



# DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

**District Conversion Public Charter School Renewal Application for  
Polk County Virtual Academy  
Mena School District**

**Deadline for Final Submission: 5:00 PM on November 14, 2022**



**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
**Charter School Office**  
**Four Capitol Mall**  
**Little Rock, AR 72201**  
**501.682.4472**

<b>Event/Deadline</b>	<b>Renewal Applications</b>
Initial Applications Due by 5:00 p.m. s submitted to <a href="mailto:ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov">ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov</a>	September 30, 2022
Application Reviews with DESE	October 17-28, 2022
Application Revision Window	October 31-Nov. 14, 2022
Final Application Due by 5:00 pm Submitted to <a href="mailto:ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov">ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov</a>	November 14, 2022
Charter Authorizing Panel Hearings	December 13-14, 2022
State Board of Education Meeting- Review of Charter Authorizing Panel Decisions	January 12, 2023

### Charter Information

<b>Name of Charter:</b>	Polk County Virtual Academy
<b>LEA Number:</b>	5703703
<b>Authorization Date:</b>	10/19/2017
<b>Expiration Date:</b>	6/30/2023
<b>Enrollment Cap:</b>	200
<b>Grades Served:</b>	K-12
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Dr. Lee Smith
<b>Charter Mailing Address:</b>	501 Hickory Avenue, Mena, AR 71953
<b>Charter Physical Address:</b>	700 South Morrow Street, Mena, AR 71953
<b>Contact for Application:</b>	Bridget Buckley
<b>Contact Email:</b>	bridget.buckley@menaschools.org
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	(479) 394-1710

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

## Section 1: Charter Data

**Current Accreditation Status: Accredited**

**Level of Support: General**

### Enrollment (3rd Quarter ADM)

2019	2020	2021	2022
24	23	62	20

### Graduation Rates

2019	2020	2021	2022
100%	50%	100%	100%

### Letter Grades

2019	2020	2021	2022
C	NA	NA	D

### ESSA School Index

	2019	2020	2021	2022
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Overall Index	<b>64.35</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>61.85</b>	<b>60.18</b>
Weighted Achievement	<b>58.33</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>40.91</b>	<b>41.67</b>
Growth	<b>69.65</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>76.28</b>	<b>75.45</b>
SQSS	<b>60.71</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>62.59</b>	<b>52.44</b>

## Section 2: Charter Mission Statement

Previous mission statement:

The belief that all students deserve an educational program tailored to meet individual needs will drive the efforts of PCVA. The academy can provide opportunities for student choice in all aspects of learning including where, when, and what to learn by providing personalized learning for students through virtual curriculum provided by Edmentum. Partnering with families and the community, PCVA will provide K-12 students flexible learning choices that offer support and acceleration to promote college, career, and citizenship readiness. Additionally, students may choose to participate in community service opportunities and real world apprenticeships.

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

NA

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
Provide students in Polk County with a quality alternative public education option.	% of Staff who are Arkansas certified and/or Arkansas Qualified in the area they are teaching.	Polk County Virtual Academy uses an Arkansas approved Digital Provider, Edmentum, to ensure quality curriculum and certified staff. Edmentum staff are available to students and parents through Zoom, email, text and phone calls and tutoring opportunities are available through the program as well. Students in PCVA are also able to receive concurrent credit through University of Arkansas Rich Mountain as well as participate in the vocational programs offered through UARM. Students are eligible to participate in all district activities and are considered Mena Bearcats, even graduating with their Mena High School cohort.

\*

2019	2020	2021	2022
No Data	85%	50% of staff are AR certified in their content area. 100% are Arkansas Qualified in the area they are teaching.	100% All staff are either AR certified in their content area or are Arkansas Qualified in extracurricular areas.

