



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

District Conversion Public Charter School Renewal Application for

Cross County High School - A New Tech School

****FINAL APPLICATION SUBMITTED 12/7/20****



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

Charter Information

Name of Charter:	Cross County High School – A New Tech School
LEA Number:	1901703
Authorization Date:	January 14, 2011
Expiration Date:	June 30, 2021
Enrollment Cap:	500
Grades Served:	7-12
Superintendent:	Nathan Morris
Charter Mailing Address:	21 Cr 215 Cherry Valley, AR 72324
Charter Physical Address:	21 Cr 215 Cherry Valley, AR 72324
Other Contact for Application:	
Contact Email:	
Contact Phone:	

Number of Years Requested for Renewal (1-5):

5

Section 1: Charter Data

Current Accreditation Status: Accredited

Level of Support: General

Enrollment (3 Quarter ADM)

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
278.45	276.56	265.81	260.78	265.67

Graduation Rates

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
4 Year	90.91	92.68	83.67	-
5 Year	82.98	90.91	95.12	-

Letter Grades

2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
D	C	C	N/A

ESSA SCHOOL INDEX

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Overall Index	60.4 State Avg = 67.43	67.04 State Avg = 66.28	66.7 State Avg = 66.48	N/A
Weighted Achievement	42.24 State Avg = 52.75	50.45 State Avg = 49.4	53.14 State Avg = 49.1	N/A
Growth	75.95 State Avg = 79.84	81.99 State Avg = 79.74	79.35 State Avg = 79.69	N/A
SQSS	38.61 State Avg = 52.54	45.83 State Avg = 52.4	48.02 State Avg = 52.95	N/A

Section 2: Charter Mission Statement

Previous mission statement:

The mission of Cross County High School is to prepare students that are deeply versed in 21st century skills, are strong critical thinkers and excellent problem solvers, and who graduate with the tools to enable their success.

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

What type of educational model does the school follow?

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

Section 3: Charter Goals

Goal 1	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Literacy: The school will narrow the achievement gap between the school's performance as compared to the state's performance by 2% each year until the school reaches the state average.</p>	<p>State mandated test (ACT Aspire)</p>	<p>Since 2016, Cross County High School met a component of the Literacy Charter Goal routinely (Chart A). A grade level grew by 2% or met the state average 68.75% of the time data was collected. Although the 2020 ACT Aspire test was not taken due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, projections for the 2020 ACT Aspire based on ACT Aspire Interim assessment data (Chart B) showed Cross County High School as on track to grow from the 2019 school year and meet or exceed the state average in English and Reading.</p> <p>In each year except 2017, at least one grade level at Cross County High School surpassed the state average. 2017 followed a year of high teacher turnover which may provide an explanation for the lower than expected scores at Cross County High School that year (Chart C).</p> <p>In the 7th grade specifically, 50% of students (more than the state average) were proficient in 2016. After a dip in scores in 2017, the 7th grade scores grew in 2018 and grew again in 2019 to return to exceeding the state average. 8th grade scores followed a similar path.</p> <p>In the high school grades, 9th grade scores grew considerably in 2016 (by over 5%), in 2017 (by over 6%), and in 2018 (by over 12%). 10th grade also showed growth to meet the Charter Goal by 2018, highlighted by growing over 20% from 2017 to 2018 before exceeding the state average in 2019. The growth in individual grades is mirrored by Cross County High School's overall high value added growth scores during this time period (Chart D).</p> <p>To continue to track and respond to data in 2020, Cross County High School has added the iReady reading assessment to serve as a baseline for the beginning of the year. The iReady assessment will provide earlier data for immediate intervention and will supplement data collected from quarterly ACT Aspire Interims. In the upper grades, the 9th and 10th grade ELA teachers have begun to adapt their individually created curriculum to include resources from the DESE ELA Course Resource guides.</p> <p>To continue on this positive trajectory, Cross County High School applied for and was granted the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Successful Outcomes for Arkansas Readers (SOAR) grant through the Arkansas Department of Education. The SOAR grant will allow for additional training in the Science of Reading, materials, and the purchase of an approved middle school ELA curriculum over the next two years. This will be the first time middle school students at Cross County High School will have access to a guaranteed, viable curriculum in over eight years. The approved curriculum will better transition students from Cross County Elementary Technology Academy to the high school and ensure students in 7th grade do not experience a drop in their ELA proficiency or achievement.</p>

