



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

2021 Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application – Part 1 of 4

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA)

Name of Proposed Charter

Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)

Initial Application - Deadline June 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
Applications will not be accepted after this time.

Final Application - Deadline July 15, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
Applications will not be accepted after this time.

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

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Charter School Office
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-683-5312

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Proposed Charter:	Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA) Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)
Primary Contact for Application:	Paul G. Vallas
Primary Contact Phone:	504-655-4319
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Name of sponsoring entity:

American Quality Schools – Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

The sponsoring entity is eligible to apply for a public school charter under the following category:

- A public institution of higher education
- A private nonsectarian institution of higher education
- A governmental entity
- An organization that is nonsectarian in its programs and operations and is, or will be, exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Name of Charter Management Organization:

American Quality Schools, Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

Other Schools Managed by the CMO:

Name of School	Location	Year Established
Numerous successful charter schools have been opened and operated by the two executive members of the AQS team submitting this proposal. Mr. Paul Vallas, while serving as CEO of Chicago Public		

Schools, Philadelphia Public Schools, and New Orleans Public Schools, has created and/or overseen the operation of over 100 total charter schools. Among these schools, 11 have been military academies. Dr. Michael Bakalis, the founder and CEO of American Quality Schools (AQS), has founded and/or operated 19 charter schools and one private secondary school. Since 1999, AQS has been involved in charter startups, charter school management, and charter and private school educational consulting. The model was to work with local citizens groups to launch a school, continue its management for a specific period of time, and then transition the ongoing operation of the school to the original citizen's groups. In 2015, AQS made the decision to redirect its efforts and focus on educational consulting and work in the area of international education.

This new partnership is designed to introduce the military/first responder model to additional locations across the United States as a viable, scalable option to meet specific student academic and career needs. Given the successful track record of previous military academies, this model is extremely effective in areas with high rates of low-socioeconomic families; high rates of student cultural and ethnic diversity; and lower graduation rates.

1. Describe the public hearing which was held for the purpose of assessing support for the establishment of this public charter school. Include the number of attendees and the feedback and/or public comments that were received.

The first public hearing was held on May 26, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. through an open Zoom session.

- The online login information was Meeting ID: 452 457 8282 Passcode: 7F43zR
- The telephone access information was 1-312-626-6799 – Passcode/PIN: 971357

The public was invited and encouraged to attend via notices published in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette on May 7th, May 10th, May 16th, and May 19th. Copies are included in *Application Part 3 of 4 - Attachments 2A1* (pgs. 45-49). No preregistration was required.

A presentation concerning the sponsoring organization, American Quality Schools; the intended purpose and structure of the school; recruitment strategy; academic focus and options; community benefits; and long-term plans for the academy were presented to those present. Only one community member attended the session. However, there were technical issues that resulted in the meeting starting 15 minutes late. As a result, a second public hearing will be held in early July, which gives the community addition opportunity for input. The participant was an assistant superintendent from one of the school districts within the boundaries of the proposed charter school. He asked several questions and responded favorably.

A second public hearing was held on July 6, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. through an open Zoom session.

- The online login information was Meeting ID: 860 4617 6128 Passcode/PIN: 170284
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86046176128?pwd=dkdqMDFDTm01YW5pUGtlQ1hFcjd1QT09>
- The telephone access information was +1 312 626 6799 – Meeting ID: 860 4617 6128 Passcode/PIN: 170284

The public was invited and encouraged to attend via notices published in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette on June 16th, June 20th, and June 27th. Copies are included in *Application Part 4 of 4 - Attachment 2A2* (pgs. 50-53). No preregistration was required.

A presentation concerning the sponsoring organization, American Quality Schools; the intended purpose and structure of the school; recruitment strategy; academic focus and options; community benefits; and long-term plans for the academy were presented to those present.

There were no attendees in attendance at the Zoom session beyond the AQS team members. However, the presentation was still given in case someone phoned in and they did not acknowledge their presence. The presentation was recorded and saved for documentation purposes.

2. Describe the educational need for the charter in the geographical area to be served. Include quantitative data related to academic achievement.

Current Education Statistics for Little Rock Area

From 2014 – 2021, the student enrollment in the State of Arkansas has remained relatively stable (**less than 1% decline**), the Little Rock (**12% decline**) and North Little Rock (**11% decline**), and Pulaski County Special (**33% decline**) School Districts have experienced a larger decline in student enrollment.

In 2021, in the State of Arkansas, 59.8% of the students' ethnicity was identified as "white"; however, in the Little Rock (19.2%), North Little Rock (26.4%), and Pulaski County Special (39.1%) School Districts that percentage was significantly lower. This statistical gap indicates the Little Rock metropolitan area is not representative of the state as a whole regarding ethnic diversity in student population.

In 2021, in the State of Arkansas, 65.4% of the students were identified as eligible for free or reduced lunch. In the Little Rock (78.0%) and North Little Rock (99.9%) School Districts that percentage was much higher. In these school districts, the vast majority of their students are identified as at-risk under federal Title 1 guidelines.

From 2014 – 2021, the graduation rate in the State of Arkansas has experienced a moderate increase (86.9% - 88.8%). However, the Little Rock (78.2% - 78.3%), and North Little Rock (83.8% - 82.5%) School Districts have not demonstrated the same type of growth. One specific concern relates to Hispanic/Latino students in the Little Rock area. The 2020 State of Arkansas graduation rate for Hispanic/Latino students is 86.8% while Little Rock School District's was 71.4%, which was still an increase of their 2014 graduation rate of 68.6%.

Note: All data was gathered from the Arkansas Department of Education website.
<https://insight.ade.arkansas.gov/?lea=AR#counties>

Why does these data matter?

General Academic Highlights for Current Academies

The current military academies on average are greater than 80% minority and 80% poverty. In each, Academy test scores and graduation rates outperform their local school districts. College entrance rates for each academy rank higher than their local school districts average. Military academies also report minimal behavioral problems

Special Highlights include the New Orleans Military and Maritime Academy (NOMA) which is only

one of three A-rated schools in Louisiana and the top non select enrollment school in New Orleans. The Phoenix and Rickover Military Academy's in Chicago are over 95% minority and 90% poverty and outperform the district average in reading and math scores by 25-100%, respectfully. The AMFRA will be partnering with NOMMA and will be incubating its leadership team there. We firmly believe the same type of results are attainable for the Little Rock Academy.

List of Current Military Academies

*Chicago Military Academy at Bronzeville (1999) <https://www.chicagomilitaryacademy.org/>

*General Patton Military Academy (1999)
https://www.farragutcareeracademy.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?type=d&uREC_ID=44232

*George Washington Carver Military Academy (2000)
<https://www.carvermilitary.org/>

*Phoenix Military Academy (2004)
<https://www.phoenixmilitary.org/>

*Rickover Naval Academy (2005)
<https://www.rickovernaval.org/>

*Philadelphia Military Academy at Elverson (2005)
<https://pma.philasd.org/>

*Marine Leadership Academy (2007)
<https://marine.cps.edu/#>

*Chicago Air force Military Academy (2009)
<https://www.afahs.org/>

*New Orleans Military and Maritime Academy (2010)
<https://nomma.net/>

*Bridgeport Military and Maritime Academy (2013)
<https://www.bridgeportedu.net/Page/12939>

3. Describe in general terms, the area within the boundaries of the school district where the applicant intends to obtain a facility to be used for the open-enrollment public charter school.

The Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA) will be located within the boundaries of the Little Rock School District, the North Little Rock School District, and/or the Pulaski County Special School District.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
Grades to be Offered	9	9-10	9-11	9-12	9-12
Enrollment Cap	200	400	600	800	800

Charter Site Address:	To be determined
City:	To be determined
Chief Operating Officer:	To be determined
Phone:	To be determined
School District Where Charter Will be Located:	To be determined
List the districts from which the charter school expects to draw students:	Little Rock School District, North Little Rock School District, Pulaski County Special School District

4. What type of educational model will the school follow?

- Traditional
- 100% Virtual
- College Prep
- Credit Recovery/ALE
- Other: **Military Academy/First Responder concentration/focus**

5. Provide the mission statement of the proposed charter school:

We believe our students have a right to receive a quality education, to learn in a safe and disciplined environment; they should be encouraged by the academy, the parents, and the community to manifest their dreams through creating personal visions for their lives and active goal setting.

Our vision is to become an internationally renowned educational institution where young women and men are challenged and nurtured through rigorous college preparatory and education-to-career curricula that are designed to assure student learning, student progress, and student achievement resulting in exceptional post-secondary qualifications.

The school’s mission is “Building global leaders and citizens...one cadet at a time,” AMFRA is committed to providing structure in a nurturing environment supported by learning opportunities to promote character building, leadership training, and reading and math improvement to achieve academic growth and academic excellence for all cadets.

This mission is accomplished in part through:

- promoting citizenship
- developing individual leadership
- communicating effectively
- strengthening individual and collective self-esteem
- providing the incentive to live drug-free
- improving physical fitness
- promoting graduation from high school
- working as team members

6. Provide a list and brief description of the programmatic features that the school will implement in order to accomplish the mission.

The Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy (AMFRA) will provide a unique learning opportunity for highly motivated students who desire a distinctive educational experience. Students who choose the Academy will be privileged to study in a focused, college preparatory environment guided by a team of teachers and retired military instructors who bring unparalleled experience to the classroom. The expectation of the Academy is that cadets will develop their minds, bodies and character in an atmosphere where active learning stimulates curiosity. The Academy will foster respect, integrity, inclusion and diversity as core values in its operations. All students are welcome including those with special needs. AMFRA will provide the structure and personal motivation needed by youth to succeed in our changing world. This will be accomplished in part by:

- Integrating the JROTC curriculum, which fosters a climate of increased personal respect, discipline, courtesy, and integrity, into the daily school experience of all students/cadets. Established by the National Defense Act of 1916 and expanded by Congress in 1964, the JROTC program operates within a military framework to train student cadets in leadership and motivational skills that will serve them during their school years and throughout their lives.
- Providing a “First Responders” academic and extracurricular program concentration. AMFRA’s First Responders Program (FRP) introduces an array of work-study occupations as well as work-study opportunities with existing public and private institutions. (*A first responder is someone whose job is to respond immediately ((first)) when there is an accident or emergency. First Responders include Police Officers, Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians, Nursing, Aviation/Drone Operators.*) AMFRA will partner with local First Responder institutions including the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office, Little Rock Fire Department, MEMS, and the Reserve Officers Training Program (ROTC). AMFRA will also partner with a local college or University that offers advanced certifications to earn credits towards an associate degree in First Responders areas of interests.
- Implementing a tiered cadet corps student structure, which allows for progressive leadership training and opportunities. The Cadet Chain of Command will be empowered as much as possible to lead the Corps of Cadets. Extensive leadership and staff training shall be done with each empowered group and they, in turn, should assist in the training of their replacements. Cadets shall be actively counseled and mentored on a regular basis regarding overall performance. The cadet staff can complete many daily tasks on behalf of the administration (announcements, attendance taking, other low to medium risk daily activities). Cadets will have

unprecedented control of their environment, giving them the opportunity to learn and experience true leadership that can seldom be gained in many traditional high school designs.

- All students will have Personalized Learning Plans (PLP) beginning with their enrollment. These PLPs will be designed with an advisory teacher, parent, and the student. The purpose is to map an academic path for the student based on their personal interests, future goals, and learning needs. Students qualifying for special education services will have their IEP as the basis for their PLP.
- Delivering a college preparatory curriculum to all students with a STEM emphasis on engineering and coding. Given the increased need in the global workforce for engineers of all types as well as highly skilled coders, the core curriculum will have a heavy focus on developing these areas for post-secondary study and/or career entry.
- Increasing the amount of instructional time in a school day to allow for additional student learning opportunities based on the academy's purpose. AMFRA's instructional day shall consist of no less than 420 minutes of instruction each day Monday through Friday, which exceeds the State requirement of 370.
- Using data to inform instruction and monitor student progress. Instructional Leadership Teams (ILT) at AMFRA analyze results from interim assessments and provide feedback to teachers highlighting trends to either correct or replicate. Proper and deliberate use of data informs the faculty of what our cadets know and, perhaps, do not know. In addition, learning assistants/interventionists will be available to conduct specially focused math and literacy support for struggling students.
- Providing the state-required curriculum but also significantly expanding it to allow students to develop skills and interests that go beyond the traditional high school models. Using a combination of classroom-based, virtual, and work-site-based learning experiences, students will find greater diversity and relevance in their post-secondary transition preparation.
- Having a high level of technology integration throughout academics and operations. Technology will be integral to the delivery of instruction and assessments; managing educational data; engaging the parent and business community; performing ongoing operational functions of the academy; and communicating academy progress and success.
- Digital synchronous and asynchronous learning options will be embedded into the curriculum model to ensure ongoing and flexible instructional opportunities for all students. All students will be provided a personal computing device to extend the school day and take advantage of these learning options.

Other common features of military academy charter schools include:

- Small schools with high highly focused levels of teacher-student interaction
- Instill values of discipline, work ethic, leadership, and character development
- Emphasize service learning and giving back to the community

- Partner with organizations such ROTC, police and fire departments, TSA, Emergency Management Services, Med-Tech institutions to promote career opportunities
- Military-type governance structure with a chain of command and students organized into companies, platoons, and squads

7. Establish performance criteria that will be used to measure the school’s progress in improving student learning and meeting or exceeding the state educational goals. The mission of the school should be reflected in the performance criteria.

Goal	Measuring Instrument
<p>To engage student cadets in learning experiences and activities that will enable them to exceed Arkansas standards and to prepare them for post-secondary education and the work world.</p> <p>To be eligible for graduation, student cadets shall successfully complete the requirements set forth by the Arkansas State Board of Elementary and Education and the AMFRA graduation requirements.</p>	<p>The evaluation of student progress be based on State DOE mandates and guidelines. Specifically, the AMFRA set the following criteria for a success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of freshmen will be on track to graduate, • 75% of juniors will meet or exceed state standards, • 90% of all student cadets will graduate within five years of entry, • 80% of graduates will enroll in post-secondary (full or part time), • The Academy will post a 95% annual attendance rate.
<p>To develop and improve student cadet skills in the areas of leadership, citizenship, character development, self-discipline, communication, group dynamics, team building, and other related areas. To gain the ability to think logically and to communicate effectively.</p>	<p>All cadets will demonstrate their leadership capacity in multiple venues throughout their academy journey through academic, extracurricular, service-learning, and/or program concentration (JROTC/First Responder) area involvement. Accommodations will be provided to students with an IEP.</p>
<p>To ensure that student cadets display disciplined behavior conducive to learning, and act with honesty and integrity.</p>	<p>All students will refrain from behaviors that result in disciplinary action or demonstrate positive behavior modification after committing an infraction. Accommodations will be provided to students with an IEP.</p>
<p>To challenge student cadets to reach beyond their perceived capabilities in all aspects of their lives, to gain confidence and self-esteem, and to appreciate the importance of physical fitness and good nutrition and health.</p>	<p>All students will participate in school sponsored activities related to physical fitness, nutrition, and healthy lifestyle choices. Accommodations will be provided to students with special needs</p>

	<p>in these areas including those students with an IEP.</p>
<p>To involve parents in the total education process of the student cadet.</p>	<p>In addition to the academy’s parent advisory council, ongoing synchronous and asynchronous parent engagement activities will be conducted to ensure they understand how their children are doing at the academy, both academically and socially. These include meetings related to their student’s Personalized Learning Plan/Individual Education Plan. The goal is to have a minimum of two “parent touches” for all students per grading period.</p>

CURRICULUM

8. Will the school provide the required courses as outlined in the Standards for Accreditation and the 38 Required High School Course Offerings? If not, explain what changes will be made. What additional electives will be offered?

The Academy will meet all Arkansas state academic requirements in Standard 1-A including the 38 Required High School Course Offerings and Arkansas Student Graduation Requirements. In fact, the Academy graduation requirements exceed State requirements. Given the school will open over a four-year phase in approach (1 grade per year), the course catalog is subject to change based on student needs, state standards/requirements, and school resources.

In addition, we are increasing the amount of instructional time in a school day to allow for additional student learning opportunities based on the academy’s purpose. AMFRA’s instructional day shall consist of no less than 420 minutes (7 hours) of instruction each day Monday through Friday, which exceeds the State requirement of 370.

The matrix provided below is our current intended four-year path. It outlines the standard curriculum and graduation option. However, AMFRA will also provide courses and learning opportunities that support the alternate pathway to graduation as needed.

