



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Public Charter School Renewal Application for Center of Excellence

**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>	NLR Center of Excellence
<b>LEA Number:</b>	6002703
<b>Authorization Date:</b>	July 2017
<b>Expiration Date:</b>	June 2022
<b>Enrollment Cap:</b>	3000
<b>Grades Served:</b>	9-12
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Dr. <a href="#">Gregory Pilewski</a>
<b>Superintendent Email:</b>	pilewskig@nlrsd.org
<b>Charter Mailing Address:</b>	201 West 22nd St. North Little Rock, AR 72114
<b>Charter Physical Address:</b>	201 West 22nd St. North Little Rock, AR 72114
<b>Contact for the Application:</b>	<a href="#">Karla Whisnant</a>
<b>Contact Email:</b>	whisnantk@nlrsd.org
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	501 975 3895

**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
400	417	386	345

**Graduation Rates**

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
4 Year	96.9%	97.9%	95%	95%
5 Year		99.0%	97.9%	97.9%

**Letter Grades**

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

**ESSA School Index**

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Overall Index	59.91	63.2	N/A	60.04*
Weighted Achievement	34.01	36.45	N/A	29.96*
Growth	80.87	80.9	N/A	81.23*
SQSS	50.46	50.62	N/A	44.85*

## Section 2: Charter Mission Statement

### Previous mission statement:

It is the mission of the North Little Rock Center of Excellence (COE) to enable all students to find their passion, fulfill their potential as empowered individuals to become constructive members of their community and productive participants in the economy.

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

The mission of the North Little Rock Center of Excellence is to prepare students to be authors of their future through personalized learning, positive relationships, and engaging instruction.

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

- Alternative Learning Environment
- Traditional
- Virtual Only
- College Prep
- Credit Recovery
- XX Other Focus Area: blended of traditional and digital

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

Students will have the option of blended, traditional, and digital courses while focusing on the best pace, place, path, and time for their needs. Students will move at their own pace in the setting that they feel most comfortable while successful. Students will be able to work at any given time during the day, night or on weekends through digital learning until the desired skill is mastered. This type of learning will enable students to get a more realistic view of the “real world” and what it means to be a productive citizen.

Course delivery will be personalized. Students will be required to log 30 hours of learning work per week. By providing flexibility to students and a multifaceted approach, students will be able to advance in their general coursework at a pace that fits their individual needs. Students will be able to hold a job in order to support their family, participate in an apprenticeship or internship to further their career opportunities, or take post-secondary courses on a college campus in order to fast track their college experience. This currently is not available in a traditional setting. The flexibility required to fully support the programs in the COE can only be achieved in a charter school setting. Embedded courses will be offered for life skills which will make content relevant and the redundancy of skills eliminated. Students who choose a blended or digital approach will move through content with a self-paced approach. This will allow students to remain engaged and work on one subject or multiple subject/projects as they see fit. Adults will serve as mentors, assist with goal setting, and monitor progress to ensure students will remain on track and be able to graduate on time if not early.

An essential part of the content delivery for the COE will be obtained through a digital software platform called Edgenuity. Courses will be provided through a Personalized Learning approach, where students move through the content at their own pace once mastery is achieved. Students will also be grouped with teacher advisors to set goals and monitor progress toward course completion. Content teachers will provide support and teach skills not yet mastered that prove difficult for the student.

Flexibility in scheduling is key to allow students time to participate in internships and apprenticeships. Students will have the opportunity to complete industry level certifications in their career pathway of choice prior to graduation. Internships and apprenticeships will also be available for students. Industry Partners and their participation as interim instructors, mentors, and contributors to programming and projects are essential to our model. Students will receive explicit soft skills instruction that will be embedded in all courses and the culture of the school. Strong expectations for professional behavior will be enforced. Students will have the opportunity to apply content knowledge and demonstrate personal accountability through career specific cross-curricular team projects. Students will be empowered to obtain

the jobs they desire through the instruction and support they receive from industry mentors while completing these projects.

