

Mountain Home Career Academies Accountability Profile

Expedited Review



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Section 1: Abstract

Mountain Home Career Academies is a district conversion charter serving grades 8–12, opened in 2004, with a mission centered on preparing students for a competitive technological world through higher-order thinking, literacy, mathematical reasoning, and innovative instructional strategies. Current enrollment is 1,456 students, representing approximately 73% of the enrollment cap of 2,000. The Expedited Review Accountability Profile provides a multi-year overview of enrollment and special populations, academic performance indicators, graduation outcomes, financial status, governance practices, and improvement planning systems.

Academic performance trends show overall alignment with or improvement above the state average. The school received a C rating in 2022–2023, no rating reported in 2023–2024, and a B rating in 2024–2025, compared to a consistent state average of C. ATLAS growth and achievement comparisons in English Language Arts, Math, and Science are included for both all students and the lowest-performing quartile, along with graduation rate trend comparisons. School and district improvement planning emphasizes ESSA index performance, ATLAS growth, ACT outcomes, PLC practices, intervention systems, and Science of Reading alignment.

Financial and operational indicators reflect overall compliance with noted documentation gaps. ADE Finance reports no financial concerns or findings. Board materials show consistent academic and fiscal oversight, including recurring academic reports and formal budget and tax levy approvals. Governance transparency is generally strong for mid-2025, though minutes for 2026 meetings were not yet posted at the time of review. Recruitment/retention and school improvement plans are present and compliant in structure.

Section 2: School Summary

Background Information

Location	500 Bomber Blvd, Mountain Home, AR 72653
Year Opened	2004
Grade Levels	8 th – 12 th
Enrollment CAP	2,000
Charter Type	District Conversion
Mission Statement	The mission is to prepare students to enter an increasingly competitive technological world. We provide a curriculum that promotes higher-order thinking skills. Our emphasis across the curriculum will be to raise student performance in reading comprehension, written expression, and mathematical reasoning using proved educational strategies together with innovative technologies. The ultimate mission of Mountain Home High School Career Academies is to graduate students who are empowered with the necessary skills to succeed in life.

Leadership Team

Personnel	Title	School / Organization	Email
Mary Beth Russell	High School Principal	Mountain Home Career Academies	mrussell@mhbombers.com
Jason Schmeski	President	Board Member	jschmeski@mhbombers.com
Scott Booth	Vice President	Board Member	sbooth@mhbombers.com
Mollie Morgan	Secretary	Board Member	mmorgan@mhbombers.com
Barbara Horton	Member	Board Member	bhorton@mhbombers.com
Brad Butler	Member	Board Member	bbutler@mhbombers.com
Tommy Knight	Member	Board Member	tknight@mhbombers.com
Marsha Partney	Member	Board Member	mpartney@mhbombers.com

