

**NORTH LITTLE ROCK CENTER  
OF EXCELLENCE**

**CHARTER INTERNAL  
REVIEW COMMITTEE  
REVIEW AND APPLICANT  
RESPONSES**

**Arkansas Department of  
Education**

**District Conversion Charter School  
2016 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**

## **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**

### **C2: MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission Statement should be meaningful and indicate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree.

#### **Evaluation Criteria:**

- A mission statement that is clear and succinct

**Fully Responsive**

### **C3: 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**

#### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Define all acronyms used in this section.

#### **Applicant Response:**

- COE-Center of Excellence
- NLRSD-North Little Rock School District
- IEP-Individualized Education Plan
- LPAC-Language Proficiency Assessment Committee
- POP-Personalized Opportunity Plan
- CNC-Computer Numerical Control
- APEX-This is the name of a digital curriculum provider and not an acronym.
- ACT-American College Test

### **C4: 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**

**Partially Responsive**

**Not Responsive**

#### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Explain why no goals are tied to students passing industry certification exams when that is a major component of the program.
- Given that high school science standards will be fully implemented during the 2018-19 school year, provide a goal tied to science for that year and the following years.

**Applicant Response:**

1. The application prompt states, “On the following table, list the specific measurable goals in reading, English, and mathematics, based on the state mandated assessments, and any other assessment tools if used, for improving student academic achievement for each year...”. This is one of the reasons that goals for certification exams were not stated in the application itself. Another reason is that industry needs change rapidly and tying a goal to a specific certification exam could prove to be problematic if industry no longer recognizes or needs a particular certification listed in a goal. Our goal is to have a program that is flexible enough to change as industry needs evolve and change.

2.

Goal	Assessment Instrument for Measuring Performance	Performance Level that Demonstrates Achievement	When Attainment of the Goal Will Be Assessed
*10% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort Science scores for all COE students within the first five years	ACT Aspire-9 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> Grades ACT-11 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grades	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade-28% 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade-30% 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade-26% 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade-26%	2019

\*An additional 10% increase is the goal set for subsequent years in a five year period. The goal for total increase in achievement is 20% by 2022.

**Remaining concerns:** The applicant has a reluctance to set a goal tied to industry certification, even though industry certification is an integral part of the charter programming.

**C5: 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

**Fully Responsive**

**Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Explain how the missing fine arts credit and social studies credit will be fulfilled.
- Confirm that courses for journalism and health credit requirements will be offered.
- Confirm that the charter, if approved, will work with the ADE and ACE to receive course approval for any unapproved and/or blended courses or replace those courses with approved courses.

- Confirm that one semester of drama will be offered, given that only one semester of oral communications is being offered.
- Provide AP and Pre AP information for all four core areas.

### **Applicant Response:**

1. Fine Arts and Social Studies credits will be offered to students in a variety of ways with the student determining what method of instruction works best for them. Students electing to receive instruction in a digital setting will be provided with a state approved computer program, students electing to learn in a blended environment will be provided with a traditional teacher and state approved computer program. Those students electing to receive instruction in a traditional manner will receive direct instruction from a teacher.
2. Courses for credit in journalism and health will be offered.
3. The leaders of the COE Charter School and the North Little Rock School District will work with the Arkansas Department of Education and Arkansas Career Education to receive course approval for any unapproved courses or replace those courses with approved courses in order to and to meet or exceed curriculum standards and requirements established by the Arkansas State Board of Education in accordance with all laws, rules, and procedures promulgated to ensure access to quality instruction.
4. One semester of drama credit will be offered as required by the Arkansas Department of Education.
5. AP and Pre-AP courses will be offered to students. Those electing to receive traditional instruction will be provided the instruction by a trained AP/Pre-AP teacher. All COE faculty will be PreAP trained in order to provide PreAP coursework, additionally digital coursework approved by the ADE offers PreAP coursework which will be available to students. ADE approved AP digital courses offered shall include but are not limited to; AP Calculus AB, AP Statistics, AP Spanish Language, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Psychology, AP Environmental Science, AP English Language and Composition, AP English Literature and Composition, AP U.S. History, AP U.S. Government and Politics, AP Macroeconomics.

