



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Public Charter School Renewal Application for The Excel Center

**Deadline for Initial Submission: 5:00 PM on October 4, 2021**



**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Charter School Office  
Four Capitol Mall  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
501.683.5313**

EVENT/DEADLINE	Renewal Applications
Initial Applications Due by 5:00 p.m. Submitted to <a href="mailto:ade.charterschools@ade.arkansas.gov">ade.charterschools@ade.arkansas.gov</a>	October 4, 2021
Application Reviews with DESE	October 15-31, 2021
Application Revision Window	November 1-15, 2021
Final Applications Due by 5:00 p.m. Submitted to <a href="mailto:ade.charterschools@ade.arkansas.gov">ade.charterschools@ade.arkansas.gov</a>	November 15, 2021
Charter Authorizing Panel Hearings	December 14-15, 2021
State Board of Education Meeting – Review of Charter Authorizing Panel Decisions	January 13, 2022

### Charter Information

<b>Name of Charter:</b>	The Excel Center
<b>LEA Number:</b>	6058703
<b>Authorization Date:</b>	October 19, 2016
<b>Expiration Date:</b>	June 30, 2022
<b>Enrollment Cap:</b>	1,050
<b>Grades Served:</b>	Adults age 19 and over completing grades 9-12
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Markous Jewett
<b>Superintendent Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mjewett@goodwillar.org">mjewett@goodwillar.org</a>
<b>Charter Mailing Address:</b>	7400 Scott Hamilton Dr. Suite 50, Little Rock, AR 72209
<b>Charter Physical Address:</b>	7400 Scott Hamilton Dr. Suite 50, Little Rock, AR 72209
<b>Contact for the Application:</b>	Greg Wertenberger, School Director
<b>Contact Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:gwertenberger@excelcenterar.org">gwertenberger@excelcenterar.org</a>
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	501-372-5100 x 1158

**Number of Years Requested for Renewal (1-5):****Section 1: Charter Data****Current Accreditation Status:** Accredited**Level of Support:** General**Enrollment (3 Quarter ADM)**

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
83.17	77.51	74.9	118.74

\* The Excel Center does not track 4 or 5 year graduation rates since our students are all 19 and over and do not follow traditional 4 or 5 year graduation cohorts. Instead, we compare our number of graduates each year to average enrollment and report that number related to one of our charter goals.

**Graduation Rates**

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
4 Year				
5 Year				

\* The Excel Center does not receive an annual letter grade or an ESSA School Index because the school holds a waiver for state testing.

**Letter Grades**

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**ESSA School Index**

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Overall Index	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weighted Achievement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Growth	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SQSS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Section 2: Charter Mission Statement

### Previous mission statement:

The mission of The Excel Center is to provide adults the opportunity and support to earn a high school diploma and begin postsecondary education while developing career paths in sectors of the local economy that offer better-than average- employment and growth opportunities.

### If the mission statement for the charter will change, please provide the new mission:

The school's mission remains unchanged.

### What type of educational model does the school follow?

- Alternative Learning Environment
- Traditional
- Virtual Only
- College Prep
- Credit Recovery
- Other Focus Area: Adult Education

### How is the selected educational model incorporated in the day-to-day operations of the school, curriculum, class offerings, etc.?

The Excel Center meets students where they are in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help them manage work, life and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals. The Excel Center's education plan has three main pillars: (1) an academic philosophy that meets the goals and needs of adult students, (2) a concentrated focus on College and Career Readiness, and (3) a coaching platform designed to address barriers that impede students' continued educational success. In addition to these pillars, The Excel Center is built upon a foundation of elements proven to drive success for adult students, including an accelerated and flexible student schedule to meet the needs of working and busy adults, available transportation assistance and easy access for non-driving students, child care provided for students with children, and a mature learning environment with a mix of both younger and older students.

## Section 3: Charter Goals

Please use the following space to evaluate the goals approved in the last charter application.