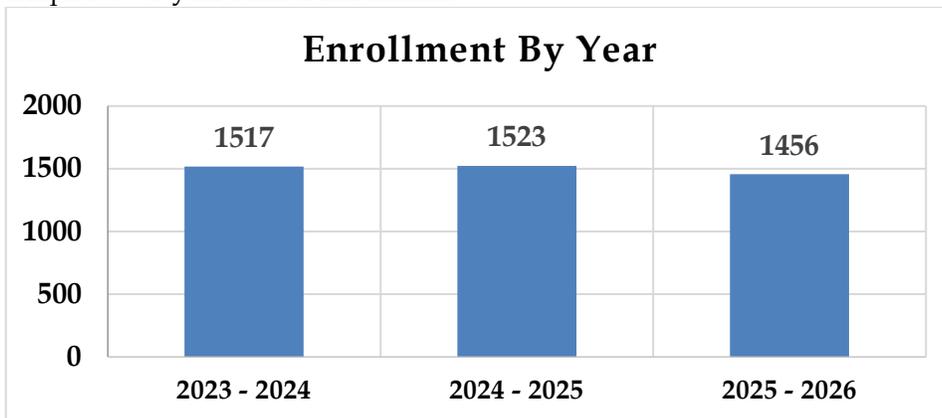
Section 3: Student Enrollment Data

Table 3.0 – 2025 – 2026 Enrollment

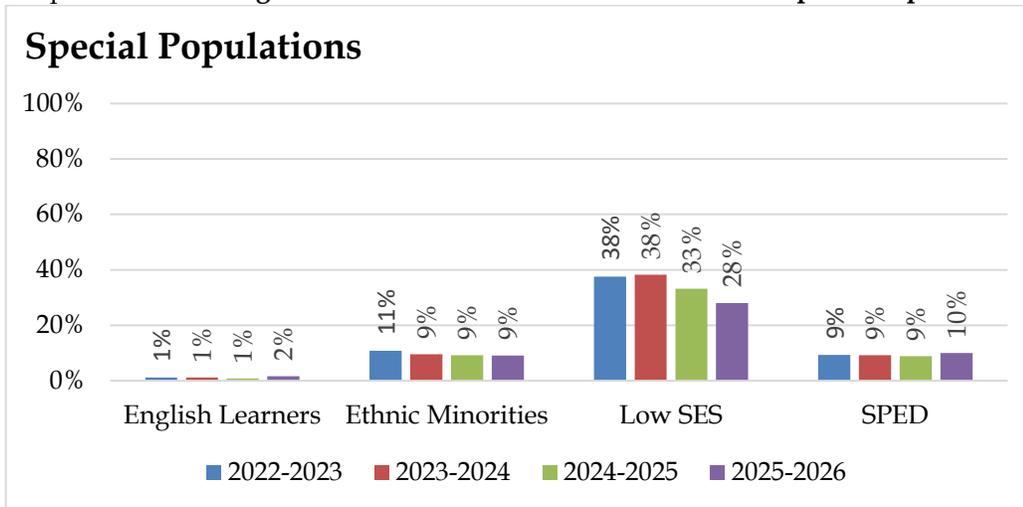
2025 – 2026 Enrollment	Enrollment Cap	Percent of Cap
1456	2000	72.80%

Graph 3.0 reports the past three years’ total enrollment count; **Graph 3.1** shows student demographics over the past three years. **Graph 3.2** provides the charter school’s enrollment percentages of students identified as part of a special population during the past three years. The data reported was captured from the Arkansas Department of Education’s Data Center and is current as of the October 2025 school census count.

Graph 3.0 - 3-year School Enrollment



Graph 3.1 - Percentage of Enrolled Students Considered Part of Special Populations **



** Students who are English language learners, those who receive a free or reduced lunch, and those with an IEP are included in the state’s definition of special populations.

Section 4: Academic Performance Data

In 2013, the Arkansas legislature passed A.C.A 6-15-2105, requiring the state to implement an A-F grading scale for schools as an indicator of a school’s overall academic health. **Table 4.0** shows the school’s past three years of letter grades compared to the state.

Table 4.0 - Letter Grade Comparison

School	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Mountain Home Career Academies	C	Not Available	B
State average	C	C	C

Growth and Achievement

Growth scores show how many students met their **individual growth goals** on the end-of-year tests. It highlights how well a school helps **all students make progress**, no matter where they start.

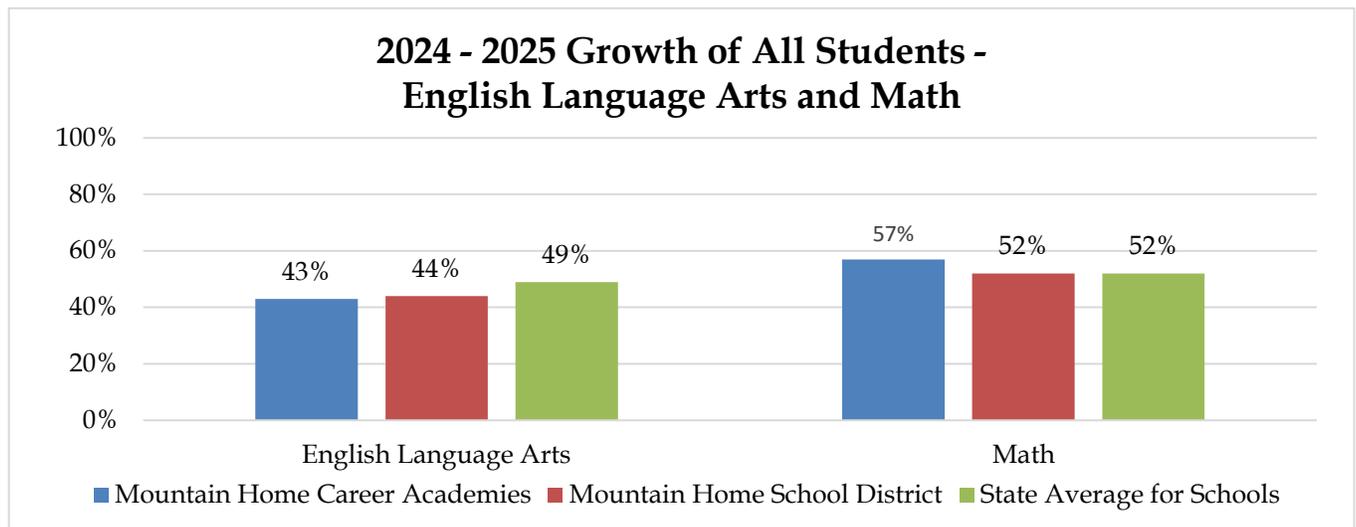
Achievement scores show the percentage of students who met or exceeded grade-level expectations on the annual statewide tests.

