



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Open Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal Application for Premier High Schools of Arkansas

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**

Event/Deadline	Renewal Applications
Initial Applications Due by 5:00 p.m. s submitted to ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov	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 ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov	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

Name of Charter:	Premier High Schools of Arkansas
LEA Number:	6053700
Authorization Date:	08/2012
Expiration Date:	6/30/2023
Enrollment Cap:	District: 600
Grades Served:	9-12
Superintendent/Director:	Rhonda Bradford
Charter Mailing Address:	1621 Dr. Martin Luther King Drive Little Rock, AR 72202
Charter Physical Address:	1621 Dr. Martin Luther King Drive Little Rock, AR 72202
Sponsoring Entity:	ResponsiveEd Texas
Charter Management Organization	Blue Learning
Contact for Application:	Dennis Felton, Jr.
Contact Email:	dfelton@responsiveedar.com
Contact Phone:	479-366-9410

School Campuses

School Name	LEA Number	City	Grades Served
Premier High School of Little Rock (240)	6053703	Little Rock	9-12
Premier High School of Texarkana (75)	6053709	Texarkana	9-12
Premier High School of Fort Smith (285)	6053706	Fort Smith	9-12
Premier High School Virtual Academy	6053712	Little Rock	9-12

Number of Years Requested for Renewal (1-20): 10 years

Section 1: Charter Data

Current Accreditation Status: Accredited

Level of Support: Level IV

Enrollment (3rd Quarter ADM)

17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
100.78	95.43	98.56	91.49	138.5

Graduation Rates

School Year	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
4- Year Cohort	44.83%	32.4%	34.88%	44.19%	Not Available
5- Year Cohort	66.7%	59.5%	35.3%	51.2%	Not Available

Letter Grades

17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

ESSA School Index

School	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Overall Index	38.86%	39.09%	Data Not Available	36.04%	37.61
Weighted Achievement	1.56	3.65	Data Not Available	1.97	1.38
Value- Added Growth Score	75.05	78.2	Data Not Available	76.33	77.38
Growth	ELA 72.0 Math 76.3 Science 73.1	ELA 78.6 Math 75.67 Science 79.80	Data Not Available	ELA N/A Math 75.74 Science 79.60	Data Not Available
SQSS Score	21.25	17.49	Data Not Available	22.56	20.43
OSS Discipline	50	12	10	2	13

Total Discipline Actions	28	22	10	2	Data Not Available
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Section 2: Charter Mission Statement

Previous mission statement:

Premier High School Mission is to provide hope for students through a caring, mastery-based, blended learning option that promotes a free society and cultivate moral and academic excellence.

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

Section 3: Charter Goals

Goal 1	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Premier students will demonstrate measurable student success in English.</p>	<p>Percentage of students who increase readiness levels on the state Assessment,</p> <p>*Percentage of students who increase percentile rank on norm referenced Examines,</p> <p>*Number of successfully passed local assessments.</p>	<p>The school administers the NWEA MAP Reading assessment three (3) times a year. Fall, Winter, and Spring assessments are used to measure the growth of students throughout the school year.</p> <p>Due to the unique and highly mobile population that the school serves, the state assessment performance has seen mixed results. The school has seen a trend in students performing below the state readiness levels. According to the NWEA MAP Norms reference chart, the results do indicate that the majority of students are performing below grade level.</p> <p>Mastery of Knowledge Units</p> <p>The school has successfully graduated 235 students over the last five (5) years. These students earned 1,410 credits in Math, Science, Social Studies, English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Electives. Over the past five years, the school has awarded over 5,000 credits to students in addition to receiving a high school diploma.</p> <p>ACT Results</p> <p>ACT Reading Average 2018 15.86 2019 12.90 2020 14.77 2021 16.18</p> <p>ACT English Average 2018 13.07 2019 13.20 2020 12.46</p>

2021 12.76

**Reading NWEA MAP Results
Grade Level RIT Score**

2018-2019

Grade	RIT Score
Grade 09	219.0
Grade 10	210.0
Grade 11	213.0
Grade 12	213.0

2019-2020

Grade	RIT Score
Grade 09	203.0
Grade 10	215.0
Grade 11	215.0
Grade 12	209.0

2020-2021

Grade	RIT Score
Grade 09	227.0
Grade 10	206.0
Grade 11	215.0
Grade 12	219.0

2021-2022

Grade	RIT Score
Grade 09	199.0
Grade 10	202.0
Grade 11	207.0
Grade 12	204.0

Covid-19 Impact

The Covid-19 pandemic definitely presented some changes and challenges. The school struggled with onsite attendance and participation in local and state assessment. The school has implemented best practices such as professional learning community, high quality professional development, data coach, and school improvement support to identify schoolwide deficiencies and implement a schoolwide improvement plan. This plan includes goals, activities, and intended outcomes for the overall school.

