

**2012-2013 Application Cycle**

**ADE**

**Evaluation and**

**Applicant**

**Responses**

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy**  
**Bentonville, Arkansas**

# Arkansas Department of Education

## Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument

*The following instrument will be used to evaluate applications submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education (“ADE”) for the establishment of new open-enrollment public charter schools. This instrument is only intended to provide clarity, transparency and consistency in the charter school application review process.*

The ADE will use the following instrument only to evaluate the quality of an open-enrollment public charter school application against the criteria stated herein. For each of the application requirements, the criteria define the characteristics and elements of a response that meet the standard for charter approval. The following definitions will guide the rating of each information requirement:

- Meets the Standard:** The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and demonstrates capacity to open and operate a quality charter school. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate.
- Partially Meets the Standard:** The response addresses most of the criteria, but response lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information.
- Does Not Meet the Standard:** The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issue in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.

# Arkansas Department of Education

## Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application Evaluation

### EVALUATION RUBRIC WITH RESPONSES

Name of Proposed School: **NORTHWEST ARKANSAS CLASSICAL ACADEMY**

Eligible entity status:

- Public institution of higher education
- Private nonsectarian institution of higher education
- Governmental entity
- Nonsectarian organization exempt from taxes under Section 501(c) (3)

Status of 501(c) (3) Application: **Pending**

### Part 1: 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 response that meets the standard will guarantee that:

- A Letter of Intent was filed with ADE on time and included all necessary information.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

## Part 2: REQUIRED INFORMATION

### STANDARDS 1 and 2 OF APPLICATION: PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS

All proposed school design teams must conduct a public hearing before applying for an open-enrollment 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 response that meets the standard will present:

- A thorough description of the results of the public hearing;
- A thorough description and evidence of public support exhibited at the hearing;
- Documentation of required notices published to garner public attention to the hearing;
- Documentation of required notices of the public hearing to superintendents and school board members in contiguous school districts; and
- Copies of any documents or presentations distributed at the public meeting.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>
<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>		<b>Reference</b>

## STANDARD 3 OF APPLICATION: GOVERNING STRUCTURE

The Governing Structure section should explain how the school will be governed. It should present a clear picture of the school's governance processes and composition, what responsibilities various groups and people will have and how those groups will relate to one another.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Documentation of proper legal structure of the governing board and sponsoring entity;
- A comprehensive description of the planned relationship between the governing board of the school and governing board of the sponsoring entity;
- A clear description of the governing board's roles and responsibilities;
- Adequate policies and procedures for board operation, including board composition, member term length, and member selection;
- A clear, sensible delineation of roles and responsibilities in relation to governance and school management; and
- A reasonable plan for involving parents, staff, students and community in the decision-making of the school.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	<b>X</b>	

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<p><b>Explain which governing board is referenced in C as B states that there will be a governing board of the school and a governing board of the sponsoring entity.</b></p>	<p><b>Pages 7-8</b></p>
<p><b>Provide the roles and responsibilities for the board that is not discussed in C.</b></p>	<p><b>Page 8</b></p>
<p><b>D states that the board will function according to existing ResponsiveEd bylaws. Since ResponsiveEd will be managing the operations, and bylaws were not included, describe each of the following for both the sponsoring entity board and the school board: Board composition; and Board selection process.</b></p>	<p><b>Page 9</b></p>
<p><b>State which board members are being discussed in the section titled Board Members.</b></p>	<p><b>Page 10-11</b></p>
<p><b>Explain if the Community Advisory Committee is the same as the school board.</b></p>	<p><b>Page 11-12</b></p>
<p><b>Confirm that the board referenced under the section titled Transition to Arkansas Board is the governing board of the sponsoring entity.</b></p>	

**Explain which governing board is referenced in C as B states that there will be a governing board of the school and a governing board of the sponsoring entity (pgs. 7 – 8)**

**Response**

**For the sake of clarity, in this document all references to the sponsoring entity, Responsive Education Solutions of Arkansas, will be referred to as “ResponsiveEd.” All references to the non-profit education management organization located in Lewisville, Texas, Responsive Education Solutions, will be referred to as “ResponsiveEd of Texas.”**

