



## **Founders Classical Academy Online Elementary Narrative Report to Charter Panel**

### **Overview**

In response to a request from the Charter Authorizing Panel to discuss the current performance of our online elementary campus, we respectfully submit the following narrative and presentation.

### **Purpose of Charter**

- 1) To provide students across the state with a high quality college preparatory virtual education that includes best digital learning practices and adequate wraparound support on their journey to high school graduation and further higher education.
- 2) To provide flexibility to students and families in their pursuit of a college preparatory education.
- 3) To increase the impact of Founders Classical Academies across Arkansas through an innovative high quality virtual education experience.

### **Mission**

Founders Classical Academies seek to provide an excellent and distinctive classical education that pursues knowledge, promotes virtue, and prepares students for prosperous lives in a free society.

### **Letter Grade**

Founders Classical Academy Online Elementary earned an F rating from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for performance during the 22-23 school year.

<b>FCA Elementary Online Score</b>	<b>State Average</b>
<b>36.80</b>	<b>67.62</b>

## Letter Grade Analysis

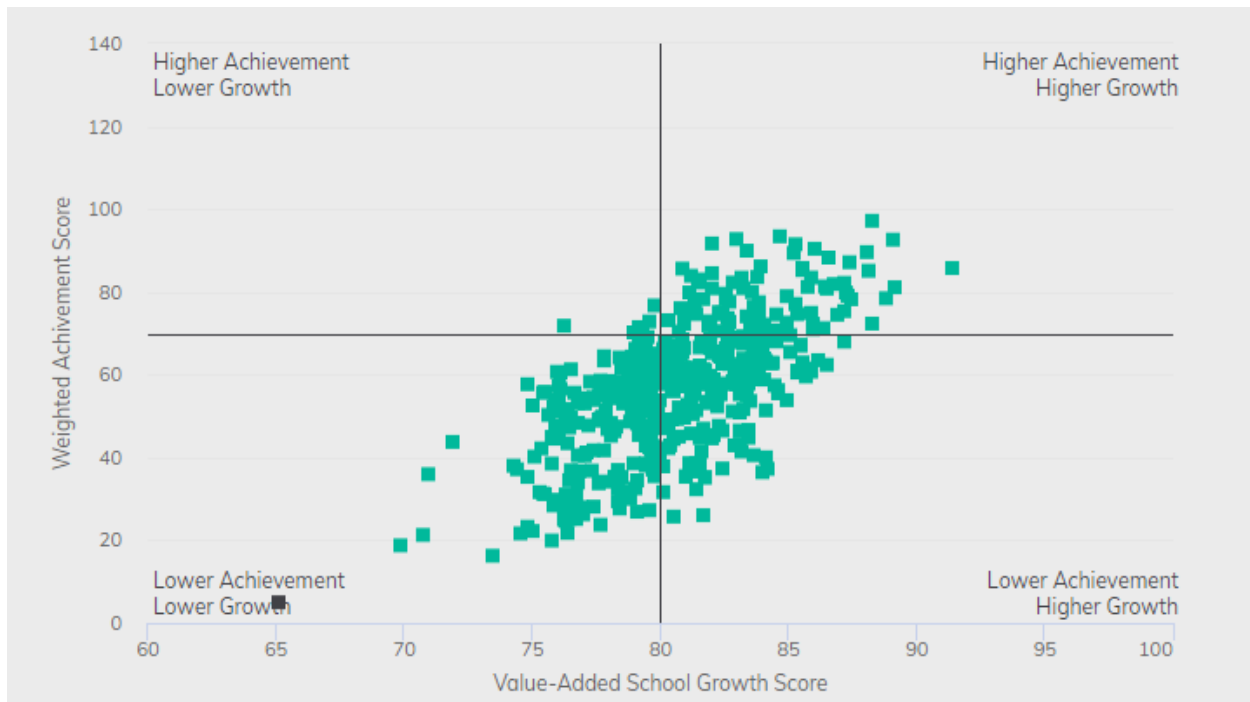
Founders Classical Academy Elementary Online is in its second year. SY 22-23 was the first year for the campus, and it consisted of two fourth graders, one fifth grader, and two sixth graders, for a total of 5 students. In SY 23-24, we added additional elementary grade levels in K-3. Currently, we serve 8 students in K-6.

As we analyzed the data from our ESSA School Index report, we noticed three major areas contributing to the letter grade: literacy, student engagement, and Student Academic Achievement and Growth.

In terms of literacy, we had one (1) of our elementary students who scored Ready in Reading on the ACT Aspire as compared to the state average of 37.73. In short, our students in 3rd - 6th grade were not reading on grade level.

