



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

2023 New Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application

AMS Schools – Arkansas

Name of Proposed Charter

Initial Application - Deadline May 15, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
Applications will not be accepted after this time.

Final Application - Deadline July 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
Applications will not be accepted after this time.

Any application that is substantially incomplete will not be forwarded to the authorizer for consideration. An application will be considered substantially incomplete if it does not provide enough information to enable staff at the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide a meaningful review.

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Charter School Office
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-683-5312

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Proposed Charter:	AMS Schools – Arkansas
Primary Contact for Application:	Steven Hykes, Chief Financial & Growth Officer
Primary Contact Phone:	520-306-8798
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Primary Contact Email:	SHykes@amsschools.org

Name of sponsoring entity:

AMS Schools – Arkansas, Inc.

The sponsoring entity is eligible to apply for a public-school charter under the following category:

- A public institution of higher education
- A private nonsectarian institution of higher education
- A governmental entity
- An organization that is nonsectarian in its programs and operations and is, or will be, exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

Name of Charter Management Organization:

AMS Impact Group

Other Schools Managed by the CMO:

Name of School	Location	Year Established
Academy of Math and Science Prince	1557 West Prince Road, Tucson, AZ 85705	2002
Math and Science Success Academy	434 West Lerdo Road, Tucson, AZ 85706	2008
Academy of Math and Science Flower	3335 West Flower Street, Phoenix, AZ 85017	2013
Academy of Math and Science Camelback	6633 West Camelback Road, Phoenix, AZ 85033	2015
Academy of Math and Science Desert Sky	5701 West McDowell Road, Phoenix, AZ 85035	2018
Academy of Math and Science Glendale	4540 West Glendale Avenue, Glendale, AZ 85301	2019
Academy of Math and Science Peoria Advanced	7785 West Peoria Avenue, Peoria, AZ 85345	2019
Academy of Math and Science South Mountain	1445 West Baseline Road, Phoenix, AZ 85041	2020
Academy of Math and Science Avondale	10555 West Buckeye Road, Tolleson, AZ 85353	2020

1. Describe the public hearing which was held for the purpose of assessing support for the establishment of this public charter school. Include the number of attendees and the feedback and/or public comments that were received.

AMS Schools – Arkansas hosted a public hearing on Wednesday, May 10 from 4:00 – 5:00 (CDT) at the McMath Library at 2100 John Barrow Road, Little Rock, Arkansas 72204. The meeting was also simultaneously hosted virtually.

Four members of the public attended the hearing virtually and provided questions, comments, and/or support for the establishment of AMS Schools – Arkansas. Attendees asked questions and provided comments about why we chose Little Rock to launch a K-8 school, what makes us different, population growth in other areas of the state and the need for strong schools statewide, teacher recruitment strategies, the state of rural education in Arkansas, and high school. The final public comment made by an attendee expressed excitement for the potential launch of our school. Together, the attending members of the public were supportive and understanding of our mission and the need we have identified in Little Rock.

Based on support expressed in the public hearing, meetings with education leaders in Arkansas, and an initial parent interest, AMS Schools – Arkansas is confident that there is considerable interest in and support for our program and academic model.

2. Describe the educational need for the charter in the geographical area to be served. Include quantitative data related to academic achievement.

In alignment with our mission and values, the Academies of Math and Science Network (AMS) and AMS Impact Group (henceforth “AIG” or the “CMO”) only seek expansion into communities with a clear, demonstrated need for the program that we offer—typically with 70%+ of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch (FRL) and low nearby school

performance. When examining Little Rock, Arkansas, our team completed a thorough analysis of the educational need for AMS Schools – Arkansas (the proposed charter, henceforth “AMS Arkansas”) and AMS Little Rock (the proposed school site). We are confident that bringing the AMS program to Little Rock will have a positive impact on students and families who currently have limited quality school options, particularly in the Windamere, John Barrow, Terrytown, and Oak Forest neighborhoods west and southwest of Little Rock proper. We are ready to respond to the exceptional need in this community by offering a proven program that can remediate, accelerate, and improve the educational prospects of economically disadvantaged Little Rock students.

Our needs analysis is focused around two potential facility locations. Specifically, AMS Arkansas is working on securing one of two facilities either at 6423 Stagecoach Road or at 5705 West 65th Street as displayed in the figures included in this response. In partnership with InSite EFS, a nationwide real estate advisory firm for educational and non-profit facilities, we have prepared various heatmaps that are indicative of a tremendous need for our program and experience as a high-quality operator with a 20+ year track record exclusively serving economically disadvantaged communities.

Figure 1: Little Rock FRL Percentages, Letter Grades, and K-12 Population Distribution

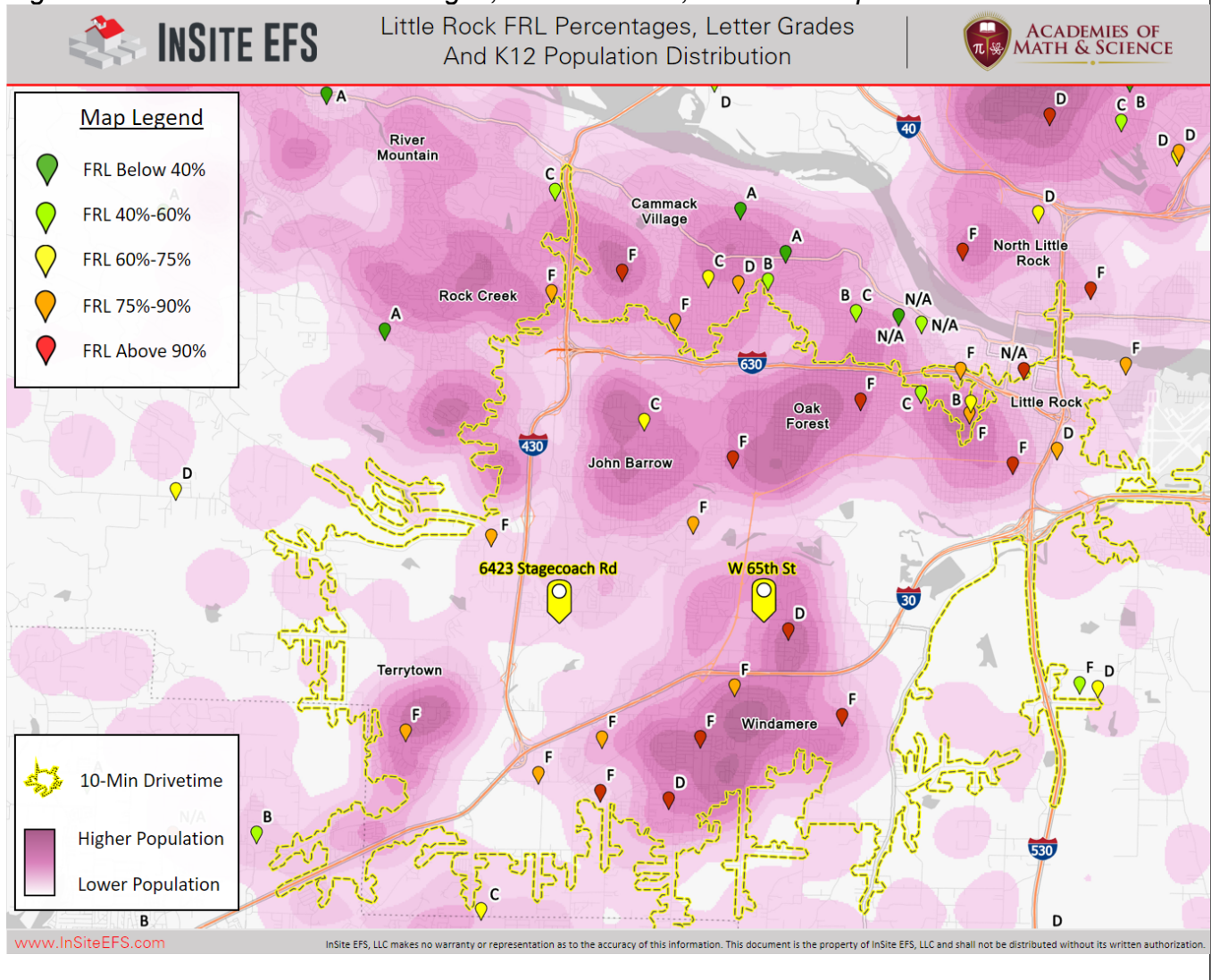
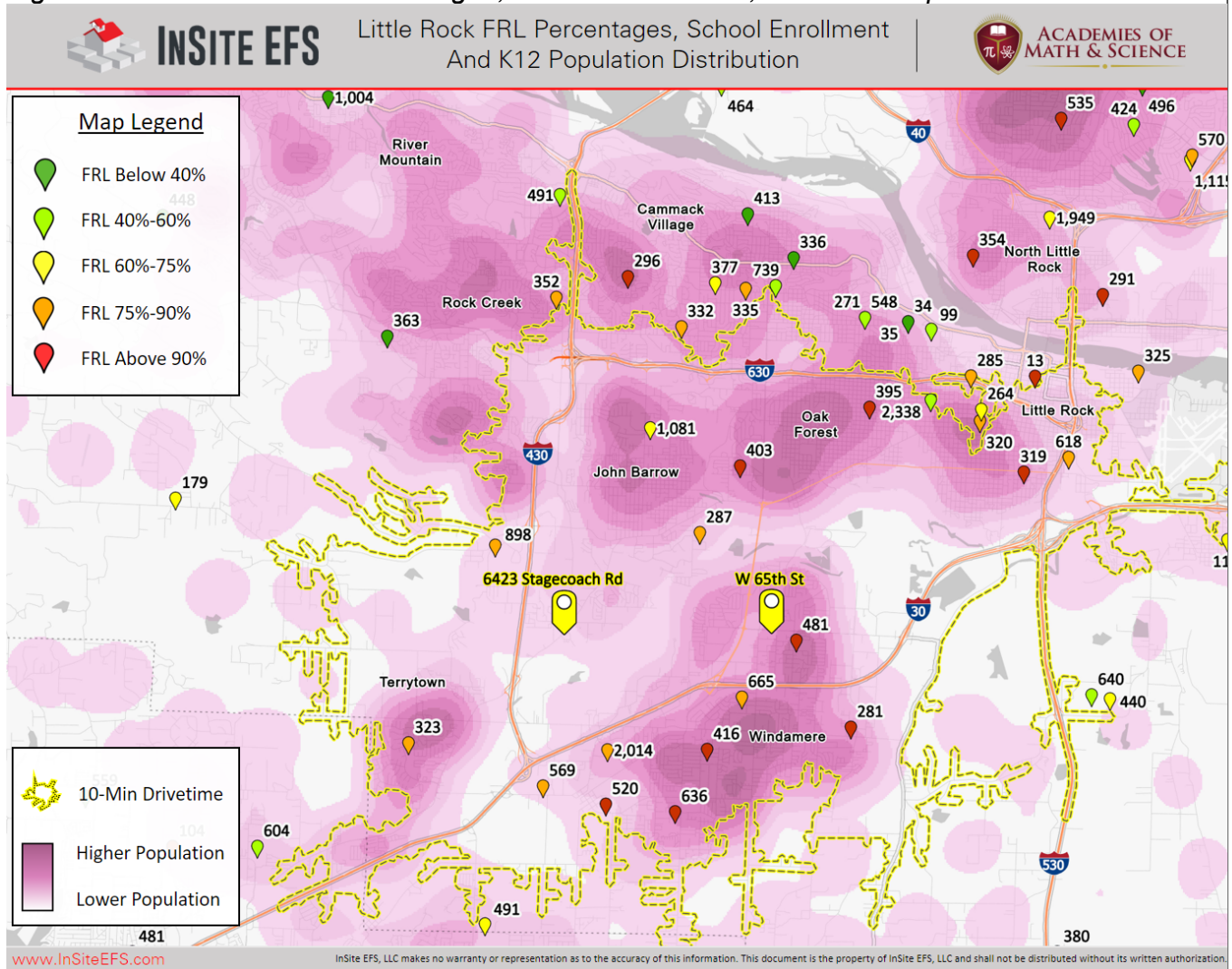


Figure 1 displays a concerning situation for Little Rock students within the 10-minute drivetime boundary as measured from the two potential facilities. Of the 26 schools in this area, 17 are F-rated, 4 are D-rated, 4 are C-rated, 1 is B-rated, and there are 0 A-rated schools. Extending beyond the boundary, the number of schools increases to 49 but the academic performance situation is no less concerning: 22 are F-rated, 11 are D-rated, 7 are C-rated, 4 are B-rated, and 5 are A-rated. Furthermore, the schools closest to our potential sites are situated in population dense neighborhoods with between 75%-90% FRL or higher than 90% FRL. The Windamere area south of the West 65th Street location in particular is severely underperforming—6 F-rated schools and 2 D-rated schools leave families with scarce options.

Using student enrollment data available through the Arkansas Department of Education Data Center, we've created Figure 2 below to continue to unpack the educational need in this community.

Figure 2: Little Rock FRL Percentages, School Enrollment, and K-12 Population Distribution



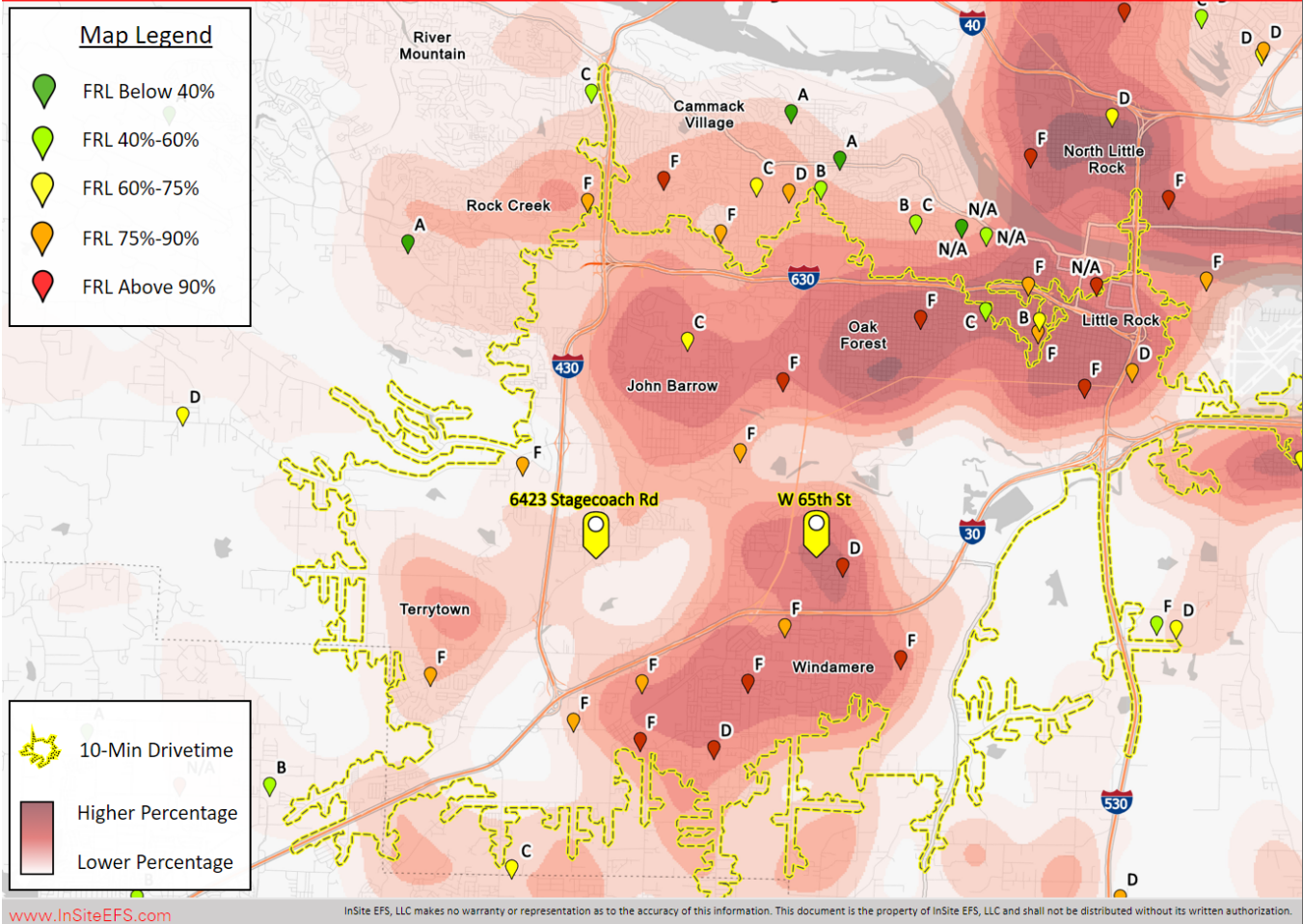
The data from both maps illustrates the significant number of Little Rock students attending D and F schools. Within the 10-minute drivetime boundary, there are 16,334 K-12 students total: 9,019 (55%) attend an F-rated school, 2,175 (13%) attend a D-rated school, 4,401 (27%) attend a C-rated school, 739 (5%, one school) attend a B-rated school, and 0 students attend

an A-rated school. Expanding beyond the drivetime boundary to include portions of North Little Rock School District and Pulaski County Special School District as in Figure 2, there are 27,831 students: 10,401 (37%) attend an F-rated school, 7,238 (26%) attend a D-rated school, 5,750 (21%) attend a C-rated school, 1,878 (7%) attend a B-rated school, and 2,564 (9%) attend an A-rated school. In conducting this analysis, AMS does not intend to undercut the hard work and effort taken on every day by these Little Rock schools. However, the educational need in this community is staggering given the fact that 17,639 or 63% of students attend a D or F-rated school. This percentage of students is even higher if we narrow in on the 10-minute drivetime boundary with 11,194 or 69% of students attending a D or F-rated school.

