



March 4, 2019

Via E-mail to: ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov
Arkansas Department of Education
Reginald Ballard, Director of Public Charter Schools
Charter School Office, Four Capitol Mall, Room 304-B
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Re: Letter of Intent to Apply for an Open Enrollment Public Charter School

Dear Mr. Ballard:

On behalf of The Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter, Inc. (NWACS), we are writing to express our intent to be the sponsoring entity to apply for an open-enrollment public charter school in Bentonville, Arkansas, to be located within the boundaries of the Bentonville Public School District, and to be referred to as "The Northwest Arkansas Children's Center School" (note: this is a working title). The Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter has been authorized by the Arkansas Secretary of State to transact business in the State of Arkansas as a Non-Profit Corporation with an exemption under Section 501(c)(3). Our Federal Identification Number is 58-1984893.

Since 1993, NWACS has cared for more than 10,000 children from throughout the state of Arkansas who are victims of abuse, abandonment or neglect. The Emergency/Residential Program is our flagship program which ensures 24/7 care for these children by meeting each child's basic needs. In 1998, NWACS established an on-site school, under the auspices of the Bentonville Public Schools, to meet the specific educational needs of the children residing at NWACS. In this trauma-informed environment, students benefit from small classroom sizes taught by state-certified teachers trained in meeting the specialized classroom needs of children who have experienced trauma.

The goal of establishing the open-enrollment charter school is to expand our education services to children throughout Northwest Arkansas who have experienced traumatic events and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that have led to significant setbacks in their education. The school will focus on cultivating academic success of students by first identifying and meeting physical, emotional and psychological needs. Instruction will provide a combination of blended and experiential learning scaffolded with routines, structure and research-based behavioral support. The school will also provide wrap-around services to the families of the students by providing trauma-informed training programs and assistance in meeting basic needs, such as meals, snacks, clothing and referrals to other needed services.

The proposed open-enrollment charter school would have full access to our 80-acre campus and 26,300 square feet of building space which includes a commercial kitchen with a large dining area and a recreational building with a full-size gym. The proposed school will serve students in grades K-12. The first year will include grades K-6 with a maximum enrollment of 56 students. Proposed expansion will include adding grades 7-8 in year two, grades 9-10 in year three and grades 11-12 in year four. Maximum enrollment for the school is not to exceed 130 students. The address of the proposed charter in the Bentonville School District and the primary contact information for "The Northwest Arkansas Children's Center School" following:

Jake Gibbs, Director of Education Services
Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter
14100 Vaughn Road, Bentonville, AR 72713
Phone: 479.795.2417, Cell: 479.422.0201, E-Mail: jgibbs@nwacs.org

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Maury Peterson in blue ink.

Maury Peterson
Executive Director

Handwritten signature of Jake A. Gibbs in blue ink.

Jake A. Gibbs
Education Director

CC: Dr. Debbie Jones, Superintendent, Bentonville Public Schools