**To clarify, the governing board of the sponsoring entity will also serve as the governing board for the school. As such, the governing board of the sponsoring entity, ResponsiveEd, and the governing board for the school will be one and the same. Therefore, the roles and responsibilities as outlined in section C on page 8, and the “Board Members” section of page 9, will be that of the sole governing board.**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Provide the roles and responsibilities for the board that is not discussed in C (pg. 8).**

**Response**

**The governing board of the sponsoring entity and the governing board for the school will be one and the same. Therefore, the roles and responsibilities as outlined in section C as powers and duties on page 8 will be that of the sole governing board.**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**D states that the board will function according to existing ResponsiveEd bylaws. Since ResponsiveEd will be managing the operations, and bylaws were not included, describe each of the following for both the sponsoring entity board and the school board: Board composition; and Board selection process.**

**Response**

**A copy of the entity bylaws has been included for your review. A minimum of five members will serve on the board which will be comprised of Arkansas residents and local school community representatives. The current Board of Directors will solicit applications from qualified candidates who are interested in promoting the interests of the organization through service on the board before the State Board of Education in November or December of 2012. Subject to Article 3.03 of the Bylaws, new board members will be selected from a pool of qualified candidates by the remaining Directors.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**State which board members are being discussed in the section titled Board Members (pg. 9).**

### **Response**

**The board referenced on page 9 is the governing board of the sponsoring entity and the local school board as they are one and the same.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Explain if the Community Advisory Committee is the same as the school board (pgs. 10-11).**

### **Response**

**The Community Advisory Committee, referenced on page 10 and 11, is not the same as the school board. The Community Advisory Committee is similar to a Parent Teacher Association or Parent Teacher Organization as it will provide a medium through which parents can become more involved in the education of their children. Although the Community Advisory Committee will hold no official governing authority, it will be a source of information for school based decision making initiatives.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Confirm that the board referenced under the section titled Transition to Arkansas Board is the governing board of the sponsoring entity (pgs. 11 - 12).**

### **Response**

**To clarify, the governing board of the sponsoring entity will also serve as the governing board for the school. As such, the governing board of the sponsoring entity and the governing board for the school will be one and the same.**

## STANDARD 4 OF APPLICATION: 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 response that meets the standard will present:

- A mission statement that is manageable and measurable.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	<b>X</b>	

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<b>Explain the measurability of the mission statement</b>	

### Response

**To clarify the mission statement of Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy mentioned on page 12, the primary mission of ResponsiveEd of Arkansas is to provide hope for students through an encouraging, innovative learning environment where they are academically successful and develop into lifetime learners. Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy staff will strive to inspire and implement measurable academic performance standards. Each student will be expected to meet high standards of academic performance by demonstrating the knowledge and skills required for college and career readiness. Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy understands that in order to succeed in this mission, a combined effort of community leaders, parents, students, and staff must be cultivated.**

**The Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy is committed to meeting their mission statement as evidenced by the measurable performance goals listed under Standard 7 which are directly tied to the components of the mission statement. Successfully meeting these measurable six goals, designed to address the components of our mission statement, will provide the evidence of our success in actualizing our mission.**

## STANDARD 5 OF APPLICATION: EDUCATIONAL NEED

The Educational Need section should indicate how the school intends to offer a viable educational option for students in Arkansas. Along with the mission statement, this section outlines the basic rationale for the new school.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A description of educational need that presents a clear option for students, and
- Valid and reliable data that substantiates the educational need for the school.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

## STANDARD 6 OF APPLICATION: 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 response that meets the standard will present:

- 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;
- A specific rationale for how the charter school will enhance or expand the educational options currently available to the school's target student population; and
- A clear organization of the school in terms of both lengths of school day and year that meets minimum state requirements.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<b>Explain parent monitoring.</b>	<b>Page 17</b>

### Response

**Parent Monitoring, as referenced on page 17 in the Interventions section, refers to actions taken by parents to monitor the academic progress of their children through activities such as reviewing report cards, progress reports and ensuring the completion of homework.**

**It's important for parents to keep up with how their children are doing in school. Talking with children about what they learned in school, their favorite subjects, and upcoming tests or projects are simple ways of monitoring. Monitoring sleep habits, organizational skills, vision and hearing to make sure students are prepared for school are beneficial for optimal student performance.**