All in all, if a student and their family living in this area of Little Rock intend to seek a higher quality school, their options are extraordinarily limited. In our experience serving 8,500 Arizona students with an average FRL of 80%, families in economically disadvantaged communities often rely on neighborhood schools that are close to the other hubs and resources they count on day to day. Even if a family is indeed able to secure enrollment at a more distant school, there are hardly any A and B-rated schools to choose from. While expanding the map to longer drivetimes does offer Little Rock families more schools to choose from, there are only 5 schools that earned an “A” and 4 schools that earned a “B” based on the most recent publicly available A-F reports. Additionally, those 5 A-rated schools all have an FRL below 40% which indicates that an entirely different community demographic is being served in those locations.

To further layer this analysis, we’ve reviewed the same map with annual household income below \$50,000 highlighted.

Figure 3: Little Rock FRL Percentages and Annual HHI (Household Income) Below \$50k



To conclude with Figure 3, the educational need in Little Rock is exceptionally evident and even more clear in this version of the map: students attending schools in economically disadvantaged communities simply do not have quality school options and a concerning number of the schools in a reasonable driving range are failing to meet state accountability standards. The few schools on the map that have earned an A or B-rating are between 40-60% FRL or lower than 40% FRL. As a charter school network with a fervent commitment to serving economically disadvantaged communities with limited options, we are inspired and invigorated by the opportunity to contribute to transforming the educational landscape of Little Rock.

3. Describe in general terms, the area within the boundaries of the school district where the applicant intends to obtain a facility to be used for the open-enrollment public charter school.

AMS Arkansas is looking for a school facility within the boundaries of the Little Rock School District, North Little Rock School District, the Pulaski County Special School District, or a combination of those districts. The extent of the search for a facility matches the combined boundaries of these school districts. The two potential facilities we are presently looking into securing are located within the boundaries of the Little Rock School District.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Grades to be Offered	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment Cap	600	600	600	600	600

Charter Site Address:	Exact location to be determined
City:	Little Rock, Arkansas
Chief Operating Officer:	Brandi Adams Bressler
Phone:	602-667-7007
School District Where Charter Will be Located:	Exact location to be determined. We will provide this information as soon as a facility is secured.
List the districts from which the charter school expects to draw students:	Little Rock School District North Little Rock School District Pulaski County Special School District

4. What type of educational model will the school follow?

- Traditional
- 100% Virtual
- College Prep
- Credit Recovery/ALE
- Community School

Other:

5. Provide the mission statement of the proposed charter school:

Through a well-rounded education, we transform today's scholars into tomorrow's global visionaries.

6. Provide a list and brief description of the programmatic features that the school will implement to accomplish the mission as it pertains to its educational model.

To accomplish our mission of transforming today's Arkansas scholars into tomorrow's global visionaries and manifest our vision for the "Best Education, Best Environment," AMS Arkansas will implement AMS's well-rounded K-8 program and educational model. By emphasizing reliable systems and structures that allow our educators to care for and guide each individual student, our program ensures that students who attend AMS Little Rock will have a team of informed stakeholders capable of making targeted decisions that culminate in on-grade level or higher achievement and personal success. The AMS program provides a

data-driven, holistic, culturally relevant, and sustainable educational experience through a rigorous program with high-quality curriculum anchored by state standards and supplemented by an emphasis on equity and access.

In the design of our program, we believe that there are knowledge, skills, and mindsets that will transcend the technological or geopolitical advancements of the next five, ten, or twenty years. We are steadfast in teaching fundamental skills that will serve students in high school, college, and life at large. We take a rigorous approach to weaving together core content, secondary content, electives, equity, and accessibility for all students to facilitate a true culture of learning. Teachers will utilize a variety of learning activities and engagement strategies to provide an overall learning experience tailored to the unique needs of each student and classroom. Students will participate in project-based assessments, regular formative and summative assessments, real-world experiences, student discourse, direct instruction, varying group size work, and more. In doing so, our aim is that AMS students deeply value their educational experience by learning and creating meaning from diverse experiences and perspectives, developing key critical thinking skills, and exploring new global contexts.

Fundamentally, our program ensures that AMS students are able to:

- Produce, comprehend, and analyze the written and spoken word.
- Calculate, compute, and model complex mathematical equations and scenarios.
- Leverage technology to maximize impact and increase efficiency.
- Understand and cherish the essential role of an informed, respectful individual in their community and society at large.

To accomplish our mission and ensure students grow and achieve lasting mastery in the above areas, AMS Arkansas will implement the following programmatic features:

- We offer increased time for students in English Language Arts and Math and offer Computer Science for all students.
- We offer data-driven, regular, individualized interventions for students that need it.
- We constantly leverage data to make decisions that impact students in real-time across a number of learning modalities, including targeting intervention or remediation for students or classrooms that demonstrate learning gaps or needs, and offering accelerated learning opportunities for students who demonstrate mastery of course content.
- We invest in high-quality research-based curricula supported by an AIG Academic Team that is committed to making sure all materials are adapted as needed so that students constantly make meaningful progress toward the achievement of mastery in state standards.
- We offer high-quality electives and extracurriculars to ensure that students have a well-rounded and dynamic K-8 experience that inspires and cultivates a love of learning.
- We offer regular opportunities for students to build character, foster equity & community, develop their social and emotional skills, and participate in counseling.

For core content curriculum, AMS Arkansas will use the following list of programs and resources to achieve excellent academic outcomes. To calibrate this list, AMS reviewed the Arkansas Department of Education's guidance from the Arkansas Initiative for Instructional Materials (AIIM). Together, these resources are the building blocks for quality instruction and classroom time that culminates in foundational reading, writing, math, and science skills.

- Mathematics
 - Into Math
 - I-Ready
 - IXL Math
- Reading / Literature / English Language Arts
 - Wit and Wisdom
 - Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)
 - Supplemental Programs
 - Lexia Core 5 Reading
 - SIPPS for phonemic awareness and phonics instruction
 - Geodes
 - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness
 - News ELA
 - Words Their Way
 - Dyslexia Intervention:
 - Barton Reading and Spelling System
 - Wilson Reading System
- Social Studies
 - K-5: Houghton-Mifflin Elementary Social Studies
 - 6-8: Discovering Our Past: A History of the World
 - 6-8: Discovering Our Past: A History of the United States
- Science
 - My Pals Are Here
 - Delta Science
 - OpenSci Ed
 - International Technology and Engineering

To track each student’s journey through our K-8 program, each learning unit includes common formative/summative assessments set at regular intervals and culminates with comprehensive and state blueprint/standards aligned benchmark assessments. Through regular assessment, AMS teachers, administrators, and families can carefully track student trajectories toward mastery throughout the year, reliably target and plan for student intervention, and ensure all unique student needs are met. Constantly driven by data, our instructional design is intentional, rigorous, and tirelessly collaborative.

Finally, AMS Arkansas will implement comprehensive professional development (PD) that ensures quality instruction and student support is delivered with fidelity every school day. Our vision for professional development is to provide quality job-embedded learning & coaching experiences and relevant evidence-based formal PD grounded in targeted instructional & leadership competencies, positive partnerships, each school’s unique needs, and clear accountability measures to improve outcomes for all students. On a weekly basis, AMS Arkansas teachers will have protected time for supported instructional planning, formal PD and team collaboration, and real-time observation and coaching. Alongside broader PD goals, our goal is to foster a supportive community where both leaders and teachers constantly collaborate to improve student outcomes through formal PD, in the classroom, in structured professional learning community (PLC) time, and group planning & data-dive meetings.

Prior to the start of each school year, staff will attend a two-week AMS Teacher Academy to

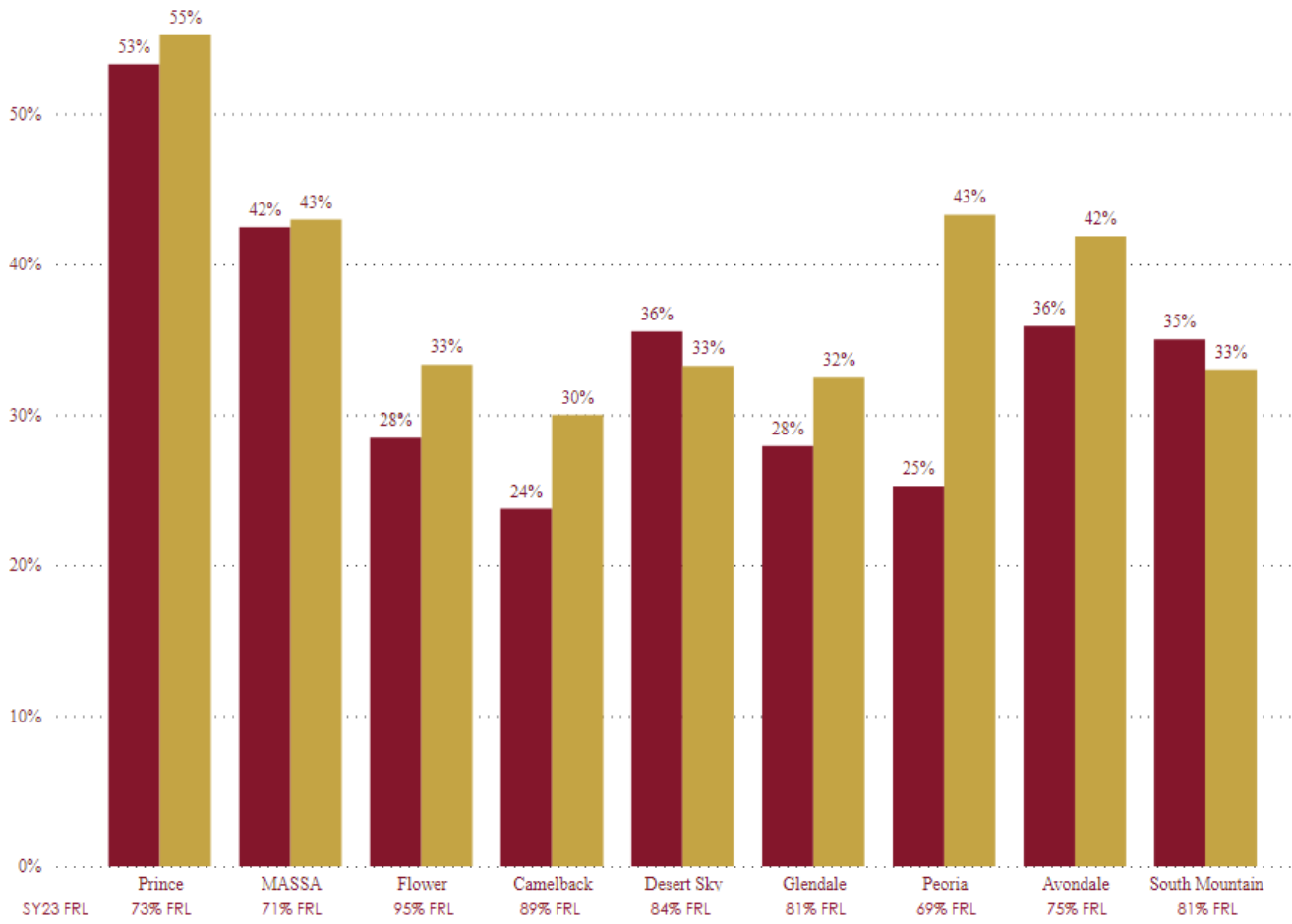
orient new teachers and reorient returning teachers on instructional expectations, begin lesson plan development, strengthen understanding of curriculum, and begin each year's trajectory toward lasting mastery in best teaching practices. AMS Arkansas leaders will similarly participate in an AMS Leadership Institute to prepare for the year's professional development cycle, learn and build on best practices in evaluation, coaching, and student support, and ensure the school's unique challenges and needs are at the forefront of strategy. For the preparation of this final application, AMS staff met with numerous Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) staff across various departments that all offer specialized PD. AMS Arkansas will foster and maintain a collaborative partnership with ADE for professional development, support, and resources. We know it is critical to work with and receive insight from local experts in Arkansas education as we get to know a new community.

To further understand how the AMS program and model would impact Little Rock students, we translated our most recent Arizona A-F Accountability letter grades and scores to the Arkansas model. While some nuances between the states make this analysis an imperfect measure and we acknowledge different demographics between these communities, we remain confident that our A-rated Arizona schools would be no less than B-rated, but still likely A-rated in the Arkansas model over time. Based on 2021-22 results in Arizona, we have 2 A-rated schools, 5 B-rated schools (2 of which have only been open for 2 years, 4 of which this was their first letter grade), and 2 C-rated schools, together serving 8,500 students with an average 80% free and reduced-price lunch and 93% minority population.

Official letter grades for 2022-23 are still being processed by the state of Arizona. However, we've been able to achieve excellent growth across the AMS network based on reviewing our 2022-23 state testing data. In the graphs below, each AMS school's 2021-22 and 2022-23 passing rates for ELA and mathematics demonstrate the efficacy of our program in serving high-FRL populations, especially in the wake of unprecedented learning loss from the pandemic.

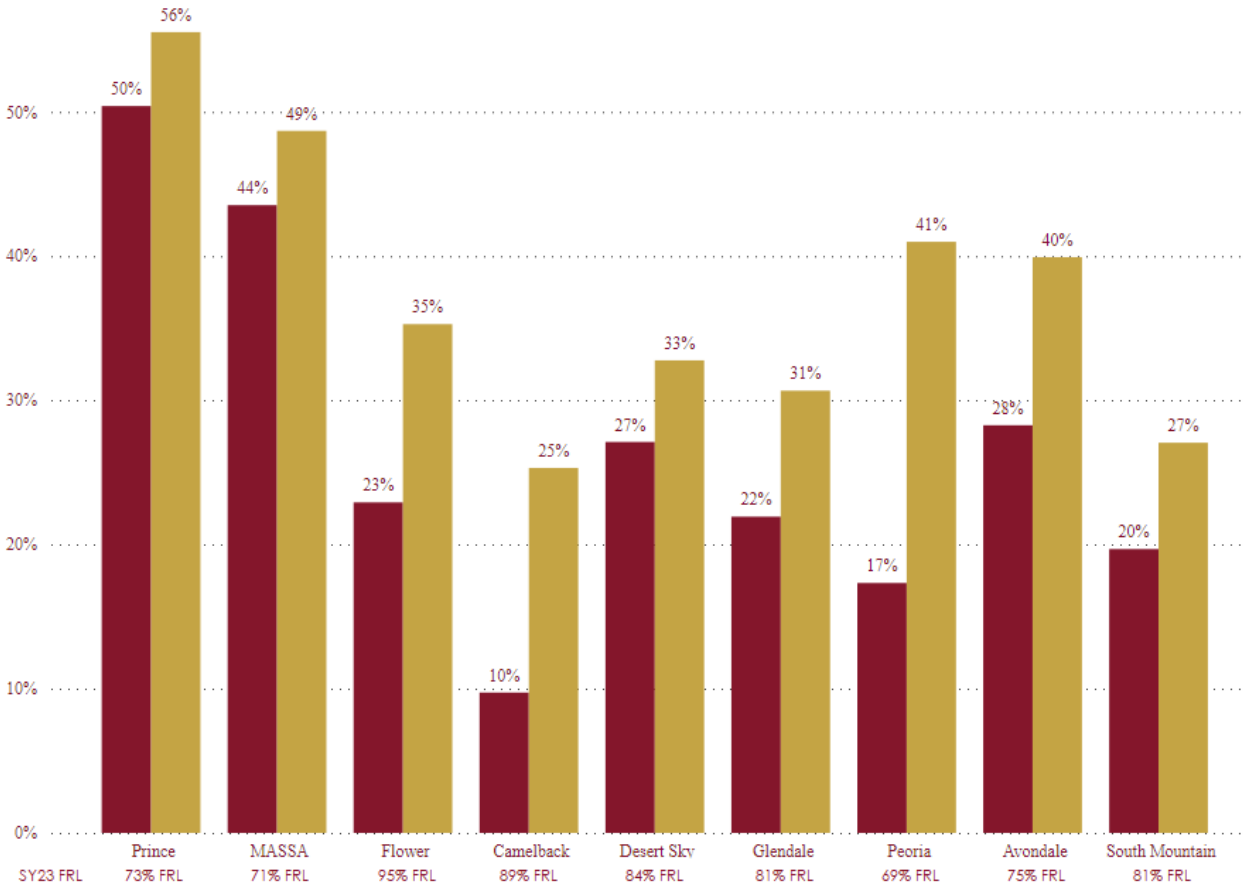
Arizona State Assessment English Language Arts % Passing: By School

School Year ● 2022 ● 2023



Arizona State Assessment Mathematics % Passing: By School

School Year ● 2022 ● 2023



Furthermore, the state of Arizona places students into “Growth Categories” by percentile in both subjects compared to all other students in Arizona. Low Growth students are in the bottom 33rd percentile, Average Growth students are in the middle 33rd percentile, and High Growth students are in the top 33rd percentile. The tables below show Full Academic Year (FAY) AMS student placement in these categories for both SY22 and SY23.

SY 21-22 Growth Categories of FAY Students

School	Low Growth	Average Growth	High Growth
Prince	32%	32%	36%
MASSA	27%	36%	37%
Flower	28%	35%	37%
Camelback	40%	34%	26%
Desert Sky	33%	30%	37%
Glendale	34%	33%	33%
Peoria	48%	32%	20%
Avondale	30%	35%	34%
South Mountain	33%	37%	30%
Total	33%	34%	33%

SY 22-23 Growth Categories of FAY Students

School	Low Growth	Average Growth	High Growth
Prince	25%	35%	40%
MASSA	24%	31%	45%
Flower	25%	30%	45%
Camelback	26%	30%	44%
Desert Sky	27%	31%	42%
Glendale	18%	31%	51%
Peoria	16%	27%	57%
Avondale	23%	34%	44%
South Mountain	26%	34%	41%
Total	24%	32%	45%

Between SY22 and SY23, the percentage of our students in the High Growth category increased by 12%, Average Growth increased by 2%, and Low Growth decreased by 9%. In particular, AMS Peoria, our lowest-rated school by accountability scores in SY22, demonstrated exceptional growth in moving their percentage of High Growth students from 20% to 57%, the highest in the AMS network. This incredible growth was achieved through intentional collaboration between the AMS network and AMS Peoria staff throughout the year to improve leader and teacher effectiveness.

