legal Comments: A waiver of 16.01 of the Standards for Accreditation is not necessary in

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order to effectuate these waivers. Additionally, only a waiver of 16.02.3 is necessary (not the entire 16.02).

Applicant Response: *The Mena School District is requesting a waiver for 16.02.3.*

Remaining Legal Issues: Applicant should confirm it is rescinding its request for waivers of 16.01, 16.02, and 16.03 of the Standards for Accreditation.

6. Guidance Counseling Services

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-1001

Section 16.01.3 of the Standards for Accreditation

Section 3.01.1 of the ADE Rules Governing Public School Student Services

Each PCVA student will have a SSP developed by students, parent, the PCVA Director, and Mena School District staff. This team will work with students in scheduling and graduation requirements. Each student plan will be reviewed annually to ensure PCVA students are meeting their plans.

Legal Comments: A waiver of §6-18-1001 et seq. is necessary in order to effectuate this waiver.

Applicant Response: *The Mena School District is requesting a waiver for §6-18-1001 et seq.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None

7. Flag/Period of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-115

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-105

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-106

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-108

The four campuses in the Mena School District display the American flag and the Arkansas flag. PCVA will be housed on the middle school campus. Since the PCVA will be a virtual environment, the period of silence or the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance would be impossible to monitor.

Legal Comments: None

8. Eye and Vision Screening

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-1501

ADE Rules Governing Eye and Vision Screening Report

Polk County Virtual Academy

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PCVA students will not be on campus on a regular schedule to receive eye and vision screening exams. Parents will be notified about these optional services and given the option for their children to receive eye and vision screenings.

Legal Comments: Applicant should confirm that it is aware that it must provide these services to students who are recommended for screening for additional educational services.

Applicant Response: *The district is aware that eye and vision screening exams will be offered and provided.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None

9. Teacher Licensure / Fair Dismissal

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-501

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-701

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1004

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-309

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-401

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-902

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-919

Sections 15.01, 15.02, and 15.03 of the Standards for Accreditation

ADE Rules Governing Personnel Policies

ADE Rules Governing Parental Notification of an Assignment of a Non-Licensed Teacher

For Year 1, 2, and 3, PCVA will contract with a curriculum provider who will employ teachers that are licensed in the states in which they reside. The district will use certified teachers currently employed as the after school tutors for PCVA students to ensure that high quality instruction is provided to these students. Teachers who will be in direct contact with PCVA students will already meet the requirements of background and Child Maltreatment checks. The tutors will receive the regular hourly rate of pay established on the Mena School District salary schedule.

Legal Comments: Section 15.01 and 15.02 of the Standards for Accreditation relate to superintendents and principals which Applicant has not provided any rationale. If the superintendent and principal will be licensed, then these waivers are not necessary. A waiver of the ADE Rules Governing Educator Licensure is necessary to effectuate these waivers. Ark Code Ann. § 6-17-501 is not a valid law and § 6-17-701 relates to the reading improvement program and is not necessary. If Applicant intended to request a waiver from the Teacher Fair Dismissal and Public Employee Fair Dismissal, then a waiver of § 6-17-1501 et seq. and § 6-17-1701 et seq. are the waivers to request. Applicant has not requested any of the laws regarding personnel policies so ADE Legal cannot provide additional guidance on what sections of the ADE Rules Governing School District Requirements for Personnel Policies are necessary as a waiver of those rules are not necessary to achieve the Applicant’s stated goals regarding teacher licensure. Lastly, the ADE Rules Governing Parental Notification of an Assignment of a Non-

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Licensed Teacher have been repealed so no waiver is necessary.

Applicant Response: *Mena School District is not requesting any waivers for teacher licensure or fair dismissal.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None as waiver request has been rescinded.

10. Class Size & Teaching Load

Section 10.02 of the ADE Standards for Accreditation

Personalized learning through the online curriculum will allow teachers to work with a larger number of students than in the traditional classroom setting. The proposed student to teacher ratio of 40:1 would accommodate the different skill levels of enrolled students.

Legal Comments: Applicant should confirm it is aware that class sizes for special education students cannot be waived.

Applicant Response: *Mena School District is aware that class sizes for Special Education students cannot be waived.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None

11. Food Services

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-705

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-701

Students in the PCVA will not be on campuses on a regular schedule so no meals will be prepared for these students. However, if students are enrolled in regular classes/courses at Mena Public Schools, going on field trips, or participating in a community service project, parents may choose to create a meal program account for their students.

Legal Comments: In order to effectuate this waiver, a waiver of § 6-20-701 et seq. is necessary (not just 6-20-701).

Applicant Response: *Mena School District is requesting a waiver of § 6-20-701 et seq.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None

12. Commodity Bidding

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-301

The Mena School District will contract with one of the vendors on the Arkansas approved vendor

Polk County Virtual Academy

Red=Waivers not previously requested, need additional discussion, or have remaining issues

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Information provided by Applicant is in italics.

list to provide the online curriculum for PCVA students. The selection of the best available curriculum to meet student needs and meet the goals of the virtual academy may limit the vendor selection. A waiver for the curriculum vendor selection is specifically requested.

Legal Comments: ADE Legal is uncertain why a waiver of this section is necessary if Applicant plans to use an already approved vendor to provide these services.

Applicant Response: *Mena School District will contract with one of the Arkansas approved vendors so we do not need waiver from § 6-21-301.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None as waiver request has been rescinded.

13. Report Cards

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-903(a)(2)

Parents and students will have access to report cards through their online curriculum program.

Legal Comments: Please confirm paper report cards will be provided if requested.

Applicant Response: *Paper report cards will be provided if requested.*

Remaining Legal Issues: None

14. Curriculum

Sections 9.03.4.12 and 9.02.3.12 of the Standards for Accreditation

The Mena School District requests that all AP courses taught be included as part of the 38 units required by law for Standards and Accreditation. The waiver is requested to enable qualified students below ninth grade to take foreign languages, Algebra 1 and other similar courses. This waiver supports the personalized learning for PCVA students and accommodates the opportunity for acceleration in course options.

Legal Comments: There is not a section 9.02.3.12 of the Standards for Accreditation. Additionally, ADE Legal is unsure why this waiver is necessary. If Applicant intends for students in grades 5-8 be allowed to take high school courses for high school graduation credit that is already allowed under the Standards for Accreditation in Section 9.03.3.12. Applicant should provide additional information and rationale on its request.

Applicant Response: *Mena School District is not requesting a waiver from Standards of Accreditation 9.03.3.12.*

Remaining Legal Issues: ADE Legal is uncertain what waiver the Applicant is requesting and why it is necessary to help Applicant achieve it's goals.

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15. Credit for College Courses

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-223

This waiver will enable qualified students below the ninth grade to take and receive concurrent credit for college courses. This waiver support the personalized learning goals in the student's success plan.

Legal Comments: None

Desegregation Analysis: Fully responsive