SMART Goal 1	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
60% of graduates will earn one or more industry recognized credentials or concurrent college credits.	<p>Successful earning of the college credit and/or industry-recognized credentials by each student will be tracked each term.</p> <p>A final average will be calculated at the end of each school year with the number of graduates earning at least one college credit and/or industry recognized credential serving as the numerator and the total number of graduates that school year serving as the denominator.</p>	<p>Prior to the 2020-21 school year, well above 60% of our graduates successfully earned industry-recognized credentials while completing their high school diplomas. Due to the impact of COVID-19 during the 2020-21 school year, our students had limited access to training institutes and providers which made it tougher for them to obtain certifications. With expanded training offerings on the horizon through The Academy at Goodwill and other providers, we anticipate meeting and possibly exceeding the pre-pandemic levels of performance in the next five years.</p>

\*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

School Year	Graduates earning IRCs or Concurrent Credit
2016-2017	N/A - School did not begin serving students until Oct. 2017
2017-2018	N/A - The Excel Center's inaugural commencement occurred in December 2018
2018-2019	83%
2019-2020	100%
2020-2021	56%

SMART Goal 2	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
60% of students will average a 10-point gain in Reading and Math on the iReady assessment.	<p>iReady testing will take place at least three times during a student's enrollment: at initial enrollment, mid-enrollment, and at the end of enrollment.</p> <p>Numerator= the number of students who show at least a 10-point gain in their score in reading and math.</p> <p>Denominator=the number of students who have comparative iReady scores in the academic year.</p>	<p>The 2020-2021 school year, although different and tough, proved to be the most successful for our students. After returning to in-person learning, we saw significant growth among many of our students, so much so that we met our goal of having at least 60% average at least a 10-point gain in reading on the iReady assessment. In math, we fell short of the 60% by 4% and had 56% of our students average at least a 10-point gain on their iReady assessment. We expect to see this type of growth as we continue providing services and support. While having to pivot to remote learning amid the global pandemic led to decreases in the percentage of students meeting academic growth goals in 2019-2020, we have seen a significant increase in the percentage of students who are meeting those growth goals in 2020-2021.</p>

\*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

School Year	% Meeting Growth in Math	% Meeting Growth in Reading
2016-2017	<p>N/A The Excel Center did not begin serving students until October 2017</p>	
2017-2018	<p>N/A iReady diagnostic used for initial placement only during the school's first year.</p>	
2018-2019	51%	40%
2019-2020	46%	31%
2020-2021	56%	60%

SMART Goal 3	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
50% of graduates will be employed or pursuing further education or training within 6 months of high school graduation.	Within six months after graduation, students will be contacted to complete a post-graduate survey in which they will be asked to report on their work and education/training status.	We have consistently met our goal of at least 50% of our graduates pursuing higher education, training, or employment opportunities within six months of graduation. With the increasing demand for a skilled workforce by employers in our state, we anticipate that our graduates will continue to have a variety of choices in competitive employment opportunities, as well as options for pursuing higher education due to their achievement of completing their high school diploma and industry recognized credentials through The Excel Center and The Academy at Goodwill.

\*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

School Year	Graduates employed or pursuing further education or training within 6 months of graduation.
2016-2017	N/A - School did not begin serving students until Oct. 2017
2017-2018	N/A - The Excel Center's inaugural commencement occurred in December 2018
2018-2019	67%
2019-2020	89%
2020-2021	84%

<b>SMART Goal 4</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>Evaluation of Goal</b>
15% of average annual enrollment will graduate.	<p>Numerator =The total number of students who graduate by the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Denominator = The school's average enrollment over five terms in the academic year.</p>	<p>Average enrollment increased significantly during the 2020-21 school year when online learning was an option for all students. However, online learning presented challenges for many of our students in addition to the barriers they typically present with including: needing intense levels of remediation, childcare, and juggling schedules of parenting, working, and making ends meet. Their ability to focus on a regular schedule of virtual school proved extremely difficult. Many of our students were juggling their own schooling and their children's remote schooling with a lack of access to technology and reliable infrastructure to be successful. While enrollment numbers increased dramatically in 2020-21, we did not see a similar increase in the number of students making expected academic progress during this same time frame.</p>

\*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Average enrollment</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Percentage of graduates to average enrollment</b>
2016-2017	N/A - School did not begin serving students until Oct. 2017		
2017-2018	N/A - The Excel Center's inaugural commencement occurred in December 2018		
2018-2019	99	24	24%
2019-2020	85	17	20%
2020-2021	136	17	13%



## Section 4: New Goals

Select performance goals for the period of time requested for renewal that are related to the specific mission of the charter. Please include how the goals will be monitored.