Instructional Support

		<p>The school has hired an Instructional Coach to work with school leadership on data disaggregation, data analysis, and school improvement planning. This has increased the instructional support and feedback teachers are receiving as well.</p>
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*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

Goal 2	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Premier students will demonstrate measurable student success in math.</p>	<p>* Percentage of students who increase readiness levels on the state Assessment,</p> <p>*Percentage of students who increase percentile rank on norm referenced Examines,</p> <p>*Number of successfully passed local assessments.</p>	<p>The school administers the NWEA MAP Math assessment three (3) times a year. Fall, Winter, and Spring assessments are used to measure the growth of students throughout the school year.</p> <p>Due to the unique and highly mobile population that the school serves, the state assessment performance has seen mixed results. The school has seen a trend in students performing below the state readiness levels. According to the NWEA MAP norm reference charts, the results do indicate that the majority of students are performing below grade level</p> <p>Mastery of Knowledge Units</p> <p>The school has successfully graduated 235 students over the last five (5) years. These students earned 1,410 credits in Math, Science, Social Studies, English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Electives. Over the past five years, the school has awarded over 5,000 credits to students in addition to receiving a high school diploma.</p> <p>ACT Math Average 2018 15.57 2019 15.50 2020 14.00 2021 14.53</p> <p>2018-2019</p>

		<p>Grade RIT Score Grade 09 213.0 Grade 10 213.0 Grade 11 211.0 Grade 12 205.0</p> <p>2019-2020 Grade RIT Score Grade 09 211.0 Grade 10 208.0 Grade 11 210.0 Grade 12 212.0</p> <p>2020-2021 Grade RIT Score Grade 09 225.0 Grade 10 211.0 Grade 11 213.0 Grade 12 221.0</p> <p>2021-2022 Grade RIT Score Grade 09 205.0 Grade 10 204.0 Grade 11 214.0 Grade 12 213.0</p> <p>Total Units Completed 2020-2021 4959 2021-2022 3423</p> <p>Covid-19 Impact The Covid-19 pandemic definitely presented some changes and challenges. The school struggled with onsite attendance and participation in daily attendance and state assessment. The school has implemented best practices such as professional learning community, high quality professional development, data coach, and school improvement support to identify schoolwide deficiencies and implement a schoolwide improvement plan. This plan includes goals, activities, and intended outcomes for the overall school.</p> <p>Instructional Support The school has hired an Instructional coach to work with school leadership on data</p>
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		disaggregation, data analysis, and school improvement planning. This has increased the instructional support and feedback teachers are receiving as well.
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*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

Goal 3	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Premier students will demonstrate measurable student success in Science.</p>	<p>* Percentage of students who increase readiness levels on the state Assessment,</p> <p>*Percentage of students who increase percentile rank on norm referenced Examines,</p> <p>*Number of successfully passed local assessments.</p>	<p>The school administers the NWEA MAP assessment three (3) times a year. Fall, Winter, and Spring assessments are used to measure the growth of students throughout the school year.</p> <p>Due to the unique and highly mobile population that the school serves, the state assessment performance has seen mixed results. The school has seen a trend in students performing below the state readiness levels. According to the NWEA MAP, the results do show the longer a student stays enrolled, the more growth is visible in norm referenced exams.</p> <p>Mastery of Knowledge Units</p> <p>The school has successfully graduated 235 students over the last five (5) years. These students earned 1,410 credits in Math, Science, Social Studies, English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Electives. Over the past five years, the school has awarded over 5,000 credits to students in addition to receiving a high school diploma.</p> <p>ACT Science Average 2018 15.79 2019 15.30 2020 13.69 2021 14.94</p> <p>Covid-19 Impact</p>

		<p>The Covid-19 pandemic definitely presented some changes and challenges. The school struggled with onsite attendance and participation in daily attendance and state assessment participation. The school has implemented best practices such as professional learning community, high quality professional development, data coach, and school improvement support to identify schoolwide deficiencies and implement a schoolwide improvement plan. This plan includes goals, activities, and intended outcomes for the overall school.</p> <p>Instructional Support The school has hired an Instructional coach to work with school leadership on data disaggregation, data analysis, and school improvement planning. This has increased the instructional support and feedback teachers are receiving as well.</p>
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*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

Goal 4	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
Premier students will apply and enroll to an institution of higher learning.	<p>Observations, interviews and/or survey instruments will be used to indicate status of graduates.</p> <p>100% of students enrolled for two or more years</p>	<p>The school has employed a College & Career Coach to help the efforts in meeting this goal. The College & Career coach provides postsecondary advising, guidance, and support to students and families.</p> <p>The school has hosted the following events below to help support students and parents with postsecondary options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -College Visits -Career Expo Visits -College & Career Fair -Military Recruiter Visits -College Representative Visits -FAFSA Workshops -College Application Technical Assistance

		<p>-Be Proud Be Pro -Career & Trade Center Visits</p> <p>Percentage of students who applied and enrolled in an institution of higher learning, trade school military.</p> <p>2017-2018 85% 2018-2019 87% 2019-2020 90% 2020-2021 93% 2021-2022</p>
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*Insert graph or data table below reflecting the progress toward the goal over the last five years.