All public charter schools are responsible for educating students according to the standards set for Arkansas public schools. As of the 2024 – 2025 school year, the ATLAS assessment is being used to track both Growth and Achievement for schools.

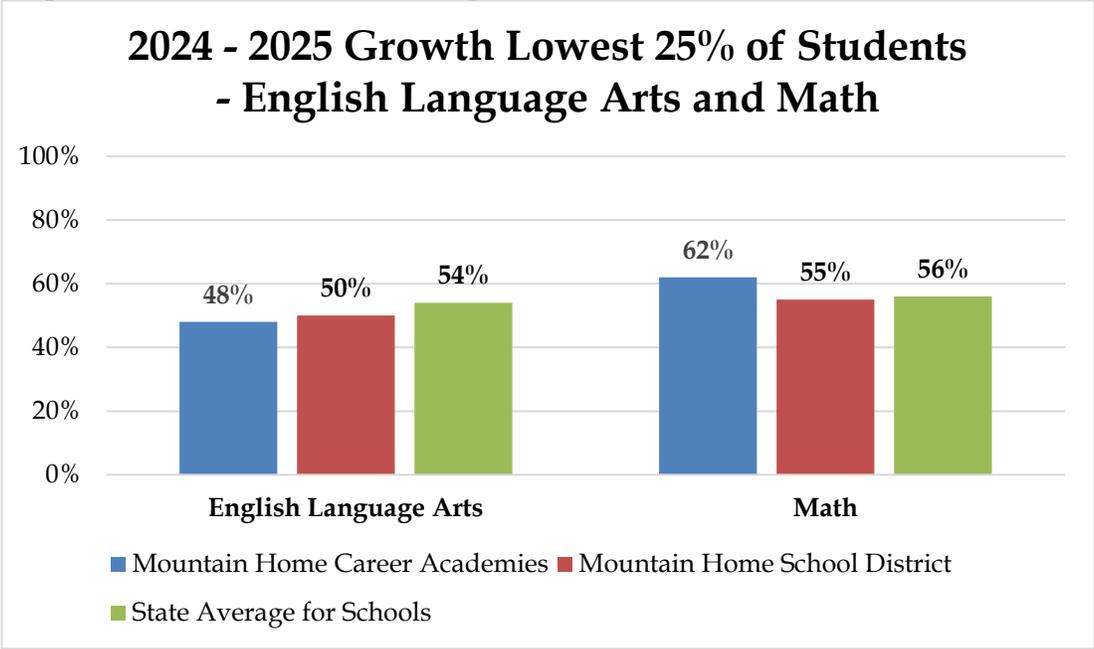
School Growth Comparison Data 2024 – 2025 school year

Graph 4.1.a compares growth of all students at the charter school in English Language Arts and Math with the state average. **Graph 4.1.b** compares growth of the charter school’s lowest 25% of students in English Language Arts and Math with the state average.