When we look at student engagement, our score was significantly low, 21.43 as compared to the statewide average of 61.55. Something was clearly wrong in terms of attendance for us. What we discovered was that the process for online attendance was not consistent. In order to solve the problem for the current school year, we have linked attendance directly to course engagement and completion and added additional checks and balances to ensure accuracy. Additionally, we have implemented a program we call REACH which is designed to provide additional supports and monitoring for students who are not engaging with school.

For student academic achievement and growth, we earned a score of 5 for the Weighted Achievement indicator, placing us in the very bottom of the Lower Achievement / Lower Growth quadrant. Not only did students not reach achievement levels, they also did not grow academically as anticipated.



## SMART Goals & Achievement of Goals

As outlined in our charter, the following goals apply to our elementary grade levels:

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Assessment Instrument for Measuring Performance</b>	<b>Performance Level that Demonstrates Achievement</b>	<b>Current Performance</b>
Demonstrate measurable student success in literacy	State-mandated assessments and nationally normed assessments	Meet or exceed state average in overall literacy. 80% of students who attend two or more years will perform at or above the 75th percentile on a nationally normed assessment such as NWEA MAP.	75% of students demonstrated growth from Fall 23 to Winter 24 NWEA MAP Reading  20% of students scored Ready or Exceeds on ACT Aspire in Reading for SY 22-23
Demonstrate measurable student success in math	State-mandated assessments and nationally normed assessments	Meet or exceed state average in overall math. 80% of students who attend two or more years will perform at or above the 75th percentile on a nationally normed assessment such as NWEA MAP.	75% of students demonstrated growth from Fall 23 to Winter 24 NWEA MAP Math  0% of students scored Ready or Exceeds on ACT Aspire in Math for SY 22-23*
Demonstrate measurable student success in science	State-mandated assessments and nationally normed assessments	Meet or exceed state average in science.	33% of students scored Ready or Exceeds on ACT Aspire in Science

\*Note: only 1 student tested for ACT Aspire Math

## Supporting Data for Achievement of Goals Performance Data

### 22-23 Letter Grades

Current LEA	Letter Grade
FCA Bentonville (K-7)	A
FCA Rogers Elementary (K-6)	A
FCA Rogers High School (7-12)	A
FCA West Little Rock Elementary (K-6)	D
FCA West Little Rock High School (9-12)	D
FCA Online Elementary (K-6)	F
FCA Online High School (7-12)	D

Our campuses that were originally established as a Founders model have consistently earned A ratings on their report cards over the past 10 years. Our campuses that are either converting fully to Founders or are extremely low in enrollment numbers are progressing toward higher letter grades with the implementation of interventions, high quality professional development, literacy coaches, and additional tutoring for students. In addition, a more comprehensive benchmark, remediation, and assessment system has been implemented for struggling students.

### Testing Percentages

School	22-23 SY		21-22 SY	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
FCA Bentonville	99.64%	99.64%	98.08%	98.80%
FCA West Little Rock	100%	100%	98.08%	98.80%
FCA WLR HS	100%	100%	93.24%	93.24%
FCA Rogers	100%	100%	n/a	n/a
FCA Rogers HS*	100%	100%	97.86%	97.87%
FCA Online	Below 10%	Below 10%	n/a	n/a
FCA Online HS	70.83%	79.17%	n/a	n/a

## Aspire Performance Data

### English

Grade Level	Bentonville	Rogers	West Little Rock	Online
3	Exceeding	Exceeding	Ready	
4	Exceeding	Exceeding	Ready	Ready
5	Exceeding	Exceeding	Ready	Ready
6	Exceeding	Exceeding	Exceeding	Ready
7		Exceeding	Exceeding	Ready
8		Exceeding	Ready	Ready
9		Exceeding	Exceeding	Close
10		Ready	Close	Ready

### Reading

Grade Level	Bentonville	Rogers	West Little Rock	Online
3	Ready	Ready	Close	
4	Ready	Ready	Close	Ready
5	Ready	Ready	In Need of Support	Close
6	Ready	Ready	Close	In Need of Support
7		Ready	Close	Close
8		Ready	Close	Close
9		Ready	Ready	Close
10		Close	In Need of Support	Exceeding

### Science

Grade Level	Bentonville	Rogers	West Little Rock	Online
3	Ready	Ready	Close	
4	Ready	Ready	Close	Ready
5	Ready	Ready	Close	Close
6	Ready	Ready	Close	Close
7		Ready	Close	Close
8		Ready	In Need of Support	Close
9		Ready	Close	In Need of Support
10		Close	In Need of Support	Ready