Goal 5	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
<p>Increase in student class participation</p>	<p>Attendance Records (Average of 4 quarters ADM)</p> <p>Increase attendance 5% by the end of year 5.</p>	<p>The school has strived to implement attendance intervention and attendance incentives to improve the overall attendance each school year. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the school year 2019-2020 and 2021 indicated mixed results due to the switch to virtual learning and hybrid learning options. However, since the 2022-2023 school year, the school has seen a significant increase in student attendance and engagement.</p> <p>Average Daily Attendance</p> <p>2017-2018: 75.8% 2018-2019: 71.4% 2019-2020: 72% 2020-2021 73.3% 2021-2022 70.1%</p> <p>Attendance incentives</p> <p>The school has implemented a schoolwide attendance incentive program to recognize student attendance and engagement.</p> <p>Dropout Prevention Specialist</p> <p>The school has employed a Dropout</p>

		<p>Prevention Specialist to provide support and intervention for students who have chronic absenteeism and or “at risk” of dropping out.</p> <p>Attendance Recovery</p> <p>Due to the unique student population, the school has developed an attendance recovery program to help students with chronic absenteeism and previous poor attendance.</p> <p>Rock Region Metro The school has partnered with Little Rock Region Metro transportation to provide students with free bus passes to have access to transportation to and from the school.</p> <p>CTE</p> <p>In order to assist students into entering the workforce and to boost student engagement, a CTE program was started in 2021-2022. 21-22: 10% of the student body participated in CTE 22-23: 55% of the student body participated in CTE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12 pathways (9 via Metro Career Center/3 onsite) - 25 student participating in JAG (new for 22-23) - Partnerships with over 10 community organizations for career training and opportunities
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Goal 6	Metric	Evaluation of Goal
Demonstrate high level of community and parental involvement	Meeting agendas and/or sign in sheets. Increase	The school has provided several opportunities for parents and the community to engage in school decision making and strategic planning. The school has hosted the following

	percentage of participation	<p>community and parent engagement events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Open House -Community Leaders Luncheon -Community Fair -Donuts with the Director -National Parental Involvement Day -Parent Pizza with a Professional Speakers -Parent Career Fair (Spring 2023) <p>The school has community members and parents who are represented on the following committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -School Health & Wellness Committee -School Improvement Plan Committee -School Activities -Community Advisory Board
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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>Goal 1: 100% of PHS-Little Rock students will develop Student Success Plans, and apply and be accepted into a post-secondary education school, military, or vocational program.</p> <p>Measurement/Monitoring/Evaluation/ Tools: The campus leadership will evaluate the plan annually based on teacher and student needs/progress throughout the school year.</p> <p>Naviance College Resource Tool: College Going Rate (Annually) Alumni Data Tracking (Annually) Student Success Plan; Graduation Plans (Annually) NCAA Clearinghouse Verification Sign-in sheets for events</p>

Goal 2: Premier Little Rock will administer the NWEA MAP Reading, Math & Science Assessment for students in grades 9-12 (3) times during the 2022-2023 SY. Based on the Fall to Spring NWEA MAP, 75% of the students attending Premier High School of Little Rock will meet, or surpass the projected growth score in reading, mathematics, and science.

Measurement/Monitoring/Evaluation Tools:

The campus leadership will evaluate the plan annually based on teacher and student needs/progress throughout the school year.

Monitoring of the district/school level plans will occur as follows:

NWEA fall, winter, and spring Growth Reports
Classroom walk-thru; classroom observations data (Weekly)
Teachers can articulate common language and instructional model components (Weekly)
PGP Plans; Teachers can articulate PGP Goals (Sept/Jan/May)
NWEA MAP Reading/Math/Science Assessment (Sept/Jan/May)
STAR Reading Assessment (Aug/Oct/Feb/May)
Formative Evaluation; Summative Evaluations

Goal 3: 95% of Premier students will participate in state mandated assessments.

Measurement/Monitoring/Evaluation Tools:

- *Arkansas Correction Engine
- *Accountability Report (DESE Percentage Tested)
- *Student Participation Tracking Report

Monitoring of the district/school level plans will occur as follows:

Student Tracking
Student Attendance Tracker
Testing Incentive

Goal 4: PHS - Little Rock will implement a Social and Emotional Learning Plan focused on education and engagement.

Measurement/Monitoring/Evaluation Tools:

The campus leadership will evaluate the plan annually based on teacher and student needs/progress throughout the school year.

Monitoring of the district/school level plans will occur as follows:

Teachers/staff will invite local leaders and professionals into classrooms to share about emotional-health topics (year-around)

PHS will increase family-focused events including Health Fair, Fall carnival, and End of Year Celebration. (Sep/Nov/May)
 Classroom walk-thru; classroom observations data (Weekly)
 Recognition assemblies (Weekly)
 Family Focused Event Nights (Monthly)

Goal 5: 100% of Premier graduates senior class will be assigned an internship/apprenticeship, earn industry based certification, and/or earn college credit during their senior year.

Measurement/Monitoring/Evaluation Tools:

- **Industry Based Certification Student Tracker
- **SIS Graduation Report
- **Career Technical Education Annual Report
- **Student Transcript
- **Annual JAG Student Report

Monitoring of the district/school level plans will occur as follows:

Section 5: Waivers

Waiver #1	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Alternative Learning Environment	A.C.A §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5)(A) A.C.A §§ 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i) A.C.A §§ 6-48-102 A.C.A §§ 6-48-103 Standard 2-I.1 DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding Section 4	Continue Waiver

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

Premier High School offers a personalized learning environment for students who require a non-traditional educational environment. Students have opportunities to learn at high levels. It is the mission of the school team to provide leadership, support, and service to students, parents, and school community so every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement.

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

Premier will strive to provide an individualized approach to students by an alternative approach made possible by the small-sized high school environment. Premier embodies many of the practices described in the Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education: Indicators of Quality Programming.