AMFRA Proposed Course Matrix

Language Arts (State Graduation Requirement - 4 Units) (AMFRA requirement of 5 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
English 9 (state requirement)	9	1	1
English 10 (state requirement)	10	2	1

ELA **state requirement** alternatives for English 11/12 (All students will select four of six)

- ELA state elective-Technical Reading and Writing for Trade & Industry	11-12	3	.5
- ELA state elective- Reading and Writing for STEM	11-12	3	.5
- ELA state elective- Cross Cultural Literature	11-12	3	.5
- ELA state elective- Film as Literature	11-12	3	.5
- ELA state elective- Entrepreneurship and Innovation	11-12	3	.5
- ELA state elective- Public Relations	11-12	3	.5

Other ELA electives

Transitional Literacy Ready	9-10	1	1
Journalism I	11-12	3	1
Writer’s Workshop for ACT/SAT	10-12	2	.5
ACT/SAT Prep English Reading & Grammar	10-12	2	.5
AP English Literature & Composition	9-12	2	1

The State only requires one of these courses; however, the Academy will require both for all students.

Oral Communication: Personal	9-12	1	.5
Oral Communication: Professional	9-12	2	.5

Science (State Graduation Requirement - 3 Units) (AMFRA requirement of 4 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
Physical Science (state requirement or higher)	9-10	1	1
Biology (state requirement or higher)	10-12	2	1
Chemistry (state requirement or higher)	10-12	2	1
Engineering Science I (academy requirement for all)	10-12	2	1
Earth Science	10-12	2	1
*Computer Science I (*Flex Credit w/ Mathematics)	10-12	2	1
*Computer Science II (*Flex Credit w/ Mathematics)	10-12	2	1
Physics	11-12	3	1
Engineering Science II	11-12	3	1
AP Biology	10-12	2	1
AP Engineering Science	11-12	3	1
AP Chemistry	11-12	3	1

Mathematics (State Graduation Requirement - 4 Units) (AMFRA requirement of 4 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
Algebra I (state requirement)	9-11	1	1
Algebra II	9-12	1	1
Geometry (state requirement)	9-12	1	1
Transitional Math Ready	9-12	1	1
*Computer Science I (*Flex Credit w/ Science)	10-12	2	1
*Computer Science II (*Flex Credit w/ Science)	10-12	2	1
Technical Math for College & Careers	10-12	2	1
Pre-Calculus	10-12	2	1
Calculus	11-12	3	1
Trigonometry	11-12	3	1
AP Statistics	11-12	3	1

Social Studies (State Graduation Requirement - 3 Units) (AMFRA requirement of 3 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
Civics (state requirement)	9-12	1	.5
U.S. History Since 1890 (state requirement)	9-12	1	1
World History Since 1450 (state requirement)	9-12	2	1
Economics & Personal Finance (state requirement)	9-12	2	.5
Arkansas History	10-12	1	.5
Military History	10-12	2	.5
Technology and Society: An Historical Review	10-12	2	.5
Psychology I	10-12	2	.5
AP United States Government & Politics	11-12	3	1

Fine Arts (State Graduation Requirement – .5 Units) (AMFRA requirement of 1 unit)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
Visual and Graphic Art I	9-12	1	1
Visual and Graphic Art II	10-12	2	1
Visual and Graphic Art III	11-12	3	1
Visual and Graphic Art IV	12	4	1
Instrumental Music I	9-12	1	1
Instrumental Music II	10-12	2	1
Instrumental Music III	11-12	3	1
Instrumental Music IV	12	4	1
Vocal Music I	9-12	1	1
Vocal Music II	10-12	2	1
Vocal Music III	11-12	3	1
Vocal Music IV	12	4	1

Career Focus or Content Electives (State Graduation Requirement - 6 units) (AMFRA requirement of 6 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
JROTC curriculum options (academy req of 4)	9-12	1	8
First Responders curriculum options (academy req of 2)	9-12	1	6

World Languages (State Graduation Requirement – 0 Units) (AMFRA requirement of 2 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
Spanish I	9-12	1	1
Spanish II	9-12	2	1
Spanish III	9-12	3	1
Mandarin Chinese I	9-12	1	1
Mandarin Chinese II	9-12	2	1
Mandarin Chinese III	9-12	3	1

Other Courses (State Graduation Requirement – 1 Unit) (AMFRA requirement of 2 units)

Course Name	Grades Offered	Year of Introduction	Credit Unit
Health & Safety I (.5 State requirement)	9-12	1	.5
Health & Safety II	9-12	1	.5
Physical Education I (.5 state requirement)	9-12	1	.5
Physical Education II	9-12	1	.5
Physical Education III	10-12	2	.5
Physical Education IV	10-12	2	.5

Total State Graduation Requirements: 22

Total AMFRA Graduation Requirements: 27

In addition, a variety of extracurricular and co-curricular activities will be provide based on student interest and academy focus.

Notes

Students must complete a digital course for credit – A.C.A. § 6-16-1406

Students must earn a credit in a course that includes personal & family finance in grades 9-12 – A.C.A. § 6-16-135

Students must pass the Arkansas Civics' Exam – A.C.A. § 6-16-149

Students must complete hands-on CPR training – A.C.A. § 6-16-143

In addition, the following considerations are integrated into the academic program design:

- Academics use a college preparatory curriculum including four years of successful JROTC participation and advancement.
- Digital synchronous and asynchronous learning will be key to continuous and flexible learning

options for all students.

- AMFRA promotes academic achievement motivating cadets towards the goal of post-secondary education especially in the engineering and coding disciplines.
- The academics create an intellectual atmosphere that allows for the diversity of ideas without fear of ridicule.
- A daily formation is required with cadet activities from planning meetings to team practices. Attendance at formations and uniform inspections affect JROTC grading.
- Citizenship, character development, service learning, values, physical training, leadership, and military customs and tradition are integrated into Academy life to reinforce the “whole person” concept.
- The Academy buildings will be open as staffing permits to allow maximum time for cadets to practice, foster teamwork, and team build.

9. Describe the process that will be used to ensure all curriculum materials used in the educational program are aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards?

The Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA) offers a standards-based program designed to prepare cadets for the rigor of postsecondary academics using Arkansas’s Learning Standards to inform instruction and measure student achievement.

The curriculum will be mapped to the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. After an in-depth analysis of standards, the team identifies the types of assessments necessary to allow students to showcase their new understanding and demonstrate their growth on essential skills and standards. Once evidence of mastery is determined, an assessment map is created to indicate the types of assessments to be used to monitor and evaluate performance on each standard. The team will then design curriculum maps comprised of learning objectives, lesson activities, and digital and interactive resources that will lead students to successful mastery of concepts.

There will be an annual curriculum review retreat. During the school’s staff annual curriculum review and alignment exercises, the staff will verify the standards, benchmarks and performance standards are addressed in the appropriate manner, such as lesson plans, pacing guides, etc. The staff will also ensure that best practices are used and recommend improvements where needed. Special attention will be placed on how using project-based learning, collaborative learning, differentiated learning will be a few of the methods used to teach the state’s curriculum frameworks.

In addition, AMFRA will comply with Arkansas’s Right to Read Act. The science of reading is key in the academy’s literacy efforts, which also includes using Arkansas’s Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (RISE) initiative to foster a culture of reading. The English/Language Arts program will use instruction that is explicit, systematic, cumulative, and diagnostic, including dyslexia programs, evidence-based reading intervention programs, and specific curriculum from Arkansas Approved Literacy Curriculum Programs.

In addition, AMFRA uses the Instructional Development System (IDS) approach, which focus attention on core alignment and instructional improvement. Each IDS is a unified system of curricular strategies, classroom materials, formative and summative assessments, targeted professional development, and personalized coaching. The IDS model is designed to provide increased, but appropriate, rigor to the classroom experience while thoroughly preparing cadets for college entrance exams and state-level

summative assessments. There is a strong emphasis on project-based learning.

The Arkansas Public School Resource Center (APSRC) will be a significant resource utilized to stay informed of modifications to the Arkansas academic standards including curriculum materials. Any updates communicated through the State Board of Education from any sources will immediately be reviewed by AQS and AMFRA leadership and disseminated to staff accordingly.

STUDENT SERVICES

10. Describe how the school will provide guidance and counseling services for all students.

AMFRA will comply with Arkansas Act 190 of 2019 regarding guidance and counseling services. Our program model includes staffing one guidance counselor per grade level. Therefore, in year 1 we would have one guidance counselor and in year 2, we would have two and so on. In addition to meeting the requirements in the statute, all first-year students will be assigned an advisory teacher that works with them throughout their high school career. AMFRA will specially train a cadre of teachers with a secondary assignment as advisory teachers. Coordinating with the guidance counselor, these teachers will be available to help guide students and parents regarding course choices, career options, and provide other social and emotional supports as appropriate. The guidance counselor will coordinate the Advisory Teacher program. We will seek outside consulting services on a contractual basis for more advanced needs.

11. Describe how the school will provide library media services for all students.

AMFRA is requesting a waiver for having a licensed library-media specialist onsite and a traditional library-media center. Instead, the academy will have a full-time digital literacy coach to assist students in developing critical communications, research, and technology skills. The individual will be housed in the Academy's learning resource center, a multipurpose, large and small group learning area. The library-media standards will be embedded into the English/Language Arts curriculum and instruction.

Also, all students will be issued a personal computing device that allows student access to public academic, research, and project materials during and outside the school day. In addition, access to digital library resources including "full text" books will be provided through a subscription service available to all enrolled students. In addition, we will partner with the local public library to assist students in getting a library card to access additional print books and materials, audio books, and local resources to supplement their school-provided digital resources.

12. Describe how the school will provide special education services for all students.

AMFRA will assure that its special education program meets all requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). A complete continuum of service placements in alignment with IDEA goals, will be afforded all eligible students. Each student has an assigned IEP team. The roles of a support team include creating and maintaining a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and recommending the instructional accommodations and related wrap-around services determined necessary to ensure all students meet their academic and social goals. The IEP team will consistently evaluate the progress of each student based on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

All teachers providing services to students will hold a valid Arkansas special education teacher license. AMFRA will comply with all state special education class size and teaching load requirements. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy support services will be provided to all students as required by their IEP. These services will be acquired on a contractual basis with appropriately licensed local service providers. We will have a full-time nurse on staff as well, which can provide immediate medical support as needed. In addition, transportation, compliant with state and federal laws, will be provided to students qualifying under IDEA.

General education teachers will be provided a copy of each student's IEP plan at a glance at the beginning of the school year and will assure the document is kept confidential and securely stored in the classroom for collaborative purposes. Any teacher working with students who have disabilities are required to use the IEPs to incorporate accommodations, modifications, and instructional strategies geared towards meeting student needs. General and special educators will have access to resources that guide instructional decisions in an inclusive setting and address challenging behaviors. Resources will include curriculum guides and intervention materials to aid struggling students.

General and special educators will work together in a collaborative effort to continually develop a foundation for effective strategies that promote growth for all students. These collaborative efforts will strive to involve other partners, such as parents, community organizations, and related service providers, to accomplish short and long-term positive outcomes in academic, social, and emotional areas. Our goal is to maximize new partnerships to increase accountability, share resources/strategies, analyze data, and meet agreed-upon student goals.

With regard to required state academic assessment, students served under IDEA will be assessed in accordance with state requirements. Students with IEPs may have access to unique accessibility tools and supports to fit each student's needs and preferences. Some of these tools and supports are delivered through Arkansas's online assessment system while others are provided outside the system, by the teacher. Accommodations are made for each student based on their IEP.

Any student with an IEP that is determined eligible to take the ACT Aspire state assessment will be provided testing accommodations if designated in their IEP. For students with significant cognitive disabilities who qualify for the alternate assessment, we will instead use the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLMs) assessments. The state's DLM Alternate Assessment System helps educators facilitate student success by illustrating the interrelation among the knowledge, skills, and understandings necessary to meet academic content standards. We will use it to facilitate assessment for these individuals.

All students will be provided opportunities to participate in extracurricular, cocurricular, and specialized content activities. For students with disabilities (physical, cognitive, behavioral), appropriate accommodations will be made to allow them to be actively engaged with their peers. If the student receives special education services, the types of accommodations will be determined by the IEP team.

13. Describe how the school will provide dyslexia screening and services for all students.

Early identification of students at risk for reading difficulties is critical in developing the appropriate instructional plan. "The best solution to the problem of reading failure is to allocate resources for early identification and prevention." (Torgesen, 2000). Initial screening is the first step in identifying the students who are at risk for learning difficulties. According to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-41-603, a school district shall screen students for dyslexia in grade three or higher experiencing difficulty, as noted by a classroom teacher

If the initial, level I, or level II dyslexia screening indicates that a student has characteristics of dyslexia, the Response to Intervention (RTI) process shall be used (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-41-603 (c)(1)). Dyslexia intervention services fall under the RTI framework. If dyslexia screening indicates characteristics of dyslexia exist, then the student shall be provided dyslexia intervention services (Ark.

Code Ann. § 6-41-603 (c)(2)(A)).

For older students, grades 3 and up, it may be more difficult to find age and grade appropriate curriculum-based measures and informal diagnostic inventories or checklists for an accurate identification. Given our students are high school level, that may indeed be a challenge. However, by initially conducting level II dyslexia screening using standardized norm referenced assessments, it allows a comparison of the student's performance on the individual components to other students the same age and grade. Administering a level II dyslexia screening for an older student, is also a more efficient use of the student's time and the assessment administrator's time. The level II dyslexia screening data, can provide solid justification for outlining an appropriate 504 service and accommodation plan.

Personnel administering the screener will be trained in the screening tools. School resources and enrollment will influence individual district decisions about who should give and score the screening tools. Because the data will be used to help guide instruction, classroom teachers will participate in screening, scoring, and progress monitoring. AMFRA will comply with all required dyslexia reporting regulations.

14. Describe how the school will provide screening and instruction for English Language Learners.

We will meet the federal requirements to properly identify, assess, and support English learners through an effective English language development program, and submit an annual district-wide English Learner Plan to the DESE including a Home Language Survey, Required Parent Notifications, and ESOL Student Assessment.

15. Describe how the school will address the needs of gifted and talented students.

A waiver for the Gifted and Talented program is being requested as we believe our entire educational concept is built on the differentiation of instruction according to the subject matter and student ability including the ability to earn college credit for many of the college preparatory and JROTC/First Responder concentration classes. Students will be encouraged regularly to "think outside the box" in their day-to-day classroom experiences. AMFRA students will also be offered a rigorous core curriculum that also has an integrated engineering and coding focus to enhance their individual interests and skills. Through the use of classroom-based, virtual, and work-site-based learning experience, it will support differences in learning style preferences and different learning rates. Using our personalized learning plans, we believe all our students will be challenged in their learning, and consequently, their achievements will reflect this.

16. Describe how the school will address the needs of students who meet the criteria for an alternative learning environment.

The AMFRA educational model is comprehensive enough that it can effectively accommodate the needs of students who would ordinarily be placed in an alternative learning environment. We believe the level of involvement will offset many of the student's struggles with classroom behavior reducing the need for ALE. AMFRA will provide an individualized approach to engage students through small class sizes, teacher-pupil ratio, using methods of instruction that are very hands-on and at appropriate levels. In addition, the use of multiple positive behavior intervention strategies will be used to proactively addresses students' social and emotional needs.

AMFRA will offer extensive educational and social services to address each student's individual needs and help them thrive within the usual classroom setting. We will have a certified guidance counselor(s) on staff. For students with disabilities that result in behavior issues, their IEP team will take the lead in determining what is the most appropriate alternative learning environment. However, should a student need services beyond our capabilities, we will seek external licensed counseling and guidance to provide this student with the most supportive environment. The goal is to make our standard program robust but flexible enough to meet any student's needs for alternative learning environments.

17. Describe the transportation services that will be provided by the school.

AMFRA understands that transportation to and from school may create a hardship for a significant percentage of families in the community. Therefore, daily transportation will be provided using a combination of options.

Currently, the following specific strategies are being considered as part of the total solution.

- 1) Contract with a carrier to provide door to door transportation for students with unique or special needs.
- 2) Contract with a carrier to collect students at pre-determined locations using a hub model.
- 3) Partner with metro transportation to get bus passes for students.
- 4) Leverage any transportation consortiums available

We envision using all three concurrently. After the enrollment lottery is completed, we will have a better idea about our students' needs. Also, after the final site has been selected, other viable strategies may be identified.

18. Describe how parents and guardians will have opportunities to engage with school staff regarding school operations and the progress of their child.

Parental involvement in the educational process is key to any child's overall success and well-being. AMFRA recognizes the importance of family in the learning process and plans to address this component by establishing a close working relationship with our students and their families through effective communication and a variety of engagement strategies.

