



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Public Charter School Renewal Application for Hot Springs Junior Academy

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 ade.charterschools@ade.arkansas.gov	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 ade.charterschools@ade.arkansas.gov	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

Name of Charter:	Hot Springs Junior Academy
LEA Number:	2603702
Authorization Date:	10/21/2016
Expiration Date:	06/30/2022
Enrollment Cap:	900
Grades Served:	7-9
Superintendent:	Dr. Stephanie Nehus
Superintendent Email:	nehuss@hssd.net
Charter Mailing Address:	401 Emory Street Hot Springs AR 71913
Charter Physical Address:	401 Emory Street Hot Springs AR 71913
Contact for the Application:	William Brazle Dr. Taryn Echols
Contact Email:	brazlew@hssd.net echolst@hssd.net
Contact Phone:	501-624-5228 501-624-3372

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
501	482	478	771

Graduation Rates

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

Letter Grades

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

ESSA School Index

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Overall Index	61.81	60.52	N/A	59.89
Weighted Achievement	47.52	45.05	N/A	38.46
Growth	77.5	78.1	N/A	77.55
SQSS	42.84	38.04	N/A	51.03

Section 2: Charter Mission Statement

Previous mission statement:

At Hot Springs Junior Academy, we take pride in educating every student **ACADEMICALLY, EMOTIONALLY, PHYSICALLY, CULTURALLY and SOCIALLY** to become a contributing citizen in a global society.

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

New Goal after starting PLC Pilot Cohort:

The mission of HSJA is to ensure high levels of learning for all students to compete in a global society.

What type of educational model does the school follow?

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

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

We conduct school in a traditional fashion by meeting all state required standards, following state frameworks for curriculum, we have traditional hours of operation from 7 am - 4 pm, and we also have a traditional grading system (A-F). We also require our students to attend regularly unless they were accepted into our virtual academy before August 15th. Also, we follow a traditional calendar that begins in August and normally releases students in May or June.

We do have 9th graders on our campus and they begin to get traditional credits toward their 23.5 credits that are required for graduation. Students do not have to pay any tuition to attend the school, and all of our students receive free breakfast and lunch.