Overall, we believe that we not only have a program capable of achieving high-quality results in Little Rock, but also the knowledge, experience, and tools to adapt to any campus's individual needs and achievement level. For example, our team acknowledges the need for academic intervention in ELA at AMS Desert Sky and AMS South Mountain due to the decrease in passing percentages year-over-year. As a network, we value a culture of data transparency and a comprehensive, solutions-oriented approach to education. Regardless of the area of need, each AMS school mobilizes intentional professional development,

instructional coaching, and data-driven strategies to ensure that we meet and exceed progress-to-goal targets in each upcoming school year in alignment with our vision of every school in our network earning and sustaining A ratings. We are prepared and inspired to undertake the hard work necessary to bring this commitment to success to AMS Arkansas.

Since our first school opened in 2002, AMS schools have helped thousands of economically disadvantaged K-8 students achieve success. As an operator with a proven track record serving economically disadvantaged and underserved communities, we know we can positively impact students in need in Arkansas. Given the level of school performance in the area we intend to serve, we are optimistic that AMS Little Rock will give 600 of the 11,194 students attending D or F-rated schools a better, high-quality choice. At the same time, we hope that our efforts to form strong partnerships within the community and neighboring schools can unite us all in learning and growth to improve outcomes for a greater number of students over time.

7. Establish performance criteria that will be used to measure the school’s progress in improving student learning and meeting or exceeding the state educational goals. The mission of the school should be reflected in the performance criteria.

We are prepared to improve student learning and meet/exceed state educational goals in Little Rock through a straightforward, high-quality academic program. Considering our mission and the impact of these goals, today’s Little Rock scholars in the area we intend to serve are struggling academically and improving their outcomes is essential. To that end, we focus on key goals built around academic achievement, growth, student attendance and year-over-year retention, and a culture of positive behavioral expectations.

Goal	Measuring Instrument
75% or more of all K-8 students meet or exceed expectations on internal curriculum assessments for English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science (3-8).	I-Ready, common formative assessments, benchmark assessments
75% or more of K-6 students meet or exceed growth goals as identified by the Arkansas Department of Education R.I.S.E annually.	State assessments, I-Ready
Less than 10% of K-8 students qualify as chronically absent as defined by the state of Arkansas.	PowerSchool daily attendance data, state school label dashboard
75% or more of students identified in a subgroup category meet or exceed growth goals in ELA and Math on internal assessments and State end of year testing.	Benchmark assessments and state assessments
AMS Little Rock earns an “A” letter grade.	Arkansas state letter grade reports
Less than 5% of AMS Little Rock students lose instructional time due to in or out of school suspensions with no gaps across lines of difference.	PowerSchool student discipline records
AMS Little Rock maintains or exceeds 90% leader and 85% staff retention.	AMS staffing data
AMS Little Rock maintains or exceeds 90% student retention and persistence.	AMS student enrollment data

CURRICULUM

8. Will the school provide the required courses as outlined in the Standards for Accreditation and the 38 Required High School Course Offerings? If not, explain what changes will be made. What additional electives will be offered?

All AMS Arkansas K-8 courses will meet or exceed the applicable Arkansas Standards for Accreditation. All K-8 students will receive daily standards aligned on-grade level rigorous instruction in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Performing Arts (Music), Visual Arts (art), Health & Safety/Physical Education, and Computer Science. Each grade level course will meet or exceed the individual requirements for specific content, skills, or time as prescribed by standards. Additionally, seventh and eighth grade students will have a choice of elective between Performing Arts and Visual Arts.

Students in grades 5-8 will have additional acceleration pathways and students in 8th grade have the opportunity to enroll in Algebra I. For mathematics specifically, our goal is to ensure that students are appropriately challenged and matriculate from AMS ready for the rigor of high school courses including Algebra II, Geometry, and other higher-level courses. Across all content areas, AMS teachers will receive targeted professional development in vertical alignment of standards between grade-level and higher-level courses to be able to plan and execute intentional teaching and learning opportunities that prepare students for advanced concepts and skills. Effective scaffolding and spiraling of advanced content will embed learning acceleration into the AMS Arkansas student experience and promote increased collaboration within our community of educators. We also plan to cultivate relationships with high school teachers at schools our students matriculate to in order to strengthen this instructional alignment over time.

AMS Arkansas will also offer additional micro-intensive electives in multiple areas to support diverse topic exposure, new skill development, and overall student achievement. Classroom teachers will offer these in two six-week cycles across topics that include Robotics, Coding, Dance, Theater, Academic Pentathlon, Journalism, Biology, Environmental Science, and Research Systems. Enrollment in intensive micro-electives will be determined through academic achievement data and student interest.

9. Describe the process that will be used to ensure all curriculum materials used in the educational program are aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards?

To align curriculum, the AIG Academic Team builds an arc of learning for each course that is grounded in state academic standards. Following meticulous review by a team of content specialists and expert teachers, the team selects curricular resources then aligns all grade levels and content areas to state standards. This process is guided by a foundational framework based on the school's needs assessment. Next, a collaborative team evaluates existing curriculum resource materials in five key areas: level of standards alignment, assessment, assured learning experiences (performance tasks), instruction for all, and overall learning plan. The team rates the extent to which curricular resources meet essential questions in all five areas based on the needs assessment. Specifically:

- To what extent are the standards aligned and balanced within and/or across the resource?
- Do the big ideas and essential questions represent research in teaching and learning and capture "the big ideas" of the field?

- Do the “unwrapped” standards represent the teachable content and skills?
- Does the level of rigor in the standards advance student thinking to higher levels?
- Is the level of rigor evident in the corresponding big ideas and essential questions?
- Does the unit overall reflect the relevance of the standards?
- Does the collection of assured learning experiences and assessments demonstrate the learning progressions?
- Is the entire unit coherent with all its components aligned and balanced?
- Will the unit, as designed, lead students to achieve the identified standards?

Once this process is complete, the team will resolve any identified gaps in current materials in cases where they do not adequately address state standards, which includes review and alignment to the curriculum vetted through the Arkansas Initiative for Instructional Materials (AIIM). This collaborative team process also involves identifying additional curricular materials that will remediate any gaps in primary materials and/or meaningfully supplement the learning experience. All curriculum guidance materials for teachers provide detailed suggestions and articulate which resources are best used for each standard and for various learning circumstances/needs. Ultimately, AMS Arkansas teachers will be able to lesson plan standards-aligned instruction using identifiable best practices and best resources suited to their students’ unique learning needs.

10. Describe how reading instruction and literacy will be addressed. Address each of the following questions.

a) What curricula are used that are aligned to the Science of Reading and are there any limitations to the selected materials?

AMS Arkansas systematic standards-based instruction in reading and literacy will occur during Tier I classroom instruction 90 minutes a day in grades K-5. During this block, students engage in systematic and intentional instruction with practice in the five areas of the Arkansas Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (R.I.S.E.). While working with texts, students also engage in intentional direct instruction vocabulary word work. In this ELA block, all K-5 students receive daily whole and small group explicit and direct instruction in the following areas:

- Phonemic Awareness (K-2)
- Phonics (K-3)
- Vocabulary (K-5)
- Fluency (K-5)
- Comprehension (K-5)
- Writing (K-5)
- Language (K-5)

Students are introduced to, practice, and refine foundational skills that are then applied to diverse and complex texts. Furthermore, reading and literacy instruction occurs in more than just dedicated ELA blocks—AMS students refine and practice their literacy skills in all content areas. Curriculum scopes and sequences for every class embed ELA standards so that students can build knowledge and apply comprehension and fluency while enhancing their writing abilities to show what they know. Additionally, each class offered at AMS layers in systematic vocabulary word work and language practice to further build student proficiency and promote academic growth.

In terms of curricular materials for ELA, AMS Arkansas will use the following:

- Wit and Wisdom
- Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)
- Supplemental Programs
 - Lexia Core 5 Reading
 - SIPPS for phonemic awareness and phonics instruction
 - Geodes
 - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness
 - News ELA
 - Words Their Way
- Dyslexia Intervention:
 - Barton Reading and Spelling System
 - Wilson Reading System

b) What is the plan for ensuring that all teachers will be trained in the Science of Reading?

To ensure that all teachers required to complete training in the Science of Reading do so annually, AMS will facilitate registering teachers and create individual plans and pathways for staff to keep current with this requirement.

c) Will there be Science of Reading assessors in the charter school?

AMS Little Rock will have at least one qualified administrator, initially the AMS Arkansas executive director & founding principal, who is trained as the Science of Reading Assessor. Additionally, at least one AMS regional and/or national leader will also be trained as a Science of Reading Assessor.

STUDENT SERVICES

11. Describe how the school will provide comprehensive counseling services for all students. Include a description of the services, who will be providing the services, how the provider(s) will be trained, and the time allotment to carry out the counseling program.

AMS Arkansas will provide on-site, full-time school counseling and mental health intervention services. School counselors will carry an individual student caseload and group counseling caseload. Counselors will provide comprehensive services through one-on-one character building and support sessions, crisis intervention, social and civility practices group counseling, and other relevant services as necessary to support the student community. Students may also be assigned to the counseling caseload in congruency with the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process to receive behavioral interventions and supports.

For support sessions and civility practices groups, our counselors use strategies from Second Step, a program designed to help students build social-emotional skills, nurture positive relationships, manage their emotions, set goals, and ultimately thrive in all aspects of their life. For character building services, AMS counseling professionals draw character-building strategies from programs such as but not limited to Lions Quest, Boys Town Press, Character Strong, and Harmony Solutions.

In addition to in-school services, AMS counselors partner with local community support organizations to connect families with support services at home or at other institutions outside the regular school environment. AMS schools also utilize an inclusive electronic community counseling referral system that is accessible to all stakeholders including teachers, administrators, students, parents, and auxiliary staff. All students referred to the school counselor will, at minimum, receive a meeting with the counselor and a screening for counseling services.

The AIG Director of Student Services will initially onboard and then train all counseling service providers monthly. For counseling and mental health service providers, training topics include but are not limited to school counseling schedule structure, community engagement standards, and state compliance expectations. Although time allotment may vary depending on individual student needs, the typical time allotment for participation in the counseling program is six full weeks of official in-service school days.

12. Describe how the school will provide library media services for all students. Make sure to address the following questions.

a) How will access to materials that support curriculum, research, and recreational reading be provided to students and teachers.

Each AMS classroom will have an identified set of resources that support curriculum, student research, and recreational reading. In core content classrooms, teachers will have individual classroom libraries with materials suited to their grade level and content area. Additionally, teachers will be able to check out items from school level resources hubs to have in their classrooms to supplement the curricular topic at hand, recreational reading, or for social and cultural enjoyment.

Speaking to school level resources, AMS Little Rock will have a dedicated resource area

housing additional curricular resources for teacher and student use. Beyond these print resources, students will have access to digital resources that blend into their curricular experience as well for research and recreational use.

b) If there will be no librarian who will provide instruction in the use of the library and the Library Media Standards, and how will they be trained to teach the standards?

AMS is seeking a waiver from the requirement to employ a Library Media Specialist or librarian. We are seeking this waiver based on our integrated approach to teaching the Arkansas Library Media Standards. AMS teachers in all grade levels will actively teach and access these six media standards in the following content areas:

- **Standard 1:** Represented in science, social studies, art, music, P.E. These content areas allow for the authentic integration of ideas and for the practical application of stating problems and solutions while posing questions.
- **Standard 2:** Represented in every content area across all grades. Our curriculum and course planning facilitates regular student discourse and engagement with diverse perspectives. The AMS curriculum's interwoven focus on equity also provides a solid foundation for students to receive explicit instruction, practice, and build on each skill within this standard. Alignment to Standard 2 also blends well with our students building social emotional and character skills through varied learning activities that test and challenge their own understanding of the topics at hand and world at large.
- **Standard 3:** Represented in every content area, though most prevalent in core content areas. Each AMS course has projects and cooperative group tasks where students interact, plan, and work together to achieve a shared goal. Each of these projects are designed around the application and/or continued building of learned and practiced skills into broader group tasks. This approach helps students build on the concepts within the standard of learning and current topics while also developing their personal and social responsibility skills.
- **Standard 4:** Represented in most content areas through explicit instruction and student tasks that demand citing sources to stake a claim. An example is projects and larger scale tasks in the course content cycle where students gather information, analyze sources for quality and accuracy, and differentiate between various sources to identify relevance. Students work together to deliver products that rely on a diverse selection of student-selected credible sources alongside learning about the ethics and necessary practices involved with using work generated by others.
- **Standard 5:** The AMS curriculum applies a continuous improvement feedback model for learning where students engage in personal and group discovery and reflection. In AMS electives, students have regular opportunities to grow and gain perspective and persistence skills by working on self-selected and self-directed inquiry-based projects.
- **Standard 6:** Represented in all content areas. At AMS, students engage in many learning modalities where explicit instruction in ethical practices and safety is taught or applied. Nearly all AMS classes implement technology and media to deliver or supplement curricular content. Consequently, our program and the use of technology and media are aligned to clear expectations of ethical and safe practices. AMS teachers actively teach and cultivate fundamental ethics knowledge and build student understanding of the proper use of technology. Students also learn to safely understand and participate in the sharing of information through multimedia as well as to respect the intellectual property and multimedia participation of their peers and the world at large. AMS Computer Science classes in particular extensively cover digital

citizenship and ethics.

With regard to how AMS Arkansas teachers will be trained to teach these standards as they integrate into AMS programs and curriculum, teachers will attend regular professional development weekly throughout the school year, and on annual basis for larger-scale training. Both weekly and annual training will help teachers learn how to effectively teach and access media standards. Teachers will be held accountable for implementing best practices through job-embedded professional development that occurs in planning meetings, observation and feedback meetings, active real-time coaching, and modeling.

c) If there is no librarian, who will provide professional development in new and emerging technologies, integration of technology into the instructional programs, and in the laws and policies pertaining to the use and communication of ideas and information, including copyright law?

As previously mentioned, AMS Arkansas is seeking a waiver of the requirement to employ a librarian or library media specialist. If approved, there will be no librarian or library media specialist at the school. Professional development for teachers in new and emerging technologies, integration of technology into the instructional programs, and in the laws and policies pertaining to the use and communication of ideas and information including copyright law will regularly occur through a variety of providers so teachers are up to date on emergent information, strategies, and practices. These professional development sessions will in part be led by AMS computer science teachers in collaboration with school leadership. AMS Arkansas will also provide self-directed and/or virtual learning opportunities for teachers to enhance or supplement the information provided by regular professional development. Additionally, AMS Arkansas' executive director and/or the regional leadership team will prescribe out-of-school learning opportunities for staff or contract with quality external professional development providers in these areas as needed.

Furthermore, AMS staff preparing this application received feedback from and spoke with Cassandra Barnett, Program Advisor for School Libraries for the Arkansas Department of Education, regarding library media standards and professional development. AMS Arkansas plans to attend and schedule critical learning opportunities for pertinent staff as provided by Ms. Barnett and the Arkansas Department of Education directly. Such learning opportunities include professional development on standards, guided inquiry, and project-based learning for administrators and teachers. AMS Arkansas will also refer to virtual webinars and other resources published and recommended by the Arkansas Department of Education.

d) Will the school have written policies for selection, removal, and retention of materials as well as a policy for addressing challenged materials, and who will be responsible for implementing those policies?

In partnership with the CMO, AMS Arkansas will draft and implement a policy in compliance with the applicable terms of Act 372 of 2023 for the selection, removal, and retention of materials, including policies and procedures for addressing challenged materials. These policies will emphasize alignment to the AMS program and model and the needs of the individual school communities we serve as determined by the AMS Arkansas executive director. The executive director will be responsible for maintaining and implementing all areas of these policies with support from the CMO and local school leadership.

13. Describe how the school will provide special education services for all students. Address each of the following areas.

a) Describe how you will identify students who have a disability and may need special education and related services (Child Find).

AMS Arkansas will primarily identify students with disabilities who may need special education and related services through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process, a comprehensive eight-week classroom intervention and data collection procedure, and through the use of a 45-day screener. This system includes collaboration between the school's principal or assistant principal, school counselor, general education teacher, and special education services coordinator. AMS Arkansas' Child Find plan will be made public and available through the front office staff of the school and will also be available in the student/parent handbook.

For students who are younger than the ages AMS serves in K-8, we will utilize the district of residence (DOR) and refer families who inquire about early-childhood services to DOR programs. AMS does not serve early-childhood students. For AMS-school aged students, AMS will utilize a 45-day screener as part of the child find process. Each student's homeroom teacher will complete this standard screener within the first 45 days of enrollment. Depending on responses to this screener, the student can be referred to (1) immediate evaluation, (2) a 504 plan, (3) in class interventions or a behavior improvement plan, or (4) an MTSS team. AMS Arkansas will have systemwide structures in place for navigating student needs and will use a tiered model to track and implement interventions for students who demonstrate needs at any point during the child find process.

Interventions are targeted, timely, and set on a step-by-step schedule for school staff involved. AMS holds staff accountable for program implementation through an MTSS tracker for each individual campus and daily intervention trackers built into each student's academic or behavior MTSS form for teachers.

Throughout the MTSS process, AMS staff will engage family members in at least four points. First, school leadership and parents/guardians will meet to review the step-by-step process and sign a parent/guardian notification form. Second, parents/guardians will discuss and complete the parent/guardian input MTSS form to help us better understand the student's needs and plan effective interventions. Third, school leadership will check in with parents/guardians during weeks four and five to provide any updates on progress or answer questions. Lastly, school leadership will connect with parents/guardians to discuss the result of the MTSS determination meeting, what interventions will continue or be added, and explain the 504-referral process (if applicable), special education testing referral process (if applicable), and any related services (if applicable).