The communication process includes:

- Ongoing communication will be critical to keep parents updated about the academic progress of their child. Operational matters that affect the students and/or parents will also be regularly communicated as needed. Communication will occur through the school's website, phone calls, email, and other modes of print and digital communication. Examples of specific activities include weekly e-bulletins, automated phone contact updates or notices, digital suggestions/concerns portal, subscriber digital push notifications, parent portal, etc.

Engagement strategies include but are not limited to:

- *Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs)* - Collaboration between parents and educators will assist students in creating their personalized learning plans. Parents will be provided with informational packets at the beginning of each year, which will explain the process of creating their student's personalized learning plan and how to access them electronically or in writing if needed. Parents will have continuous access to their student's personalized learning plan

through the school website. We will work with the public library to ensure processes are in place to facilitate parent access to public workstations that can be used to access these as well. Quarterly conferences between parents and teachers will include a review of the student's personalized learning plan to assess needs, track progress, and make adjustments. For students receiving special education services, their IEP will serve as the basis for a PLP.

- *Parent/Community Participation Opportunities* - AMFRA will host Volunteer Days to allow community members, including parents, to interact with students providing mutual learning opportunities. This strategy supports social development and enables students to apply knowledge in a real-world context. It also allows parents and community members to see what is occurring at AMFRA and provide input about potential improvements.
- *Academy Town Forums* – There will be regularly scheduled monthly academy school board meetings, which are open to the public. However, the academy leadership team will also host public forums to engage the parents/community on selected topics for open dialog. The topics will typically be related to the current needs of AMFRA or future direction/goals.
- *Quality and Satisfaction Surveys* – AMFRA will conduct and maintain an ongoing formal survey process designed to obtain actionable data about parent/community perspective on the quality of and satisfaction with the academy.

19. Describe how food services will be provided for students.

AMFRA will seek out a local vendor to supply hot and cold nutritious meals for all students every day at a reasonable cost through the Request for Proposals (RFP's) process. The nurse/nutritionist will consult with the vendor to ensure that menus are healthy and that foods that may trigger any severe allergies are either left out or easy to identify. The school will meet all USDA and Arkansas nutrition guidelines. While the specifics of the menus can only be developed once the nurse/nutritionist is hired and the vendor selected, in general, students will have milk, fruit and an entrée each day, and there will always be a vegetarian option to include students with dietary restrictions.

The school plans to participate in the National School Lunch Program and students who qualify for free or reduced meals will receive them. The school plans to offer breakfast, lunch, and an afterschool snack through contracted services with a local vendor. The school will use the process outlined in the Arkansas Department of Education School Eligibility Manual to determine eligibility. AMFRA will also apply for the "The Backpack Program" to enable students to continue to have access to daily healthy meals on weekends and scheduled breaks.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

20. Describe the governing structure of the open-enrollment charter school including board composition, selection process, length of term and responsibilities.

American Quality Schools (AQS)'s General Governance Model for AMFRA

The absence of a clear governance and decision structure has been a problem for numerous charter schools throughout the United States. Vagueness of language and duplication of areas of authority are recipes for organizational chaos. Final legal, personnel, and financial authority and accountability must reside in the entity given the legal authority to operate the school and that is the school charter. Specifically with the charter applied for in this proposal, that authority, if granted, will be done so by the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to the American Quality Schools (AQS) organization. No individual organization can be held accountable if it does not have full responsibility to address all the areas for which it will be ultimately accountable. AQS will interface directly with DESE on matters that relate to statutory, fiscal, or programmatic compliance.

Academy School Board

At the school level, a local School Board governs the academy. AMFRA board members will include but are not restricted to local civic or educational local leaders involved in educational reform and/or have experience evaluating senior executives and are therefore qualified to monitor and evaluate school leadership. These board members will be representative of the community in which the school is located. They will have a diverse set of professional skills and practical work experience in the areas of education, public/non-profit and/or for-profit administration or operations, community development, finance, and law. The School Board will also have representation from AMFRA's local First Responders partners. Parents are also eligible to apply for board positions.

Any interested party may nominate an individual for a position on the School Board by submission of a AMFRA School Board nomination form (to be developed) to AQS or the AMFRA School Board. Upon nomination, the candidate's nomination form will be given to AQS who will investigate the nominee's qualifications and interest in the position.

The AMFRA School Board will consist of at least seven members chosen by AQS through application and recommendations of local citizens. The final selection of members will be done by AQS. Board member terms shall be for a period of three (3) years, starting January 1- December 31. The first year for any new member may be a partial year if their term does not begin on January 1. To allow for stability and continuity while initially launching this process, the founding group of board members will randomly be assigned to terms of three (3) or four (4) years. That would allow for a phase-in of the board appointment process.

In October of a year when a set of board members' terms are about to expire, AQS leadership, in conjunction with the AMFRA School Board, will begin the board appointment process. The goal is to fill the seat of board members whose terms will expire in December. On the following January as a result of board appointment, current members whose terms expired may be selected to continue serving on the board for an additional three (3) years, or a new individual may be assigned to that spot.

Our intent is to primarily have in person school board meetings. However, we are seeking a waiver requiring physical attendance of board meetings to allow flexibility due to the unique composition of

the school board. By having “First Responders” as an integral part of the academy design and governance, it most likely necessitates the use of electronic media, such as conference calls and ZOOM, for participation in AMFRA’s regular meetings. In addition, we anticipate having one or more national experts on the school board as well. We believe moving forward that school board meetings will be hybrid model (both in-person and virtual) as the new norm.

All virtual participation will provide the ability for board members to hear and see what is going on in the board room, and those individuals physically in attendance at the board meeting will be able to hear and see the board members who are participating virtually.

Primary Responsibilities

Their primary functions and authority will be to:

- Support the school’s mission and purpose
- Enhance the school’s public standing within the community and beyond
- Formulate and supervise overall school policy
- Ensure effective organizational planning and sound board policy
- Ensure adequate resources acquisition and allocation
- Ensure resources are managed effectively
- Review and give first-level approval of the annual academy budget and convey that information to the AQS central office for final review and approval.
- Monitor and review all school expenditures monthly to ensure compliance with the adopted budget.
- Monitor, evaluate and hold management accountable for school performance
- Participate in evaluating the school administration based on criteria developed by the AQS central office. AQS shall have the final decision on the retention, termination, bonus amount, and yearly compensation of the administration.
- Ensure legal, ethical, and fiscal integrity and maintain accountability
- Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance
- Hear, in open meetings, issues concerns and recommendations of students, parents, and citizens.

Note: The first administrative team of the school, if the proposal is approved, will be selected by AQS. Subsequent openings in that position will involve the local school board in the initial interview of candidates and that board will make the recommendation of the final two applicants to the AQS central office for final approval.

Meetings of the School Board

The AMFRA School Board will meet monthly throughout the year, at a designated location, the school or otherwise agreed upon public meeting space. Date, time and place of all board meetings, will be available on the school website and in the local print media. Meetings of the board are public meetings open to everyone. We want to ensure members of the community are able to communicate their concerns to the School Board. Any person following the board protocol for public comment may speak at an open meeting of the School Board. As per state requirement and Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), all meetings will be recorded including audio, and formal written meeting minutes will be taken. Both will be saved and archived. These documents will be maintained as public records and accessible on the school website and at the school office.

Professional Development

Professional development for the AMFRA School Board will be required. These training sessions will reflect the professional development plan for school board members as required under Ark. Code Ann. §6-13-629. The trainings will be conducted by the Arkansas Public School Resource Center.

Local Academy Organizational model

- Arkansas State Board of Education
- American Quality Schools
- AQS Military and First Responder Academy Program Superintendent
- AMFRA School Board
- Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy (AMFRA) Commandant
- Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy (AMFRA) Chief Academic Officer
- Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy (AMFRA) JROTC Officer

American Quality Schools (AQS) will sponsor and be responsible for final implementation of the Military and First Responder Academy model. That process is led by its Program Superintendent. The Superintendent serves as the administrative lead from AQS and supervises the Commandants of local academies nationally. He also leads program development, expansion, and evaluation.

The Program Superintendent is an executive educator with very strong academic preparation and an extensive leadership record at the PK-12 district and post-secondary levels. To better understand Arkansas's state requirements, policies, practices, and culture, this individual is willing to participate in Arkansas's Superintendent Mentor Program. In order to ensure a successful launch, AQS will assign its Superintendent to serve as AMFRA's Chief Academic Officer (CAO) for its first year in operation. He will relocate to Little Rock to work jointly with the Commandant to implement the academy model during this period.

The make-up of the local AMFRA administrative team shall exhibit a solid balance of educational and military experiences and excellence. The administrative team must articulate a vision for the integration of military practices into the academy school environment.

The AMFRA Commandant will be charged with the total implementation of the AMFRA program at this site to include complete coordination with AQS Superintendent, AQS central office staff and Department of Defense elements. The Commandant duties include:

- Coordinating and directing the daily activities of the Academy.
- Coordinating with the JROTC Officer on matters of compliance and discipline including administrative details of the merit/demerit system and enforcement of the academy's discipline system and Cadet code.
- Coordinating with the Chief Academic Officer on education matters and processes to ensure alignment in academy operations and overall effectiveness.
- Working in conjunction with the Chief Academic Officer and JROTC Officer on staff evaluations. Military experience is required for this position. Education experience is strongly encouraged.
- Serving as the AQS liaison with AMFRA's School Board

The AMFRA Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will be an experienced PK-12 educator and reports to the Commandant. S/He is responsible for coordinating and directing all educational activities of the Academy. The CAO duties include:

- Coordinating the professional development activities of the academic staff
- Serving as coach and mentor to the academic staff
- Coordinating and monitoring the data management teams, school-wide assessment activities, and the instructional leadership teams (ILTs).
- Coordinating the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) program for students.
- Coordinating the implementation of the core, college preparatory, dual credit, AP, work-based learning, and “First Responder” curricula.
- Managing the ongoing curriculum review and update process ensuring curriculum alignment.
- Working in conjunction with the JROTC Officer to coordinate parent engagement activities.
- Working in conjunction with the Commandant to coordinate academic staff evaluations.

The Academy JROTC Officer will be a retired military officer certified by his/her service branch and appointed to the Academy to provide supervision and oversight of military programs and JROTC instruction and report to the Commandant. Is considered part of the Academy’s administration team. The JROTC Officer duties include:

- Acting as the chief advisor to the Commandant on military matters, discipline, and is responsible for military programs.
- Coordinating all aspects of the JROTC department including supervision of JROTC instructors and will mentor and manage all other Military Instructors.
- Monitoring JROTC curriculum adherence and managing the Extra Military Instruction (EMI) program
- Conducting counseling of military instructors at the direction of the Commandant
- Serving as the military property custodian and logistics manager
- Working closely with the principal regarding the merit/demerit system of the Academy and Summer Leadership Seminar (Freshman Orientation).
- Working in conjunction with the Commandant on evaluation of JROTC instructors.

All administrative, certified, and classified staff members hired at AMFRA are employees of American Quality Schools, Inc.

21. Identify the positions that will have final decision-making authority for the school in the areas of (1) finance and purchasing; (2) student discipline; (3) hiring and firing of staff; and (4) hiring and firing of the school director or superintendent.

American Quality Schools (AQS) reserves final decision-making authority in finance and purchasing, hiring, and firing of staff including commandant, chief academic officer, and JROTC officer. However, AQS may delegate components of these processes to Academy leaders and the Academy’s local school board.

22. How will the charter ensure that there is a separation of power between the sponsoring entity, charter management organization, school board and superintendent?

As stated in the response to question 20, the charter holder, American Quality Schools (AQS), must have ultimate responsibility and accountability for all areas of academic, personnel, and financial aspects of the school. The charter holder cannot be held accountable for school performance absent the authority to fully operate the school. The answer provided in response to question number 20 we believe clarifies the role of the parties. In this case, the sponsoring entity and the charter management

organization are one and the same, the AQS organization.

23. Explain the charter's conflict of interest policy and identification procedures.

The Board is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct. The purpose of a *Conflict of Interest Policy* is to protect AMFRA when the Board is contemplating a transaction or arrangement that might impermissibly benefit the private financial interest of a member of the AMFRA School Board or AMFRA leadership team member. In addition, the *Conflict of Interest* policy provides the Board with a procedure which, if observed, will allow a transaction or arrangement to be treated as valid and binding even though a Board member(s) has, or may have, a conflict of interest with respect to the transaction. The Board places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflicts of interest. All such *Conflicts of Interest* shall be declared by the member concerned and noted in the Board meeting minutes.

Duty to Disclose

In connection with any transaction or arrangement that might give rise to a *Conflict of Interest*, an interested person must disclose the existence of his or her financial interest and must be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board. The interested person must make this disclosure at the start of the regularly scheduled Board meeting following the discovery of the financial interest; provided, however, that no action can be taken on such disclosure unless the issue was identified in the posted agenda for the meeting where required.

Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the Financial Interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the Board, the interested Board member shall not participate in the discussions or vote on the matter. The remaining Board members will determine whether a *Conflict of Interest* exists.

Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

If the Board determines that a financial interest of a Board member constitutes a *Conflict of Interest*, the Board Chair (or acting Board Chair if the sitting chair is the Interested Person) shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement giving rise to the conflict. After exercising due diligence, the Board shall determine whether it can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a *Conflict of Interest*. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable, and the State's Ethics Laws do not prohibit or invalidate the proposed transaction, the Board or committee shall determine by a majority vote whether the proposed transaction or arrangement is in the school's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to the school. Based on this determination, the Board shall decide whether to enter into the proposed transaction or arrangement.

Violations of the *Conflict of Interest Policy*

If the Board or committee has reasonable cause to believe that a member has failed to disclose an actual or possible *Conflict of Interest*, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the response of the member and making such further investigation as the Board deems warranted under the circumstances, the Board determines that the member has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible *Conflict of Interest*, the Board shall take appropriate corrective action.

Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the Board shall document the *Conflict of Interest* and contain:

1. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest giving rise to an actual or possible *Conflict of Interest*.
2. The nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a *Conflict of Interest* was present, and the Board's decision as to whether a *Conflict of Interest* in fact existed.
3. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction.
4. Resolution reached.

24. Describe the student recruitment process and timeline that will provide an equal opportunity for all parents and students to learn about and apply for admission to the proposed public charter school.

AMFRA will comply with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public school admissions. Our admission policies will not knowingly discriminate against children meeting the Arkansas Department of Education's, State Board of Education's, or the United States Department of Education's laws and eligibility requirements for school-aged children including, but not limited to, the areas of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin. It is an open-enrollment public charter school choice for parents seeking a free educational opportunity for their children. If the charter is granted, AMFRA will begin its vigorous student recruitment campaign immediately by advertising to potentially interested families of 9th grade students for the 2022 – 2023 school year. During the initial year of AMFRA's operations, the school's enrollment will be 200 9th grade students. In subsequent years, student enrollment will be increased until it reaches its 800-student capacity (*see chart on pg. 5*).

Prospective parents will have the opportunity to obtain registration information of the enrollment application process and visit with school officials for additional information. The recruitment campaign will include but is not limited to circulation and distribution of flyers, online and printed public announcements, community meetings, word of mouth, and television advertisements. AMFRA enrollment forms will be available online through the school's website and in print at the school office. In addition, registration assistance will be available on-site at AMFRA or other locations at designated days and times.

We will also work with our local community First Responders partners and community youth services so they can share academy registration information through their public relations efforts. Multiple social media strategies will be used to highlight the academy's availability, purpose, enrollment processes, and updates.

Formal annual student recruitment will begin November of each school year following the charter approval.

25. Describe the procedures for conducting the annual single lottery enrollment process, including how students will be placed on waiting lists and how parents will be notified about each child's selection or order on the waiting list.

Applications for registrations will be collected throughout the open enrollment period. After the close of enrolment, all eligible students with complete application packets will be placed into an application pool. Their names will go into a random lottery that will be conducted in public and monitored by an objective third party. Our intent is to use the services of the Office of Education Policy with the

University of Arkansas.

The official date for the lottery will be set after charter approval, but public notice for the event will be given at least seven (7) calendar days in advance through the contact information provided with the application. Students do not have to be present to be accepted. Finally, students that were enrolled in the AMFRA during the previous academic year do not need to reapply unless they were dismissed for academic or disciplinary matters. Then they would be considered new applicants plus they would need to follow the academic/disciplinary reapplication procedures that will be developed prior to the school opening since they are not applicable until the school's second year of operation.

The lottery will be projected onto a screen and be live-streamed. Names for will be drawn and announced for all open admittance slots by grade until they are filled. When the drawing is complete, all students in the lottery pool will be identified as either Admitted or Waitlist. Parents will know at the conclusion of this meeting the status of their student's acceptance.