		For all students at Cross County High School, a schoolwide literacy strategy will be researched, field tested, and implemented through weekly Cluster (similar to Professional Learning Communities) meetings as a part of the TAP program. The schoolwide strategy will provide ELA teachers intensive support in areas data show is critical for our students. To make Cluster meetings more impactful for our ELA teachers 7-12, a veteran, high-performing ELA teacher has been moved into a Mentor Teacher role. This teacher leader will be essential in Cross County High School continuing to grow to meet literacy goals.
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Chart A: Cross County High School vs. State Average Literacy

	<i>KEY:</i>	<i>Met Charter Goal of Growing 2%</i>	<i>Met Charter Goal of Meeting State Average</i>
Year	Grade	Cross County	State Average
2016	7th	50	49.97
	8th	59.62	52.47
	9th	36.96	47.48
	10th	40	47.80
2017	7th	38.30	56.52
	8th	37.84	58.38
	9th	43.18	52.94
	10th	32.61	52.44
2018	7th	40	44.59
	8th	40	48.13
	9th	55.81	44.06
	10th	54.55	43.58
2019	7th	43	39.2
	8th	39	55.5
	9th	28	37.4
	10th	35	32.2

Chart B: 2020 ACT Aspire Interim Assessment Tracking

	CCHS Year Average (Interim I-IV)	State Year Average (Interim I-IV)	CCHS Average Interim IV (End-of-Year)
English	69.50%	71%	87.74%
Reading	54.00%	42%	52.11%
Science	47.50%	40%	52.19%

Chart C: ACT Aspire Growth and Change Between Years

Subject	2016 Baseline	2017	Change	2018	Change	2019	Change
English	61	57	-4	63.5	+6.5	66.25	+2.25
Reading	38	27	-11	37.25	+10.25	36.25	-0.75
Science	32	20	-12	35.5	+15.5	37.75	+1.75

Chart D: High School Value-Add Scores

Year	Assessment	Value-Add Score
2015	PARCC	5
2016	ACT Aspire	5
2017	ACT Aspire	1
2018	ACT Aspire	5
2019	ACT Aspire	2
2020	ACT Aspire Interims	4

Goal 2	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Mathematics: The school will narrow the achievement gap between the school's performance as compared to the state's performance by 2% each year until the school reaches the state average.</p>	<p>State mandated test (ACT Aspire)</p>	<p>Cross County High School has experienced growth in mathematics achievement since restabilizing the staff after significant teacher turnover following the 2015-2016 school year (Chart E). After the mathematics teachers had the 2016-2017 school year to find their bearings, scores have grown (Chart F). On the 2018 ACT Aspire, all grades grew from the previous year. In 2019, three grades met the Charter Goal of growing 2% from the prior year and in 2020, ACT Aspire Interim Assessment scores projected the positive trend to continue (Chart G). Therefore, since taking the 2017-2018 ACT Aspire Assessment, Cross County High School has met aspects of the mathematics Charter Goal 87.5% of the time.</p> <p>The turnaround in mathematics achievement in the final two years data is available is evidence for the impact effective teachers can make. To ensure the positive trends continue, Cross County High School has committed to continuing implementation of the TAP system. The TAP system includes weekly Cluster meetings where a schoolwide mathematics instructional strategy will be researched, field tested, and implemented by all mathematics teachers in 7th-12th grade. This effort will be supported by both a Teacher Leadership Team, Master Teacher, and Mentor Teacher. The current mathematics Mentor Teacher previously taught at Cross County Elementary Technology Academy. This teacher was moved to the high school to serve as a teacher leader in the mathematics department and ushered in a culture shift around accountability, data-driven instruction, and planning. Cross County High School will make strategic staffing and leadership decisions in the future to continue positive trends in mathematics classrooms.</p> <p>To further support teachers, Cross County High School has also gradually added guaranteed, viable mathematics curriculum in all grade levels. A McGraw Hill/Glencoe Math curriculum was added in grades 7 and 8 as a part of the turnaround effort following the 2016 and 2017 ACT Aspire assessments. In the 2019-2020 school year, the high school began implementation of Reveal Math in the upper grades. Cross County High School is also currently pursuing the Tier 1 Mathematics Curriculum grant through the Arkansas Department of Education to purchase additional manipulatives, curriculum, and materials to continue to reach our goals.</p>

