

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**2024
CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION**

Somerset Academy Arkansas

Campus 1: Somerset Academy Little Rock K-12

Campus 2: Somerset Academy Bentonville K-12

APPLICANT PROFILE INFORMATION

1. Name of Proposed Charter School: Somerset Academy Arkansas (District Name)

Campus Names: Somerset Academy Little Rock and Somerset Academy Bentonville.

2 campuses proposed - 3 individual school numbers

2. Name of the eligible entity under which the charter will be organized:

Somerset Academy Arkansas, Inc.

3. Name of contact person:

Title/Relationship to Charter: Todd German/ Board Chair

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Names and roles of all persons in the applicant group, i.e., anyone with a role in drafting the substantive content of this application and is expected to have a significant role with the school, including any consultants or employees of an education service provider or management organization. Add lines as needed.

Full name	Current Role with Proposed School	Future Role with Proposed School
Todd German	Board Chair	Governing Board Chair
Chantal Morales	Board Member	Board Member
Matt Cox	Board Member	Board Member
Liliana Salazar	National Director of Special Education and Student Support, Academica	ESP Support: ESE
Richard Moreno	Budget Consultant	Budget Consultant, Building Hope Representative
Frankie Mestre	CMO and ESP Support	Support Services, Marketing

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Adriana Lima	Board Representative from ESP	Marketing, Communications
Ana Martinez	CFO, Academica	ESP Support: Fiscal
Amy Nunez	Human Resources Director, Academica	ESP Support: Human Resources
Vanessa Mancebo, Esq.	Legal & State Compliance	ESP Support: Legal and Compliance support

4. Projected Date of School Opening (Month/Year): August 2025

5. Type of Charter

<input type="checkbox"/> Open Enrollment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open Enrollment -CMO	<input type="checkbox"/> Conversion Charter
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6. Educational Model

<input type="checkbox"/> Classical	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional	<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Prep	<input type="checkbox"/> Career/CTE
<input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Populations		

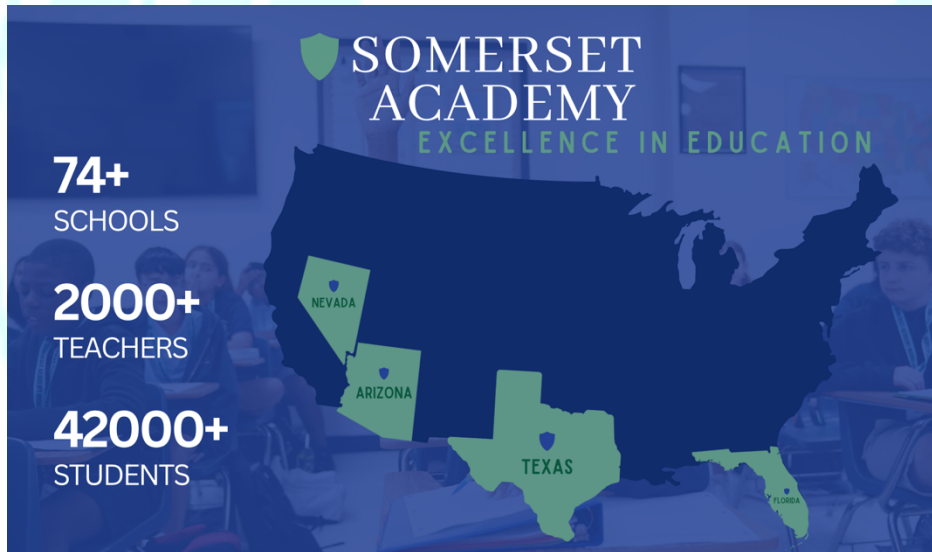
Section 1: Executive Summary

A. Vision and Mission

- 1) **State the charter school’s mission and vision for the proposed school. Provide a clear, focused, and compelling purpose for the school that is measurable and focused on educational outcomes. The mission and vision narrative should address how the school will help to provide high-quality education to Arkansas students.**

The mission of Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 Campuses is to provide a rigorous and comprehensive education through a nurturing and supportive environment that fosters academic excellence, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. The vision is to create a learning community where all students can achieve their highest potential and become responsible, productive citizens.

Somerset schools in Arkansas will replicate the educational excellence of the Somerset Academy, Inc. model. Somerset Academy, Inc. has a track record of over 25 years of educating students across the Nation.



Innovative approaches to education and a forward-thinking mindset have been hallmarks of Somerset Academy’s success. The institution has embraced cutting-edge technologies, teaching methodologies, and educational practices to stay ahead of the curve in preparing students for the challenges of the modern world. This forward-looking approach has positioned Somerset as a leader in educational innovation.

Somerset Academy operates community-centered school choice centers that stand as a beacon of hope and empowerment for underserved students. Somerset Academy schools are designed to address the unique needs of underserved students within the communities that they currently serve and communities in which they seek to expand, like Little Rock and Bentonville, for example.

Somerset Academy is founded on the principles of equity, inclusivity, and community engagement. Somerset aims to provide a holistic and supportive learning environment that empowers the students to overcome barriers and achieve academic success.

Somerset Academy has a strong focus on social-emotional learning integrated into the school’s curriculum. Somerset recognizes the importance of fostering emotional intelligence, resilience, and interpersonal skills to prepare students for academic success and positive social interactions. Somerset actively involves parents and the broader community in the educational process.



ACCOLADES

NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARDS

- 2021- SOMERSET ACADEMY SILVER PALMS
- 2020- SOMERSET ACADEMY SOUTH MIAMI MIDDLE
- 2020- SOMERSET ACADEMY MIRAMAR SOUTH
- 2018- SOMERSET ACADEMY MIRAMAR
- 2017- SOMERSET ACADEMY DAVIE
- 2016- SOMERSET ARTS CONSERVATORY
- 2011- SOMERSET ACADEMY DAVIE

Somerset Academy, Inc. is a recipient of an FY2024 Charter Schools Program (CSP) Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter School Grant.



Elementary School (K-5)

The mission of Somerset Academy Arkansas (both Little Rock and Bentonville campuses) is to provide a rigorous and comprehensive education through a nurturing and supportive environment that fosters academic excellence, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.

The vision is to create a learning community where all students can achieve their highest potential and become responsible, productive citizens. To achieve this, the school will implement a rigorous curriculum, provide professional development for educators, and use data-driven decision-making to tailor instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. By focusing on foundational literacy skills and offering a multi-tiered system of supports, the school aims to address early literacy deficiencies and diverse learning needs.

Success will be measured by improvements in student academic performance, literacy rates, and social-emotional development. Somerset Academy Arkansas is committed to providing a high-quality education to Arkansas students, preparing them for future academic success and responsible citizenship. Instruction and goals will be tailored to Arkansas Academic Standards.

Middle School (6-8)

The mission of Somerset Academy Arkansas Middle Schools (both Little Rock and Bentonville campuses) promotes a transformational culture that maximizes student achievement and the development of accountable, global learners in a safe and enriching environment that fosters high-quality education.

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The vision is to create a dynamic where all students can achieve their highest potential and become productive citizens. The school strives to cultivate well-rounded individuals who excel academically, demonstrate strong character, and are equipped to contribute positively to society.

To deliver a high-quality education to Arkansas students, Somerset Academy Arkansas Middle Schools will implement a curriculum that meets or exceeds state standards and is designed to challenge students intellectually. This includes Pre advanced placement (AP) and honors courses, as well as opportunities for dual enrollment with local colleges and universities.

By utilizing data-driven instruction and providing individualized support, the school will cater to the diverse learning needs and interests of each student, ensuring that all students, regardless of their starting point, receive the tools and support needed to succeed.

The school will focus on developing students' social-emotional skills and character traits, such as resilience, responsibility, and respect, through programs and activities that emphasize leadership, community service, and ethical behavior. Somerset Academy Arkansas Middle Schools will also prepare students for high school and beyond by offering comprehensive college and career counseling, internships, and career exploration opportunities.

The goal is to ensure that students have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to pursue their post-secondary goals. Additionally, the school will create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where all students feel valued and respected, fostering a strong sense of community and belonging among students, staff, and families.

By delivering a rigorous and personalized education, Somerset Academy Arkansas Middle Schools will help bridge achievement gaps and ensure that all students, particularly those from underserved communities, receive the high-quality education they deserve.

Success will be measured by student outcomes such as academic performance and the development of strong social-emotional skills. Somerset Academy Arkansas Middle Schools are committed to elevating educational standards and outcomes for all its students.

High School (9-12)

The mission of Somerset Academy Arkansas High Schools (both Little Rock and Bentonville campuses) promotes a transformational culture that maximizes student achievement and the development of accountable, global learners in a safe and enriching environment that fosters high-quality education.

The school aims to foster academic excellence, critical thinking, and lifelong learning skills, preparing students for success in college, career, and life. The vision is to create a dynamic where all students can achieve their highest potential and become productive citizens. The school strives to cultivate well-rounded individuals who excel academically, demonstrate strong character, and are equipped to contribute positively to society.

To deliver a high-quality education to Arkansas students, Somerset Academy Arkansas High Schools will implement a curriculum that meets or exceeds state standards and is designed to challenge students intellectually. This includes required advanced placement (AP), CTE Courses and honors courses, as well as opportunities for dual enrollment with local colleges and universities. By utilizing data-driven instruction and providing individualized support, the school will cater to the diverse learning needs and

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interests of each student, ensuring that all students, regardless of their starting point, receive the tools and support needed to succeed.

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By delivering a rigorous and personalized education, Somerset Academy Arkansas High Schools will help bridge achievement gaps and ensure that all students, particularly those from underserved communities, receive the high-quality education they deserve.

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Educational Options and Impact

Somerset Academy Arkansas will operate two campuses, each hosting three schools: an Elementary School (K-5), a Middle School (6-8), and a High School (9-12). This structure will create six schools across two campuses in Little Rock and Bentonville, each committed to providing a comprehensive, high-quality education that addresses the diverse needs of students and prepares them for future success.

Little Rock:

- Elementary, Middle, and High Schools will serve families in the Little Rock School District and surrounding areas.
- Will address significant academic performance challenges within the district, such as high numbers of failing and below-average schools.
- Focus on early literacy and data-driven instruction to improve academic outcomes.

Bentonville:

- Elementary, Middle, and High Schools will serve families in the Bentonville School District and surrounding areas.
- Address challenges posed by increasing enrollment and capacity issues in local schools.
- Provide a robust early literacy program and rigorous academic standards to enhance educational outcomes.

- 2) **Arkansas intends to be a national leader in education. To that end, provide an overview of the proposed school's education program, including major instructional methods. Explain why this school model will impact student outcomes for the targeted population.**

Somerset Academy Charter Schools offer a distinctive educational experience that sets them apart from

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traditional public schools through several key features:

- **Personalized Learning Approach:** - Somerset Academy emphasizes personalized and student-centered learning, tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs and learning styles of each student. This approach fosters increased engagement and academic success.
- **Data-Driven Culture:** - A strong data-driven culture allows Somerset Academy to utilize assessment results and performance metrics to inform instruction and track student progress. This focus on data helps educators identify areas for improvement and implement targeted interventions to support student achievement.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** - Somerset Academy prioritizes meaningful engagement with stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and the community. This collaborative approach ensures that the educational environment is responsive to the needs and expectations of all involved parties.
- **Parental Involvement:** - The schools encourage robust parental involvement in the educational process, fostering a community-focused environment where parents actively participate in their children's learning journey. This partnership helps create a supportive and enriched educational experience.
- **Student Goal Setting:** - Somerset Academy actively involves students in setting personal academic goals, helping them take ownership of their learning and development. This practice fosters self-motivation and accountability, guiding students toward achieving their full potential.
- **Focus on Character Education:** - Emphasizing character education and social-emotional learning, Somerset Academy promotes values such as responsibility, respect, and community engagement, aiming to develop well-rounded individuals.
- **College and Career Readiness:** - The school emphasizes college and career readiness, offering advanced placement (AP) courses, dual enrollment programs, and vocational training to prepare students for post-secondary education and future careers.
- **Diverse and Inclusive Environment:** - Somerset Academy fosters a diverse and inclusive environment that celebrates different cultures and backgrounds, enhancing the learning experience for all students.

Overall, the Somerset Academy Charter Schools model offers a student-focused and community-oriented education, emphasizing stakeholder engagement, data-driven decision-making, and strong partnerships with parents. This holistic approach prepares students for success in both academically and as productive citizens.

Somerset Academy Arkansas, comprising two campuses in Little Rock and Bentonville, will implement a comprehensive K-12 education program designed to align with Arkansas's goal of becoming a national leader in education. The program emphasizes a rigorous, evidence-based curriculum grounded in early literacy and extends through high school, incorporating systematic and explicit instruction in key areas such as phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Differentiated instruction and data-driven decision-making will be central to tailoring teaching to meet the varied learning styles and needs of each student, ensuring personalized and effective learning experiences.

Somerset Academy, Inc. prides itself on providing educational opportunities and improving student performance through personalized and immersive student engagement strategies. Our students are outpacing their peers in traditional public schools, thus cementing Somerset Academy's long-term trend of positive student data outcomes. Student performance data is collected, analyzed, and discussed with students and

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families through a transparent data chat process that empowers students and families to understand how they are doing and work toward their goals.

Below is a table comparing Somerset Academy student performance to state averages in Florida Somerset Schools:

Florida Summary of Somerset Academy Network Performance Compared to State and Largest Districts – Florida State Assessment					
NAME	YEAR	SCIENCE % PROFICIENT	SOCIAL STUDIES % PROFICIENT	MATH % PROFICIENT	ELA % PROFICIENT
MIAMI DADE	22-23	52%	66%	(FAST) 59%	53%
BROWARD	22-23	49%	63%	(FAST) 57%	37%
SOMERSET FL NETWORK	22-23	56%	71%	(FAST) 68%	62%
STATE OF FLORIDA	22-23	53%	64%	(FAST) 56%	50%
21-22					
MIAMI DADE	21-22	50%	68%	52%	55%
BROWARD	21-22	48%	65%	49%	53%
SOMERSET FL NETWORK	21-22	53%	74%	64%	60%
STATE OF FLORIDA	21-22	51%	67%	51%	52%
18-19					
MIAMI DADE	18-19	56%	72%	60%	58%
BROWARD	18-19	53%	69%	59%	58%
SOMERSET FL NETWORK	18-19	59%	80%	68%	68%
STATE OF FLORIDA	18-19	56%	70%	58%	55%

Retention and Graduation Rate

In an era where educational institutions face heightened accountability for performance, Somerset Academy has displayed a remarkable track record. Serving a diverse student population, including those from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, Somerset Academy has consistently achieved sustainable growth and accomplishments.

Notably, Somerset Academy has surpassed the average rates of retention and graduation in comparison to other schools in the district. These achievements become even more noteworthy when adjusting for socioeconomic factors, such as the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL). By exceeding district averages in these key metrics, Somerset Academy exemplifies an effective and inclusive educational model, fostering success among students who face additional challenges. This success not only underscores our commitment to academic excellence but also highlights the positive impact of providing the Somerset Academy brand of educational support in the pursuit of overall student achievement.

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District Name	School Name	Graduation Rate 2021-22
Florida	State Graduation Rate	87.3
BROWARD	SOMERSET PREPARATORY ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH AT NORTH LAUDERDALE	90
MIAMI-DADE	SOMERSET ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL (SOUTH HOMESTEAD)	88
MIAMI-DADE	SOMERSET PREPARATORY ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL HOMESTEAD	86
BROWARD	SOMERSET ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL MIRAMAR CAMPUS	98
BROWARD	SOMERSET ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH	96
BROWARD	SOMERSET ARTS CONSERVATORY	99
MIAMI-DADE	SOMERSET ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	95
PALM BEACH	SOMERSET ACADEMY CANYONS HIGH SCHOOL	97

To enhance student engagement and foster a love for learning, the curriculum will include experiential and project-based learning opportunities, integrating real-world applications into the educational experience. Technology will play a significant role in supporting interactive learning and providing students with access to a broad range of resources and tools. Continuous professional development for educators will ensure they remain adept at employing best practices and innovative instructional strategies, contributing to a high-quality education environment.

The school model addresses the needs of diverse populations in both Little Rock and Bentonville, including students from low-performing schools and those facing socio-economic challenges. By focusing on foundational literacy skills and providing a robust support system through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Somerset Academy aims to close achievement gaps and enhance academic performance. This support system ensures that targeted interventions are provided based on individual student needs, promoting equitable learning outcomes for all students.

The middle and high school programs at Somerset Academy will incorporate advanced placement (AP) courses, honors classes, and dual enrollment opportunities with local colleges and universities. This rigorous academic framework is designed to challenge students intellectually and prepare them for college and career success. Project-based learning (PBL) will be integrated into the curriculum to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills through real-world applications and collaborative projects. Additionally, the program will emphasize the development of social-emotional skills and character traits, such as resilience, responsibility, and respect, through various programs and activities.

By aligning with Arkansas’s goal of becoming a national leader in education, Somerset Academy is committed to providing a high-quality education that prepares students for future academic success, responsible citizenship, and meaningful contributions to society. The effectiveness of the program will be measured by improvements in student academic performance, literacy rates, graduation rates, and college and career readiness. The comprehensive and adaptive nature of the education program ensures that all students, regardless of their starting point, have the opportunity to achieve their highest potential and contribute positively to Arkansas’s educational leadership.

B. Evidence of Need, Support, and Involvement

1) Describe the anticipated student population the school intends to serve. Provide a rationale for seeking to serve this population.

Somerset Academy Arkansas plans on opening facilities within the Little Rock and Bentonville School Districts. These districts serve the cities of Little Rock and Bentonville, respectively, and will draw students from surrounding districts, including North Little Rock School District and neighboring districts of Gravette, Decatur, Gentry, Springdale, Rogers, and Pea Ridge.

Bentonville School District currently serves 18,674 students in 22 schools. In order to understand the school’s targeted population more in depth, the school has examined student ethnicity demographics from Bentonville School District. We anticipate the actual student body will mirror the school district the facility will be in once the school opens. Data from public schools within our targeted population was obtained through the ADE Data Center¹. Results were then averaged together to produce the findings shown below:

Demographics						
White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Native American	Two or More
70.5%	3.2%	12.0%	7.4%	0.7%	1.4%	4.7%

Somerset Academy also anticipates that approximately 11% of our students will be eligible to receive special education while 5% will be English Learners (EL)¹. Furthermore, we expect that roughly 21% of our students will qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) services.

Little Rock School District currently serves 20,135 students in 39 schools. In order to understand the school’s targeted population more in depth, the school has examined student ethnicity demographics from Little Rock School District. We anticipate the actual student body will mirror the school district the facility will be in once the school opens. Data from public schools within our targeted population was obtained through the ADE Data Center¹. Results were then averaged together to produce the findings shown below:

Demographics						
White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Native American	Two or More
19.4%	59.2%	16.6%	3.4%	0.1%	0.5%	0.7%

The rationale for serving these populations is based on the need for high-quality educational options in these areas, where significant numbers of low-performing schools, diverse learning needs, and socio-economic challenges exist. Somerset Academy’s proven educational model, with its focus on early literacy and a robust support system, is designed to address these challenges and provide all students with the opportunity to succeed academically and socially.

For more detailed demographic information, please refer to the ADE Data Center: [ADE Data Center](#).

1. ADE Data Center- <https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov/SRC/33/6001000#section10>

- 2) **Describe the current educational options available to your target population. Include the overall academic performance of schools located near the proposed school and geographic area.**

Bentonville Campus:

Somerset Academy Bentonville will operate three schools on its campus: an Elementary School, a Middle School, and a High School. The academy aims to provide a well-rounded education focusing on early literacy, preparing students for both college and future careers. Below is a consolidated overview of the educational options and challenges faced by the Bentonville School District and how Somerset Academy Bentonville aims to address them.

Elementary School

Somerset Academy Bentonville Elementary School will serve families in the Bentonville School District and surrounding districts, including Gravette, Decatur, Gentry, Springdale, Rogers, and Pea Ridge. The Bentonville School District currently offers diverse educational options within its elementary schools, including:

- Traditional public schools following the state’s curriculum.
- Specialized magnet programs with a focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).
- Two charter schools focusing on classical, college prep, and STEAM.

However, the district faces significant challenges due to increasing enrollment:

- An expected gain of over 2,000 students in the next five years.
- 20,173 housing units projected by 2032, with over 9,000 currently in production.
- Eleven schools expected to be over capacity.

Out of the 22 elementary schools:

- 4 schools are rated an “A” grade.
- 5 schools are rated with a “B” grade.
- 4 schools are rated with a “C” grade.

Somerset Academy Bentonville can help bridge the gap with its early literacy program. The academy has a proven track record with high-quality neighborhood schools, creating future leaders capable of solving complex challenges.

Middle School

Somerset Academy Bentonville Middle School will serve the same communities. The Bentonville School District offers various educational options through its nine middle schools, including:

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- Traditional public schools following the state’s curriculum.
- Specialized magnet programs focusing on STEM.
- Two charter schools with a classical, college prep, and STEAM focus.

Enrollment challenges and capacity issues persist, similar to those at the elementary level:

- Over 2,000 students expected to be added in the next five years.
- Eleven schools projected to be over capacity due to housing development.

Out of the nine middle schools:

- 7 schools are rated an “A” grade.
- 2 schools are rated with a “B” grade.

Somerset Academy Bentonville Middle School aims to address these challenges with rigorous programming and a strong focus on literacy and STEM, leveraging the academy’s successful educational model.

High School

Somerset Academy Bentonville High School will continue to serve the same geographic area. The district offers diverse educational options through its two high schools:

- Traditional public schools following the state’s curriculum.
- Specialized magnet programs focusing on STEM.
- Two charter schools with a classical, college prep, and STEAM focus.

The district’s high schools face similar capacity challenges:

- An expected increase of over 2,000 students in the next five years due to housing growth.
- Both high schools are currently rated an “A” grade.

Somerset Academy Bentonville High School will provide rigorous academic programs and comprehensive support services to prepare students for college and careers, addressing capacity challenges and maintaining high educational standards.

Little Rock Campus:

Elementary School:

Somerset Academy Little Rock will serve families in the Little Rock School District and the surrounding North Little Rock School District. The current educational options within the Little Rock School District (LRSD) include 24 elementary schools offering traditional public education, specialized magnet programs, and 16 charter schools. Despite this diversity, LRSD faces significant academic challenges:

- 11 elementary schools have been rated as failing (F).
- 5 schools fall into the below-average category (D).
- Only 3 schools have achieved an excellent rating (A), and just 1 is considered above average (B).
- 4 schools are rated as average (C).

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Somerset Academy promises to provide a well-rounded education with a strong focus on early literacy, preparing students for college and future careers. The early literacy program aims to bridge achievement gaps and improve academic performance by leveraging Somerset's proven educational model.

Middle School:

Somerset Academy Little Rock Middle School will cater to middle school students in the LRSD and North Little Rock School District. The LRSD offers diverse educational options across six middle schools, including traditional public schools, specialized magnet programs, and 16 charter schools. However, academic performance remains a concern:

- 3 middle schools are rated as failing (F).
- 1 school falls into the below-average category (D).
- Only 1 school is above average (B), and 1 school is rated as average (C).

Somerset Academy Little Rock Middle School will implement rigorous programming and leverage its track record of high-quality neighborhood schools to address these challenges and foster academic excellence.

High School:

Somerset Academy Little Rock High School will serve high school students in the LRSD and surrounding areas. The LRSD offers various educational options through its four high schools, including traditional public schools, specialized magnet programs, and 16 charter schools. However, academic performance indicates significant room for improvement:

- 1 high school is rated as failing (F).
- 2 high schools are below average (D).
- Only 1 high school is rated as average (C).

Somerset Academy Little Rock High School will provide rigorous programming and comprehensive support to help bridge the gap in academic performance, creating future leaders equipped to solve complex challenges.

3) Based on your outreach, research, and understanding of the community and the students you seek to serve, what are the main challenges to the student's success in the community you seek to serve? What does your proposed school intend to do to address these challenges?

On August 6th, Somerset Academy Arkansas, adhering to DESE regulations, hosted a virtual community informational meeting for prospective families. This online format was selected to provide a comprehensive overview of the academy's program offerings while affording participants the flexibility to join from work, home, or any location convenient for them. The public hearing, in compliance with the 6.00 Rules Applicable to Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools, was properly noticed, with proof of compliance attached to this application. The meeting successfully attracted 23 attendees, including individuals who connected via their own devices and several groups who joined collectively from their workplaces.

Beyond the public hearing, Somerset Academy Arkansas launched a digital campaign to assess parental interest in its programs in Little Rock and Bentonville. This first round of digital advertisements, executed on Facebook and Instagram from August 7 to August 13, 2024, proved exceptionally successful, underscoring the community's interest and need for Somerset's educational offerings.

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In Bentonville, a rapidly expanding city, the campaign results reflected a robust demand for rigorous academic options, particularly at the elementary and middle school levels. This indicates a clear need for a new K-12 charter school to serve its growing population. Meanwhile, in Little Rock, the diverse and vibrant capital city of Arkansas, there was significant interest across all grade levels. This highlights the necessity for an institution like Somerset Academy to provide high-quality education tailored to the needs of local families.