Goal 2	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
PCVA will provide quality, alternate programming for students who desire something other than a traditional learning environment.	All PCVA students will participate in statewide testing. Students will meet or exceed the state average.	<p><b>Due to COVID, it has been difficult to get students to come in to test. In 2021, two students refused testing. In 2022, all students tested. No data was available for 2018 or 2019 testing.</b></p> <p><b>2022 showed gains in all areas. The number of students in each grade level is small, so percentages are less than representative of the academic profile.</b></p>

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

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Reading		NA	41	50
Science		NA	27	50
Math		NA	23	38
Language		NA	63	75

Goal 3	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>All students will have a developed Student Success Plan. Students, families and staff will work together to develop plans that focus on student learning and growth.</p>	<p>Number of students who meet their SSP goals.</p>	<p>During the first two years of establishing the charter, SSP's were difficult to develop and maintain. Staff were learning the programs and while plans were made, they were not fully implemented. In 2020, in spite of the pandemic, plans were developed for all students and progress toward goals was made. In 2021 and 2022, SSP's were established, followed with fidelity, and student goals were adjusted to meet student needs. Added in the 2023 school year is a focus on student career planning.</p>

2019	2020	2021	2022
<p>All students were given opportunity to set goals and work towards those goals. Progress monitoring was not well established.</p>	<p>Student success plans were developed with attendance monitored, academic goals established and adjusted over the year. All students met at least 1 goal.</p>	<p>Student success plans established and monitored with fidelity. Students met or exceeded goals.</p>	<p>Student success plans established and monitored with fidelity. Students met or exceeded goals.</p>

Goal 4	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>PCVA Students will take the ACT before the end of their senior year.</p>	<p>Number of seniors who have not taken the ACT by graduation vs. those who have.</p>	<p>The goal in the state is for every junior to take the ACT. The first few years of the charter, it was difficult to get the students to come in for the ACT that was offered free at MHS, but once the SSP's started being worked through with fidelity, having students test became easier. However, this did not seem to be a good measure of the success of the charter.</p>



2019	2020	2021	2022
4 Seniors. 2 Graduate. 1 student took the ACT	2 Seniors. 2 Graduate. 2 Students took the ACT	8 Seniors. 5 Graduate. 7 Students took the ACT.	3 Seniors. 1 Graduate. 1 Student took the ACT.

### 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
80% of students who select PCVA for acceleration will meet the goals in their student success plan, achieving accelerated status by completing coursework prior to the course end date. Students have access to concurrent courses, college level vocational courses, summer and holiday work time.
70% of students who select PCVA for remediation will meet the goals in their student success plan, recovering at least one credit per semester. Tutoring is available for students and advisory meetings will be held periodically to assess student progress towards their goals.
100% of PCVA students will develop a career focus with a yearly plan for advancing towards their chosen career path including, but not limited to, service opportunities in the chosen field, mentoring, internship, research, and employment. Community service will be an important piece of each student's career plan.

## Section 5: Waivers

Waiver #1	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
School Day	6-16-102: School Day 1-A.4.2: 6 hours per day 1-A.2: Seat Time	Continue
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></p>		
<p>PCVA students are able to work at the pace needed to complete the courses. Individual needs are met by pacing learning as needed. Students have the ability to work outside the normal Monday-Friday, 8am-3:30 pm school week. Credit is awarded based on subject matter competency. Staff monitor students' progress on a weekly basis to make sure they are meeting goals. Teachers work with parents and students to help ensure success in the program. This waiver supports the goal of flexibility. Students who are struggling in the traditional classroom program and are seeking a different educational opportunity are referred to PCVA.</p>		
<p><b>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</b></p>		
<p>Yes. Student progress is monitored by percentage of course completed based on estimated amount of time for the course which adheres to state standards. Completion of the course qualifies for the suggested amount of time for a semester.</p>		

<b>Waiver #2</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Mandatory Attendance	Statute: 6-18-213 (a) (2)	Continue
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>Students in PCVA self pace and work at any time. Course completion will validate students' effort and will be monitored by staff. The waiver for attendance has allowed students to complete courses at a faster pace but also in a time that works with their needs such as work schedules, health needs, etc. Staff maintain student progress communicating quickly if students fall behind. Attendance is calculated y course progress monitoring. This waiver supports the goal of flexibility for both students who accelerate and those who struggle.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</b>		
<p>Yes. Student progress is monitored consistently and communication is made with both parents and students.</p>		