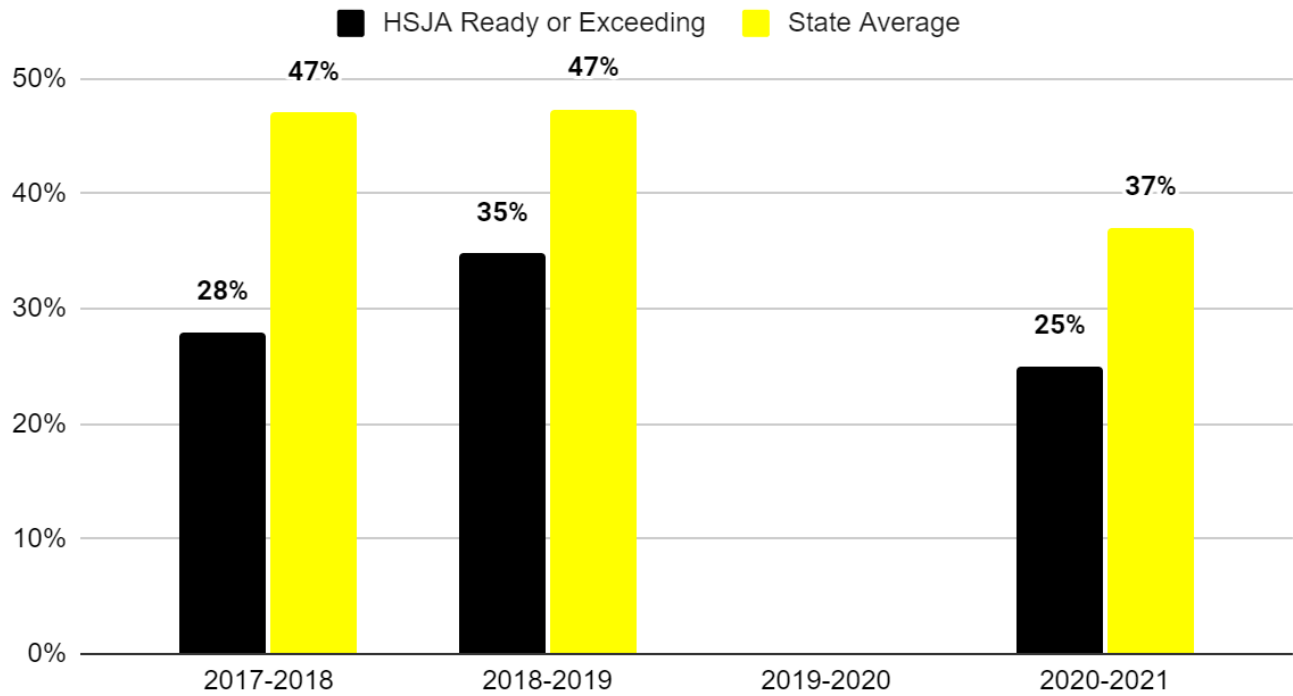
Section 3: Charter Goals

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

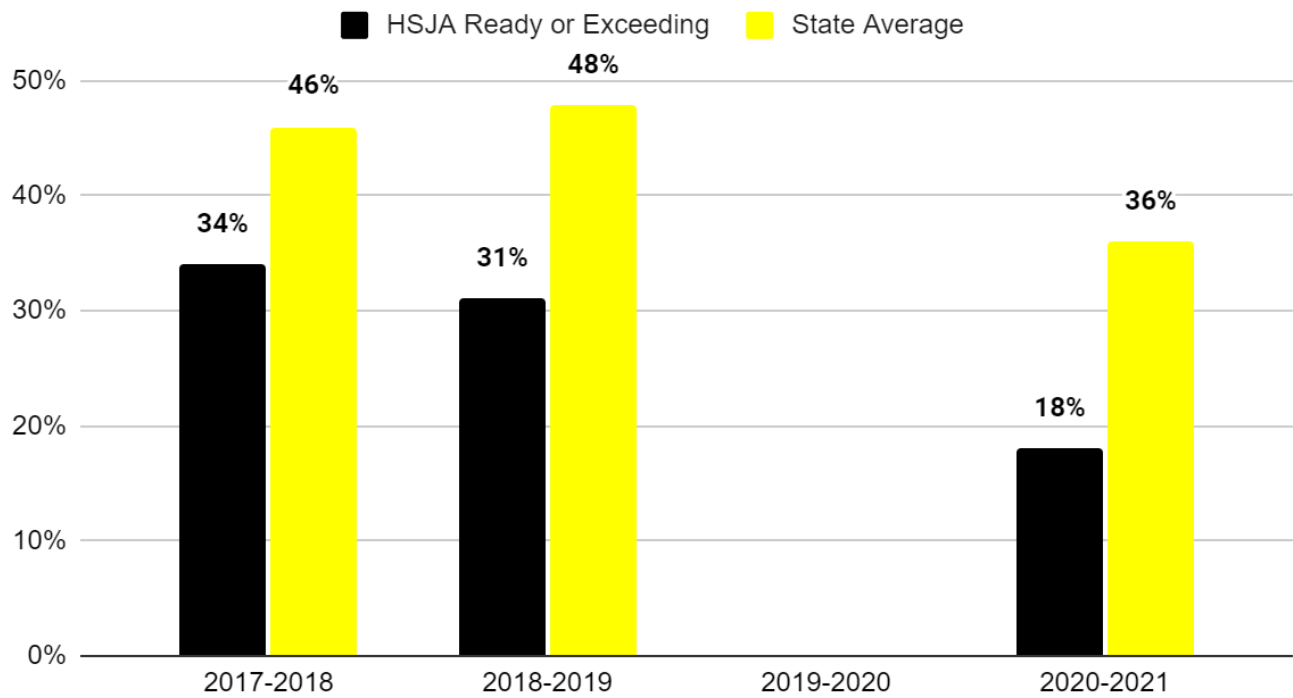
SMART Goal 1	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
Increase Math Scores	ACT Aspire Summative	<p>At the start of the conversion charter, the school used Math 180 as the curriculum for students who were Close or In Need of Support on the prior years ACT Aspire Summative Assessment. This did not provide our students, who needed intervention and targeted remediation, with grade-level instruction. During the 2019-2020 school year, it was recommended that the school leaders not continue this practice.</p> <p>Now, all students are receiving grade-level instruction and targeted intervention that teachers create through the collaborative PLC process. District curriculum leaders decided to provide cohesion within the scope and sequence of mathematics instruction and moved a math curriculum (Eureka Math) through 8th grade. Math teachers have been placed on an extended contract and a Math Learning Loss Interventionist was hired to support teachers in addressing gaps in foundational math skills.</p> <p>We are also providing targeted support to our students who are “in need of support” for 45 minutes on Tuesdays and Thursdays in seminar to improve foundational math skills to support students in grade-level instruction.</p>