The campaign yielded impressive results, generating 159 leads for the Bentonville campus, with a breakdown as follows: 106 leads for K-5, 34 leads for grades 5-8, and 19 leads for grades 9-12. The Little Rock campus attracted 100 leads, divided into 52 for K-5, 27 for grades 5-8, and 21 for grades 9-12. These outcomes are a testament to the substantial interest and demand for new K-12 programs in these communities. The establishment of Somerset Academy's campuses will address this demand, providing families with valuable educational opportunities and supporting the overall growth and development of both areas.

Based on Somerset's outreach and research, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 identifies several needs to meet the demand and growth coming to the community. To address these challenges, the proposed school will implement a rigorous academic program grounded in the Science of Reading, emphasizing systematic and explicit literacy instruction. Extensive professional development will equip educators to meet diverse learning needs, while a Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will provide targeted and intensive interventions based on student requirements. Data-driven decision-making will inform instructional practices, and inclusive, differentiated instruction will cater to students performing at various levels. Recognizing the importance of family and community engagement, the school will foster strong communication channels and encourage parental involvement through volunteer opportunities and participation in school events. Additionally, incorporating socio-emotional learning (SEL) programs will support students' social and emotional development. By addressing these multifaceted challenges through a comprehensive, evidence-based approach, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to enhance educational outcomes and provide all students with the opportunity to succeed.

4) Explain the process for setting, monitoring, and revising performance expectations. In your response, include how the school will use data and how you would define success for the students and school.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will establish a thorough and adaptable process for setting, monitoring, and revising performance expectations to maintain high academic standards and foster continuous improvement. This process will be data-driven, starting with the systematic collection of various data points, such as standardized test scores, formative assessments, classroom grades, and other relevant academic performance indicators. These data will be managed and analyzed through a sophisticated data management system.

The analytical phase will involve both descriptive and comparative analyses to detect trends and identify areas that require attention. This analysis will inform the goal-setting process, ensuring that the goals are aligned with district and state educational priorities, as well as Somerset Academy's overall mission. A comprehensive school improvement plan will be developed, detailing specific strategies, actions, responsibilities, timelines, and required resources to meet these goals.

The implementation of this plan will actively involve all stakeholders, including educators, administrators, students, and parents. This collaborative approach will be supported by ongoing professional development to equip staff with the skills and knowledge needed to achieve the desired outcomes. Progress will be continuously monitored through regular data collection and formative evaluations, allowing for real-time insights into student and school performance.

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Based on the evaluation results, necessary adjustments will be made to strategies and practices, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability. Success for students will be defined by their academic growth, proficiency in core subjects, social-emotional development, and preparedness for future educational challenges. For the school, success will be measured by improved student outcomes, a nurturing and positive learning environment, and the attainment of long-term educational objectives, solidifying Somerset Academy's commitment to delivering exceptional education.

Section 2: Academic Plan

A. Academic focus

- 1) **Describe and outline the proposed school's academic focus. Include specific academic benchmarks, educational philosophy, instructional methods, and innovations.**

Somerset Academy Little Rock and Somerset Academy Bentonville: K-12 School Network

Mission and Vision:

A member of Somerset Academy, Inc., a network of high-performing charter schools throughout the United States, Somerset Academy Arkansas (encompassing Little Rock and Bentonville campuses) is committed to serving students from diverse backgrounds. The schools provide a student-centered education focusing on early literacy, guided by the Science of Reading research, and adhere to the following core values:

- **Excellence:** Upholding the highest standards of education and character development.
- **Innovative Teaching and Learning:** Promoting creativity and adaptability.
- **Equal Opportunity:** Ensuring equal access to educational opportunities for all students, celebrating and addressing their diverse backgrounds and needs.
- **Community:** Establishing strong, positive relationships within the school and the broader community.

Alignment with Strategic Goals:

Somerset Academy Arkansas aligns with the Arkansas Department of Education's mission and the LEARNS Act, focusing on improving literacy rates, expanding school choice, strengthening accountability, and ensuring student safety and well-being. Somerset Academy, Inc.'s strategic plan addresses these elements comprehensively.

Academic Excellence and Literacy Focus:

Somerset Academy Arkansas is dedicated to achieving academic excellence through a strong foundation in early literacy, guided by the Science of Reading Research. The schools will implement systematic and explicit literacy instructional plans, including:

- **Phonological Awareness:** Systematic instruction on sound recognition and manipulation.
- **Phonemic Awareness:** Systematic instruction on sound recognition.
- **Phonics:** Explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships.
- **Fluency:** Practices to enhance reading speed, accuracy, and expression.
- **Vocabulary:** Direct and indirect instruction to expand word knowledge.
- **Comprehension:** Strategies to improve text understanding and interpretation.

Curricular and Instructional Practices:

The schools will provide extensive professional development and purchase curricular materials aligned with Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (R.I.S.E) Arkansas and the Arkansas English Language Arts Standards. By aligning with state and national standards, utilizing data-driven approaches, and employing innovative educational practices, Somerset Academy ensures a solid academic foundation for its students.

Parent and Community Engagement:

Somerset Academy Arkansas recognizes that student success is a shared responsibility. The schools will establish open communication lines through newsletters, emails, and school portals to keep parents informed and engaged. Parent-teacher conferences will provide collaborative settings to discuss student achievements and strategies. Parents will be encouraged to take active roles through volunteer opportunities, school events, and participation in governance, enriching the school community.

Elementary School Program:

Somerset Academy Arkansas elementary schools focus on foundational literacy and numeracy skills, incorporating engaging, hands-on learning experiences. The curriculum includes:

- **English Language Arts (ELA):** Emphasis on reading comprehension, writing, literature, and vocabulary development.
- **Mathematics:** Instruction in key concepts including arithmetic and introductory algebraic thinking.
- **Science:** Curriculum covering life sciences, earth sciences, and physical sciences.
- **Social Studies:** Courses covering world history, U.S. history, geography, and civics.
- **World Languages:** Introduction to languages such as Spanish, French, and Mandarin.
- **Fine Arts:** Exploration of visual arts, music, theater, and dance.
- **Technology:** Courses introducing digital literacy and safe technology usage.

Middle School Program:

Somerset Academy Arkansas middle schools aim to develop critical thinking skills, a love for learning, and social-emotional competencies. The curriculum includes:

- **Core Subjects:** ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- **Electives:** World Languages, Fine Arts, Technology, and Career and Technical Education (CTE).
- **Advanced Coursework:** Honors classes and high school coursework where appropriate.
- **Safety and Wellness:** SEL curriculum, anti-bullying programs, and comprehensive student support services.

High School Program:

A robust secondary education at Somerset Academy High Schools in Arkansas is designed to ensure that students are well-prepared for college, career, and civic life. It encompasses rigorous academic standards, diverse course offerings, comprehensive support services, and opportunities for extracurricular engagement. An outline of key components and a sampling of coursework is included in the table below:

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Core Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English Language Arts (ELA): Four years of instruction focusing on reading, writing, literature, and critical thinking. Emphasis on diverse literary works and advanced composition skills. - Mathematics: Four years including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and options like Pre-Calculus, Calculus, and Statistics. - Science: At least three years including Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, with opportunities for advanced coursework in subjects like Environmental Science and Anatomy. - Social Studies: Three years covering U.S. History, World History, Government, and Economics. Inclusion of civics education to foster informed and engaged citizens.
Electives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - World Languages: Offering at least two years of world language instruction (e.g., Spanish, French, Mandarin), promoting global competence. - Fine Arts: Courses in visual arts, music, theater, and dance to encourage creativity and cultural appreciation.
Advanced Coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advanced Placement (AP) Courses: Offering a range of AP courses in subjects like ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Arts, enabling students to earn college credit and engage in college-level work. - Dual Enrollment: Partnerships with local colleges and universities allowing students to take college courses and earn credits while still in high school. - Career and Technical Education (CTE): Programs in fields such as health sciences, information technology, engineering, and culinary arts, providing practical skills and career readiness.
Learning Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tutoring and Academic Interventions: Offering tutoring services, study halls, and academic interventions to support students who need additional help in core subjects. - Special Education Services: Providing comprehensive support for students with disabilities, including individualized education programs (IEPs) and related services.
College/Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - College Counseling: Guidance counselors provide support in college selection, application processes, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities. - Career Exploration: Career counseling, job shadowing, internships, and work-based learning opportunities help students explore various career paths and gain real-world experience. - Standardized Test Preparation: Preparation programs for college entrance exams like the ACT and SAT, as well as industry certification exams for CTE pathways.
Extracurricular Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Athletics: Offering a range of sports programs (e.g., football, basketball, soccer, track and field) to promote physical health, teamwork, and school spirit.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clubs and Organizations: Diverse clubs and organizations such as debate club, robotics, student government, drama, and cultural clubs to foster student interests and leadership skills. - Community Service: Encouraging community service and volunteer opportunities to build civic responsibility and engagement.
Social-emotional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEL Curriculum: Integrating SEL into daily instruction to develop skills like emotional regulation, empathy, decision-making, and interpersonal relationships. - Counseling Services: Access to school counselors, mental health professionals, and peer support programs to address student well-being and mental health needs. - Anti-Bullying Programs: Implementing comprehensive anti-bullying policies and programs to ensure a safe and inclusive school environment.
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1:1 Device Programs: Providing each student with a tablet or laptop to ensure access to digital learning resources and enhance technological literacy. - Blended Learning: Incorporating online and digital resources into traditional teaching methods to create a more flexible and personalized learning environment. - STEM Initiatives: Emphasizing STEM education through dedicated labs, maker spaces, and partnerships with technology companies to prepare students for future careers in science and technology.
Assessment and Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequent Assessments: Using formative and summative assessments to monitor student progress and inform instruction. State-mandated assessments are complemented with regular classroom assessments. - Data-Driven Decision Making: Analyzing assessment data to identify trends, inform instructional practices, and implement necessary interventions. - Continuous Improvement: Regularly reviewing and updating curricular and instructional practices based on data, feedback, and best practices in education.
Community and Parental Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parental Involvement: Encouraging active parent participation through regular communication, parent-teacher conferences, and involvement in school governance. - Community Partnerships: Building partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, and higher education institutions to enrich the educational experience and provide additional resources and opportunities for students.

Technology Integration:

Somerset Academy Arkansas integrates technology into the learning environment through 1:1 device programs, blended learning, and STEM initiatives. These efforts ensure students develop technological literacy and are prepared for future careers.

Assessment and Accountability:

The schools will use frequent assessments to monitor student progress and inform instruction. Data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement practices will ensure high academic standards.

Community and Parental Engagement:

Active parent participation will be encouraged through regular communication, parent-teacher conferences, and involvement in school governance. Community partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, and higher education institutions will enrich the educational experience.

Our academic plan is strategically designed to ensure all students achieve and exceed these targets. Specifically, we are committed to the following key benchmarks:

- Reading Proficiency by Grade 3: - We aim for at least 75% of students to demonstrate reading proficiency by the end of third grade, as measured by state assessments, aligning with the focus on early literacy.
- Mathematics Competency by Grade 5: - Our target is for 70% of fifth-grade students to achieve proficiency or above on state math assessments, which includes mastering key concepts such as fractions, decimals, and basic algebraic thinking.
- Science Standards Mastery by Grade 8: - We strive to have 70% of eighth-grade students demonstrate mastery of the Arkansas Science Standards, focusing on critical areas like the scientific method and ecosystems.
- College and Career Readiness in High School: - Our goal is for 75% of high school students to meet or exceed college and career readiness benchmarks, as indicated by scores on standardized assessments such as the ACT.
- Graduation Rate: - We are committed to achieving a graduation rate of 90%, ensuring that students not only meet academic standards but are also prepared for post-secondary success.

Our curriculum is aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards and incorporates evidence-based instructional methods to foster both foundational skills and critical thinking. We employ a robust assessment plan, utilizing both formative and summative assessments to monitor student progress closely against these benchmarks. Through our RTI framework, we provide targeted interventions for students needing additional support, while offering enrichment opportunities for advanced learners. By leveraging our past successes, ongoing professional development, and strong community partnerships, we are committed to a continuous improvement model that supports every student's academic success and meets these specific benchmarks.

Somerset Academy Arkansas, through its commitment to excellence, innovative teaching, equal opportunity, and community, aims to provide students with a robust education that prepares them for future academic success and responsible citizenship. The schools' comprehensive programs, rigorous academic standards, and strong community partnerships will create a supportive and engaging learning environment for all students.

2) Describe the school-wide, evidence-based plan that will drive academic improvement for all students and help close achievement gaps. Please provide any relevant research and evidence you used in developing the plan.

For over two decades, the leadership teams at Somerset Academy have effectively launched and managed high-achieving, college preparatory public charter schools. Working closely with essential community stakeholders, Somerset has established and nurtured a culture devoted to diversity, academic excellence, and equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge to embark on fulfilling career paths. A study by

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Stanford University's Center for Research on Outcomes (CREDO) assessed the effectiveness of charter management organizations nationwide, incorporating various metrics to gauge their impact.

CREDO's third study compared the academic progress of students in charter schools with those in traditional public schools (TPS). A significant discovery was the recognition of a small group of charter school operators that excel in promoting educational equity, dubbed "gap-busting" schools. Within this prestigious category, Somerset Academy has been recognized as a "gap buster" network, showing remarkable student performance in both reading and mathematics.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 provides a school-wide, evidence-based plan designed to improve academic performance for all students. Several integrated strategies are included in the plan, which have both been supported by educational research and are internationally recognized as best practices.

Data-Driven Decision-Making Strategy:

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 identifies student needs, monitor progress, adjust instruction, conduct regular assessments and data analysis.

Research and Evidence - Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) emphasize the importance of data-based decision-making in response to intervention (RTI) models. Hattie (2009) found that data-driven teaching practices had an effect size of 0.90, indicating a strong positive impact on student performance.

High-Quality Professional Development Strategy:

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 provides ongoing professional development focused on cultural competency, evidence-based instructional strategies, and differentiation.

Research and Evidence:

According to Desimone et al. (2002), effective professional development emphasizes addressing content needs, encouraging active learning, promoting collaboration, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Yoon et al. (2007) found that sustained and intensive teacher professional development was positively correlated with student achievement.

Curriculum Alignment and Rigor Strategy- Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will ensure that all curriculum aligns with state standards and promotes high expectations for all students. Schmoker (2006) argues that clear and coherent curriculum alignment is critical for improving student achievement. - Marzano (2003) supports the need for a guaranteed and viable curriculum as a critical factor in student learning.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Strategy:

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 implements MTSS to provide targeted support at varying levels of intensity based on student needs. Burns & Gibbons (2012) highlight the effectiveness of MTSS in identifying and addressing the diverse needs of students, reducing the number of students requiring special education services. Vaughn & Fuchs (2003) found that MTSS frameworks are effective in improving outcomes for all students, particularly those at risk of academic failure.

Family and Community Engagement Strategy: Foster strong partnerships with families and the community to support student learning and well-being.

Research and Evidence:

Henderson & Mapp (2002) underscore the importance of family and community engagement in improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps. Epstein (2001) provides a framework for school-family-community partnerships that enhance school improvement efforts.

Inclusive Practices and Differentiated Instruction Strategy: Use inclusive teaching practices and differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Research and Evidence:

Tomlinson (2001) promotes differentiated instruction as a strategy to address the varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles of students.

Hehir & Katzman (2012) support inclusive education as a means to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and their peers.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Strategy:

Integrate SEL into the curriculum to support students' emotional and social development.

Research and Evidence:

Durlak et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis showing that SEL programs significantly improve students' social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance.

Zins et al. (2004) provide evidence that students with strong SEL skills perform better academically and exhibit fewer conduct problems.

Technology Integration Strategy:

Leverage technology to enhance instruction and provide personalized learning opportunities.

Research and Evidence

According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2014), effective technology integration can improve learning outcomes and engagement. Roschelle et al. (2000) emphasizes the importance of technology in providing interactive, adaptive, and personalized learning experiences for students.

Monitoring and implementation

The plan should be implemented by a school-wide leadership team.

Establish a clear action plan with specific objectives, timelines, and responsibilities. To monitor progress and make necessary adjustments, formative assessments and feedback loops should be used on an ongoing basis.

In conclusion, the implementation of this comprehensive, evidence-based plan requires commitment, collaboration, and a commitment to continuous improvement. By addressing the diverse needs of all students and utilizing research-backed strategies, the school can improve academic performance and close achievement gaps.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 Macro and Micro Level Data Chats:

Teacher to Student Data Chats:

Micro-Level:

Regular one-on-one meetings between teachers and students discuss student progress, set goals, and identifies areas of improvement. Discussions, test scores, homework performance, and classroom participation can be discussed.

Macro-Level:

On a macro level, periodic group discussions (e.g., classroom discussions) are necessary to address overall class performance, shared challenges, and collective goals.

Admin-Teacher:

Micro-Level: Meetings between administrators and teachers to review teaching performance, student data, and professional development plans.

Macro-Level: School-wide or departmental meetings to discuss curriculum changes, school performance data, and changes in policy.

Family:

Micro-Level:

Student progress, behavior, and performance are discussed during parent-teacher conferences.

Macro-Level:

Meetings of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or school-wide forums that address broad school performance metrics, policy changes, and community involvement.

Professional Development

Teacher professional development (PD) is essential for keeping up with the latest educational strategies, technologies, and methodologies. PD is more effective if it is continuous: It should take the form of continuous learning opportunities rather than

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 provides effective professional development for ongoing training. Professional development is continuous learning opportunities rather than one-off sessions. The teachers and staff collaborate and share best practices and peer learning. Professional development is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of the school and its teachers, focusing on areas that need improvement or enhancement. Professional development provides actionable strategies that teachers can immediately implement in their classrooms.

Somerset Academy will utilize the Arkansas Professional Learning Provider Guide (AR PLPG) to select vendors that deliver high-quality professional development. By aligning selection with state standards and educational priorities, Somerset ensures that professional learning initiatives are research-based and effective. The AR PLPG will guide the evaluation process, focusing on vendor experience, program effectiveness, and

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the ability to tailor offerings to meet Somerset's specific needs. Additionally, quality assurance measures and continuous feedback mechanisms will be implemented to ensure the ongoing relevance and impact of professional development, ultimately supporting enhanced instructional practices and improved student outcomes.

Response to Intervention (RTI) - RTI involves the identification and support of students with learning and behavior difficulties at an early stage.

- *In Tier 1, universal interventions are provided to all students to prevent and promote academic and behavioral difficulties.*
- *Tier 2: Targeted interventions for groups of students who require more support than Tier 1.*
- *Tier 3: Intensive interventions that address the specific needs of students who have not responded to the interventions of Tiers 1 and 2.*

Tutoring

Tutoring provides additional support to students struggling or wishing to improve their performance. Based on the student's needs, tutoring should focus on specific areas where assistance is needed. The tutoring should be conducted consistently with regular sessions to ensure progress. Maintaining regular sessions to ensure consistency.

The tutoring process should be student-centered. The learning style should be student-centered, and tutoring should be adapted to the student's learning style and pace. The tutoring program should include regular feedback to the student and his/her

Data Chats and RTI:

Data chats help identify students who may need more support and provide RTI strategies.

PD and Data Chats:

Data chats are used to develop professional development programs that address usual challenges faced by teachers.

Tutoring and RTI:

Tutoring can be used as part of Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions in the RtI framework to provide more personalized support for students.

Implementing these strategies in practice requires the following steps:

- *Build a Data-Driven Culture.*
- *Ensure that all levels of decision-making use data regularly.*
- *Invest in Professional Development.*
- *Provide relevant and practical opportunities for continuous professional development.*
- *Establish Clear Communication Channels.*
- *Maintain regular and clear communication between the teachers, administrators, and students.*

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- *Continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and strategies and make necessary adjustments.*

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 implements these research-based strategies and follows a comprehensive, evidence-based plan that can address all students' needs. Academic performance and closing the achievement gaps is through the 3 Cs of Commitment, Collaboration, and Continuous Improvement.

- 3) Describe the school's curriculum and discuss how it will prepare students to meet or exceed Arkansas standards.**
 - a) If the curriculum is fully developed, summarize curricular choices, and explain the rationale for selection. If the curriculum still needs to be fully developed, describe any curriculum decisions made to date, share any proposed curricular decisions that are pending, and explain the process for completion.**
 - b) Provide evidence or documentation that the literacy curriculum chosen is based on the science of reading. Describe your strategy for students reading at or above grade level or higher and your strategy for students reading below grade level.**

(A and B answered Below)

Somerset Academy, Inc. Schools has its member schools go through a rigorous selection process to ensure alignment with the highest standards of academic achievement and local and state requirements. Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will ensure that all curricular materials will be in alignment with the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Approved Programs (https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/u/1/d/e/2PACX-1vRSTCg7VRJK_QHIKCsUbtCEAswvEHxIQsCTFftB7eTy77iNP0zG3dYKDvRdr3ltyVpCaFkfZh2iK_oN/pubhtml). All curricular decisions are made to align with the course codes that go along with the outline described in question *A. 1* above regarding the Academic Focus of the School.

At Somerset Academy, we are committed to providing our students with a high-quality education by ensuring all content areas are supported with state-approved instructional materials. We meticulously select resources that align with the Arkansas Academic Standards, ensuring they meet the rigorous criteria set forth by the Arkansas Department of Education. By doing so, we guarantee that our curriculum is both relevant and effective, fostering a comprehensive learning environment that supports student achievement and prepares them for future success. Our educators are dedicated to continuous review and adoption of the most current and approved instructional materials across all subjects, thereby maintaining the highest standards of teaching and learning. Below is a sampling of materials that have been successfully implemented at Somerset schools and are approved by DESE:

ELA/Reading:

Core Knowledge Language Arts - a comprehensive language arts curriculum that emphasizes the development of literacy skills through a structured approach to reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It integrates rich content knowledge with foundational skills, focusing on building vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking. The program is designed around thematic units that explore a wide range of subjects, promoting background knowledge and cultural literacy. CKLA uses a combination of engaging texts, hands-on activities, and assessments to support differentiated instruction, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to become proficient and confident communicators. CKLA is designed to build foundational skills and integrate rich content knowledge, which aligns well with Arkansas's literacy standards that emphasize reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

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Mathematics:

enVision - a comprehensive mathematics curriculum designed to develop conceptual understanding through problem-based learning and visual learning strategies. It emphasizes deep mathematical thinking and real-world application, integrating interactive and visual components to support diverse learning styles. Envision Math offers a coherent progression of topics, fostering fluency in fundamental math skills while encouraging critical thinking and collaborative learning. The curriculum includes digital resources and assessments to facilitate differentiated instruction, ensuring all students can achieve proficiency in mathematics. EnVision's emphasis on deep mathematical thinking through conceptual understanding and problem-based learning aligns with the Arkansas Mathematics Standards, supporting AIIM's commitment to rigorous mathematical instruction.

Science:

Amplify Science - A hands-on, inquiry-based science curriculum that integrates literacy and science practices. It aligns with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Amplify Science's inquiry-based approach aligns with Arkansas's emphasis on experiential learning and aligns with AIIM by fostering scientific literacy and critical thinking.

Social Studies:

National Geographic Learning - Provides a wide array of resources that integrate geography, history, culture, and current events into the social studies curriculum. The integration of geography, history, culture, and current events supports AIIM's aims by providing students with a holistic understanding of social studies.

Special curricular considerations are also made to include those that address the vision and purpose of Somerset Academy, Inc., including, but not limited to:

- Early Literacy Foundation in the Science of Reading: A research-based approach focused on systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- STEM Integration: Hands-on, Project-Based Learning: Incorporates, technology, engineering, and mathematics through and practical experiences.
- Global Learning: World Cultures, Languages, and Global Issues: Studies that prepare students to be informed and engaged global citizens.
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Promotes emotional and social development through structured programs supporting self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

In our ongoing commitment to excellence, we recognize the importance of continually evaluating and selecting curricula that meet the evolving needs of our students and align the Arkansas Department of Education's guidelines. Leveraging the expertise of Somerset Academy leadership and existing schools already utilizing a variety of programs, we have developed a robust process to ensure every student excels, particularly in reading. For example, as a result of the network's desire to ensure a strong foundation of the Science of Reading, primary literacy programs have adopted Core Knowledge Language Arts as the Core Reading Curriculum and Magnetic Reading Foundations as a supplemental phonological and phonics program to bridge the gaps that of our schools have encountered with their students. Magnetic Reading Foundations is closely aligned with the science of reading, a body of research that outlines the best practices for teaching reading based on how the brain learns to read. Key aspects of this alignment include:

1. Evidence-Based Instruction:

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- The program is rooted in the latest scientific research on reading development and instruction.
- It employs methods that have been proven effective through extensive studies and empirical evidence.

2. Systematic and Explicit Approach:

- Instruction is delivered clearly, sequentially, ensuring foundational skills are taught explicitly and systematically.
- This approach helps students build a strong foundation in reading by progressing from simple to more complex skills.

3. Multi-Sensory Learning:

- Magnetic Reading Foundations incorporates multi-sensory techniques, engaging students through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities.
- This multi-modal approach helps reinforce learning and supports the diverse needs of learners.