<b>Waiver #3</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Gifted and Talented Education	Code: 6-42-101 et seq. 6-20-2208(c)(6)  Standard: 2-G.1  Rules: DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards	Continue

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

PCVA students who qualify for GT services are still provided those services on site and can be assessed for the programming. MSD GT Coordinator receives referrals from parents, students, and staff and provides screening and assessments through the district GT programming guidance. Once referrals are made, data is collected and permission to test is received prior to testing. A committee led by the GT Coordinator evaluates the criteria.

Elementary students who qualify for GT services are invited to participate in the GT classes that are provided onsite. Both elementary and secondary GT students are invited to participate in Quiz Bowl activities. Secondary GT students receive their services through projects that are offered or allowed by their content area teachers in the area of their choice. Staff are provided support and guidance options that engage students in extended opportunities for learning. Courses are available for both PreAP and AP. Teachers of PreAP and AP courses through the online curriculum provided by Edmentum meet all training requirements and provide that evidence to PCVA Director.

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

No. Continued as is.

<b>Waiver #4</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
School Nurse	Code: 6-18-706 6-25-103 and 104  Standards: 2-E.1 2-D.1 4-F.1 4-F.2  ADE Rules: DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools	Continue

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

PCVA students participate in an online curriculum provided by Edmentum so a school nurse or library media specialist are not required. Students still have access to the school provided staff.

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

No. Students still have access to each building level nurse and library media center.

<b>Waiver #5</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Guidance Counseling Services	Code: 6-18-1001 Standards: 16.01.03 Rules: 3.01.1	Rescind

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

Each PCVA student has a SSP developed by the director in conjunction with student, guardian, and staff. The team works with students in scheduling and maintaining graduation requirements. Each student plan is reviewed annually to make sure students are making adequate yearly progress.

Students have access to the school counselors in each building, as well as the behavior interventionists and the student success planner. Each of these people are available to the PCVA Director to receive student referrals for academic, social emotional/mental health, and engagement concerns. Students in 9-12 are invited to all career planning opportunities through Mena High School and the College and Career Coach works with PCVA students to accommodate their planning needs. K-12 PCVA students and families are invited to participate in all counseling service activities such as Red Ribbon Week, Friday career day, career and college visits, ACT testing and practice, ASVAB testing and review of results, etc.

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

Rescind

<b>Waiver #6</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Flag/Period of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance	Code: 6-16-105 6-16-106 6-16-108 6-10-135 6-10-115	Continue
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
PCVA is a virtual environment so the codes for flags, period of silence, and Pledge of Allegiance are not feasible for presentation.		
<b>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</b>		
Supporting our flexible learning environment, we continue to engage virtual students in patriotic activities and events, and all MSD buildings display the flags.		

<b>Waiver #7</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Eye and Vision Screening	Code: 6-18-1501 and 6-18-1502  Rules: DESE Rules Governing Eye and Vision Screening Report in Arkansas Public School	Continue
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
PCVA students are not on campus on a regular schedule to receive eye and vision screening exams. Parents are notified about these optional services and given the option for their children to receive eye and vision screenings on campus.		

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

Service will continue to be provided as it has been.

<b>Waiver #8</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Personnel Policies	<p><b>Code:</b>            6-17-1501 Teacher Fair Dismissal            6-17-1701 Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act            6-15-1004 Qualified Teachers in every Public School Classroom            6-17-309 Licensure Waiver            6-17-401 Teacher's License Requirement            6-17-902 Definitions            6-17-919 Warrants void without valid certificate and contract            6-17-418 Teacher Licensure</p> <p><b>Standards:</b>            4-D.1</p> <p><b>Rules:</b>            Licensure- Educator            Licensure (Section 7 only)</p>	Rescind

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

PCVA has continued to use an Arkansas approved digital provider, Edmentum, to employ teachers who are AR licensed in all core content areas and in elementary; however, the provider uses certified teachers in their state (highly qualified) to provide additional courses for electives, extracurricular and CTE. This has allowed PCVA students to have a wide variety of courses to choose from while maintaining the quality of the teaching for students. Because Edmentum is an approved provider, this waiver is not needed.