### Math

Grade Level	Bentonville	Rogers	West Little Rock	Online
3	Ready	Ready	Close	
4	Ready	Ready	Close	In Need of Support
5	Ready	Ready	Close	In Need of Support
6	Ready	Ready	Close	In Need of Support
7		Ready	Close	Close
8		Ready	In Need of Support	Close
9		Ready	In Need of Support	In Need of Support
10		Close	In Need of Support	Close

For our schools who need improvement, we have established the following supports:

- Targeted Intervention
- Curriculum and Vertical Alignment
- Additional PD for teachers
- Utilizing our district Literacy Coach and Instructional Coach to assist teachers

### **Intended Outcomes & Innovations**

- 1) Students engaged in a high quality virtual program and supported through best learning practices that allow for active learning, effective content authoring, and personalized lesson design methods.
- 2) Increase in student accessibility and engagement in Founders Classical Academy academic model in remote or rural locations.
- 3) Increase in the percentage of Arkansans prepared for higher education.
- 4) Flexibility in student learning to meet individual and family needs.
- 5) Helping students prepare for a successful life beyond high school through accelerated learning, concurrent courses, workplace readiness, military/career readiness, and acceptance into university, college and/or trade school.
- 6) Our campus has been working diligently with our state assigned literacy coach who is assisting the elementary instructional team with literacy instruction.

### **Online Campus Specifics**

- Classical Education in an Online Environment - We are the only school in the state offering a classical education to students online.
- Student Engagement Opportunities
- High Dosage Tutoring
- Personalized Learning
  - Learning Mentors assist students with time management, and course progress.
  - Learning Facilitators are available for 1:1 tutoring opportunities when students need it and for the specific concepts they need to have reinforced
  - Subject-area Knowledge Assessments and MAP data assist the instructional team to design personalized pathways for learning for each student
- Scheduling Flexibility
- Providing Emergent Technology - Dedicated tech support team to assist students with any issues with logging in or equipment needs.
- To add engagement and a sense of community for students, clubs and enrichment activities are included in the regular schedule.

### **Adherence to Mission Statement:** **Description of Curriculum, Programs, and** **Instructional Methods**

Founders Classical Academy has a proven track record of providing a high-quality, classical education that emphasizes increased levels of content learning while installing qualities of

scholarly perception and response to that content. This methodology is teacher directed. Educators are focused on teaching students to think for themselves, analyze and integrate learning as relevant to everyday life.

All curriculum at Founders Classical Academy is aligned with the Arkansas state standards, as well as with the classical model. Regular curriculum reviews are conducted in order to determine its continued alignment with those standards as well as the effectiveness of the curriculum to efficiently introduce new concepts to online students.

Founders takes a classical approach to education characterized by a traditional liberal arts and sciences curriculum and whole-group teaching methodology with an orientation towards truth, beauty, and goodness.

Our approach to classical education is a mindset, a body of knowledge, and an instructional method. The mindset says that well-informed, moral, and self-governing people who pursue the common good promote a healthy and free society. That mindset is informed by a distinct body of knowledge and tools of learning that promote an understanding of the human experience and the world in which we live. That body of knowledge and tools provide us simultaneously with a common language and principles, and compelling and beautiful content around which to form thoughtful and rational thinkers. Our classical threefold method of instruction recognizes that all learning is built upon previous learning and that students learn in a hierarchical manner:

- systematic knowledge acquisition,
- dialectic and logic that is an extension of the knowledge, and
- rhetoric or the art of persuasion, which provides for the eloquent expression of thought and meaningful engagement with others.

While we know we have room for improvement, particularly with our online environment, we are committed to continuing to be the only online classical education program in the state.

### **Comparison to Other Local Charters**

<b>School</b>	<b>ESSA Index Score</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
FCA-Online Elem	36.80	F
FCA-Online HS	54.58	D
AR VA Elem	56.06	F
AR VA MS	58.45	D
AR VA HS	56.03	D
AR Connections	56.43	D
Adventure Academy	51.11	F



# Plan for Improvement

## **Area 1: Literacy**

### ● **Grades K-2**

- Develop / utilize written curriculum map that aligns with SOR
- Utilize curriculum that is aligned to SOR
- Provide classroom teachers with a strong, systematic and explicit phonics program
- Screen all K-2 struggling readers for reading difficulties
- All K-2 classes will have 50 minutes of synchronous, direct literacy instruction daily
  - Phonological Awareness
  - Phonics Instruction
- Comprehension and Writing are also embedded in the History, Literature, and Science blocks
- 30 minutes Small Group reading time for skills based support
- Provide interventions for students identified as struggling readers