4. Ongoing Assessment and Progress Monitoring:

- The program includes tools for regular assessment and progress monitoring, allowing teachers to track student development and make data-driven instructional decisions.
- This ensures that interventions can be timely and targeted to address specific areas of need.

5. Focus on the Five Core Components:

- The program emphasizes the five essential components of reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension.
- By addressing all these components, the program provides a well-rounded approach to reading instruction.

Magnetic Reading Foundations offers a science-based, comprehensive framework for teaching early literacy skills. By incorporating evidence-based practices, systematic instruction, and multi-sensory learning, the program effectively supports the development of foundational reading skills. This ensures that all students, whether they are reading below or above grade level, receive the tailored instruction they need to become proficient, confident readers.

Students reading at or above grade level need opportunities for enrichment and acceleration. These students are challenged with advanced reading materials, higher-order thinking activities, and opportunities for independent projects. The goal is to extend their learning and keep them engaged and motivated.

To ensure students who are not yet reading at grade level, teachers differentiate instruction within the core curriculum to provide more complex and challenging tasks for advanced readers. This may include literature circles, advanced comprehension activities, and opportunities for critical analysis and synthesis of texts. In addition to the in-class Tier I support, students who are not meeting academic expectations may be identified for need of additional support, as referenced above in the section regarding *MTSS/RI*.

Sample of research based programs which Somerset Schools may use:

Research Based Instruction Materials				
Grades	Content	CORE Selected Curricula	Supplemental and Technology	Rationale

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K-5	English Language Arts	Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) ; Amplify ; 2015 Edition	Wonderworks Intervention; i-Ready; Wordly Wise (vocabulary); Orton-Gillingham (Wilson Reading)	Adopted program designed to meet the individual needs of all learners, and utilizes small group instruction and leveled text for Differentiated Instruction (DI)
6-12	English Language Arts	College Board <i>Springboard</i> for 6-12; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, <i>Collections 6-12</i>	i-Ready; Holt McDougal; Reading Plus; SAT Advantage; SBAC Writing Rubrics	Adopted program designed to meet the individual needs of all learners, students read and analyze a wide range of texts in genres and also learn to write in various forms and is aligned to Advanced Placement coursework and prepares students for high-stakes assessments and college courses.

The Language Arts program will reflect critical and creative thinking and a harmonious balance of its several components, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and oral interpretation of literature. Language Arts instruction will also cover the application of the writing process, effective use of speaking and listening and language skills, higher-order critical thinking and literacy skills, enabling future success in high school and beyond.

4) Describe the professional learning opportunities and support provided to educators to implement the described academic plan.

To effectively implement an academic plan, educators need a blend of professional learning opportunities and ongoing.

Here are some components that might be included:

Professional Learning Opportunities:

Workshops and Seminars:

Initial Training: Comprehensive sessions to familiarize educators with the academic plan, its goals, methodologies, and assessment tools.

Follow-Up Workshops:

Periodic workshops to address challenges, share best practices, and provide updates based on feedback and data.

Online Training Modules:

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Flexible, self-paced learning modules covering various aspects of the plan, teaching strategies, and subject-specific content.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Regular meetings where educators can collaborate, share experiences, and collectively solve problems related to the implementation.

Conferences: - Opportunities to attend local, regional, or national educational conferences to gain broader insights and innovative practices.

Instructional Coaching: - One-on-one or small group coaching sessions with instructional coaches to provide personalized support and guidance.

Ongoing Support:

- Mentorship Programs - Pairing less experienced educators with veteran teachers for ongoing guidance and support.
- Periodic Evaluations and Feedback - Regular classroom observations followed by constructive feedback sessions to help teachers refine their practices.
- Resource Accessibility - Providing access to teaching materials, lesson plans, and digital resources that align with the academic plan.
- Technical Support - Ensuring educators have the technological tools they need and providing technical assistance as required.
- Reflection and Adjustment - Scheduled times for educators to reflect on their practice, discuss what is working or not, and make necessary adjustments to their implementation.
- Professional Development Grants - Financial support for educators to pursue additional training, certifications, or advanced degrees related to the academic plan.
- Collaboration with Stakeholders Establishing a network of support that includes administrators, parents, and community members to provide a holistic support system for teachers.
- Establishing a network of support that includes administrators, parents, and community members to provide a holistic support system for teachers.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: Teachers are trained on how to collect and analyze student performance data to make informed decisions about instructional strategies and interventions.

Sample Timeline for Implementation Support:

Pre-Implementation:

- Phase 1: Initial training and resource distribution.
- Phase 2: Introduction of PLCs and mentorship pairings.

Early Implementation

- Phase 3: Instructional coaching starts, initial classroom observations.
- Phase 4: Follow-up workshops and online training modules.

Mid-Year:

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- Phase 5: Evaluation and feedback cycles, data analysis workshops.
- Phase 6: Adjustments based on feedback, additional coaching as needed.

End of Year:

- Phase 7- Comprehensive review, sharing of success stories, and planning for the next academic year.

Professional Development

Teacher professional development (PD) is essential for keeping up with the latest educational strategies, technologies, and methodologies. PD is more effective if it is continuous: It should take the form of continuous learning opportunities rather than

Effective PD should be ongoing and follow:

Continuous learning opportunities rather than one-off sessions.

Collaborative: Encourages sharing of best practices and peer learning.

Relevant: Tailored to meet the needs of the school and its teachers, focusing on areas that need improvement or enhancement.

Practical: Provides actionable strategies that teachers can immediately implement in their classrooms.

Network Professional Development

Doral Leadership Institute (DLI):

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 provides teachers and staff Doral Leadership Institute (DLI) will develop highly qualified administrators to lead our school with integrity, perseverance and ethical decision making. The mission of Doral Leadership Institute is through a variety of critical experiences, aspiring instructional leaders will develop skills to support high quality schools with passion, ethics, effective communication and shared values. Future leaders reflect on best practices that sustain an innovative and equitable learning environment.

Somerset Academy schools in Arkansas are committed to maintaining the highest standards of education by ensuring that all their teachers are properly licensed in the state. This commitment underscores their dedication to providing quality education and fostering a supportive learning environment for all students.

To achieve this, Somerset Academy has implemented a rigorous process to ensure compliance with Arkansas state licensing requirements. Teachers wishing to join the Somerset faculty must first hold at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited. They are then required to pass the examinations, which assess their knowledge in their specific subject areas and general teaching skills. Additionally, prospective teachers must complete a state-approved educator preparation program, which includes practical, in-classroom training.

Once these initial steps are completed, aspiring teachers must apply for licensure through the Arkansas Department of Education. This involves submitting verification of their educational qualifications, test scores, and completing a background check to ensure the safety and well-being of students.

Somerset Academy takes an active role in supporting its teachers through this process. The schools offer resources and guidance to help educators successfully navigate the requirements, ensuring that they have all necessary documentation and understanding of the state's educational standards.

By adhering to these rigorous standards, Somerset Academy schools ensure that their teachers are not only qualified and knowledgeable but also prepared to meet the diverse needs of their students, fostering an educational environment that promotes excellence and growth for all.

5) Explain the proposed master schedule. Describe why this schedule will be optimal for student learning. Summarize how the school will plan time for teacher development, tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring, acceleration, and other academic activities. Provide a copy of the proposed annual academic calendar and proposed master schedule with this application.

The Master Schedule (Attached) is designed to provide a comprehensive curriculum that encompasses all required subject areas. This includes a balanced offering of core subjects such as English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, ensuring that each subject is taught in alignment with Arkansas State Standards and provides adequate instructional time for depth of learning.

We offer a diverse range of electives and enrichment courses that cater to students' varied interests and support a well-rounded education. This includes classes in the arts, physical education, technology, and world languages, which are integrated into the schedule to promote the development of students' diverse skills and talents.

Our schedule is constructed to ensure all students have equitable access to required courses and electives, with sufficient instructional time allocated to meet state guidelines. Periods are structured to allow for both in-depth exploration of core content and participation in elective courses, ensuring comprehensive educational experiences.

Somerset Academy provides flexible scheduling options to accommodate the diverse needs of our student body, including advanced placement, honors courses, and support classes for students requiring additional assistance. This flexibility is integral to meeting individual student needs while adhering to educational standards.

Continuous Evaluation and Improvement:

- We regularly review and adjust our course offerings and scheduling practices based on student performance data, feedback from educators, and evolving educational standards. This ongoing assessment ensures our compliance with standards 1-A.1.2 and 1-A.1.3 and the continuous enhancement of our educational programs.

Through these structured course offerings and scheduling practices, Somerset Academy is committed to not only meeting but also exceeding the educational standards set forth by DESE, providing quality instruction and diverse learning opportunities for all students.

At Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12, the design of the yearly academic calendar is thoughtfully aligned with the school's mission and educational strategic goals, particularly emphasizing the delivery of targeted instruction, aligned learning standards, quality assessments, and effective interventions. Here's how this alignment manifests throughout the academic year:

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Beginning of the Academic Year

- **Setting Learning Targets and Standards Alignment:** At the start of the academic year, teachers set clear, measurable learning targets based on aligned standards. This period is critical as it lays the groundwork for what students are expected to achieve by the end of the year. These targets are communicated to students and parents, ensuring that everyone involved is aware of the expectations and the academic goals.
- **Professional Development:** Before classes begin, teachers participate in professional development workshops focused on effective instructional strategies, differentiation techniques, and data analysis. These sessions equip teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge to meet the diverse needs of their students and to tailor lessons to promote maximum engagement and learning.

During the Academic Year

- **Implementation of Quality Assessments:** Throughout the academic year, a variety of formative and summative assessments are strategically administered to monitor student progress toward their learning targets. These assessments provide essential data that helps in adjusting teaching methods and strategies as needed.
- **Data Analysis and Response to Intervention:** Regular data analysis sessions are held to evaluate student performance across different metrics. This analysis helps in identifying students who may need additional support. The academy implements a comprehensive Response to Intervention (RTI) model, where students receive tailored instructional interventions based on their specific needs. This could range from remedial instruction to advanced enrichment activities to ensure all students are moving toward grade-level proficiency.

Mid-Year

Mid-Year Reviews and Adjustments: Midway through the year, a detailed review of academic progress is conducted. This involves reassessing student growth against the original learning targets and making necessary curriculum adjustments. This period may also involve additional professional development for teachers, particularly in areas where student data indicates a need for instructional improvement or new strategies.

- **Continued Enrichment and Intervention:** Regular enrichment sessions continue, providing 20-30 minutes per day, three days a week, dedicated to addressing both remedial and advanced student needs. These sessions are crucial for reinforcing basic skills and extending learning beyond the standard curriculum.

End of the Academic Year

- At the academic year's end, final assessments are proctored to measure student achievement relative to the set learning targets. These assessments help determine the effectiveness of the instruction and the intervention strategies used throughout the year.
- Teachers and administrative staff reflect on the past year's successes and challenges. Insights gained from these discussions are used to plan for the next academic year, with an aim to continuously improve instructional practices and student outcomes.

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The structure of the academic calendar at Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 ensures that every part of the year is strategically utilized to foster student growth, consistently track progress, and make informed adjustments to teaching and learning processes. This systematic approach is in perfect harmony with the academy's mission to provide a high-quality, differentiated educational experience that prepares all students for academic and life success. Through ongoing assessment, targeted interventions, and continuous professional development, the academy upholds its commitment to educational excellence and equity.

At Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12, the structure of the school and week is carefully designed to meet state regulations and optimize learning opportunities for elementary school students. The daily and weekly schedules are crafted to ensure that each student receives a balanced education with ample time dedicated to core subjects, enrichment activities, and personal development.

The proposed school has an instructional day running from 8:00 A.M. and ending at 3:00 P.M., making the total duration 7 hours per day, or a minimum of 360 minutes per week of core instruction. In accordance with Arkansas regulations, the school would operate 178 school days, totaling 1,068 instructional hours per school year. Thus, the following time allocations are designed to represent a minimum daily focus and provide a comprehensive educational experience in all core academic areas.

Instructional Minutes for Core Subjects	
Reading/English Language Arts	90 minutes/day
Mathematics	60 minutes/day
Science	30 minutes/day
Social Studies	30 minutes/day

Instructional Minutes for additional subjects

Physical education	40 minutes/weekly
Visual Arts	40 minutes/weekly
Music	40 minutes/weekly
Recess	40 minutes/ daily

In Somerset Academy, as in Arkansas, and many other educational systems, there is a specific emphasis on early literacy that is frequently addressed through the implementation of uninterrupted literacy blocks, especially in grades K-2. These literacy blocks are designed to provide young learners with dedicated time to focus on developing fundamental reading and writing skills, which are crucial for their future academic success. The reason for the distinction between the early grades (K-2) and upper elementary grades (3-5) in the duration and focus of the literacy block revolves around the developmental stages of children:

In the early grades, the focus is on phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency — the building blocks of reading. Children at this stage are just beginning to read and need substantial support and instruction to become proficient readers.

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As students enter the intermediate elementary grades, the goal is to shift from learning to read to reading to learn. They use their reading skills to access content across all subjects and are now expected to think critically about texts and express themselves more complexly in writing.

For kindergarten through 2nd grade, the uninterrupted block is typically longer and more focused. This is because these early years are critical for establishing the basics of phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, vocabulary, and fluency in reading. The literacy block in these grades often ranges from 90 to 120 minutes. This extended period allows for a variety of activities including guided reading, shared reading, read-alouds, and independent reading, as well as integrated writing instruction. The goal is to build a strong foundation in literacy that will support all other areas of learning.

As students progress into grades 3 through 5, the structure of the literacy block might evolve, although it remains a significant part of the daily schedule. In these grades, while the block may still last approximately 90 minutes, the focus shifts slightly towards more advanced competencies such as reading comprehension, critical analysis of texts, and more sophisticated writing tasks. Students are expected to apply their foundational reading skills to explore more complex material and demonstrate deeper understanding through written and oral communication.

It's important to note that within these structures, adaptability to meet diverse student needs is crucial. Teachers may differentiate instruction within the literacy block, providing small groups or individual instruction tailored to students' specific literacy levels and challenges. This could involve targeted interventions for students struggling or enrichment for those excelling.

By tailoring the uninterrupted literacy blocks to the developmental needs of students at different grade levels, Somerset Academy ensures that all students develop strong literacy skills that are essential for academic success and lifelong learning. This structured approach aligns with educational best practices and state standards, maximizing the efficacy of literacy education throughout the elementary grades.

Instructional Hours for Core Subjects:

- Language Arts: 90 minutes per day
- Mathematics: 60 minutes per day
- Science: 30 minutes per day
- Social Studies: 30 minutes per day

These time allocations are designed to exceed the minimum requirements and provide a comprehensive educational experience in all core academic areas.

Start and Dismissal Times:

- Starting the day at 8:00 AM and ending at 3:00 PM aligns well with elementary students' natural alertness patterns, making use of the peak concentration hours in the morning for core academic activities and using afternoons for more hands-on and interactive learning.

The structure of the school day and week at Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 ensures that students are not only meeting but exceeding the educational standards set forth by Arkansas regulations. This schedule is

designed not just to fulfill mandatory instructional hours but to optimize each moment of the school day to enhance student learning, engagement, and overall school experience.

B. Academic Performance

- 1) Explain the process for setting, monitoring, and revising academic performance goals. Include in your response how the proposed school will use data to improve instruction, inform professional development, and evaluate curriculum.**

Creating and maintaining high academic standards is critical for any educational institution. At Somerset Academy, the process of setting, monitoring, and revising academic performance goals is a comprehensive and dynamic practice that involves multiple stakeholders and relies heavily on data-driven decision-making. It includes a strategic cycle of using baseline data to identify opportunities for growth, setting targets through collaborative goal setting, and consistently monitoring progress towards the goals. The process includes:

- **Data Collection:**
 - **Student Performance Data:** Collect standardized test scores, formative assessment results, classroom grades, and other relevant academic performance indicators.
 - **Demographic Data:** Gather data on student demographics, including socio-economic status, ethnicity, language proficiency, and special education needs.
 - **Attendance and Behavior Data:** Monitor attendance records, disciplinary actions, and behavioral incident reports.
 - **Teacher Data:** Assess teacher qualifications, professional development participation, and performance evaluations.
- **Data Aggregation and Management:**
 - Utilize a comprehensive data management system to aggregate and store collected data.
 - Ensure data accuracy and integrity through regular audits and validation checks.
- **Data Analysis:**
 - **Descriptive Analysis:** Summarize data to identify trends, patterns, and areas of concern.
 - **Comparative Analysis:** Compare performance across different student groups and against state/national benchmarks.
- **Reporting:**
 - Create detailed data reports and dashboards for stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, parents, and the school board.
 - Ensure that reports are timely, accurate, and actionable.

Further, Somerset Academy has a rigorous school improvement process to ensure data is collected at regular intervals and is considered within the larger network of schools. The school improvement process includes:

1. Needs Assessment:

- Conduct a thorough needs assessment based on collected data to identify key areas requiring improvement.
- Engage stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and community members, to gather input and insights.

2. Goal Setting:

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- Establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals based on the needs assessment.
- Align goals with broader district and state educational priorities.

3. Strategic Planning:

- Develop a comprehensive school improvement plan, outlining strategies and actions to achieve established goals.
- Assign responsibilities, set timelines, and allocate resources.

4. Implementation:

- Execute the school improvement plan with fidelity, ensuring that all stakeholders are engaged and informed.
- Provide ongoing support, professional development, and resources to teachers and staff.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Continuously monitor progress towards goals through regular data collection and analysis.
- Conduct formative evaluations to assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies and make necessary adjustments.

6. Continuous Improvement:

- Foster a culture of continuous improvement by regularly reviewing and refining the school improvement plan based on evaluation results.
- Celebrate successes, learn from challenges, and remain adaptable to emerging needs and opportunities.

7. Communication and Reporting:

- Maintain open and transparent communication with all stakeholders throughout the improvement process.
- Provide regular updates on progress, challenges, and successes to the school board, parents, and the wider community.

By adhering to this data-driven analysis plan and structured school improvement process, Somerset aims to enhance student outcomes, foster a positive school environment, and achieve long-term success in providing high-quality education to all students.

The process of setting, monitoring, and revising academic performance goals at Somerset Academy involves a systematic and collaborative approach that is heavily reliant on data-driven decision-making. By continuously collecting and analyzing data, the school can make informed adjustments to instructional practices, professional development, and curriculum design. This iterative process ensures that academic goals are not only met but also aligned with the school's mission to provide high-quality education that prepares students for future success.

2) Describe the promotion/retention policies for instructional staff.

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Due to professional learning opportunities and ongoing support, educators can effectively implement the academic plan, resulting in enhanced instructional practices and better student outcomes. Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 is committed to the promotion and retention of its instructional staff. These policies guide educators' career development, and the best and most capable educators remain in the system.

The following is a detailed overview of what these policies typically include:

Promotion Policies:

- **Performance Evaluations:** Regular performance reviews based on classroom observations, student outcomes, and other metrics. Somerset Inc. Network uses the Agavex Teacher Evaluation Model.
- **Professional Development Requirements:** Completion of specific professional development programs or continuing education credits. Participation in workshops, seminars, and further education relevant to their subject or teaching methodologies.
- **Leadership Roles:** Opportunities for teachers to take on additional responsibilities, such as department heads, instructional coaches, or curriculum coordinators. Demonstration of leadership qualities, mentorship of new teachers, and active involvement in school committees.
- **Tenure and Experience:** Consideration of years of service and overall experience in teaching. - Tenure policies where applicable, ensuring that long-serving teachers who meet performance standards have job security.
- **Advanced Degrees and Certifications:** Incentives for obtaining advanced degrees (e.g., Master's, Doctorate) or specialized certifications (e.g., National Board Certification). - Recognition and consideration of additional qualifications in the promotion process.
- **Contributions to School Community:** Involvement in extracurricular activities, community engagement, and contributions to the school culture. Active participation in school improvement initiatives and successful implementation of school policies.

Retention Policies:

- **Competitive Compensation:** Regular salary reviews to ensure competitive pay scales that reflect teachers' experience, performance, and additional qualifications. Benefits packages include health insurance, retirement plans, and other financial incentives.
- **Supportive Work Environment:** Provision of essential resources and support, including access to teaching materials, technology, and professional development. Fostering a positive and collaborative work culture with opportunities for teacher input in decision-making.
- **Mentorship and Coaching:** Structured mentorship programs for new and early-career teachers to support their development and retention. Ongoing access to instructional coaches and professional learning communities for continuous growth.
- **Recognition and Awards:** Formal recognition programs to acknowledge outstanding teaching performance and contributions to the school community. Awards, public acknowledgment, and other incentives to boost morale and job satisfaction.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Policies that support a healthy work-life balance, including reasonable work load expectations and support for personal well-being. Flexible working arrangements where possible and support for teachers managing personal or family commitments.

- **Career Advancement Opportunities:** Clear and transparent pathways for career advancement within the institution. Opportunities for professional growth, including leadership positions and roles in special projects or initiatives.
- **Feedback and Communication:** Regular opportunities for teachers to provide feedback on their working conditions, support needs, and career aspirations. Transparent communication from administration regarding policy changes, performance expectations, and career opportunities.

Implementation:

- **Clear Documentation:** Detailed policy documents outlining the criteria and processes for promotion and retention. Easy access to these documents for all staff members.
- **Consistent Application:** Ensuring the policies are applied consistently and fairly across all instructional staff. Regular training for administrators on the effective implementation of these policies.
- **Regular Review:** Periodic review and updates of policies to reflect changes in educational standards, staff feedback, and institutional goals. Incorporating best practices and new research into policy revisions.

By adopting comprehensive promotion and retention policies, educational institutions can foster a motivated, skilled, and stable instructional workforce, leading to improved educational outcomes for students.

Section 3: Student Services and Special Populations

- 1) **Explain the proposed charter school’s Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) or similar intervention service models. Please include a description of the model, data, and components that will help ensure students receive high-quality instruction.**

The school will follow the state’s Response to Intervention (RtI) guidance (<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/learning-services/curriculum-support/response-to-intervention>) and use the Problem Solving RtI framework (<http://www.rtinetwork.org>) to make informed decisions about students’ individual academic needs. The MTSS RtI model has been adapted for the implementation of evidence based instruction and intervention.

The school’s overarching goal is to improve achievement using evidence-based interventions matched to the instructional need and level of the child. At Tier 1, evidence-based core instructional and behavioral methodologies, practices and supports designed for all students provide the foundation in general education. Tier 2 consists of supplemental instruction and interventions that are provided in addition to and in alignment with core instruction and behavioral supports to targeted groups of students identified as needing additional assistance. Tier 3 is targeted for those students who require intensive instructional or behavioral intervention in addition to and in alignment with core instruction. At this tier, instruction and intervention intensity is reflected in increased frequency, greater duration and/or more individualization. Each tier varies within the components of Focus, Interventionist, Setting, Grouping, Curriculum, Duration, Length of Instructional Sessions, Assessment, Progress Monitoring and Behavior. The data the School will use for this process may include: State testing scores, iReady Diagnostic Reading or Math, Early Warning Indicators such as retentions and truancy, Behavioral referrals, or Grades D’s & F’s in core classes on a quarterly basis. Throughout every

tier, the child's response will be monitored on a series of increasingly intense interventions to assist in identifying and addressing academic, second language, and behavioral difficulties prior to the child experiencing failure.

The school will actively involve parents in the MTSS process as it recognizes how crucial this is. Parents are essential partners in their child's education. Parents have valuable insights into their child's strengths, challenges, interests, cultural background, language proficiency, and unique circumstances. Their input can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the student, which can inform the development of appropriate interventions and support strategies. In addition, involving parents in the MTSS process will foster a collaborative relationship between our school, promoting open communication and shared responsibility for the student's academic and behavioral success. This shared responsibility will enable parents to better understand and reinforce the strategies and interventions being implemented at school, creating a cohesive support system for the student. Ultimately, the school's parental goal through the MTSS process is to empower parents to be active participants in their child's education which will enable them to understand the specific interventions and supports being provided, monitor progress, and make informed decisions regarding their child's educational plan.

2) Describe school-wide, research-based instructional strategies that specifically benefit students with disabilities, emergent bilingual/English learners, and students performing above and below grade level in the same classroom environment.

The school recognizes that implementing effective instructional strategies that cater to the diverse needs of students with disabilities, emergent bilingual/English learners, and students performing above or below grade level in the same classroom is crucial for creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment. It is important to note that these strategies will be implemented in a culturally responsive and inclusive manner, considering the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and strengths of all students. Additionally, ongoing assessment, progress monitoring, and collaboration among teachers, specialists, and families will be essential for ensuring the effectiveness of these strategies and making adjustments as needed. The school-wide, research-based instructional strategies that will be implemented include:

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** UDL is a framework that provides multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement to accommodate diverse learners. It emphasizes flexibility in the ways information is presented, how students respond or demonstrate their knowledge, and how they are motivated to learn.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Differentiated instruction involves adjusting the content, process, product, and learning environment based on students' readiness levels, interests, and learning preferences. Teachers can provide different entry points, scaffolding, and levels of complexity to meet the needs of students at various levels.
- **Cooperative Learning:** Cooperative learning strategies, such as think-pair-share, jigsaw, and group projects, promote peer interactions and support. These strategies can benefit students with disabilities by providing opportunities for peer modeling and support, while also allowing emergent bilingual/English learners to practice language skills in a low-stakes environment.
- **Explicit Instruction:** Explicit instruction involves breaking down complex skills into smaller, manageable steps and providing clear explanations, modeling, and guided practice. This approach can

benefit students with disabilities, as well as those who are struggling or performing below grade level, by providing structured support and opportunities for practice and feedback.