Graph 4.1.a – 2024 – 2025 All Students Growth Comparison



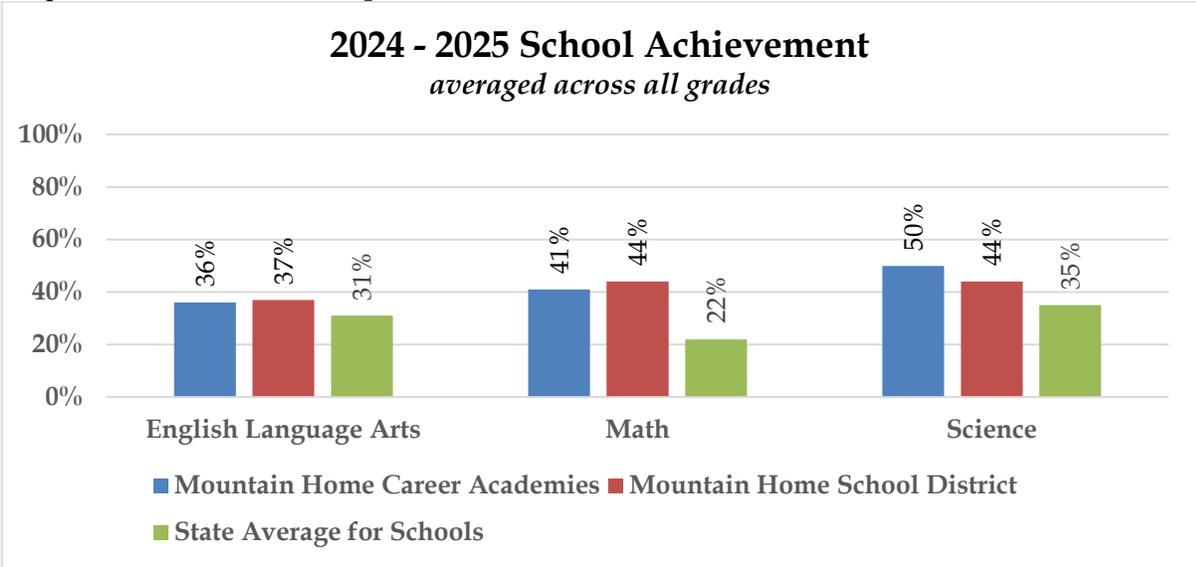
Graph 4.1.b - Lowest 25% Growth Comparison



School Achievement Comparison Data

Graph 4.1 presents proficiency (achievement) scores, averaged across all grades, for the charter school in English Language Arts, Math, and Science for the 2024 - 2025 school year compared to the state average.

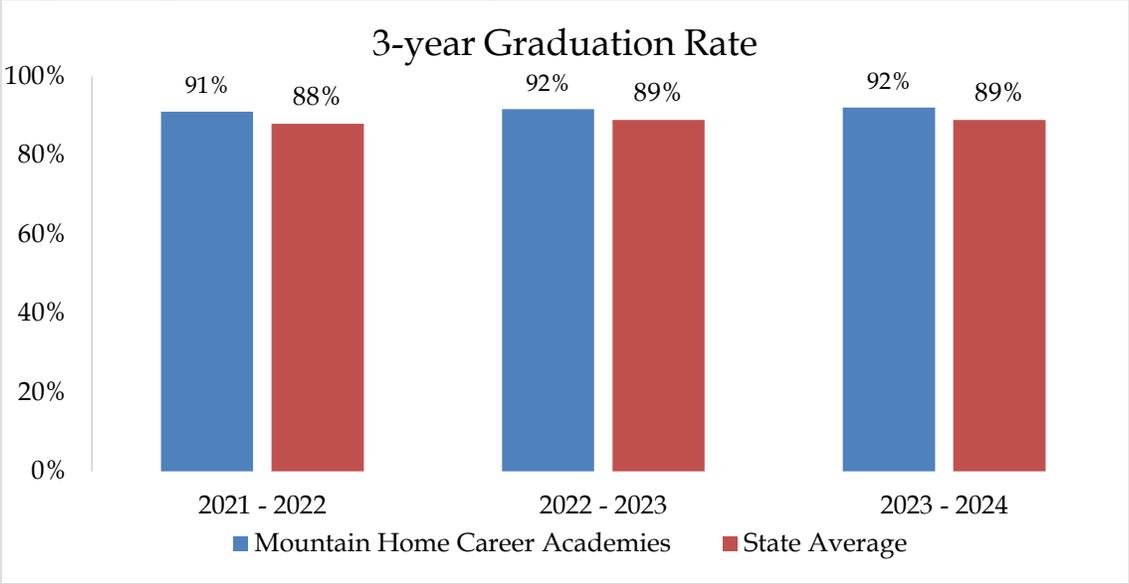
Graph 4.1 - Achievement Comparison



Graduation Rate Comparison Data

Graduation rate is included in determining a school’s academic performance. **Graph 4.2** compares the school’s graduation rate with the state average over the past three years.