Waiver #2	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Board of Directors	A.C.A §§ 6-13-608 A.C.A §§ 6-13-611 A.C.A §§ 6-13-613 A.C.A §§ 6-13-615 A.C.A §§ 6-13-616 (a) A.C.A §§ 6-13-618 A.C.A §§ 6-13-619 A.C.A §§ 6-13-620 A.C.A §§ 6-13-621 A.C.A §§ 6-13-630 A.C.A §§ 6-13-634 A.C.A §§ 6-13-1303 A.C.A §§ 6-14-101 et seq. A.C.A. §§ 6-13-612(c). School Board Zones and Rezoning ADE Proposed Rules Governing Reimbursement by School Districts for Election Expenses	Continue with Waiver

<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		
<p>This waiver has provided flexibility for the school board of directors and has increased accessibility and engagement for all stakeholders to engage and attend the meetings.</p>		
<p>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</p>		
<p>This waiver exempts the district from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that its provisions relating to board size, qualifications, elections, duties, powers, terms, meeting location, and vacancies are: (a) generally not applicable in the open-enrollment charter school context, and/or (b) otherwise outlined in Responsive Education Solutions of Arkansas' by-laws. the school district, in light of the waiver request that is being made concerning certified employees. Instead, Premier High School will require a waiver to include classified employees as defined in Section 6-13-1302.</p> <p>The Arkansas Board of Directors will meet quarterly and will ensure the public has access to meeting minutes, meeting agenda, and virtual (live) meetings. This information will be provided to stakeholders in advance according to state law. The Responsive Ed Board or the Superintendent will not serve on the Responsive ED Arkansas Board. All board meetings will be published using school websites and district communication systems.</p>		

Waiver #3	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Class Size and Teaching Load	A.C.A §§ 6-17-812 Standard 1-A.5 Class Size 1-A.6 Class Size and Teaching Load	Continue Waiver

	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load, Section 4 & 4.	
Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.		
This waiver has allowed the school to provide mastery-based learning opportunities for students and implement a model that allows more flexibility for teaching load. The waiver has supported the school in credit recovery and accelerated learning opportunities.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		
Exemption from this portion of the Education Code because the school's education program requires flexibility in addressing the unique needs of its at-risk student population by having students complete courses required to gain their High School Diploma. Students work at an individualized pace using a mastery based program that will help them gain credit faster than 120 clock hours which lends itself to larger class sizes (30-35) which ultimately affects Class Size and Teaching Loads of the teaching staff. Increasing the class size will not create any additional work for the teachers or the need for additional pay due to teachers due to teachers not having to create lesson plans and students working at their own pace.		

Waiver #4	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Curriculum, Grading, and Credit Hours	A.C.A §§ 6-15-902(a) 1-A.2 2-2.01 DESE Rules Governing Grading and Course Credit	Continue Waiver

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

The school provides a personalized learning model with mastery based learning. This waiver has allowed the school to work with a dropout recovery population by focusing on the state’s graduation requirements and ensuring students meet graduation requirements. Students who are behind are able to get caught back up to the graduation cohort through mastery based learning.

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

Exemption from this portion of the Education Code because the school’s education program requires flexibility in addressing the unique needs of its at-risk student population by having students complete courses required to gain their High School Diploma. Students will have the ability to take any course needed for graduation. Students must pass with a grade of 70 or higher and they work at an individualized pace using a mastery based program that will help them gain credit faster than 120 clock hours.

Premier High School will offer the twenty-two (22) Credits required to fulfill graduation requirements.

A parent or student can request course(s) that are part of the required 38 courses that are not offered by the school. The school will use an Arkansas approved digital learning provider such as Virtual Arkansas. This will provide students and parents access to additional courses.

Waiver #5	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Facilities and Flag Display	A.C.A §§ 6-16-105 A.C.A §§ 6-16-106 A.C.A §§ 6-21-117 (2)-(5)	Continue

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

This waiver does not impact student learning opportunities, school innovation or have an impact on equitable access to effective teachers.

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

Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires that facilities leased by Premier High School to conform to the school facility standards defined in the Arkansas School Facility Manual. Considering initial enrollment size, it will be difficult to financially follow through with this requirement. The applicant ensures that any and all facilities that it leases for academic purposes shall meet the requirements of all state and local health and safety codes, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires the erection of a flagstaff on the school grounds. Premier High School may be leasing its facilities. As such, it may not be permitted to erect a flagstaff on the leased property. Otherwise, Premier High School will seek alternative methods for prominently displaying the United States and Arkansas flag.

Waiver #6	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Flexible Schedule School Calendar	A.C.A §§ 6-10-106 A.C.A §§ 6-16-102 (a)(1-4)(c) 1-A.4.2	Continue

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

This waiver provides students opportunities to engage in additional programs such as CTE pathways, JAG, and community service learning. This waiver also allows the flexibility in scheduling for students who have responsibilities and duties outside of school.

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

way?

Exemption from this portion of the Education Code because the school's education program requires flexibility in addressing the unique needs of its at-risk student population by having students complete courses required to gain their High School Diploma. As such, Premier High School requests that "school day" be defined as a day in which classes are in session and students receive at least four (4) hours of instructional time. Students will have the opportunity to participate in extended day academic programs. The instructional day will be extended up to and beyond (6) hours for students in need of additional assistance. In Texas, we have implemented an extended school year program that addresses loss of learning and learning gaps for students. This waiver would allow us to replicate these best practices in years to come.