Parents will also be officially notified by phone or email, and U.S. postal mail as provided, within 3 business days of selection. Parents will have seven (7) business days to respond to that notification as to whether they will accept the spot or decline. Every effort will be made to contact the parent, but if the parent fails to respond within the specified allotted time, the next student in line on the waitlist will be notified and the same notification procedures shall be followed.

Parents of students placed on the "Waitlist" will also be notified within three (3) business days from selection and will be informed should their student become eligible. The necessary student contact information (student name, parent/guardian name, address, email, phone #) will be acquired from their initial application form. We will also post a statement on the school's website and waitlist notification about the need and their responsibility to continuously update contact information for any student placed on the academy's waiting list.

AMFRA will continue to accept applications after the open enrollment period ends, documenting the date the application was received. The eligible students will then go onto the waitlist in order of application. If an applicant on the waitlist does not get accepted for that school year, that applicant will need to re-apply for the following year during the application period.

26. Will any of the enrollment preferences outlined in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-306(14)(C), will be utilized by the charter school. This includes children of founding members of the charter and siblings of enrolled students. If so, please explain the policy.

We will not provide any enrollment preferences. However, students enrolled in the academy do not need to reapply in subsequent years to continue attending unless they were dismissed from the Academy previously for academic and/or disciplinary reasons. They would then be considered new applicants and be required to follow the enrollment process for all new student applicants.

27. Explain how students leaving the charter during the school year will impact students on the waiting list.

AMFRA staff will work diligently to keep students enrolled at the charter school. Sometimes situations occur, like emergencies or moving, and if a student leaves the Academy during the school year, the next student on the waitlist, according to their lottery designation, will be offered the seat. If there is not a

waitlist, we will accept applications for the seat.

28. Provide a list of staff positions that will be employed in the school business office. Include the responsibilities of each position.

All business aspects of the school operation will be handled at the AQS central office by a General Business Manager. Their pro-rated personnel costs are paid from the CMO fees. These will include:

1. Processing school level recommendations to the central office for hiring and/or termination of all personnel.
2. All the paper processing of such actions will be done at the AQS central office.
3. All employee insurance issues, benefits, payroll, will be done through the AQS central office.
4. All final budget approval and oversight and the final monitoring and oversight of school purchases will be approved by the AQS central office.
5. All financial and regulatory compliance issues regarding state and federal laws and financing and reporting will be done by the AQS central office in conjunction with the school principal and local school board.

29. Describe the plan for managing procurement activities. Specify the types of financial decisions to be made at the school level, board level and charter management organization level.

Procurement Compliance

AMFRA will follow all local, state, and federal regulations regarding procurement. AQS on behalf of AMFRA will comply with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-301 et. seq regarding purchasing. AQS will competitively bid or will purchase from competitively bid Arkansas state contracts in accordance with Arkansas law.

The AMFRA Commandant has the authority to approve purchases/contracts of \$2,500 or less. The AQS CEO must approve purchases/contracts of more than \$2,500 and full School Board and AQS CEO approval will be required for contracts exceeding \$10,000.

AQS and AMFRA's School Board will review all expenditures, and this information will be provided through monthly financial reports prepared by AMFRA staff.

Procurement Process

- All initial decisions regarding procurement prior to the school opening will be made by the Commandant in consultation with the AQS Superintendent.
- Purchases \$2,500 and below can be authorized by the AMFRA Commandant. The preferred method of procurement at this level is through a purchase card (P-card).
- For purchases above \$2,500 and up to \$10,000, those will require initial review and review by the Commandant, then final review and approval by the AQS Superintendent. Those purchases should be done through a AQS purchase order.
- For purchases above \$10,000, those items can be procured in accordance with Arkansas state purchasing laws. Then the purchase order will receive initial review and review by the Commandant, then review and approval by the AMFRA School Board, and then final review and approval by the AQS Superintendent.

30. Describe the process by which the school governance will adopt an annual budget.

The AMFRA Commandant, in conjunction with input and discussion from the AMFRA's school board, will construct and give first approval for the annual school budget. The AQS central office staff will review that recommendation and reserve the authority to make additions, subtractions, or alterations of fund allocation. Any such revisions will be returned to the Commandant and local board for further discussion until a consensus between all parties is achieved. However, once again in any unresolvable issues regarding the budget, AQS shall retain final authority on all budget matters.

Using a policy by which it has operated schools for over 20 years, AQS will insist that all school budgets must be balanced every year. There will be no authorization or approval of the school budget by AQS for borrowing to cover school expenses or to cover any potential financial deficits.

31. Describe the manner in which an annual audit of the financial and programmatic operations of the school will be conducted. If the school wishes to request that the authorizer allow a licensed accountant or licensed certified public accountant, rather than the Legislative Auditor, to perform the first-year audit, identify the accountant by name, firm, address, and phone number. The named accountant must meet the requirements of ADE Rules Governing Publicly Funded Educational Institution Audit Requirements, including the prohibition on auditors providing non-audit services (such as accounting or consulting services) to auditees. A school's preference as stated in this application may not be changed without prior approval of the authorizer.

An annual audit of the financial and programmatic operations of the school will be performed by the Legislative Auditor. If this preference is changed, the school will seek approval of the authorizer first, provide the name and contact information of the accounting firm, and assure that any newly selected auditing firm meets all the requirements of ADE Rules Governing Publicly Funded Educational Institution Auditing Requirements.

32. If the facility to be used by the school has been identified, list the owner(s) of the facility, and describe their relationship with employees or directors of the sponsoring entity or charter management organization

To be determined

33. If the facility to be used by the school is not currently in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provide a list of items that will need to be addressed to bring the facility into compliance.

The facility has not yet been identified; however, we will ensure that the facility is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

34. Are there any alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility?

The specific site has yet to be selected; however, a site will be selected that is not within 1,000 feet of

alcohol sales.

35. Describe the potential impact of the proposed public charter school on the efforts of affected public school districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy Desegregation Analysis

This desegregation analysis is in support of Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy's (AMFRA) request to be granted a charter for an open-enrollment public charter school to be located within Pulaski County. The school site will be located within the boundaries of either the Little Rock School District (LRSD); Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) or North Little Rock School District (NLRSD). Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106, AMFRA is required to carefully review the potential impact its operations would have upon the efforts of the LRSD, PCSSD, NLRSD, and Jacksonville North Pulaski School District (JNPSD) to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. At full enrollment, AMFRA will serve students in Grades 9-12 with a maximum enrollment cap of 800 students.

I. The Status of Pulaski County Desegregation Litigation

AMFRA is providing this desegregation analysis in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 to review the potential impact that its charter application would have upon the efforts of all four (4) of the Pulaski County school districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. In conducting its review, AMFRA has substantiated that the LRSD and the NLRSD have been declared unitary in all respects of their school operations. The Pulaski County desegregation litigation was first filed in 1982. *Little Rock School District, et al v. Pulaski County Special School District, et al.*, Case No. 4:82:cv-00866-DPM. In 1989, the parties entered into a settlement agreement (the "1989 Settlement Agreement") under which the Arkansas Department of Education, the then-three (3) Pulaski County school districts, and the intervenors agreed to the terms of state funding for desegregation obligations.

LRSD successfully completed its desegregation efforts in 2007 and was declared fully unitary by the federal court in 2007. *Little Rock School District v. Pulaski County Special School District*, Case No. 4:82-cv-0866 (E.D. Ark.), Order filed February 23, 2007. In 2010, LRSD filed a motion to enforce the 1989 Settlement Agreement. The motion contended that operation of open-enrollment public charter schools within Pulaski County interfered with the "M-M Stipulation" and the "Magnet Stipulation." On January 17, 2013, Judge D.P. Marshall Jr. denied LRSD's motion, stating:

"The cumulative effect of open enrollment charter schools in Pulaski County on the stipulation magnet schools and M-to-M transfers has not, as a matter of law, substantially defeated the relevant purposes of the 1989 Settlement Agreement, the magnet stipulation, or the M-to-M stipulation."

Little Rock School District v. Pulaski County Special School District, Case No. 4:82-cv-0866 (E.D. Ark.), Order filed January 17, 2013. LRSD appealed to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

One (1) year later, on January 13, 2014, Judge Marshall approved a Settlement Agreement that included a provision stipulating to the voluntary dismissal with prejudice of LRSD's pending appeal concerning the charter school issues. In light of LRSD's unitary status and the parties' 2014 Settlement Agreement, AMFRA's requested charter cannot interfere with the purposes of the Pulaski County desegregation litigation, which has been fully concluded as to LRSD. After the dismissal and the settlement agreement, the case was completely concluded for all purposes as to LRSD, and the federal court terminated all jurisdiction in the matter. Because of that, there is no possibility that AMFRA's requested charter could impact LRSD's unitary status. To be clear, AMFRA's charter application cannot impact LRSD's unitary status because 1) there is no case in which LRSD's unitary status could be an issue; 2) LRSD made a claim regarding operation of open-enrollment charter schools in federal court in 2010 and lost it; and 3) As a consequence of the 2014 Settlement Agreement, the LRSD

released any claims it had concerning the charter school issues. On January 30, 2014, the Court also approved a stipulation among the parties that PCSSD is unitary in the areas of Assignment of Students and Advanced Placement, Gifted and Talented and Honors Programs. Based on the stipulation, the Court released PCSSD from supervision and monitoring in these areas. Thus, as of January 30, 2014, LRSD, NLRSD and PCSSD are unitary in the area of student assignments. On April 4, 2014, the court found that PCSSD is unitary in the areas of Special Education and Scholarships. Subsequently, PCSSD was also found to be unitary in the areas of Staff and Monitoring. Pursuant to Judge Marshall's order on May 6, 2021, both PCSSD and JNPSD are unitary in all areas except School Facilities.

Upon review, AMFRA believes that its request to obtain an open-enrollment public charter shall have no negative effects on the efforts of the PCSSD and JNPSD to attain unitary status.

II. Data

According to the 2019-2020 enrollment figures as maintained by the ADE Data Center, LRSD had a student population of 21,472 students, of which approximately 60.4% were African American; 19.2% were White, and 15.9% were Hispanic. NLRSD's student population was 8,076 students, of which approximately 59.3% were African American; 28.1% were White, and 9.5% were Hispanic. PCSSD's student population was 11,801 students, of which approximately 42.9% were African American; 41.5% were White, and 9.7% were Hispanic. JNPSD's student population was 4,014 students, of which approximately 52.5 % were African American; 34.8% were White, and 7.8% were Hispanic. Under Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-306(6)(A), AMFRA must be race-neutral and non-discriminatory in its student selection and admission process. While it is impossible to project its future racial composition accurately, AMFRA will implement admissions policies that are consistent with state and federal laws, regulations, and/or guidelines applicable to charter schools.

In addition, Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 requires that AMFRA's operation will not serve to hamper, delay, or in any manner negatively affect the desegregation efforts of a public school district or districts within the state. As explained in more detail above, AMFRA's careful review of the relevant statutes and court orders affecting the LRSD, NLRSD, PCSSD, and JNPSD and their student populations shows that such negative impact is not present here.

III. Conclusion

AMFRA submits that upon the basis of its review, neither any existing federal desegregation order affecting the PCSSD, LRSD, NLRSD, and JNPSD, nor the 1989 Settlement Agreement prohibit the State's charter school authorizer from granting its application to operate an open-enrollment public charter school within the geographic boundaries of either the LRSD, NLRSD or PCSSD.

This proposed public charter school will have no effect on any school that must comply with any court orders and statutory obligations as it relates to the maintenance of a unitary system of desegregated public schools. AMFRA will comply with all applicable federal and state statutory and regulatory requirements regarding the creation and maintenance of desegregated public schools. None of the surrounding school districts, Pulaski County Special School District, Little Rock School District, or North Little Rock School District, are under any court-ordered desegregation mandates.

36. List the services that the CMO will provide to the charter and the annual cost of the services.

American Quality Schools is the CMO for the AMFRA. Our CMO services include:

Human Resource Management

- Recruit teachers and personnel for the school
- Interview candidates for positions
- Do all the required background checks on potential employees such as verifying their academic

credentials and doing criminal background checks

- Manage employee health insurance plans and any other employee benefits
- Train all secretarial and support staff
- Handle employee HR issues or complaints

Finance and Budget

- Create yearly budgets for the school
- Monitor all expenditure not to exceed budget allocations
- Find best pricing for school vendors procurement
- Manage accounts payable for academy
- Handle all payroll operations for school employees
- Manage bank relationship that are connected to school operations

Facilities Management

- Keep compliant with city fire codes and other health and safety regulations
- Maintain exterior of building such as lawn maintenance and snow removal
- Maintain all school equipment such as copiers, audio-visual, computers, etc.
- Manage preventative maintenance cycles

Information Technology Management

- Negotiate best price for and purchase of technology equipment and software
- Establish and maintain technology equipment/software standards and refresh cycles
- Establish cybersecurity requirements and data control processes

Academic Management

- Provide professional development training for all academic personnel
- Develop curriculum for the school
- Provide regular evaluations of teachers and administrators
- Monitor compliance with all state and federal regulations by providing state and federal officials with required reports

Costs – 10% of state and local revenue. No portion of federal funding.

WAIVERS

Complete the following tables indicating all sections of Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education rules, and the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts from which the public charter school seeks to be exempted in order to meet the goals of the school.

Waiver #1 Topic	Administration
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-13-109 School Superintendent Definition §6-17-302 Public School Principal Qualifications and Requirements §6-17-427 Superintendent License
Standard for Accreditation	Std. 4 Human Capital: 4-B.1, 4-B.2, Standard 4-C.1 Standard 4-C.2
ADE Rules	Rules Governing the School Superintendent Mentoring Program
Rationale for Waiver	<p>The success of AMFRA depends upon having the right leaders and staff. AQS's Military and First Responder Academy Program Superintendent will serve as Superintendent for the academy. The AQS Superintendent is a highly experienced and degreed executive PK-12 educator with over 25 years' experience at the assistant superintendent level and above. However, we seek a waiver from Arkansas licensure requirements. We will ensure this role is filled by a highly credentialed and experienced educator, but not necessarily Arkansas licensed or eligible individual. The AQS Superintendent is also willing to participate in Arkansas's Superintendent Mentoring Program if needed.</p> <p>The school level operation will be led by a Commandant with military experience who also has extensive expertise in training and organizational leadership. The multiple roles of the Commandant, in addition to the regular academic and day to day management of the school, will include fund raising and public relations with businesses and advanced educational institutes.</p> <p>In addition, there will be a local Chief Academic Officer, who is a highly experienced PK-12 education professional possessing one or more of the following: possesses state principal certification or able to acquire one, experience supervising principals, a strong history of education leadership at the PK-12 district level, advanced education leadership credentials. A principal licensure waiver is requested for the first year in operation since the AQS Superintendent will also serve in this capacity to launch the academy. The intent is to hire an Arkansas licensed or eligible for licensure principal in the second year.</p> <p>There is also a JROTC Officer to guide the military academy</p>

	<p>components. We believe the academy’s diverse academic program requires special people who may or may not hold certification in these areas through Teacher Licensure of the state of Arkansas. We do ensure that the person selected will understand the job requirements and have the unique capabilities to meet these needs.</p> <p>These will be an “at will” positions. All state rules regarding the duties of the school level administrators will be followed.</p>
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Waiver #2 Topic	Alternate Learning Environment
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-48-102-103 §6-15-1005 (b) (5) §6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i)
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 2-I.1
ADE Rules	Section 4 of the Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding
Rationale for Waiver	<p>Alternative education programs are designed to serve those students whose educational progress deviates from the standard. Often their behavior interferes with their own learning or the educational process of others. The AMFRA educational model is comprehensive enough that it can effectively accommodate the needs of students who would ordinarily be placed in an alternative learning environment within the regular classroom environment, without the need for alternative placement.</p> <p>AMFRA will promote success at varying levels for students through small class sizes, teacher-pupil ratio, and methods of instruction that are very hands-on and at appropriate levels. In addition, the use of multiple positive behavior intervention strategies will be used to proactively addresses students’ social and emotional needs. AMFRA offers extensive educational and social services to address each student’s’ individual needs and help them thrive within the usual classroom setting. We believe the level of involvement will offset many of the student’s struggles with classroom behavior reducing the need for ALE.</p> <p>For students with disabilities that result in behavior issues, their IEP team will take the lead in determining what is the most appropriate alternative learning environment. However, should a student need services beyond our capabilities, we will seek external licensed counseling and guidance to provide this student with the most supportive environment.</p>

Waiver #3 Topic	Class Size and Teaching Load
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-17-812
Standard for Accreditation	1-A.5
ADE Rules	Class Size and Teaching Load
Rationale for Waiver	AQS, AMFRA, and the School Board will adopt alternative class size arrangement based on academic and program need. Core academics will use an average student-to-teacher ratio of 25:1. However, certain specialty “first responder courses” may be designed to involve a large percentage (up to 50 students) of the student body concurrently. As a result, the class size will be larger than current state standards. However, additional appropriate adult supervision will be provided even in these instances.