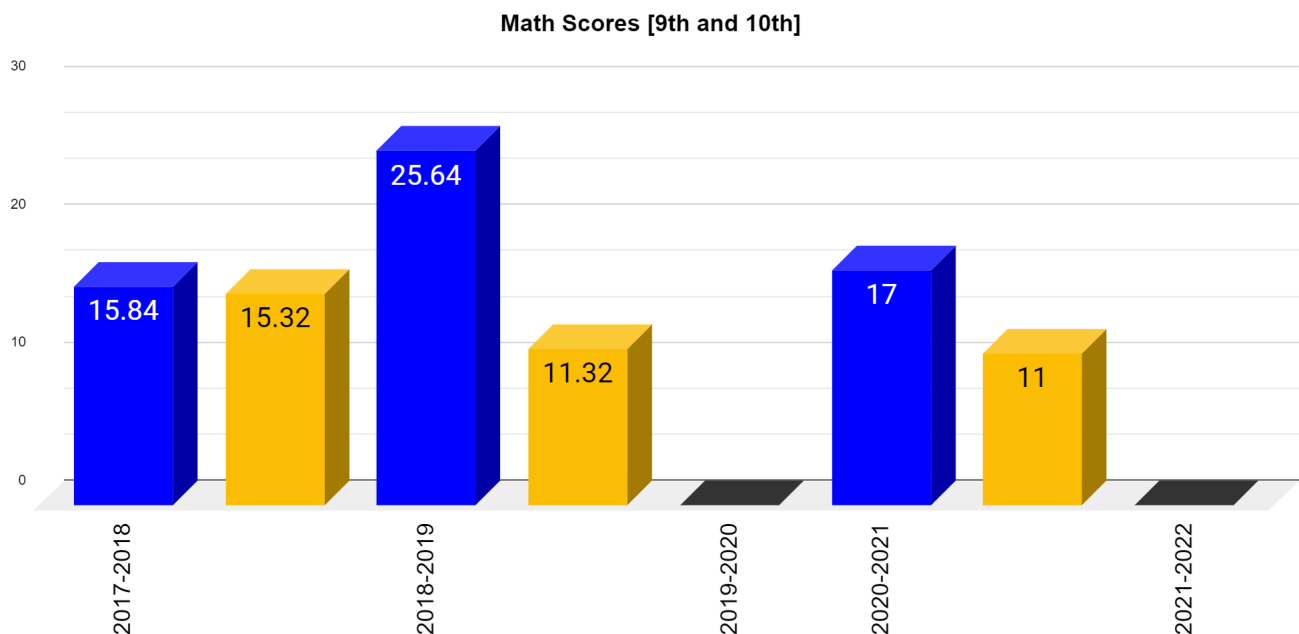
Students will have the opportunity to complete a value added high school diploma program. In partnership with our post-secondary institution partners, students will have the opportunity to complete college credit through dual and concurrent enrollment as well as articulated credit and technical certificates. Due to the flexible nature of the program and the multifaceted approach to course delivery, students will be able to attend the COE virtually and online courses will be used for core course delivery. Remote instruction combined with required scheduled on-site lab classes will be delivered to virtual students for career focused classes. All content will be delivered with a focus on the career path of the student in order for students to see relevance and achieve the rigor necessary to excel in their given profession. Flexibility in delivery is needed in order to quickly respond to the job market trends.

### Section 3: Charter Goals

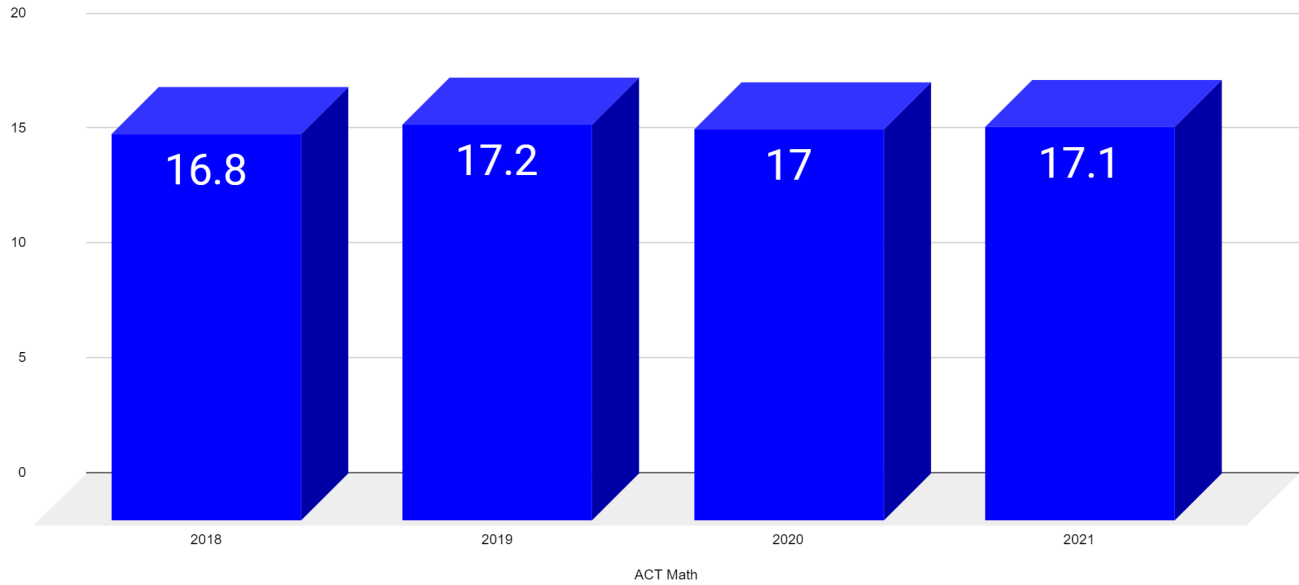
Please use the following space to evaluate the goals approved in the last charter application.