- **Multimodal Instruction:** Integrating various modes of instruction, such as visual aids, hands-on activities, and multimedia resources, can accommodate different learning styles and strengths. This approach can benefit emergent bilingual/English learners by providing multiple entry points to content and reducing language barriers, while also engaging students performing above or below grade level with varied modalities.
- **Scaffolding and Gradual Release of Responsibility:** Providing temporary supports (scaffolding) and gradually transferring responsibility to students as they become more proficient can benefit all learners. This approach allows for differentiated support and challenges based on individual needs.
- **Flexible Grouping:** Grouping students based on their instructional needs, rather than solely by their grade level or ability, can facilitate targeted instruction and peer support. Flexible grouping allows for fluid movement among groups based on students' progress and changing needs.
- **Technology Integration:** Incorporating assistive technologies, educational software, and online resources can provide additional support and accessibility for students with disabilities, while also offering opportunities for enrichment and personalized learning for students performing above or below grade level.

3) Describe how the charter school intends to identify, evaluate, and appropriately place exceptional students with disabilities in the most appropriate educational setting.

The school will follow the guidance in the state's Special Education Process Guide (<https://arksped.ade.arkansas.gov/documents/paperwork-reduction/sped-process-guide.pdf>) to effectively provide special education services for all students found eligible under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 13 categories. In addition, the state's Eligibility Criteria & Program Guidelines for ages 5-21 (<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/special-education/policy-regulations/eligibility-criteria-program-guidelines>) will be used to identify possible referral characteristics, conduct required and recommended screening information, obtain required, other and optional evaluation data, and understand the evaluation data analysis process to determine eligibility for any of the 13 IDEA categories.

The school will conduct Child Find activities to ensure that all children with disabilities within its jurisdiction and in need of special education and related services are identified, located, evaluated regardless of severity of their disability. The school will develop and maintain a written child find plan outlining the systematic and continuous efforts the school will undertake to meet its responsibilities. The plan will include Screening and General Education Interventions, Accommodations, and Strategies. The Screening process will be to identify or predict children who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. A variety of methods may be used to screen children, including performance on assessments, curriculum-based measures, and/or kindergarten readiness measures. When the school's screening process reveals that a child or groups of children are at risk of not meeting the Arkansas Academic Standards, the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards and/or established behavioral expectations, the child's need for evidence-based interventions should be considered.

In addition, as part of the MTSS RtI process, a request will be made for a formal evaluation of students who are suspected of needing a specialized program. This request for a formal evaluation is made by the Problem-Solving Team (PST) and occurs only after the team determines that extensive evidence based efforts have been ineffective in meeting the student's educational needs OR that the intensive interventions were successful in meeting the student's educational needs, but sustained implementation of said interventions is not feasible for a regular education teacher.

Once the team determines that the student is not making adequate progress at Tier III, the PST will refer for formal evaluation. Records of social, psychological, medical and achievement data in the student's cumulative folder are reviewed. Attendance records will be reviewed and where appropriate investigation of reasons for excessive absenteeism will be conducted.

Sensory screenings will be completed during the RtI. Students being considered for special education programs, excluding hospital/homebound, will be screened for vision and hearing prior to conducting an evaluation to determine the student's eligibility. If vision and/or hearing screenings are failed, the school will make work with the family and outside agencies so that the vision/hearing issues can be resolved. The failed screenings will not delay the referral for an evaluation. PST members (including the parents) will decide what areas are to be evaluated. The PST members may include: regular and special education teachers, administrators, counselors, and other individuals as needed, to assist with the decision making process of what areas will be evaluated. School personnel will be responsible for obtaining parental consent to evaluate. Procedural Safeguards and the proposed evaluation procedures will be explained to the parent.

NOTE: At any time during this process, the parent has the right to request an evaluation for special education eligibility and RtI can be conducted concurrently. The school understands that RtI will not block a special education referral. All evaluations will be completed within sixty student calendar days of which the student is in attendance following school receipt of the parent consent.

When conducting an initial evaluation, the school will consider:

- If the child is a child with a disability
- Whether the child needs special education and related services
- The educational needs of the needs
- If the child is an English learner, the level of English proficiency
- The present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (related developmental needs) of the child.

The Referral Process includes the Referral, Referral Conference, Evaluation, Notice of Conference and Evaluation Programming Conference Decision/Notice of Decision. The school must meet the 60 day timeline requirement from the start of the Referral process to the Notice of Conference. The Initial Evaluation Process includes Initiating the Referral, Scheduling a Meeting with the parents to determine if student should be evaluated, Providing Parents their Parental Rights

https://arksped.ade.arkansas.gov/rules_regs_08/RevisionstoRulesandRegulationJuly2010/YOUR%20RIGH

[TS%20UNDER%20THE%20IDEA.pdf](#)), Providing Written Notice of Action including Parental Consent, Conducting the Evaluation, and Determining Eligibility.

Eligibility will be determined after the completion of the comprehensive evaluation and the activities described in the general education interventions procedures are completed. An IEP will be created when the student meets eligibility.

In order to ensure students with disabilities receive FAPE in the LRE, the School will provide, to the maximum extent appropriate, that children with disabilities are educated with children who are nondisabled. The school district shall use the term "inclusion" to mean:

- that a student is receiving education in a general education regular class setting reflecting natural proportions and age-appropriate heterogeneous groups in core academic and elective or special areas within the school community;
- a student with a disability is a valued member of the classroom and school community;
- the teachers and administrators support universal education and have knowledge and support available to enable them to effectively teach all children; and
- a student is provided access to technical assistance in best practices, instructional methods, and supports tailored to the student's needs based on current research.

The School will assume responsibility for programming and delivering special education services to exceptional students, as identified in the student's IEP with adherence and fidelity to the State's policies. Special education services will include Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) to be provided through the implementation of the IEP. The School will adapt, as appropriate, to the needs of the special education student in content, methodology, and delivery of instruction to ensure access to the general curriculum and proficiency in the educational standards adopted by the state of Arkansas. SDI will be organized and planned instructional activities provided by the special education teacher to ensure that systematic and explicit instruction is linked to the student's IEP goals and objectives.

In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities (including meals, recess periods, counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the School, and referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities) the School will ensure that each student with a disability participates with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student. This will be reflected in the School's documents, master schedule, logs, rosters, and list of referrals.

The School will make adaptations to school facilities, to the maximum extent appropriate and within provisions of the law, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), to ensure that students with disabilities enrolled in the School will be educated in the LRE.

Developing Individualized Education Plans: Students will be guaranteed FAPE, evaluations, as well as consequent placement and implementation of an appropriate IEP. The written IEP for each student will include: Special Education instructional services through SDI (systematic and explicit instruction) offered in the specified service delivery model(s); Measurable annual learning/behavioral goals that may involve the evaluation of behavior through a FBA and development of a BIP; Program Components; Goals: **S** Specific, **M** Measurable, **A** Use Action Words, **R** Realistic and relevant, **T** Time-limited (SMART);

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Progress reports to parents; Diploma options; Curriculum (Standard or ACCESS); Assessment; Supplementary aids and services; Relates Services and Accommodations.

The IEP Team will include: Parent, LEA, General Education Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Evaluation Specialist and all additional members of the team that will be notified with a reasonable amount of time and all appropriate contacts will be made. Input from all team members and student data will be used to create an IEP.

The School will establish procedures that provide for parents, guardians, surrogate parents, or persons acting in loco parentis to participate in decisions concerning the IEPs. Parents of each student with a disability will be members of any group that makes decisions for their child. In order to ensure that parents are present at each meeting, or are afforded the opportunity to participate at each meeting: (a) parents will be notified of the meeting at least ten days prior to set meeting to ensure that they have an opportunity to attend; (b) the meeting will be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place; (c) a written notice to the parent will indicate the purpose; time; location of the meeting; who, by title or position, will be in attendance; and will include a statement informing the parents that they have the right to invite individuals with special knowledge or expertise about their child. If neither parent can attend, the School will use other methods that can to ensure parent participation (e.g., individual or conference telephone calls or video conferencing. NOTE - A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the parent indicated in the notification of meeting that they will not be able to attend and gives permission to proceed without or the school is unable to obtain the attendance of the parent.

The School will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parents and the student, beginning at age twelve (12), understand the proceedings at a meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents and students who are deaf or whose native language is other than English.

Timelines for IEPs include the following:

- An IEP will be developed within thirty (30) calendar days following the determination of a student's eligibility for special education and related services and be in effect prior to the provision of these services.
- A meeting shall be held at least annually to review, and revise, as appropriate, each IEP.

The IEP team will consider the following factors in the development, review, and revision of the IEP:

- Strengths of the student and concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child;
- Results of the initial or most recent evaluation or reevaluation;
- As appropriate, results of the student's performance on state or district-wide assessments; and/or
- Academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student.
- In the case of a student whose behavior impedes the student's learning or the learning of others, strategies, including the use of positive behavioral interventions, supports, and other strategies to address that behavior.
- In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, the language needs of the student as related to the IEP.

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- In the case of a student who is blind or visually impaired, provision of instruction in Braille and the use of Braille.
- The communication needs of the student.
- Whether the student requires assistive technology devices or services.
- At least annually, whether extended school year (ESY) services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the student.
- If, after considering all the factors mentioned above, the IEP team determines that a student needs a particular device or service, including an intervention, accommodation, or other modification, in order to receive FAPE, the IEP includes a statement to that effect.

Each IEP will include the following:

- A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum.
- A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to meet the student's needs that result from the student's disability to enable the student to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum.
- A description of benchmarks or short-term objectives for students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, or any other student with a disability, at the discretion of the IEP team.
- A statement of the special education and related services, and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student.
- A statement of the classroom accommodations, modifications, or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals.
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class or in the activities described above.
- A statement addressing any individual appropriate accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on the State or district assessments.
- If the IEP team determines that the student will take an alternate assessment instead of the regular state or district assessment of student achievement, the IEP must include a statement of why the student cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the student.
- The projected date for the beginning of the special education, services, accommodations, and modifications described and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services.

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- A statement of how the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the student is making toward meeting the annual goals will be provided.

The School will ensure that the IEP team revises the IEP as appropriate to address:

- Any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in the general curriculum, if appropriate;
- Results of any reevaluation conducted;
- Information about the student provided to or by the parents;
- The student's anticipated needs or other matters; and/or
- Parent requests for revisions of the student's IEP.

Generally, changes to the IEP must be made by the entire IEP team at an IEP team meeting and may be made by amending the IEP rather than by redrafting the entire IEP (interim IEP).

In order for an IEP to be in effect, parent/guardian must sign consent for placement first. Once parental consent is obtained, special education and related services will be provided to an eligible student and will be implemented as soon as possible following the IEP team meeting. In addition, the IEP will be accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, and other service provider who is responsible for its implementation. All teachers and providers will be informed of their specific responsibilities related to the implementation of the IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the student in accordance with the IEP. The School will make substantial efforts to assist the student in achieving the goals and objectives or benchmarks listed on the IEP.

EXCEPTIONS: The general education interventions described here are not required for students who demonstrate speech disorders, severe cognitive, physical or sensory disorders or severe social/behavioral deficits that require immediate intervention to prevent harm to the student or others.

Lastly, the school will implement Child Find awareness activities and organized initiatives throughout the year to identify preschool- and school-aged children with disabilities. These activities may include public awareness campaigns by the school or in partnership with the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that include information provided in languages spoken in the community and target a wide audience including parents and families, daycare and early childhood education providers, summer camps, medical providers, homeless shelters, and religious institutions. For older children, activities may include locally administered assessments that measure student academic growth, screening private school students and home school students, meeting with mental health practitioners, sharing information with nonprofit organizations that focus on families and children, and coordinating with State agencies that provide services to children and young adults. With the increased use of social media, the School may post child find notices on their websites and social media pages.

The continuum of placements for the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) includes:

*Regular class with Indirect Service

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EX: Special Education teacher consults with General Education teacher on how to best meet the student's IEP goals.

*Regular Class 80% or more

EX: Special Education teacher works directly with the special education student inside the general education classroom such as support facilitation.

*Regular Class 40% to 79%

EX: Special Education student is removed from the general education classroom and is provided specially designed instruction in a resource room setting from the special education teacher.

*Regular Class Less Than 40%

EX: Special Education student is removed from the general education classroom for the majority of the school day and is provided specially designed instruction in a self-contained setting from the special education teacher.

*School-based Day Treatment

EX: Day Treatment is the most intensive non-residential program that can be provided over an extended period of time to a Special Education student. School-based day treatment permits access to community-based mental health services in conjunction with and integrated into the student's educational program.

*Special Day School

EX: Special Day Schools are day programs licensed through Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS). The school may refer a student to a DDS day program when the school has determined the student is in need of more exceptional education services than the school can provide.

*Residential School

EX: Special Education student is placed in a residential facility for the provision of 24/7 treatment and care. The school will identify an approved residential facility that will provide the necessary special education and related services as written in the Individualized Education Plan, but will maintain its responsibility for procedural safeguards being met and the provision of FAPE.

*Hospital Program

EX: A hospitalized student is a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric condition which is acute or catastrophic in nature, or a chronic illness, or a repeated intermittent illness due to a persisting medical problem and that confines the student to a hospital, and restricts activities for an extended period of time. Specially designed instruction is provided by the special education teacher in the hospital in person or virtually.

*Homebound Instruction

EX: A homebound student is a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric condition which is acute or catastrophic in nature, or a chronic illness, or a repeated intermittent illness due to a persisting medical problem and that confines the student to home, and restricts activities for an extended period of time. Specially designed instruction is provided by the special education teacher either in the home in person or virtually.

The school's plan for adhering to all federal and state special education laws and rules is:

- 1) The school will familiarize itself with all applicable laws and regulations that govern special education, such as IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The school will attend all state meetings and webinars to stay abreast of state special education mandates.
- 2) The school will appoint the Special Education Teacher as the designated liaison with the state who can act as a point of contact for all special education matters. As he/she is will be certified in Special Education based on the state of Arkansas certification requirements, he/she will be knowledgeable about the applicable laws and regulations and be responsible for coordinating efforts between both entities.
- 3) The school will create and adopt comprehensive policies and procedures that will explain the entire special education process. The school will follow the guidance in the state's Special Education Process Guide (<https://arksped.ade.arkansas.gov/documents/paperwork-reduction/sped-process-guide.pdf>) to effectively provide special education services for all students found eligible under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 13 categories. In addition, the state's Eligibility Criteria & Program Guidelines for ages 5-21 (<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/special-education/policy-regulations/eligibility-criteria-program-guidelines>) will be used to identify possible referral characteristics, conduct required and recommended screening information, obtain required, other and optional evaluation data, and understand the evaluation data analysis process to determine eligibility for any of the 13 IDEA categories.
- 4) The school will understand and implement appropriate accommodations and modification for students with disabilities, as outlined in their IEP or Section 504 plans.
- 5) The school will respect and protect the privacy and confidentiality of students with disabilities, following applicable federal and state laws, such as the Family Educational and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- 6) The school will build strong lines of communication and collaboration with the state's Special Education department which may include partnerships, attending meetings, and exchanging information regularly to ensure a cohesive approach.
- 7) The school will engage in ongoing collaboration with education professionals to gain a better understanding of the unique needs of students with disabilities and foster a collaborative approach to addressing issues that may arise.
- 8) The school will continuously review and update their policies and procedures to stay current with changes in federal and state guidelines. The school will monitor developments in special education legislations and regulations to ensure ongoing compliance.
- 9) The school will, if needed, consult with legal experts specializing in special education or disability rights to ensure practices align with the law.

The School will provide related services such as Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy via a contracted company on the first day of school. The school will contract with Aequor (<https://www.aequor.com>) or Miyo Health (<https://www.miyohhealth.com>) for the provision of

Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy. Aequor will have valid and up to date certifications in the state of Arkansas. School logs will be kept of all services provided to students. The schedule of services will be created based on the number of minutes on each student's IEP for the related services. The school will not participate in Medicaid billing.

4) Describe how the school will meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELL). Include the procedures that will be utilized for identifying students, ensuring that they have equitable access to the school's programming, and engaging with their families.

The school will follow the guidance in the state's ESOL Program Guide: Guidance for Providing ESOL Services (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NsJy6TIBYBUPqqdwD-nsOqho0Bp1c6N/edit>). The school will create an ESOL Plan to ensure effective programming and appropriate support is provided to English Language Learners (ELL) so that they learn how to effectively employ a second language in an academic setting while learning through that second language knowledge and skills in multiple disciplines. The school's ESOL Plan will include how ELL will be screened, placed, parents notified of placements, and how ELL are annually reviewed for entrance and exit procedures. In addition, the school will clearly define what Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) will be provided to ELL.

The school's students who may be ELL 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.

There are two ways the school will use to identify potentially eligible students for ESOL services – HLU and documenting the reason the student is a Language Minority Student if not clearly indicated on the HLU via the HLU Verification Form.

Students who qualify for initial assessment are classified as a Primary Home Language Other than English (PHLOTE) student, or a Language Minority Student (LMS) and the language provided other than English must be appropriately entered in student information system.

The school will use the state's initial English proficiency screener (ELPA21) as the Language Proficiency Screener. Placement decisions will be made by a site-based Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee (LPAC) consisting of at least three educators, one from each category:

1. Building administrator (principal, assistant principal)
2. English for Speakers of Other Languages Designee (Teacher who is English as a Second Language-endorsed and/or trained to work with English Learners)
3. Certified educator familiar with the student's data and performance in the classroom.

The LPAC will meet within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter to review assessment results and other available data and determine an initial placement along with any recommended classroom and assessment accommodations. The LPAC will also determine the appropriate classroom and assessment accommodations to be provided to the student due to their English Learner needs, if any.

At the opening of the school year, parents and guardians of students who have been identified as an ELL and placed in the school's ESOL program must be notified not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year of their child's identification and placement. After the school year begins, parents and guardians of students should be notified within two weeks of enrollment of their child's identification and placement.

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Parents/guardians must be notified in a language or manner they understand regarding the information and decision of the LPAC. It is optional to invite the parent to the actual LPAC meeting, but, if invited, invitations to attend the LPAC must be in a language and/or manner that the parent understands. If a parent does not understand English and requests a school-provided interpreter, the school must provide an interpreter to the extent practicable. Notification letters must be dated and signed by school personnel. Please note that parents/guardians are notified of a student's placement and informed of how to waive services. The school does not need to ask permission or approval to place a student as an ELL, nor does the school need to obtain permission to begin services. Parents/guardians may waive ELL services at any time and may request their child return to ELL services at any time. ELs whose parents/guardians have waived services must continue to participate in the annual ELPA21 summative assessment until the student meets the exit criteria.

The school will choose the language assistance program that is most beneficial for that student population. Sample programs include Structured English Immersion (SEI) or an English Language Development Program (ELD).

The school understands its obligation to have highly qualified teachers available to provide language assistance services, and will make every effort to hire teachers with those credentials or an ESOL specialization on their teaching certificate.

The school will design and implement ESOL programs that enable ELL to attain English proficiency and equal participation in the standard instructional program. The school will use appropriate and reliable evaluation and testing methods that have been validated to measure ELL students' English language proficiency and knowledge of the core curriculum. Only by measuring the progress of ELL in the core curriculum during the ELL program can the school ensure that students are growing academically.

The school will ensure that all ELL who may have a disability, like all other students who may have a disability and need services under IDEA or Section 504, are located, identified, and evaluated for special education and disability-related services in a timely manner. When conducting such evaluations, the school will consider the English language proficiency of ELL in determining the appropriate assessments and other evaluation materials to be used.

The school must monitor the progress of all of their ELL in achieving English language proficiency and acquiring content knowledge. Monitoring ensures that ELs are making appropriate progress with respect to acquiring English and content knowledge while in the ESOL program or, in the case of opted-out ELL students, in the regular educational setting. To assess ELL's acquisition of English proficiency, the school will use the ELPA21. ELPA21 (English Language Proficiency Assessment) is a standardized test aligned with English Language Proficiency Standards. It assesses language acquisition in the four domains of Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing.

Annual (yearly) reviews of ELs will be conducted by the school's LPAC. Each annual review will yield one of three decisions:

1. Student has not met required exit criteria, so he/she remains in the program.
2. Student has met required exit criteria, so he/she exits the program and begins the monitoring process.
3. Student is in the monitoring process, classified as a Former English Learner, and is monitored for four years, according to federal guidelines as outlined in the [Arkansas English Learner Entrance and Exit Procedures Manual](#) which is part of the [Arkansas ESSA Plan](#).

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The school will meet this obligation by providing full access to the grade-appropriate core curriculum from the start of the ESOL program while using appropriate language assistance strategies in the core instruction so that ELL students can participate meaningfully as they acquire English. In adapting instruction for ELL students, the school will ensure that their specialized instruction (e.g., structured immersion or sheltered content classes) does not use a watered-down curriculum that could leave ELL students with academic deficits when they transition from ESOL programs into general education classrooms. Such specialized instruction should be designed such that ELL students can meet grade-level standards within a reasonable period of time. The school will also place ELL in age-appropriate grade levels so that they can have meaningful access to their grade-appropriate curricula and an equal opportunity to graduate.

5) Describe how the school will meet the needs of gifted and talented students. Include the procedures that will be utilized for identifying students, ensuring that they have equitable access to the school's programming, and engaging with their families.

While the curriculum at the school is deemed academically challenging, a waiver will be sought for the inclusion of a gifted and talented program. Students who exceed in subject areas based on test scores and competence in subject area, will have additional time built into each class to complete accelerated work. The school's administration will choose the accelerated programs and materials for the students. In addition, the school will follow guidelines and offer dual-enrollment classes through colleges/universities for secondary students. The school will also offer Pre-AP and AP classes in the core areas, as each grade is added.

6) Describe how the school will meet the needs of students at risk of academic failure. Include the procedures that will be utilized for identifying students, ensuring that they have equitable access to the school's programming, and engaging with their families.

The school recognizes meeting the needs of students at risk of academic failure requires a comprehensive and systematic approach that involves early identification, targeted interventions, equitable access to programming, and family engagement. Effective implementation of these procedures requires a coordinated effort among administrators, teachers, support staff, families, and community partners. By prioritizing early identification, providing targeted interventions and support services, ensuring equitable access, and engaging families as partners in the educational process, our school will better meet the needs of students at risk of academic failure and promote their overall success.

Identifying Students at Risk, the school will:

- Implement a universal screening process to assess all students in areas such as reading, math, and behavior at the beginning of the school year and at regular intervals (e.g., quarterly or trimesterly).
- Use multiple data sources, including standardized assessments, classroom performance, attendance records, and teacher observations, to identify students who are not meeting grade-level benchmarks or demonstrating significant academic or behavioral difficulties.
- Utilize the Problem Solving Team (PST) consisting of administrators, teachers, counselors, and specialists to review student data and determine appropriate interventions and support strategies.

Ensuring Equitable Access to Programming, the school will:

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- Conduct an equity audit to identify and address potential barriers to access, such as language barriers, cultural differences, socioeconomic factors, or other systemic issues that may impact student participation and achievement.
- Provide targeted academic interventions, such as small-group instruction, tutoring, or specialized programs, during the school day or through extended learning opportunities (e.g., after-school programs, summer school).
- Offer supplemental resources and support services, such as counseling, mentoring, or social-emotional learning programs, to address non-academic factors that may impact student success.
- Ensure that all interventions and support services are provided in a culturally responsive and inclusive manner, respecting students' diverse backgrounds and needs.
- Provide professional development for teachers and staff on implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, differentiated instruction, and trauma-informed practices to better support at-risk students.

Engaging with Families, the school will:

- Establish regular communication channels with families, such as parent-teacher conferences, phone calls, or online platforms, to share information about student progress and areas of concern.
- Involve families in the development and implementation of intervention plans and support strategies, valuing their input and perspectives.
- Offer family workshops, classes, or resources to support families in assisting their children's academic and social-emotional development at home.
- Facilitate family-school partnerships by encouraging families to participate in school activities, decision-making processes, and volunteer opportunities.
- Provide interpreters, translated materials, and other language support services to ensure effective communication with families from diverse linguistic backgrounds.
- Collaborate with community organizations and agencies to connect families with additional resources and support services, such as healthcare, housing assistance, or social services, as needed.

Progress Monitoring and Evaluation, the school will:

- Implement a data-driven decision-making process by regularly monitoring student progress through formative assessments, classroom observations, and other data collection methods.
- Adjust interventions and support strategies based on student progress or lack thereof, ensuring that the interventions are effective and responsive to individual student needs.
- Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the school's at-risk support system through annual program reviews and stakeholder feedback, making necessary adjustments to improve outcomes for students at risk of academic failure.