Waiver #4 Topic	Gifted and Talented Services
Arkansas Code Annotated	§ 6-42-109 Reports by School District §6-20-2208 (c) (6) Monitoring of Expenditures
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 2: Student Support Services Standard 2-G Gifted and Talented Services 2-G.1 Gifted and Talented Services
ADE Rules	Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards
Rationale for Waiver	A waiver for Gifted and Talented program is being requested as we believe our entire educational concept is built on the differentiation of instruction according to subject matter and student ability including the ability to earn college credit for many of the college preparatory and JROTC/First Responder concentration classes. Students will be encouraged regularly to “think outside the box” in their day-to-day classroom experiences. AMFRA students will also be offered a rigorous core curriculum that also has an integrated engineering and coding focus to enhance their individual interests and skills. Through the use of classroom-based, virtual, and work-site-based learning experience, it will support differences in learning style preferences and different learning rates. Using our Personalized Learning Plans, we believe all our students will be challenged in their learning, and consequently, their achievements will reflect this.

Waiver #5 Topic	Instructional Structure and Clock Hours
Arkansas Code Annotated	
Standard for Accreditation	1-A.1.3
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The charter will offer grades 9-12 at capacity; however, one grade level will be added each year until full capacity is reached in year 4. A waiver is requested to offer courses needed for the grade levels being served each school year.

Waiver #6 Topic	Library Media
Arkansas Code Annotated	§ 6-25-103 Library Media Services Defined §6-25-104 Library Media Specialist
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 4-F Library Media Specialist 4-F.1 Library Media Specialist 4-F.2 Library Media Specialist
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMFRA is requesting a waiver on having a certified library-media specialist and traditional school library. Instead, the academy will have a <i>learning resource center</i> that is a multipurpose, large and small group learning area staffed by a digital literacy coach who assists students in developing critical life skills, which includes a variety of technology and research skills. However, the digital literacy coach may not be certified as a library-media specialist.</p> <p>Also, all students will be issued a personal computing device that allows student access to public academic, research, and project materials during and outside the school day. In addition, access to digital library resources including “full text” books will be provided through a subscription service available to all enrolled students. This integrated approach more closely reflects current industry practices where communications, research, collaboration, and document development are created digitally. The library-media standards will be embedded into the English/Language Arts curriculum and instruction.</p>

Waiver #7 Topic	Minimum Salaries for Classified Employees
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Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-17-2201 et seq Minimum Salary §6-17-2403 Minimum Teacher Compensation
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	Sections 5.01.4 and 6.01 of the Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites
Rationale for Waiver	We will post salary information and personnel policy on the school website in compliance with state statute. However, we seek waiver to gain the flexibility for how it is constructed and displayed on the website given it may be different than other school districts' salary schedules.

Waiver #8 Topic	Personnel
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-17-111 Duty Free Lunch §6-17-114 Daily Planning Period §6-17-201(a) §6-17-201(c) Committee for Each School District §6-17-203-205 Committee for Each School District §6-17-208 Grievance Procedure §6-17-209 Interim Personnel Policy Committee §6-17-210 Right to Witness or Representative §6-17-211 §6-17-2301 (c) Committee for Each School District
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>Given the most important responsibilities of the school are to protect students' safety, health, and academic progress, we believe using an "at will" employment process provides the flexibility to effectively and efficiently meet these mandates. As a result, all AMFRA employees are considered "at will" employees. AMFRA employees will not be on an employment contract.</p> <p>The nature of this school will require all staff to work together, and often serve in multiple capacities. We believe all staff members, including the leadership team, bring great diversity in experiences and competencies. The school will benefit from this fact, and our culture must celebrate that reality. We will inform all employees during interviews of our expectations and the school culture we are creating. We also believe modeling that for our students is very beneficial for their social and emotion development as we seek to</p>

	<p>prepare them to be highly competent, global leaders.</p> <p>Given the small size of the school staff initially, we ask for a waiver from duty-free lunch. There may be occasions when teachers serve lunch duty. We intend to provide teacher directed planning period that meet the state requirement in total minutes per week; however, we will work with the staff to create flexible models to achieve this outcome. Therefore, we are requesting a waiver to allow for this flexibility.</p> <p>The guidelines for Personnel Policy (PP) committee are not feasible in our model. Personnel will be apprised of all changes made to the personnel policies and will be furnished with the most current version of the policies. These policies will also be posted and updated online so the current versions are readily available to all staff members.</p>
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Waiver #9 Topic	School Board of Directors and Election Laws
Arkansas Code Annotated	<p>§6-13-608, 611, 616 (a), 619 (c) (d), 620 (5) (A) (ii) (b), 621, 624, 628 and 630 - 631 School District Board of Directors</p> <p>§6-14-101 et seq General Application of Election Laws.</p> <p>§ 6-13-612(c)</p> <p>§ 6-13-613</p> <p>§ 6-13-615</p>
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>American Quality Schools (AQS), a 501c3 non-profit, seeks a waiver from the selection, board size, qualifications, powers, terms, and vacancies of a School Board of Directors. Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy's (AMFRA's) School Board will oversee the academy's governance under the chartering authority granted to AQS.</p> <p>These board members are not selected by public. The AMFRA School Board, will consist of nine (9) members serving in that capacity. Board member terms shall be for a period of 3 years, starting January 1- December 31. The first year of any new member may be a partial year if their term does not begin on January 1.</p> <p>To allow for stability of continuity in initially launching this process, the founding group of board members will randomly be assigned to terms of 3 or 4 years. That would allow for a phase in of the board renewal process.</p> <p>In a year when a set of board members' terms are about to expire,</p>

	<p>AQS leadership in conjunction with the AMFRA School Board will begin the reconsideration process in October, which results in selecting the new set of board members beginning the following January. As a result of reconsideration, existing members may be selected to continue on the board for an additional 3 years or a new individual may be assigned to that spot.</p> <p>Any interested party may nominate an individual for a position on the AMFRA School Board by submission of a nomination in writing to AQS or AMFRA School Board. Upon nomination, the candidate's nomination form will be given to AQS who will investigate the nominee's qualifications and interest in the position.</p> <p>AMFRA's board is made up of business leaders, educators, and First Responder representatives with a common vision and goal. We ask for a waiver regarding physical attendance of board meetings due to additional responsibilities, work schedules and feasibility. By having First Responders as an integral part of the academy design and governance, it most likely necessitates the use of electronic media, such as conference calls and ZOOM, for AMFRA's regular meetings. We request permission for AMFRA's School Board meetings to be a mixture of in-person and electronic attendance (following State and Federal guidelines as closely as possible).</p> <p>We will require at a minimum the state-required professional development of our board members. AQS shall govern the school with fiscal accountability and regulations per the law.</p>
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Waiver #10 Topic	School Year
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-10-106 Uniform Dates
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The academy will comply with state statute regarding school year start date, but we seek the flexibility to have a longer year. The state standard year is 178 instructional days. Our school year will be no less than 178 instructional days but up to 183 instructional days with an additional required summer orientation program of up to 5 instructional days for all new incoming students.

Waiver #11 Topic	Personnel Policies
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Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-17-201 (c) Certified Personnel Policies §6-17-2303 Committees on Personnel Policies-Members §6-17-2301 (c) Classified School Employee Personnel Policy Law
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	Sections 5.01.4 and 6.01 of the Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites
Rationale for Waiver	We request a waiver of these laws and rules in order to draft personnel policies which reflect the unique needs and practices of the AMFRA. The policies will cover all necessary areas such as compensation; terms and conditions of employment; salary schedules; workdays and holidays; leave, etc. The academy is bringing in many non-traditional types of staff members, which requires non-traditional compensation measures, human resource policies, and internal controls to ensure the safety of our students.

Waiver #12 Topic	Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-17-1501 et. seq. Teacher Fair Dismissal Act §6-17-1701 et. seq. Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	Sections 5.01.4 and 6.01 of the Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites
Rationale for Waiver	This waiver is being requested to enable us to establish an "at-will" employment system for all our staff members (both instructional and noninstructional). Again, given the unique structure of personnel engaged with our school, this waiver will allow us to make prompt personnel decisions, as and if necessary, to address performance issues which negatively impact the safety of our students and effective operation of the school.

Waiver #13 Topic	Teacher Licensure
Arkansas Code Annotated	§6-17-919 Warrants void without license § 6-17-301 §6-17-309 Licensure §6-17-401 Teacher License Requirements

	<p>§6-17-902 §6-17-1004 Qualified Teachers §6-17-2301 (c) Personnel Policies</p>
Standard for Accreditation	Std. 4: Human Capital – 4-D.1
ADE Rules	Section 7 Educator Licensure
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMFRA is requesting asking for a waiver from standard licensures to hire the most qualified teachers best suited to implement our vision through the unique programs and approaches. In some areas these instructors may not carry a valid Arkansas Teaching Certificate. Instead, these teachers may include teachers with qualifications such as career experience, industry certifications, and/or extensive education in content matter. Also, we seek a waiver from Section 7 licensure rules to gain the ability to assign a licensed teacher to teach out of area if necessary.</p> <p>We will comply with the Arkansas Qualified Teacher requirements.</p> <p>We will not hire anyone who has had a teaching license revoked or who cannot pass the mandatory Background Check. We do not ask for this waiver in regard to Special Education as we will hire a certified Special Ed Teacher.</p> <p>We ask for waiver from §6-17- 919 as these teachers’ salaries would be paid through the same funds as the other certified instructors. Teachers will be evaluated under the TESS system. All teachers will complete Professional Development requirements according to ADESE guidelines and as deemed necessary for implementing AMFRA special programs.</p>



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

2021 Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application – Part 2 of 4

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA)

Name of Proposed Charter

Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)

Initial Application - Deadline June 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after this time.

Final Application - Deadline July 15, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after this time.

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

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Charter School Office
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-683-5312**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Proposed Charter:	Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA) Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)
Primary Contact for Application:	Paul G. Vallas
Primary Contact Phone:	504-655-4319
Primary Contact Cell:	504-655-4319
Primary Contact Email:	paulgvallas@gmail.com

Name of sponsoring entity:

American Quality Schools – Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

The sponsoring entity is eligible to apply for a public school charter under the following category:

- A public institution of higher education
- A private nonsectarian institution of higher education
- A governmental entity
- An organization that is nonsectarian in its programs and operations and is, or will be, exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Name of Charter Management Organization:

American Quality Schools, Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

1. IRS letter reflecting tax exempt status or a copy of the entity's application for 501(c)(3) status. (See Attachment 1 in *Application - Part 2 of 4* – pages 43-44)
2. Attach documentation to demonstrate that each of the following requirements of Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-302 was met:
 - a. The notice of the public hearing was published on a weekly basis for at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the date of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the school district in which the school will likely be located. (See Attachments 2A in *Application - Part 3 of 4* – pages 45-49 and *Application - Part 4 of 4* 50-53)
 - b. The notice of the public hearing was not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.
 - c. The last publication date of the notice was no less than seven days prior to the public meeting.
 - d. Within seven calendar days following the first publication of the notice of the public hearing, emails announcing the public hearing were sent to the superintendent of each of the school districts from which the open- enrollment public charter school is likely to draw students for the purpose of enrollment and the superintendent of any district that is contiguous to the district in which the open-enrollment public charter school will be located. (See Attachments 2D in *Application - Part 2 of 4* – pages 54-55 and 56-57)
3. Budget template (See Attachment 3 in *Application - Part 2 of 4* – pages 58-67)
4. Statement of Assurance (See Attachment 4 in *Application - Part 2 of 4* – pages 68-71)

Other Attachments/Appendices:

First Responder's Concentration Overview – See Appendix I in *Application - Part 2 of 4* – pages 72-74

Letters of Support – See Appendix II in *Application - Part 2 of 4* - page 75

Attachment 1: IRS Letter on 501 (c) (3) Status



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20224

Date: OCT 31 2008

The American Quality Schools Corporation
850 W. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60607

Employer Identification Number:
36-4298732
Person to Contact and ID Number:
Laurice Ghougasian 00221507
Toll Free Contact Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
June
Public Charity Status:
509(a)(1) & 170(b)(1)(A)(ii)
Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
March 5, 2002
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. **Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.**

We have reviewed your request under section 301.9100-3 of the Procedures and Administration Regulations for an extension of the time for filing Form 1023. Based on a consideration of the facts and circumstances represented, your request for an extension is denied.

Section 508(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code states that an organization organized after October 9, 1969, shall not be treated as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) for any period before giving notice that it is applying for recognition of exempt status, if such notice is given after the time prescribed in the regulations.

Section 1.508-1(a)(2)(i) of the Income Tax Regulations states that an organization seeking exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Code must file the notice described in section 508(a) within 15 months from the end of the month in which the organization was organized. Such notice is filed by submitting a properly completed and executed Form 1023 exemption application.

Our records indicate that your Form 1023 was filed with the Internal Revenue Service on March 5, 2002, which is more than 15 months from the end of the month in which you were organized. Therefore, the provisions of section 508(a)(2) of the Code are applicable to you. Thus, your exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Code is effective beginning on the date indicated above, which is the date your Form 1023 was filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

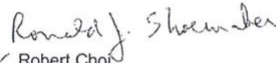
The American Quality Schools Corporation

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

This ruling letter revokes our letter to you dated September 19, 2006.

Please see enclosed *Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities* for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Sincerely,

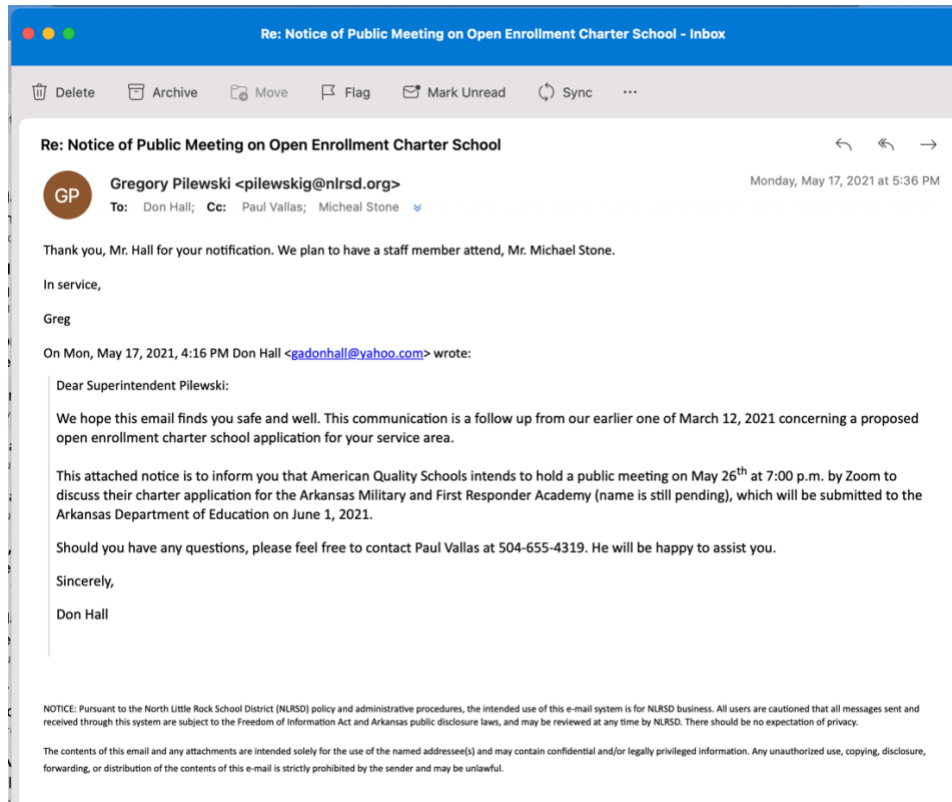

for Robert Choi
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings & Agreements