SMART Goals
<p><b>75% of graduates will earn one or more industry recognized credentials or concurrent college credits.</b></p> <p>Successful earning of the college credit and/or industry-recognized credentials by each student will be tracked each term.</p> <p>A final average will be calculated at the end of each school year.</p> <p>Numerator = the number of graduates earning at least one college credit and/or industry recognized credential</p> <p>Denominator = total number of graduates in the school year.</p>
<p><b>60% of students will average a 10-point gain in Reading and Math on the iReady assessment.</b></p> <p>iReady testing will take place at least three times during a student's enrollment: at initial enrollment, mid-enrollment, and at the end of enrollment.</p> <p>Numerator = the number of students who show at least a 10-point gain in their score in reading and math.</p> <p>Denominator = the number of students who have comparative iReady scores in the academic year.</p>
<p><b>75% of graduates will be employed or pursuing further education or training within 6 months of high school graduation.</b></p> <p>Within six months after graduation, students will be contacted to complete a post-graduate survey in which they will be asked to report on their work and education/training status.</p> <p>Numerator = the number of graduates reporting enrollment in higher education, training programs, or employment.</p> <p>Denominator = total number of graduates in the school year.</p>
<p><b>15% of average annual enrollment will graduate.</b></p> <p>Numerator = The total number of students who graduate by the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Denominator = The school's average enrollment over five terms in the academic year.</p>

## Section 5: Waivers

### Existing Waivers

Please list every waiver the charter school currently holds. Please check either “rescind” or “continue waiver” in the top-right box. If you plan to continue the waiver, please provide thorough answers to the questions provided.

Waiver #1 Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Advanced Placement Courses 9-12	Standard 1-A.1.3.10 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-16-1204	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
The Excel Center has a keen focus on college and career readiness and works to ensure students are prepared for "what comes next" after high school. As students progress through The Excel Center's course progression, students will have an opportunity to enroll in dual credit courses where they may earn college credit, as well as industry certification courses where they may earn industry recognized credentials.		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #2 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Alternative Learning Environment	DESE Rule - Student Special Needs Funding - Section 4.00 Standard: 2-I.1 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-48-102 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-48-103 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i) Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center is a unique learning environment designed to meet the needs of adults who have previously dropped out of high school. The school model is designed as an alternative learning environment for individuals who have not been successful in prior traditional academic learning environments and to provide a new education option that allows adults of all ages to earn a high school diploma.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
<p>Students have the benefits of flexible schedules, small class sizes, individualized interventions and supports designed to address the challenges that many of our adult learners face. Additionally, all students are assigned to a Life Coach to assist students with accessing needed supports and services to meet both academic and social/emotional needs.</p>		

Waiver #3 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Attendance	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-18-209(b) Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-18-213(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center serves adults age 19 or older and students will not be subject to compulsory attendance rules or laws. Students are adults, and flexibility in attendance to accommodate their adult responsibilities is necessary. The school academic calendar is divided into five 8-week terms with each term including approximately 32 instructional days.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #4 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Board of Directors	DESE Rule: School Board Zones and Rezoning Standard: 3-A.6 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-630 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-615 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-14-101 et seq. Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-608 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-619(c)(1)(A) Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-620 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-616(a) Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-634 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-611 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-629	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Bylaws of The Excel Center, which govern the actions of its Board of Directors, are consistent with all requirements of Nonprofit Corporation law. The Bylaws specify the number of directors, the process of appointing them, the length of their term of service, and processes for resignation and removal, and meeting requirements all of which are consistent with the requirements of law.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
Empty space for explanation		