		The high school monitors progress towards mathematics goals by constantly collecting quality data from classroom assessments and ACT Aspire Interim assessments. For the 2020-2021 school year, the high school has also added iReady Math assessments as early data collection paths for middle school. This has already provided early data for teachers in the absence of 2020 ACT Aspire assessment data. Moving forward, Cross County High School is committed to continuing to effectively teach mathematics in all educational settings--in-person, virtually, or in a blended model.
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Chart E: Cross County High School vs. State Average Mathematics

	<i>KEY:</i>	<i>Met Charter Goal of Growing 2%</i>	<i>Met Charter Goal of Meeting State Average</i>
Year	Grade	Cross County	State Average
2016	7th	42.86	43.85
	8th	34.62	38.43
	9th	28.26	28.39
	10th	17.50	21.62
2017	7th	29.79	49.44
	8th	24.32	45.24
	9th	13.64	31.51
	10th	13.04	26.20
2018	7th	45	47.38
	8th	35.56	46.48
	9th	30.23	33.75
	10th	15.91	28.97
2019	7th	55	47.7
	8th	45	47.7
	9th	23	35.8
	10th	25	29.2

Chart F: ACT Aspire Growth and Change between Years

Subject	2016 Baseline	2017	Change	2018	Change	2019	Change
Science	32	20	-12	35.5	+15.50	37.75	+2.25
Math	32	20	-12	31.5	+11.50	37.0	+5.50

Chart G: 2020 ACT Aspire Interim Assessment Tracking

	CCHS Year Average (Interim I-IV)	State Year Average (Interim I-IV)	CCHS Average Interim IV (End- of-Year)
Math	49.50%	43%	67.08%
Science	47.50%	40%	52.19%

Goal 3	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Graduation: Based on our commitment to college and career readiness, we will meet or exceed the national graduation rate each year.</p>	<p>Graduation Rate</p>	<p>Cross County High School has consistently met or exceeded the national graduation rate and thus, met the Charter Goal. Additionally, Cross County High School routinely has high on-time credit scores and, over time, has raised 5-year graduation rates (Chart H).</p> <p>Since 2016, Cross County High School has added a fully staffed College and Career Access Program, (College x Career x Choice) that has assisted students in making choices in high school to become ready for the postsecondary path of their choosing. This program has grown, with significant district financial support, from a part time college advisor working on two campuses, to two full time college advisors solely dedicated to working with Cross County High School students. The two college advisors meet regularly with all juniors and seniors. The college advisors also plan a Virtual Internship for each junior in the career field of their choice. The Virtual Internship program allows juniors to meet one-on-one with a professional for mentorship and guidance on postsecondary plans. This has a significant impact on the juniors as they enter into their senior year and prepare for graduation and life after high school. In the students' senior year, the college advisors begin to collaboratively address issues involving graduation and postsecondary matriculation with the school guidance counselor, principal, and external partners.</p> <p>The College x Career x Choice program has partnered with the Delta College Attainment Network (DCAN) since 2017. This partnership has impacted graduation rates through expanded opportunities for high school juniors and seniors including the addition of persistence counselors known as Alumni Advisors. Alumni Advisors meet with all Cross County High School seniors in the spring of their final semester to ensure that the students have identified their passion, purpose, and plan for the future. This motivates students to continue on the path to graduation and aspire towards quality postsecondary options. For students at-risk of failing to graduate, the high school has also added one-on-one meetings with the principal and school counselor.</p>

Chart H: Graduation Rates and Graduation Information

Year	Cross County High School Graduation Rate Combined	5-year Graduation Rate	National Graduation Rate*	Arkansas Graduation Rate	Cross County High School On-time Credits Points (SQSS)
2014-2015	83%	--	83%	--	--
2015-2016	90.9%	82.98%	84%	88.47%	--
2016-2017	92.7%	90.91%	85%	88.95%	84.5
2017-2018	83.7%	95.12%	85%	90.1%	82.4
2018-2019	89.1%	84.3%	--	--	93.69
2019-2020	^90.0%	--	--	--	--

*National Graduation Rate data taken from the National Center for Education Statistics. As of May 2020, the latest data is for the 2017-2018 school year.