Waiver #7	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Gifted and Talented	A.C.A §§ 6-20-2208(c)(6) Ark. Code Ann. § 6-42-109 2-G.1 DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval	Continue

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

The general student population at Premier will be attending classes solely in order to get back on the path towards receiving their high school education as quickly as possible. This flexibility has allowed the school to provide enrichment opportunities for students that meet individual students needs through programs such as AP classes, concurrent credit opportunities, and enrichment programs.

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

Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires the inclusion of a gifted and talented program. While there will undoubtedly be students who would qualify and benefit from such a program, the general student population at Premier will be attending classes solely in order to get back on the path towards receiving their high school education as quickly as possible.

Upon program assessment, if the need for such a program is determined then Premier High School will attempt to align with a local distinguished college or university in order to offer students the opportunity to take dual-enrollment classes. Such classes would allow those interested in a college education the ability to complete advanced education courses while still working towards their high school diploma. Premier High School will partner with schools like ASMSA and organizations like Virtual Arkansas to provide students with Advanced Placement courses.

Waiver #8	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Non-Instructional Duties, Planning Periods, and Duty Free Lunch	Non-Instructional Duties, Planning Periods, and Duty Free Lunch A.C.A §§ 6-17-111 A.C.A §§ 6-17-114 A.C.A §§ 6-17-117	Continue

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

This waiver has allowed the school to have the flexibility in designing a staffing plan and daily schedule that enhances learning opportunities and increased equitable access to effective teachers.

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

Premier High School requires teachers to be contracted if they are assigned to more than sixty (60) minutes of non-instructional duties per week. Instead, Premier High School requests that the time be increased to two-hundred forty (240) minutes. Such a revision recognizes that open-enrollment charter schools are often required to operate on a more limited budget than their traditional public school counterparts, requiring teachers to perform both instructional and non-instructional duties to achieve efficient and economical operation of the school. The individualized curriculum utilized by Premier High School dramatically reduces the time needed by a teacher for instructional planning.

The teachers at the school will be provided adequate time for planning and non-instructional duties.

Sample Premier Teacher Schedule

7:30-8:00 a.m. Homeroom
 8:00-9:50 a.m. 1st Block
 9:50-10:00 a.m. Morning Break
 10:00-11:50 a.m. 2nd Block
 12:00-12:30 p.m. Lunch
 12:30-2:00 p.m. 3rd Block
 2:00-3:30 p.m. Planning/Prep Block

Teachers are provided a minimum (360) minutes a week for non instructional duties and planning. The school will also provide an additional one hundred twenty (120) minutes for time to engage in professional learning, data analysis, and planning. In the event, the school has students attending after school tutoring or academic intervention, the teachers will rotate to protect time allocated.

Waiver #9	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Personnel Policies and Employee Dismissal	A.C.A §§ 6-17-203 A.C.A §§ 6-17-129 A.C.A §§ 6-17-211 A.C.A §§ 6-17-1201 et seq. A.C.A §§ 6-17-1301 et seq. A.C.A §§ 6-17-1501 et seq. A.C.A §§ 6-17-1701 et seq. A.C.A §§ 6-17-2301(c) DESE Rules Governing Document Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites, Sections 4-6	Continue
<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		

This waiver has allowed the school to design policies that are aligned to the school mission and vision and unique operations. The flexibility also allows the school to determine appropriate documents such as personnel policies, salary schedules, to be developed by the school

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

Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. Instead, the Board of Directors for Premier High School will adopt personnel policies, including, but are not limited to, the following terms and conditions of employment; salary schedule, fringe benefits, and other compensation issues; annual school calendar, including work days and holidays; evaluation procedures; leave; grievance procedures; termination or suspension; reduction in force; and assignments. Premier High School employees will be employed on an “at-will” basis and will be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, and in accordance with the personnel policies approved by the Board of Directors. Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. As such, minimum sick leave for Premier High School teachers will be addressed in the Employee Handbook and will be given at a set rate and not accumulated on a monthly basis. Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires teachers to be certified and contracted. As such, Premier High School will have the flexibility to identify and hire those individuals best suited to facilitate the school’s unique educational program. Premier High School ensures that it will hire “highly qualified” teachers on an “at-will” basis.

The school is seeking the flexibility to have personnel policies that support our school model and practices. The school will post personnel policies, but the salary schedule and policies will look unique to the charter. For example, the school recognizes employees as exempt and non exempt instead of classified and certified.

Waiver #10	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Salaries/Compensation	A.C.A §§ 6-17-2201 et seq. A.C.A §§ 6-17-2401 et seq. A.C.A §§ 6-17-802 A.C.A §§ 6-17-908 A.C.A §§ 6-17-919 A.C.A §§ 6-17-129	Continue

<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		
<p>The waiver has provided the school with the flexibility to compensate staff members in competitive markets to provide equitable access to highly effective teachers.</p>		
<p>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</p>		
<p>Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. Instead, the Board of Directors for Premier High School will adopt personnel policies, including, but are not limited to, the following terms and conditions of employment; salary schedule, fringe benefits, and other compensation issues; annual school calendar, including work days and holidays; evaluation procedures; leave; grievance procedures; termination or suspension; reduction in force; and assignments. Premier High School will provide compensation that is competitive with local public school districts. Premier High School reserves the right to determine a specific salary by taking into account the teacher’s years of applicable work experience, current salary, skill, education, and other qualifications. Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires insurance or other fringe benefits to be approved by a majority of the teachers in the school district. Instead, the provisions of insurance or other fringe benefits will be considered and provided pursuant to action by the Board of Directors. All teacher classroom materials must be submitted and approved through the Purchase Order process prior to purchase in order to qualify for reimbursement.</p>		