Graph 4.2 – 3-year Graduation Rate Comparison



Section 5: Financial Summary

Financial information was provided by the Arkansas Department of Education's Finance office in late October 2025. There were no financial concerns or findings for the school.

Section 6: Operational Performance Summary

This section reviews the charter school's compliance with applicable laws, enrollment and recruitment practices, and school improvement plans. The data assists in ensuring accountability and allows ADE to support continuous improvement in charter schools. Additionally, the information aids ADE's Charter School Office in deciding whether to recommend that the Charter Authorizing Panel renews the charter contract.

Charter School Board

The Board meeting schedule for the current school year, meeting agendas and minutes are easily accessible for July 2025 through December 2025. Agendas for January 2026 and a special meeting held Feb 2, 2026, are available; however, no minutes for those or other meetings held in 2026 were available.

Collectively, the minutes show that the board maintained regular review of academic performance data and executed timely, properly recorded budget approvals and adjustments, consistent with governance best practices and state compliance expectations.

A review of the available board minutes show that the board consistently exercised its governance responsibilities related to academic oversight and fiscal stewardship. The minutes document recurring academic performance reporting as well as formal action on annual budget matters and required budget adjustments.

Across all regular meetings in this period, the board received structured Academic Reports from district leadership. On September 18, 2025, the board reviewed academic performance indicators including the Professional Learning Community (PLC) Dashboard and statewide recognition metrics. On October 14, 2025, the Academic Report included a review of i-Ready Beginning-of-Year diagnostic assessment data. On November 20, 2025, the board reviewed K-2 ATLAS Summative assessment results as part of the Academic Report. On December 18, 2025, the Academic Report featured a district counselor presentation addressing student academic and support outcomes. These recurring agenda items demonstrate a consistent pattern of board-level monitoring of student achievement data and instructional indicators.

The board also took formal action related to annual budget governance requirements. On November 20, 2025, the board reviewed and unanimously approved the Budget of Proposed Expenditures and related tax levy documentation for the upcoming fiscal year, in accordance with Arkansas statutory requirements for advance public approval prior to the annual school election. The minutes reflect statutory citation, presentation of the proposed budget, a formal motion, second, and unanimous vote. In addition, on September 18, 2025, the board approved required budget adjustments tied to fiscal cycle reporting, AFR submission, and APSCN/eFinancePlus alignment. This action demonstrates active board oversight of budget amendments and state reporting compliance following the previously adopted budget.

Staff Recruitment and Retention Plan

The Mountain Home Public Schools – Staff Recruitment and Retention Plan is structurally compliant and organized around required state focus areas but shows mixed strength in goal measurability and action-step specificity. It includes the three required domains: (1) recruitment of minority teachers/administrators, (2) retention of diverse staff, and (3) increasing the number of students pursuing education careers. It also includes baseline demographic tables, applicant and staff diversity data, action steps, assigned responsible parties, and

expected outcomes. The recruitment goal is clearly stated – increasing the percentage of minority teachers and administrators to better reflect student demographics – and is supported by defined activities such as attending minority recruitment conferences, participating in college career days, and advertising vacancies on broader platforms. Evidence measures (for example, a target that 30% of qualified applicants be representative of minorities) are included, which strengthens accountability. However, several action steps lack numeric targets (such as number of fairs, postings, or partnerships per year) and rely on general activity descriptions rather than quantified outputs, limiting evaluability.

The retention section includes appropriate strategy categories – novice teacher support, mentoring assignments, and financial incentives – and identifies responsible leaders and timelines. The inclusion of a novice teacher program and mentor pairing is a strong practice indicator. Baseline and expected outcome metrics are provided, but they reveal **goal-definition inconsistency**: the stated retention goal references 10-year retention, while the measured expected outcome references 3-year retention percentages, which weakens alignment between goal and evaluation method. Retention actions would be more complete with clearer program design details (mentor selection criteria, meeting frequency, support components, evaluation measures, and funding levels for bonuses). Progress-review sections are present but thin, with limited barrier analysis and adjustment strategy, suggesting partial rather than fully developed continuous-improvement documentation.