^ Calculated locally by Cross County High School

-- No Data Available

Goal 4	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Attendance will increase by 1% each year for the first two years and .5% each subsequent three years.</p>	<p>Attendance records</p>	<p>Chronic Absenteeism is an issue at Cross County High School (Chart I). Attendance is an area the high school staff and leadership take extremely seriously and various action steps have been attempted to address this issue. The challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic have resulted in additional barriers to regular school attendance that the high school is working to address.</p> <p>In past years, attendance incentives (weekly, monthly, and yearly) were implemented at the high school through an initiative called the Be Excellent Challenge. Students were rewarded with raffle tickets for school attendance and participation. Raffle tickets earned students the chance to win highly sought after prizes like gaming consoles and gift cards. Students were also able to qualify for certain exam exemptions by meeting attendance requirements. Since 2016, Cross County High School has also sought to streamline the attendance reporting and accountability systems. Students who are absent are contacted daily by school staff members and parent meetings are scheduled as necessary.</p> <p>Attendance was slightly up in the 2019-2020 school year. Cross County High School will work to continue to increase the percentage of students attending school each day and will seek innovative, research-based solutions to this problem.</p>

Chart I: Attendance Rate

Year	Attendance Rate Combined
2014-2015	94.5%
2015-2016	91.22%
2016-2017	90.45%
2017-2018	89.63%
2018-2019	89.42%
2019-2020	90.09%

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.

SMART Goal
<p>Literacy: The percentage of students proficient in reading will increase by 2% for the next five years as measured by ACT Aspire or the state mandated assessment.</p>
<p>Mathematics: The percentage of students proficient in mathematics will increase by 2% for the next five years as measured by ACT Aspire or the state mandated assessment.</p>
<p>College and Career Readiness: The percentage of Cross County High School graduating seniors scoring at or above a Composite Score of 19 on the ACT Test will increase by 1% each year for the next five years.</p>

Section 5: Waivers

Waiver #1	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Class size and teaching load	Standard 1-A.5 A.C.A §§ 6-17-812 DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	<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.		
<p>This waiver provides the opportunity to offer co-taught courses that are relevant, engaging, and cross-curricular. Examples of co-taught courses we offer or have offered are Capstone, which is the culminating course for seniors blending English 12 and Transitional Literacy with a focus on Philosophy. Students present their learning at the end of the year to a panel of teachers from their year-long portfolio compiled from the four pillars studied in this course. BioLit is another course that includes English 10 and Biology. One exciting project in this class is the study of the <i>Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> and how that connects to the advancement of ethical medical practices today. Civic and Economics is paired with our local college/career prep course that makes real-world connections to personal finance, FAFSA, and college entrance essays.</p> <p>These courses are structured in a way that not only create engaging lessons for students that are personally meaningful, but coursework that is rigorous to stretch their thinking and increase problem solving. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011.</p>		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #2	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Unit of Credit Meets for Minimum of 120 Clock Hours	Standard 1-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.		
We are rescinding this waiver for the 2020 renewal.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #3	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Calendar	A.C.A §§ 6-10-106	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		
<p>While many schools operate on the standard, traditional school calendar, Cross County Schools use this waiver to begin the school calendar earlier in an effort to narrow the learning gap and skill loss from the summer break. Having this in place provides an opportunity to further close the achievement gap as we have seen in our increased growth and proficiency, the overall improvement in our overall letter grade, and some areas in SQSS indicators. The high school moved from a D rating to a C in 2018 with an overall score less than one point from a B and a maintained C rating in 2019; again within a close range from a B score. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011.</p>		
<p>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</p>		
Empty space for response		

Waiver #4	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Library Media Licensure and Ratio	Standards 2-D.1; 4-F.1 and 4-F.2 A.C.A §§ 6-25-103 A.C.A §§ 6-25-104	<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.