- 7) As required by Ark. Code Ann. §6-41-603, all charter schools are required to screen every student in kindergarten through grade 3 (K-3) and those in grades 3-12 who experience difficulty with fluency using a high-quality, evidence-based screener approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. Screeners should use the Arkansas Literacy screening assessment in their evaluation. In addition to the screening requirements, describe how the school will provide literacy intervention and dyslexia services for identified students.**

The school will screen each student in K-3, and any new K-3 students that were not screened previously who enrolls for the first time in the school. The school will also screen students in grades 3-12 who demonstrate difficulty with fluency. The screening shall be performed with fidelity and include phonological and phonemic

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awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, rapid naming skills, and encoding skills. The school shall screen using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS). DIBELS alone may be insufficient to determine the existence of dyslexia, therefore additional screening assessments will be used to measure components that were not measured in DIBELS. The school will refer to the Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide for a list of screening instruments (https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/DRG-App-I-TOC_20210923084612.pdf). If the DIBELS shows that a student is at some or at risk, then a Level I dyslexia screener will be administered. If the initial dyslexia screening indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia, the MTSS RtI process will be implemented to address the needs of the student. Students administered a Level II dyslexia screener may be determined as having functional difficulties in the academic environment due to the characteristics of dyslexia and should be considered for accommodations or equipment under a Section 504 plan. Parents will be notified if dyslexia intervention services are needed based on the screeners. Parents will have the option to receive an independent dyslexia evaluation from appropriately trained professionals (EX: School psychologist). The school will contract with a school psychologist as needed.

The school will provide services for students whose dyslexia Level I or Level II screening indicate a need for dyslexia intervention services by a teacher with specialization in working with students that have dyslexia. The services may include explicit instruction, individualized instruction in a small group setting concentrating on maximizing student engagement, meaning-based instruction emphasizing comprehension and composition, or multisensory instruction that incorporates 2 or more sensory pathways. Level I and Level II students will be monitored closely to ensure the interventions are working. If they are not, the PST will meet to discuss consent for a special education evaluation after a referral conference is held.

In addition, the school's administration will provide professional awareness training on dyslexia during the Opening of Schools teacher planning days. The school's administration will also encourage teachers to participate in dyslexia awareness and training as part of their yearly Professional Development Plan.

Section 4: School Climate

- 1) Describe the intended school climate/environment. Explain how that climate will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.**

Somerset Academy aims to cultivate an educational culture where academic excellence is both respected and actively pursued while fostering an intrinsic care for others. The school emphasizes the development of the whole child, encouraging a Problem-Solving approach to conflict to support each child's growth. This approach helps to minimize punitive measures that could disrupt the academic and social settings, thereby enabling students to take ownership of their mistakes and learn from them. The environment encourages students to accept responsibility for their actions, fostering character development.

a) Include in your explanation how the climate for students, teachers, administrators, and parents will be established.

The school climate at Somerset Academy will be established through collaborative efforts among students, teachers, administrators, and parents, adhering to the following principles:

Respect and Responsibility: A culture of respect and responsibility will be deeply ingrained in the daily routines of the school. Students will be taught to behave in a respectful, responsible, and safe manner, which is crucial for an enjoyable and productive learning environment. Teachers will consistently apply best-practice behavior management techniques to ensure that students understand the consequences of their actions and can learn from their mistakes.

Active Parental Involvement: Parents will be expected to take an active role in maintaining an orderly and supportive environment based on mutual respect. This partnership between parents and the school will help establish high expectations for both academic and social behaviors, ensuring a cooperative atmosphere conducive to academic excellence.

Teacher and Administrator Role: Teachers will develop their own classroom discipline plans, aligned with the school's rules and code of conduct, and will prominently display these plans in their classrooms. Teachers will also inform students of specific classroom rules, positive reinforcements, and consequences for non-compliance. Full compliance with these plans will be expected from both students and parents, who will sign and return the discipline plan at the start of the school year. Administrators will support teachers and students by taking the least extreme disciplinary measures necessary to maintain a healthy and peaceful learning environment.

b) Include in your explanation how the school climate will be supportive of students with a variety of needs, including students receiving special education services, English language learners, gifted and talented students, and students who are at risk of academic failure.

Somerset Academy is dedicated to creating a supportive climate that meets the diverse needs of its students, including those receiving special education services, English language learners (ELL), gifted and talented students, and students at risk of academic failure:

Special Education Services: For students receiving special education services, individualized education plans (IEPs) will be developed and implemented to address their unique needs. The school will use the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to provide varying levels of interventions based on the students' needs, with increasing intensity at each tier.

English Language Learners (ELLs): ELL students will receive targeted support through specialized instruction and resources aimed at improving their language proficiency. The school's environment will be inclusive, recognizing and celebrating cultural diversity, which will help ELL students feel safe and supported.

Gifted and Talented Students: For gifted and talented students, the school will provide opportunities for enrichment and advanced learning. Differentiated instruction and challenging coursework will be offered to ensure these students remain engaged and motivated.

Students At Risk of Academic Failure: Students who are at risk of academic failure will benefit from the MTSS model, which provides a continuum of tiered interventions. Tier I involves school-wide behavioral policies to prevent initial occurrences of problem behavior. Tier II includes supplemental group interventions for students requiring additional support. For students needing intensive, individualized interventions, Tier III strategies will be employed, including behavior intervention plans developed through functional assessment of behavior (FAB).

By implementing these strategies and fostering an environment of mutual respect, accountability, and high expectations Somerset Academy will promote a positive academic environment that supports intellectual and social development for all students.

2) Describe the school's approach to discipline, behavior intervention, and classroom management. Highlight key policies, systems, and related structures and address how they will support the climate described in question 1 and will comply with Arkansas laws.

Somerset Academy aims to create a disciplined, respectful, and supportive environment conducive to academic excellence and character development. The school's approach to discipline, behavior intervention, and classroom management is aligned with its mission and the Arkansas state laws, as outlined in the recent legislative updates.

Problem-Solving Approach to Discipline

Somerset Academy emphasizes a Problem-Solving approach to discipline to support each student. This approach helps students take ownership of their behavior and learn from mistakes, rather than relying on punitive measures. The goal is to maintain the integrity of both academic and social settings by minimizing disruptions.

Consistent Behavior Management Techniques:

Teachers will apply consistent, best-practice behavior management techniques to ensure students understand the consequences of their actions and learn from them. This consistency supports an orderly environment where students are more likely to behave in a respectful, responsible, and safe manner.

Parents are expected to play an active role in maintaining a supportive and orderly environment. High expectations for students, collaboration between parents and school staff, and mutual respect are essential for achieving academic excellence and proper conduct.

Response to Intervention for Behavior / Multi-Tiered System of Supports (RtIB/MTSS):

Tier I: School-wide behavioral policies, such as rules, routines, and physical arrangements, will be established and taught to prevent initial occurrences of problem behaviors. Interventions may include increasing positive reinforcements and implementing safety programs and Positive Behavior Support (PBS).

Tier II: For students requiring additional support, supplemental group interventions will be provided. This may include small group counseling on topics like anger management and social skills, and alternatives to suspension such as detention.

Tier III: Students needing intensive interventions will receive individualized support through the Student Support Team (SST) process. Interventions will be based on Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP).

Professional Development:

To comply with Arkansas law, particularly Act 1029, the school will provide two hours of professional development on bullying prevention and the recognition of the relationship between bullying and the risk of suicide. This training will count towards meeting professional development requirements for accreditation and licensure.

Classroom Management

Individual Classroom Discipline Plans:

Teachers will create their own discipline plans based on school rules and the Code of Student Conduct. These plans will be displayed prominently in classrooms and communicated to students and parents at the beginning of the school year. Full compliance with these plans is expected.

Consistent Enforcement and Positive Reinforcement:

Students will be informed of specific classroom rules, positive reinforcements for good behavior, and consequences for non-compliance. Teachers are expected to consistently enforce these rules to maintain an orderly learning environment.

Compliance with Arkansas Laws

1. Bullying and Cyberbullying Policies

In line with Act 1029, Somerset Academy will establish clear definitions and procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating, and responding to bullying and cyberbullying. Policies will include:

- Prohibiting bullying on school property, in school vehicles, and during school-sponsored events.
- Providing a clear definition of bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Requiring school employees to report incidents of bullying.
- Ensuring that reports of bullying are promptly investigated, and proper actions are taken.

2. School Board Member Training

School board members will receive training on school safety, student discipline, and bullying prevention. This aligns with the legislative requirement that they receive information on these topics to support a safe educational environment.

3. Reporting and Accountability

Written records of all investigations and actions taken regarding bullying will be maintained. The superintendent will report discipline data, including bullying incidents, to the school board at least once a year in a public hearing.

By implementing these policies and systems, Somerset Academy will create a structured and supportive environment that promotes academic excellence and complies with Arkansas state laws, particularly those addressing bullying and school safety.

3) Briefly explain the general plan to engage parents in school life and communicate with them regularly about school matters.

At Somerset Academy, family involvement is a cornerstone of the school’s approach to fostering a positive academic environment and reinforcing student intellectual and social development. Engaging parents and maintaining open lines of communication are key strategies in achieving these goals.

Family Involvement in School Life

Parents are expected to take an active role in supporting an orderly and supportive learning environment. This includes understanding and reinforcing school-wide behavioral policies and classroom discipline plans. At the beginning of the school year, parents will receive, review, sign, and return each teacher's discipline plan, indicating their commitment to uphold the school's standards at home.

The school emphasizes the importance of a collaborative partnership between parents and school staff. This partnership is essential for maintaining high expectations for students and creating a cooperative atmosphere conducive to academic excellence and proper conduct. Parents are encouraged to participate in school events, volunteer opportunities, and parent-teacher organizations.

Regular Communication with Families

At the start of the school year, parents will participate in orientation sessions where they will be introduced to the school's policies, expectations, and available resources. Throughout the year, the school will provide regular updates on school matters, including important events, changes in policies, and student progress, through emails blasts and the school's website.

Transparent Reporting and Accountability

In compliance with Arkansas law, particularly Act 1029, the school will maintain transparent reporting practices. Parents will be promptly notified if their child is involved in an alleged incident of bullying. They will be informed about the investigation process, outcomes, and any actions taken. This transparency helps build trust and assures parents that the school is actively working to maintain a safe environment.

Professional Development Information:

As part of the school's compliance with Act 1029, school staff will undergo professional development related to bullying prevention and the relationship between bullying and the risk of suicide. The guidance document developed for professional development will also be shared with parents to help them understand school policies and how to address bullying.

The school will communicate the availability of counseling and other intervention services to parents. This ensures that parents are aware of the resources available to support their children's emotional and social well-being.

Specific Communication Channels

Regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences will provide parents with personalized updates on their child's academic and behavioral progress. These meetings allow for two-way communication where parents can share insights and collaborate with teachers on strategies to support their child.

The school will utilize digital communication tools, such as email, online portals, and mobile apps, to keep parents informed about daily school activities, homework assignments, upcoming events, and any urgent announcements. These tools ensure that parents have easy access to important information anytime, anywhere.

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By implementing these strategies, Somerset Academy ensures that parents are actively engaged in school life and consistently informed about school matters. This engagement and communication are essential components in creating a supportive and collaborative environment that promotes academic excellence and complies with Arkansas state laws.

4) Will the school offer any extra and co-curricular activities? If so, please describe.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will offer a variety of extra- and co-curricular activities to enrich the student experience. The school aims to provide students with opportunities to learn important skills such as sportsmanship, accountability, and team. Here are some of the activities and programs the school may offer:

1. Team Sports and School Clubs:

- Robotics
- Judo
- Chess
- Dance Team
- Soccer
- Football
- Softball

2. School-wide Productions and Competitions:

- Holiday Show
- Talent Show
- End of Year Show
- Battle of the Books
- Math Bowl
- Somerset's Got Talent
- Somerset Spelling Bee

3. Student Government and Organizations:

- Student Council
- National Honor Society
- EmpowerMe Club (elementary)

4. Performing Arts and Recreational Clubs:

- Music Club
- Dance Teams
- Singing Sensations

5. Safety and Service Clubs:

- Safety Patrol (elementary)

The school will fund these activities through various means, including fundraising activities, sponsorships, and donations from local businesses. Additionally, the school will provide an After Care Program, which will help fund the expenses for these activities.

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The school's commitment to offering a comprehensive extracurricular program will help students flourish beyond the classroom, contributing to their overall development and success.

- 5) Briefly explain and describe the school's policy concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints. Include what role the governing board may have in complaints. Attach a copy of the current handbook (if possible) describing those policies and procedures.**

Somerset Academy schools follow a structured approach to addressing grievances and complaints from parents, students, and other stakeholders. The school's policy ensures that all concerns are handled systematically and fairly, with opportunities for resolution at various levels. This approach aligns with the commitment to transparency, accountability, and fostering a collaborative school environment.

Steps for Addressing Grievances and Complaints:

1. **Initial Clarification with Teacher (If Applicable):** Parents or students first address their concerns directly with the teacher involved. This initial step aims to resolve misunderstandings or issues through direct communication.
2. **Meeting with School Administration:** If the issue remains unresolved, a meeting is scheduled with the school administrator (typically the principal or an assistant principal). The administration will work towards mediating and finding a resolution.
3. **Contact Educational Support Provider:** If the matter is still unresolved after meeting with the school's administration, the complainant can contact the Educational Support Provider (ESP). The ESP acts as an intermediary to address the concern more formally.
4. **Escalation to Board Appointed Parent Liaison:** Should the issue persist, it is escalated to the Board Appointed Parent Liaison. The liaison assists in facilitating communication between parents and the board, ensuring that concerns are adequately addressed.
5. **Speaking at Governing Board Meetings:** Parents and students are welcome to voice their complaints or suggestions at scheduled Governing Board meetings. Meeting dates and speaker forms are made accessible at the school and on the school's website. This provides a formal platform for grievances to be aired and addressed at the board level.
6. If, after following the preceding steps, the issue remains unresolved, parents can contact the ADE, DESE Compliance Assistance Center. The CAC may be contacted for assistance and to discuss the resources and remedies available.

The Governing Board plays a crucial role in the complaints process. The Governing Board appoints a Parent Liaison to facilitate communication and address unresolved complaints. The board holds regular meetings where stakeholders can present their concerns. Additionally, the board reviews and oversees the processes and outcomes of complaints to ensure that they are handled in line with the school's policies and are in line with Arkansas state laws regarding educational governance and student and parent rights.

Section 5: Organizational Plan

A. Governance and Leadership

- 1) **Please review the Statement of Assurances (see Appendix A) and acknowledge with your signature that they will be addressed through policies adopted by the charter school or sponsoring entity.**

Please see signed Statement of Assurances.

- 2) **Board of Directors – Provide a list of proposed board members, if identified. Please include the actual or preferred roles of each member, a brief description of major responsibilities, their expertise area (i.e., academics, finances, legal, management, and operations, parents, community leaders, educator, operations, or community relations), and explain the selection process**

Somerset Academy Arkansas, Inc. is the legal entity that will operate the school. The governing board will function in alignment with Arkansas law, and Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education rules governing public charter school. The board will adopt policies and procedures in alignment with Arkansas Law related to Charter School Governing Board Operations.

Somerset Academy, Inc. is a recipient of an FY2024 Charter Schools Program (CSP) Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter School Grant, has been actively engaging in various discussions with leaders in the school choice sector within Arkansas. These conversations are aimed at fostering collaboration and exploring innovative strategies to enhance educational opportunities in the state. Somerset Academy of Arkansas's board has strong ties to Arkansas, with one current board member proudly residing in the state, exemplifying their enduring commitment to the region. By extending its reach into Arkansas, Somerset Academy aims to contribute to the development of a brighter future for society by providing quality education to a diverse array of students, reinforcing their mission to cultivate excellence and equity in education.

Founding Governing Board Members:

Todd German, Governing Board Chair

Mr. German is an Investment Advisor and partner in Keys Wealth Management, a private investment management firm. Has served as senior officer for a number of local financial institutions. Most recently, in addition to serving as board member and Treasurer of the Somerset board, Todd is the President of the Key West Collegiate School, Chairman of Hometown PAC, and member of the Key West Citizen Editorial Board.

His past volunteer time was spent as the President of the Key West Business Guild, Vice Chair of the Community Foundation, President of the Montessori Charter Elementary School, Chair of the Key West Citizen's Review Board, and former President of the Key West Botanical Garden Society.

Todd is a graduate of Leadership--Monroe County, the Key West Ambassador Program and the Key West Citizen's Police Academy. He holds memberships in all the associations promoting business in Key West--the Attractions, Lodging, Innkeeper's and Realtor's Associations. Mr. German brings financial, real estate and charter school governance experience.

Matt Cox, Vice Chair

Over the course of his 21-year career, Matt Cox has served as an owner and developer's engineer for various private and public land development projects. He has designed and managed of hundreds of acres of retail,

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industrial, and residential projects and dozens of miles of new roadways and utilities to serve them. Matt is an expert in the development process and has seen first-hand how intentional planning and development of land stimulates the economy and creates revenue and opportunities for a broad range of stakeholders. As a licensed engineer, owner, and Vice President at Kimley-Horn, his greatest professional pleasure comes from helping clients realize their land development aspirations. Matt has an extensive coast to coast network of Kimley-Horn peers, as well as architects, planners, developer clients, and experts in the legal and financial sectors to draw upon.

Since 2016, Matt has served as an active Board Member for Somerset Academies of Texas. In 2019, Matt was elected to the Corporate Board of Somerset Academy, Inc. in Florida. Matt has a passion for education and working with school leaders to ensure the purpose of Somerset Academy is realized:

“Somerset Academy, Inc. promotes a transformational culture that maximizes student achievement and the development of accountable, global learners in a safe and enriching environment that fosters high-quality education.”

Matt is also active other industry organizations and is involved with his church, where he resides in Northwest Arkansas.

Taylor Smith, Director

Taylor Smith, President and founder of Project Finance & Development Investments LLC ("PFDI"), specializes in the financial engineering, development and financing of diverse public and private sector projects throughout Florida and various states within the United States.

Since 1998, Smith, through PFDI and other affiliated companies, has financed and developed charter schools, school concurrency projects, public roads, residential developments, mixed-use projects, parking garages, tax-exempt housing, government facilities and stand along daycare. The projects, many of which included tax-exempt financings, total over \$1Billion. PFDI development projects have involved the creation of complex ownership structures with multiple public and private stakeholders including corporations, municipalities, county governments, school districts, state agencies and not-for-profit institutions. PFDI coordinated the establishment of all of the Florida Educational Facilities Benefit Districts in Florida. Taylor Smith was appointed to the State of Florida's founding Charter School Review Panel as well as the Florida Greenways Commission. Smith is a Governor's appointed Board Member of the Florida Development Finance Corporation and is a Trustee of Doral College, Miami, Florida. Smith also serves as a Director and Treasurer of Building Faith, a Florida non profit real estate holding company that currently owns over \$250million in Florida charter school facilities. He serves on the Somerset Academy, Inc. governing board.

After graduating from Spruce Creek High School in Volusia County, Smith attended Princeton University and conducted graduate studies as a Fulbright Scholar and a Harry S. Truman Scholar at the Australian National University.

Chantal Morales, Director

Chantal Morales is an accomplished educator with over 17 years of experience in elementary education. Ms. Morales began her career as an elementary school teacher in 2007. After joining the Mater Academy family in 2010, and aspiring to be a school leader, Ms. Morales went on to serve as a Reading Coach and Lead Teacher for Mater Academy Elementary from 2013-2019, and later as Assistant Principal from 2019-2021. In an effort to increase her circle of influence, Ms. Morales began serving as Principal of Mater Academy Elementary in 2021, servicing nearly 1600 students in grades K-5 and overseeing over 180 staff members.

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During her three years as Principal, Ms. Morales has led the school to continued success- leading the school to maintain it's high performing status as determined by the Florida Department of Education by implementing a rigorous and innovative curriculum that develops students both academically and socially. As Principal of a Title I school, Ms. Morales has effectively utilized resources and provided compliance oversight to ensure the academic success of students most in need. Ms. Morales believes that all students are leaders, and that all students can succeed when provided with a safe, nurturing and academically challenging environment.

- 3) Identify the processes and structures that the proposed board will have in place to ensure:**
 - a) Effective and efficient operation of school governance**
 - b) Establishment and monitoring of school improvement goals**
 - c) Procedural oversight and monitoring of personnel decisions**
 - d) Fiscal responsibility and sustainability of the school**
 - e) Compliance with all applicable laws and rules concerning ethics**
 - f) Community Engagement**

a) Effective and efficient operation of school governance:

The Somerset Academy Arkansas, Inc. governing board, comprising Todd German (Chair), Matt Cox (Vice Chair), Taylor Smith (Director), and Chantal Morales (Director), will ensure effective and efficient school governance through the following processes and structures:

Structured Meetings: The board will meet quarterly and hold additional special meetings as needed. Each meeting will follow a clear agenda, adhere to open meeting laws, and include comprehensive minutes to ensure transparency.

Defined Roles and Responsibilities: The board will consist of clearly defined positions such as Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Each role carries specific duties to maintain governance efficiency.

Mandatory Training: Board members will undergo mandatory training in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and Division Rule 3-A.6 to stay informed about effective governance practices.

b) Establishment and monitoring of school improvement goals:

Goal Setting: The board will establish clear, measurable school improvement goals in alignment with the school's mission and vision. This will involve input from school leadership, teachers, and community stakeholders.

Monitoring: Regular progress reports will be provided by the Superintendent/Principal, reviewed in quarterly board meetings, and evaluated against predefined performance metrics.

Annual Review: An annual review process will be implemented to assess the achievement of school improvement goals, identify areas for improvement, and adjust strategies accordingly.

c) Procedural oversight and monitoring of personnel decisions:

Hiring and Supervision: The board will hire and supervise the Superintendent/Principal, who will oversee the day-to-day operations of the school. The Superintendent/Principal will be responsible for the management and hiring of other school staff, ensuring alignment with school policies.

Performance Evaluations: Annual performance evaluations for the Superintendent/Principal will be conducted by the board, including feedback from various stakeholders and a review of school data and performance.

Personnel Policies: The board will adopt and enforce comprehensive personnel policies, ensuring fair and transparent hiring, evaluation, and disciplinary processes.

d) Fiscal responsibility and sustainability of the school:

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Budgeting: The board will adopt and maintain a balanced operating budget, ensuring financial resources are allocated efficiently to support the school's mission and goals.

Financial Oversight: The Treasurer will oversee financial transactions, maintain accurate records, and ensure compliance with financial policies. The board will review and approve financial audits and reports.

Certified Public Accountant: The board will ensure the retention of a certified public accountant for conducting annual financial audits, which will be reviewed and approved by the board.

Financial Recovery Plans: If necessary, the board will monitor and implement financial recovery plans to ensure fiscal sustainability and compliance.

e) **Compliance with all applicable laws and rules concerning ethics:**

Conflict of Interest Policy: The board will adhere to a strict conflict of interest policy, requiring disclosure of any potential conflicts before transactions are approved. Board members and officers are prohibited from using their positions for personal gain.

Ethics Training: Board members will undergo training on ethics and fiduciary responsibilities to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Transparency: All board meetings and decisions will be conducted in accordance with open meeting laws, ensuring transparency and public accountability.

f) **Community Engagement:**

Public Involvement: The board will actively engage the community by providing reasonable notice of board vacancies and inviting applications from qualified persons, including parents and teachers.

Feedback Mechanisms: Regular communication channels will be established to gather feedback from parents, students, and community members, ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making processes.

Annual Reports: Progress reports will be made available to the community and sponsoring entities, detailing achievements and goals for continuous improvement.

By implementing these processes and structures, the Somerset Academy Arkansas, Inc. board will ensure effective governance, constant school improvement, sound fiscal management, adherence to ethical standards, and strong community engagement.

B. School Administration

1) ***Superintendent Position*** – If a superintendent has been appointed, please indicate the selection criteria and a rationale for the choice, including leadership qualities and capacity that uniquely qualify the selected individual to lead this charter. If a superintendent has not been selected, please include a job description and indicate the leadership qualities and capacity desired for this position. How will this leader be supported and developed?

A Superintendent has not been selected. The school may opt to have a Superintendent once the school and network expand.

Job Description for Superintendent:

Reports to: School Governing Board

Supervises: All administrative, instructional, and non-instructional staff at the school

Position Goal: To provide the leadership and management necessary to administer and implement all programs, activities, and policies essential to ensure high-quality educational experiences and services for all in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment.

Essential Performance Responsibilities:

- Leadership: - Administer, control, and supervise the instructional program of the school operations and school personnel.

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- Encourage teachers and pupils to perform to the best of their ability.
- Interpret the educational program of the school and school system to the community.
- Provide leadership and direction for all aspects of the school's operation.
- Facilitate frequent communication with parents of the school community.

Educational and Operational Oversight:

- Coordinate and adapt school curricular programs and policies.
- Assume responsibility for the buildings, grounds, equipment, and supplies of the school.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate the School Improvement Plan.
- Supervise and coordinate the budgetary process.
- Coordinate and conduct the interview process and make hiring and termination decisions for all staff.
- Develop and supervise New Teacher programs.
- Compile and prepare all student achievement outcomes.