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

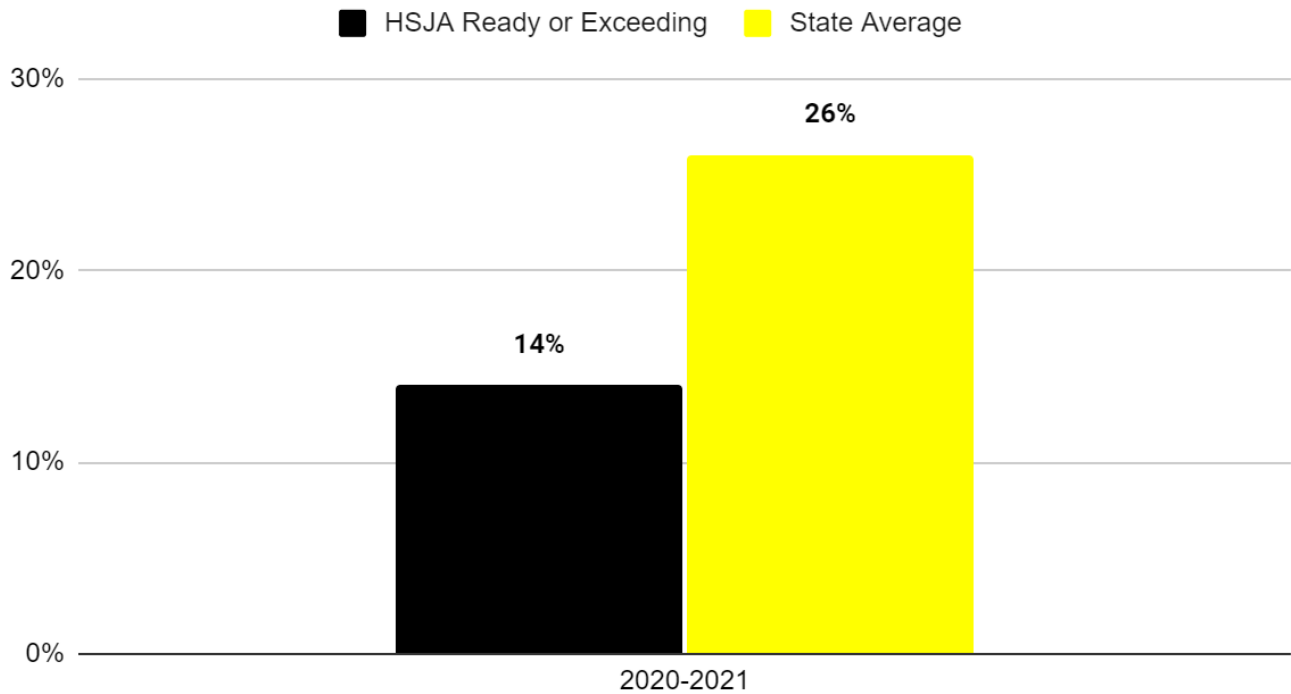
7th Grade Math



8th Grade Math



9th Grade Math

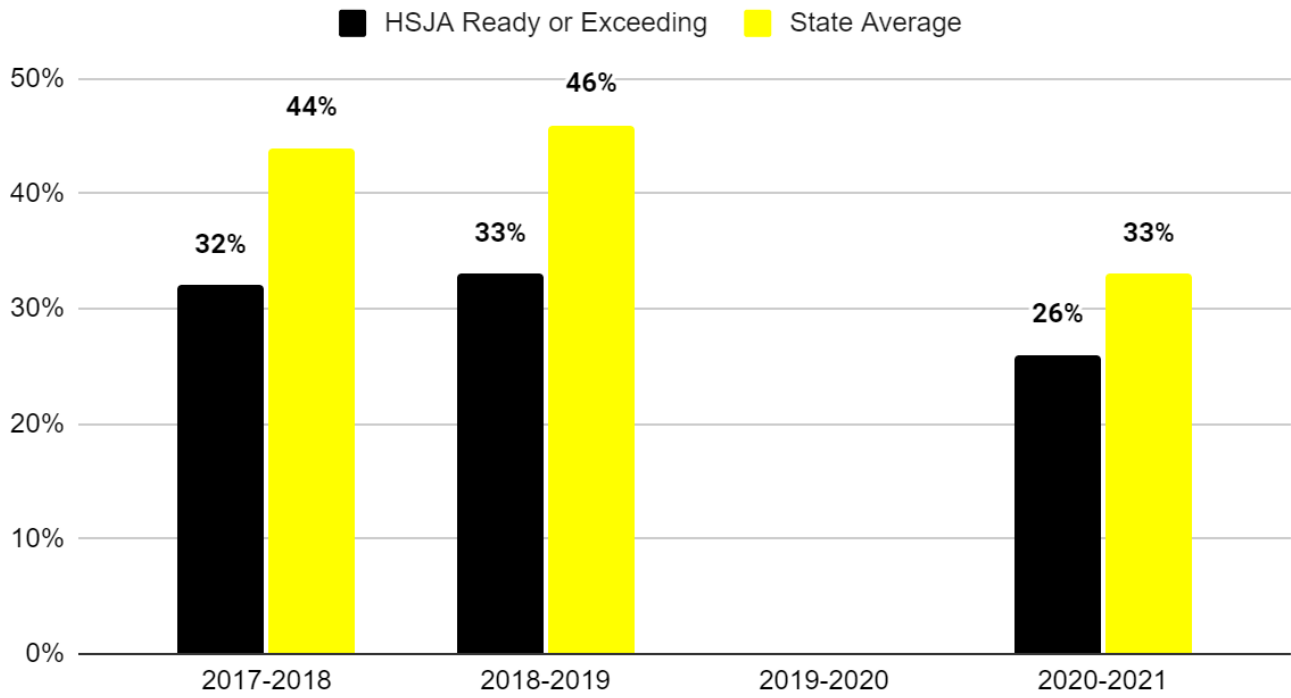


SMART Goal 2	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
Increase Literacy Scores	ACT Aspire Reading, English, and Writing	<p>At the start of the conversion charter, the school used Read 180 as the curriculum for students who were Close or In Need of Support on the prior years ACT Aspire Summative Assessment. This did not provide our students, who needed intervention and targeted remediation, with grade-level instruction. During the 2019-2020 school year, it was recommended that the school leaders not continue this practice.</p> <p>Now, all students are receiving grade-level instruction and targeted intervention that teachers create through the collaborative PLC process. District curriculum leaders decided to provide cohesion within the scope and sequence of literacy instruction and added grades 7 and 8 to the new literacy curriculum (<i>Wis and Wisdom</i>). The district curriculum team added a “Critical Reading” class that is targeted for students who have characteristics of dyslexia to get the services and support they need to better succeed in school.</p> <p>We are also offering after-school tutoring for students to be able to work on reading and English skills as designated by the teacher. All teachers have been</p>