Cross County High School currently houses a traditional library with access to books, resources and research materials. Additionally, students have access to digital resources, such as, online libraries. Cross County High School is a 1:1 school providing every 7-12 student with a laptop with internet accessibility in an effort to further provide access to resources and research materials that the library may not have to enhance students' learning experiences. With this, classrooms also become media centers for students and teachers. Another component of this waiver regards who runs the library media center. A classified library aide, trained in all aspects of the media center, is assigned to run day-to-day operations. An administrator will supervise the employee to ensure resources and training needed are provided. Since the traditional media center is not solely located in one location in the building, with classrooms functioning as a media center, teachers have a greater impact on what students select as research and reading. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011 and amended in 2018.

We are no longer asking for a waiver from Standards 2-D.1 as we will continue to maintain an appropriate balance of print and non-print media.

If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?

Waiver #5	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Superintendent Licensure	Standard 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.		
Cross County High School is rescinding this waiver request for the 2020 renewal.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #5	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Teacher Licensure	Standard 4-D.1 A.C.A. §§ 6-15-1004 A.C.A. §§ 6-17-309 A.C.A. §§ 6-17-401 et seq. A.C.A. §§ 6-17-902 A.C.A. §§ 6-17-401 A.C.A. §§ 6-17-919 DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure, section 7	<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.

The continued use of our teacher licensure waiver will give us the maximum opportunity to access the best, most effective teachers for the classroom. For example, a teacher that is licensed in 4-8 Math, may also demonstrate the skills and knowledge to be effective in an upper level math class, such as, Geometry. Allowing this person to teach in that class, while still demonstrating adherence to Arkansas Qualified Teacher parameters, is very beneficial to student achievement. A teacher that has a business degree and meets AQT qualifications when applicable, but no teacher license, can be a great addition to the Business department bringing knowledge from the field that can be very beneficial to student success. This waiver allows us to put the best teachers in the right places providing more equitable access to effective educators and instructors. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011.

Being a very rural school has proved difficult at times to find a highly qualified, certified teacher for some content areas. This waiver has allowed us to find highly qualified teachers that are not certified but are degreed in their areas of expertise and bring great experiences to our students based on that expertise. All of our teachers are provided very structured support throughout the year to coach them to be effective and grow each year. The TAP System provides weekly PLC meetings to address effective instructional practices, 4-5 observations each year for each teacher with specific areas of reinforcement and refinement, a structure for tracking teacher growth plans, and continued support and coaching between observations to help teachers grow instructionally and to increase student achievement. Because of the support provided, many of our non-licensed teachers seek a pathway to become licensed in their field.

Currently, Cross County High School employs four teachers who are currently not licensed but are qualified either with their degree or by the Arkansas Qualified Teacher standards, as applicable, or both. Because of the support provided to these teachers, three of them are seeking licensure through non-traditional pathways. Three years ago, the school was in search of a Spanish teacher. That is a very hard to fill position, and being in a rural area made this more difficult. The current teacher was hired under this waiver with a degree in Spanish and

English. This teacher has been rated as effective based on classroom observations and is now enrolled in a non-traditional program and passed one of the two Praxis exams needed for licensure. Another teacher, a math teacher, was hired on a waiver to teach math and immediately sought out enrollment in the APPEL program and is finishing that program this year. Another teacher, a PE teacher with a degree in Physical Education has been with the District for many years and with the help of the leadership team and this waiver is now confident and effective and is also seeking licensure through a non-traditional program. Finally, our most recent hire, a business teacher, began with us on an Emergency Teaching Permit for the first year transitioning to employment under this waiver is now on track and accepted in a non-traditional program to obtain a teaching license. Another teacher, a paraprofessional who is Apple Certified teaches a computer repair course that allows our students to obtain a local credit and learn an important skill in today's market.