## **C6: 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**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Confirm that APEX is the only external provider for the charter or provide details for other additional vendors.

- Confirm that teachers will receive APEX training to assist students with content and skills.

### **Applicant Response:**

1. Only digital coursework approved by the ADE is planned for the charter. APEX is one of the ADE approved vendors and will be utilized initially. Based on individual student achievement and goals, it may become necessary for multiple ADE approved digital platforms to be utilized. In the event that APEX or other digital providers are unable to meet the needs of COE students and/or requirements set forth by the state for approval as a digital provider, another state approved digital provider will be chosen.
2. Teachers will receive training in all digital coursework platforms utilized in the COE to assist students with content and skills. The training will be provided by qualified digital platform trainers. For those who have not mastered the use of the platform, additional job embedded training will be provided.

## **C7: 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**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Explain the criteria and process for selecting industry ambassadors.
- Provide the transportation protocol for transporting students to off-site locations.
- Explain how students will receive dual enrollment credit and if any out-of-pocket expense will be passed on to the students.
- Explain why AP courses are not addressed in the college credit dual enrollment program.
- Explain who will monitor the off-site learning of the students attending virtually.
- Describe the cost associated with Get Ahead Diesel School to the school and to the student.

- Provide the minimum number of students who must attend the charter in order for the school to be financially viable. Describe the method used to calculate this number. Tell who made the calculations and describe the financial expertise of the individuals who assisted in this assessment.
  - Describe the contingency plan if fewer students than necessary for financial viability enroll before the first day of school. Provide a detailed explanation of the ways in which the charter leaders will provide the education program outlined in the application to fewer students than determined necessary for financial viability or a date that the charter leaders will notify the parents and staff at the Arkansas Department of Education that the school will not open as anticipated.
  - Explain how charter leaders will provide the education program outlined in the application if enough students for financial viability enroll and are admitted but fail to arrive when school begins.

### **Applicant Response:**

1. Industry ambassadors are carefully selected by industry partners as representatives of their company who will serve as education liaisons within the school and submitted to the school district for vetting. Before an Ambassador can interact on a school campus, expectations for the role of Ambassador are reviewed and background check paperwork is prepared. Ambassadors are subjected to the same background checks as district teachers and administrators. At the time in which the background check is completed and passed, a school identification badge will be created and presented to the Ambassador who will be expected to adhere to district volunteer policies.
2. The Center of Excellence will follow North Little Rock School District Transportation policies as stated in the North Little Rock School District Handbook. For events including but not limited to school sanctioned and scheduled field trips, job shadowing events, internship experiences, and scheduled industry tours, school transportation will be provided for students.
3. Students will receive dual enrollment credit for classes in which an agreement (MOU) with an institution of Higher Education exists. Out of pocket expenses for the student may include any tuition fees imposed by the college as outlined in the MOU if the student desires to receive college credit for the class. Financial assistance may be provided for students who are unable to pay required fees so that all who wish to participate in dual credit courses can do so.
4. COE students can obtain college credit by taking AP courses and achieving a score of 4 or 5 on the appropriate AP Exam.
5. Teachers will be assigned students who are enrolled virtually according to their career pathway of interest. They will be required to attend a lab day at least monthly depending on the program of study they enroll in. They will be assigned to a Personalized Opportunity Plan team. Together, the POP team and the teacher assigned to the virtual student will monitor the achievement to determine deficits and adequacy of digital activity. In the event that a student has been inactive for more than three days, direct contact will be made with the student/or parent in order to determine whether support through the Retraining Program is necessary.

6. There is no cost associated with the Get Ahead Diesel School for the school or the student. This program is provided free of charge in partnership with Daimler Trucks International and Arkansas Truck Centers.
- A. At current levels of state foundation funding, the minimum number of students who will need to attend the Center of Excellence is 177. Brian Brown, North Little Rock School District Director of Purchasing, calculated this total by dividing the total estimated cost to be incurred by the conversion charter by the 2016-17 school year state foundation funding amount as demonstrated below.