## STANDARD 7 OF APPLICATION: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

The Academic Achievement Goals section should define the performance expectations for students and the school as whole.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Specific goals in:
  - Reading;
  - Reading Comprehension;
  - Mathematics; and
  - Mathematic Reasoning;
- Goals that are clear, measurable and data-driven;
- Goals on improving student achievement; and
- Valid and reliable assessment tools for measuring each of the defined goals.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<b>In Goal #5, define the term “effective growth.”</b>	<b>Page 21</b>

### Response

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy, as referenced on page 21, defines effective growth as evidence of increasing growth of skills as documented by the completion of skill proficiencies by meeting the benchmarking standards established for each skill proficiency area.**

## STANDARD 8 OF APPLICATION: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ALIGNMENT

The Curriculum Development and Alignment section should define the process by which the design team developed (or chose) the curricular program of the school, and illustrate alignment with Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core Standards.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard of a curricular development and alignment program will present:

- Evidence that the curriculum aligns with, or a sound and rational plan and timeline for aligning the curriculum with, the Arkansas Department of Education’s content standards, benchmarks and performance standards.
- Evidence that the Applicant is prepared to implement the requirements and timeframe of the Common Core Standards.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Clarify if there is an intention to deviate from the minimum curriculum requirements of the standards for accreditation for grades K-12.</b>	<b>Page 57</b>

### Response

**There is no intention to deviate from the minimum curriculum requirements of the standards for accreditation for grades K -12.**

## STANDARD 9 OF APPLICATION: GEOGRAPHICAL SERVICE AREA

The Geographical Service Area section must outline the impact of a new school opening within the current public education system.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- The specific geographical area served by the charter school; and
- Information on the school districts within the geographical area that may be affected (including data on the expected number of students to transfer to the charter school).

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	<b>X</b>	

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<b>Provide information regarding districts within the geographical area.</b>	

### Response

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will serve the geographical area of Bentonville, Arkansas, in Benton County. Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will utilize an innovative approach to education based on a Classical Liberal Arts and Sciences curriculum. It is expected that up to 445 students in grades kindergarten to eight in year one, and 685 students from grades kindergarten to twelve within five years will come from the Bentonville School District, Decatur School District, Gentry School District, Gravette School District, Pea Ridge School District, Rogers School District and Siloam Springs School District. According to the 2011-2012 enrollment information housed on the Department of Education Data Center's website, the Bentonville School District contained 14,123 students; the Decatur School District contained 491 students; the Gentry School District contained 1,384 students; the Gravette School District contained 1,768 students; the Pea Ridge School District contained 1,695 students, the Rogers School District contained 14,145 students, and the Siloam Springs School District contained 3,922 students.**

## STANDARD 10 OF APPLICATION: 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 response that meets the standard will present:

- A clear and conceptually sound plan for documenting and reporting student performance data;
- A timeline for data compilation and completion of an annual report to parents, the community and the State Board of Education that outlines the school's progress; and
- A plan for dissemination of the annual report to appropriate stakeholders.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

## STANDARD 11 OF APPLICATION: 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 lottery selection process.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- 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.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

## STANDARD 12 OF APPLICATION: STAFFING PLAN

The Staffing Plan section should describe the job duties of the school director and other key personnel. This section should also describe the professional standards that all employees will be held to.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A job description for the school director and other key personnel, including but not limited to an operations director, board members, teachers, etc.;
- An outline of the professional qualifications required for administrators, teachers, counselors, etc.; 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.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	X	

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<p><b>Because the applicant has not requested waiver of the statutes and rules requiring licensure of superintendents, the superintendent must be properly licensed. The statute and rule requiring licensure are Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-109 (“School superintendent”) and Standard 15.01 of the Standards for Accreditation. The superintendent will also be subject to the mentoring program required by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-427 and ADE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring Program.</b></p> <p><b>Explain which board will be the ultimate governing body for the school.</b></p> <p><b>Provide the qualifications of the Superintendent</b></p> <p><b>Provide the job descriptions and qualifications for Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer.</b></p>	<p><b>Page 25</b></p> <p><b>Page 34</b></p>