Enclosure: *Pub. 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities*

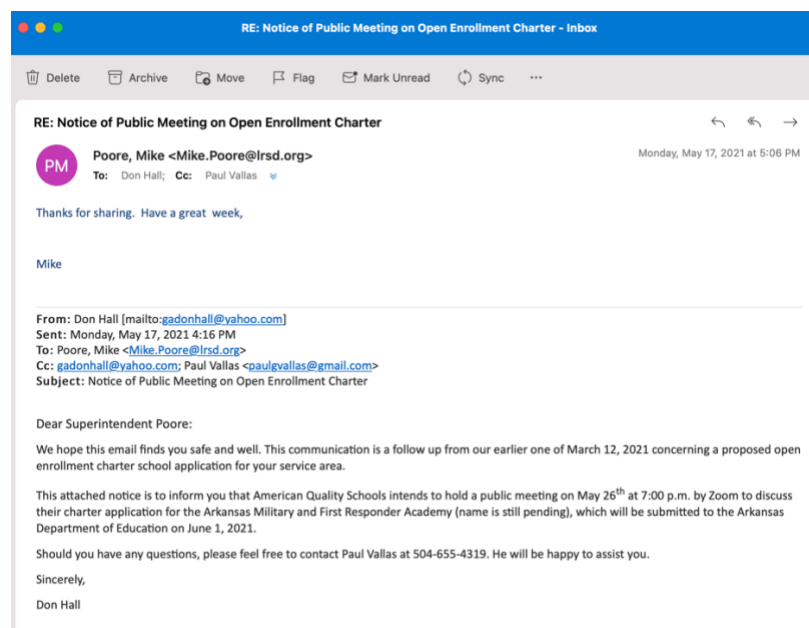
For Section 2 A Attachments – Notice of Public Hearings – See Charter Application Parts 3 & 4

Attachments 2D – Notice of 1st Public Hearing to Area Superintendents

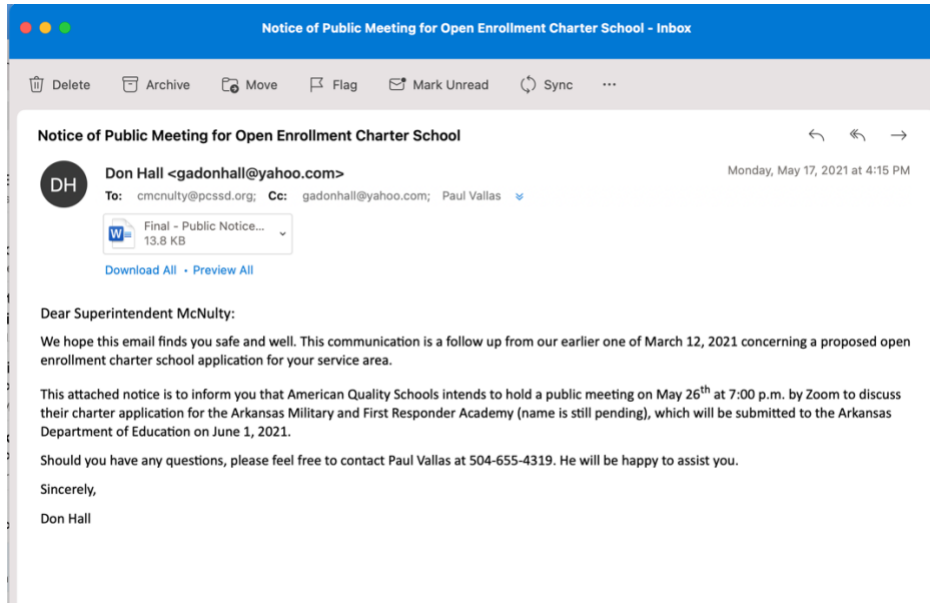
Email to Superintendent at North Little Rock School District



Email to Superintendent at Little Rock School District



Email to Superintendent at Pulaski County Special School District



American Quality Schools plans to submit an application to the State Board of Education to open a charter school in Little Rock, Arkansas area to be referred to as the Little Rock Military Academy.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Virtually via Zoom
Wednesday, May 26, 2021, 7:00 PM

Join with Zoom at
Meeting ID: 452 457 8282 Passcode: 7F43zR

Or

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4524578282?pwd=RVoxeEVySldEWHhld2hvZzlmMGICQT09>

Or join by phone at
1-312-626-6799 – Passcode/PIN: 971357

All are welcome to join us to learn about American Quality Schools and the opportunities we will bring to your community. Pre-registration is not required.

Attachments 2D – Notice of 2nd Public Hearing to Area Superintendents

American Quality Schools
is submitting an application to the State Board of Education to open a charter school in the Little Rock, Arkansas area to be referred to as the Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - SECOND
Virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 7:00 PM

Join with Zoom at
Meeting ID: 860 4617 6128 **Passcode:** 170284
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86046176128?pwd=dkdqMDFDTm01YW5pUGtlQ1hFcjd1QT09>

Or join by phone at
1-312-626-6799 – **Passcode/PIN:** 170284


All are welcome to join us to learn about American Quality Schools and the opportunities we will bring to your community. Pre-registration is not required. 

Email to Superintendent at North Little Rock School District


Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School - 2021

Delete Archive Move Flag Mark Unread Sync ...

Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School ← ↶ ↷

 **Don Hall** <gadonhall@yahoo.com> Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 1:17 PM

To: cmcnulty@pcssd.org; **Cc:** gadonhall@yahoo.com; Paul Vallas; Michael Bakalis; JoAnna Lever

 Final - Second Publi...
17.4 KB

[Download All](#) • [Preview All](#)

Dear Superintendent McNulty:

We hope this email finds you safe and well. This communication is a follow up from our earlier ones concerning a proposed open enrollment charter school application for your service area.

This attached notice is to inform you that American Quality Schools intends to hold a second public meeting on July 6th at 7:00 p.m. by Zoom to discuss their charter application for the Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy, which was submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education on May 30, 2021.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paul Vallas at 504-655-4319. He will be happy to assist you. You can also contact me by email.

Sincerely,
Don Hall

Email to Superintendent at Little Rock School District

RE: Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School - Inbox

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RE: Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 4:51 PM

PM Poore, Mike <Mike.Poore@lrsd.org>
To: Don Hall; Cc: Paul Vallas; Michael Bakalis; JoAnna Lever

Thanks so much for the notification. Have a great end to the week,

Mike

From: Don Hall [mailto:gadonhall@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 17, 2021 12:17 PM
To: Poore, Mike <Mike.Poore@lrsd.org>
Cc: gadonhall@yahoo.com; Paul Vallas <paulgvallas@gmail.com>; Michael Bakalis <mbakalis@aqc.org>; JoAnna Lever <jlever@apsrc.net>
Subject: Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School

Dear Superintendent Poore:

We hope this email finds you safe and well. This communication is a follow up from our earlier ones concerning a proposed open enrollment charter school application for your service area.

This attached notice is to inform you that American Quality Schools intends to hold a second public meeting on July 6th at 7:00 p.m. by Zoom to discuss their charter application for the Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy, which was submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education on May 30, 2021.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paul Vallas at 504-655-4319. He will be happy to assist you. You can also contact me by email.

Sincerely,
Don Hall

Email to Superintendent at Pulaski County Special School District

Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School - 2021

Delete Archive Move Flag Mark Unread Sync ...

Notice of Second Public Hearing for Open Enrollment Charter School Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 1:16 PM

DH Don Hall <gadonhall@yahoo.com>
To: Gregory Pilewski; Cc: gadonhall@yahoo.com; Paul Vallas; Michael Bakalis; JoAnna Lever

Final - Second Publi...
17.4 KB

Download All • Preview All

Dear Superintendent Pilewski:

We hope this email finds you safe and well. This communication is a follow up from our earlier ones concerning a proposed open enrollment charter school application for your service area.

This attached notice is to inform you that American Quality Schools intends to hold a second public meeting on July 6th at 7:00 p.m. by Zoom to discuss their charter application for the Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy, which was submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education on May 30, 2021.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paul Vallas at 504-655-4319. He will be happy to assist you. You can also contact me by email.

Sincerely,
Don Hall

Attachment 3 – Tentative 2 Year Budget

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy Estimated Revenues - Year 1

Source of Funds	# Students	Amount Per Student	Total Yr 1
Foundation Funding	200	\$7,349.00	\$1,469,800.00
Professional Development	200	\$27.40	\$5,480.00
ESA	200	\$1,051	\$210,200.00
Charter Facility Funding	200	\$450	\$90,000.00
Grants/Other Funding:	Walton Grant		\$1,150,000.00
Total Budgeted Revenues**			\$2,925,480.00

Note: ** This does not include funding from Title 1 or Federal Child Nutrition

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy Estimated Salaries to be Paid from State/Local Funds - Year 1

Position	#	Salary	Subtotal	Fringe	Total Expense
Commandant (Superintendent/Principal)	1	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$23,400	\$113,400
Chief Academic Officer (Assistant Principal)	1	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$20,800	\$100,800
JROTC Officer	1	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$18,200	\$88,200
Core Curriculum Teachers	10	\$47,000	\$470,000	\$122,200	\$592,200
Special Education Teachers	2	\$47,000	\$94,000	\$24,440	\$118,440
Digital Literacy Specialist	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$10,400	\$50,400
JROTC Instructors	1	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$10,920	\$52,920
First Responder Instructors	2	\$42,000	\$84,000	\$21,840	\$105,840
Learning/Intervention Assistants	2	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$15,600	\$75,600
Guidance Counselor	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$11,700	\$56,700
Nurse/Nutritionist	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$10,400	\$50,400
Parent/Community Engagement Specialist	1	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$9,100	\$44,100
Administrative Assistant	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$7,800	\$37,800
Data/Records Clerk	1	\$28,000	\$27,500	\$7,150	\$34,650

IT Technician	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$10,400	\$50,400
Custodian	1	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$7,280	\$35,280
			\$0	\$0	\$0

Total Budgeted Salaries and Benefits \$1,607,130

**Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy
Estimated Expenditures - Year 1**

Administration:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Professional development	\$10,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$10,000.00
Equipment	computing equipment, printers, phone/intercom system	\$25,000.00
Other	Start-up furniture	\$20,000.00
Classroom Instruction:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Learning management system	\$20,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$20,000.00
Equipment	student and teacher computing devices	\$225,000.00
Special Education:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	IEP and case management system	\$5,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$3,000.00
Gifted & Talented Program	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$1,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
ALE Program:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$2,500.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$1,000.00

ELL Program:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Online instructional resources	\$2,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Guidance Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$2,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Health Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$2,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment	Startup furniture and equipment	\$10,000.00
Library Media Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Online subscriptions	\$5,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,500.00
Equipment	Learning Center equipment	\$8,000.00
Fiscal Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$0.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Pupil Transportation:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Contractor drivers, bus passes	\$50,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Maintenance & Operations:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Maintenance and repair, waste removal, security monitoring	\$30,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,500.00

Equipment		\$5,000.00
Phone		\$4,000.00
Gas		\$8,000.00
Electric		\$14,000.00
Water		\$6,000.00
Sewer		\$5,000.00
Food Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$100,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$3,000.00
Equipment	Tables/Heat Tables/Cash Register - one time	\$25,000.00
Data Processing:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	SIS	\$3,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment	safety/security/time management/inventory management	\$15,000.00
Substitute Personnel:	Explanation	Amount
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Salaries		\$10,000.00
CMO Fee (if applicable):	Explanation	Amount
Annual Fee	10% state and local revenue	\$140,360.00
Facilities:	Explanation	Amount
Lease/Purchase Contract Per Yr		\$120,000.00
Facility Upgrades	Security	\$40,000.00
Property Insurance Per Yr		\$14,000.00
Content Insurance Per Yr		\$14,000.00
Debt Expenditures:	Explanation	Amount

Other Expenditures:	Explanation	Amount
Recruitment of students/teachers	Advertising/Marketing/Website creation	\$20,000.00
Legal Services		\$5,000.00
Extra Duty Stipends		\$15,000.00

TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURES \$1,034,860.00

**Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy
Year 1 Ending Balance**

REVENUE \$2,925,480.00

EXPENDITURES

Salaries & Benefits	\$1,607,760.00	
Other Expenses	\$1,034,860.00	

\$2,642,620.00

ENDING BALANCE – Year 1 \$282,860.00

Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy

Estimated Revenues - Year 2

Source of Funds	# Students	Amount Per Student	Total Yr 1
Foundation Funding	400	\$7,422.00	\$2,968,800.00
Professional Development	400	\$27.40	\$10,960.00
ESA	400	\$1,051	\$420,400.00
Charter Facility Funding	400	\$450	\$180,000.00
Grants/Other Funding:	Walton Implementation Grant Balance		\$282,860.00

Total Budgeted Revenues ** \$3,863,020.00

Note: ** This does not include funding from Title 1 or Federal Child Nutrition

**Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy
Estimated Salaries to be Paid from State/Local Funds - Year 2**

Position	#	Salary	Subtotal	Fringe	Total Expense
Commandant (Superintendent/Principal)	1	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$23,400	\$113,400
Chief Academic Officer (Assistant Principal)	1	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$20,800	\$100,800
JROTC Officer	1	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$18,200	\$88,200
Core Curriculum Teachers	7	\$47,000	\$329,000	\$85,540	\$414,540
Core Curriculum Teachers	10	\$49,000	\$490,000	\$127,400	\$617,400
Special Education Teachers	3	\$49,000	\$147,000	\$38,220	\$185,220
Digital Literacy Specialist	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$11,700	\$56,700
JROTC Instructors	2	\$42,000	\$84,000	\$21,840	\$105,840
First Responder Instructors	4	\$42,000	\$168,000	\$43,680	\$211,680
Learning/Intervention Assistants	4	\$30,000	\$120,000	\$31,200	\$151,200
Nurse/Nutritionist	1	\$44,000	\$44,000	\$11,440	\$55,440
Guidance Counselor	2	\$45,000	\$90,000	\$23,400	\$113,400
Parent/Community Engagement Specialist	1	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$9,100	\$44,100
Administrative Assistant	2	\$32,000	\$64,000	\$16,640	\$80,640
Data/Records Clerk	1	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$7,280	\$35,280
IT Technician	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$10,400	\$50,400

Custodian	1.5	\$28,000	\$42,000	\$10,920	\$52,920
			\$0	\$0	\$0

Total Budgeted Salaries and Benefits \$2,477,160

**Arkansas Military and First Responder Academy
Estimated Expenditures - Year 2**

Administration:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Professional development for staff	\$10,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$10,000.00
Equipment		\$2,500.00
Classroom Instruction:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Learning management system	\$20,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$20,000.00
Equipment	student and teacher computing devices	\$225,000.00
Special Education:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	IEP and case management system	\$5,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$3,000.00
Gifted & Talented Program	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$2,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
ALE Program:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$2,500.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$1,000.00
ELL Program:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	online resources	\$2,000.00

Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Guidance Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$4,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Health Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$2,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		
Library Media Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	Online subscriptions	\$5,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,500.00
Equipment	Learning Center equipment	\$5,000.00
Fiscal Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$0.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Pupil Transportation:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$75,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,000.00
Equipment		\$0.00
Maintenance & Operations:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$30,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$2,500.00
Equipment		\$5,000.00
Phone		\$6,000.00

Gas		\$10,000.00
Electric		\$18,000.00
Water		\$8,000.00
Sewer		\$7,000.00
Food Services:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services		\$140,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$5,000.00
Equipment		\$5,000.00
Data Processing:	Explanation	Amount
Purchased Services	SIS	\$3,000.00
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Equipment		\$1,000.00
Substitute Personnel:	Explanation	Amount
Supplies and Materials		\$1,000.00
Salaries		\$10,000.00
CMO Fee (if applicable):	Explanation	Amount
Annual Fee	10% state and local revenue	\$280,720.00
Facilities:	Explanation	Amount
Lease/Purchase Contract Per Yr		\$120,000.00
Facility Upgrades		\$40,000.00
Property Insurance Per Yr		\$14,000.00
Content Insurance Per Yr		\$14,000.00
Debt Expenditures:	Explanation	Amount

Other Expenditures:	Explanation	Amount
Recruitment of students/teachers	Advertising/Marketing	\$20,000.00
Legal Services		\$5,000.00
Extra Duty Stipends		\$25,000.00

TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURES \$1,180,720.00

**Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy
Year 2 Ending Balance**

REVENUE \$3,863,650.00

EXPENDITURES

Salaries & Benefits \$2,477,160.00

Other Expenses \$1,180,720.00

\$3,657,880.00

ENDING BALANCE – Year 2 \$205,140.00

Attachment 4: Statement of Assurance

2021 Open-Enrollment Charter Applicant State of Assurances

The signature of the President of the Board of Directors of the proposed public charter school's sponsoring entity certifies that the following statements are and will be addressed through policies adopted by the sponsoring entity and policies to be adopted by the public charter school; and, if the application is approved, that the sponsoring entity, governing body, administration, and staff of the open-enrollment charter shall abide by them.