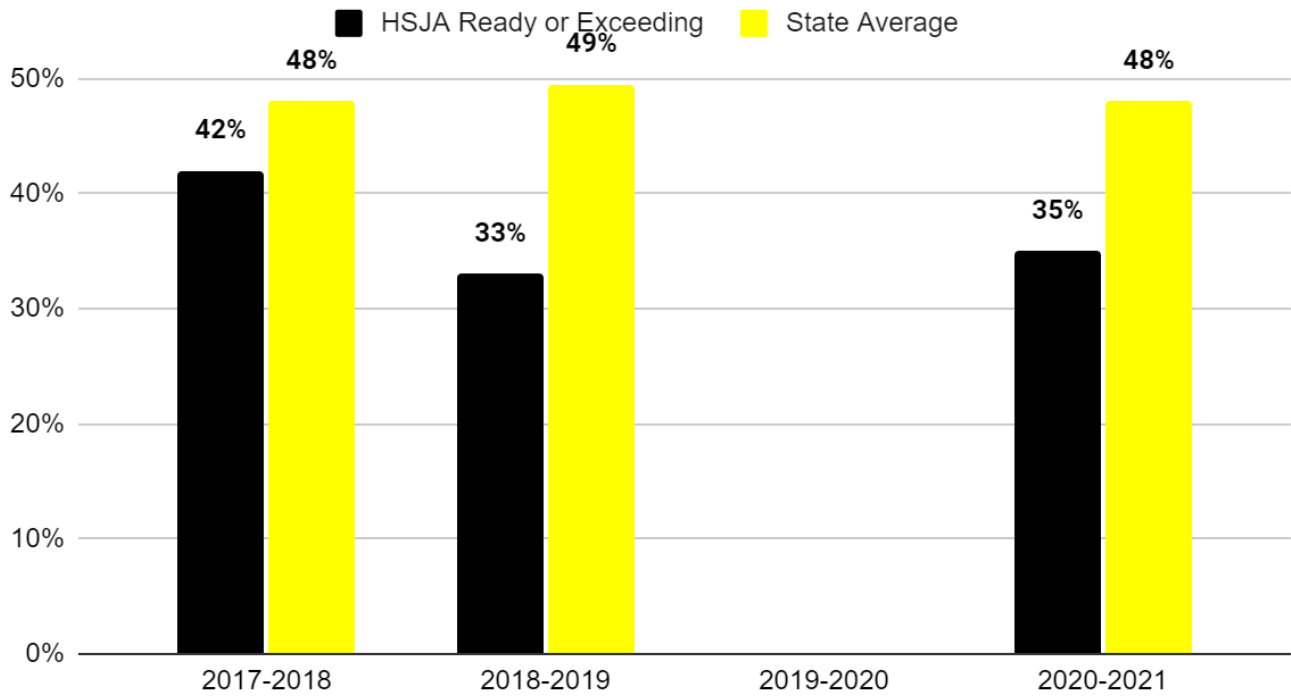
		<p>trained in the Science of Reading, and utilize this training to improve reading capabilities within the building. The district has created a Literacy Plan to address gaps in foundational literacy skills</p>
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*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