Administrator Salary and Benefits (1.0 FTE)	\$95,000.00
Teacher Salaries and Benefits (15 FTE)	\$975,000.00
Career Counselor Salary and Benefits (.5 FTE)	\$45,000.00
Instructional Aid Salary and Benefits (1.0 FTE)	\$35,000.00
APEX Digital Learning Program (unlimited seats)	\$17,000.00
*Materials and Supplies	<u>\$7500.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$1,174,500.00
16-17 Foundation Funding	\$6,646.00

$\$1,174,500.00 / \$6646.00 = 176.72$  or 177 students

\*\$7,500.00 was added as an expense that was not included in the original application. This amount will come from the North Little Rock School District operating budget.

Brian Brown is the Director of Purchasing for North Little Rock School District. He is a Certified Business Official in the state of Arkansas.

- B. In the event that the Center of Excellence does not meet the minimum enrollment numbers needed for viability, the following steps will be taken:
- Estimated operating costs will be reviewed and reduced.
  - Additional sources of revenue will be sought to cover the costs of the charter including but not limited to grant money and partnership funding. These calculations are based solely on foundation funding.
  - If additional funding cannot be obtained to cover expenses, access core subject teachers will be transferred to other schools within North Little Rock School District as needed to fill open teaching positions. North Little Rock School District hires teachers year round.
  - In the event that all teaching positions are filled in other district schools, staff numbers will be reduced according to district reduction in force policy.
  - If costs cannot be reduced to meet the enrollment achieved by July 15, parents, students, the community, and Arkansas Department of Education will be notified that the Center of Excellence will not open as planned.
- C. If students enroll and do not attend, the following steps will be taken:
- Days 1-10 of non-attendance-Parent/guardian contacted and action taken accordingly

- i. Illness-counted absence but continued enrollment,
  - ii. Transfer to another district-withdrawal procedures implemented
  - iii. No contact/no show-dropped from enrollment after 10 days of non-attendance
- b. The steps outlined in part B of this response will be taken in the event that not enough students attend the Center of Excellence to be counted to receive enough funding for viability of the school.

## **C8: 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**

## **C9: 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:**

- Explain the training faculty will receive to assist students with extraordinary school and work commitments, including social and emotional needs.
- Describe how many students you anticipate to follow each of the sample schedules provided.

### **Applicant Response:**

- Faculty training will be vital to the concept and design of the COE. Faculty will be trained on personalized learning by district staff, ADE approved digital coursework platform(s) provided by applicable vendor, Pre-AP strategies provided by College Board trainers, and all ADE required professional development provided by district staff.
- The estimated enrollment per grade level is 9th grade- 44, 10th grade- 38, 11th grade- 100, 12th grade- 200.

## C10: 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**

## C11: 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**

## C12: 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 access to the guidance program includes access to a licensed guidance counselor.
- Explain the meaning of “students who physically attend the COE” in regards to nursing staff.
- Provide a written agreement with the Layman Public Library.
- Explain how students and teachers will be trained to fully utilize the digital library in the absence of the library media specialist.
- Confirm that students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations on state assessments.
- Explain how the students attending the school virtually will be transported to school to participate in labs.
- Confirm that a licensed Gifted and Talented teacher will be in the classroom to address social and emotional needs.

### **Applicant Response:**

- Students will have access to a licensed guidance counselor.
- “Physically attending the COE” means students who elect to receive instruction on campus either via traditional, blended, or digitally while on campus using COE equipment. Nursing staff will be available to meet the needs for students who are present on campus. Since some students may elect to attend virtually, a staff nurse would be unable to physically examine those students.
- NLRSD has an agreement with Laman Library in which library cards are provided to NLRHS students.
- Teachers will be provided training before school begins in how to fully utilize the digital library at Layman. Students will be trained during the first two weeks of school in their orientation class.
- Students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations on state mandated assessments.
- No transportation will be provided by the district. Students attending lab will be required to provide their own transportation. In the event that transportation becomes a hardship for the student and prevents them from attending lab days, virtual labs or accommodations may be provided for the student to ensure participation and success.
- The ADE approved Gifted and Talented plan for North Little Rock School District will be followed. The plan addresses GT services through pre-AP and AP coursework.
- All staff will be trained in Pre-AP strategies in order to meet the needs of gifted students. Additionally, the POP team will be the student's advocate and mentor in order to address social and emotional needs. This will include but is not limited to knowing the students’ goals and job aspirations and/or addressing social and emotional deficits.