Governance and Accountability:

- Report directly to the Governing Board for all purposes.
- Coordinate, supervise, and conduct the evaluations of all staff.
- Oversee the School Advisory Council.
- Maintain a positive and productive relationship with the Parent-Teacher Association.
- Supervise all students and staff.

Qualifications:

- Education: An earned Master's Degree or higher from an accredited college or university.
- Experience: A total of five (5) years of school experience is required, including a minimum of three (3) years of required experience as a Principal/Assistant School Principal.
- A valid certification in School Principal or Professional School Principal is necessary.

Desired Leadership Qualities and Capacity:

- Strong instructional leadership with a proven track record of raising student achievement.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills for fostering relationships with all stakeholders.
- Operational management skills to ensure the effective use of resources and maintenance of facilities.
- Strategic thinking for developing and implementing school improvement plans.
- Integrity and ethical judgment to uphold the school's mission and vision.

Support and Development:

- The superintendent will receive ongoing support from the Governing Board, including regular performance evaluations and feedback.
- Professional development opportunities will be provided, including attendance at educational leadership conferences, seminars, and training sessions.
- Mentorship from experienced education leaders within the network of Somerset Academy schools.

2) Principal Position – If a principal has been appointed, please indicate the selection criteria and a rationale for the choice, including leadership qualities and capacity that uniquely qualify the selected individual to lead this charter. If a principal has not been selected, please include a job description and indicate the leadership qualities and capacity desired for this position. How will this leader be supported and developed?

Job Description for Principal:

Reports to: School Governing Board

Supervises: All administrative, instructional, and non-instructional staff at the school

Position Goal: To provide the leadership and management necessary to administer and implement all programs, activities, and policies essential to ensuring high-quality educational experiences and services for all students in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment.

Essential Performance Responsibilities:

Leadership:

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- Administer, control, and supervise the instructional program of the school operations and school personnel.
- Encourage teachers and pupils to perform to the best of their ability.
- Interpret the educational program of the school and school system to the community.
- Provide leadership and direction for all aspects of the school's operation.
- Facilitate frequent communication with parents of the school community.

Educational and Operational Oversight:

- Coordinate and adapt school curricular programs and policies.
- Assume responsibility for the buildings, grounds, equipment, and supplies of the school.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate the School Improvement Plan.
- Supervise and coordinate the budgetary process.
- Coordinate and conduct the interview process and make hiring and termination decisions for all staff.
- Develop and supervise New Teacher programs. - Compile and prepare all student achievement outcomes.

Governance and Accountability: Report directly to the Governing Board for all purposes.

- Coordinate, supervise, and conduct the evaluations of all staff.
- Oversee the School Advisory Council.
- Maintain a positive and productive relationship with the Parent-Teacher Association.
- Supervise all students and staff.

Qualifications:

Education: An earned Master's Degree or higher from an accredited college or university. - Experience: A total of five (5) years of school experience is required, including a minimum of three (3) years of required experience as a Principal/Assistant School Principal. A valid certification in School Principal or Professional School Principal is necessary.

Desired Leadership Qualities and Capacity:

- Strong instructional leadership with a proven track record of raising student achievement.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills for fostering relationships with all stakeholders.
- Operational management skills to ensure the effective use of resources and maintenance of facilities.
- Strategic thinking for developing and implementing school improvement plans.
- Integrity and ethical judgment to uphold the school's mission and vision.

Support and Development:

- The principal will receive ongoing support from the Governing Board, including regular performance evaluations and feedback.
- Professional development opportunities will be provided, including attendance at educational leadership conferences, seminars, and training sessions.
- Mentorship from experienced education leaders within the network of Somerset Academy schools.

By adhering to these criteria and structures, Somerset Academy Arkansas and Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aim to appoint highly qualified and effective leaders who can drive the success of their charter schools.

C. Faculty and Staff

- 1) Describe the school's proposed leadership structure. Include a copy of the school's proposed organizational chart.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will implement a leadership structure designed to ensure effective administration, strong educational quality, and a supportive environment for both students and staff. The leadership structure will be organized to promote clear communication, accountability, and the successful achievement of the school's mission and goals.

The Governing Board - The Governing Board will act as the ultimate policy-making body, overseeing the school's operations, financial health, and academic performance. The Board will set the strategic direction,

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approve budgets, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. The Board will also be responsible for hiring and evaluating the School Principal. The Board will consist of experienced professionals from diverse backgrounds, including education, finance, law, and community leadership.

School Principal - The School Principal will be the primary leader of the school, responsible for day-to-day operations, implementing Board policies, and ensuring the academic success of the students. The Principal will oversee the faculty and staff, manage resources, and lead the development and execution of the school's educational programs.

The Principal will be selected by the Governance Board based on qualifications such as extensive administrative and teaching experience, state certification in educational leadership, and a proven track record of school management and improvement.

Assistant Principal(s) – based on school size if needed:

Assistant Principals will support the Principal in managing the school's operations. Their duties will include overseeing specific academic departments, handling student discipline, managing extracurricular programs, and ensuring compliance with educational standards. Assistant Principals will be selected by the School Principal and approved by the Board. Candidates will be required to have appropriate administrative certification and relevant experience in school leadership.

Teachers and Staff - Teachers will be responsible for delivering high-quality instruction, assessing student progress, and participating in professional development. Support staff, including administrative assistants, counselors, and paraprofessionals, will assist in creating a productive learning environment. Teachers and staff will be recruited based on their certifications, teaching experience, and alignment with the school's educational philosophy.

Superintendent (Future Role) - As the Somerset network in Arkansas expands, the role of Superintendent may be introduced. The Superintendent will oversee multiple Somerset Academy campuses in the region, ensuring they adhere to the Somerset Academy model and maintain high standards of academic and operational performance. The Superintendent will be appointed by the Governing Board and must have substantial experience in educational leadership, preferably with a successful track record in charter school management.

Somerset Academy, Inc -- Somerset Academy, Inc. will support Somerset Academy of Arkansas, Inc. and its schools through oversight and implementation of the Somerset Academy model with fidelity. The CMO will provide guidance on curriculum, staff development, financial management, and compliance with regulatory requirements to ensure the school's success.

2) Describe the strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring faculty and staff. Explain the school's proposed strategy for retaining high-performing faculty and staff.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to recruit and hire highly qualified and dedicated faculty and staff who are committed to the and vision. The recruitment strategy is designed to attract diverse and talented individuals through various avenues, ensuring the best candidates are selected for each role.

Recruitment Timeline:

September 2024 - February 2025: Initial recruitment of the School Principal.

March 2025 - Finalize the hiring of the School Principal.

March 2025 - May 2025: Initial recruitment of faculty and staff.

June 2025 - July 2025: Finalize recruitment and hiring of faculty and staff.

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Advertising and Outreach:

Advertisements will be placed in local and national newspapers, educational job boards, and on the school's website to attract a wide range of applicants. Presentations and flyers will be disseminated at local universities, colleges, and job fairs to engage recent graduates and experienced educators.

The school and Somerset network will use social media platforms and professional networks to reach a broader audience.

Tap into the broader Somerset Academy, Inc. network and do outreach to current staff and leadership to see if there are candidates from existing Somerset schools interested in opportunities in Arkansas. This will ensure the vision and mission are consistent with the brand.

Selection Criteria:

- State Certification for the required position.
- Relevant teaching or administrative experience.
- Excellent presentation and interpersonal skills, positive recommendations and evaluations, alignment with the school's mission, and an ability to work as part of a team in a small-school setting with parental involvement.
- Strong letters of recommendation from previous employers or mentors.

Hiring Process:

A recruitment committee will be formed, including members from the school administration, the and the Governing Board. The committee will develop interview questionnaires tailored to each position. Initial screening interviews will be conducted to assess qualifications and fit with the school's culture. Final interviews will be conducted by the School Principal and a representative from the Governing Board. The School Principal will make final hiring decisions within the scope of the budget approved by the Governing Board.

Background Checks and Compliance:

All candidates will undergo background checks, fingerprinting, and drug testing as required by Arkansas law.

Strategy for Retaining High-Performing Faculty and Staff:

Professional Development

- Offer ongoing professional development opportunities tailored to enhance teaching skills and professional growth. This includes workshops, conferences, and in-house training sessions.
- Encourage participation in district-based in-service training programs.
- Work with the Doral Leadership Institute in Miami, FL, which Somerset Academy partners with to develop leaders from within the network, ensuring a consistent vision and mission.

Mentorship and Support:

- Implement a mentoring program for new teachers involving experienced educators from the Somerset family to provide guidance, support, and feedback.
- Regular performance evaluations and constructive feedback sessions to help teachers improve and grow professionally.

Competitive Compensation and Benefits:

- Offer a competitive salary structure that includes performance-based bonuses and incentives.
- Provide a comprehensive benefits package that includes health insurance, retirement plans (401k with immediate vesting), tuition reimbursement for further education, and other fringe benefits.

Positive Work Environment:

- Foster a collaborative and supportive work environment where teachers feel valued and appreciated.

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- Encourage open communication and provide opportunities for teachers to participate in decision-making processes.

Career Advancement Opportunities:

- Create clear pathways for career advancement within the school and the larger Somerset network.
- Offer leadership roles such as department heads, grade-level chairs, or special program coordinators to deserving teachers.

Recognition and Rewards:

- Implement a system for recognizing and rewarding high-performing teachers through awards, public acknowledgment, and additional responsibilities.

By implementing these recruitment, hiring, and retention strategies, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to build and maintain a high-performing team of educators and staff committed to the school's mission and the success of its students.

3) Describe the policies and procedures for evaluating staff and providing performance feedback. Describe how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, including termination, as well as leadership/teacher changes. Please provide a copy of the policy and procedures listed in your handbook (If available).

Based on the provided document, here is a response tailored to the question for Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12:

Policies and Procedures for Evaluating Staff and Providing Performance Feedback:

1. Evaluation System:

Regular Evaluations: All staff, including teachers and administrators, will undergo regular performance evaluations. These evaluations will be conducted annually and will include mid-year reviews to ensure continuous improvement.

Performance Metrics: The evaluation system will utilize both qualitative and quantitative metrics. This includes classroom observations, student achievement data, student and parent feedback, and adherence to the school's policies and standards.

Feedback Mechanism: Post-evaluation, staff members will receive detailed feedback highlighting their strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback will be both verbal and documented to ensure transparency and accountability.

Teacher Walk-Throughs: In addition to formal evaluations, administrators will conduct impromptu walk-throughs of classrooms to observe instructional practices and provide immediate feedback. These walk-throughs will ensure that high standards are maintained consistently and allow for real-time coaching and intervention where necessary.

2. Evaluation Criteria:

Teaching Performance: Evaluations for teachers will focus on instructional effectiveness, classroom management, implementation of curriculum standards, and student engagement and achievement.

Leadership Performance: For administrators, evaluation criteria will include leadership qualities, capacity to implement school policies, effectiveness in managing staff, and success in achieving school improvement goals.

Handling Unsatisfactory Leadership or Teacher Performance:

1. Identifying Unsatisfactory Performance:

Continuous Monitoring: Regular classroom observations and reviews of student performance data will help identify any deficiencies in teaching or leadership practices.

Performance Improvement Plans: Staff members identified with unsatisfactory performance will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP will outline specific areas needing improvement, set measurable goals, and provide a timeline for achieving these goals.

2. Support and Development:

Professional Development: Staff members on a PIP will receive targeted professional development opportunities to address their areas of weakness. This might include workshops, mentoring, peer observations, and additional training sessions.

Coaching and Mentorship: Experienced educators or administrators will be assigned to provide ongoing coaching and mentorship to staff members needing support.

3. Addressing Continued Unsatisfactory Performance:

Regular Reviews: Progress on the PIP will be reviewed at regular intervals. Staff members will receive continuous feedback on their progress and any necessary adjustments to the improvement plan.

Documentation: All steps and efforts made to improve performance will be documented meticulously. This documentation will serve as a record in case further action is needed.

Termination and Leadership/Teacher Changes:

Termination Procedures:

Final Review: If the staff member fails to show sufficient improvement after the PIP and additional support, a final review will be conducted by the school administration.

Board Involvement: The findings of the final review and all related documentation will be presented to the School Governing Board. The Board will make the final decision regarding termination based on the evidence provided.

Proper Protocols: Termination will be conducted in compliance with the school's policies, employment laws, and contractual agreements to ensure fair and legal proceedings.

Leadership and Teacher Changes:

Succession Planning: The school will have a succession plan in place to ensure smooth transitions in case of leadership changes. This includes identifying potential internal candidates who can step into leadership roles or conducting external searches as needed.

Interim Appointments: In the event of immediate leadership changes, interim appointments will be made to ensure continuity in school operations until a permanent replacement is found.

Transparent Communication: All changes in leadership or teaching staff will be communicated transparently to all stakeholders, including staff, students, and parents, to maintain trust and stability within the school community.

By implementing these policies and procedures, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to maintain a high standard of teaching and leadership, foster continuous professional growth, and ensure a supportive and effective educational environment.

D. Transportation

- 1) **Will the school provide transportation services? If so, describe the transportation services plan that the school will provide.**

The school will **not** be providing transportation services at first. If transportation is needed, funds will be allocated to provide alternate transportation. Transportation services will be provided to students with an IEP who require it as a related service to access their education. In addition, students that are identified as temporary displaced will be provided transportation options under the McKinney-Vento Act.

E. Food Service

- 1) **Describe how the school will provide meal services.**

An organized, healthy meal service that meets local health, state and federal regulations and adheres to 7 CFR Parts 210 and 220 will be offered at the school site. Healthy, well-rounded, nutritious meals will be provided in accordance with The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the USDA Dietary Guidelines of meal component and portion size requirements. The School will participate in the free/reduced priced meal program and will provide free and reduced priced meals for eligible children. Eligible children are children from households with gross incomes within the free and reduced limits on the Federal Income Guidelines. All Healthy meals will be distributed to students using a point of sale accountability procedure.

The school will participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The school will either prepare its own food, in which case the school will have a food service preparation area with all of the necessary equipment for preparing and holding the food, or the school will contract with an Arkansas Department of Agriculture registered vendor to provide the food and equipment necessary for holding the food at required temperatures.

- 2) **Describe the food service space at the facility.**

The school facility will adhere to all applicable state laws with regards to inspections of food service facilities and will pass inspection with the Arkansas Department of Health. The school will have a designated Child Nutrition Director which will act as the certified food protection manager on site. The school commits to completing an Agreement and Policy Statement with ADE, DESE, Child Nutrition Unit (CNU).

F. Safety

- 1) **Describe how the school safety and security plan for students, staff, facility, and property will be developed and updated in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.**

Somerset Academy is committed to creating a safe and secure environment for its, staff, facility, and property. The development and continuous updating of our school safety and security plan will be guided by a multi-faceted approach involving collaboration with several key stakeholders and adherence to Arkansas state law and regulations.

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Somerset Academy will ensure that its safety and security measures align with Arkansas Code Annotated (A.C.A.) § 6-15-1302, which mandates that all public schools, including charter schools, develop comprehensive safety plans. These plans will encompass protocols for addressing a wide range of potential safety issues, including natural disasters, intruder situations, and other emergencies.

Somerset Academy will work closely with its Education Service Provider's (ESP) National Director of Safety and Security. This expert will provide guidance on best practices in school safety, help in the implementation of security technologies, and ensure that all safety protocols are in line with national standards.

We will maintain an open line of communication with the Arkansas DESE to ensure our safety plans are compliant with state guidelines. This collaboration will include regular updates to DESE on our safety measures and participation in any state-mandated safety audits or reviews.

Somerset Academy will partner with the Arkansas Center for School Safety to access specialized training, resources, and tools designed to enhance school safety. The Center offers expertise in emergency preparedness, crisis response, and violence prevention, which will be integral to our safety plan.

Plan Development and Continuous Improvement:

At the outset, a comprehensive risk assessment will be conducted to identify potential safety and security threats specific to our school environment. This assessment will be reviewed periodically to account for any changes in the school's circumstances or broader safety landscape.

Based on the risk assessment, we will develop detailed policies and procedures addressing all aspects of school safety, including but not limited to, access control, visitor management, lockdowns, evacuations, and communication protocols during emergencies.

All staff and students will undergo regular training on the implemented safety protocols. We will conduct routine drills for various scenarios to ensure preparedness and familiarity with the procedures.

The school will invest in advanced safety technologies such as surveillance cameras, controlled access systems, and emergency notification systems. These tools will be continuously monitored and maintained to ensure their functionality.

The safety plan will not be static. Instead, it will be a living document subject to ongoing review and improvement. Monthly safety meetings, annual reviews, and post-incident analyses will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of current measures and incorporate new strategies or technologies as needed.

By engaging with our ESP's National Director of Safety and Security, collaborating closely with the DESE and the Arkansas Center for School Safety, Somerset Academy will create and maintain a robust safety and security plan. This plan will be in full compliance with all applicable Arkansas laws and regulations, ensuring a safe learning environment for all members of our school community.

G. Facilities

- 1) Provide a description of the school facility if it has been obtained. If not, describe the process for identifying and securing a facility. Briefly describe the contingency plan should you not be able to acquire the desired facility.**

A facility has not been identified. The Board plans to engage an experienced charter school facilities developer to acquire, design, plan and construct facilities for lease, which are appropriate to the needs of the School. The School would need a one or multi-story structure built or renovated to meet all requisite codes and life-safety regulations set forth by the applicable governing agency.

Size and Layout of Space: The facility will have an adequate number of classrooms designed to meet or exceed all pertinent classroom design standards set forth by the governing agency. The proposed facility will include program elements such as traditional classrooms, art, science and computer labs, multi-media instructional areas, lunch / multi-purpose room, food prep areas, and indoor and outdoor activity spaces.

The Governing Board will direct its ESP to bring to the Board a recommendation for a quality educational facility to be leased by the School.

Campus Structure:

Somerset Academy Arkansas will establish two campuses: one in Little Rock and one in Bentonville. Each campus will house three schools: K-5, 6-8, and 9-12, creating a total of six schools. Each school will have its own school number and will function as part of the larger Somerset Academy Arkansas network.

Projected Schedule:

- March – December: Facility Identification
- December – February: Facilities Negotiations upon charter approval by DESE
- February- June: Execute Lease/Conduct Maintenance and Repairs
- June – July: Final Preparations of Facilities
- July: Conduct Final Facilities and Safety Inspections

Identifying and Securing a Facility

The ESP has extensive experience in identifying facilities and facilities developers, and has successfully assisted other charter school applicants in securing state-of-the-art charter school campuses. The ESP works with reputable and experienced charter property developers, who have access to a network of financial institutions ready to commit the necessary capital for build-to-lease facilities. The developers have also demonstrated abilities in securing the necessary local governmental approvals for charter school purposes and required financing. They have relationships with award-winning design and engineering firms, as well as contractors with a track record of timely completion of excellent facilities meeting the needs of the School.

Safety, Permitting, and Inspections - The facility will meet all requirements for educational facilities in accordance with Arkansas Building Code and Fire & Safety Code. The facility will meet all such requirements for education facilities, including but not limited to, restrooms, fire safety, campus security, air quality control, weather proofing, etc.

The School will participate in the Sponsor’s annual site compliance visits for the purpose of reviewing and

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documenting, as appropriate, compliance with applicable health and safety requirements. Other inspection agencies may include inspections of kitchens and related spaces as well as Department of Labor and Employment to for OSHA compliance. The School will show proof of the annual inspections prior to the first day of operations.

Contingency Plan

The School's Governing Board expects to finalize negotiations with a potential landlord prior to charter contract negotiations with the Sponsor. If unsuccessful, negotiation will commence immediately with an experienced developer. The Governing Board will require periodic updates from its ESP concerning the progress that is being made in final identification of a suitable site and developer to acquire, construct and lease the facilities. In the event that issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy is for any reason not expected in a timely fashion, the School's Governing Board intends to direct the ESP to locate alternative facilities options suitable for school use immediately for the Board's review. The Governing Board will require periodic updates from its ESP concerning the progress that is being made in final identification of a suitable facility. Any such facility shall be zoned for educational use and contain the adequate number of classrooms designed to meet or exceed all pertinent classroom design standards set forth by the governing agency. The backup facilities will comply with Arkansas Building Code and Arkansas Fire Prevention Code.

H. Additional Operations

- 1) **Describe the school's technology plan for meeting the academic and operational needs of classrooms, labs, library/media standards, district website, and other relevant areas of the school.**

To school's goal is to ensure that students and staff have access to high-quality technology resources that enhance learning, support instructional practices, and streamline operational efficiency in line with the Somerset Model.

Classroom Technology

Interactive Whiteboards and Projectors: Classrooms will be equipped with interactive whiteboards and projectors to facilitate dynamic and engaging instructional delivery.

Student Devices: Each classroom will have sufficient tablets or laptops available to ensure students have access to digital resources for research, collaboration, and interactive learning activities. This aligns with the commitment to integrate technology into daily instruction and enhance students' digital literacy skills.

Teacher Laptops: Teachers will be provided with laptops to design and deliver curriculum, manage student data, and communicate effectively with students and parents.

Computer Labs:

High-Performance Desktops: The computer labs will be equipped with high-performance desktops to support a wide range of applications and software necessary for STEM, coding, and other technology-intensive courses.

Specialized Software: Labs will feature specialized software for graphic design, programming, and other technical courses. Tools like Adobe Creative Suite, AutoCAD, and various coding platforms will be installed to support the curricular needs of the students.

Regular Maintenance and Upgrades: There will be a schedule for regular maintenance and timely upgrades to ensure all equipment remains up-to-date and fully functional.

Media Center:

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Digital Library Resources: The media center will provide access to a wide range of digital resources, including eBooks, academic databases, and multimedia content, to support research and reading initiatives.

Media Production Equipment: The media center will be equipped with audio-visual production tools, such as cameras, microphones, and editing software, to facilitate student projects in media and communication.

Library Management Software: A robust library management system will be implemented to streamline the check-out process, manage inventory, and provide students with easy access to library resources.

School Website:

User-Friendly Design: The school website will be designed to be user-friendly and easily navigable, ensuring that students, parents, and staff can access important information effortlessly.

Timely Updates: The website will be regularly updated with news, events, and critical announcements to keep the school community informed.

Online Portals: Secure online portals will be provided for student information systems, parent communication, and teacher resources. These portals will facilitate seamless communication and access to necessary information.

High-speed, secure Wi-Fi will be available throughout the school to support the use of devices and ensure that all digital learning activities can be conducted without interruption.

The school will implement comprehensive security systems, including surveillance cameras and access control systems, to ensure a safe learning environment. These will be integrated with the school's network for easy monitoring and management.

Advanced data management systems will be used to track student performance, attendance, and other critical metrics. These systems will support data-driven decision-making and personalized learning plans.

Continuous professional development will be provided to staff to ensure they are proficient in using the latest technology tools and resources. Workshops, online courses, and peer training sessions will be conducted regularly.

Implementation and Support:

A dedicated IT support team will be available to address any technical issues, conduct regular maintenance, and support the integration of new technologies. The technology plan will be reviewed annually, with input from teachers, students, and other stakeholders, to ensure it continues to meet the evolving needs of the school.

By implementing this comprehensive technology plan, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to enhance the educational experience, support instructional effectiveness, and ensure operational efficiency across all areas of the school.

2) Describe the school's school health and nursing services plan.

The school's goal is to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all students through comprehensive health and nursing services that support academic success and overall wellness, while also allowing for flexibility in staffing to meet these needs effectively.

It is always Somerset's intent to hire staff who hold necessary credentials and are experienced in field. That is the school's priority when searching for a candidate for counseling, nursing and all positions.

Request for Waivers:

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The school is requesting a waiver to allow flexibility in hiring practices for school counselors and nursing staff. Specifically:

- The ability to hire individuals who are in the process of becoming certified as school counselors if a certified individual is not available.
- The flexibility to hire certified nursing assistants (CNAs) or medical assistants to work under the supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN) if an RN is not identified prior to the start of the school year.

Comprehensive Health Services

Health Screenings: Conduct routine health screenings for vision, hearing, scoliosis, and BMI (Body Mass Index) in alignment with Arkansas Department of Health Rules and Regulations guidelines. These screenings are vital for early identification and intervention for health issues that could affect learning and development.

First Aid and Emergency Care: Maintain a well-equipped health room for students who become ill or injured during the school day. Trained personnel will provide first aid and manage minor illnesses and injuries, following established protocols for emergencies to ensure immediate care and contact emergency services if necessary.

Nursing Services

Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and Medical Assistants: The school will plan to utilize certified nursing assistants or medical assistants to work under the supervision of an RN to service students. This model has proven effective in other Somerset network schools, ensuring continuous quality care while providing flexibility in staffing.

Medication Administration: Institute clear policies and procedures for the safe administration of medications, consistent with Arkansas state standards. Medications will be administered by the RN or trained CNAs/medical assistants and stored securely in the health room.

Health Care Plans: Develop Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCPs) for students with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and severe allergies. The school's CNA or Medical Assistant will collaborate with parents, healthcare providers, and school staff to ensure effective implementation of these plans.