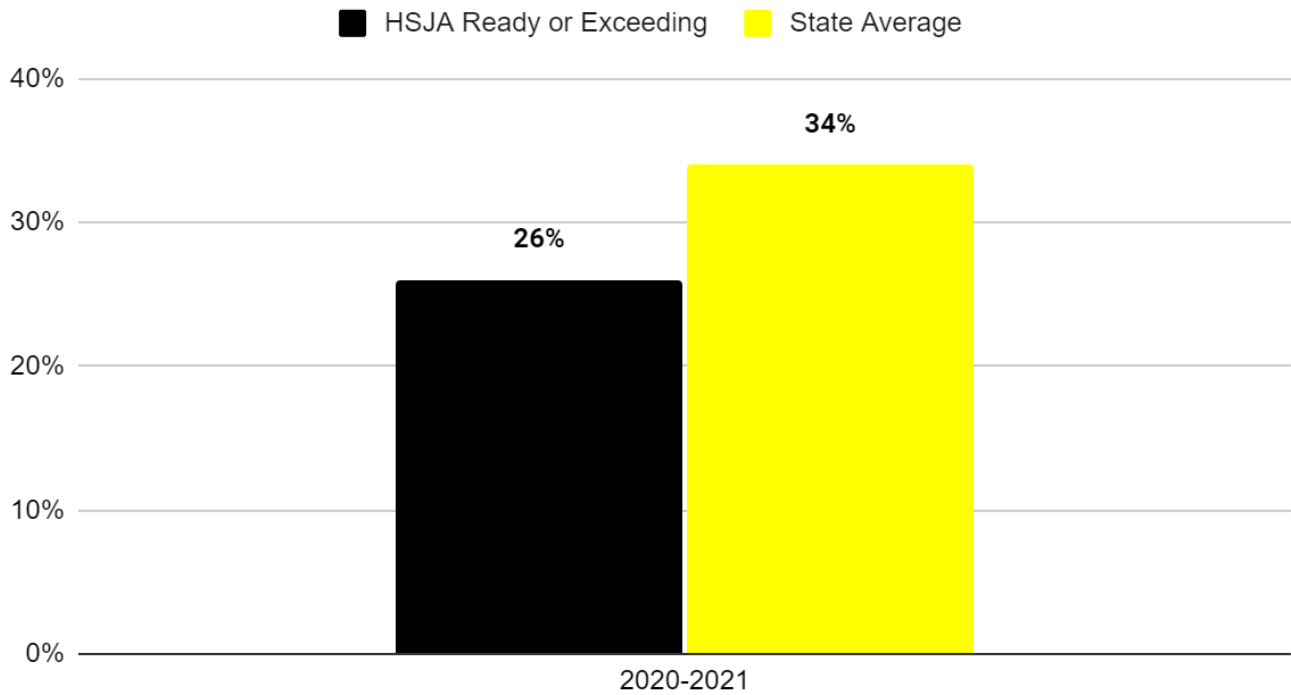
7th Grade Literacy



8th Grade Literacy



9th Grade Literacy



SMART Goal 3	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
Provide exposure to career opportunities	School Calendar of Activities, Quarterly Focus, Exploration Period	<p>During the last five years, the school did not use career exploration for all students to address our previous charter goal of “providing exposure to career opportunities”. Students were indirectly exposed to career opportunities through interest surveys, but the initial goal written in the last application was not fulfilled.</p> <p>Currently, our master schedule reflects changes that have been made to increase awareness of career opportunities for students. In 7th and 8th grade, students are introduced to career-related studies through our International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, Career Development, FACS program of study, and initial implementation of Project Lead the Way Courses.</p> <p>During seminar classes on Tuesday and Thursday, we are partnering with community leaders to speak during a monthly series on career exploration and leadership. The school revised the Student Success Plan to mirror the plan from the high school campus. Students now have a clear plan of reaching career and/or college goals.</p> <p><i>There is no data for this goal over the last five years.</i></p>

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

SMART Goal 4	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
Standards-Based Report Cards	Standards-Based Report Cards	<p>The school did not create a standards-based report card. The district has implemented SBRC in grades K-6. The first year of implementation for grades 5 and 6 was the 2021-2022 school year. We are still considering adding SBRC for grades 7 and 8 in the future.</p> <p><i>There is no data for this goal over the last five years.</i></p>

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

SMART Goal 5	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
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Monitor Student Progress	Standards-Based Report Card	<p>The school monitored student progress but did not use a measurable form of evidence to track the indicators listed on the previous application such as: NWEA, ACT Aspire Periodic Assessments, Personalized Learning, and Student Portfolios.</p> <p>The ESSA school index was explained to school leaders in 2019-2020 school year as a tool to promote equity in data collection and school success indicators. The training was provided to staff to understand the metric indicators such as Weighted Achievement, Student Engagement, and SQSS.</p> <p>The school was selected into the PLC Pilot Cohort 4 in the summer of 2020 and has since developed a live data tracker to analyze Common Formative Assessment data, Unit Plans, and essential learning of students skill by skill.</p> <p>Other indicators of student progress are measured through grades in eSchool, student engagement, and SEL behaviors. Our live data tracker is updated when our students are assessed on Essential Standards through a guaranteed and viable curriculum set forth by our staff.</p> <p><i>There is no data for this goal over the last five years.</i></p>
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*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