It is important to note that AMS does not arbitrarily delay or deny referrals for evaluations related to special education services or Section 504 plans. AMS's Child Find process under Section 504 or Special Education law is not replaced or delayed by MTSS or Response to Intervention (RTI, which we also use), but may lead to additional supports if the data indicates needs as such. The complete process is intended to ensure that students receive the best supports adapted to their exact needs. If a student's individual needs dictate that a referral be effectuated immediately, AMS staff will ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken.

b) Describe the Least Restrictive Environment continuum available.

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Section 300.115: "Each public agency must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services."

The levels of services AMS provides are:

1. Regular class with indirect or consult services (RG)
2. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day
3. Inside the regular class for not more than 79% of the day, no less than 40% of the day
4. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day
5. Public School Day Program / Self-Contained Program
6. Private Separate Day School Program

Currently, AMS is able to provide supports 1-5 listed above on every AMS campus. Services for private day programming will be contracted out through partnership with a private day school. AMS may opt to place the student in a private placement. This circumstance would result in a Private School Placement by a Public Agency as defined by the Arkansas Department of Education Special Education and Related Services Guidelines (8.00, 8.10.1-8.10.3.1). To do so:

1. An IEP meeting must be held and conducted before placement by AMS.
2. A representative of the private placement must be present at the IEP meeting.
3. After entering the private school or facility, annual IEP meetings must occur and may be initiated and conducted by the private school or facility.
4. If the private school or facility initiates the IEP, AMS must be involved and in agreement to any changes on the student's IEP.
5. AMS will remain responsible for the compliance of the IEP despite placement at a private school or facility.

c) Describe your plan for adhering to all federal and state special education laws and rules.

AMS Arkansas plans to adhere to all federal and state special education laws by utilizing the resources provided by the Arkansas Department of Education Division of Elementary and Secondary Education including the Procedural Requirements and Program Standards and the Special Education Process Guide. Additionally, AMS currently operates on guidance and safeguards from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) program. To ensure our special education programs and related staff adhere to networkwide special education policies and federal/state laws, AMS also implements and/or ensures:

- Regular meetings with state agencies and departments involved in special education
- Participation in state monitoring processes
- An up-to-date Exceptional Student Services (ESS) Manual including:
 - Policies and procedures
 - State statutes and regulations
- A qualified ESS regional coordinator to manage and oversee program needs including:
 - Timelines
 - Communication
 - Parental Rights
 - Procedural Safeguards
- Bi-Monthly ESS training

- Quarterly ESS team meetings
- Regular (weekly) collaboration meetings with school administrators
- Ongoing professional development on:
 - Best practices
 - High-Leverage practices
 - State Compliance
 - Software Programs
 - Curriculum

d) Describe how you will provide related services such as Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy. (Medicaid cannot be the sole funding source for related services. The district must have their own Medicaid number if related services are billed through Medicaid. The charter is responsible for paying Medicaid match.)

For related services, AMS Arkansas will partner with exceptional student services (ESS) providers to contract for speech-language pathologists, speech-language pathologist assistants, psychological evaluation services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and any other related service provider necessary to support a student beyond the capacity of our direct staff. Direct staffing for these related services can be challenging due to the specialized nature of each need, but we understand the importance of these services for the students who need them and will maintain partnerships with several agencies accordingly. These partnerships allow AMS to meet student needs across the board with fidelity.

Some of the specialized related services and supports offered at AMS include but are not limited to:

- Behavior support for students in need of additional support in their daily routines, BIPs (Behavior Intervention Plans), and on-task behavior.
- Counseling for students in need of various counseling services/supports as described in Question #11 of this application.
- Occupational therapy for ESS students in need of additional support with fine motor and sensory skills.
- Physical therapy for ESS students in need of additional support in areas of physical and gross motor skills.
- Interpersonal/social skills and social emotional learning programs for students in need of additional support with daily interactions with peers or staff and transitioning to various school environments.
- Speech-Language services for ESS students in need of additional support in communication such as expressive and receptive communication, pragmatics, or articulation.
- Vision impairment and hearing impairment services for students who require such services.

The services listed above are potentially considered for all students based on the results of triennial evaluations and demonstrated student needs. It is worth noting that each student's stakeholders & team may convene to determine that an evaluation is needed between triennial evaluations. That is to say, each student's team is not beholden to a triennial schedule and will regularly review data and evaluate students when additional data is necessary to fully serve a student. This process includes if a student has a concerning score

on a formal or informal assessment, when a student does not make meaningful progress on goals, or when there is a traumatic life event, to name a few examples. Additionally, teams can decide on a 504 or behavior plan at any point regardless of evaluation status if doing so will facilitate the student's success. Each student's IEP team determines the frequency and duration of services, and services are typically provided in an in-person format. When local providers are not readily available to offer in-person services, virtual sessions are occasionally utilized.

AMS does not utilize Medicaid reimbursement at this time and funds for these services come from ESS grants.

AMS staff preparing this application and our related services for students in Arkansas spoke with and incorporated feedback from Yvonne Greene, Administrator for Monitoring and Program Effectiveness, Office of Special Education, Arkansas Department of Education.

14. Describe how the school will provide dyslexia screening and services for all students.

AMS Arkansas will provide dyslexia screening and services for all students in accordance with the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing How to Meet the Needs for Children with Dyslexia published in June 2018.

To do so:

- AMS will screen:
 - Students in Kindergarten through second grade (K-2)
 - K-2 students who transfer into the school
 - Students in grade three or higher who demonstrate reading deficiencies as noted in the state rules
 - A student from another state who enrolls in K-2 (unless the student is exempt or had a similar screening the current school year)
- AMS will utilize the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or an equivalent screener.
- AMS will utilize Response to Intervention (RTI) or MTSS processes as needed.
- AMS will utilize the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide as needed.
- AMS will notify parents if there is a need and provide a list of resources.
- AMS will notify parents of their rights and the right to have an independent comprehensive evaluation, and that the results of this evaluation will be considered by AMS.
- AMS will provide intervention and instructional approaches as needed based on evaluations.
- AMS will report screening results annually according to the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide.

15. Describe how the school will provide for the needs of English Learners.

- a. How will you be screening, placing, notifying parents/guardians of placements, and annually reviewing English Learners/Former English Learners as per the Arkansas English Learner Entrance and Exit Procedures?**

I. Screening:

All new students will be required to complete the statewide Arkansas Home Language Usage Survey during school enrollment. The survey consists of 9 questions in total, responses to the

first 6 of which may indicate the need for English language proficiency screening. Those 6 questions are:

1. In what language do you prefer to receive written communication from the school?
2. In what language would you prefer to communicate with school staff when speaking?
3. What language(s) is (are) spoken in your home?
4. What language did your child learn first?
5. What language does your child use most often at home?
6. What language does your family speak most often at home?

If the response to any of the above questions indicates another language other than English, the student will be tested using the Arkansas statewide screener, the ELPA21 Language Proficiency Screener, to determine if the student qualifies for services. Students that have previous test history but not a current test on record will be tested immediately to determine the need for continued English Learner (EL) services. Aligned to the Arkansas English Learner Entrance and Exit Procedures, all AMS Arkansas students will be assessed, placed, and parents/guardians will be notified of placement within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter.

II. Placing

A student qualifies for EL services if their score is less than proficient on the language screener. The student is then placed in a designated integrated mainstream classroom and scheduled for daily Targeted English Language Development (ELD) with pure or neighboring proficiency levels, when available.

III. Notifying Parents/Guardians

After new students qualify for EL services, AMS will send a parent notification form to parents/guardians of identified students. For continuing EL students, AMS will send parent notification forms within the first 10 days of school. The form will be aligned to Arkansas requirements for notification as described in the Arkansas English Learner Entrance and Exit Procedures. Issued in a language and manner in which the student's parents/guardians can understand, the form will explain the EL program placement, the student's English proficiency level, the program that the student will be participating in and its goals as a whole, exit requirements and criteria, and any applicable information related to if the student has an IEP. Finally, the form will include written guidance that informs parents/guardians of their right to have their student immediately removed from the program upon request and the option to decline or waive their student's participation in the program. New student test result reports will be sent to parents/guardians according to a cycle calendar after the initial testing and annual reassessment period.

IV. Annual Review of EL/Former English Learners (FEL)

All ELs and parent withdrawn students will be reassessed annually to measure progress across language domains and overall language proficiency. AMS will review EL test results to determine strengths and instructional entry points for the upcoming school year and plan compensatory education. Parent withdrawn student test result reports will be reviewed to determine academic stability and any potential need to revisit providing EL services.

EL students who meet exit criteria will transition to FEL after receiving a proficient score on the ELPA21 and by demonstrating success comparable to their non-EL/native English-speaking peers in two additional qualifying areas to be determined by AMS Arkansas EL

stakeholders and the executive director in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education. FEL students will be monitored for 4 years after meeting the aforementioned criteria. The 4-year monitoring consists of collecting student data from AMS assessments and state standardized assessments. AMS staff will review data to determine if retesting is needed to resume EL services and/or initiate compensatory educational services.

To align AMS Arkansas' services plan for EL students to Arkansas requirements, AMS incorporated feedback into this application from Tricia Kerr, English for Speakers of Other Languages Program Director at the Arkansas Department of Education. AMS will continue to consult and partner with EL experts at the Arkansas Department of Education to ensure program alignment and effectiveness.

b. How do you plan to provide English Language Development and Access to Core instruction aligned with the Arkansas English Language Proficiency Standards to each English Learner?

AMS Arkansas will take a comprehensive approach to English Language Development (ELD) that incorporates time for integrated ELD with English proficient peers and explicit targeted ELD instruction using Arkansas English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards as the focal standards for EL students only. Students will receive the following time allocations: 60 minutes daily K-5 and 50 minutes daily 6-8 for both integrated ELD and targeted ELD.

I. Integrated ELD

All educators share the responsibility for designing instruction that integrates language and literacy development with content learning. Excellent outcomes in this area will be accomplished by using content standards to plan instruction along with the Arkansas English Language Proficiency Standards to support differentiation by language proficiency level. By using scaffolded supports, academic language development, collaborative discussions, reading, and writing, educators help students develop interdisciplinary content knowledge, language skills, and autonomy.

For integrated ELD, all AMS educators will:

- Differentiate disciplinary language instruction using the English Language Proficiency Standards.
- Provide differentiated scaffolds to make grade level concepts comprehensible in receptive, productive, and interactive language and to support students to make informed and deliberate choices about language when speaking and writing.
- Model learning approaches so students can construct meaning using metacognition strategies.
- Immerse students in a language rich environment and engage in interactive and discussion-based learning tasks about the language of complex content-area texts.
- Plan and provide opportunities for students to work together in intellectually rich and integrated learning environments around worthy and engaging inquiry questions, texts, and topics.
- Support each EL students' deep learning and ability to engage in extended academic discourse and abundant, authentic writing. Integrated instruction in disciplinary language and content will support the development of student agency when educators:
 - Provide choices or open-ended opportunities to select strategies and tactics for mastery of language and content.

- Encourage independent learning by teaching effective strategies for learning language and content.
- Encourage initiative by creating learning environments that increase motivation and engagement with language and content.

Through participation in integrated language and content instruction, EL students will develop a sense of voice, confidence, and self-determination as they use content and language in tandem to meet their goals.

II. Targeted ELD

Explicit language instruction is a critical opportunity to intentionally support EL students in developing the discourse practices they need to engage with rigorous, grade-level disciplinary content. Just as literacy and language should be integrated into content instruction, so should content and disciplinary practices be integrated into language instruction. Educators use the English Language Proficiency Standards with content materials to teach language.

For targeted ELD, all AMS educators will:

- Create opportunities for students to use language and reflect on their understanding across the four language domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in direct connection to rigorous, grade-level content.
- Design instruction that fosters EL student autonomy by equipping them with the strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings.
- Immerse students in a language rich environment that fosters critical thinking and problem solving.
- Utilize language supports, academic language development, and opportunities for academic discourse.
- Provide age/grade level appropriate instruction and materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and aligned to the English Language Proficiency Standards.
- Design explicit instruction that provides students with an understanding of how language functions through the lens of current content.
- Provide targeted and explicit language instruction to support the development of student agency. AMS educators will:
 - Provide choices or open-ended opportunities to select strategies and tactics for language acquisition.
 - Encourage independent learning by teaching effective strategies for learning language.
 - Encourage initiative by creating learning environments that increase motivation and engagement with language acquisition.

Through participation in targeted and explicit language instruction, EL students will develop a sense of voice, confidence, and self-efficacy around their language use.

c. How will you communicate information to limited English proficient parents in a language and manner they can understand about any program, service, or activity that is called to the attention of parents who are proficient in English?

In order to effectively communicate information to limited English proficient parents, AMS Arkansas will implement a comprehensive language access plan. This plan will include the

following core strategies and services:

- **Translation Services:** AMS will provide translation services in multiple languages to ensure that important information is communicated to parents in a language they can understand. This service will include translating written materials such as school policies, academic performance reports, and newsletters, to name a few.
- **Interpretation Services:** AMS will provide interpretation services for parent-teacher conferences, school events, and other important meetings. This will ensure that parents can fully participate in their child's education and have access to the same information as parents who are more proficient in English.
- **Bilingual Staff:** AMS will strive to hire bilingual staff members who can communicate effectively with limited English proficient parents. These staff members will be trained to provide information in a clear and understandable manner.
- **Community Partnerships:** AMS will establish partnerships with community organizations that serve limited English proficient families. These partnerships will help us to better understand the needs of our families and help provide more targeted support to those who need it.

Through these strategies, we will ensure that all AMS Arkansas families, regardless of their language proficiency, have access to the same information about school programs, services, and activities. In doing so, we foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for the community to enjoy.

16. Describe how the school will address the needs of gifted and talented students.

After reviewing our program alignment to the Arkansas gifted and talented program based on feedback from Krystal Nail, Program Director for Gifted & Talented and Advanced Placement at the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Learning Services, AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of the gifted and talented requirements to ensure that the full breadth of our well-rounded and rigorous program is available to all students. Our emphasis on math, science, literacy, and fundamental learning skills aims to place all students on the path toward academic achievement that would otherwise qualify them as “gifted and talented.” Backed by differentiated instruction and curriculum resources that allow teachers to address individual student needs, whether struggling or ready for additional rigor, AMS Arkansas will take a multi-faceted and interwoven approach to providing the kind of services and support a gifted and talented program would otherwise provide. Consequently, we do not wish to design criteria for admittance to a gifted and talented program as these services and programming should be available to all students. AMS Arkansas will provide additional rigor with immediacy, flexibility, and equity for all students.

Driven by data, AMS Arkansas will first address the needs of students who merit acceleration through authentic programming integrated into their regular classroom time. Across every classroom, students will need varying levels of remediation, on-level, accelerated, or “gifted” programming. To deliver student aligned instruction and learning opportunities with fidelity, teachers will leverage structured Goals Are My Everything (G.A.M.E., an AMS-designed schedule feature) time 300 minutes per week, weekly exit tickets, common curriculum formative assessments, benchmark data, iReady, and more. Gifted students will participate in meaningful differentiated learning minutes in the regular classroom setting alongside their AMS peers.

Using CMO designed resources, AMS teachers will unpack academic standards and align an arc of learning to the needs of their students. Our curriculum resources and programs afford teachers the opportunity to choose from a variety of resources that push standards and individual students across a range of achievement levels. Furthermore, teachers will select, adapt, and utilize a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to challenge advanced students in all content areas, drive cognitive development at an individualized pace and depth, promote critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, and ultimately instill a sense of intellectual curiosity that also motivates independent learning. By integrating advanced programming into our comprehensive program, teachers can leverage exemplary AMS Arkansas students to model successful learning and skills to the rest of their peers. In alignment with our organization's commitment to serving economically disadvantaged and underserved communities, our belief is that a rising tide will lift all boats. Establishing separate criteria, programming, and pull-out services for gifted and talented students would thus be antithetical to our commitment to transforming *all* AMS Arkansas scholars into tomorrow's global visionaries.

During Goals Are My Everything time 60 minutes per day, five days per week, AMS teachers will provide individualized opportunities for students to push through and fill gaps, or engage in increased rigor that drives students to excel. These 300 minutes per week will be a part of every AMS Arkansas student schedule as the basis for regular intervention, reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration depending on the student. Advanced students will receive various specialized learning opportunities during G.A.M.E. time that would otherwise be reserved for a gifted and talented classroom.

iReady, a research-based program we currently use in Arizona, will help facilitate the kind of individualized support that a gifted and talented program's data collection, typically through abilities testing, would otherwise provide. iReady's MyPath program creates an individualized learning path for each student with sequentially designed learning and lessons to address unique student gaps or provide additional challenge for students ready for the next step in their education. Through adaptive diagnostic tests and further adaptive assessments, student learning and growth is dynamically assessed and maximized. AMS Arkansas teachers will receive regular professional development and administrative support to leverage the tools that iReady provides in support of our belief that gifted and talented programming should be available for all students. Furthermore, iReady's diagnostic and adaptive tools also offer integrated recommendations on how teachers and interventionists should monitor students when using iReady and what skills or standards each student needs emphasis on to reach the next stage of achievement.

Advanced AMS students may also participate in micro-intensive electives including robotics, Academic Pentathlon, research systems, and various specialized sciences, to name a few. Offerings and enrollment in micro-intensive electives will be based on student needs and interests, and teacher strengths and interests. The emphasis of these electives will be for students to work together to leverage their advanced skills to further develop their critical thinking and build interest in diverse subjects that will engage them during and hopefully beyond their time at AMS.

17. Describe how the school will address the needs of students who meet the criteria for an alternative learning environment.

AMS Arkansas is requesting an alternative learning environment waiver in alignment with our existing school model and individualized approach to student development. If approved, AMS will provide on-site integrated services to assist students who would typically be classified as in need of alternative education services. We will not operate standalone alternative learning environments or programs. However, we may employ outside resources to assist with unique student needs if necessary. Overall, AMS staff will be proactive with students in need of extraordinary academic, social, or behavioral support. Our staff will have the tools to meet these kinds of needs with the goal of maximizing each students' ability to succeed in the traditional classroom setting.