Waiver #11	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Principal	Principal A.C.A §§ 6-17-302 (a) 4-C.1 4-C.2	Continue

<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		
<p>This waiver has allowed the school to have the ability to identify the most qualified candidate for the position without having to limit the candidates to those who hold an AR administrative license.</p>		
<p>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</p>		
<p>Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. Instead, the Premier High School Principal will be employed on an “at-will” basis and will not be required to hold a valid supervisory or administrative certificate. In addition to identifying a Principal with the requisite skills and experience in education and management, Premier High School will ensure that its principal is appropriately qualified to lead the school through extensive training in the school’s educational methodology.</p>		

Waiver #12	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Student Services	A.C.A §§ 6-18-706 A.C.A. §6-18-2003(a)(2)(A) A.C.A §§ 6-25-103-104 2-C.2 2-D.1 3-D.1 2-E.1 2-E.2 4-E.2 4-F.1 4-F.2 6-A.1	Continue

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

These waivers had provided the school an opportunity to be innovative in meeting the support services and wraparound services for students. This allows the students to have adequate support that is aligned to the school mission and vision.

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

College & Career Coach

Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires a guidance program to employ on-campus certified counselors. The principal and Career and College Coach will be equipped to give students advice regarding higher education options, life after high school, etc. Similarly, Premier High School staff will be informed that they will be responsible to handle issues generally given to a campus counselor. Contracted Counseling Services will be ready should such situations arise. Due to the unique population served by the school, the school is seeking to employ an individual who is providing comprehensive support for students through innovative learning models. The school will meet all other required parts of the Arkansas Comprehensive Counseling Act. The school is seeking the ability to employ someone who is not certified. The school will meet all the requirements of the Arkansas School Counseling Improvement Act other than licensure.

Duties/Responsibilities

Guide students to understand the relationship between learning and success in school and beyond.

Information to parents and students by holding workshops on preparing for college, post-secondary training, and financial aid.

Providing resources to identify career interests and aptitudes as part of the development of the Student Success Plan.

Develop graduation projection plans and student success plan

Develop postsecondary go plans for students

Academic support and guidance to students

Facilitate internships, concurrent credit, and industry based certifications

Provide sessions on suicide prevention and bullying prevention

Provide guest professions to speak with students.

Provide character education and social emotional learning activities for students

Provide parents with information on postsecondary institutions

Provide workshops for parents and students to provide technical assistance with postsecondary planning

Host career days, college fairs, and college tours to educate students on postsecondary options

The school will develop a Comprehensive School Counseling Plan and engage in assessment annually.

Student Engagement/Media Specialist

Premier High School will have a computer lab equipped with emergent technology. This center will be operated by an instructional aide or highly qualified teacher and available to students. A minimum of three thousand volumes, or at least eight books per student, whichever figure is larger, will be kept. The school is seeking to provide thousands of volumes to students using web-based digital books to increase accessibility.

School Nurse

-The school will provide a part-time contracted nurse with a minimum qualifications of Registered Nurse to provide student health support, school safety support, and conduct student health screenings. The school nurse will meet state certification guidelines. In the event, the school nurse is not available, the school designated "Student Health Officer " will provide intervention and protocol outlined in the school health & safety manual. The school health officer will facilitate in the event any medical emergencies and incidents that need medical profession attention. The school will ensure that the campus safety team will be equipped with CPR training, First Aid training, and Stop the Bleed Training.

School Facility

The school is seeking the flexibility to maintain school facilities outside of the rules from the Arkansas Division of Public School Academic Facilities Manual as they apply to traditional school districts. This would provide the school with the flexibility to construct spaces that would comply with all state and federal requirements but also constructed in a way that are most useful to the school meeting the needs of the student population.

Waiver #13	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Superintendent	A.C.A §§ 6-13-109 A.C.A §§ 6-17-427 4-B.1 4-B.2	Continue

	Superintendent Mentoring DESE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring Program	
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Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

These waivers have provided the school district to have the flexibility of determining the most qualified candidate for the position. This has provided opportunities to employ leaders who are enhancing student learning opportunities and promoting innovation within the school.

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

Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. Instead, the Premier High School Superintendent will be employed on an “at-will” basis and will not be required to hold a valid supervisory or administrative certificate. In addition to identifying a Superintendent with the requisite skills and experience in education and management, Premier High School will ensure that its Superintendent is appropriately qualified to lead the school through extensive training in the school’s educational methodology.

Waiver #14	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Educator Licensure	A.C.A §§ 6-15-1004 A.C.A §§ 6-17-201 (c) A.C.A §§ 6-17-202 A.C.A §§ 6-17-203 A.C.A §§ 6-17-204 A.C.A §§ 6-17-205 A.C.A §§ 6-17-209 A.C.A §§ 6-17-211 A.C.A §§ 6-17-301 A.C.A §§ 6-17-309	Continue

	<p>A.C.A §§ 6-17-401 A.C.A §§ 6-17-418 A.C.A §§ 6-17-902 A.C.A §§ 6-17-908 A.C.A §§ 6-17-919</p> <p>4-D.1 4-E.1 4-F.2</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure (Section 7.00)</p>	
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Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.