Recently, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching released a research study of NIET's impact on several schools, with Cross County School District being one of the selected in that study. It found the percentage of effective teachers increased 19 points from 2015-2016 to 2018-2019 and the retention of these effective teachers rose 21 points from 2016-2017 to 2019-2020. The percentage of effective teachers at CCSD are as follows based on the study:

Effective Teachers		Effective Teachers Retained	
2015-2016	75%	2016-2017	75%
2016-2017	84%	2017-2018	84%
2017-2018	88%	2018-2019	86%
2018-2019	94%	2019-2020	96%

This waiver has not only allowed Cross County High School to find effective teachers in a different way, it has afforded us an opportunity to coach and motivate these teachers and help them find pathways to licensure through a culture of support in an effort for those teachers to continue a successful career in education. Another benefit from growing effective teachers is improved student achievement which Cross County High School is seeing growth each school year.

If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?

Waiver #6	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Counselor Licensure	Standard 4-E.1	<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.		
This waiver was not a part of the 2015 renewal.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #7	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Gifted and Talented	Standard 2-G.1 A.C.A. §§ 6-20-2208(c)(6) DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Approval Standards A.C.A. §§6-42-109	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Waiver
<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		
<p>Utilizing project-based learning and integrated courses create coursework that is rigorous, engaging, and differentiated for all learners, including gifted students. The different instructional methods, project and problem-based, in all classrooms provide differentiation for gifted students. Two examples of such differentiation are the BioLit course and Capstone course where students delve deeper into their learning through rigorous projects that involve engaging culminating events, projects, and presentations of learning that give students the opportunity to highlight their creativity. Other courses are offered that provide opportunities for students to be creative and work above grade level, such as, EAST and Mobile Application Development. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011.</p>		
<p>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</p>		
<p></p>		

Waiver #8	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Fine Arts Curriculum	Standard 1-A.1.2.5	<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.		
Cross County High School is rescinding this waiver for the 2020 school year.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #9	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Health and Safety and Physical Education Curriculum	Standard 1-A.1.2.6	<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.		
Cross County High School is rescinding this waiver request for the 2020 renewal.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #10	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Career and Technical Education	Standard 1-A.1.2.7	<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.		
We are rescinding this waiver for the 2020 renewal.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #11	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Arkansas History	Standard 1-A.1.2.8	<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.		
<p>Cross County High School is rescinding this waiver request for the 2020 renewal. The school will seek a course approval to integrate and embed Arkansas History into 7th and 8th Social Studies.</p>		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #12	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
High School Credit for 5-8 Courses	Standard 1-A.1.2.9	<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.		
This waiver was rescinded during the previous renewal in 2015.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #13	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Duty-Free Lunch	A.C.A. §§ 6-17-111	<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.		
<p>This waiver provides the opportunity for teachers to see social settings of their students outside the classroom, connecting that to teacher knowledge of students (TKS) and differentiation while also increasing flexibility to conduct cluster meetings (PLCs) This creates an effective balance, allowing for some teachers to cover advisory and some to cover lunch duty. Additionally this waiver allows a teacher to complete their maximum sixty minutes of duty during lunch. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011.</p>		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		
Empty space for response		

Waiver #14	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Daily Planning Period	A.C.A. §§ 6-17-114	<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.		
<p>Teachers will continue to be provided the required planning time (200 minutes weekly), however, depending on scheduling for the given school year, planning time may be parceled differently during the week. This provides ample time to plan in-depth projects and allows for teacher collaboration. This waiver has been used since the initial charter approval in 2011.</p>		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #15	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Alternative Pay Programs	A.C.A. §§ 6-17-119	<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.		
<p>Our school implements the TAP System (The System for Student and Teacher Advancement) as our teacher observation system. TAP is a comprehensive educator effectiveness model that provides powerful opportunities for career advancement, professional growth, instructionally focused accountability and competitive compensation for educators through the implementation of four interrelated key elements. Those four elements are: instructionally focused accountability, multiple career paths, ongoing professional development, and performance-based compensation. This program tethers our cluster meetings (PLCs) for teacher professional development, and student growth through school-wide strategies. Since the implementation of TAP, teachers have become more effective in the classroom and students have shown growth in key areas over many years. This waiver was approved in 2017.</p>		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Provide information on new waivers that are being requested.