### **Remaining Concerns:**

- The agreement between the Laman Library and North Little Rock School District was not provided.
- There seems to be a discrepancy in regards to when/how/if transportation will be provided. In a response to a request on Prompt 7, the applicant stated, “The Center of

Excellence will follow North Little Rock School District Transportation policies as stated in the North Little Rock School District Handbook. For events including but not limited to school sanctioned and scheduled field trips, job shadowing events, internship experiences, and scheduled industry tours, school transportation will be provided for students.” In response to a request on Prompt 12, the applicant stated, “No transportation will be provided by the district. Students attending lab will be required to provide their own transportation. In the event that transportation becomes a hardship for the student and prevents them from attending lab days, virtual labs or accommodations may be provided for the student to ensure participation and success.”

### **C13: 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**

#### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Confirm that the annual report published in the newspaper will be separate from the district report published in the newspaper.

#### **Applicant Response:**

The annual report published in the newspaper will include the COE as every other school in the district is listed. Each individual school with separate LEA numbers are reported separately within one advertisement.

### **C14: 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

### **Fully Responsive**

#### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Confirm that the commitment letter is not a requirement.
- Explain if enrollment will be based on first-come-first-serve or if a lottery will be held once the school becomes oversubscribed.

#### **Applicant Response:**

- The Letter of Commitment is not a requirement for admission, but rather a document that ensures the student and parent have been given information that will assist their student is successful in the COE.
- Enrollment will be on a first-come-first serve basis until capacity is met and then students will be put on a waiting list. Applications that are received on-site on the same day will be time stamped in the order they are received. Applications received in the mail will be placed in an anonymous lottery drawing to determine student order.

## **C15: 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**

## **C16: 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**

### Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Provide a projected teacher to pupil ratio for each type of instructor listed.

### Applicant Response:

The projected teacher to pupil ratio is as follows:

- Manufacturing-1:25
- Medical Professions-1:25
- Transportation, Distribution, Logistics-1:20
- Math-1:25
- English-1:25
- Science-1:25
- Social Studies/History-1:25

## C17: 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**

## C18: 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**

## **C19: 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**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Explain if students attending virtually will receive meals.

### **Applicant Response:**

- Students who attend the COE virtually and would like to participate in the school meal program should report to the COE between 11:30 am-12:00 pm to receive a meal.

## **C20: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

The Parental Involvement section should describe how parents or guardians of enrolled students, the school employees, and other members of the community will make a positive impact on the school and its educational program.

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

- A plan for involving parents and guardians in the school's education programs; and
- A proposal that involves the parents of students, employees and the broader community in carrying out the terms of the charter

### **Fully Responsive**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

- Explain how and when parents will receive training to assist students with online work and with maximizing "the personalized program".

### **Applicant Response:**

Parents will attend orientation where they will learn student options and how to best assist their student. Because of the nature of virtual learning, more frequent parent/student contact is needed in order to determine adequate student progress. Due to the newness of Personalized Learning, student and parent feedback in the form of surveys and conversations will inform the content and frequency of additional meetings and/or training. Additionally, parents are also a vital part of their student's POP team which met quarterly to determine student progress and establish goals. Further POP meetings may be needed and can be called by the team in order to further assist the student.

## **C21: 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**

## **C22: DESEGREGATION ASSURANCES**

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

**Fully Responsive**

**Partially Responsive**

**Not Responsive**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

**See legal comments.**

## **C23: 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

**Fully Responsive**

**Partially Responsive**

**Not Responsive**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions:**

**See legal comments.**

# **LEGAL REVIEW OF WAIVER REQUESTS AND RESPONSES**

North Little Rock Center of Excellence

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

**Green**=Waivers previously granted, no remaining issues

**Teal**=Note from ADE Legal to Charter Authorizing Panel

*Information provided by Applicant is in italics.*

**North Little Rock Center of Excellence  
Waivers Requested in Original Application  
2016 District Conversion Charter Application**

**1. School Year Dates**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106**

*NLRHS is requesting a waiver of the uniform school calendar. This change will allow us to adjust our schedule as necessary to align with participating colleges as well as any career opportunities that may arise. This is not an attempt to shorten a student's school year. Each student will still be required to attend the number of days required by state law. It will allow us to start the school year earlier or end later, if necessary.*