### Concerns and Additional Questions

**Because the applicant has not requested waiver of the statutes and rules requiring licensure of superintendents, the superintendent must be properly licensed. The statute and rule requiring licensure are Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-109 (“School superintendent”) and Standard 15.01 of the Standards for Accreditation. The superintendent will also be subject to the mentoring program required by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-427 and ADE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring Program.**

**Response**

**In order to give us the opportunity to attract the best school superintendent to work in our unique school environment, we wish to request this waiver from the licensure requirement for our superintendent position.**

**Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-109 and Section 15.01 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation (both concerning the licensure of school superintendents) and Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-427 and ADE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring Program (concerning required mentoring of first-year superintendents).**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Explain which board will be the ultimate governing body for the school (pg. 25)**

**Response**

**The governing board of the school and the sponsoring entity (ResponsiveEd of Arkansas) board will be one and the same.**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Provide the qualifications of the Superintendent (pgs. 34).**

**Response**

**Please see attached job descriptions for qualifications of Superintendent.**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Provide the job descriptions and qualifications for Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer**

**Response**

**Please see attached job descriptions for Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer qualifications.**

## STANDARD 13 OF APPLICATION: BUSINESS AND BUDGETING PLAN

The Business & Budgeting Plan section should describe how the charter school will organize its business office and manage its fiscal responsibilities.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- An appropriate plan for how the school will manage procurement activities;
- A description of the personnel required to carry out business duties, including the requisite qualifications of any proposed personnel;
- A realistic timeline and process by which the governance structure will review and adopt an annual budget; and
- A balanced two-year budget estimate that accurately reflects the revenue currently available to the school and expenditures for program implementation, and does not rely on one-time grants or other funds that are not presently guaranteed.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	<b>X</b>	

Strengths	Reference
<p><b>The applicant references that a budget will be developed prior to June 30 and approval by the Board by June 30, and submitted to The Arkansas Department of Education by September 1. This meets the requirement that this task be completed by required date of September 30.</b></p> <p><b>The applicant states that a procurement process will be adopted which complies with the Arkansas state Procurement Law.</b></p>	<b>Pg. 35</b>
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<p><b>The applicant provided salary schedules, but one cannot determine how a salary would be calculated because only ranges are listed. Please clarify.</b></p> <p><b>The applicant has included revenue that is not guaranteed under other sources.</b></p> <p><b>Applicant should clarify amounts budgeted for purchased services under administration as well as which positions are included in the 3.5 that make up the salary amount.</b></p> <p><b>Applicant should clarify what makes up \$12,700 budgeted administrative travel.</b></p> <p><b>Applicant should clarify what positions are included under Special Education.</b></p> <p><b>Applicant should clarify why positions were not budgeted for ALE and if a position is budgeted for providing ELL services to students according to information submitted.</b></p> <p><b>It should be noted that if the Superintendent will be acting as Business Manager (p. 9), the Superintendent must meet the</b></p>	<p><b>Pgs. 67</b></p> <p><b>Pgs. 59 &amp; 63</b></p> <p><b>Pg. 59</b></p> <p><b>Pg. 60</b></p> <p><b>Pg. 42 &amp; 43</b></p>

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**The applicant provided salary schedules, but one cannot determine how a salary would be calculated because only ranges are listed. Please clarify (pg. 67).**

### **Response**

**Salaries will be determined based on years of experience and qualifications. Please see attached, proposed salary schedule as an example of how salaries would be calculated.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**The applicant has included revenue that is not guaranteed under other sources.**

### **Response**

**Please see attached revised budget to clarify the issue regarding included revenue that is not guaranteed. All federal funds have been removed.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Applicant should clarify amounts budgeted for purchased services under administration as well as which positions are included in the 3.5 that make up the salary amount. Pgs. 59 & 63**

## **Response**

**Purchased services under administration includes an administrative fee of 15% of state revenues to cover the cost of central office services for finance, business manager functions, marketing, information technology, curriculum development, human resources, facilities, special education oversight, training, and any other administrative needs of the school. An additional \$5,000 is included for legal and board related costs. Positions for the 3.5 that make up the salary amounts include 1/3 of Regional Director \$30,000, Director/Principal \$50,000, Secretary \$30,000, 1/2 Curriculum Specialist \$20,617.**