The student pipeline goal (increasing minority participation in pre-educator pathways and Educators Rising) is well aligned to state expectations and includes baseline and target percentages, identified responsible roles, and partnership actions with a local higher-education institution. This section is directionally strong but would benefit from added specificity around recruitment methods, student identification criteria, annual participation targets, and monitoring cadence. Overall, the plan is complete in required components and compliant in structure, with clearly stated goals and responsible parties.

School Improvement Plan

The Mountain Home Public Schools' Plan for School Improvement plan establishes a clear, high-level performance focus centered on ESSA Index ratings, ATLAS growth, ACT performance, and graduation rate improvement. The stated goals are ambitious and outcome-oriented, especially the targets of 100% expected growth in literacy and math and an average ACT composite of 19. The plan also references multiple evidence-based practices (ATLAS, NWEA MAP, CFAs, CSAs, PLC structures, RTI strategies, Science of Reading training) and identifies recurring review cycles through collaborative teams and PLCs. From a framework standpoint, it follows a recognizable Plan-Do-Check improvement cycle and shows alignment with Arkansas accountability measures and district data systems.

From a completeness and specificity perspective, however, the goals and action steps would benefit from stronger operational detail. While the performance targets are measurable, several are not fully realistic or differentiated (for example, 100% growth targets across all students) and are not broken down by subgroup, grade span, or baseline performance levels. The action section lists programs, assessments, and professional development topics but does not clearly connect each strategy to a specific goal, implementation step, responsible role, dosage (how often/how much), or expected interim benchmark. Monitoring language is frequent but repetitive and somewhat inconsistent (weekly/monthly/quarterly references overlap), and success criteria beyond assessment use are not tightly defined. Overall, the plan provides a solid compliance-level structure and strong alignment to assessment and PLC practices.

Section 7: Executive Summary

Academic Performance

Mountain Home Career Academies demonstrates generally solid and improving academic performance relative to state benchmarks. The school earned a C letter grade in 2022–2023 and a B in 2024–2025 (with 2023–2024 not available), compared to a state average of C across years. ATLAS growth and achievement comparisons are reported in ELA, Math, and Science for both all students and the lowest 25% subgroup. Graduation rate trend data is also included as a component of the accountability framework.

The School Improvement Plan is outcome-oriented and aligned to ESSA Index, ATLAS, ACT, and graduation metrics, and references PLC structures, RTI supports, common formative assessments, and Science of Reading training. While goals are measurable, several targets are set at very high levels (for example, universal growth expectations) without subgroup or baseline differentiation. Action steps reference appropriate programs and assessment systems but would benefit from tighter linkage between each strategy, responsible role, implementation frequency, and interim benchmarks.

Financial Performance

Financial performance and oversight are sound and low risk. ADE Finance reported no financial concerns or findings for the school. Required fiscal actions – including annual budget approvals, tax levy documentation, and budget adjustments – were formally reviewed and approved by the board within statutory timelines.

Board minutes document formal votes on proposed expenditures, tax levy items, and required budget adjustments tied to reporting cycles and state systems alignment. Monthly and periodic financial reviews and adjustments indicate active fiscal stewardship. No audit flags, deficit indicators, or sustainability concerns are identified in the profile, supporting a conclusion of stable financial condition.

Operational Performance

Operational performance is generally strong with minor transparency gaps. Board meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes are accessible for July–December 2025, with agendas posted for early 2026 meetings; however, minutes for 2026 meetings were not yet available at the time of review. Available minutes show consistent board engagement in academic oversight through recurring academic reports (PLC dashboards, assessment results, diagnostic data, and counseling outcomes) and formal fiscal actions.

Required operational plans are present, including a Staff Recruitment and Retention Plan and a School Improvement Plan. Both are compliant in structure and aligned to state expectations, but each would benefit from greater specificity in metrics, timelines, and quantified action steps. Overall governance, academic monitoring, and fiscal oversight practices indicate stable operational capacity and renewal readiness, with documentation posting timeliness as the primary operational improvement area.