SMART Goal 1	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
40% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort Math scores for all COE students within the first five years	ACT Aspire-9-10th Grades ACT-11th-12th Grades	We have not met our goal. Due to Covid, we switched platforms and curriculum. It is our intention, to see the growth come back as we rebuild our program as we are exiting the pandemic.

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

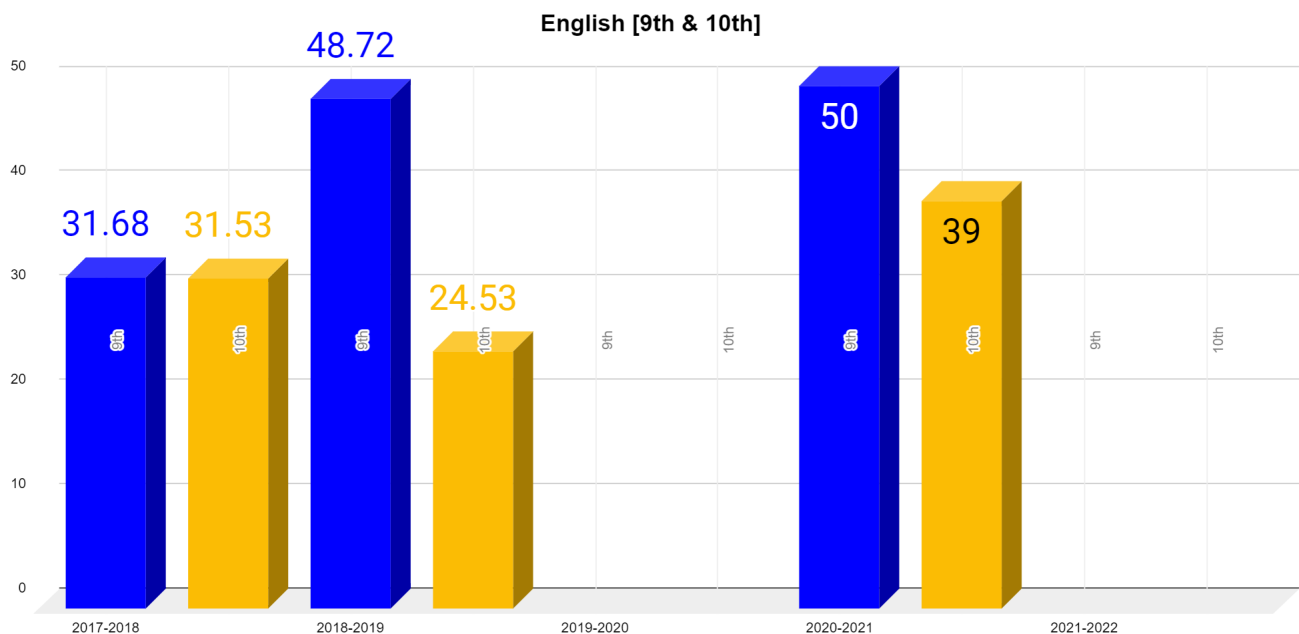


ACT Math

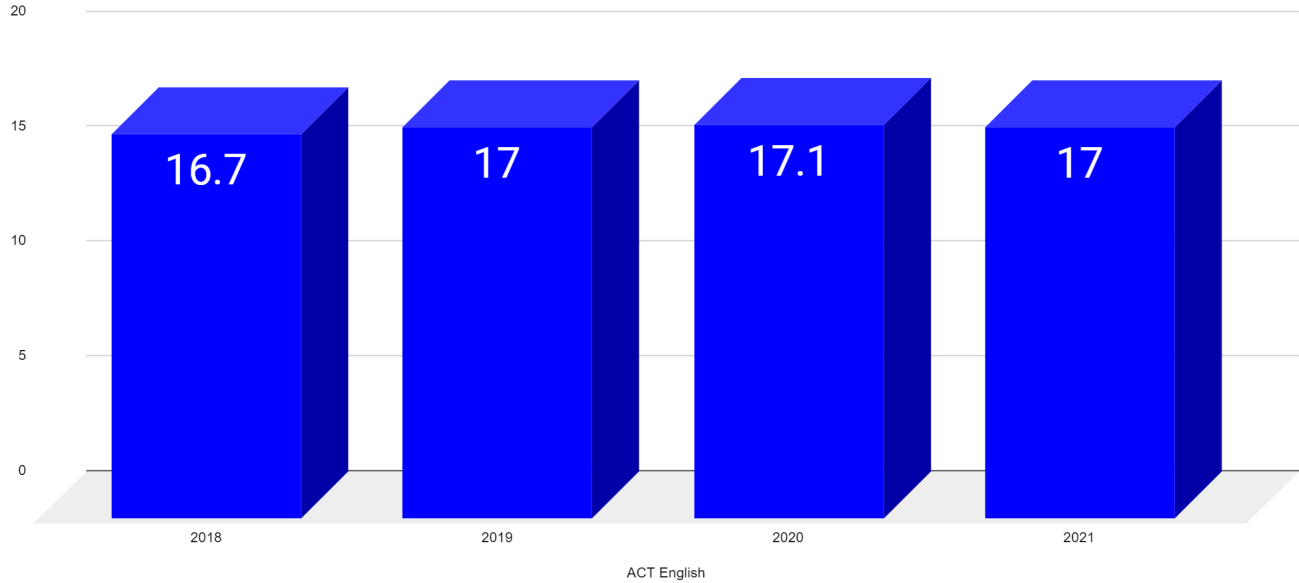


SMART Goal 2	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
20% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort English scores for all COE students within the first five years	ACT Aspire-9-10th Grades ACT-11th-12th Grades	Our 9th grade scores rose just under 20% but our 10th grade did not. We have not met our goal. Due to Covid, we switched platforms and curriculum. It is our intention, to see the growth come back as we rebuild our program as we are exiting the pandemic.