All AMS Arkansas students will be evaluated and supports will be determined on an individualized basis. By using systems with proven strategies as described below, AMS will strive to prevent behaviors or situations that would otherwise merit a student needing an ALE. AMS educators will adequately support students while remaining in an inclusion setting with their AMS peers. This model has been successful in serving students at our 9 existing schools.

AMS uses Response to Intervention (RTI) in congruence with Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to match instructional, academic, behavioral, social, and other supports to individual student needs, learning rates, and levels of performance. These factors inform educational and behavioral decisions for each student. Over the course of the entire K-8 program, all AMS students experience RTI and MTSS to varying degrees to ensure their overall success. Regardless of scope, all MTSS teams meet regularly to review interventions and data related to student needs and determine appropriate next steps. For RTI, students who would otherwise qualify for ALE are considered in Tier 3, the most intensive level of intervention. Through regular data-driven collaboration, AMS staff enable students to move through their continuum of services and receive increased or adjusted support based on need.

The AMS MTSS process involves a series of interventions applied to all aspects of a student's education. Interventions are often determined collaboratively with a student's parent(s) or guardian(s). Interventions are highly flexible and student need driven, for example, specific seating assignments, behavior management plans and incentives for positive behavior, or support from staff trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention, to name a few. Students, families, teachers, and school leadership will go through multiple rounds of this process to make data-driven decisions that provide every student with the best possible path toward improving their experience in the traditional learning environment.

AMS provides these differentiated supports in consultation with the school counselor(s), general education teacher(s), members of school leadership, and any other relevant stakeholders in each student's success. In some cases, a student who does not make expected progress may be referred to outside services, a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation, or other form of increased services plan as applicable. Stakeholders will meet regularly with each student demonstrating acute needs and work proactively to provide encouragement, support, and services when a student is on-track. AMS Arkansas leadership will also arrange or provide relevant training/resources/strategies to staff so they may support students more effectively.

AMS Arkansas will implement MTSS and RTI schoolwide with fidelity to ensure that students are provided with timely and appropriate interventions and referrals. These efforts involve multiple stakeholders at various levels of the school's staff to ensure clear, consistent expectations and supports. It is worth noting that fully engaging MTSS and RTI is intended to ensure that all students receive the best support adapted to their exact needs and doing so will not arbitrarily delay any critical services, supports, referrals. Furthermore, these strategies enable staff to strive to avoid pulling students out of classrooms, as this typically leads to learning loss from missing instructional minutes and could result in academic or social distress. AMS utilizes research-based practices and an inclusion model where struggling students have opportunities to learn from exemplar peer models, differentiated instruction, and small group support in their typical classroom. Additionally, staff involved in services for students who would otherwise qualify for ALE will receive professional development on best practices, including training from and recommended by the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Alternative Education. AMS staff preparing this application also met with Dr. C.W. Gardenhire, Alternative Education Program Advisor from the Office of Alternative Education at the Arkansas Department of Education and incorporated their feedback into this response.

To further ensure that students who would otherwise qualify for ALE placement are fully served at AMS, we require students to have exit criteria goals in any support plan. Our goal is for each student to gain the skills to eliminate barriers to accessing the traditional learning setting. Each student's team will clearly identify what factors limit the student's access to the typical school setting. The student's team and stakeholders will put supports in place to develop the necessary skills (coping skills, self-regulation, communication, etc.) so that they can reliably learn and grow with their AMS peers.

AMS also recognizes that there are circumstances where a student who would otherwise qualify for ALE will require support due to home-life challenges. Some examples of this include abuse, homelessness, residency/relocation changes, recurring attendance issues, or dropout risks. In these instances, the team will rely on the learning plan developed as part of the MTSS process. Resulting strategies can include counselor partnerships, distance learning, prescriptive learning plans, or collaboration with partnering programs, to name a few examples. Student needs will be met on an individualized basis and assessed regularly to determine if the learning plan is effective. To measure plan effectiveness, the student's stakeholders will look for sufficient progress in the academic program and/or in the student's overall behavior despite their unique needs or circumstances, though other measures may be established.

AMS Arkansas will also utilize the school's counselor to maintain relationships and coordinate services through varied support service organizations for students who may otherwise qualify for ALE. The counselor(s) will be capable of providing a variety of referrals and resources to students and families to help support them in meeting a variety of needs ranging from basic amenities such as food or clothing, or for more specific or niche needs related to the student's success at home. To the extent allowable by confidentiality, the AMS Little Rock school counselor will also ensure each student's stakeholders are informed and able to support students and families who might benefit from these services.

18. Describe the transportation services that will be provided by the school.

Matching our school operation in Arizona, AMS Arkansas will not provide direct transportation

services, i.e.: via school buses, for all students. Given our intent to open schools in communities with limited access to high performing school options, AMS Little Rock is intended to be available to those in the neighborhoods near the school or within a reasonable driving distance. Through our needs analysis in Little Rock, we are confident that both of our two potential facility locations for the school have sufficient demand to meet our 600-student enrollment cap without the need to bus students in from other communities.

Furthermore, we offer before and after care services beginning at 7:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm every school day so parent transportation allows for flexibility in when the student arrives and departs to suit each family's needs. Parent transportation also provides unique opportunities for school staff and administration to foster connections with families through the pick-up and dismissal process and gives staff a chance to address parents who arrive late. In total, our aim is that AMS Little Rock becomes a safe, reliable, and familiar part of the community.

Regardless, AMS Arkansas will always provide transportation for qualifying McKinney-Vento families and students with IEPs that call for transportation assistance.

In terms of transportation related services, AMS Arkansas will:

- Design and publicize safe walking routes for students who walk to school to use. We will also engage staff in assisting with safe entry from surrounding streets onto school grounds.
- Design and implement effective procedures so that parents can drop off, pick up, and visit the school efficiently and with minimized impact on the surrounding area.
- Explore partnerships with local public transportation providers to provide services for families for low or no cost.
- Offer before and after school care to accommodate families who may not be able to align their work/personal schedules to typical drop off and pick up times.
- Communicate with local rideshare or non-public transportation service providers to ensure that school access through those means is available for those that need it.

If AMS Arkansas provides transportation in future years due to community demand, we will look to all applicable statutes to build a sound and compliant transportation plan. Any school activity whereby the school contracts for transportation services for during or after school activities, such as athletic events or field trips, will align with state requirements for transportation.

19. Describe how the family engagement coordinator (staff member) will develop opportunities for parents and guardians to engage with school staff regarding school operations and the progress of their child.

The family engagement coordinator (role and responsibilities to be initially fulfilled by the executive director/founding school principal) plays a vital role in fostering collaboration between parents, guardians, and school staff. To create engagement opportunities for parents and guardians regarding school operations and their child's progress, the coordinator will take the following steps:

- **Establish Regular Communication Channels:** The coordinator will create regular communication channels such as newsletters, email updates, and use social media platforms to keep parents and guardians informed about school operations and their

child's progress. The coordinator will also use these channels to share upcoming events, workshops, and training sessions.

- **Conduct Parent-Teacher Conferences:** The coordinator will schedule parent-teacher conferences twice a year to discuss student progress and provide feedback to parents and guardians. The coordinator will work with teachers to ensure that these conferences are productive and provide actionable steps for parents to help their child succeed.
- **Organize Family Engagement Events:** The coordinator will organize events that allow parents and guardians to engage with school staff, such as back-to-school nights, community nights, student performances, and parent-teacher organization meetings. These events will provide opportunities for parents to meet teachers and administrators, learn more about school operations, and foster a greater sense of community in the school.
- **Collaborate with Community Organizations:** The coordinator will work with community organizations to create partnerships that provide additional resources and support for families. These partnerships may include local libraries, after-school programs, and community centers.

Overall, the family engagement coordinator will play a crucial role in developing and securing opportunities for parents and guardians to engage with school staff regarding school operations and the progress of their child.

20. Describe the plan for developing and implementing Student Success Plans that assist students with achieving readiness for college, career, and community engagement.

The path to success begins the minute a student and their family choose an AMS campus. Regardless of grade, a clear plan for success gives students the ability to take charge of their education and align themselves with the team of educators working to support them. At AMS Little Rock, the Student Success Plan (SSP) will be an individualized student-centered plan that engages every student based on unique interests and strengths to help foster understanding and appreciation for the relevance of their education and to achieve educational and career goals. The SSP will begin in kindergarten and continue through Grade 8. AMS's success planning will provide systematic support and assistance in setting goals for academic, career, social, emotional, and physical development. The SSP and supporting activities include student portfolios, explorations in careers and high school education, and a variety of cultural and/or business experiences in the community that relate to classroom learning.

Each plan has three core components that drive tracking, reporting, and goal setting: academic development, career exploration/development, and social, emotional, and physical development.

I. Academic Development

Student interests and aspirations are fundamental in the AMS academic program. Our core academic program facilitates the acquisition of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that support becoming a lasting, effective learner in K-8 and beyond. The AMS Student Success Plan is designed to ensure that students complete their primary education with core skills and knowledge as described in Question #6 of this application. With an emphasis on literacy,

science, and math, our goal is that each K-8 student matriculates from our program with the confidence to apply fundamental skills that ensure their academic success and to make informed decisions about their future.

Academic Model Criteria:

- Success in all of AMS's rigorous courses and participation in activities linked to interest, skills, and career pathways offered by AMS or in the community.
- Attainment of education goals.
- Progress toward successful completion of a portfolio/capstone project for each grade level.
- Ongoing support and assessment of progress with a mentor teacher.
- Provision of timely intervention.
- Successful participation in learning experiences outside the classroom.

II. Career Exploration/Development

Over the course of their time at AMS Little Rock, each AMS student will explore and develop their own interests and abilities in the broader context of careers in a dynamic global economy. This career exploration is completed in a variety of classes each year. Each student's customized plan will include varied and flexible educational opportunities, personal connections, elective coursework, and targeted supports tied to each student's education goals. The Student Success Plan guides students from primary education on to secondary education and beyond, allowing them to be informed stakeholders and make academic path choices that align with their interests and goals.

Career Exploration and Development Model Criteria:

- Participate in interest and ability inventories.
- Participate in career exploration activities and elective courses.
- Participate in work-based learning experiences through simulation and/or projects and partnerships outside of school.

Regarding Career and Technical Education (CTE), AMS Arkansas will offer state standards aligned computer science instruction in grades K-8. Students will participate in instruction of varying complexity and depth in all grade levels. By the time AMS Arkansas students reach formal computer science CTE instruction in grades 5-8, they will have a strong foundation from prior time participating in computer science instruction which includes the fundamentals of using a computer, coding, keyboarding, robotics, databases, research, computational thinking, and more. Altogether, the AMS computer science program will not only help students explore the extraordinary variety of careers related to technology and STEM, but also increase their capacity to reap the benefits of technology use in their education as a whole.

Staff providing instruction in career and technical education related courses will have appropriate certification or licensure as appropriate based on the waivers we are applying for. Furthermore, the AMS Arkansas executive director will attest that computer science curriculum standards are being fully taught as part of the annual statement of assurances process with the Arkansas Department of Education. To further develop our response to this question and align our existing computer science programs to Arkansas CTE requirements, AMS spoke with, reviewed resources, and incorporated feedback from Tim Johnston, Kelly Griffin, and Ross White from the Division of Career and Technical Education at the Arkansas

Department of Education.

III. Social, Emotional, and Physical Development

The AMS Student Success Plan supports positive social, emotional, and physical development by helping students engage all the school and staff have to offer while guiding students to take meaningful academic and personal risks necessary for optimal academic achievement. This portion of the AMS plan also tracks and fosters intentional goals and programming to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, manage feelings and emotions, leverage failure as a teacher, engage in behaviors supportive of positive physical health, demonstrate an appreciation for the needs of others, and embrace opportunities for academic, career, and secondary education success.

Social, Emotional and Physical Development Model Criteria:

- Build and demonstrate effective decision-making skills.
- Practice and demonstrate empathic interactions and community service.
- Utilize supportive resources.
- Identify and demonstrate healthy and safe life skills/choices.
- Broaden self-awareness within an expanding context that begins with personal relationships, the classroom, grade level, school community, local community, and ultimately a fully global context for their learning and sense of self.

21. If a waiver of teacher licensure is requested, describe the process for vetting applicants.

a. How will Arkansas Qualified Teacher requirements be ensured for core areas of Math, Science, English, Social Studies, Elementary Ed., Art, Music, and Foreign Languages?

AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of teacher licensure. If approved, all teachers who do not hold a teaching license who teach in a core academic subject area will still be required to meet Arkansas Qualified Teacher (AQT) requirements to be considered for hire. The CMO will complete a record of AQT achievement for each applicant using the Arkansas Qualified Teacher Designation Form. A form for each applicant will be kept in the applicant's file. Furthermore, it is our intent to hire licensed teachers, however, we know that the challenges of the educational hiring landscape, especially in the first year of a school's operation, merits the ability to hire unlicensed but qualified teachers in cases where a position cannot be otherwise filled by a licensed teacher of record. That said, any unlicensed AMS teacher will be encouraged and supported to seek licensure throughout their employment.

All core content applicants not licensed in the content area they wish to teach must be able to demonstrate content knowledge by having a bachelor's degree or higher and by meeting at least one of the following:

- The degree is in the content area the teacher will teach; or
- The teacher has a minimum of eighteen (18) college credit hours in the content area the teacher will teach; or
- The teacher has successfully completed a content area assessment approved by the State Board of Education for the content area the teacher will teach; or
- The teacher has National Board Certification in the content area the teacher will teach; or
- The teacher has documented successful, relevant work experience (employment in the

field or at least one year as supported by two professional letters of recommendation) in the teaching area.

22. If a waiver of class size and teaching load is requested, describe how this will be used.

AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of class size and teaching load to operate class sizes that max out at 30 students per homeroom. Approval of this waiver will align our Arkansas school model close to that of our Arizona schools and maximize our ability to serve as many students and families in need as possible. AMS has a track record of achieving high performing results while maintaining classroom capacities above the limits in Arkansas statute and above the limit we are proposing in our waiver. In Arizona, we operate 31 students per kindergarten class and up to 34 students in grades 1-8. Through high-quality teachers and instruction, comprehensive professional development, strong teacher support infrastructure, and paraprofessional support at 1 per 100 students to assist with instruction and behavior, AMS has achieved excellent academic results using these class sizes.

We believe that high quality teachers equipped with a proven program, high-quality instructional materials, comprehensive professional development, and support, are our greatest lever for success regardless of class size. Thus, the requested class size will facilitate our belief in serving as many students as we can while also delivering high quality academic results. However, we do appreciate that the needs of the Little Rock community may dictate adjusting our model in the future. As such, our commitment to data-driven review and continuous improvement will include a review of class sizes and their impact on our ability to deliver an excellent education to AMS Arkansas students. If we find our class sizes are a detriment to our mission based on academic and behavioral student data and teacher and administrator feedback, we will submit to rescind this waiver or artificially adjust class sizes on a case-by-case basis by grade.

In preparing this response for our final application submission, AMS staff spoke with and incorporated feedback from Tiffani Grayer, Coordinator of School Performance & Monitoring, and Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, Coordinator for Standards and Support/Charter Schools, from the Division of Public School Accountability at the Arkansas Department of Education. We plan to work with the Division of Public School Accountability as we strive to continuously align best practices to the needs of the community with a close eye on the achievement and growth of AMS Arkansas students.

23. Describe how food services will be provided for students.

- a) **Do you have a plan for the service of meals through the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP)? Would the meals be prepared on site or vended. Explain how you would contract and pay for services.**

AMS Arkansas will serve meals under NSLP for breakfast and lunch. We will offer a Request for Proposal (RFP) for vendors to either prepare meals onsite or at their base kitchen and deliver to schools to serve depending on what the site can accommodate, for example in a warming kitchen. Contracted services are typically invoiced per meal served. Following state guidelines, the RFP and competitive bid process allows AMS to adequately determine which vendor can provide needed services at the most reasonable price. Contracted vendors will be paid through NSLP reimbursement based on number of meals tracked by Free, Reduced, and Paid student eligibility status. The vendor will send invoices monthly, AMS will pay the

invoices, and then submit regular reimbursements for the breakfast, lunch, and snack programs to the Arkansas Department of Education Child Nutrition Unit.

- b) Please affirm that you understand that if you provide meals, you must complete an Agreement and Policy Statement with the ADE, DESE, Child Nutrition Unit (CNU). This means that if the Charter has a facility, it must pass inspection with the Arkansas Department of Health. You must have an employee designated as the Child Nutrition Director, a person serving as the certified food protection manager at each site.**

AMS Arkansas affirms understanding of the requirement to complete an Agreement and Policy Statement with the ADE, DESE, Child Nutrition Unit (CNU) to comply with our intent to provide meals through the National School Lunch Program. We also affirm the understanding that our facility must pass inspection with the Arkansas Department of Health and that we will have an employee designated as the Child Nutrition Director who will serve as the certified food protection manager for the school site.

Furthermore, the school's RFP process for NSLP will include a vendor-provided qualified kitchen manager for the school who will make sure all aspects of the food program meet or exceed state and USDA health standards. Certificates of inspection will be posted in plain and public view in the cafeteria and a copy will be sent to the CMO for record keeping for up to 5 years.

- c) Describe the process for establishing meal eligibility and eligibility verification for students, and procurement and purchasing of food.**

To establish meal eligibility and verification for AMS Little Rock students, the school's food program authorities and CMO staff will process free and reduced lunch applications in our meal processing system and complete direct certifications through the state's department of education database.

Following the practices of our successful NSLP operation in Arizona serving 8,500 students with an average of 80% qualifying for free and reduced lunch, our Arkansas schools will scan paper applications for free and reduced priced school meals to the CMO for processing. We will also provide a secure online application for parents that prefer or require such access. Once received, CMO staff supporting AMS Arkansas will enter application data into the student information system and into Mealtime, a point-of-sale platform to apply and pay for free and reduced-price school meals, which will generate student meal eligibility and report student status between Free, Reduced, and Paid. After this process is complete and each student's status is processed, AMS will send a letter to every parent informing them of their status. Further verification of status is not necessary; however, USDA-required verification will be completed in October of each school year. Periodically, AMS staff will run Direct Certification reports through Arkansas's Direct Certification Portal.