Immunization and Health Records: Maintain up-to-date immunization records for all students to ensure compliance with Arkansas state vaccination requirements. Health records will be kept confidential and secure but accessible when needed for care and coordination.

Health Education and Promotion

Health Curriculum: Integrate health education into the curriculum to promote healthy behaviors and lifestyle choices, in accordance with Arkansas Health Education Curriculum Standards. Topics will include nutrition, physical activity, mental health, substance abuse prevention, and personal hygiene.

Wellness Programs: Implement wellness programs to support the physical and mental health of students, including activities such as physical fitness challenges, wellness fairs, and seminars on stress management and healthy eating.

Parental Involvement: Engage parents in health promotion activities by providing resources and information on various health topics. Conduct workshops and informational sessions to educate parents on managing their children's health needs.

Mental Health Services:

Counseling Services: Employ school counselors or individuals in the process of becoming certified as school counselors, to provide individual and group counseling services supporting students' mental and emotional well-being. Counselors will address issues such as anxiety, depression, bullying, and family problems.

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Mental Health Referrals: Implement a system for identifying students needing additional mental health support and referring them to external mental health professionals. Establish partnerships with local mental health organizations to facilitate these referrals.

Emergency Preparedness:

Emergency Response Plan: Develop a comprehensive emergency response plan that includes protocols for medical emergencies, natural disasters, and other crisis situations. Train school staff in emergency procedures, including CPR and the use of AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators).

Crisis Intervention Team: Establish a crisis intervention team, consisting of the RN, counselors, and key administrative staff, to respond to emergencies and provide support in the aftermath of a crisis.

Implementation and Coordination:

Collaboration with Local Health Agencies: Work with local health agencies and healthcare providers to ensure students have access to necessary health services. This partnership will enhance the school's ability to provide comprehensive care and emergency services.

Training and Professional Development: Provide continuous training for the school nurse, CNAs/medical assistants, administrative staff, and teachers on health-related topics, including recognizing signs of illness, managing chronic conditions, and responding to emergencies.

Access to CMO Resources: As part of the Somerset Academy Charter Management Organization (CMO) network, the school will have access to a wide range of student services professionals, including specialized training and resources, to support the health and well-being of students.

Evaluation and Improvement:

Regular Assessment: Regularly assess the health services program to ensure it meets the needs of students and complies with Arkansas state regulations. Use feedback from students, parents, and staff to make continuous improvements.

Health Services Committee: Form a health services committee, including the RN, CNAs/medical assistants, administrative staff, teachers, parents, and students, to review and update health policies and procedures annually.

By implementing this comprehensive school health and nursing services plan, while allowing for necessary staffing flexibility, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to create a safe and healthy learning environment that supports student success and well-being in alignment with Arkansas State Standards.

- 3) **Describe the school counseling services that the school will provide to enrolled students, including how the school will staff these services in a way that meets the academic, career, and other needs of all students.**

To school's goal is to provide comprehensive counseling services that address the academic, career, personal, and social needs of all students, ensuring they are well-prepared for future success.

Note:

The school is requesting a waiver on this section in order to have flexibility to hire an individual who is in the process of getting certified to be a school counselor.

Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP):

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The school will implement a Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) in accordance with the Arkansas Department of Education rules, designed to promote student achievement and provide necessary support in academic, career, and personal/social development.

Academic Development

- Academic Counseling: Counselors will assist students in setting academic goals, developing study skills, and managing their coursework effectively. They will provide guidance on course selection, track academic progress, and offer support for students facing academic challenges.
- Individualized Academic Plans: Each student will have an individualized academic plan that outlines their educational goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Counselors will work with students, parents, and teachers to develop and review these plans regularly.
- Tutoring and Academic Support: The school will offer tutoring services and academic support programs to help students improve their performance in challenging subjects. Counselors will identify students needing extra help and connect them with appropriate resources.

Career Development

- Career Exploration: Counselors will facilitate career exploration activities, including interest assessments, career fairs, and job shadowing opportunities. These activities will help students understand their strengths and interests and explore potential career paths.
- College and Career Readiness: The counseling program will include college and career readiness guidance, helping students prepare for post-secondary education and the workforce. This will cover college application processes, financial aid information, resume writing, and interview skills.
- Partnerships with Local Businesses: The school will establish partnerships with local businesses and organizations to provide students with internships, mentorships, and real-world career experiences. These opportunities will help students gain practical skills and insights into various professions.

Personal and Social Development

- Counseling Services: Individual and group counseling services will be available to support students' personal and social development. Counselors will address issues such as stress management, conflict resolution, self-esteem, and peer relationships.
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): The school will integrate Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) into the curriculum to help students develop essential life skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, and responsible decision-making.
- Crisis Intervention: The counseling team will provide crisis intervention services for students experiencing significant personal or family issues. This may include immediate support, referrals to external mental health professionals, and ongoing counseling as needed.

Staffing and Professional Development:

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- Flexibility in Hiring: The school is requesting a waiver to hire individuals who are in the process of obtaining their certification as school counselors. This flexibility will allow the school to recruit passionate and skilled candidates who are committed to completing their certification.

- Professional Development: Continuous professional development will be provided to the counseling staff to ensure they are up-to-date with the latest counseling practices, state regulations, and effective strategies for supporting students. Training will cover areas such as trauma-informed care, cultural competency, and career counseling.

Coordination with School and Community Resources:

- Collaboration with Teachers and Administrators: Counselors will work closely with teachers and administrators to identify and support students' needs. Regular meetings and communication will ensure that counselors are aware of any issues affecting students' academic or personal lives.

- Community Partnerships: The school will establish partnerships with local mental health agencies, community organizations, and healthcare providers to offer additional resources and support for students. These partnerships will enhance the school's ability to address a wide range of student needs.

- Parental Involvement: The counseling program will actively engage parents in their children's education and well-being. Workshops, informational sessions, and regular communication will keep parents informed and involved in the counseling process.

Program Evaluation and Improvement

- Data-Driven Decision Making: The counseling program will utilize data-driven decision-making to assess its effectiveness. This includes tracking student progress, monitoring counseling outcomes, and gathering feedback from students, parents, and staff.

- Annual Program Review: The counseling program will be reviewed annually to identify areas for improvement and ensure it continues to meet the academic, career, and personal/social needs of students. Input from all stakeholders will be considered in the evaluation process.

By implementing this comprehensive school counseling services plan, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to provide robust support for the academic, career, and personal/social development of all students, in alignment with Arkansas Department of Education standards. The flexibility in staffing, along with access to a wide range of student services professionals from the CMO's network, will ensure that all students receive the guidance and assistance they need to succeed.

Somerset Academy understands the purpose of a Student Success Plan (SSP), to help guide students to post-secondary success through documented conversations between students and adults. By the end of 8th grade, each 8th grade student enrolled in the school shall have a SSP and it will follow him/her through graduation. The school will adopt the guidance provided by the state on how to map out SSPs (https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/Student-Success-Plan-2021-PD-PDF_20211206143617.pdf). The SSP will be developed by school personnel in collaboration with the student and his/her parents. The SSP will be reviewed and updated annually. It is important to note that the SSP is a working plan that is dynamic and visited periodically by the student and an advisor or mentor. In addition, it will be documented in a format and manner that will be accessible to the student. The school will include the community engagement

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components in the SSP. The SSP will have 4 parts:

Part 1 – Guide the student along pathways to graduation

Part 2 – Address accelerated learning opportunities

Part 3 – Address academic deficits and interventions

Part 4 – Include college and career planning components

The counselor and designated administrator will create a Grade Calendar by Month (9-12) and an Advisor Calendar by Month to provide guidance on the completion and ongoing reviews of the SSP. The importance of the SSP, completion and monitoring, will be reviewed at grade level and faculty meetings.

I. Recruitment and Marketing

1) Describe the Year 0 plan to recruit students. Include strategies, activities, events, responsible parties, and a timeline.

To ensure a successful recruitment of students, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will implement a multi-faceted approach combining online and offline marketing efforts, community engagement, and targeted outreach.

Activities and Events:

1. Community Engagement and Outreach:

- Host informational sessions and open houses to introduce the school to prospective families. These events will be held at various community centers, local libraries, and other accessible locations.
- Presentations at local community organizations, churches, and preschools to inform parents and guardians about the school's mission, curriculum, and enrollment process.
- Participation in community events such as fairs, festivals, and farmers markets to distribute information and engage with families directly.

2. Digital Marketing:

- Develop a comprehensive website that provides detailed information about the school, enrollment procedures, academic programs, and upcoming events.
- Utilize social media platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, and X) to reach a broader audience. Post regular updates, success stories, student testimonials, and event announcements.
- Implement targeted online advertising campaigns using Google Ads and social media ads to reach families within the local community and surrounding areas.
- Create and distribute digital newsletters to keep interested families informed about the school's developments and enrollment deadlines.

3. Print and Media Advertising:

- Design and distribute flyers, brochures, and posters to be placed in local businesses, community centers, libraries, and daycare centers.
- Place advertisements in local newspapers, magazines, and community bulletins to reach a wider audience.

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- Explore opportunities for radio and television advertisements or interviews to further increase awareness about the school.

4. Direct Mail Campaigns:

- Implement a direct mail campaign targeting households with school-age children in the surrounding neighborhoods. Mailers will include detailed information about the school, key benefits, and steps to enroll.

5. Partnerships and Referrals:

- Establish partnerships with local community organizations and businesses to create referral networks. Offer presentations, informational materials, and support to these partners to help spread the word about the school.

Timeline:

Months 1-2:

- Finalize recruitment strategies and marketing materials.
- Launch the school website and social media pages.
- Begin digital advertising campaigns.

Months 3-4:

- Host initial community informational sessions and open houses.
- Start distributing print materials and implementing direct mail campaigns.
- Engage with community organizations to schedule presentations.

Months 5-6:

- Increase frequency of community events and school presentations.
- Continue digital and print advertising efforts.
- Monitor and analyze the effectiveness of marketing strategies, adjusting as needed.

Months 7-8:

- Host follow-up informational sessions and open houses.
- Intensify social media engagement and online advertising.
- Begin the application and enrollment process for interested families.

Months 9-12:

- Conduct final community outreach events and open houses.
- Finalize student enrollment and address any remaining inquiries.
- Continue to monitor and refine marketing strategies based on feedback and enrollment data.

Team:

School Leadership Team: Oversee the entire recruitment plan, ensure milestones are met, and provide support where necessary.

Marketing Representative from CMO and ESP: Manage digital marketing efforts, social media, and online advertising campaigns.

CMO Community Outreach Coordinator: Plan and execute community engagement activities, presentations, and events.

Administrative Staff: Assist with the distribution of print materials, direct mail campaigns, and handling inquiries from prospective families.

a) Describe the key elements of the school’s marketing plan aimed at recruiting and retaining students in subsequent years

Recruitment

1. Brand Awareness:

- Continue to build and strengthen the school’s brand through consistent messaging and visual identity across all marketing channels.
- Highlight student success stories, academic achievements, and unique school programs in marketing materials.

2. Community Engagement:

- Maintain a strong presence in the community through ongoing participation in local events and partnerships with community organizations.
- Offer school tours, shadow days, and family engagement events to provide prospective families with an immersive experience of the school culture and facilities.

3. Targeted Marketing Campaigns:

- Use data from Year 0 to refine and focus marketing efforts to reach the most responsive demographics.
- Implement seasonal marketing campaigns to coincide with key enrollment periods and open house events.

Retention:

1. Parent and Student Communication:

- Establish regular communication channels with parents and students through newsletters, social media updates, and parent-teacher meetings.
- Create a parent advisory board to gather feedback and foster a sense of community and collaboration.

2. Student Engagement Programs:

- Develop extracurricular activities, clubs, and enrichment programs to keep students engaged and invested in their school experience.
- Recognize and celebrate student achievements through awards, assemblies, and school-wide events.

3. Continuous Improvement:

- Regularly assess and improve academic and extracurricular programs based on student performance and feedback.
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff to ensure high-quality teaching and support for students.

4. Alumni Relations:

- Establish an alumni network to keep former students connected and involved with the school community.
- Share alumni success stories to inspire current students and demonstrate long-term benefits of the school’s education.

By implementing these strategies, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 aims to effectively recruit new students and retain current ones, building a strong and vibrant school community over the years.

2) In accordance with Arkansas law 6-23-306, the school must prohibit discrimination in its admission policy based on gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or academic or athletic eligibility. If the school has more applicants than available seats, then it

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shall conduct a random, anonymous lottery to fill the seats. Describe how the school's enrollment lottery process will comply with these requirements.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 Enrollment Lottery Process:

Non-Discriminatory Admissions Policy:

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 strictly adheres to Arkansas law 6-23-306 by ensuring that its admission policy prohibits discrimination based on gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or academic or athletic eligibility. This commitment to non-discrimination is fundamental to the school's mission of providing equal educational opportunities to all students.

Application Period:

The school will set a specific application period during which families can submit applications for enrollment. This period will be well-publicized through various channels, including the school's website, social media platforms, community outreach events, and local media.

Lottery Process:

Application Collection:

- All applications received within the designated application period will be collected and reviewed for completeness.
- Each application will be assigned a unique, anonymous identification number to ensure confidentiality and fairness.

Verification of Preferences:

- If applicable, preferences (as permitted by Ark. Code Ann 6-23-306(14)(B)(ii)(a) and (b)) will be verified for accuracy before the lottery takes place.

Random, Anonymous Lottery:

- If the number of applications exceeds the available seats, a random, anonymous lottery will be conducted to determine which students are offered enrollment.
- The lottery will be conducted using an automated system or a similar impartial method to ensure randomness and transparency.
- The lottery process will be overseen by a designated committee or third-party observer to maintain integrity and fairness.

Notification of Results:

- Families will be notified of the lottery results via email, postal mail, or phone, based on the contact preferences indicated in their application.
- Students who are selected in the lottery will receive instructions on how to complete the enrollment process.
- Students who are not selected will be placed on a waitlist in the order determined by the lottery. They will be notified of their position on the waitlist and contacted if a seat becomes available.

Enrollment Completion:

- Families of students offered enrollment will be given a specific timeframe to accept the offer and complete the necessary enrollment documentation.
- If a family does not respond within the given timeframe, the seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist.

- a) **Ark. Code Ann 6-23- 306(14)(B)(ii)(a) and (b) allows for certain enrollment preferences. Will the charter school utilize any of the permitted enrollment preferences? If so, please briefly describe the school's policy.**

Utilization of Enrollment Preferences:

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will utilize certain enrollment preferences as permitted under Ark. Code Ann 6-23-306(14)(B)(ii)(a) and (b). Specifically, the school will implement the following preferences:

Sibling Preference:

- Preference will be given to applicants who have siblings currently enrolled at Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12. This policy helps to keep families together and fosters a sense of community within the school.

Children of Founders and Staff:

- Preference will be provided to children of the school's founders, as well as children of current staff members. This preference recognizes the contributions of those who have been instrumental in the establishment and ongoing operations of the school.

Policy Implementation:

- The application form will include sections where applicants can indicate if they qualify for any of the enrollment preferences.
- These preferences will be verified during the application review process before the lottery is conducted.
- Applicants who qualify for a preference will be placed in the lottery pool with a higher priority for selection.

By implementing these preferences, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 ensures compliance with state regulations while fostering a supportive and cohesive school community. The school remains committed to a fair and transparent enrollment process that provides equal opportunities to all applicants.

Section 6: Financial Plan and Fiscal Sustainability

In the table below, indicate the number of students the charter school intends to serve for each year of the initial charter term. What data and factors were used to determine the demand for the school and the projected enrollment shown in Table 1?

Table 1: Annual Enrollment Projection

Somerset Academy Arkansas will have two campuses, each with three schools: an Elementary School, a Middle School, and a High School. Faculty and staff will be shared across the schools on each campus. Below are the combined projections for each campus, covering Little Rock and Bentonville.

Combined Enrollment and Staffing Projections

Little Rock Campus

School Year	Grade Levels offered	Total projected Student Enrollment for all grades	Faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment	Non-faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment
Year one	K -3	250	13	6.5
Year two	K-4	375	21	9.5
Year three	K-5	475	26	12 +/-
Year four	K-5	525	30	15 +/-
Year five	K-5	550	35	17 +/-
School Year	Grade Levels offered	Total projected Student Enrollment for all grades	Faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment	Non-faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment
Year one	6	100	5	1.5
Year two	6-7	200	13.5	5.5
Year three	6-8	300	18	7.5
Year four	6-8	350	20	9.5
Year five	6-8	400	22	10
School Year	Grade Levels offered	Total projected Student Enrollment for all grades	Faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment	Non-faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment
Year one	9	100	5	1
Year two	9-10	250	13.5	5.5
Year three	9-11	450	25	9
Year four	9-12	650	30	12
Year five	9-12	750	38	15

Bentonville Campus

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School Year	Grade Levels offered	Total projected Student Enrollment for all grades	Faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment	Non-faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment
Year one	K -3	250	13	6.5
Year two	K-4	375	21	9.5
Year three	K-5	475	26	12 +/-
Year four	K-5	525	30	15 +/-
Year five	K-5	550	35	17 +/-
School Year	Grade Levels offered	Total projected Student Enrollment for all grades	Faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment	Non-faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment
Year one	6	100	5	1.5
Year two	6-7	200	13.5	5.5
Year three	6-8	300	18	7.5
Year four	6-8	350	20	9.5
Year five	6-8	400	22	10
School Year	Grade Levels offered	Total projected Student Enrollment for all grades	Faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment	Non-faculty projections based on anticipated enrollment
Year one	9	100	5	1
Year two	9-10	250	13.5	5.5
Year three	9-11	450	25	9
Year four	9-12	650	30	12
Year five	9-12	750	38	15

Notes:

- This school will be co-located with the proposed Elementary and Middle Schools being submitted.
- Faculty and staff will be shared across the three schools within each campus.

- 1) **Provide a startup budget and a three-year budget forecast beginning July 1 of year 1, necessary to sustain the successful startup of the school. Include revenue projections, expenses, and anticipated fund balances. A copy of the startup and three-year projected budget should be included with the application.**
 - a) **Include in your budget analysis the line-item revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the operating and start-up budgets are based. This description should include the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and expenses. Provide sufficient information to guide a full understanding of how budgetary figures were determined.**

Included in the Budget

- b) **Describe any anticipated state and federal funding sources the school expects to receive in addition to per-pupil foundation funding. In addition to these alternative income sources,**

clearly explain the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (grants, donations, fundraising).

See Attached Budgets. In addition, Somerset Academy, Inc. is the recipient of an FY2024 Charter Schools Program (CSP) Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter School Grants.

2) If the budget is contingent upon funding sources beyond those typically provided by the state and federal government, provide evidence of such funding.

Grant Awards: The school will actively pursue grant opportunities from private foundations, corporate sponsors, and charitable organizations dedicated to supporting educational initiatives. Documentation of awarded grants, including award letters and terms of funding, will be maintained and presented.

Fundraising Initiatives: Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will engage in local fundraising events and campaigns to generate additional revenue. This may include events such as charity auctions, benefit dinners, and community drives. Financial records and receipts from these activities will be provided as evidence of supplementary funding.

Partnerships and Sponsorships: The school will establish partnerships with local businesses and organizations that may offer financial contributions or in-kind support. Letters of commitment, contracts, and sponsorship agreements will be documented to substantiate these funding sources.

3) Explain how the school will remain fiscally sustainable and describe the school's emergency plan for cash flow challenges, a budget shortfall, lower-than-expected enrollment, or other financial challenges in the early years of operation.

Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure fiscal sustainability and to address potential financial challenges in its early years of operation:

Fiscal Sustainability: The school will implement strict budgetary controls and regular financial reviews to ensure expenditures are in line with the budget. This includes ongoing monitoring of revenue and expenses, monthly financial reporting, and adherence to budgetary constraints. In addition to state and federal funding, the school will seek diversified revenue streams through grants, fundraising, and partnerships, as described in the response to question 2.

The school will maintain an active student recruitment and retention strategy to ensure enrollment targets are met or exceeded. This includes outreach to the local community, marketing campaigns, and engagement with prospective families

A cash flow forecast will be prepared and regularly updated to project the school's financial position and to identify any potential cash flow issues in advance. A designated reserve fund will be established to cover unexpected expenses or revenue shortfalls. This reserve will be replenished as necessary to maintain financial stability.

The school will develop a contingency budget that outlines potential cost-saving measures and expenditure reductions in the event of lower-than-expected revenue or enrollment. This may include deferring non-essential expenses, renegotiating vendor contracts, and identifying areas where operational efficiencies can be gained.

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The school will identify and secure lines of credit or short-term loans to provide immediate liquidity if needed. Relationships with potential donors and sponsors will be cultivated to seek emergency funding if necessary, including the CMO.

The school's board of directors will oversee financial management practices and provide guidance on addressing financial challenges. The CMO will assist the board in ensuring financial stability. Regular board meetings will include financial reviews to ensure transparency and accountability.

4) Describe how the annual operating budget will be developed and refined each year in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-306 (10). Please include how resource allocation decisions are aligned with organizational improvement priorities, student achievement data, and mission-driven priorities.

The annual operating budget will be developed by the school's leadership team, including the principal, finance director, and other key stakeholders. This process will begin with a review of the previous year's financial performance, current financial position, and projected revenue and expenses for the upcoming year. The ESP and CMO will assist the board and school leadership team in developing the operating budget.

Resource allocation decisions will be made to align with the school's organizational improvement priorities, mission-driven objectives, and student achievement goals. This includes:

- Investing in high-quality instructional materials and resources that support academic excellence.
- Allocating funds for professional development to ensure teachers and staff are equipped to meet educational standards and student needs.
- Providing necessary support services, such as counseling and special education, to address the diverse needs of the student body.

Student achievement data and performance metrics will be analyzed to identify areas requiring additional resources or interventions. Budget allocations will be adjusted accordingly to support targeted improvement efforts. Feedback from teachers, parents, and the school community will be incorporated into the budget planning process to ensure that resource allocation reflects the needs and priorities of stakeholders.

The proposed budget will be presented to the school's board of directors for review and approval. The board will provide oversight to ensure the budget aligns with the school's strategic plan and financial policies. Regular financial reports will be provided to the board throughout the year to monitor budget performance and make any necessary adjustments.

The budget will be reviewed and refined on an annual basis, considering changes in enrollment, funding levels, and program effectiveness. A mid-year budget review will be conducted to assess financial performance and make any necessary reallocations or adjustments based on current needs and priorities. By following this structured process, Somerset Academy Arkansas K-12 will ensure that its annual operating budget is developed and refined in a manner that supports the school's mission, promotes student achievement, and maintains fiscal responsibility in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-306 (10).

Appendix A
ARKANSAS STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES
FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS

As an authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify that under the penalties of perjury, the information submitted in this application for [Somerset Academy] is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Further, I understand that if awarded a charter, the school and its governing board will address the assurances listed below through policies adopted by the sponsoring entity and charter school. In addition, if the application is approved, the sponsoring entity, governing body, administration, and staff of the charter organization shall comply with all relevant state and federal laws in addition to the assurances listed below.

1. The charter school shall be open to all students on a space-available basis and shall not discriminate in its admission policy on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or academic or athletic eligibility, except as follows: the charter school may adopt admissions policies that are consistent with state and federal law, regulations, or guidelines applicable to charter schools. The charter may provide for the exclusion of a student who has been expelled from another public school district.
2. If applications exceed the approved enrollment cap, the open-enrollment charter school shall hold an annual random and anonymous public lottery, followed by notifying parents of the enrollment status of all applicants. The waiting list generated by the lottery is valid until the next time the open-enrollment public charter school is required to conduct a random, anonymous student selection in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-306 (14)(B)(b)(2).
3. The charter school shall comply with all applicable laws concerning the recruitment, hiring, promotion, retention, or termination of its employees.
4. The charter school shall operate in accordance with federal laws and rules governing public schools, applicable provisions of the Arkansas Constitution, and state laws and regulations governing public schools not waived by the approved charter.
5. The charter school shall not use the money that it receives from the state for any unlawful sectarian program, obligations, or activity or as collateral for debt except as allowed by law.
6. Charter schools may enter public-private partnerships where they enter into a lease-purchase agreement for the acquisition or construction of a school building or related facilities built or acquired by private entities exempt from federal taxes under 26 U.S.C. 142(a)(13) as allowed by Ark. Code Ann. 6-20-402(a)(1)(B).
7. The charter school shall not impose taxes or charge students' tuition or fees that are not allowable by law
8. The charter school shall not be religious in its operations or programmatic offerings in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. 6-23-401(a)(7) or as otherwise allowed by law.