Waiver Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rationale

Section 7: Amendment Requests

List any 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 for Amendment Requests Only

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.

Results from Selected New Studies of NIET’s Impact: Cross County School District

Cross County School District’s Implementation of the TAP System

Cross County School District in Arkansas serves a rural community of about 3,600 residents with about 1,550 total households (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). Cross County School District educates 600-700 students. Like many districts in rural communities, Cross County School District historically had difficulty attracting and retaining effective teachers. From 2010-11 to 2014-15, annual teacher turnover in the schools ranged from 10% to 26%, which is at or above the national annual turnover rate (Snyder et al., 2019). Cross County School District responded to the challenge by implementing practices to “grow their own” effective teachers. In 2016-17, as part of a Teacher Incentive Fund-Cycle 5 (TIF-5) grant, Cross County School District began a partnership with NIET designed to continuously raise educator excellence and student achievement through enhanced application of the TAP System.

Leutscher and Barnett (2020) examined the impact of TAP System implementation and found evidence that grants and partnerships have allowed Cross County School District to implement, maintain, and continuously improve the TAP System and leverage school, district, and NIET resources to overcome these challenges of maintaining an effective workforce. Key findings include:

Increased Teacher Effectiveness and Improved Teacher Retention: As shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4, Cross County School District has increased educator excellence, as measured by teacher observation scores (effectiveness ratings), as well as increasingly retained these teachers in the district. The percentage of effective teachers increased 19 points from 2015-16 to 2018-19 and the retention of these effective teachers rose 21 points from 2016-17 to 2019-20.

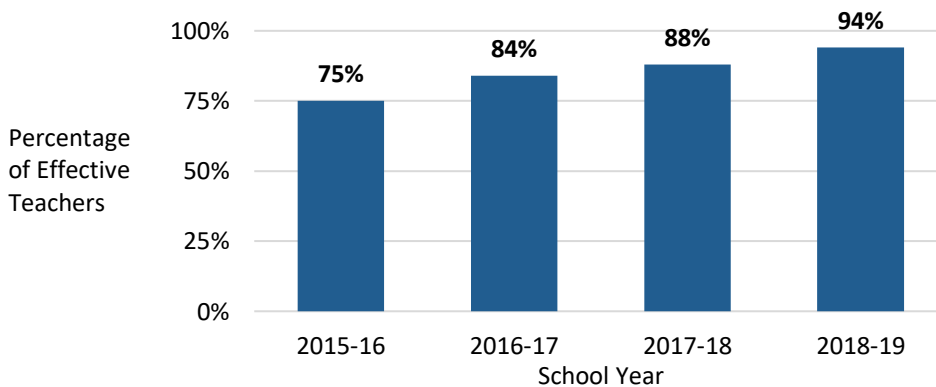


Figure 1. Cross County School District teachers improve instructional skills over time.

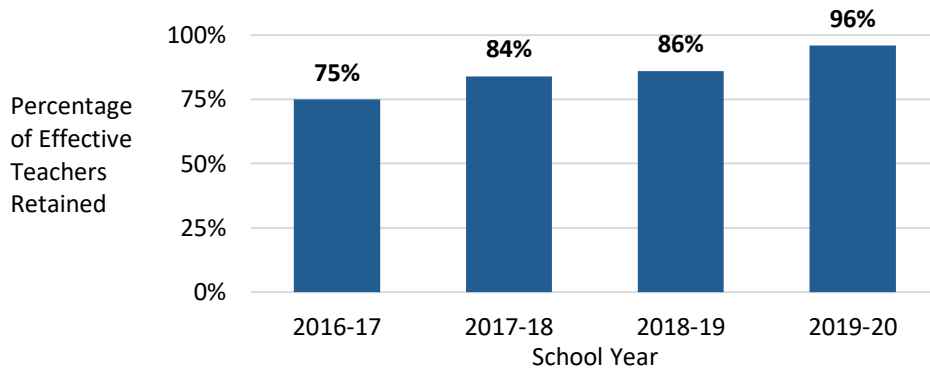


Figure 2. Cross County School District retains effective teachers over time.