Waiver #5 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Business Manager	Standard: 3-A.5 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-15-2302(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center hires the most qualified individual for the position, and that individual will receive any training necessary. This individual will also have a dotted line reporting relationship to accountants in the Finance Department of Goodwill.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #6 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Counseling	Standard: 2-C.1 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-18-2003(a)(2)(A) Standard: 4-E.1 Standard: 4-E.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></p>		
<p>The Excel Center's education plan includes a coaching platform designed to address barriers that impede students' continued educational success. The Excel Center's coaching platform acts as a comprehensive guidance program for all students and is central to providing supportive relationships that enable students to manage work, life and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals. Life coaches take on the role of a traditional guidance counselor by working with students to identify goals, schedule them in classes that help them meet both their academic and personal goals, and also act as a resource for counseling, as needed. They monitor student attendance and academic progress, identify students who may be at risk of failure or dropping out, and work proactively to secure needed community resources.</p>		
<p><b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b></p>		
<p>Coaching in The Excel Center model is designed to be more comprehensive than a traditional guidance program, by addressing the life barriers and issues that prevent students from being academically successful. Coaches work strategically to identify the non-academic barriers that keep the vast majority of adults from re-engaging in school as well as the issues that led them to drop out of school in the first place. Coaches work with students to identify potential barriers to students' continued education, whether short-term barriers (such as food assistance or transportation) or long-term challenges (including student self-efficacy and self confidence). The relationships that coaches create with each student is a critical factor in student success; those relationships provide security, confidence, and encouragement for students to continue when the work becomes difficult and life barriers become difficult to manage. Life coaches also work with students to identify career goals and help them start thinking about and prepare for "what comes next" after high school. Life coaches meet with each student to whom they are assigned regularly to track goals and to discuss academic progress toward graduation. The students and coaches will establish a graduation plan prior to students beginning their first term, and these plans are revisited prior to scheduling each subsequent term. As students approach graduation, life coaches focus these plans on assisting students to prepare for college or their career. They may help students apply to college, apply for scholarships, and complete a FAFSA form. They may also assist a student with scheduling a certification exam to complete an industry certification, fill out job applications, review resumes, and set-up mock interviews. Ultimately, The Excel Center's coaching platform is designed to ensure that all of a student's academic and nonacademic needs are met so that s/he is best prepared for "what comes next" after completing high school.</p>		

Waiver #7 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Curriculum - Arkansas History	Standard: 1-A.1.2.8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center serves adults aged 19 and over who are seeking to complete graduation requirements to earn their high school diploma and industry recognized credentials to increase their opportunities for competitive wage jobs in the workforce. The requirement for mandatory Arkansas History instruction for this population of learners does not meet the highest priority educational and vocational goals of the learners in this age demographic. Additionally, most of the adult learners who attend classes at The Excel Center completed instruction that included Arkansas History in grades 7 or 8.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
Empty space for explanation		



Waiver #8 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Fine Arts	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-16-130	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center serves adults aged 19 and over who are seeking to complete graduation requirements to earn their high school diploma and industry recognized credentials to increase their opportunities for competitive wage jobs in the workforce. The requirement for mandatory fine arts education for this population of learners does not meet the highest priority educational and vocational goals of the learners in this age demographic. Additionally, the Excel Center environment is not conducive to the performance requirement described for vocal music and instrumental music.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
Empty space for explanation		