These waivers have allowed the school to identify the most qualified candidates who have the knowledge, experience, and skills to be an effective educator. This has allowed the school to hire teachers who are innovative and provide unique learning opportunities for students. All teachers meet AR Highly Qualified Teacher criteria and/or AR Teacher certification. The school seeks to hire certified teachers first. When a teacher is hired without licensure, the school works with other higher education institutions and non-traditional programs to get them on track to certification. The waiver is instrumental in assisting the school in retaining highly qualified and high performance teachers, while making necessary staff changes when needed due to outcomes or performance.

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

Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires teachers to be certified and on a contract for the school year. As such, Premier High School will have the flexibility to identify and hire those individuals best suited to facilitate the school’s unique educational program. Premier High School ensures that it will hire Arkansas Highly Qualified” teachers. Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires teachers to be certified. As such, Premier High School will have the flexibility to identify and hire those individuals best suited to facilitate the school’s unique educational program. Premier High School ensures that it will hire Arkansas Highly Qualified teachers. Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. Instead, the Premier High School principal will be employed on an “at-will” basis and will not be required to hold a valid supervisory or administrative

certificate. In addition to identifying a principal with the requisite skills and experience in education and management, Premier High School will ensure that its principal is appropriately qualified to lead the school through extensive training in the school's educational methodology. Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code. Instead, Premier High School will employ all employees on an "at-will" basis. This means that employment with Premier High School is voluntarily entered into, and the employee is free to resign at will, at any time, with or without notice or cause. Similarly, Premier High School may terminate the employment relationship at will, at any time, with or without notice or cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law. The school is seeking to hire an individual who will meet the needs of students that may not meet the library media specialist licensure requirements. The school is not seeking a waiver from teaching the library media standards. The school will ensure the library media standards are taught and embedded in core courses such as literacy, social studies, and science.

Waiver #15	Statute/Standard/Rule	Rescind or Continue Waiver
Transportation	A.C.A §§ 6-19-101 et seq.	Continue
<p>Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.</p>		
<p>The school has provided the students with alternate transportation efforts for students that include opportunities such as carpool system, student drivers, and city bus passes.</p>		
<p>If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?</p>		
<p>Premier High School seeks exemption from this portion of the Education Code to the extent that it requires Premier High School implement a traditional school bus transportation program. Premier will implement a transportation program utilizing public transportation at no cost to the students.</p>		

Waiver #16		
Attendance	DESE Rule Mandatory Attendance Requirements for Students in Grades Nine Through Twelve	Rescind
Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.		
The waiver has provided the school to meet the unique needs of students. Due to uncertain circumstances due to home life, employment, and transportation this has increased equitable access for students. It allows the school to be innovative with school scheduling and mastery-based learning approaches.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		

Waiver #17		
Business Manager	A.C.A. §§ 6-15-2302 Standard 3-A.5	Continue
Explain how the above waiver has enhanced student learning opportunities, promoted innovation or increased equitable access to effective teachers.		
This waiver does not impact student learning opportunities, school innovation or have an impact on equitable access to effective teachers.		
If the waiver is continued, will the service be provided in an alternate way?		
The school currently has a Business Manager who is not an employee of the school		

district and works with other schools in the ResponsiveEd network. The Arkansas Executive Director of Finance meets the minimum qualifications for General Business managers. This individual also works with several other charter schools within the RES network to provide adequate support and oversight in financial services.

Waiver #18		
Required Instruction 9-12	Standard A.1.3	Continue

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

This waiver has allowed the school to implement innovative programs such as JAG, concurrent credit, employment, and community service learning opportunities. The school is able to also focus on what students need to earn a diploma.

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

Premier High School will offer the twenty-two (22) Credits required to fulfill graduation requirements.

A parent or student can request course(s) that are part of the required 38 courses that are not offered by the school. The school will use an Arkansas approved digital learning provider such as Virtual Arkansas. This will provide students and parents access to additional courses.

We are seeking to rescind the following waivers:

Waiver	Waiver Type	Statute/Standard/Rule	Action
Acquisition of Commodities	Statute	A.C.A §§ 6-21-303	Rescind
Adopt and implement school safety policies and procedures	Standard	6-A.2	Rescind
Monitoring Procedures to Ensure Curriculum Alignment	Standard	1-A.3	Rescind
Consolidation, Annexation and Formation-Definitions	Statute	A.C.A. §§ 6-13-201 et seq.	Rescind
School District Zoning	Statute	A.C.A §§ 6-13-631	Rescind
Consolidation	Statute	A.C.A §§ 6-13-1401 et seq	Rescind

Section 6:

Provide information on new waivers that are being requested.

Waiver Topic	Statutes/Standards/Rules	Rationale
None		

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.

Premier Little Rock High School Desegregation Analysis

Premier Little Rock High School (Premier) is seeking the renewal of its open-enrollment charter from the State's charter authorizer. Premier is located within the boundaries of the Little Rock School District and, as an open-enrollment public charter school unconfined by district boundaries, expects to continue to obtain most of its students from within the boundaries of the Little Rock (LRSD), North Little Rock (NLRSD), Pulaski County (PCSSD) and Jacksonville-North Pulaski (JNPSD) School Districts.