1. The information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and this application has been sent to the superintendent of all the districts from which we expect to draw students.
2. The open-enrollment public charter school shall be open to all students, on a space-available basis, and shall not discriminate in its admission policy on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or academic or athletic eligibility, except as follows: the open-enrollment public charter school may adopt admissions policies that are consistent with federal law, regulations, or guidelines applicable to charter schools. The charter may provide for the exclusion of a student who has been expelled from another public school district.
3. If enrollment exceeds the approved enrollment cap, the open-enrollment charter school shall hold an annual random and anonymous public lottery, followed with notifying parents of enrollment status for all applicants. The waiting list generated by the lottery will be maintained for one year.
4. In accordance with federal and state laws, the open-enrollment public charter school hiring and retention policies of administrators, teachers, and other employees shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, or special need.
5. The open-enrollment public charter school shall operate in accordance with federal laws and rules governing public schools, applicable provisions of the Arkansas Constitution, and state laws and regulations governing public schools not waived by the approved charter.
6. The open-enrollment public charter school shall not use the moneys that it receives from the state for any sectarian program or activity, or as collateral for debt.
7. Open-enrollment public charter schools may enter into lease-purchase agreements for school buildings built by private entities with facilities bonds exempt from federal taxes under 26 USCS 142(a) as allowed by Ark. Code Ann.

§ 6-20-402. No indebtedness of an open-enrollment public charter school shall ever become a debt of the State of Arkansas.

8. The open-enrollment public charter school shall not impose taxes or charge students tuition or fees that would not be allowable charges in the public school districts.
9. The open-enrollment public charter school shall not be religious in its operations or programmatic offerings.
10. The open-enrollment public charter school shall ensure that any of its employees who qualify for membership in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System or the Arkansas State and Public School Employee Insurance Program shall be covered under those systems to the same extent a qualified employee of a traditional school district is covered.
11. The employees and volunteers of the open-enrollment public charter school are held immune from liability to the same extent as other public school district employees and volunteers under applicable state laws.
12. The open-enrollment public charter school shall be reviewed for its potential impact on the efforts of a public school district or public school districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.
13. The open-enrollment public charter school shall comply with all health and safety laws, rules and regulations of the federal, state, county, region, or community that may apply to the facilities and school property.
14. The applicant confirms the understanding that certain provisions of state law shall not be waived. The open-enrollment public charter school is subject to any prohibition, restriction, or requirement imposed by Title 6 of the Arkansas Code and any rule and regulation approved by the State Board of Education under this title relating to:
 - (a) Monitoring compliance with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-101 *et seq.*, as determined by the Commissioner of the Department of Education;
 - (b) Conducting criminal background checks for employees;
 - (c) High school graduation requirements as established by the State Board of Education;
 - (d) Special education programs as provided by this title;
 - (e) Public school accountability under this title;
 - (f) Ethical guidelines and prohibitions as established by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-24- 101 *et seq.*, and any other controlling state or federal law regarding ethics or conflicts of interest; and
 - (g) Health and safety codes as established by the State Board of Education and state and local governmental entities.

15. The facilities of the public charter school shall comply with all requirements for accessibility for individuals with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and IDEA and all other state and federal laws.
16. Should the open-enrollment public charter school voluntarily or involuntarily close, the applicant confirms the understanding that any fees associated with the closing of the school including, but not limited to, removal of furniture, equipment, general expenses, etc., are the sole responsibility of the sponsoring entity. No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the open-enrollment public charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the state or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of the open-enrollment public charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the state or its political subdivisions. Upon dissolution of the open-enrollment public charter school or upon nonrenewal or revocation of the charter, all net assets of the open-enrollment public charter school, including any interest in real property, purchased with public funds shall be deemed the property of the state, unless otherwise specified in the charter of the open-enrollment public charter school. If the open-enrollment public charter school used state or federal funds to purchase or finance personal property, real property or fixtures for use by the open-enrollment public charter school, the authorizer may require that the property be sold. The state has a perfected priority security interest in the net proceeds from the sale or liquidation of the property to the extent of the public funds used in the purchase.
17. To be eligible for a charter school license, an entity must hold or have applied for 501(c)(3) status at the time this charter application is filed. The entity must receive formal tax exempt status under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 prior to the first day of its operation with students.
18. Any applications submitted without documentation showing that 501(c)(3) status has been applied for or received will not be reviewed. Articles of incorporation or a letter acknowledging non-profit status from the Secretary of State will not suffice.
19. The curriculum used in the school will be aligned to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education curriculum standards.
20. The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Financial Management System, provided by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, shall be the original and official accounting systems of record for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for all financial transaction records and reporting (including, but not limited to, payroll processing and wage and tax reporting to the IRS ATRS, DFA, etc., accounts payable, fixed assets, personnel budgeting, and budgeting). APSCN shall be used to record all private, as well as, local, state, and federal revenues and expenditures.
21. Ark. Code Ann. §6-24-105 prohibits charter school board members from contracting with or being employed by the charter school except in certain limited circumstances.
22. The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Financial Management System, provided by the Department of Education, shall be the original and official accounting system of record for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Department of Education for all financial transaction

records and reporting (including, but not limited to, payroll processing and wage and tax reporting to IRS, ATRS, DFA, etc., accounts payable, fixed assets, personnel budgeting, and budgeting). APSCN shall be used to record all private, as well as, local, state, and federal revenues and expenditures.

23. The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Student Management System, provided by the Department of Education, shall be the original and official student management system for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Department of Education for all student management areas (including, but not limited to, systems administration, demographics, attendance, scheduling, report cards, discipline, medical, Cognos reporting, and Statewide Information System reporting).
24. The facility to be used will be in compliance with all requirements for accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and all other state and federal laws and local zoning ordinances.
25. **A copy of the entity's letter from the IRS reflecting tax exempt status or a copy of the entity's application for 501(c)(3) status must be included with the application.** Articles of incorporation or a letter acknowledging non-profit status from the Secretary of State will not suffice.) To be eligible, an entity must hold or have applied for 501(c)(3) status at the time this charter application is filed. The entity must receive formal tax exempt status under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 prior to the first day of its operation with students. Non-profit entities without the required Internal Revenue Service documentation are not eligible to be awarded charters; therefore, any **applications submitted without documentation showing that 501(c)(3) status has been applied for or received will not be reviewed.**

Michael J. Bakalis

Applicant Signature

May 28, 2021

Date

Michael J. Bakalis

Printed Name

Appendix I – First Responder’s Concentration Overview

A **first responder** is a person with specialized training who is among the **first** to arrive and provides assistance at the scene of an emergency, such as an accident, natural disaster, or terrorism. **First responders** typically include law enforcement officers, paramedics, EMT's and firefighters.

The program offers an immersive and innovative experiential learning opportunity while preparing students for futures in the First Responder career field. Partnered with First Responder institutions, students will have the ability to receive training in a First Responder field of interest, mentorship from industry professionals, work study opportunities and specific certifications.

First Responder training will be offered as electives, consuming that portion of the AMFRA budget and school day. Traditional enrichment and recreational electives will be offered as a series of clubs the students will have an opportunity to participate in. Each of the First Responders electives will include internship and paid work-study opportunity for students. Students will have the option of changing electives. One outcome from this program is that students could be eligible for career placement in one of the five first responder areas upon graduation.

Students in the First Responders Academy Magnet select from one of five tracks:

1. Law Enforcement Track is for students interested in pursuing a future in the Law Enforcement or Criminal Justice fields.
2. Firefighting Track is for students interested in pursuing a future in the Firefighting or Fire Science fields.
3. EMS Track is for students interested in the front lines of emergency medical services, providing support to patients, before they reach a hospital.
4. Nursing Track is for students interested in the field of health care services.
5. Aviation Track is for students interested in the field of aviation, specifically Flight School, Pilotless Drone Operator, Air Traffic Control, and Drone operators,

Institutional Partners

AMFRA will partner with local First Responder institutions. They include the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office, the Little Rock Fire Department, MEMS as well as the Reserve Officers Training Program (ROTC). AMRA will also partner with a local college or University that offers advanced certifications or to earn credits towards an Associate degree in First Responders areas of interests.

AMFRA will contract with the Institutional First Responder Partners for the following services.

- Design the training to familiarize the students with their specific First Responder profession and place them on track for certification.
- Provide the instructors who will serve as paid Adjunct Professor
- Provide students with real work expense through internships and paid work-study. school to work experience that will be financed by AMFRA.

Sample First Responder Curriculum Track

The final tracks components will be determined by the First Responder partner and will include the identification and offering of certificated programs. What follows are partial samples of a Police and Fire First Responder Track.

POLICE

Criminal Justice Operations I - Grade 9

This course is to introduce the student to the history, goals, and career opportunities in the Criminal Justice Profession. It, also, covers ethics and professionalism, constitutional and criminal laws, court and trial process, juvenile justice system, and the correctional system. Students will, also, be instructed on personal, interpersonal, and communication skills as well as demonstrate employability skills.

Criminal Justice Operations II - Grade 10

This course is to introduce the student to the characteristics and procedures of patrol, complete written reports, and crime prevention programs. Students will, also, describe guidelines for use-of-force, perform CPR and first aid techniques, and procedures to protect from blood-borne pathogens. Training for Traffic Control Officer and Parking Enforcement Specialist.

Criminal Justice III (Parts 1 & 2) – Grade 11 & 12 (Dual Enrollment)

This course is to introduce the student to crime scene safety, conducting criminal investigations, conducting forensic processing, and complete property control procedures. Students will conduct a traffic crash investigation completing the proper report forms. Computer skills as well as job related math skills will be performed. Enhancing the awareness of human diversity will be instructed. Students will also participate in AMFRA funded paid-work study internships with the Police Department.

FIRE

Firefighting I - Grade 9

This course is to introduce a career of Fire Science that can lead to employment, after further instruction, to a career as a fire fighter or other disciplines in the Fire Science realm. Topics include history and culture of fire service, health, safety prevention, and situational awareness, communications for emergencies and non-emergencies, building materials and construction methods, fire behavior, operational safety, proper use and care of personal protective equipment (PPE), proper selection and utilization of fire extinguishers, securing and raising objects with rope and webbing, search and victim removal methods, firefighter survival skills, emergency scene lighting, perform forcible entry and breaching operations, and selection and deployment of appropriate ladders.

Firefighting II - Grade 10

This course is to introduce a career of Fire Science that can lead to employment, after further instruction, to a career as a firefighter or other disciplines in the fire science realm. Topics include tactical ventilation, water supply systems and sources, fire hose characteristics, inspection, and maintenance procedures, and perform various hose rolls, loads, and finishes, and control of various types of fires (structural, Class C and Class D fires, vehicle and ground cover).

Firefighting III – Grade 11 (followed by DE for 12th grade)

This course is to provide an introduction to a career of Fire Science that can lead to employment, after further instruction, to a career as a fire fighter or other disciplines in the Fire Science realm. Topics include loss control practices and procedures following AHJ (Authority Having Jurisdiction), roles of firefighters in the development and implementation of a fire and life safety program, and performing and practicing JPR (Job Performance Requirements). Students will also participate in AMFRA funded paid-work study internships with the Police Department.

Appendix II: Letter(s) of Support



July 9, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

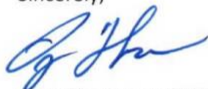
Please accept this letter in support for the Little Rock Military Academy.

As the Director of MEMS, I am excited about the beginning of the Little Rock Military Academy. With the stated focus of first responder electives concentration along with college-preparatory instructional framework the student is getting an excellent start toward a career.

The opportunity to partner and support a program that focuses on self-discipline, leadership, teamwork, health and physical fitness. I am also excited to learn that academies of this type have historically drawn significant numbers of students from underrepresented populations. This is also an area of focus for the first responder community.

I see nothing but good things for Central Arkansas with the Little Rock Military Academy. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter. If I can be of further assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Greg Thompson FACPE

MEMS Executive Director

Metropolitan Emergency Medical Services (MEMS)
P.O. Box 2452, Little Rock, AR 72203-2452
Administrative Office (501) 301-1400 / Fax (501) 301-1401



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

2021 Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application – Part 2 of 3

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA)

Name of Proposed Charter

Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)

Initial Application - Deadline June 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after this time.

Final Application - Deadline July 15, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after this time.

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

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Charter School Office
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-683-5312**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Proposed Charter:	Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA) Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)
Primary Contact for Application:	Paul G. Vallas
Primary Contact Phone:	504-655-4319
Primary Contact Cell:	504-655-4319
Primary Contact Email:	paulgvallas@gmail.com

Name of sponsoring entity:

American Quality Schools – Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

The sponsoring entity is eligible to apply for a public school charter under the following category:

- A public institution of higher education
- A private nonsectarian institution of higher education
- A governmental entity
- An organization that is nonsectarian in its programs and operations and is, or will be, exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Name of Charter Management Organization:

American Quality Schools, Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

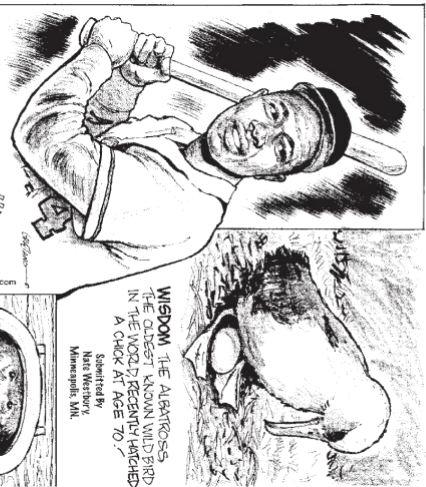
Attachments 2A1 – Notices of 1st Public Hearing

Bids/Requests	1210	Bids/Requests	1210	Bids/Requests	1210	Meetings/ Hearings	1230	Meetings/ Hearings	1230						
Internet bids will be received by the Arkansas Department of Transportation (DOT) at 1000 Main St., Room 1000, Little Rock, Ark. 72201, (501) 372-3733, June 30, 2021. A complete listing of the jobs to be included in this listing can be found on the Department's website at www.ardot.gov/divisions/procurement-management/procurement-contractors/currently-awarded-projects . General Documents and Specifications may be purchased in the Program Management Division at the address noted above during regular business hours and 1.50 per day per page thereafter. Bidders are requested to become an eligible bidder and questions regarding prequalification or bidding requirements should be addressed to the Arkansas Department of Transportation at ag@enr1.dvt.ilo.ark.gov or via telephone at (501) 569-2261.		In order to have a bid considered, contractors must obtain a bid bond in the amount of either a bidder's bond or a certified cashier's check in the total amount bid. In order for a bid to be eligible for consideration, the bid must be received in the Department of Treasury Listing of Companies holding Certificates of Authority as acceptable sureties. Contractors must obtain a bid bond in the amount of either a bidder's bond or a certified cashier's check in the total amount bid. In order for a bid to be eligible for consideration, the bid must be received in the Department of Treasury Listing of Companies holding Certificates of Authority as acceptable sureties. Contractors must obtain a bid bond in the amount of either a bidder's bond or a certified cashier's check in the total amount bid. In order for a bid to be eligible for consideration, the bid must be received in the Department of Treasury Listing of Companies holding Certificates of Authority as acceptable sureties.		The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any formalities. ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION Robert S. Moore, Jr., Chairman 754193151		Request for Qualifications RFO #100A-21-1464 for the removal of the existing concrete and steel bridge, Schlichtel & Snow Fire Arts Buildings. The full RFO can found at the UCA Purchasing website at www.uca.edu/purchasing or contact the UCA Purchasing Office at (501) 372-3733, ext. 300 and June 2, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. The State of Arkansas encourages the participation of all small, minority and women business enterprises. The State of Arkansas reserves the right to accept all proposals and to waive any formalities. Contact: Cassandra McCullen-Smith, Director of Purchasing 2125 College Avenue, Suite 2, Conway, AR 72534		City of North Little Rock COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Assistant Director for Procurement 754194161		American Quality Schools plans to submit an application to the State Board of Education to open a charter school in Little Rock.		Arkansas area to be referred to as the Little Rock Military Academy. Virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, May 26, 2021, 7:00 PM. Join with Zoom at Meeting ID: 452 457 8232 Meeting Passcode: 174521		Or join by phone at 1-317-2-926-6799. All are welcome to join us to learn about American Quality Schools and the opportunities we will bring to your community. Pre-registration is not required. 754194162	

Believe It or Not!

Wisdom: The Albatross - The Oldest Known Wild Bird in the World Recently Landed a Check at Age 70. Submitted by Marc Westbury, Menasha, Wis.

White Shannon Stevens - When Shannon Stevens in Menasha, Wisconsin, bit her in the butt when she tried to use an outpocket.



HAMMER
HANK AARON
(1934 - 2021)
ENDED HIS MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL CAREER IN 1975 WITH 2,297 RUNS BATTED IN (RBI). A RECORD HE STILL HOLDS TODAY.

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Free Ad Details

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"ALEXA, ENABLER ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE"



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

2021 Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application – Part 4 of 4

Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA)

Name of Proposed Charter

Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)

Initial Application - Deadline June 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after this time.

Final Application - Deadline July 15, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after this time.