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



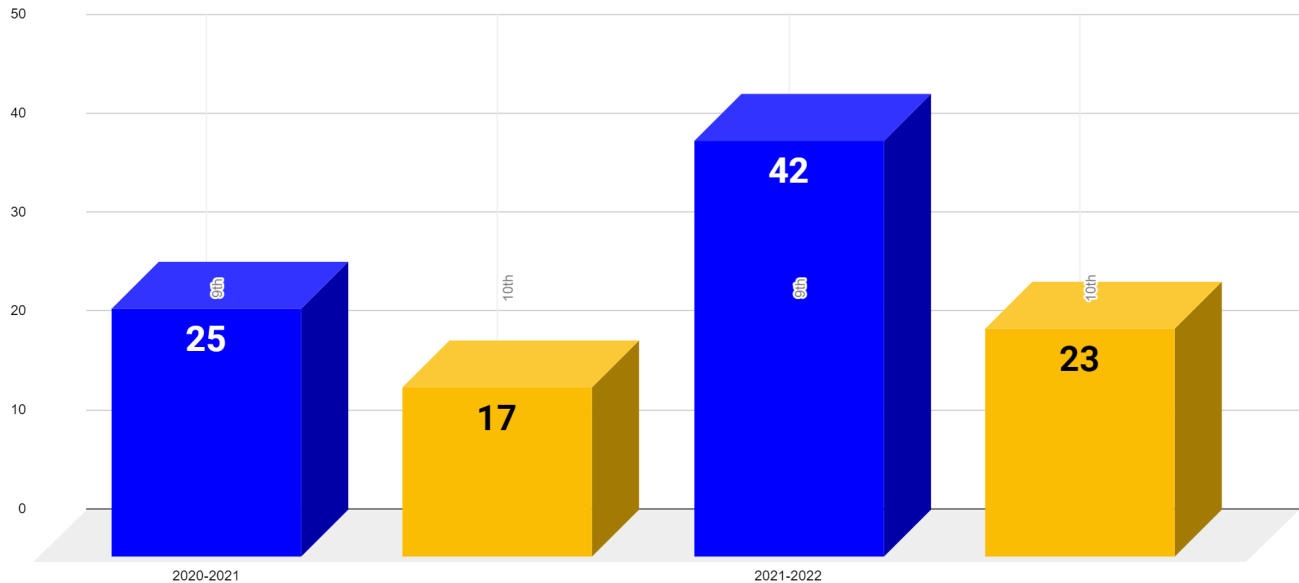
ACT English



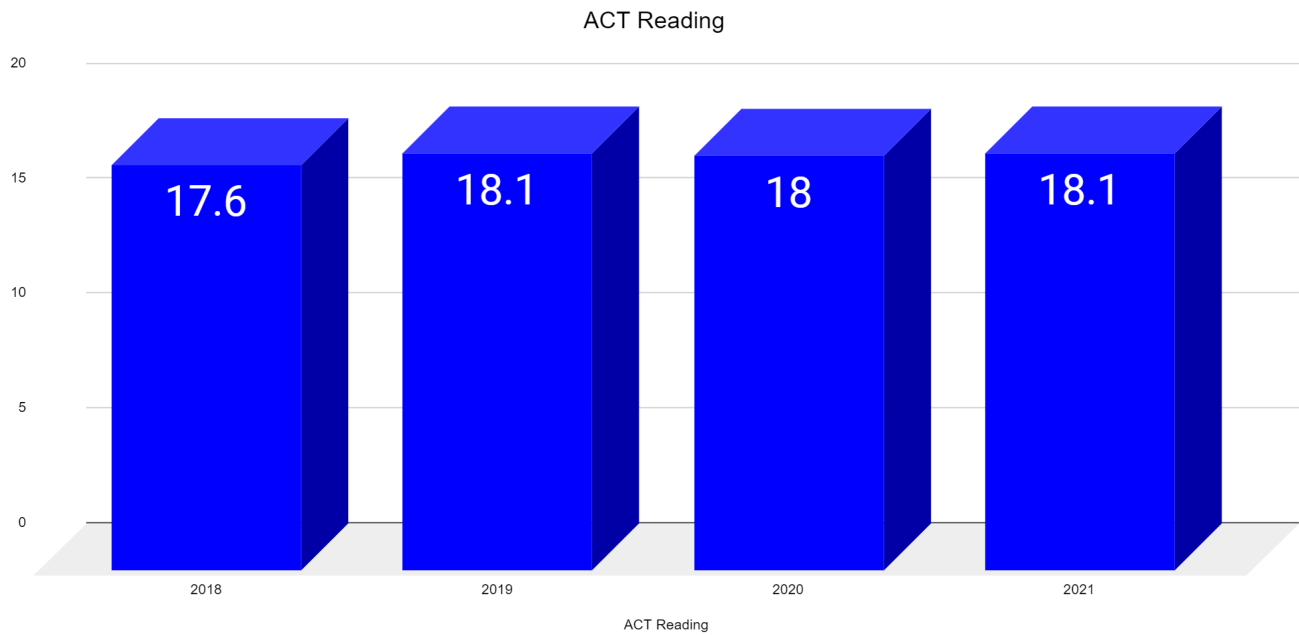
SMART Goal 3	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
40% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort Reading scores for all COE students within the first five years	ACT Aspire-9-10th Grades ACT-11th-12th Grades	We have not met our goal. Due to Covid, we switched platforms and curriculum. It is our intention, to see the growth come back as we rebuild our program as we are exiting the pandemic.

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

9th (blue) & 10th (gold) Reading Proficiency







## 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
<b>Revision of Goal 1: 20% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort Math scores for all COE students within the next five years as measured by NWEA MAP and ACT.</b>
<b>Revision of Goal 2: 20% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort English scores for all COE students within the next five years as measured by NWEA MAP and ACT.</b>
<b>Revision of Goal 3: 20% increase in 9-12 grade level cohort Reading scores for all COE students within the next five years as measured by NWEA MAP and ACT.</b>

## Section 5: 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.

### Existing Waivers to Continue

Waiver #1 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Career and Technical Education 9-12	1-A.1.3.9 Career and Technical Education - 9 units of sequenced career and technical education courses presenting three occupational areas	<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>		
To embed Career and Technical Education curricula in other courses. The curriculum supports the learning in their programs of study.		
<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
Library Media - Services - Specialist - Licensure - Program - Student Services - Ratio	4-F.1 4-F.2 A.C.A §§ 6-25-104 A.C.A §§ 6-25-103	<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>		
We incorporate many offerings through digital means - books, curriculum - while still providing access to a complete library media center. We fold the library media standards into our ELA and reading classrooms.		