AMS school food authorities will work with the Request for Proposal (RFP) selected vendor on the procurement and purchasing of food which is the vendor's responsibility as identified in the school's vendor contract. The vendor will provide a kitchen manager who will ensure the procurement of foods for menu items following the Buy American Provision and ensure that the school's facilities, staff, and practices pass all food safety measures and inspections. In collaboration with the vendor, the school food authorities select and use the commodity allocations, and items are invoiced and delivered to the vendor for food preparation.

All relevant food service employees will be trained on the collection and oversight of NSLP eligibility forms, cafeteria service flows, NSLP reimbursable meals rules/nutrition requirements, food temperature and counts, and will work with the vendor to ensure coverage and menu choices that best serve students.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

24. Describe the governing structure of the open-enrollment charter school including board composition, selection process, length of term and responsibilities.

An AMS charter school functions as a non-profit corporation starting with a corporate board which may or may not consist of the same individuals as the governing board. The corporate board is legally responsible for all contracts and actions the charter school takes and ratifies any actions of subcommittees such as a governing board. The corporate board will be responsible for the hiring and firing of employees but will have the ability to delegate this responsibility to the governing board with the exception of the executive director who can only be displaced by the corporate board.

The governing board for the school shall be a subcommittee of the corporate board made up of state residents from various industries who have a passion for education and the AMS vision for the “Best Education, Best Environment.” In addition to local board members, one member of the CMO will sit on the governing board consistent with our practices in Arizona. The CMO board member will abstain from any votes related to the CMO and AMS Arkansas’s relationship and abide by the conflict of interest policy attached with this application. The governing board will consist of no more than seven members who meet on a monthly basis (exceptions may be made for the winter and summer breaks) to discuss school academic performance, community feedback, financial performance, operational issues, and any state compliance. The corporate board shall ratify all board members joining and leaving the board and a member cannot be displaced from the board with the exception of a majority vote of either board.

Service on the AMS governing board shall be set by four-year terms with an unlimited number of possible terms. Our goal is to establish long-standing partners who are deeply committed to AMS’s work so that they can contribute to the long-term success of the organization and the communities we serve. Each board will have a president and the corporate board will also have a secretary. Both boards will follow all applicable state and charter laws which govern them.

The corporate board of AMS Arkansas will have a license agreement with AMS National for the use of the curriculum, logos, and any other intellectual property that has been created and licensed by AMS National. This board will be responsible for overseeing the integrity of the AMS academic model and ensure it is implemented with fidelity. The corporate board will look to connect all AMS charter schools annually to learn and build on best practices and foster community across school sites and states.

Lastly, AMS Arkansas will contract with AMS Impact Group for back-office services including accounting, finance, development of facilities, facilities oversight, marketing, human resources, talent development, exceptional student education services, grant compliance, state compliance, and student information systems. This contract will be negotiated between the AMS Arkansas corporate board and AMS Impact Group executives, but is proposed to be a fee based on a percentage of all revenue not to exceed 10%.

25. Identify the positions that will have final decision-making authority for the school in the areas of (1) finance and purchasing; (2) student discipline; (3) hiring and firing of staff; and (4) hiring and firing of the school director or superintendent.

The AMS Arkansas corporate board will employ an executive director who will lead the organization in all areas including serving as founding principal to open and launch the school. To begin preparing for the school's launch if the charter is approved, AMS has already hired an executive director. This position will ultimately be responsible for areas 1-3 as stated in this question and will receive input and guidance from the CMO for maximum efficiency and scalability. This position can only be removed by a majority vote of corporate board members and this position's compensation will also be decided by the same board.

Throughout the growth of the AMS Arkansas network, certain responsibilities of the executive director may be delegated to school administration or middle level management including but not limited to student discipline, hiring and firing of staff, and school site expense management. The executive director will retain ultimate authority in making sure that all schools execute the AMS model to achieve our mission.

Though AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of superintendent requirements as cited further in this application, the executive director will intentionally build their knowledge of the Arkansas educational landscape to best align to standards and practices supported by the Arkansas Department of Education, potentially including but not limited to state training and licensure by reciprocity for any educational certifications and degrees currently held in another state.

26. How will the charter ensure that there is a separation of power between the sponsoring entity, charter management organization, school board and superintendent?

In conjunction with the structure noted in Question #24, the checks and balances in place for the separation of power lie in the contracts between AMS National and AMS Arkansas along with separate management agreements between AMS Arkansas and AMS Impact Group. As a licensee of the AMS National brand, AMS Arkansas will rely on the executive director and governing board to carry out the AMS program with fidelity along with tailoring AMS's programs to meet individual student and community needs. Power is equally distributed in this model to allow proper checks and balances and keep the integrity of a proven working school system while allowing maximum flexibility to meet Arkansas specific needs.

27. Explain the charter's conflict of interest policy and identification procedures.

AMS Arkansas has adopted a conflict of interest policy as attached to this application. Conflicts of interest are identified for directors, officers, employees, and agents. This policy is inclusive of board members, volunteers, executive leadership (i.e., CEO, COO, etc.), school leadership (principals, assistant principals, etc.), business managers, and other positions as applicable. Training will be held annually with board members and leadership to review all policies and procedures including the conflict of interest policy to ensure everything is acknowledged and followed with fidelity. AMS Impact Group will assist with identifying any conflicts of interest where present and subsequently mitigate them. Additionally, the structure of all entities will help to diffuse any conflicts of interest that could occur between contractual parties.

28. Describe the student recruitment process and timeline that will provide an equal opportunity for all parents and students to learn about and apply for admission to the proposed public charter school.

AMS Arkansas is committed to informing as many families as possible in the Little Rock area about AMS's mission, vision, and their opportunity to enroll. If our charter application is approved, AMS will advertise through digital, print, and monthly community information meetings to all parents and guardians who live within a certain radius of the school.

Marketing and branding will be carried out on free public and social media sites. AMS will offer families enrollment support to assist with the application process. Enrollment advertisements and materials will be provided in English and Spanish accompanied by an ADA approved website for accessibility.

To ensure that all parents and students have an equal opportunity to learn about the school and apply for admission, we will execute the following timeline:

- March 2023: Digital ad campaign to begin to gauge interest from families in the Little Rock area.
- April 2023: First Notices of Public Hearing in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette notifying the community about the May 10th public hearing.
- May 10, 2023: Public hearing at the McMath Library in Little Rock to share information about AMS and the intent to apply for a charter with interested community members.
- July - September 2023: AMS begins mobilizing interested families to help spread the word locally to their fellow community members.
- October 2023: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- November 1, 2023: Application for enrollment for FY25 available.
- November 2023: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- December 2023: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- January 2024: Enrollment Lottery run.
- January 2024: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- February 2024: Registration offers sent to all students seated in the lottery.
- February 2024: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- March 2024: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- April 2024: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- May 2024: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.
- June 2024: Parent/community information meeting. Meetings will focus on school information as well as enrollment timelines and processes.

29. Describe the procedures for conducting the annual single lottery enrollment process, including how students will be placed on waiting lists and how parents will be notified about each child's selection or order on the waiting list.

AMS Little Rock will be an open-enrollment public charter school that does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, or disability. Families interested in applying do so through a free online application available in both English and Spanish. The enrollment process can be broken down into two distinct periods: open enrollment and post-open enrollment.

I. Open Enrollment & Open Enrollment Lottery

The open enrollment period is the designated period when all admission applications must be submitted for consideration in the random lottery. The open enrollment period ends prior to the date of the lottery.

If the number of students that apply exceeds the capacity for each program, class, grade level, or building occupancy specifications prior to the end of the open enrollment period, students will be admitted through a randomized lottery. All eligible applications submitted during the open enrollment period will be assigned a random lottery number which will determine their placement on a waitlist for open seats. If the number of applications received is fewer than the number of available seats, every student who seeks admission will be admitted. All students admitted to the school will receive notification of their enrollment opportunity via email, text message, and phone message.

II. Post-Open Enrollment

Admission applications received after the open enrollment period are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis behind applications received during the open enrollment period and behind students with priority enrollment preference.

First come, first serve is defined as a process whereby admission applications are processed in order by the date and time they are received in addition to priority enrollment preference. After the open enrollment period for each school year, each completed application is processed in the order the application was received. Parents whose students are admitted during this process, including those on waiting lists, will receive a notice of an offer of admission. Offers of admission must be accepted within the timeline specified in the offer letter.

III. Waitlist

Students who apply during open enrollment that enter the seating lottery but do not gain admission due to a lack of open seating capacity, or students who apply for admission in grade levels in which there is no room, will be placed on the waitlist during the first-come, first-serve period.

Parents will be notified about their child's placement on the waitlist by email and text message. Parents who wish to know their child's order on the waitlist can find out by contacting the school's registration office.

Waitlisted students will be offered admission in the order of their enrollment application submission date/time after priority preferences have been considered. Parents who do not accept admission or complete the entire registration process within the timeframe provided

may be removed from the waitlist and must reapply. Waitlists do not roll over year to year.

30. Will any of the enrollment preferences outlined in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-306(14)(C), will be utilized by the charter school. This includes children of founding members of the charter and siblings of enrolled students. If so, please explain the policy.

AMS Arkansas shall grant enrollment preference and/or reserve capacity for the following students by order of priority:

1. Students returning to the charter school in the second or any subsequent year of its operation.
2. Children or legal wards of employees of the school (not to exceed ten percent of the total number of students enrolled).
3. Siblings of students currently enrolled at the school.

Definition of Sibling: Students will be considered siblings if they share a common parent/guardian or legal ward, either biologically or legally through adoption, and foster children. Students sharing the same primary household are also considered siblings for the purposes of enrollment priority.

31. Explain how students leaving the charter during the school year will impact students on the waiting list.

AMS strongly believes in the importance of remaining consistently enrolled in the same school. However, AMS students who leave the charter school during the school year effectively surrender their seat in the school. Once a seat has been vacated, the next student on the waitlist for that grade will be contacted to enroll and fill the empty seat. Seats will continue to be filled throughout the school year.

32. Provide a list of staff positions that will be employed in the school business office. Include the responsibilities of each position.

I. Positions and responsibilities held by AMS Arkansas charter schools:

Each school site will have one front office manager who will facilitate the proper purchasing and receiving of items needed for the school to operate. This position also oversees contacting substitute teaching agencies and/or substitute teachers and making sure that substitute invoices match actual absences. This position will be responsible for communicating with AMS Impact Group staff about any difficulty in securing goods and services.

Each school site will also employ an assistant principal who will focus on overseeing facilities, student trips, the school lunch program, and other duties as assigned. This position will work with the principal to review spending in these areas to maintain budget alignment.

Lastly, the school principal at each school is responsible for approving all expenses related to the school's individual spending on items such as supplies, professional development, substitute teachers, etc.

II. Positions and responsibilities held by AMS Impact Group as part of the back-office agreement

AMS Arkansas will contract with AMS Impact Group for all school business back-office services. AMS Impact Group's financial team provides full scale financial services

encompassing accounts payable, procurement, financial reporting, accounting, and audit compliance. AMS Impact Group accomplishes this work through a chief financial officer who holds an inactive certified public accountant (CPA) license, a director of accounting with an active CPA license, a senior accountant, a senior financial analyst, a director of grants, and a team comprised of various other positions dedicated to accounts payable and procurement. These positions are responsible for ensuring that the executive director of AMS Arkansas, the governing board, and principal(s) have all the necessary financial information to make budgetary decisions as well as provide financial compliance information to all necessary parties. These levels of financial staffing also allow for the proper segregation of duties to ensure financial controls are met.

The full list of services that AMS Impact Group provides can be found in Question #40 of this application, but each specific position noted above has the following responsibilities:

- **Chief Financial Officer:** Set financial targets and objectives for each AMS school in collaboration with local governing boards, the executive director, and principal(s). Ensure that financial reporting is completed on time and presented to external stakeholders so they are informed of the financial state of the schools.
- **Director of Accounting:** Ensure that financial data is recorded correctly and ensure that the school's financial statements are reviewed and closed monthly. Oversee the senior accountant and the team responsible for procurement and payments.
- **Senior Accountant:** Ensure that all transactions are entered correctly and assist the teams responsible for procurement with importing financial data. Perform monthly reconciliations of bank accounts and credit card statements.
- **Senior Financial Analyst:** Prepare monthly reporting of budget to actuals and identify lagging spending areas. Work with the chief financial officer to put together annual budgets as well as 5-year projections for the organization and strategize any growth plans. Complete quarterly compliance with external parties through financial reporting.
- **Accounts Payable/Procurement Team:** Responsible for processing procurement requests from the internal system/schools to ensure that schools have necessary supplies and services on time and proper approvals have been received. Ensure that payments for such supplies and services are processed in a timely manner and have been properly received.
- **Director of Grants:** Oversee all federal, state, and local grants to ensure proper compliance as well as present annual amounts to the chief financial officer and senior financial analyst for budgetary planning. Work with grants compliance staff and local leadership to ensure compliance with all stakeholders.

33. Describe the plan for managing procurement activities. Specify the types of financial decisions to be made at the school level, board level and charter management organization level.

AMS Arkansas will adopt procurement policies which align with federal and state standards as they relate to the purchasing of commodities. Please see the AMS Arkansas Purchasing Policy attached with this application for further detail. AMS National will execute curriculum purchasing for the schools as outlined in their agreement in order to receive the best possible price on bulk materials. AMS Impact Group will assist the school and governing board with the procurement of all other items through a procurement system (currently Procurify) supported by a local level school staff member.

The charter school will have the autonomy to purchase items that meet student needs as long as they are within the bounds of the adopted budget as described in Question #34. The governing board will review and approve all purchases quarterly through the review of financial statements and budget to actual submissions presented by AMS Impact Group and the executive director.

34. Describe the process by which the school governance will adopt an annual budget.

Each winter, AMS Impact Group's financial services team will meet with the executive director and/or principals of AMS Arkansas schools to go through their current budget to actual spending and discuss areas of need for the following school year along with any unforeseen gaps in the current budget. This meeting will serve as the foundation for the budget adoption process.

After this meeting, the AMS Impact Group financial services team will formulate a budget in Excel for the following year broken out by each school and consolidated as an AMS Arkansas district. The budget is full-scale encompassing all items that affect revenues and expenses along with capital items which affect the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities. The budget will consider all new legislative initiatives which may change revenue or expenses, cost of living changes, contractual pricing changes, etc. This budget will then undergo a revision and approval process directly with the AMS Arkansas executive director to ensure that the budget meets applicable Arkansas laws, provides long term fiscal sustainability for the schools, and meets any external crediting requirements.

Once a final budget is established, the executive director and AMS Impact Group financial services team will present the proposed budget to the AMS Arkansas boards for the upcoming school year and allow the governing board at least one remaining board meeting to approve any recommended changes or considerations. The final budget as adopted by the board will be uploaded into the financial software system of the school and will serve as the foundation for the approval of purchases as well as the financial compass for each individual school and its administration.

35. Describe the way an annual audit of the financial and programmatic operations of the school will be conducted. If the school wishes to request that the authorizer allow a licensed accountant or licensed certified public accountant, rather than the Legislative Auditor, to perform the first-year audit, identify the accountant by name, firm, address, and phone number. The named accountant must meet the requirements of ADE Rules Governing Publicly Funded Educational Institution Audit Requirements, including the prohibition on auditors providing non-audit services (such as accounting or consulting services) to auditees. A school's preference as stated in this application may not be changed without prior approval of the authorizer.

AMS Arkansas requests that the authorizer allow a licensed certified public accountant, rather than the Legislative Auditor, to perform the first-year audit. This audit will be conducted by an Arkansas-licensed CPA and/or firm. The audit will be conducted in accordance with auditing standards as set forth by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants or other applicable audit standards as determined by the AMS Impact Group financial services team in compliance with ADE audit rules and best practices for auditing a public charter school. Auditors will test a sample of our transactions, review our internal control environment, and ensure that our financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for non-profits and Government Auditing Standards (GAS).

The draft of the audited financial statements will be reviewed by the executive director and the AMS Impact Group financial services team. As the financial statements are the responsibility of the audited party, the AMS Arkansas board will review and adopt all audits prior to final issuance.

AMS Arkansas requests permission to use:
Landmark CPAs
Randy Milligan, Co-Managing Member & CPA
201 East Markham, Ste. 500
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-375-2025

36. If the facility to be used by the school has been identified, list the owner(s) of the facility, and describe their relationship with employees or directors of the sponsoring entity or charter management organization.

A facility has not been secured yet, but we will provide this information once a facility has been confirmed.

37. If the facility to be used by the school is not currently in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provide a list of items that will need to be addressed to bring the facility into compliance.

A facility has not been secured yet, but it is our expectation that the facility will be 100% ADA and IDEA compliant.

38. Are there any alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility?

A facility has not been secured yet, but it is our expectation that there will not be alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility.

39. Describe the potential impact of the proposed public charter school on the efforts of affected public school districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.

This desegregation analysis is in support of AMS Arkansas' request to be granted a charter for an open-enrollment public charter school located in Little Rock, Arkansas within Pulaski County. The school site will be located within the boundaries of either the Little Rock School District (LRSD); Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD); or North Little Rock School District (NLRSD); or a combination of the above-listed school districts. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-106, AMS Arkansas is required to carefully review the potential impact its operations would have upon the efforts of the LRSD, PCSSD, NLRSD, and Jacksonville North Pulaski School District (JNPSD) to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. At full enrollment, AMS Arkansas will serve students in grades K-8 with a maximum enrollment cap of 600 students.