## **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Applicant should clarify what makes up \$12,700 budgeted administrative travel. Pg. 59**

## **Response**

**To clarify, \$12,700 budgeted administrative travel is for Employee travel subsistence - \$750, staff development - \$4,700, marketing - \$5,000, and miscellaneous - \$2,250. Most notable travel would be for the purposes of business manager training.**

## **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Applicant should clarify what positions are included under Special Education. Pg. 60**

## **Response**

**As referenced on page 60, 4 positions are included under Special Education. Those positions are 2 Special Ed teachers - \$112,122 and 2 Special Ed aides -\$42,453.**

## **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Applicant should clarify why positions were not budgeted for ALE and if a position is budgeted for providing ELL services to students according to information submitted (pgs.42 – 43).**

## **Response**

**To clarify why positions were not budgeted for ALE, ResponsiveEd's approach to student education is made possible by a small-school environment and our innovative approaches to instruction, which leads students to become lifelong learners, and allows us to provide an inclusive, focused and quality education environment for all students within our usual educational program, thus obviating the need to provide a separate non-inclusive learning environment. Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will seek a waiver of the requirements of Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and 6-48-101 et seq.; Standard 19.03 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation for Arkansas School Districts and Public School Districts; and Section 4.00 of the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding (all concerning the provision of Alternative Learning Environments). Additionally, a position is budgeted for providing ELL services.**

## **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**It should be noted that if the Superintendent will be acting as Business Manager (p. 9), the Superintendent must meet the qualifications set forth in ADE Rules Governing Minimum Qualifications for General Business Managers unless waived.**

### **Response**

**For clarification, the Superintendent will oversee all school operations. However, the duties of the Business Manager will be performed by one of ResponsiveEd of Texas's Certified Public Accountants (CPA). Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will contract with ResponsiveEd of Texas to provide these services. A waiver is requested for the ADE Rules Governing Minimum Qualifications for General Business Managers.**

**While we are seeking a waiver for flexibility, the individual assigned the duties of the Business Manager will receive all the training and support in Arkansas law and procedures necessary to perform the functions. The individual assigned will complete the minimum 5 Certified Arkansas School Business Official (CASBO) courses per year and the 10 required courses and 5 elective courses within 3 years plus any other mandated or necessary training to ensure compliance with Arkansas laws and standards.**

## STANDARD 14 OF APPLICATION: FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC AUDIT PLAN

The Financial and Programmatic Audit Plan section should provide the procedure and timeline by which an annual audit should be conducted. This section should also include an outline for the information that will need to be reported to ADE and the community.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A sound plan for annually auditing school's financial and programmatic operations.

If the Application names an accountant other than the Division of Legislative Audit to perform the first-year audit, the named accountant meets the requirements of Act 993 of 2011 and is not listed on any ineligibility list maintained by ADE or the Division of Legislative Audit

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

Strengths	Reference
<b>The applicant has requested a waiver that the Annual audit be conducted by Thomas &amp; Thomas, LLP instead of The Division of Legislative Audit.</b>	<b>Pg. 37</b>
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

## STANDARD 15 OF APPLICATION: 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:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- 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.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

## STANDARD 16 OF APPLICATION: FACILITIES

The Facilities section should provide an understanding of the school's anticipated facilities needs and how the school plans to meet those needs.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- An informed understanding of the facility needs of the school over the term of its charter.
- A realistic plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's program and targeted population.
- 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.
- A sound plan for continued operation, maintenance and repair of the facility.

For schools that will be using district-owned facilities, a response that meets the standard will present:

- Documentation that the school district and school are in agreement over the use of the facility and its equipment.

For schools that will NOT be using district-owned facilities, a response that meets the standard will present:

- Documentation that the property owner and school are in agreement over the use of the facility and its equipment;
- A statement of the facilities' compliance with applicable codes; and
- A detailed outline of any relationships between the property owner and:
  - members of the local board of the public school district where the charter school will be located;
  - the employees of the public school district where the charter school will be located;
  - the sponsor of the charter school; and
  - employees, directors and/or administrators of the charter school.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Facilities Review Report</b>	

## STANDARD 17 OF APPLICATION: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Conflicts of Interest section should identify any potential conflicts of interest among the individuals involved with the proposed charter school and detail how conflicts will be addressed.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present full disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest and detail how conflicts will be addressed.