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

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Charter School Office
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-683-5312**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Proposed Charter:	Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy (AMFRA) Formerly called “Little Rock Military Academy” in our original Letter of Intent (LOI)
Primary Contact for Application:	Paul G. Vallas
Primary Contact Phone:	504-655-4319
Primary Contact Cell:	504-655-4319
Primary Contact Email:	paulgvallas@gmail.com

Name of sponsoring entity:

American Quality Schools – Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

The sponsoring entity is eligible to apply for a public school charter under the following category:

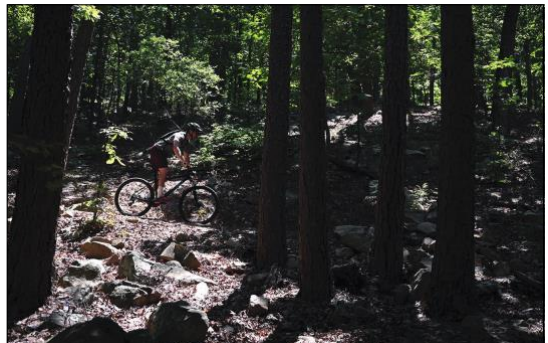
- A public institution of higher education
- A private nonsectarian institution of higher education
- A governmental entity
- An organization that is nonsectarian in its programs and operations and is, or will be, exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Name of Charter Management Organization:

American Quality Schools, Dr. Michael Bakalis, CEO, mbakalis@aq.s.org

Attachments 2A2 – Notices of 2nd Public Hearing

Pedaling on the trail



Bill Hightill rides bikes with his wife, Beth, on the Jackford trail Saturday in Pinnacle Mountain State Park. (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/Stephen Swiford)

Arkansas achievers

Adedayo Arigbede of West Memphis has been selected to become a member of the National Society of High School Scholars. Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church Foundation has announced that Tonia Kelley and Alex Shannon have been awarded the Stanley and Arminia Berry Music and Arts Scholarship...

North Little Rock notebook

Local artist gets Statuary Hall job. Local artist and award-winning sculptor Kevin Kresse learned last week that he was chosen to design and create a Johnny Cash statue for the National Statuary Hall Collection at the U.S. Capitol in Washington. Kresse's art can be seen throughout North Little Rock's downtown district...

Health care notebook

Agency: Beware of mosquitoes, ticks. The Arkansas Department of Health is warning residents to take steps to avoid tick and mosquito bites. UAMS does HIV kidney transplant. The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences has performed the state's first kidney transplant between a donor and recipient who both have HIV...

Pet of the week

Alli, a sweet, tawny Boxer mix, who likes everyone and everything, is looking for her forever home. She is sweet and chill, house-trained, and gets along great with children and other dogs.

Featured Felines

Lacey is a beautiful, sleek, athletic senior cat, who is sweet and chill. She is vetted and is looking for her forever home, as her current owners can no longer keep her.



Baker

Continued from Page 1B million to \$1 million. Baker, who worked as a lobbyist, helped arrange contributions for Maggo's campaign for a seat on the Arkansas Court of Appeals in exchange for lowering the judgment, according to the indictment, Baker has pleaded innocent.

OUR TOWN

Board weighs rule on masks for fall. The North Little Rock School District is considering whether to make masks optional for the 2021-22 school year. The district will follow Arkansas Department of Health and federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines on quarantine after possible exposure...

Births

Rock, daughter, Precious Thompson and Terrence Partee Jr., Little Rock, daughter. June 15 John and Elizabeth Otter, North Little Rock, daughter. June 16 Breanna Davis and Shawn Breyley, Little Rock, son. Andre and Madison Miller, Little Rock, daughter.

Births

The following is a list of births reported to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette by area hospitals. It may not be a complete list since parents may use the hospital not to publicly release the news of a birth. BAPTIST HEALTH MERCER CENTER - LITTLE ROCK. June 10 Christopher and Soledad, London, son. June 11 Marissa Barber and Ricky Nord, North Little Rock, son. June 11 Korrinna Parker and DeMonde Burton, White Hall, son. June 11 Ramajina Cox and Shyneel Hagler, North Little Rock, daughter. June 12 Drew and Chantrela Loring, Little Rock, daughter. June 13 Shandara Jackson and Cameron Daley, Little Rock, son. June 14 Haley Gray and Benjamin Phillips, White Hall, son. June 14 Latasha Moore and Corey Coleman, Ward, son. June 15 Chris Walker and Titan Crump, Little Rock, son.

American Quality Schools

is submitting an application to the State Board of Education to open a charter school in the Little Rock, Arkansas area to be referred to as the Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - SECOND. Virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 7:00 PM. Meeting ID: 860 4617 6128 Password: 170284

Records

Continued from Page 1B (30) days unless the business and/or legal function requires additional time." The document, last revised in 2020, goes on to state, "E-mails determined to be transitory shall be purged from the user's [sic] mailbox and all deleted folders immediately."

In the interview, Scott said, "So we don't normally keep anything more than 30 days, if we keep anything." He added, "That's the long-standing policy of Little Rock retention policy, even prior to me."

In the same interview, which was conducted by phone, senior mayor adviser Kendra Pruitt said that not all correspondence would require storage. She referred to 10 requests submitted via email that would have to be stored within 30 days.

"It says that other forms of communication should not be kept," she said. "Obviously some people do keep things, but their recommendation from IT is because of storage space — server space, things of that sort — they suggest that we do not maintain emails longer than 30 days."

Pruitt added, "Obviously, if you can delete it within a day or a week, that's even better. But it should not be retained over 30 days unless there's a legal requirement or a business requirement that is ongoing work."

Asked if the state's open-records law would constitute a legal requirement to retain records, Scott deferred to the city's legal counsel.

"That's a legal question to our city attorney," Scott said. "Again, our city attorney's aware of this email retention policy."

He added, "We provide records that are responsive to the request of the FOI Always." In a follow-up exchange via email, Pruitt provided a response from the city's information technology director, Randy Foshee, as to whether city emails are kept or maintained elsewhere after they have been deleted.

"Once deleted completely those emails are not stored or maintained," Foshee wrote. In certain instances, FOIA requests for Little Rock city records have returned limited or largely irrelevant results.

A request submitted in February for correspondence between Scott and his chief of staff, Charles Blake, during a time frame of a little less than a month returned no responsive records from Scott, according to a response from the city's FOIA coordinator.

A subsequent request for correspondence between Scott and Blake between February and May returned nine pages of email records from the mayor's office.

In another example, an FOIA request for draft working copies or final versions of Scott's planned 2021 State of the City address was submitted to the city March 18, one week before the speech was scheduled to air.

When the city completed the request March 22, the only document directly related to the speech's content was a single-page outline devoid of full paragraphs or much information beyond general headings.

The mostly empty outline said to acknowledge 2020 and covid-19. It also included three words in bold: "unite," "grow" and "transforms" apparently to serve as markers delineating planned sections of the speech. But below those words, the remainder of the page was blank.

At the time, when asked via email if a full draft of the speech was available, the FOIA coordinator responded, "Per the custodian, the Mayor's office has submitted everything relevant to this [FOIA] request."

MORE CONTENT

City of LR's guidelines on network security, email
arkansasonline.com/627262lenel/

Speech's outline provided after request for drafts
arkansasonline.com/627262lenel/

Request for Scott's emails returns just 27 pages
arkansasonline.com/627262lenel/

the requested records was Jan. 1 to May 10.

But when the city's FOIA coordinator on June 1 returned a response to the request, the document contained just 27 pages. They included several news releases, as well as an email from Scott to city directors updating them on a May 8 police shooting.

Additionally, records provided by the city in response to the request did not include emails from the Democrat-Gazette sent to Scott during that time period.

In a recent interview, Little Rock City Attorney Tom Carpenter suggested that the FOIA and Arkansas Supreme Court cases have established no record-retention aspect to the law that would apply broadly to local electronic correspondence.

Asked how the city's retention framework for electronic correspondence is different from a public employee who might choose to shred papers or documents or memos immediately after they are sent, Carpenter said, "It's not a matter if it's not maintained, it's not maintained."

He added moments later, "A lot of people in government don't keep emails for that reason. Legally, it's not required to retain records by email or text related to city business, such as a hypothetical sale of city property, would probably have to be maintained at least until the action on the property was taken, or possibly 30 days after the action if there was a question of a referendum, Carpenter said.

"And then you really don't need to keep it," he said. "If you want to keep it, you can. If you do keep it, it's a public record." Carpenter said common sense would say to retain records in other situations and referred to records documenting compliance with environmental laws.

"I think that there's probably people who get rid of everything, and I think they do so at their own peril," he said. "And I think there's probably people in the city that are pack rats and don't get rid of anything."

Local attorney John Tull, who represents the Arkansas Press Association, said via email that he was not aware of a local standard for retaining electronic correspondence.

Robert Steinbuch, a professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's William H. Bowen School of Law, said the state's open-records law "is not a records-retention statute."

Arkansas has a records-retention statute that applies to state government, Steinbuch said. "In the best of my knowledge, there's no records-retention statute by the state for localities," he said.

Localities can enact their own ordinances and procedures for retaining records, he said.

A 2005 Arkansas law provided for the development of rules and guidelines governing the retention of records, electronic or otherwise, of state agencies with an eye to the 1967 Freedom of Information Act.

However, the law expressly did not apply to cities, counties or other local governmental bodies.

Steinbuch said he had heard examples of public employees being encouraged to destroy records as soon as possible.



People walk Thursday near a new section of sidewalk along Church Avenue in Fayetteville. The city is in the middle of a \$3 million project using bond money that voters approved in April 2019 to install new streetlights and sidewalks in the city's downtown. (NWA Democrat-Gazette/Andy Shippe)

Fayetteville sprucing up downtown for walkability

STACY RYBURN
NWA DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE
FAYETTEVILLE — Walking around downtown will become safer and more pleasant within a couple of years, leaders say.

The city is in the middle of a \$3 million project to replace and build sidewalks, install streetlights, reconfigure curbs and wheelchair-accessible ramps, and make crosswalks more visible. The money is from a \$750 million transportation bond issue that voters approved in April 2019.

The project focuses on three areas of downtown. The first is Spring Street from West to College avenues, Church Avenue from Spring to Mountain streets, Meadow Street from Block to East avenues and the downtown square.

The second piece covers Prairie Street from Government to School avenues and West Avenue from Prairie to South streets.

The final area involves Dickson Street from Arkansas to College avenues. "The goal was to connect the downtown entertainment district from a pedestrian standpoint," Public Works Director Chris Brown said. "Right now, we've got some dark areas between the downtown square and Dickson."

Wider sidewalks have been installed on mostly the west side of Church Avenue by narrowing the street, and some on the east side with ramps for wheelchairs. Southwestern Electric Power Co. crews are moving poles as utility companies such as Cox and AT&T bury their lines.

The city installed a bus shelter at the intersection with Center Street, and the intersection allows for wider turns to shorten the length of pedestrian crossings.

New streetlights on Spring Street will be installed this fall. New sidewalks are installed on both sides of Meadow Street, connecting to a sidewalk that the city installed a few years ago on the north side leading to East Avenue.

The downtown square also will get new lights. That has an estimated \$109,000 budget, with about \$122,500 coming from the \$3 million for the overall project and about \$76,500 from the parks department budget for capital improvements. Brown said.

The square is considered a city park, although Cheers at the Old Post Office owns the building at the center of the square.

The City Council's Transportation Committee is to review conceptual designs of the square lights during its meeting Tuesday. The city hopes to install the new square lights early next year after the holidays, Brown said.

Curtis Arnold, owner of Cheers, said he's glad to see the new square lighting plans get started. The city approached him about the lights, and he's given input on the type of fixtures, he said.

People tend to congregate on the square, especially after leaving the restaurant, Arnold said. It can get pretty dark and, with the lights, people should be able to see the benches and gardens more easily. Plus, businesses such as his that participate in the Outdoor Refreshment Area program, in which people can walk around outside with alcoholic beverages, should clearly benefit, he said.

"We're thankful the city's doing it and looking forward to adding a little more ambiance and character to our already amazing downtown," he said.

The intersection at West Avenue and Prairie Street is in the design phase. Preliminary plans show new sidewalks on both sides of Prairie Street and a new sidewalk on the west side of West Avenue with new lights and green space throughout.

The West Avenue work will pick up where the city's cultural arts corridor project work will end. The \$16 million bond issue to build the arts corridor includes work on West Avenue from Dickson to South streets. The downtown walkability project will build a sidewalk from South to Prairie streets.

The new features will offer people an easier walk from the area to different parts of downtown, he said. Construction should wrap up by the fall of 2022.

Prairie Street and West Avenue will be wide enough in certain spots to accommodate on-street parking, Brown said. Recent developments on Prairie Street, including Prairie Street Bar & Tap and Prairie Street Live, have attracted hundreds of people to the area.

Sprucing up Dickson Street will be a project for next year, Brown said. Discussion started a few years ago with the city wanting to put a new overlay on the street. The Dickson Street Merchants Association provided a list of improvements it wanted to see, including more visible crosswalks, better sidewalks in certain spots and more lighting.

"We're looking at just kind of reworking or sprucing everything up and fixing some things that need some maintenance," Brown said.

Preliminary designs are in progress. The project faces some logistical challenges as the city prepares for construction at Dickson Street and West Avenue. The parking lot west of the Walton Arts Center will become a civic gathering space for the arts corridor, recently named The Ramble.

Construction is to begin next fall after a parking deck is built near the northwest corner of the intersection. Landowners Greg House and Ted Belden also plan to build a hotel at the intersection's northwest corner.

Construction of the parking deck should begin in late July or early August.

Pulaski County notebook

WILLIAM SANDERS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE
Worker bonuses on agenda for JPs

At a Pulaski County Quorum Court meeting Tuesday, justices of the peace will hear the first reading of a proposed ordinance to give county employees one-time bonuses.

The money would come from the American Rescue Plan, which gave the county \$76.1 million in covid-19 relief funds.

Under guidelines in the proposed ordinance, which is sponsored by Justice of the Peace Curtis Keith, each essential county worker would receive \$500 and each first responder would receive \$1,000.

During an agenda committee meeting earlier, Justice of the Peace Kristina "Keg" Gullett sought to amend the ordinance proposal to make all county employees eligible to receive \$1,000, but her effort did not receive a second.

Maumelle to open new 'Splash Pad'

Maumelle plans to open its "Splash Pad" next to the Maumelle library during the public meeting Tuesday. The city hopes to install the new square lights early next year after the holidays, Brown said.

The Sherwood Humane Animal Shelter plans to hold its grand reopening Monday and offer free pet adoptions all this week, according to a Facebook post.

Animal shelter set to reopen Monday

Prosecutors argued that Wright was drunk and physically aggressive toward Echo Gentry. At the time, Wright was living with Gentry and her children in an apartment in the Rosehill Ridge complex on Suckey Street in Texarkana, Texas.

Kavane Wright had invited Eric Gentry, a barber school student and his girlfriend's twin, to come to the house and cut his hair, his nephew's hair and Echo Gentry's children's hair. Eric Wright brought his first cousin, Mario Cornelius, with him to the apartment.

Prosecutors argued that Echo Gentry and Wright were arguing, "over alcohol" and that Wright was being physically aggressive toward her.

Wright retrieved a 9mm pistol from his bedroom and began carrying it in his pocket. The state called several witnesses, including Echo Gentry, who testified that Wright becomes assaultive toward women when intoxicated.

Eric Gentry asked Cornelius if he had a gun in his truck and that the two went outside. Witnesses said. Cornelius said he repeatedly asked Eric Gentry to leave but Eric Gentry wanted to go back inside.

Cornelius testified that there was no gun and that Eric Gentry said he didn't want to leave his sister and children in the apartment with Wright.

Crisp and Richards argued that Wright knew Eric Gentry didn't have a gun and was engaged in criminal conduct. If a person is engaged in criminal conduct, castle doctrine statutes don't apply, the prosecutors argued.

Man, 27, acquitted in 'castle doctrine' killing

LYNN LAROWE
TEXARKANA GAZETTE
A jury acquitted a Texarkana man Friday in a murder case the defense argued was self-defense under the Texas "castle doctrine."

Kavane Lamary Wright, 27, was also acquitted on a lesser charge of manslaughter.

Wright had a right to shoot and kill Eric Gentry if he believed his life was in danger in his own home. Authorities said in March 2020, when the fatal shooting occurred, that Eric Gentry, 35, was a Texarkana, Ark. resident.

Prosecutors argued that Wright was drunk and physically aggressive toward Echo Gentry. At the time, Wright was living with Gentry and her children in an apartment in the Rosehill Ridge complex on Suckey Street in Texarkana, Texas.

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Construction of the parking deck should begin in late July or early August.