9. The charter school shall ensure that any of its employees who qualify for membership in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System or the Arkansas State and Public-School Employee Insurance Program are covered under those systems to the same extent required by law.
10. Under applicable state laws, the employees and volunteers of the charter school is immune from liability to the same extent as other public school district employees and volunteers.
11. The charter school shall carefully review the potential impact of its application on the efforts of a public school district or public-school districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 (a).
12. The charter school shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety laws, rules, and regulations regarding the facilities and school property.
13. The applicant confirms the understanding that certain provisions of state law shall not be waived. The charter school is subject to any prohibition, restriction, or requirement imposed by Title 6 of the Arkansas Code and any rule and regulation approved by the State Board of Education under this title relating to (a) Monitoring compliance with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-101 et seq., as determined by the Commissioner of the Department of Education; (b) Conducting criminal background checks for employees; (c) High school graduation requirements as established by the State Board of Education; (d) Special education programs as provided by this title; (e) Public school accountability under this title; (g) Health and safety codes as established by the State Board of Education and state and local governmental entities, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. 6-23-401(b).
14. No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the state or its political subdivisions. No debts of the charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the state or its political subdivisions, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. 6-23-503. Upon dissolution of the charter school or nonrenewal or revocation of the charter, all net assets of the charter school, including any interest in real property purchased with public funds, shall be deemed the property of the state unless otherwise specified in the charter of the charter school. If the charter school used state or federal funds to purchase or finance personal property, real property, or fixtures for use by the charter school, the authorizer may require that the property be sold. The state has a perfected priority security interest in the net proceeds from the sale or liquidation of the property to the extent of the public funds used in the purchase.
15. The school's curriculum will be aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards
16. The school will operate within the statewide assessment system
17. The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Financial Management System, provided by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, shall be the original and official accounting system of record for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for all financial transaction records and reporting (including, but not limited to,

payroll processing and wage and tax reporting to the IRS ATRS, DFA, etc., accounts payable, fixed assets, personnel budgeting, and budgeting). APSCN shall be used to record all private, as well as local, state, and federal revenues and expenditures.


18. The charter school shall comply with Ark. Code Ann. §6-24-105-107 concerning contracting with board members, administrators, and employees.

19. The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Student Management System, provided by the Department of Education, shall be the original and official student management system for the public charter school as required by state law and the rules and regulations of the Department of Education for all student management areas (including, but not limited to, systems administration, demographics, attendance, scheduling, report cards, discipline, medical, Cognos reporting, and Statewide Information System reporting).

20. The facility to be used will comply with all applicable accessibility requirements in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and all other state and federal laws and local zoning ordinances.

21. A copy of the entity's letter from the IRS reflecting tax-exempt status or a copy of the entity's application for 501(c)(3) status must be included with the application. Articles of incorporation or a letter acknowledging non-profit status from the Secretary of State will not suffice.) To be eligible, an entity must hold or have applied for 501(c)(3) status at the time this charter application is filed. The entity must receive formal tax-exempt status under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 prior to the first day of its operation with students. Non-profit entities without the required Internal Revenue Service documentation are not eligible to be awarded charters; therefore, any applications submitted without documentation showing that 501(c)(3) status has been applied for or received will not be reviewed.

To the best of my knowledge, I certify that the information and data contained in the application are true and correct. The applicant's governing body has duly authorized this application and documentation, and the applicant will comply with the Arkansas Statement of Assurances for Charter Schools and all State and Federal laws guiding Charter Schools in Arkansas unless granted a waiver. The sponsoring entity presiding over this application and any subsequent charter operations affirm and acknowledge the information and affirmations presented in this application (sign and date):

Authorized Representative Printed Name:	Todd German, Board Chair
Authorized Representative Signature:	
Date:	June 14, 2024

Addendum – Experienced Operator or CMO

- 1) **Describe the enrollment practices, processes, and policies of the proposed school. If these differ from your existing school(s), please describe how and why they differ.**

Admission Policy - In accordance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws and in accordance with the Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306, the School will not discriminate on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or academic or athletic eligibility.

Any eligible student who submits an application (prior to the posted deadline) shall be considered, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building. In such case, all applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection/lottery process.

Enrollment Preferences - In accordance with Arkansas Statute, the School will give enrollment preference to the following student populations:

- Students who are siblings of a student enrolled in the charter school.
- Students who are the children of a founding member of the governing board and children of employees of the charter school.

Students will be enrolled based on grade level availability. The school leader will establish a timeline for registration and enrollment which will be posted on the schools website and sent to families who have been selected.

If the number of applicants exceeds the capacity, students not selected in the initial lottery will be placed on a waitlist. The same enrollment preferences will apply if space becomes available for a student on the waitlist. A lottery system will take place as enrollment spots become available.

- 2) **Explain how the community for the proposed school is similar and/or different from the community that schools in your portfolio currently serve.**

The School expects to have a student population reflective of the community it will serve. The School's educational process relies on the partnership among the school, family, and community. The stakeholders of Somerset Academy Arkansas, Inc. are committed to meet the needs of the target student population by hiring staff and creating a School Advisory Council that will mirror the diverse characteristics and incorporate multiple perspectives in school development. Further, the Governing Board members reflect diversity in their personal and career backgrounds and areas of expertise. Their skills, ranging from business ownership to educational leadership, will serve to monitor and guide the school and surrounding community's reciprocal needs.

- 3) **Provide a portfolio summary of existing schools operated by CMO or charter organizations. List all charter schools that have operated within the last five years. Please indicate if any of those schools have had their charter revoked or not renewed.**

For each school listed, provide name, location, years opened, grades served. In addition, please provide five years of data (or a maximum number of years of data available, if less than five) for the following categories:

- a) Total enrollment.
- b) Statewide designations and letter grades, if applicable.

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- c) Student Achievement
- d) Student Growth
- e) Graduation rate, if applicable.
- f) Demographic and socioeconomic breakdown.
 - i) % African American, Asian, Hispanic, White, Other race/ethnicity
 - ii) % Free and Reduced lunch
 - iii) % Special Education
 - iv) % English Language Learners/Emergent Bilingual
 - v) % Gifted and Talented

See attachments.

4) **Select one of the network's lower-performing schools and describe its performance. What specific strategies have you implemented to improve performance?**

For over two decades, the leadership teams at Somerset Academy have effectively launched and managed high-achieving, college preparatory public charter schools. Working closely with essential community stakeholders, Somerset has established and nurtured a culture devoted to diversity, academic excellence, and equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge to embark on fulfilling career paths. A study by Stanford University's Center for Research on Outcomes (CREDO) assessed the effectiveness of charter management organizations nationwide, incorporating various metrics to gauge their impact.

CREDO's third study compared the academic progress of students in charter schools with those in traditional public schools (TPS). A significant discovery was the recognition of a small group of charter school operators that excel in promoting educational equity, dubbed "gap-busting" schools. Within this prestigious category, Somerset Academy has been recognized as a "gap buster" network, showing remarkable student performance in both reading and mathematics.

Somerset Academy has long been dedicated to extending high-quality educational opportunities to underserved student populations. This commitment is woven through the innovative curriculum design, personalized learning strategies, and strong community partnerships we've developed to ensure that all, regardless of socio-economic background, have access to excellent education.

At the heart of our educational approach is the integration of rigorous academic programs with supportive initiatives specifically designed to meet the needs of low-income, minority, and other underserved groups. Our schools offer prestigious Advanced Placement (AP) and Cambridge (AICE) programs, which not only enhance learning opportunities but also boast passing rates significantly higher than state averages. This ensures that advanced learning opportunities, often reserved for more affluent districts, are accessible to our diverse student body.

One of the remarkable achievements of Somerset Academy is the high graduation rates among our underserved populations. Economically disadvantaged students and English Language Learners, for instance, have graduation rates of 95.3% and 96.8% respectively. These figures exceed the state average and underscore our success in closing the achievement gap. This is supported by targeted initiatives such as tailored tutoring, mentoring, and counseling services designed to address the unique challenges faced by these students. Recognizing the importance of early exposure to college-level coursework, we have expanded our dual enrollment programs. These allow students to earn college credits while still in high school, providing a crucial gateway for underserved students who might not otherwise view higher education as attainable. In the past academic year alone, over 1,000 of our students, many from underserved backgrounds, participated in at least one dual enrollment class.

The role of community and family engagement cannot be overstated in our educational model. Somerset Academy fosters strong partnerships between families, communities, and schools, which enhances the educational experience and creates a robust support network. These partnerships ensure that families are engaged in their children's education, providing a vital connection between home and school environments. Fueled by our successes and supported by grants and other funding mechanisms, we are poised to extend our high-performing school model to more low-income communities across regions like Arizona, Florida, Texas, and Nevada. Our plans to enroll an additional 13,540 students are a testament to our commitment to increase the reach and impact of our educational offerings, bringing the benefits of a Somerset education to more underserved students. The United States Department of Education, recognizing our commitment to excellence and desire to replicate educational opportunities across the country, awarded our network a CMO replication grant specifically for this purpose. As of April, 2024, the plans to open this school are in alignment with the goals of the grant and would be supported by this grant program.

At the heart of Somerset Academy's operational excellence and strategic direction is its dedicated governing board. Composed of seasoned professionals from a wide array of fields including education, business, service, and governance, the board brings a wealth of knowledge, experience, and commitment to the advancement of high-quality education. This diverse group of individuals has demonstrated exceptional leadership and possesses extensive expertise in their respective domains, which equips them to navigate complex decisions and foster sustainable growth within the educational landscape.

The board's governance practices are anchored in transparency, accountability, and ethical management, ensuring that every decision is not only well-documented but also aligns with both internal policies and external regulatory requirements. Regular meetings facilitate robust dialogue and effective decision-making that guides the broad network of Somerset Academy schools.

Strategically, the board's involvement extends deep into the planning and execution of the academy's long-term objectives. From setting ambitious educational goals to facilitating the replication of successful school models, the board works closely with school administrators to maintain consistently high standards across all Somerset schools. This strategic oversight is critical for aligning operational efforts with Somerset's mission to support every student's academic success.

Financial health is another critical area overseen by the governing board. Through diligent financial stewardship, the board ensures that resources are judiciously allocated to not only meet current educational priorities but also to support strategic expansion and sustainability. This careful management is crucial for maximizing the impact of funding and maintaining the financial integrity of Somerset Academy's programs.

Recognizing the vital role of community involvement, the board actively engages with various stakeholders including parents, local communities, and educational organizations. This engagement ensures that the academy remains responsive to the needs of the communities it serves and reflects the diverse voices of its constituents in its policies and programs.

Moreover, the board is vigilant in ensuring compliance with state and federal education laws and manages risk strategies to address potential challenges that could impact academic performance, school safety, and financial operations. This proactive approach is fundamental in maintaining the academy's stability and ensuring a safe, effective learning environment for all students.

The board also places a high value on continuous improvement and professional development for its members, keeping abreast of the latest trends and developments in education governance. This commitment not only prepares the board to effectively respond to changes in the educational landscape but also enhances their ability to govern with foresight and insight.

Somerset Academy, renowned for managing some of the highest performing schools in Florida and nationally, recently faced a significant challenge when one of our recorded proficiency rates below 43% in both reading and mathematics. This reflection aims to delve into the reasons behind this underperformance and describe the concerted efforts made to remedy the situation.

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically disrupted educational norms, impacting student engagement and learning outcomes across the globe. This particular school within our network struggled notably with primary literacy skills during this period. The abrupt transition to remote learning exacerbated existing educational disparities, as many students faced difficulties due to limited access to necessary technology and supportive learning environments. These barriers were particularly pronounced in this community, hindering consistent student engagement and leading to gaps in foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Additionally, it became apparent that the school's existing literacy programs were not sufficiently tailored to the diverse needs of our students. These programs failed to accommodate various learning paces and styles, a crucial element in effectively teaching foundational subjects like literacy.

In response to these challenges, Somerset Academy's leadership took immediate and robust action. Enhanced on-site monitoring was implemented, with frequent visits and check-ins from seasoned educators in our network. These visits aimed to provide real-time support and ensure the effective implementation of new teaching strategies and programs. Recognizing the critical role of effective leadership in overcoming these educational hurdles, we closely collaborated with the school's leaders, focusing on elevating their strategic and operational capabilities. This included targeted professional development that emphasized leadership in crisis situations and the adoption of data-driven instructional techniques. To directly tackle the inadequacies in the literacy program, we introduced a revised curriculum that incorporated more adaptive learning technologies and differentiated instruction strategies. These new initiatives were designed to be more engaging and accessible, aiming to enhance student participation and learning outcomes.

Understanding the pivotal role of community and parental involvement in educational success, we intensified our efforts to engage parents and community members. This was achieved through more frequent communications and the organization of workshops aimed at equipping parents with the resources and knowledge to support their children's learning at home.

Furthermore, the school set clear, measurable goals for improvement in literacy and mathematics proficiency. Regular assessments were introduced to rigorously monitor progress and adapt teaching methods as necessary, ensuring our interventions were responsive and effective. Additional resources, including more teaching staff and specialized educators, were also allocated to provide necessary individual attention and support. While final school grades have not been tabulated for this school year, our interim assessments give us confidence that this school is poised to meet the high standards the rest of the network upholds. Support will continue if and when the school regains its proficiency levels to ensure a continued progression on this track.

Looking forward, Somerset Academy remains unwavering in our dedication to not only restore but exceed the previous educational standards at this school. Through a blend of strong leadership, innovative teaching strategies, and robust community support, we are committed to uplifting the academic performance of all students and meeting the high expectations that define the Somerset Academy network. This ongoing journey reflects our deep commitment to ensuring every student in our network achieves their fullest potential.

- 5) **Describe the scope of specific resources, services, or set of services that the Charter Management Organization (CMO) will provide for the school to support operation or management.**

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Somerset Academy, Inc., serving as the Charter Management Organization (CMO), delivers essential academic and operational support to the school. This includes providing up-to-date information systems and administrative procedures which are necessary for an effective educational program, but at a lower cost than if these services were managed internally. This arrangement alleviates the principal from numerous administrative and compliance responsibilities, allowing them to focus more on leadership, students, staff, and academics.

The CMO employs a team of professionals to ensure that the school is managed professionally and adheres to all the necessary requirements stipulated by sponsor contracts, as well as relevant state and federal laws, and local municipal ordinances concerning operations and facilities. This organizational structure strengthens the overall administration and operations of the school, leading to enhanced educational outcomes.

Schools managed under the CMO are noted for their high-standard, college-preparatory educational programs, which have been delivering consistent academic achievements since 1997. Going forward, the CMO will partner with Academica, an Educational Service and Support Provider. This collaboration will extend the scope of support services provided to the CMO, encompassing critical central office functions such as facilities design and maintenance, human resource coordination, compliance, and reporting. Additionally, the CMO will benefit from comprehensive accounting services including bookkeeping, managing payables, asset management, budget preparation, risk management, cash flow analysis, and preparation of financial statements for review and approval by the Governing Board.

6) **Please describe and explain any monetary obligations designated for services or fees associated with partnering with the CMO (if applicable).**

Somerset Academy, Inc. provides the school with access to a broad pool of educational professionals, offering robust academic support and operational services for a competitive fee of \$750 per student per year. Moreover, their proven ability to manage financially healthy schools and build substantial reserves for additional programming is particularly attractive. Their success in replicating educational programs across various U.S. regions through strong ties with large charter school networks further validates the Board's decision.



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 wavier list provided below. This list includes the appropriate waiver topic and citations to the applicable Arkansas Code Section, Rules, and Standards 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	Board of Directors
Arkansas Code Annotated	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.
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	Rules Governing School Board Zones and Rezoning
Rationale for Waiver	The applicant seeks a waiver for the sections of Arkansas Code Annotated and ADE Rules listed above as it pertains to the proposed board of directors and policy adoption. The board members are not selected or elected from the general public but rather named to the board as described in the application, which also describes the process for filling vacancies, the frequency of meetings, officer positions and responsibilities, and length of terms. The board is the only body that may adopt policies for the school. The applicant is replicating a highly successful model that has a

	<p>proven track record of academic excellence. The core of this process is the board, which is made up of dynamic individuals from a diverse set of backgrounds, experiences, and expertise unified with a common goal and vision. While physical meetings will be held, it is requested that the applicant be allowed to have meetings by telephone and web-based meeting software, in order to best fit the schedules of our board and stakeholders. Publication of these open meetings would still be made in accordance with ACA, and members of the public will be offered the opportunity to attend physically, or via the call-in number or web-based meeting software. Additionally, members of the public are invited to register for public comment, which may be done via the school's website, or from a campus location, in order to participate in the meeting.</p>
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Waiver #2 Topic	Superintendent & Principal
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-13-109 6-17-302 6-17-427
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 4-B.2, 4-C.1, 4-C.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>The applicant seeks a waiver for the sections of Arkansas Code Annotated and Standard for Accreditation listed above as it pertains to school leadership. The applicant's success is predicated on being able to select leaders that commit to the Board's shared vision and goal. Experienced educational leaders are part of the founding board and bring those decades of experience to hiring a superintendent to serve the school's best interest as well as future principals. These candidates at the time of hiring may not hold the requisite certifications under ACA and Standard 4-B.2, and the school may not be at a size where a principal is required for day-to-day management, therefore the applicant requests a waiver from 4-C.1 and 4-C.2. Any school leader hired by the board will be an "at-will" employee. Development of school leaders is something the existing network prides itself on, and any school leader hired for any position will, if not initially certified in Arkansas, will obtain the licensure as a condition of their employment with the Board through certification or reciprocity, if applicable.</p>

Waiver #3 Topic	Facilities and Flag Display
Arkansas Code Annotated	6-16-105 United States Flag 6-16-106 Arkansas State Flag 6-21-117(2)-(5) Leased Academic Facilities

Standard for Accreditation	Standard 6-A.1, 6-A.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	<p>Because the applicant has not identified a facility, a waiver is being requested in the case that the landlord does not allow for a flag to be permitted. The school commits to finding alternatives ways to display the American and Arkansas State flag.</p> <p>Additionally, a waiver is requested for Standards 6-A.1 and 6-A.2. This waiver is requested because a site has not yet been selected, and a transportation plan will not be developed until student enrollment data is available to determine the need and methods. The school facility will, at minimum, meet the requirements of all state and local health and safety codes, ADA and IDEA.</p>

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Waiver #4 Topic	Personnel Policies
Arkansas Code Annotated	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 6-17-203 6-17-205 6-17-209 6-17-301 6-17-208 6-17-210 6-17-202 6-17-201(a) & (c)
Standard for Accreditation	3-A.2 (only to the extent that the classified salary schedule must be published on the school's website)
ADE Rules	Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites – 5.01.4, 5.01.5, 6.01, 6.02 (as for these sections, only to the extent that classified & administrator salary information is required to be published on the school's website)
Rationale for Waiver	The applicant is seeking a waiver for the above sections of statutes, standards and rules as they pertain to personnel policies. The applicant plans to adopt personnel policies covering all necessary areas, including but not limited to salary schedules, benefits and other compensation issues; annual school calendars; evaluation procedures; leave; grievance procedures; termination or suspension; reduction in force and assignments. Employees will be "at will" and will be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and in accordance with the referenced personnel policies of the Board. Employees will have the right to appeal their dismissal in accordance with a grievance policy adopted by the Board of Directors. Issues such as minimum sick leave will be addressed in the Employee Handbook for the school. This waiver will generally allow the school to make prompt personnel decisions to address performance issues negatively impacting the school's operation. The applicant also seeks the ability to develop policies with groups of employees outside of those mandated. As the applicant will seek to find the best qualified candidates for the

	positions available, flexibility in publishing salary ranges is sought. The applicant uses similar policies successfully in other states, and it is a key component of its highly successful programs.
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Waiver #5 Topic	School Counselor, Student Services
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. 6-18-706
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 4-E.1, 4-E.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The school is requesting a waiver on this section in order to have flexibility to hire an individual who is in the process of getting certified to be a school counselor. Additionally, the school would like to request a waiver of the enumerated ratios for both counselor and nurse to instead provide the flexibility based on need of cases, due to qualified staffing shortages, existing health support structures, low incidence of health issues, specialized staff training, flexible health service delivery, and participation in innovative health service programs. This model has worked at other network schools. As part of the CMO's network, the school will have access to a wide range of student services professionals.

Waiver #6 Topic	Required Instruction K-12
Arkansas Code Annotated	
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 1-A.1.3
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The school is requesting a waiver of this code because the school will not be offering all K-12 grade levels and will be operating at a much smaller number in its initial start up years. The school may not be able to sustain the offering of the full 38 courses until later on in its existence. The school needs the flexibility to ensure that it is offering the courses and electives that are pertinent to achieving its mission. The school commits to providing students with a well rounded education and align all courses and curriculum to Arkansas Academic Standards. The model being replicated has been successful in doing so across

	different states and is committed to ensuring success for the students of Arkansas.
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Waiver #7 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>The applicant is seeking a waiver for the above sections of Arkansas Code Annotated and Rules to hire the most qualified teachers best suited to implement the Board’s shared goal and vision. In some circumstance a teacher may not at time of hire hold a valid Arkansas Teaching Certificate, and some may have extensive career experiences that make them uniquely qualified for the innovative programs the school offers. Out-of field instructors will be used only in extreme circumstances and subject to board approval. While some teachers may not hold a valid Arkansas Teaching Certificate at the time of hire, they will be required to obtain the necessary licensure as a condition of their employment through certification or reciprocity, if applicable. Additionally, all teachers will complete the requisite Arkansas Qualified Teacher (AQT) training. In certain cases, teachers with extensive career experience may be uniquely qualified for the school’s innovative programs. All employees must pass a background check. The applicant has a proven track record of success using an alternate observation and evaluation system, and is seeking a waiver in order to continue using that method.</p>

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Waiver #8 Topic	Library Media Services
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-103 Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-104
Standard for Accreditation	Standard 2-D.1 Standard 4-F.1, 4-F.2
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The school requests a waiver for the requirement of a Library in the immediate. Because facilities have not yet been identified, the school needs to request a waiver. The school also requests a waiver regarding student population and hourly status of the Library Specialist. The applicant will incorporate all relevant Library Media state standards through development of a pedagogy and curriculum implementation.

Waiver #9 Topic	Class Size & Teaching Load
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-812
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	The applicant is seeking a waiver for the above sections of Arkansas Code Annotated, Standards, and Rules to hire the most qualified teachers best suited to implement the Board's shared goal and vision. In some circumstance a teacher may not at time of hire hold a valid Arkansas Teaching Certificate, and some may have extensive career experiences that make them uniquely qualified for the innovative programs the school offers. Out-of-field instructors will be used only in extreme circumstances and subject to board approval. All employees must pass a background check- and for core subject areas be eligible to be designated as Arkansas Qualified Teachers. The applicant has a proven track record of success using an alternate observation and evaluation system, and is seeking a waiver in order to continue using that method.

Waiver #10 Topic	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	The school is requesting a waiver to house an ALE. The school will meet the needs of student who meet the criteria for an alternative learning environment through Response to Intervention (RtI) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (M-TSS). RtI integrates assessment and intervention within a schoolwide M-TSS to maximize student achievement, and support students' social, emotional, and behavior needs. An Alternative Student Action Plan will be created by the counselor, the student's teacher, and the designated administrator. The Alternative Student Action Plan will be overseen by the counselor.

Waiver #11 Topic	Report Cards
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-903 a(2)
Standard for Accreditation	
ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The applicant requests the waiver for the above section of ACA insofar as it pertains to distribution of report cards, that an electronic transmission of the report card to a parent/guardian's email address will be acceptable as a distribution method.

Waiver #12 Topic	Planning Period, Duty Free Lunch Period and Non-Instructional Duties
Arkansas Code Annotated	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-111 § 6-17-114 § 6-17-117
Standard for Accreditation	

ADE Rules	
Rationale for Waiver	The applicant seeks a waiver for the sections of Arkansas Code Annotated listed above to provide school leaders with maximum flexibility in using their personnel to safely operate their campus. While the guidelines for limits on non-instructional duties per week is the goal, there are times during the school day and year which would require staff to exceed these guidelines to safely deliver services to students and their families.

Waiver #13 Topic	Gifted and Talented
Arkansas Code Annotated	6-20-2208(c)(6), 6-42-109
Standard for Accreditation	2.G.1
ADE Rules	DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards
Rationale for Waiver	The school requests a waiver to the Statutes, Standards and Rules regarding the separate Gifted and Talented program requirement. The school's model provides a rigorous curriculum to all students, challenging them academically and preparing them for future success while recognizing that some children of high ability and potential require differentiated learning and challenges in areas of study that interest them. The school's integrated model focuses on differentiation of instruction and mirrors the standards typically associated with Gifted and Talented programs. By offering a challenging educational experience beyond standard expectations found in most educational settings, teachers can incorporate advanced subject matter, delving into complex concepts that surpass grade-level material as an alternative to the standard curriculum. College preparatory courses, including Pre-AP and AP courses, are integrated to equip students with the necessary skills for higher education. Through personalized learning plans created in consultation with educators and parents, the school can tailor instruction to cater to students' preferences and challenge them in their learning. Our counselors will provide criterion- and norm-referenced assessments for student screening.

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 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>

			DESE Rules Governing 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</u> <u>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</u> <u>Supplies – Rules</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-303(b)</p>	<p><u>School Safety</u> <u>Policies & Procedures</u></p> <p>Standard 6-A.2</p>	<p><u>Statewide Assessment</u> <u>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</u> <u>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 &</u> <u>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 –</u> <u>12-mo. Contract for</u> <u>Vocational Agri Teachers</u></p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-802</p>	<p><u>Tornado & Earthquake</u> <u>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>