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>By 2027, all students will take part in career exploration that will promote and align with the academy experience found at Hot Springs World Class High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We will use career exploration to introduce our students to career opportunities inside our community, and outside Hot Springs. This goal will ensure that every student has access to high levels of learning, with an added focus on a value-added diploma at HSWCHS. ● Students will take grade-level specific classes that support the exploration of the three academies at HSWCHS of Liberal Studies, Education and Healthcare, and Business and Industrial Technology. Those courses may include but are not limited to Leadership, Medical Detectives, Family, and Consumer Sciences, and Career Development. ● An exploration experience will be created for each grade level that outlines career opportunities through CTE pathways, guest speakers and coordinated school simulated activities that support career exploration.
<p>By 2027, 40% of students will participate in advanced courses through the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In order to promote the International Baccalaureate continuum to our high school campus, HSJA will work with the MYP Coordinator to increase participation in one or more MYP courses.
<p>By 2027, the ESSA report card will reflect student growth by 5% each year in the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Weighted Achievement</u>: <i>Pre COVID 45.05 Post COVID 38.46</i>. We aim to increase the ELA and Math scores by 5% each year. This goal aligns with our Overall School Level Improvement and PLC Goals. ● <u>SQSS in the following areas</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Engagement: Pre COVID 45.16 Post COVID 78.78 (the district found an error in data input in eSchool from the 2018-2019 SY that reflected low student engagement scores) ○ Reading at grade level: <i>Pre COVID 37.13 Post COVID 30.49</i> ○ Science achievement: <i>Pre COVID 33.18 Post COVID 29.46</i> ○ On-time credits: As the school now hosts 9th grade, we aim to keep the on-time credits above 90% for all students. The current percentage is 86.21 for the 2020-2021 school year.
<p>By 2027, HSJA will streamline the live PLC data tracker and the Student Success Plan to increase progress on student academic and social standards, organize unit plans to pace essential learning for each course, and track intervention and extension in real-time.</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
Career Courses	Section 9.03.3.9 (“Career and Technical Education”)	x Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.		
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.		

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Waiver #2 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Teacher Licensure	DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure- section 7 A.C.A §§ 6-17-401/ A.C.A §§ 6-17-309 ; Ark. Code Ann. Sections 6-15-1004; 6-17-902, and 6-17-919.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver

Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

As the number of licensed teachers continues to decrease, it is imperative that we continue this waiver. Under this waiver, we have been able to secure many non-traditional teachers who bring experience to our campus. Teachers work through ALP's with post-secondary institutions, but simply knowing that we have the flexibility to hire without having ALP/collegiate paperwork in hand has allowed us to act quickly in the hiring process and has allowed us to secure teachers with experience beyond the classroom which is very helpful in our career academies. HSJA intends to leverage increased flexibility in its schedule to create more time for career exploration.

While the intent of this waiver is primarily for elective courses, it may also be used to secure teachers for core content areas when necessary.

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.

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Waiver #3 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Class Size/Teaching Load	-Standard 1-A.5 -A.C.A. § 6-17-812	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver

	-DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	
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Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

This waiver is used only in circumstances where a specific career course has a large number of interested students. In this case, an internship exploration (9th grade) can still be conducted regardless of class size. We believe that the addition of an exploration/intervention/extension period that will be utilized in the charter school is an example of the exceptional case worthy of a waiver. A waiver is being specifically requested for our teachers to be able to instruct no more than 185 students, with a maximum of no more than 35 students per class. With the new opportunity to be implemented by the charter school, some teachers may need to have a class load of 185 students. This waiver would be used on an as-needed basis only as the school creates learning opportunities that include intervention and extension, and internship exploration.

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.

Waiver #4 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Health and Safety Courses	Section 9.03.3.7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.		
Empty space for explanation		
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.		
Empty space for student service explanation		

Waiver #5 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
6 Hour Instructional Day	Standard 1-A.4.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
Instructional Day	Statute- A.C.A §§ 6-16-102	

Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

HSJA is seeking to increase scheduling flexibility and offer more opportunities during the day for career exploration, intervention/extension, and MYP courses which could necessitate that the planned instructional time be less than six (6) hours per day or thirty (30) hours per week. All required content will be provided but the time may need to be flexible.

The 6 hour instructional day waiver is already approved through our Digital Learning Plan for Conversion Charter schools but this was only for one calendar year. We are seeking approval of this waiver for the duration of this charter renewal.

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.

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Waiver #6 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver

Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

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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.

Waiver #7 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver

Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

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.

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

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.