Improved Student Achievement. As teachers became more effective and stayed in Cross County School District, student performance on the state assessment increased. From the year before grant implementation (2015-16¹) through the third year of the grant (2018-19), the percentage of Cross County School District students passing the state assessment increased for all tested subjects. Additionally, Figure 5 and Figure 6 compare Cross County School District with the average of comparison schools that had similar demographic characteristics and passing rates on the 2015-16 state assessment. Cross County School District began outperforming the comparison group in 2016-17 and increased or maintained the advantage over the comparison group in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

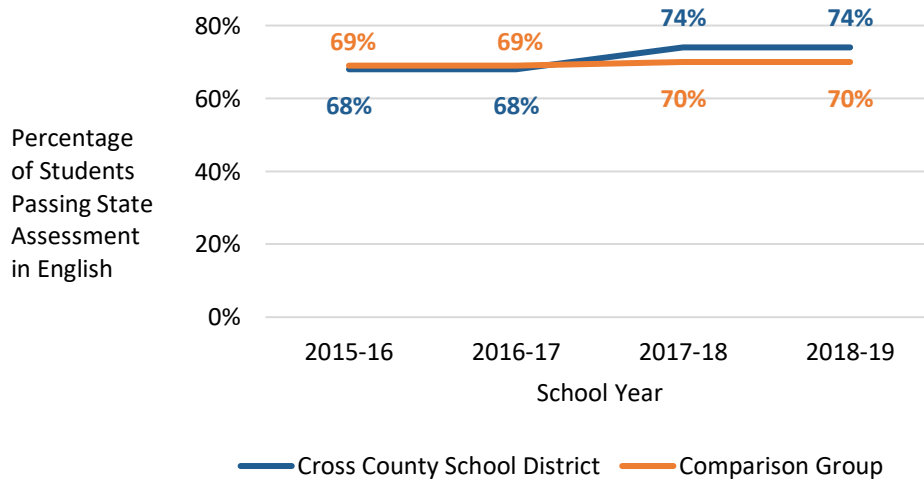


Figure 3. Cross County School District students improve performance on the English state assessment.

¹ In the 2015-16 school year, the Arkansas Board of Education adopted the ACT Aspire as the summative assessment statewide. The ACT Aspire is a series of end-of-year tests for grades 3-10 in the subject areas of English, reading, writing, math, and science.

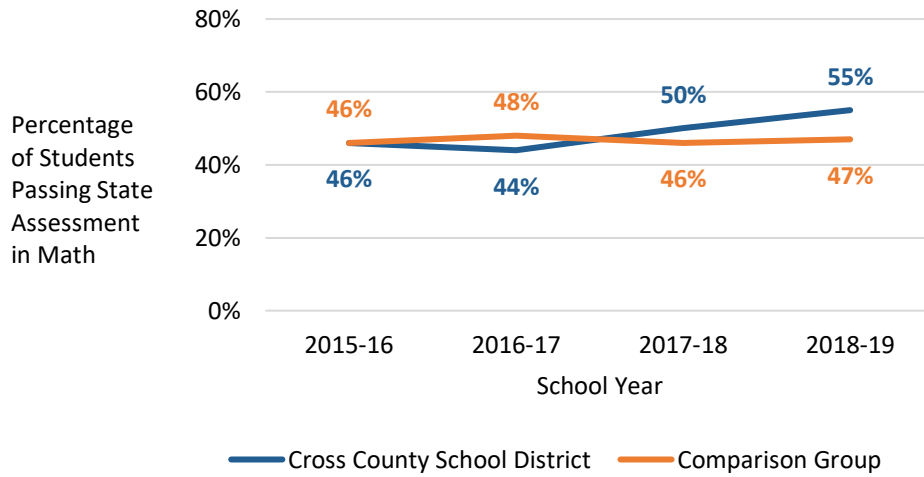


Figure 4. Cross County School District students improve performance on Math state assessment.

As a district serving a rural community, Cross County School District faces obstacles in the recruitment, development, and retention of effective educators. Through the TIF grant and partnership with NIET, Cross County School District has continuously improved to overcome these obstacles.