I. The Status of Pulaski County Desegregation Litigation

Premier is providing this desegregation analysis in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 to review the potential impact that its charter renewal application would have upon the efforts of all four (4) of the Pulaski County school districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. In conducting its review, Premier has substantiated that the LRSD and the NLRSD have been declared unitary in all respects of their school operations. The Pulaski County desegregation litigation was first filed in 1982. *Little Rock School District, et al v. Pulaski County Special School District, et al.*, Case No. 4:82:cv-00866-DPM. In 1989, the parties entered into a settlement agreement (the "1989 Settlement Agreement") under which the Arkansas Department of Education, the then-three (3) Pulaski County school districts, and the intervenors agreed to the terms of state funding for desegregation obligations.

LRSD successfully completed its desegregation efforts in 2007 and was declared fully unitary by the federal court in 2007. *Little Rock School District v. Pulaski County Special School District*, Case No. 4:82-cv-0866 (E.D. Ark.), Order filed February 23, 2007. In 2010, LRSD filed a motion to enforce the 1989 Settlement Agreement. The motion contended that operation of open-enrollment public charter schools within Pulaski County interfered with the "M-M Stipulation" and the "Magnet Stipulation." On January 17, 2013, Judge D.P. Marshall Jr. denied LRSD's motion, stating:

"The cumulative effect of open enrollment charter schools in Pulaski County on the stipulation magnet schools and M-to-M transfers has not, as a matter of law, substantially defeated the relevant purposes of the 1989 Settlement Agreement, the magnet stipulation, or the M-to-M stipulation."

Little Rock School District v. Pulaski County Special School District, Case No. 4:82-cv-0866 (E.D. Ark.), Order filed January 17, 2013. LRSD appealed to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

One (1) year later, on January 13, 2014, Judge Marshall approved a Settlement Agreement that included a provision stipulating the voluntary dismissal with prejudice of LRSD's pending appeal concerning the charter school issues. In light of LRSD's unitary status and the parties' 2014 Settlement Agreement, Premier's requested charter renewal cannot interfere with the purposes of the Pulaski County desegregation litigation, which has been fully concluded as to LRSD. After the dismissal and the settlement agreement, the case was completely concluded for all purposes as to LRSD, and the federal court terminated all jurisdiction in the matter. Because of that, there is no possibility that Premier's requested charter renewal could impact LRSD's unitary status. To be clear, Premier's charter renewal application cannot impact LRSD's unitary status because 1) there is no case in which LRSD's unitary status could be an issue; 2) LRSD made a claim regarding operation of open-enrollment charter schools in federal court in 2010 and lost it; and 3) as a consequence of the 2014 Settlement Agreement, the LRSD released any claims it had concerning the charter school issues. On January 30, 2014, the Court also approved a stipulation among the parties that PCSSD is unitary in the areas of Assignment of Students and Advanced Placement, Gifted and Talented and Honors Programs. Based on the stipulation, the Court released PCSSD from supervision and monitoring in these areas. Thus, as of January 30, 2014, LRSD, NLRSD and PCSSD are unitary in the area of student assignments. On April 4, 2014, the court found that PCSSD is unitary in the areas of Special Education and Scholarships. Subsequently, PCSSD was also found to be unitary in the areas of Staff and Monitoring. Pursuant to Judge Marshall's order on May 6, 2021, both PCSSD and JNPSD are unitary in all areas except School Facilities.

Upon review, Premier believes that its request to obtain the renewal of its open-enrollment public charter shall have no negative effects on the efforts of the PCSSD and JNPSD to attain unitary status.

II. Data

According to last year's third-quarter Average Daily Membership enrollment figures as maintained by the DESE Data Center, LRSD had a student population of 20,518 students, of which 59.94% were Black/African-American; 19.57% were White, and 16.02% were Hispanic. NLRSD's student population was 7,640 students, of which 57.19% were Black/African-American; 25.75% were White, and 11.45% were Hispanic. PCSSD's student population was 11,227 students, of which 44.37% were Black/African-American; 38.61% were White, and 10.17% were Hispanic. JNPSD's student population was 3,841 students, of which 54.81% were Black/African-American; 33.85% were White, and 7.54% were Hispanic. Premier's student population was 127 students, of which 80.8% were Black/African-American,

and 14.4% were White.

Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 requires that Premier's continued operation will not serve to hamper, delay, or in any manner negatively affect the desegregation efforts of a public school district or districts within the state. As explained in more detail above, Premier's careful review of the relevant statutes and court orders affecting the LRSD, NLRSD, PCSSD, and JNPSD and their student populations, and its own student population, shows that such negative impact is not present here.

III. Conclusion

Premier submits that upon the basis of its review, neither any existing federal desegregation order affecting the PCSSD, LRSD, NLRSD, and JNPSD, nor the 1989 Settlement Agreement prohibit the State's charter school authorizer from granting its renewal application to continue operating an open-enrollment public charter school within the geographic boundaries of the LRSD.

Section 9: Disclosures

Provide the names and contact information for each board member and administrator.

List Board Members and Administrators Name, Contact, and Title	Provide any Relationship to Another Board Member or Administrator
Richard Cromwell 479-530-5621 richcromwell@gmail.com President	None
Jennifer Stephens 501-680-5366 Jrockstephens@hotmail.com Vice-President	None
Tony Brown 501-747-2254 tony_brown0522@yahoo.com Secretary/Treasurer	None
Dr. Charity Smith 501-442-3480 charitysmith.99@comcast.net	None