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

PCVA will continue to offer the same services using the approved digital provider, Edmentum.

Waiver #9	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Class Size and Teaching Load	Code: 6-17-812  Standards: 1-A.5  DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load Section 3 and 4	Rescind

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

Personalized learning through the online curriculum provided by Edmentum has allowed teachers to work with larger numbers of students than in the traditional classroom setting at times. This has accommodated the different skill levels of enrolled students. Over the past five years, at no time have PCVA students needed to be in a class over the acceptable size.

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

Rescind

Waiver #10	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Food Services	Code: 6-18-705 Breakfast Program 6-20-701 School lunch Program  Standard:	Rescind



	<p>3-D.1</p> <p>Rules: DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools</p>	
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></p>		
<p>Students in PCVA are not on campus regularly so no meals are prepared for these students. Virtual students are not allowed to participate in child nutrition programming.</p>		
<p><b>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</b></p>		
<p>Students will need to come on site for meals.</p>		

<b>Waiver #11</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
<p>Report Cards</p>	<p>Code: 6-15-903 (a)(2)</p> <p>Requiring report card to be mailed, provided at PT conferences or sent home with students</p>	<p>Continue</p>
<p><b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b></p>		
<p>Report cards are provided through the online portal for the virtual program. Mailed report cards will be provided if requested by parent.</p>		
<p><b>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</b></p>		
<p>Continue service as provided.</p>		

<b>Waiver #12</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Credit for College Courses	Code: 6-18-223 Credit for College Courses	Continue
<b>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</b>		
<p>This waiver allows qualified students below the ninth grade to take and receive concurrent credit for college courses, supporting personalized learning goals in the student success plans. Students work through University of Arkansas at Rich Mountain for concurrent credit courses and for vocational concurrent courses. These courses allow students who are working to accelerate their education an option for achieving college classes while also obtaining credits in high school. The vocational pathways that students can complete through UARM allow them to begin a career pathway.</p>		
<b>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</b>		
Continue as provided.		

<b>Waiver #13</b>	<b>Statute/Standard/Rule</b>	<b>Rescind or Continue Waiver</b>
Library Media Services	Code: 6-25-103 and 6-25-104  Standards:  2-D.1 4-F.1 4-F.2  ADE Rules:	Continue

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

PCVA students participate in an online curriculum provided by Edmentum. Students enrolled in PCVA have full access to their grade level library where they can check out resources and books, and where they can see assistance from a certified library media specialist. The LMS Standards are provided to the students through their Student Success Plans and are embedded in their Literacy program.

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

No. Students still have access to each building level library media center.

### Section 6:

**Provide information on new waivers that are being requested.**

Waiver Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rationale
National Anthem	Code: 6-10-136 Star Spangled Banner Act	The national anthem will still be provided at school events but the requirement for playing the national anthem will not be possible since there is no permanent environment for the students. However, the National Anthem is played daily on the school district radio station multiple times with free online access for all students and families.
Recess	Standard: 1-A.4.3 Recess  Rules: DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools Section 7.11	Polk County Virtual Academy is a virtual environment making a recess waiver necessary. Recess time is in the suggested schedule for students, but flexibility can be at the parent's discretion as well as what activities constitute "recess time".

## 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

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.

The granting of a conversion charter renewal to Mena Public Schools for the Polk county Virtual Academy has had no effect and will continue to have no effect on any Arkansas public school district's efforts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. The Mena School District is not under any federal desegregation order and neither are any of the surrounding districts.