Waiver #9 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Physical Education Nutrition & BMI Screening	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-16-132 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-18-705 DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity: Sections 6, 7, 8, & 12	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center serves adults aged 19 and over who are seeking to complete graduation requirements to earn their high school diploma and industry recognized credentials to increase their opportunities for competitive wage jobs in the workforce. The requirement for mandatory physical education &amp; BMI screening for this population of learners does not meet the highest priority educational and vocational goals of the learners in this age demographic. Additionally, The Excel Center does not provide a food service program to our adult learners.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #10 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Superintendent	Standard: 4-B.1 Standard: 4-B.2 DESE Rule: Superintendent Mentoring Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-13-109 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-427	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center employs a school director who is held accountable by the Board of Directors of Goodwill Arkansas Education Initiatives, Inc., who holds the charter for the school. Other school administrators may be hired or contracted, as necessary. The School Director will report to the Board of Directors of The Excel Center but will also have a dotted line reporting relationship to the Goodwill VP of Mission Services, who will oversee the School Director on a daily basis, ensuring that the mission and vision of the Board is being carried out in the school and that the school is operating effectively and efficiently. This waiver allows the Board of Directors to have the flexibility to assign administrative and educational leadership roles to a qualified individual in the organization who may not have completed a formal educational leadership licensure program. This flexibility is essential to ensure that educational leadership and school administration duties can be assigned to persons who understand and can carry out the board's mission for the school in the context of the larger mission and goals of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #11 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Principals	Standard: 4-C.1 Standard: 4-C.2 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-302	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></p>		
<p>The Excel Center employs a School Director and a Lead Teacher at each campus. The School Director manages school operations and makes day-to-day instructional and administrative decisions and works closely with the Lead teacher to perform chief academic officer duties for The Excel Center. The School Director is responsible for developing the culture and establishing strong connections with local community partners to develop and enhance programs for supporting students' career pathways. He/she is responsible for supporting the professional growth needs of the educational and support staff at each campus. This waiver allows the Board of Directors to have the flexibility to assign building level administrative and educational leadership roles to a qualified individual in the organization who may not have completed a formal educational leadership licensure program. This flexibility is essential to ensure that educational leadership and school administration duties can be assigned to persons who understand and can carry out the board's mission for the school in the context of the larger mission and goals of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas.</p>		
<p><b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b></p>		

Waiver #12 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Evaluations	DESE Rules Governing Educator Support and Development: Sections 6, 7, & 8 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-2801, et. seq.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>As employees of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas (GIA), the organization who holds the charter for The Excel Center, school staff undergo quarterly and annual evaluations according to the personnel policies of GIA. School staff are evaluated on effective teaching and leadership criteria appropriate to their role that are aligned to Danielson's Framework for Teaching. The quarterly conversations and annual evaluation by a trained supervisor allow each staff member to identify areas of professional growth and develop a plan for needed support and professional development.</p>		
<p>Goodwill Education Initiatives (GEI), which founded the first Excel Center, has developed a Technical Leadership Series to help develop a pipeline of teachers, staff and school leaders. The Technical Leadership Series comprises eight training and development sessions, each of which teaches a specific set of imperatives that potential leaders can apply immediately to enhance their current role and prepare them for a next level leadership position. The process of selecting staff to participate in the Technical Leadership Series includes evaluation of performance in the staff member's current role, performance with accelerated assignments, the desire to grow within the organization, and the ability to balance ambition.</p>		
<p>The Excel Center has adopted the same teacher evaluation system as that adopted by other Excel Centers across The Excel Center Network. All school personnel will receive annual staff evaluations which evaluate teachers in the following domains: purposeful planning; effective instruction; teacher leadership; and core professionalism. Summative evaluations result in one of four possible performance ratings. Decisions to invite staff to return in subsequent school years is at the discretion of the Board based on performance and school budget.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
Empty space for explanation		

Waiver #13 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Foreign Language 9-12	Standard: 1-A.1.3.5	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center serves adults aged 19 and over who are seeking to complete graduation requirements to earn their high school diploma and industry recognized credentials to increase their opportunities for competitive wage jobs in the workforce. The requirement for mandatory foreign language instruction for this population of learners does not meet the highest priority educational and vocational goals of the learners in this age demographic.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #14 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Gifted and Talented	DESE Rule: Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-42-109 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-20-2208(c)(6) Standard: 2-G.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>As students progress through The Excel Center's course progression, they will have an opportunity to enroll in dual credit courses where they may earn college credit as well as in courses where they may earn industry-recognized credentials.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
<p>Students' varied cognitive levels are met through differentiated instruction and the ability to dual enroll in college courses and industry recognized training programs. The Excel Center has a keen focus on college and career readiness and works to ensure students are prepared for "what comes next" after high school.</p>		