<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Meets the Standard</b>
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

## STANDARD 18 OF APPLICATION: STUDENT SERVICES

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

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present, unless a waiver is being sought:

- 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;
- A transportation plan that will serve all eligible 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;
- An alternative education plan for eligible students, including those determined to be at-risk, or those that are bilingual or have limited English proficiency;
- Plans for offering access to one or more approved Alternative Learning Environments; and
- Plans for a gifted and talented program for eligible students.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	<b>X</b>	

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<p><b>The Applicant should clarify whether it intends to offer students an Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) as required by Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and 6-48-101 et seq.; Standard 19.03 of the Standards for Accreditation; and Section 4.00 of ADE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding.</b></p> <p><b>Clarify that the state requirements for Special Education will be adhered to.</b></p> <p><b>Address how the charter will make plans for offering access to one or more approved Alternative Learning Environments.</b></p> <p><b>Explain the statement, “For both At-Risk and Limited English Proficient students the learning gap is being closed.”</b></p>	<p><b>Page 40</b></p> <p><b>Page 43</b></p> <p><b>Page 43</b></p>

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**The Applicant should clarify whether it intends to offer students an Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) as required by Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and 6-48-101 et seq.; Standard 19.03 of the Standards for Accreditation; and Section 4.00 of ADE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding.**

### **Response**

**ResponsiveEd wishes to clarify its application under this Standard to request a waiver of the requirements of Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and 6-48-101 et seq.; Standard 19.03 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation for Arkansas School Districts and Public School Districts; and Section 4.00 of the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding (all concerning the provision of Alternative Learning Environments).**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Clarify that the state requirements for Special Education will be adhered to (pg. 40).**

### **Response**

**Arkansas Special Education state requirements, as referenced on page 40, will be followed.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Address how the charter will make plans for offering access to one or more approved Alternative Learning Environments (pg.43).**

### **Response**

**As currently stated in our application, ResponsiveEd's individualized approach to student education is made possible by a small-school environment; our innovative, non-typical approaches to the instruction of this population, which leads these students to become lifelong learners allows us to provide an inclusive, focused and quality education environment for all students within our usual educational program, thus obviating the need to provide a separate non- inclusive learning environment.**

### **Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Explain the statement, "For both At-Risk and Limited English Proficient students the learning gap is being closed (pg. 43)."**

### **Response**

**The unique instructional program design of the Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will address the learning needs of both At-Risk and Limited English Proficient students as evidenced by narrowing of the learning gap over the duration of the school year.**

## STANDARD 19 OF APPLICATION: FOOD SERVICES

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

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

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

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
	<b>X</b>	

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
<p><b>Clarify the method of procurement as to assure open and free competition.</b></p> <p><b>Clarify that USDA meal pattern will be adhered to.</b></p> <p><b>Address the concern of Child Nutrition staff regarding issue of ratio of potential students to staff.</b></p> <p><b>Clarify the anticipated % of Free and Reduced Meal students.</b></p>	

### Concerns and Additional Questions

**Clarify the method of procurement as to assure open and free competition.**

#### Response

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy assures that in any agreement that requires bidding, either by state or federal law, Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will use open and free competition. Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will contract with a food service vendor to provide child nutrition services for the charter school. In selecting that vendor, there will be a request for proposal process. A vendor will be selected from the eligible proposals received by the charter school.**

### Concerns and Additional Questions

**Clarify that USDA meal pattern will be adhered to.**

#### Response

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will utilize a food service contracted vendor to provide nutritious meals for all charter students. Northwest Arkansas Classical**

**Academy will fully comply with all state and federal regulations regarding meal patterns and meal services. With regard to the contract for vendor services for food services, Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy shall comply with all applicable state and federal regulations.**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Address the concern of Child Nutrition staff regarding issue of ratio of potential students to staff.**

**Response**

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will comply with the recommended staff to pupil ratio for child nutrition programs (1staff member to serve 100 students).**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Clarify the anticipated % of Free and Reduced Meal students.**

**Response**

**The anticipated free and reduced percentage for Bentonville is 28%.**

## STANDARD 20 OF APPLICATION: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- 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.