**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.**

Our students still receive the services of a library media since we are a school within a school. COE students having access to the NLRHS library and media specialists do not push the NLRHS out of compliance.

Waiver #3 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Nurse	A.C.A §§ 6-18-706	<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.**

Allow us to take our two certified nurses to teach in our Medical Professions classrooms. The students are given opportunities to earn Certified Nurses Assistant licensure before they graduate. They are also able to earn the Pharmacy Technician licensure before they graduate.

**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.**

Our students will be provided the services needed by the NLR HS nurses. There are 4 full time nurses assigned to the LEA of the HS building. Three are on-site and one is located at the ALE.

Waiver #4 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Health Services - Program - Safety	2-E.1 2-E.2	<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.**

Students are offered the same health services that all students are offered in the district.

**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.**

Students are offered the same health services that all students are offered in the district.

Waiver #5 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Teacher Licensure -Requirements -Qualified -Waivers	DESE rules governing licensure (Section 7) 4-D.1 A.C.A §§ 6-17-401 A.C.A §§ 6-15-1004 A.C.A §§ 6-17-309 15.03 LICENSURE AND RENEWAL	<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>To give us the flexibility to hire business and industry professionals or individuals employed by higher education who possess outstanding credentials and work history but who do not have an interest in holding or obtaining a valid Arkansas Teacher License. All individuals who utilize this manner will be required to pass criminal background and Child Maltreatment Registry checks. In addition, this waiver will be used in limited circumstances in which no other adequate choice is available. This enhances the learning opportunities when students learn from those who were directly in the industry they are interested in pursuing.</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
Salaries -Teacher Definition - Warrants Void Without Valid License and Contract	A.C.A §§ 6-17-902 A.C.A §§ 6-17-919	<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>To give us the flexibility to hire business and industry professionals or individuals employed by higher education who possess outstanding credentials and work history but who do not have an interest in holding or obtaining a valid Arkansas Teacher License. All individuals who utilize this manner will be required to pass criminal background and Child Maltreatment Registry checks. In addition, this waiver will be used in limited circumstances in which no</p>		

other adequate choice is available. This enhances the learning opportunities when students learn from those who were directly in the industry they are interested in pursuing.

**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
School Day - Instructional Time	A.C.A §§ 6-16-102	<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.**

To allow embedded coursework, self-paced learning, internships and apprenticeships, and concurrent credit to be acquired outside of normal school hours.

**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 #8 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Six-Hour Instructional Day	1-A.4.2	<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.**

To allow embedded coursework, self-paced learning, internships and apprenticeships, and concurrent credit to be acquired outside of normal school hours. By offering classes early in the morning and late in the afternoon, we will be able to meet the students where their needs are located.

**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 #9 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Unit of Credit meets for 120 clock hours	1-A.2	<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.**

Transition to new standards of waiver granted 10/21/16. To allow embedded coursework, self-paced learning, internships and apprenticeships, and concurrent credit to be acquired outside of normal school hours.

**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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**Rescind the following Existing Waivers**

Waiver #10 Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Adopt and implement school safety policies and procedures	6-A.2	<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.**

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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.**

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Waiver #11 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
<b>REPEALED</b> Attendance	Mandatory Attendance Requirements for Students in Grades Nine through Twelve A.C.A §§ 6-18-211	XX 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>		
<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 #12 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Class Size and Teaching Load	Class Size and Teaching Load 1-A.5 A.C.A §§ 6-17-812 Each public school district shall comply with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Division regarding class size and teaching load.	XX 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>		
<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 #13 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Gifted and Talented - Annual Reporting - Expenditures - Services	Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2-G.1</li> <li>● A.C.A §§ 6-42-109</li> </ul>	XX Rescind <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A.C.A §§ 6-20-2208(c)(6)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation, or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></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 #14 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Principals - Qualifications and Responsibilities	A.C.A §§ 6-17-302	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input 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><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 #15 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Counselor Licensure	4-E.1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input 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><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>		



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Waiver #16 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Superintendent Licensure	4-B.2	<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.**

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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.**

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Waiver #17 Topic	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Calendar	A.C.A §§ 6-10-106	<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.**

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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.**

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## **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.

<b>Waiver Topic</b>	<b>Statutes/Standards/Rules</b>	<b>Rationale</b>

## 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	Enrollment Cap	We do not have the facilities to effectively enroll 3000 students. I recommend the cap enrollment to be 600.
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.**