Waiver #15 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Grading Scale	DESE Rule: Uniform Grading Scales for Public Secondary Schools and for Optional Use in Public Elementary Schools Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-15-902	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
The Excel Center has adopted the uniform grading scale that is provided in statute and DESE Rules.		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		



Waiver #16 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Nurse	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-18-706	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center students are adults. Any emergency on-site health issues will be addressed according to Goodwill standard operating policy via emergency or other private health care provider. The Excel Center contracts with a part-time registered school nurse as needed for assistance with health and health education needs of our adult students. The Excel Center will establish partnerships with a variety of health service providers and students will be provided referrals to these health service providers, as necessary.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #17 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Library Media Services & Instructional Materials	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-21-413 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-25-103 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-25-104 Standard: 4-F.1 Standard: 4-F.2 Standard: 2-D.1 DESE Rules Governing Instructional Materials: Sections 5.01 & 5.01.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center has adopted many of the same curriculum and instructional materials that have been successfully used within a national model.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
<p>Instructional resources are researched based materials used within a national model and aligned to Arkansas Curriculum Standards. The nature of the educational program is such that it does not offer a library media program, but educational resources are made available to students through a variety of print and digital media at no cost to students.</p>		

Waiver #18 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Open-Enrollment Charter Schools - Admission Procedures	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-23-306(14)(B)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
Excel Center admissions procedures are consistent with the provisions in this statute and a waiver is not needed.		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #19 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Parental Involvement	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-15-1701 et seq.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>All students enrolled in The Excel Center are 19 years of age and older and typically are not under the care of a parent or guardian. As a result, The Excel Center communicates directly with students instead of communicating with parents or other parties unless students specifically sign a FERPA release form to share records of their educational progress.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #20 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Personnel Policies	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-2303 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-201 et seq. Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-2403 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-1206 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-1305 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-1304 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-204 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-1701 et seq. Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-1205 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-1501 et seq. Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17- 2301 et seq. DESE Rule: Website Requirements: Sections 5.01.4 and 5.01.5 and 6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Board of Directors shall establish an employee handbook which outlines all personnel policies requirements outlined under Ark. Code Ann.§§ 6-17-201(c). School personnel will have an opportunity to provide input into these policies through public comment during meetings of the Board of Directors which are open to the public. All staff will be at will employees. The Excel Center will adopt the same teacher evaluation system as that adopted by other Excel Centers across The Excel Center Network. All school personnel will receive annual staff evaluations which evaluate teachers in the following domains: purposeful planning; effective instruction; teacher leadership; and core professionalism. Summative evaluations will result in one of four possible performance ratings. Classified staff will receive at least annual evaluations based on performance. Decisions to invite staff to return in subsequent school years will be at the discretion of the Board based on performance and school budget. All school employees will be offered a salary commensurate to salaries offered to similar positions in local area schools.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #21 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Report Cards - Delivery Requirements	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-15-903(a)(2)(B)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>All students enrolled in The Excel Center are 19 years of age and older and typically are not under the care of a parent or guardian. As a result, The Excel Center communicates directly with students instead of communicating with parents or other parties unless students specifically sign a FERPA release form to share records of their educational progress.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #22 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Paying unlicensed faculty	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-908 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-919	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></p>		
<p>Since we have requested a waiver from the requirement that teachers be licensed, we also request a continued waiver from these requirements so we are able to legally pay our faculty.</p>		
<p><b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b></p>		
Empty space for response		

Waiver #23 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Calendar	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-10-106	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center's school calendar includes five, 8-week sessions, with new sessions beginning after the prior term ends. The Excel Center's instructional program continues year-round. Due to the school model, the school calendar extends beyond the start and end dates as prescribed by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106. In the event that the school closes during the school year due to inclement weather and/or emergencies, The Excel Center will add any necessary make-up days to the end of the term.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		