<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Meets the Standard</b>
		<b>X</b>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

## STANDARD 21 OF APPLICATION: WAIVERS

The Waivers section should describe any waiver from local or state law which the charter is seeking.

### Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A rationale for each and every waiver request; and
- A justification of how the waiver requests relate to the school's educational program.

Does Not Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Meets the Standard
		<b>X</b>

### Legal Comments

#### 1. Requested Waivers

- a. **Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106 (“Uniform dates for beginning and end of school year”). This waiver is not necessary to accommodate the Applicant’s planned adherence to the Bentonville School District school calendar. The Applicant should clarify why waiver is necessary.**
- b. **Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-902(a) (“Grading scale – Exemptions – Special education classes”): The past practice of the State Board has been to grant this waiver only as to non-core (i.e., elective) courses when the request is made in a new charter school application. The State Board has in the past granted waiver as to core courses only after a charter school has established itself and demonstrated a substantial need for the waiver. In addition, waiver may be granted only to the extent that the proposed grading scale is more rigorous than the scale provided by statute. Finally, to effectuate this waiver, the Applicant must also request waiver of ADE Rules Governing Uniform Grading Scales.**
- c. **Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1004 (“Qualified teachers in every public school classroom”), 6-17-309 (“Certification to teach grade or subject matter – Exceptions – Waiver”), 6-17-401 et seq. (“Teacher license requirement”), 6-17-902 (“Definitions”), & 6-17-919 (“Warrants void without valid certificate and contract”):**
  - i. **To effectuate this waiver, the Applicant must also request waiver of Standard 15.03 of the Standards for Accreditation, ADE Rules Governing Waivers for Substitute Teachers, and ADE Rules Governing Parental Notification of an Assignment of a Non- Licensed Teacher. If no waiver is sought of these rules, the applicant’s teachers may be required to be licensed.**

- ii. The ADE Rules Governing the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing Assessment and Accountability Program, Sections 5.02.4 and 5.03.2, requires that standardized assessments be administered according to procedures established by the ADE. The ADE's procedures require that certified teachers administer the standardized assessments. Violations of such procedures are subject to sanctions by the State Board pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-438.**
  
- ii. All teachers and school personnel must submit to the criminal background and central registry checks required by law.**
  
- iv. Waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-401 et seq. shall not be construed as a waiver of the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators.**

## **Concerns and Additional Questions (copy and paste from rubric document)**

### **1. Requested Waivers**

**a. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106 (“Uniform dates for beginning and end of school year”). This waiver is not necessary to accommodate the Applicant’s planned adherence to the Bentonville School District school calendar. The Applicant should clarify why waiver is necessary.**

**b. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-902(a) (“Grading scale – Exemptions – Special education classes”): The past practice of the State Board has been to grant this waiver only as to non-core (i.e., elective) courses when the request is made in a new charter school application. The State Board has in the past granted waiver as to core courses only after a charter school has established itself and demonstrated a substantial need for the waiver. In addition, waiver may be granted only to the extent that the proposed grading scale is more rigorous than the scale provided by statute. Finally, to effectuate this waiver, the Applicant must also request waiver of ADE Rules Governing Uniform Grading Scales.**

**c. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1004 (“Qualified teachers in every public school classroom”), 6-17-309 (“Certification to teach grade or subject matter – Exceptions – Waiver”), 6-17-401 *et seq.* (“Teacher license requirement”), 6-17-902 (“Definitions”), & 6-17-919 (“Warrants void without valid certificate and contract”):**

**i. To effectuate this waiver, the Applicant must also request waiver of Standard 15.03 of the Standards for Accreditation, ADE Rules Governing Waivers for Substitute Teachers, and ADE Rules Governing Parental Notification of an Assignment of a Non-Licensed Teacher. If no waiver is sought of these rules, the applicant’s teachers may be required to be licensed.**