**Legal Comments:** None

**Remaining Issues:** None

**2. Licensure**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1004**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-302**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-401**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-919**

**Section 15.03 of the Standards for Accreditation**

*NLRHS requests a waiver from the above-listed statutes and rules to the extent that it is necessary to give NLRHS the flexibility to hire business and industry professionals or individuals employed by higher education who possess outstanding credentials and work history but who do not have an interest in holding or obtaining a valid Arkansas Teaching License. All individuals who utilized in this manner will be required to pass criminal background and Child Maltreatment Registry checks. In addition, this waiver will be used in limited circumstances in which no other adequate choice is available.*

**Legal Comments:** Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-302 only applies to principals and is not necessary unless Applicant intends to waive the requirements for principals. In order to effectuate this waiver, waivers of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-902 and the ADE Rules Governing Educator Licensure are also necessary.

North Little Rock Center of Excellence

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

**Green**=Waivers previously granted, no remaining issues

**Teal**=Note from ADE Legal to Charter Authorizing Panel  
*Information provided by Applicant is in italics.*

**Applicant Response:** *The applicant requests waiver of Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-902 and the ADE Rules Governing Educator Licensure in addition to those previously requested.*

**Remaining Issues:** None

**3. Library Media Specialist/School Nurses**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-103**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-104**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-706**

**Sections 16.01, 16.02.3, and 16.03 of the Standards for Accreditation**

**Section 3.01.6 of the ADE Rules Governing Public School Student Services**

*The COE will offer students access to an e-library that will provide students 24 hour access. This will support a learning environment conducive to successful digital and blended learning. Learners work at their own pace and time. Because of the structure of this program, a library media specialist will not be necessary.*

**Legal Comments:** Applicant should provide rationale for its request and use of a waiver from the requirements for school nurses and detail how it will help Applicant achieve its goals. Additionally, Section 16.01 of the Standards applies to guidance counseling services which Applicant has not requested. Applicant should confirm whether this was a mistake and they wish to rescind that section or if they intended to request a waiver of guidance counseling services. If they intended to request a waiver of guidance counseling services, a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-1001 et seq. and Section 3.01.1 of the ADE Rules Governing Public School Student Services is also needed.

**Applicant Response:**

*A waiver from nurse/student ratio is requested. NLRSD can still provide quality nursing services for the COE with existing nursing staff. Any accrued savings as a result of a waiver from the nurse/student ratio requirement in this statute can be put toward educational uses.*

*The applicant wishes to rescind the previous request for a waiver of Section 16.01 of the Standards applying to guidance counseling.*

**Remaining Issues:** None

North Little Rock Center of Excellence

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**4. Class Size and Teaching Load**

**Section 10.02.5 of the Standards for Accreditation**

*NLRHS requests a waiver of the requirement that a teacher shall not be assigned more than one hundred-fifty (150) students and that an individual class shall not exceed thirty (30) students. NLRHS believes that in certain circumstances in order to implement its unique charter curriculum, some elective courses and the teachers of those courses may need more than the maximum allowance of students. NLRSD ensures that under no circumstances will any teacher be assigned more than one hundred-eighty (180) students. NLRSD will use this waiver on an as-needed basis only.*

**Legal Comments:** Applicant should acknowledge that special education class sizes cannot be waived. Additionally, if the district will not be compensating an educator for teaching more than 150 students a day, then a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-812 is necessary.

**Applicant Response:**

*Although a waiver for class size and teaching load is being requested, the applicant acknowledges federal requirements for special education class sizes and will continue to adhere to those requirements if the waiver is granted.*

*A waiver of Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-812 is also requested.*

**Remaining Issues:** None

**5. Gifted and Talented**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-2208(c)(6)**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-42-109**

**Section 18.0 of the Standards for Accreditation**

**ADE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards**

*Students in the COE will have access to appropriate pre and advanced courses as well as concurrent credit opportunities. The responsibilities and roles for this position will be addressed by the POP team, classroom instructors, and the North Little Rock School District Coordinator of GT, AP, and 18.*

**Legal Comments:** None

**Remaining Issues:** None

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## 6. Professional Development

### Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-701

#### Section 15.04 of the Standards for Accreditation

#### ADE Emergency Rules Governing Professional Development

*To the extent that it is necessary, NLRHS requests a waiver of the mentioned statutes and ADE Rules for the sole purpose of not requiring its non-licensed teachers to meet the state's teacher professional development requirements. The waiver will apply to Technical areas only and will apply to no core areas. NLRHS will establish its own training to acclimate new, unlicensed teachers to their teaching roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This waiver will help NLRHS meet its established goal of increasing the number of students participating in a career pathway and obtaining industry certification or concurrent credit before graduation.*

**Legal Comments:** This waiver is not necessary for non-licensed educators as they do not have to follow the professional development requirements, but the waiver would apply for teachers and administrators.

#### **Applicant Response:**

*The COE requests to amend the original request and apply the waiver to all educators including certified staff. This will allow the COE to provide personalized professional development that is flexible enough to directly address the learning needs of faculty.*

**Remaining Issues:** None

**NOTE FROM ADE LEGAL:** Waivers from Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-701 et seq. and the ADE Rules Governing Professional Development have not been granted to any other schools.

## 7. Career and Technical Education

### Section 9.03.3.9 of the Standards for Accreditation

*NLRHS requests a waiver of the requirement to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) curricula (Keyboarding, Career Orientation, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Survey of Agriculture) as separate classes. NLRHS will ensure compliance with ADE Standards Rules, Arkansas Frameworks, and all applicable rubrics by embedding this curriculum within other courses or presenting courses such as Family and Consumer Sciences or Survey of Agriculture at Grade 8. Such flexibility is necessary to increase time for students to participate in career pathway opportunities at the high school level.*

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**Legal Comments:** The section requested is for grades 5-8, and the Applicant refers to grade 8 in its rationale. However, the Applicant will serve grades 9-12. Applicant should provide clarification on what section it is requesting and rationale for why. Additionally, waivers are not necessary to embed courses. The applicant should seek course approval for its embedded course(s).

### **Applicant Response:**

*The applicant requests to rescind the waiver request as it references the Standards Section for Grades 5-8 and requests to substitute a waiver request for Section 9.03.4.11 of the Standards Rules for CTE Requirements for Grades 9-12.*

*Additionally, the Center of Excellence plans to work with the Arkansas Department of Career Education and Arkansas Department of Education to obtain course approvals as required for planned embedded courses.*

**Remaining Issues:** None

## **8. Planned Instructional Day/Seat Time**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-211**

**Sections 10.01.4 and 14.03 of the Standards for Accreditation**

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

*NLRHS requests a waiver of the requirement that the planned instructional time in each school day shall not average less than six (6) hours per day or thirty (30) hours per week, as well as the requirement that a unit of credit must meet a minimum of 120 clock hours. Such waivers are needed in order to increase scheduling flexibility and offer more exploratory and developmental time in specific college and career pathways. By leveraging increased flexibility, by embedding coursework, and by creating an environment wherein students can learn at their own pace, students will have more time to serve in internships and apprenticeships, and to gain concurrent credit. These opportunities will position our students to be more successful in their college and career experiences.*

**Legal Comments:** Applicant should provide additional rationale on how it will ensure students are receiving enough instruction time to sufficiently master the content. In order to effectuate this waiver, a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-102 is also needed.

### **Applicant Response:**

*Students who choose a blended or digital learning program are required to log at least thirty hours of instructional work time per week. This is recorded through the digital provider and/or the time clock system that will be in place onsite. Students will be required to demonstrate*

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*mastery of content through assessment before they will be allowed to move on to other content. If mastery is not demonstrated, the student will be required to spend additional time and access instructional resources available to them in the Center of Excellence in order to achieve mastery. The teachers and Personalized Opportunity Plan team will monitor student learning and achievement to help ensure mastery of content is achieved.*

*Off-site educational activities that COE students will participate in (such as apprenticeships/internships and concurrent credit opportunities) pursuant to their Personalized Opportunity Plan may also be capable of being completed in less than the 120 hours and/or the average hours of instructional time per day or week, but all courses/educational content requirements will be completed.*

*A waiver of Ark. Code Ann. 6-16-102 is also requested by the applicant.*

**Remaining Issues: None**

**Desegregation Analysis: Fully Responsive**