Waiver #24 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Lunch Program	Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-20-701 et seq.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center serves adults age 19 or older and the school does not provide meals to students.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

Waiver #25 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Teacher Licensure & Salaries	DESE Rule: Educator Licensure: Section 7 Licensure Exceptions Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-401 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-309 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-15-1004 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-902 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-17-2203	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>All teachers at The Excel Center meet Arkansas Qualified Teacher requirements in the areas of their teaching assignments; however, within those requirements, we want to have the autonomy to hire the best possible teachers, even if some of those candidates' qualifications do not include an Arkansas secondary teaching license. The school will be committed to recruiting and hiring quality staff members who are eligible to earn a teacher certification. Hiring top talent is an ongoing challenge for The Excel Center, particularly in a large market where there are vast professional opportunities for teachers and educational leaders. The Excel Center will have the flexibility to identify those individuals best suited to facilitate the unique educational programs in our adult education setting. In addition to meeting Arkansas Qualified Teacher requirements, all school staff must pass required criminal background and Child Maltreatment Registry checks prior to employment. All Excel Center staff are at-will employees.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		
Empty space for explanation		

Waiver #26 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Instructional Structure and Clock Hours	Standard: 1-A.2 Standard: 1-A.4.1 Standard: 1-A.4.2 Statute: A.C.A §§ 6-16-102	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>The Excel Center operates at least four periods each day, each consisting of 90 minutes of instruction. Each day of fixed-time instruction provides at least 360 minutes (6 hours) of instructional time available for students. Students have the option of attending 3 hours a day. Flexible scheduling will be available to meet the needs of working and busy adults. The school will be open from 9AM to 4PM for students who prefer to attend classes in the morning, afternoon and/or evening. Prior to each 8-week term, the school will evaluate students' needs to determine whether additional evening classes should be available to accommodate working students. In that event, up to six class periods will be available to students, providing 540 minutes of instructional time available for students.</p> <p>The Excel Center will hold classes during morning, afternoon, and evening sessions, with some students leaving the building throughout the day as new students enter. As a result, the school will never have its full student capacity in classes during any one scheduled period. Consequently, teachers will only be teaching a portion of the student body at a given time.</p> <p>Due to the nature of The Excel Center, a curricular model that accelerates the time it takes to earn a high school diploma is critical to the success of the program. The Excel Center model includes 8-week terms during which students complete coursework that may take a semester or full year in a traditional high school setting. Course offerings will be made based on the needs of the enrolled students.</p> <p>The Excel Center will utilize a competency-based approach to measuring student mastery of standards aligned curricula in lieu of seat time requirements. All courses offered will require students to demonstrate mastery of material via standards-aligned formative and summative assessments. To allow for the teaching of simultaneous, embedded, and/or online courses and to allow for the integration of graduation credit courses with courses as necessary, The Excel Center requests a waiver of the seat time requirement.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is for a student service (ex: counseling, nursing, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) please explain how the services are being provided and how the needs of students are being met.</b>		

## New Waivers

Please list any waivers the charter wishes to add to its charter. For each waiver topic, please be sure to add the appropriate statute, Standard for Accreditation, and DESE Rule related to the waiver topic. For each topic the school must provide a detailed rationale explaining: (1) why the waiver is necessary to allow the charter to achieve its stated goals and mission, (2) how the waiver will be used, and (3) if related to a student service (ex: nursing, counseling, library media, gifted and talented, ALE, etc.) how the school will meet the needs of students and how the student service is being provided in an alternative way.