**ii. The ADE Rules Governing the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing Assessment and Accountability Program, Sections 5.02.4 and 5.03.2, requires that standardized assessments be administered according to procedures established by the ADE. The ADE’s procedures require that certified teachers administer the standardized assessments. Violations of such procedures are subject to sanctions by the State Board pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-438.**

**iii. All teachers and school personnel must submit to the criminal background and central registry checks required by law.**

**iv. Waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-401 *et seq.* shall not be construed as a waiver of the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators.**

## **Response**

**Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy would like to add the following clarifying points to the current application:**

- 1. a. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106 (School Year Dates) – ResponsiveEd wishes to maintain this waiver request so that it will have maximum flexibility in accommodating its educational program in future years, when it may not always choose to follow the**
- b. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-902(a) (Grading Scale) – It is this applicant’s understanding that this waiver request is routinely requested by applicants in their initial charter applications, and that it is routinely granted by the State Board of**

**The application would especially like to point out that its proposed grading scale is more rigorous than the scale found in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-902. Specifically, there is no “D” grade in the proposed scale and the grade “F” will be assigned for grades below 70 (the normal “D” range is 60-69%).**

**To fully effectuate this waiver, additionally, the applicant**

- c. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1004 (Qualified Teachers in Every Public School Classroom), 6-17-309 (Certification to Teach Grade or Subject Matter – Exception – Waiver), 6-17-401 *et seq.*, (Teacher Licensure Requirement), 6-17-902 (Definitions), and 6-17-919 (Warrants Void Without Valid Certificate and Contract):**

**ResponsiveEd wishes to clarify and fully effectuate its waiver request in this area and waive: (1) Section 15.03 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation; (2) the ADE Rules Governing Waivers of Substitute Teachers; and (3) the ADE Rules Governing Parental Notification of an Assignment of a Non-**

## **2. Waivers Not Requested**

- a. In order to give us the maximum flexibility possible in attracting the best school superintendent to work in our unique school environment, we wish to request this waiver from the licensure requirement for our superintendent position:**

**Arkansas Code Ann. § 6-13-109 and Section 15.01 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation (both concerning the licensure of school superintendents) and Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-427 and ADE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring Program (concerning required mentoring of first-year superintendents).**

- b. As Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will contract with ResponsiveEd of Texas to provide the services of Business Manager, ResponsiveEd wishes to clarify its application under this Standard by requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2302**

**and the ADE Rules Governing Minimum Qualifications for General Business Managers.**

**c. ResponsiveEd wishes to clarify its application under this Standard to request a waiver of the requirements of Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and 6-48-101 *et seq.*; Standard 19.03 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for**

**Accreditation for Arkansas School Districts and Public School Districts; and Section 4.00 of the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding (all concerning the provision of Alternative Learning Environments).**

**As currently stated in our application, ResponsiveEd's approach to student education is made possible by a small-school environment and our innovative, non-typical approaches to the instruction which leads these students to become lifelong learners and allows us to provide an inclusive, focused and quality education environment for all students within our usual educational program, thus obviating the need to provide a separate non-inclusive learning environment.**

## STANDARD 22 OF APPLICATION: 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:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- 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.

Legal Comments	Reference
<b>Applicant responded within the context of this standard. A complete desegregation analysis will be presented to the State Board of Education.</b>	
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

#### Attachments:

**Additional and/or clarifying information is needed as follows:**

**Include the superintendent, the chief financial officer, the chief operating officer, and the regional director on the proposed salary schedule.**

**Correct the number of instructional minutes as provided on Page 56.**

#### Concerns and Additional Questions

**Include the superintendent, the chief financial officer, the chief operating officer, and the regional director on the proposed salary schedule.**

#### Response

**Services for the positions of superintendent, chief financial officer, and chief operating officer will be provided through the administrative services provided by ResponsiveEd of Texas. Contracted amounts will be based on a percentage of total state revenues and not the specific salary amounts for either position. Salary budgeted for the Regional Director position will be a percentage (approximately 1/3) of the total salary. The Regional Director position will not be a contracted position. Please see attached revised salary schedule.**

**Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Correct the number of instructional minutes as provided on Page 56.**

**Response**

**Please see attached, revised schedule.**