I. The Status of Pulaski County Desegregation Litigation

AMS Arkansas is providing this desegregation analysis in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 to review the potential impact that its charter application would have upon the efforts 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, AMS Arkansas 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 the 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, AMS Arkansas’ requested charter 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 AMS Arkansas’ requested charter could impact LRSD’s unitary status. To be clear, AMS Arkansas’ charter 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 the 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, AMS Arkansas believes that its request to obtain an 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 the 2021-22 enrollment figures as maintained by the ADE Data Center, LRSD

had a student population of 20,786 students, of which approximately 59.9% were African American, 19.6% were White, and 16.0% were Hispanic. NLRSD's student population was 7,685 students, of which approximately 57.2% were African American, 25.8% were White, and 11.5% were Hispanic. PCSSD's student population was 11,265 students, of which approximately 44.4% were African American, 38.6% were White, and 10.2% were Hispanic. JNPSD's student population was 3,846 students, of which approximately 54.8% were African American, 33.9% were White, and 7.5% were Hispanic.

Under Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-306(6)(A), AMS Arkansas must be race-neutral and non-discriminatory in its student selection and admission process. While it is impossible to project its future racial composition accurately, AMS Arkansas will implement admissions policies that are consistent with state and federal laws, regulations, and/or guidelines applicable to charter schools.

In addition, Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 requires that AMS Arkansas' 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, AMS Arkansas' careful review of the relevant statutes and court orders affecting the LRSD, NLRSD, PCSSD, and JNPSD and their student populations shows that such negative impact is not present here.

III. Conclusion

AMS Arkansas 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 application to operate an open-enrollment public charter school within the geographic boundaries of the LRSD, NRLSD, PCSSD, or a combination of those school districts.

40. List the services that the CMO will provide to the charter and the annual cost of the services.

AMS Arkansas will contract with AMS Impact Group for services for a fee not to exceed 10% of all school revenue. The services provided for this fee are the minimum amount of services the contracted organization will provide.

I. Technology and IT Services

1. Designing overall technology, IT systems, and strategy
2. Assuring alignment of technology purchases with technology strategy
3. Providing staff training on the technology and IT systems
4. Designing overall data collection systems; selecting and/or creating database systems; assuring compatibility and security of systems
5. Managing IT staff at all school sites
6. Conducting research on future growth of technology and IT services and equipment and implementing changes and improvements
7. Website content maintenance and supervision of design

II. Public Relations

1. Developing the public relations strategy for AMS Arkansas
2. Preparing and distributing press releases for AMS Arkansas
3. Conducting regular outreach efforts for AMS Arkansas
4. Engaging firms for PR services as required

5. Attending networking events and conferences as representatives of AMS Arkansas

III. Enrollment Marketing

1. Managing staff for open house events
2. Managing online recruitment platforms including Facebook and Google AdWords and all print advertisements including brochures and postcards

IV. Staff Recruitment and Human Resources

1. Managing the identification of open positions, posting of positions, attendance at recruitment events, all aspects pertaining to the search for new candidates, and hiring from the beginning to the end of the process including contracting with all third-party vendors and platforms
2. All HR functions involved in employee onboarding
3. Screening of and selecting benefits providers
4. Handling all employee questions with respect to employment and benefits and managing legal and other help as necessary in case of employment complaints or lawsuits

V. Development

1. Identifying relevant grant opportunities
2. Writing and administering of all grants for AMS Arkansas
3. Managing fundraising for special projects and needs
4. Contracting with outside fundraisers and/or providing fundraising staff at each school as required

VI. Other Services

1. Negotiating capital equipment purchases and leases for existing sites
2. Maintaining AMS Arkansas' corporate files and providing support for board meetings
3. Preparing state-required annual reports for AMS Arkansas
4. Providing school calendars that meet state requirements
5. Providing time schedules for all charter schools
6. Coordinating and supervising building and asset maintenance and repair
7. Planning staffing levels at each charter school

VII. Enrollment and Enrollment Maintenance

1. Supervising operations related to:
 - a. Enrollment, including registration, waitlist management, and withdrawals
 - b. Attendance
 - c. Student Records
2. Creating manuals and timelines for policies and procedures and staff training related to:
 - a. Enrollment, including registration, waitlist management, and withdrawals
 - b. Attendance
 - c. Student Records
3. Conducting market analysis (demand for AMS Arkansas' services)
4. Conducting student-retention analysis
5. Preparing periodic enrollment reports for the Board

VIII. SAIS – Student Automatic Information System

1. Contracting with database-system providers, updating, and solving database problems
2. Conducting data-entry training for site staff
3. Supervising data entry
4. Supervising data uploads
5. Reconciling SAIS and AMS Arkansas database data
6. Supervising SAIS legal compliance

IX. Students

1. Creating policies and procedures and supervising operations related to:
 - a. Identifying and providing services to “Atypical Learners” (i.e., students that demonstrate atypical learning behavior: a faster or slower pace of learning than the average student)
 - b. Identifying and providing educational services to students with special needs, in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, including state-required reporting
2. Finding, contracting, and supervising licensed exceptional student services/special education staff at all school sites including, but not limited to, evaluation staff, psychologists, and speech and all other therapists
3. Supervising data collection and providing relevant data for state monitoring and exceptional student services/special education audits

X. Accounting

1. Preparing proposed, adopted, and adjusted versions of school budgets
2. Preparing financial reports for all the charter schools
3. Submitting budgets and financial reports to applicable authorities as required by law
4. Coordinating, preparing, and providing audit data for annual audits
5. Recording AMS Arkansas’ accounting data
6. Preparing quarterly financial reports for the board(s)
7. Preparing AMS Arkansas’ tax returns
8. Managing accounts payable and accounts receivable
9. Maintaining all vendor files
10. Assuring compliance with GAAP accounting standards
11. Assuring compliance with any bondholder reporting requirements

WAIVERS

Complete the following tables indicating all sections of Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education rules, and the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts from which the public charter school seeks to be exempted to meet the goals of the school.

Please use the waiver list provided below. This list includes the appropriate waiver topic and citations to the applicable Arkansas Code Section, Rules, and Standard to fully effectuate the requested waiver.

Each of your waiver requests must include a rationale. Failure to provide a rationale will result in your application being marked as incomplete.

Waiver #1 Topic	Acquisition of Commodities
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-303(b)
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS Arkansas requests a waiver of part (b) of the above Arkansas Code on the grounds that teacher allowances are part of the financial model and we prefer that orders are placed through the school's office manager for efficiency. Additionally, the school principal is thus able to approve purchases related to academic activity to ensure they are in compliance with academic curriculum standards. Teachers at AMS do not pay out of pocket for any materials purchased in relation to this code.</p> <p>Teacher supplies and needed items are procured by the office manager of the school through the contracted procurement system supported by the CMO. Different classes can require different budgets (ex: art) and thus teachers are given the ability to purchase items for their class on an as needed basis and not on a monetary basis. Staff are also allotted the ability to decorate their classroom with school funds with a budget typically capped at \$300. This limit is determined at the discretion of each school principal as they are ultimately responsible for managing this line of the school's budget.</p>

Waiver #2 Topic	Board of Directors
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-13-608 6-13-611

	6-13-612(c) 6-13-613 6-13-615 6-13-616(a) 6-13-617 6-13-618 6-13-619(a), (c), (d)(2)(A), (d)(4) 6-13-620(5) 6-13-622(b) 6-13-630 6-13-631 6-13-634 6-13-635 6-13-1303 6-14-101, et seq.
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS Arkansas requests a waiver of these statutes to the extent that the provisions are inapplicable in a public charter school setting and are materially addressed through the bylaws of the nonprofit corporation formed for this charter. Additionally, AMS Arkansas requests a waiver of 6-13-620(5) to the extent that a contract for a leader has been established in preparation for the formation of a charter and to the extent that this contract is binding for the contractual term and includes metrics needed for performance. Renewal of future leadership contracts and annual performance reviews as a part of these contracts is embedded within the framework of AMS schools. A waiver of section 6-13-635 is requested to the extent that teacher salaries will be governed by the salary schedule and any increases to employee salaries will be within the context of an annual budget approved by the school board however, individual compensation decisions will be determined by the executive director and their administrative reports where no schedule exists. A waiver of section 6-13-619(a) is needed to the extent that governing board members are volunteer board positions and a mixture of professionals, staff, and parents at any given point in time. As such, AMS Arkansas will work with the board to find a time to meet that serves all members and staff alike. Additionally, it is our experience that regularly scheduled meetings and times allow for transparency and proper planning for any issues that need addressed without the need of special requests. AMS Arkansas will meet monthly beginning with the start of the first school calendar year and may take recesses for summer or other school breaks and when no action items are present.</p>

Waiver #3 Topic	Classified Employee Minimum Salary
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-2201, et seq.
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas follows all applicable federal and state laws with regards to minimum compensation for staff and the need to provide paid breaks where federally or state mandated. AMS Arkansas also will remain competitive with regard to paraprofessional hiring by providing opportunities for staff to get classroom experience and help support additional post-secondary education to facilitate a process whereby paraprofessionals can become teachers. AMS Arkansas wishes to have the autonomy to decide the best course of action for classified staff without the mandates related to bonuses. As a network, AMS currently has a teacher in residence program that helps paraprofessionals transition to classroom aides to classroom teaching ready and will look for creative ways to model this program in Arkansas. The program description as currently run in Arizona is attached.

Waiver #4 Topic	Leased Academic Facilities & Flag Display
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-105 6-16-106 6-21-117(2)-(5)
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 6-A.1
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas requests a waiver of this portion of the Arkansas Education Code to the extent it requires AMS's facilities to conform to the specific school facility standards defined in the Arkansas School Facility Manual and/or to erect a flagstaff on the school grounds. AMS ensures that any and all facilities uses for academic purposes will meet the requirements of all applicable state and local health and safety codes, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. However, AMS may be leasing its facilities and may not be permitted to erect a flagstaff as described in the cited statute. Therefore, AMS will plan for alternative methods to prominently display the United States and Arkansas flags at the school.

Waiver #5 Topic	Library Media Specialist
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-25-103 6-25-104
Standard for Accreditation	4-F.1 4-F.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of the requirement to employ a dedicated library media specialist or librarian. As described in Question #12 of this application, AMS will meet or exceed the expectations of this statute by taking an integrated approach to fulfilling the provision of library media services and standards education in lieu of staffing the position prescribed by the above Arkansas Code and Standards. AMS will provide library media services with fidelity covering the standards, access to materials, and professional development.

Waiver #6 Topic	Personnel Policies
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-111 6-17-114 6-17-117 6-17-203 6-17-204 6-17-205 6-17-208 6-17-209 6-17-210 6-17-211 6-17-301(a) & (b) 6-17-1201, et seq. 6-17-1301, et seq. 6-17-2301(c)(1) & (d)(2) 6-17-2302 6-17-2303 6-17-2304 6-17-2305 6-11-129(a)(1)(b)
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites – Section 6
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of personnel policies in this section to the extent that additional committees and requirements are presented above normal AMS school

personnel procedures. AMS Arkansas personnel policies will be set by the governing board and executive director based on best practices throughout the educational industry, staff input, other applicable federal and state legal requirements, and budgetary constraints. AMS Arkansas' personnel policy and contracts will create a process by which contractual grievances can be mediated. Additionally, disputes arising from staff concerns will be resolved through dedicated CMO human resources personnel who are degreed and trained in best practices. Additional layers of policies and procedures resulting from the above Arkansas codes can cause inefficiencies and delays in efficient resolutions of staff concerns.

AMS Arkansas also seeks to waive the requirements surrounding non-teaching hours. AMS Arkansas teacher contracts will limit the amount of teaching hours required, currently 31 per week, and includes pay for hours beyond this limit. Additionally, AMS school schedules currently allow for 60 minutes of planning and 60 minutes of lunch period. However, AMS Arkansas wishes to preserve the right to modify schedules in the event a teacher has less than the required hours and/or a specific student day requires additional help from staff. This flexibility also allows the greatest efficiency and maximum impact to the overall student experience and safety as it pertains to drop-off and dismissal.

With regards to Arkansas Code § 6-17-301, AMS Arkansas administrative contracts contain language which speak to the termination process, length, and financial obligations of the non-profit corporation. In Waiver #11, AMS Arkansas is asking for a waiver of administrative licensing, including for the superintendent (executive director), though a background check and review of eligibility for administration for a position is standard practice.

Speaking to Arkansas Code §§ 6-17-111, 114, and 117, AMS Arkansas will post salary information (teacher salaries will be governed by a salary schedule) and personnel policies on our public website, but we are seeking this waiver as the information and policies in our model will look different than those set forth in the statute. Furthermore, despite the waivers of these statutes and as mentioned above, AMS Arkansas teachers will be given adequate preparation/planning time, a 60-minute lunch break, and reasonable amounts of additional non-instructional duties to ensure that our personnel policies promote staff retention.

AMS Arkansas is asking for waivers of minimum sick leave balances to allow policies and procedures to be designed for

	all staff which are in accordance with other applicable state and federal laws and account for the competitive landscape of both a local and regional area. Sick leave is part of existing AMS policies along with federal holidays and other forms of paid time off.
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Waiver #7 Topic	Principal
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-302
Standard for Accreditation	Standards 4-C.1, 4-C.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of the need to have valid supervisory or administrator licenses pursuant to the above cited statutes. The principal of the school, a role that will be initially fulfilled by the executive director, will be employed on an at-will basis and will not be required to hold supervisory or administrative licenses/certificates. Once the executive director, who will themselves be qualified in excess of the waivable state requirements, transitions the role to a new principal, this waiver will allow AMS to select and hire a qualified principal with the requisite experience and skillset to operate and achieve excellence leading AMS's program. The new principal will also be closely supervised by and report to the executive director.

Waiver #8 Topic	School Counselors
Arkansas Code Annotated	
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 4-E.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of Standard 4-E.2 to allow us to implement a student to counselor ratio of 600 to 1 to match our current model in Arizona. Primarily based on our experience operating this ratio in AMS Arizona schools, we are confident that the approval of this waiver will result in effective counselors and student support at AMS Little Rock. Furthermore, once AMS Little Rock reaches our proposed charter enrollment cap of 600 students, Standard 4-E.2. places an awkward burden insofar as the 450 students for every 1 counselor ratio is concerned. With 600 students maximum, this Arkansas Standard dictates that we would have two counselors even though the actual ratio would be much lower

than the 450 prescribed by the state. As such, this request for a waiver not only enables AMS Arkansas to align with AMS's counselor model in general, but also aligns the school's staffing needs commensurate with the maximum number of students we intend to serve.

In terms of the research that we previously reviewed to prepare our model in Arizona that now applies to this waiver, our team looked to studies performed in the Tennessee public school system focused on student to counselor ratios and measures of effectiveness (Judith A. Boser, William A. Poppen, Charles L. Thompson. Elementary School Guidance Program Evaluations: A Reflection of Student Counselor-Ratio, Vol. 36, No. 2). There are demographic similarities between Tennessee and Arkansas and the two states are commonly compared. The results of this study showed that a single counselor in schools with enrollment of 600 or less is extremely effective in supporting children with mental health challenges, negative behaviors, academics, and community involvement. The measured community perception of schools with a ratio of one counselor per 600 or less students was also overwhelmingly positive. Community stakeholders observed that schools with this ratio and below were safer, communicated effectively, and generated strong results in building character among the student body.

Consequently, our key takeaway from Boser et. al is that a ratio of 600 to 1 and below was considered effective and ratios higher than 600 to 1 yielded diminishing effectiveness. When deciding our target ratio in Arizona, this study was key in helping us identify that our counselors can be effective at 600 to 1, a ratio that also helped our organization align effective student services to a financially sustainable staffing model across 9 schools and 8,500 students. Although lower ratios can be more effective at face value, our experience serving thousands of Arizona students using this ratio aligns with the findings of the study that 600 to 1 is quite effective given the operational and support structures in place for our counselors as described in this application. Even though this waiver request aims to lift AMS Arkansas' obligation to follow a ratio by law, our firm intent is to serve students using 600 to 1 or less. If approved, AMS Little Rock will open with a single full-time counselor regardless of the school's enrollment and 600 students per 1 counselor is the maximum at which services would be rendered in this proposed staffing model once the school reaches its enrollment cap. In the event that the school should expand beyond our initial enrollment cap of 600 students, we will hire an additional counselor to ensure that we do not diminish the school counselor's effectiveness by

	<p>exceeding 600 to 1.</p> <p>Furthermore, Emily Goodman Scott’s case study, Maximizing School Counselors’ Efforts by Implementing School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: A Case Study from the Field (Professional School Counseling, Vol.17, No.1) and the research by Boser et. al both found that the primary measure of school counselor effectiveness should not be based solely upon counselor to student ratio, but instead upon counselor availability and operational structures. AMS counseling services are built around a strong discipline matrix, a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) system, and child find design that provides students with full accessibility to counseling services regardless of the avenue of referral or lack thereof. Our emphasis on accessibility has yielded measurable success using a 600 to 1 ratio that speaks to the highly effective impact of counseling upon the academic and behavioral success of AMS K-8 students.</p> <p>The rigid structures in place for AMS’s counseling services model will ensure that AMS Arkansas students have an abundance of access to counseling and support services. Since the implementation of this ratio and accompanying systems, AMS has increased state child find process effectiveness by well over 500%. This dramatic increase in effectiveness is a direct result of our counseling services model which creates inclusion for all student success stakeholders and provides full accessibility for counselors to support students. The structured model AMS Arkansas will offer will elevate all students toward their greatest potential.</p> <p>All that said, AMS will plan to keep an eye on the growth of the school and needs of the community and adjust our proposed student to counselor ratio if needed. Given our experience and results with the 600:1 ratio, we are confident that AMS Little Rock’s single Arkansas licensed counselor, if this waiver is approved, will be able to provide ample support for all students and not engage in multiple duties or be overwhelmed beyond the scope of the position or by the caseload.</p>
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Waiver #9 Topic	Superintendent
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-13-109 6-17-427
Standard for Accreditation	Standards 4-B.1, 4-B.2
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring

	Program
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS Arkansas requests a waiver of the above cited superintendent requirements. With the launch of the school, AMS will employ an executive director to operate our efforts in Arkansas and also serve as the founding principal. The executive director will report directly the CMO's executive team, particularly the chief academic officer, and the AMS corporate/governing board(s). AMS is requesting a waiver of the Superintendent Mentoring Program as the AMS executive director will receive extensive support and performance monitoring through the CMO and AMS network, and technical support from the Arkansas Public School Resource Center and the Arkansas Department of Education Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. The AMS executive director will be extensively familiar with the AMS program and be capable of executing and adjusting it to the new community in Arkansas.</p> <p>Furthermore, the executive director's execution of our program, performance as a leader, and results in Arkansas in service of students, families, and the state's educational goals at large will be scrutinized and supported rigorously. The AMS executive director will participate in regular training for best practices in all areas of the charter school's operation. In total, we are requesting a waiver of the Superintendent Licensure and Mentoring program based on the confidence that our supportive, supervisory, and accountability structures will produce a consistently successful executive director in service of AMS Arkansas.</p> <p>Though AMS Arkansas requests a waiver of the cited superintendent requirements, the executive director of AMS Arkansas will intentionally build their knowledge of the Arkansas educational landscape to best align to standards and practices supported by the Arkansas Department of Education, potentially including but not limited to state training and licensure by reciprocity for the educational certifications and degrees currently held in another state.</p>

Waiver #10 Topic	Teacher Licensure
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1004 6-17-309 6-17-401 6-17-418 6-17-902 6-17-908 6-17-919

Standard for Accreditation	Standard 4-D.1
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure – Section 7
Rationale for Waiver	<p>Mirroring our operation in Arizona, AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of teacher licensure and certification. AMS intends to consider candidates based on their qualification for each position regardless of certification or licensure status. If approved, AMS teaching candidates who do not hold a teaching license in a core academic subject area will still be required to meet Arkansas Qualified Teacher (AQT) requirements to be considered for hire. Furthermore, it is our intent to hire licensed teachers, however, we know that the challenges of the educational hiring landscape, especially in the first year of a school’s operation, merits the ability to hire unlicensed but qualified teachers in cases where a position cannot be otherwise filled by a licensed teacher of record. That said, any unlicensed AMS teacher will be encouraged and supported to seek licensure throughout their employment.</p> <p>A record of AQT achievement will be completed by the CMO for each applicant using the Arkansas Qualified Teacher Designation Form. A form for each applicant will be kept in the applicant’s file.</p> <p>All core content applicants not licensed in the content area that wish to teach must be able to demonstrate content knowledge by having a bachelor's degree or higher and by meeting at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree is in the content area the teacher will teach; or • The teacher has a minimum of eighteen (18) college credit hours in the content area the teacher will teach; or • The teacher has successfully completed a content area assessment approved by the State Board of Education for the content area the teacher will teach; or • The teacher has National Board Certification in the content area the teacher will teach; or • The teacher has documented successful, relevant work experience (employment in the field or at least one year as supported by two professional letters of recommendation) in the teaching area.

Waiver #11 Topic	Class Size and Teaching Load
Arkansas Code Annotated	
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 1-A.5 (Class Size) Standard 1-A.6 (Teaching Load)

ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load																																				
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS has a track record of achieving high performing results while maintaining classroom capacities above those restrictions noted in Arkansas statute. While our typical class sizes range from 31-34 students, AMS Arkansas is asking for a class size that maxes out at 30 students per homeroom as noted on the charts below. Additionally, AMS Arkansas provides paraprofessional support at approximately 1 per 100 students to assist with classroom instruction and behavior. This model allows AMS Arkansas to serve as many students as possible who are in need of a high-quality education in each community school building.</p> <p>Teaching staff are capped at 31 teaching hours per week for general education and 25 hours a week for special education. Teachers are compensated contractually based on the number of working days and weekly teaching hours. Staff that exceed these teaching hours will be compensated at their contracted daily rate divided by 8 to yield an hourly compensation rate. Teachers will only exceed these teaching hours when either filling in for an absent teacher for a period or if they contractually agree to exceed their 31-hour limit for additional pro-rated compensation.</p> <p>For more information, please refer to Question #22 of this application.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="584 1197 1136 1680"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Total Enrollment</u></th> <th>FYXX</th> <th>FYXX</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1st grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5th grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6th grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7th grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8th grade</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9th - 12th grade</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>540</td> <td>540</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Total Enrollment</u>	FYXX	FYXX	K	60	60	1st grade	60	60	2nd grade	60	60	3rd grade	60	60	4th grade	60	60	5th grade	60	60	6th grade	60	60	7th grade	60	60	8th grade	60	60	9th - 12th grade			Total	540	540
<u>Total Enrollment</u>	FYXX	FYXX																																			
K	60	60																																			
1st grade	60	60																																			
2nd grade	60	60																																			
3rd grade	60	60																																			
4th grade	60	60																																			
5th grade	60	60																																			
6th grade	60	60																																			
7th grade	60	60																																			
8th grade	60	60																																			
9th - 12th grade																																					
Total	540	540																																			

<u>Sections</u>	FYXX	FYXX
K	2.00	2.00
1st grade	2.00	2.00
2nd grade	2.00	2.00
3rd grade	2.00	2.00
4th grade	2.00	2.00
5th grade	2.00	2.00
6th grade	2.00	2.00
7th grade	2.00	2.00
8th grade	2.00	2.00
9th - 12th grade		
Total	18	18
<u>Enrollment Capacity per Class</u>	FYXX	FYXX
K	30.00	30.00
1st grade	30.00	30.00
2nd grade	30.00	30.00
3rd grade	30.00	30.00
4th grade	30.00	30.00
5th grade	30.00	30.00
6th grade	30.00	30.00
7th grade	30.00	30.00
8th grade	30.00	30.00
9th - 12th grade		
Total	270	270

Waiver #12 Topic	Instructional Materials
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-413
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Instructional Materials – Sections 5.01, 5.01.2
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS Arkansas is requesting a waiver of the requirement to select and establish an instructional materials/textbook selection committee comprised of a majority membership of licensed personnel and classroom teachers. Per our current practices, the selection of instructional materials will be primarily carried out by the CMO in partnership with applicable AMS Arkansas staff and boards to ensure alignment with our program and model.</p> <p>Furthermore, if the addition of new materials is necessary for one or many reasons, AMS is seeking this waiver to ensure we</p>

	<p>have the appropriate flexibility to engage our existing curriculum and instructional materials selection processes. In these processes, which may or may not include the establishment of a committee depending on context, it is typical that AMS seeks the input of local level classroom teachers.</p> <p>Finally, we are requesting this waiver as it calls for a majority membership that is licensed—AMS is also requesting a waiver of teacher licensure and may rely on adequately qualified but not licensed staff in the selection of instructional materials or textbooks.</p>
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Waiver #13 Topic	Gifted and Talented
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-20-2208(c)(6) 6-42-109
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 2-G.1
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS is requesting a waiver of the Arkansas Gifted and Talented program requirements as cited above based on our multi-faceted and interwoven approach to providing all students with a well-rounded and rigorous K-8 education. In alignment with our organization’s commitment to serving economically disadvantaged and underserved communities, establishing separate criteria, programming, and pull-out services for gifted and talented students would thus be antithetical to our commitment to transforming all AMS Arkansas scholars into tomorrow’s global visionaries. Students in need of additional challenge, rigor, and opportunities for growth will receive such support and services with immediacy, flexibility, and equity through a variety of learning activities and instruction methods.</p> <p>Please refer to Question #16 of this application for more information.</p>

Waiver #14 Topic	Transportation
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-19-101, et seq.
Standard for Accreditation	

ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>AMS Arkansas intends to open schools in communities with limited access to high performing school options. We are requesting a waiver of the above Arkansas Code as we do not intend to provide general transportation services at this time. Through our community needs analysis and market research, we are confident that both of our two potential facility locations for the school have enough demand to meet our 600-student enrollment cap without the need to bus students in from other communities.</p> <p>Furthermore, we offer before and after care services beginning at 7:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm every school day so parent transportation allows for flexibility in when the student arrives and departs to suit each family’s needs. Parent transportation also provides unique opportunities for school staff and administration to foster connections with families during the pick-up and dismissal process and gives staff a chance to address parents who arrive late.</p> <p>If AMS Arkansas provides transportation in future years due to community demand, we will look to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-19-101, et seq. to build a transportation plan. AMS Arkansas will always provide transportation as required by law to students with IEPs that indicate the need for transportation services and for McKinney-Vento students.</p> <p>This waiver shall not apply to any school activity whereby the school contracts for bussing serves for during or after school activities such as athletic events or field trips. Such usage of transportation will align with state requirements.</p>

Waiver #15 Topic	Alternative Learning Environment (ALE)
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5) 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i) 6-48-102 6-48-103
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 2-I.1
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding – Section 4
Rationale for Waiver	AMS Arkansas is requesting an alternative learning environment waiver in alignment with our existing school model and individualized approach to student development. If approved, AMS will provide on-site integrated services to

assist students who would typically be classified as in need of alternative education services. We will not operate standalone alternative learning environments or programs. However, we may employ outside resources to assist with unique student needs if necessary. Overall, AMS staff will be proactive with students in need of extraordinary academic, social, or behavioral support. Our staff will have the tools to meet these kinds of needs with the goal of maximizing each students' ability to succeed in the traditional classroom setting.

For more information, please refer to Question #17 of this application.

Waiver Topic Names with Arkansas Code Annotated, Standards, and DESE Rules (when applicable)

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>178 Instructional Days – standard only</u></p> <p>Standard 1-A.4.1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Acquisition of Commodities</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-303</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Adopt School Calendar</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Alternative Learning Environment (ALE)</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1005(b)(5) 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i) 6-48-102 6-48-103</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding – Section 4</p> <p>Standard 2-I.1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Arkansas History</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-124(a)(2) 6-17-418 6-17-703</p> <p>Standard 1-A.1.2.8</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-213(a)(2)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Board of Directors</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-13-608 6-13-611 6-13-612(c) 6-13-613 6-13-615 6-13-616(a) 6-13-617 6-13-618 6-13-619(a), (c), (d)(1)(A), (d)(4) 6-13-620(5) 6-13-622(b) 6-13-630 6-13-631 6-13-634 6-13-635 6-13-1303 6-14-101, et seq.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Body Mass Index (BMI) Assessment</u></p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools, Section 5.02.5, 12.00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Size & Teaching Load</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-812</p> <p>Standard 1-A.5 (Class Size) Standard 1-A.6 (Teaching Load)</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Classified Employee Minimum Salary</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-2201, et seq. 6-17-2403</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Clock Hours</u></p> <p>Standard 1-A.2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Comprehensive School Counseling Program & School Counselor</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-18-2002(2)(A) 6-18-2003(a)(2)(A) Standard 4-E.1, 4-E.2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Credit for College Courses</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-223</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Curriculum – Advanced Placement Courses</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-1203(a) 6-16-1204(a), (c), and (d)</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Curriculum – Career & Technical Education</u></p> <p>Standard 1-A.1.2.7 (5-8) 1-A.1.3.9 (9-12)</p>

			Grading and Course Credit – Sections 4-1.00 & 6.00 Standard 1-A.1.3-10	
<u>Curriculum – Concurrent Credit</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-1203(b) 6-16-1204(b) and (e) DESE Rules Governing Grading and Course Credit – Sections 5.00	<u>Curriculum – CPR</u> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-143 Standard 1-C.2.5 Under Ark. Code Ann. § 6- 23-401(b) this is NOT waivable unless the charter is fully virtual.	<u>Curriculum – Fine Arts</u> Standard 1-A.1.1.5 (K-4) 1-A.1.2.5 (5-8) 1-A.1.3.6 (9-12)	<u>Curriculum – Foreign Language 9-12</u> Standard 1-A.1.3.5	<u>Curriculum – Visual Art or Music</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-130(a) – elementary 6-16-130(b) – grades 7-8 and some 6 th grade DESE Rules Governing Visual Art and Music Standard 1-A.1.1.5, 1- A.1.2.5, & 1-A.1.3.6
<u>Eye and Vision Screening</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-18-1501 6-18-1502 DESE Rules Governing Eye & Vision Screening Report in Arkansas Public Schools	<u>Financial Management – Business Manager</u> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2302(b) DESE Rule Governing the Arkansas Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program – Section 12	<u>Flag Display</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-105 6-16-106	<u>Flexible Schedule</u> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-102, except (a)(5)	<u>Food Services</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-18-705 (breakfast program) 6-20-701, et seq. (school lunch program) DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools Standard 3-D.1
<u>Gifted and Talented</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-20-2208(c)(6) 6-42-109 DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards Standard 2-G.1	<u>Grading Scale</u> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-902(a) DESE Rules Governing Grading and Course Credit – Section 2-2.01	<u>Health Services – School Nurse</u> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-706	<u>Health and Safety Services</u> Standard 2-E.1, 2-E.2	<u>Instructional Day (includes delay/early release of school and recess)</u> Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-16-102 6-10-126 – Delay or early release of school due to emergency circumstances Standards 1-A.4.2 1-A.4.3 (Recess)

<p><u>Instructional Materials</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-413</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Instructional Materials – Sections 5.01, 5.01.2</p>	<p><u>Leased Academic Facilities</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-117(2)-(5)</p> <p>Standard 6-A.1, 6-A.2</p>	<p><u>Library Media Services – includes standard for balance of instructional materials</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-103</p> <p>Standard 2-D.1</p>	<p><u>Library Media Specialist</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-104</p> <p>Standard 4-F.1, 4-F.2</p>	<p><u>Maintain School Facilities</u></p> <p>Standard 6-A.1</p>
<p><u>Parent & Family Engagement Plan</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1701, et seq.</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Plans and Family and Community Engagement</p> <p>Standard 5-A.1</p>	<p><u>Period of Silence</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-115</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Classified Employees Personnel Policies</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-2301(c) 6-17-2301(c)(1) & (d)(2) 6-17-2302 6-17-2303 6-17-2304 6-17-2305</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Committee on Personnel Policies</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-203 6-17-205 6-17-209</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Daily Planning Period</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-114</p>
<p><u>Personnel Policies – Duty-Free Lunch Period</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-111</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Employment of Licensed Personnel</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-301</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Grievance Procedure</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-208 6-17-210</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Non-instructional Duties</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-117</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Personnel Policies Incorporated into Teacher Contracts</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-204</p>
<p><u>Personnel Policies – Public School Employees’ Fair Hearing Act</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-1701, et seq.</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Requirements</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-201(a) & (c)</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Right to Join Professional Organization</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-202</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – School Employees’ Minimum Sick Leave</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-1301, et seq.</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Teachers’ Minimum Sick Leave</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-1201, et seq.</p>
<p><u>Personnel Policies – Teachers’ Fair Dismissal Act</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-1501, et seq.</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS)</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-2801, et seq.</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Educator Support and Development</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Use of Personal Leave</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-211</p>	<p><u>Personnel Policies – Website Requirements</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-11-129</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites – Sections 5&6</p>	<p><u>Physical Education</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-132</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools – Sections 7.01, 7.01.1, 7.01.1.1, 7.01.1.2, 7.01.3, 7.09</p> <p>Standards 1-A.1.1.6, 1-A.1.2.6, & 1-A.1.3.8</p>

<p><u>Pledge of Allegiance</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-108</p>	<p><u>Principal</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-302</p> <p>Standards 4-C.1, 4-C.2</p>	<p><u>Professional Development</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-703 6-17-704 6-17-705</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Professional Development</p> <p>Standard 4-G.1</p>	<p><u>Report Cards</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-903(a)(2)</p>	<p><u>Required Instruction</u> <u>K-4</u></p> <p>Standard 1-A.1.1</p>
<p><u>Required Instruction</u> <u>5-8</u></p> <p>Standard 1-A.1.2</p>	<p><u>Required Instruction</u> <u>9-12</u></p> <p>Standard 1-A.1.3</p>	<p><u>Salaries and Compensation</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-807 6-17-812 6-17-908 6-17-2401 et seq. 6-21-303(b)</p>	<p><u>School Calendar – School Start Date</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106</p>	<p><u>School Counselor</u></p> <p>Standard 4-E.1 & 4-E.2</p>
<p><u>School Property and Supplies – Rules</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-303(b)</p>	<p><u>School Safety Policies & Procedures</u></p> <p>Standard 6-A.2</p>	<p><u>Statewide Assessment System</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2907</p> <p>Under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-401(b) this is NOT waivable.</p>	<p><u>Written Student Discipline Procedures</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. 6-18-503(b)(2)</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety, 4.11</p>	<p><u>Superintendent</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-13-109 6-17-427</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing the Superintendent Mentoring Program</p> <p>Standard 4-B.1, 4-B.2</p>
<p><u>Teacher Excellence & Support System (TESS)</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-2801, et seq.</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Educator Support and Development</p>	<p><u>Teacher Licensure</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-1004 6-17-309 6-17-401 6-17-418 6-17-902 6-17-908 6-17-919</p> <p>DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure – Section 7</p> <p>Standard 4-D.1</p>	<p><u>Teachers’ Salaries – 12-mo. Contract for Vocational Agri Teachers</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-802</p>	<p><u>Tornado & Earthquake Safety Drills</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-121</p> <p>Under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-401(b) this is NOT waivable unless the charter is fully virtual.</p>	<p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-19-101, et seq.</p>

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

1. IRS letter reflecting tax exempt status or a copy of the entity's application for 501(c)(3) status.
2. Attach documentation to demonstrate that each of the following requirements of Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-302 was met:
 - a. The notice of the public hearing was published on a weekly basis for at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the date of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the school district in which the school will likely be located.
 - b. The notice of the public hearing was not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.
 - c. The last publication date of the notice was no less than seven days prior to the public meeting.
 - d. Within seven calendar days following the first publication of the notice of the public hearing, emails announcing the public hearing were sent to the superintendent of each of the school districts from which the open- enrollment public charter school is likely to draw students for the purpose of enrollment and the superintendent of any district that is contiguous to the district in which the open-enrollment public charter school will be located.
3. Budget Template
4. Statement of Assurance