Waiver Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rationale
Attendance records and reports - days in each quarter and ADM	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-18-213 (b) (c) (d)	The Excel Center schedules classes in five 8-week terms during the academic year. The school calculates beginning and ending enrollment for each term, but does not calculate or report ADM because the school does not receive state funding.
Delay or early release of school due to emergency circumstances	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-10-126 (b)	The Excel Center holds a waiver for the associated requirement for 178 instructional days, so waiver of this statute is being requested to align with the other waivers that The Excel Center holds related to instructional days.
Arkansas History	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-16-124(a)(2) Statute: A.C.A. § 6-17-418 Statute: A.C.A. § 6-17-703	The Excel Center holds a waiver for the associated standard related to the requirement for mandatory Arkansas History instruction.
Food Services	Standard: 3-D.1	The Excel Center holds waivers for the associated statutes and rules related to food service.
Fine Arts	Standard: 1-A.1.3.6	The Excel Center holds a waiver for the associated statutes and rules related to Fine Arts instruction.
Immunization	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-18-702	The Excel Center serves only adults age 19 and over. Many of our students have not had adequate access to healthcare, or are otherwise unable to provide documentation of previous vaccination in order to attend school.

Waiver Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rationale
Class Size & Teaching Load	Standard: 1-A.5 DESE Rules Governing Class Size & Teaching Load Statute: A.C.A. § 6-17-812	The Excel Center provides flexible scheduling options for adult learners to allow them to attend classes full-time or part time, with offerings in the morning, afternoon, and evenings. In order to continue to provide the greatest amount of flexibility to our adult learners, we are requesting a waiver for class size and teaching load limits to allow greater numbers of students to enroll in classes that work with their schedule, even if those classes have reached their enrollment maximum.
Statewide Assessment	Standard: 1-C.1 Standard: 1-C.1.1 Standard: 1-C.1.2 Statute: A.C.A § 6-15-2907(e) Statute: A.C.A § 6-15-2907(f) Statute: A.C.A § 6-15-2907(a)(1)(4)(B) Statute: A.C.A § 6-15-2907(l)	In November, 2018, the State Board of Education approved the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel to accept alternative metrics for student achievement and school program effectiveness that are appropriate for our adult students and reflected in our charter goals.
Board Member Remote Attendance	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-13-619(d)(3) Statute: A.C.A. § 6-13-619(d)(4)	The Excel Center school board will be made up of members from a variety of geographic regions in the state as the school expands to serve Arkansans outside of central Arkansas. These members will need the flexibility to attend meetings virtually while involving community members and stakeholders from multiple locations in the state.
Non-recurring Salary Payments	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-20-412(c)	Excel Center employees are 'at-will' employees of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas (GIA) and are not offered annual contracts. The GIA incentive plan is discretionary and annually approved by the GIA Board of Directors based on meeting organizational and personal goals. Waiver from this statute will ensure that Excel Center employees are able to continue to receive discretionary non-recurring salary payments that are equivalent to similarly qualified employees in the organization.

Waiver Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rationale
Teacher Licensure	Standard: 4-D.1 DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure: Section 7.00 DESE Rules Governing Nutrition & Physical Activity: Sections 7.09.1, 7.09.2, 7.10)	The Excel Center holds waivers for associated statutes and rules related to requiring licensed teachers in every classroom.
Teacher Pay	Statute: A.C.A. § 6-11-129(a)(1)(A)(vii) Statute: A.C.A. § 6-11-129(a)(1)(A)(viii) Statute: A.C.A. § 6-17-807 Statute: A.C.A. § 6-17-812 Statute: A.C.A. § 6-17-2401 et seq. DESE Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites	Excel Center employees are 'at-will' employees of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas (GIA) and are not offered annual contracts. The Excel Center has requested waivers for maximum class sizes and teaching load that would impact teacher pay.
Board of Directors	A.C.A. §6-13-612(c) A.C.A. §6-13-613	Based on legal comments received, we are requesting waivers from these statutes to fully effectuate the waiver that we currently hold of A.C.A. §6-13-611 regarding replacement of board members. Excel Center board members are appointed according to the board's bylaws and not elected.

## Section 7: Amendment Requests

List any non-waiver amendment requests and provide a rationale for each (i.e., changes to grade levels, enrollment cap, location, addition of campus).

	Topic	Rationale
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

## **Section 8: Desegregation Analysis**

\*Required only if the charter intends to add a campus, add grades, increase enrollment cap, or change location.

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