### ● **Grades 3-6**

- Develop / utilize written curriculum map that aligns with SOR
- Screen all K-2 struggling readers for reading difficulties
- Ensure adequate time for literacy instruction
  - 3 & 4 grade
    - 50 minute daily, synchronous literacy block
      - Word study based on Greek and Latin roots
      - Writing / Grammar
      - Handwriting
    - Comprehension also embedded in the History, Literature, Math and Science blocks
  - 5 & 6 grade
    - Word Study - morphology based
    - Comprehension - unit based
    - Writing
- Provide interventions for students identified as struggling readers
  - Provide evidence based intervention - RTI
  - Progress monitoring to support / monitor students needs

## **Area 2: Student Engagement**

### **Engagement Strategies Used to Support Students/Families:**

- Weekly announcements in classes / Landing Pages
- 1:1 Tutorials and Small Group Live Sessions
- Daily Synchronous Literacy Instruction Sessions K-5th
- Feedback in LMS
- Create Study Guides/Graphic Organizers as Needed
- Interactive whiteboard for tutorial sessions
- Create a Daily Schedule for Students Based on Needs
- Pacing Guides
- Weekly Check-Ins for Specific Students
- Encouragement/Celebrate Successes
- Club days
- Monthly newsletter to students and families

### **Attendance Policy has been revised for this year:**

The attendance policy outlined in the 2022-23 Parent and Student Handbook will be upheld for the Founders Classical Academy Online students. For purposes of clarification, this document will provide information about the ways in which attendance will be monitored in the online environment.

The Arkansas Department of Education guidance states “A student in a virtual/remote environment who is not physically present on campus will be marked present if the student stays engaged in remote learning. Definition of Engagement- A student logs in weekly to the learning platform, participates in scheduled zooms, and submits assignments according to specified due dates.”

### **FCA Online Attendance Monitoring**

In a virtual setting, regular attendance is essential to the success of a student. The longer a student does not pursue completion of coursework, the less likely they will earn credit. Additionally, an online student is a part of an online community of learners, and their absence may affect the depth of their own learning, as well as that of their peers.

### **Methods for attendance monitoring in the online classroom:**

1. If there are any synchronous (including optional) sessions scheduled, attendance will be taken and recorded on the attendance record daily. Note: for elementary students, there will be required synchronous sessions according to Arkansas state regulations in which attendance will be taken.
2. The student information system keeps track of daily participation in each course of study. The attendance team monitors this attendance on a daily basis and collaborates with the instructional team to verify course participation.

3. The Instructional Team checks for adequate progress daily and notifies parents, students, and the attendance team of failure to maintain adequate progress. For Founders Classical Academy Online, the term “adequate progress” is defined as completing all required assignments as scheduled AND maintaining a grade of 70 or above.

If any student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student’s IEP or 504 Plan take precedence. Students will work closely with their Learning Mentors to set weekly goals and monitor Achievement.

Excused absences:

If a student will be absent for one of the reasons listed in the student handbook as “excused”, the parent should notify the Learning Mentor of the expected absence. All state regulations regarding absences and excessive absences will be followed as outlined in the student handbook.

### **Area 3: Student Academic Achievement and Growth**

#### **Professional Development**

- Addition of Instructional Coaches to assist teachers with online classical instruction
- Enhanced professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their craft
- Targeted literacy professional development

#### **Testing Percentages**

- Ensuring that all students engage in standardized testing to demonstrate accurate data for assessment analysis.

#### **Student Academic Performance**

- Targeted Interventions
- Improved instruction
- Addition of Learning Mentors to assist students with the online format for learning

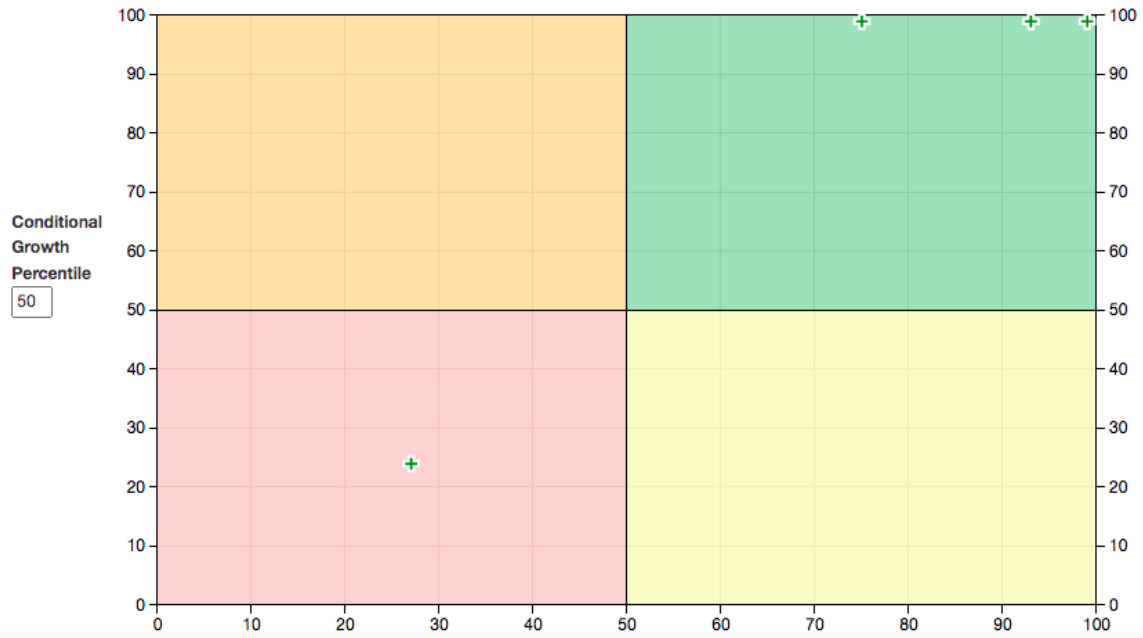
### **Results So Far for SY 23-24**

#### **Enrollment**

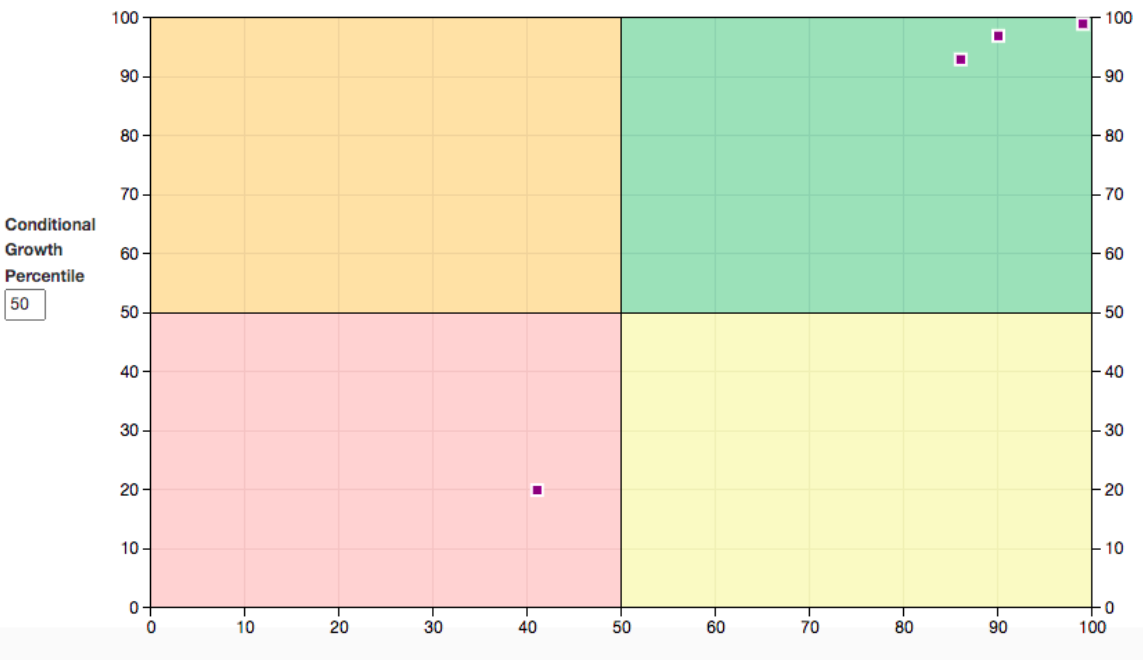
<b>SY 22-23</b>	<b>SY 23-24</b>
4 students (grades 4-6)	8 students (grades K-6)

## NWEA MAP Data

- Math Growth - Fall 2023-Winter 2024



- Reading Growth - Fall 2023-Winter 2024



## Literacy

- All students in K-2 scored above the benchmark for literacy (DIBELS).