



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2015 Application Open-Enrollment Public Charter School

Deadline for Receipt of Submission: Tuesday July 28, 2015, 4:00 p.m.
Applications will not be accepted after this time.



Name of Proposed Charter School:

_____ Arkansas Connections Academy _____

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

**Arkansas Department of Education
Charter School Office
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
501.683.5313**

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
2015 APPLICATION
OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Proposed Charter School: Arkansas Connections Academy (ARCA)

Grade Level(s) for the School: K-12 Student Enrollment Cap: 3,000

Name of Sponsoring Entity: Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc.

Other Charter Schools Sponsored by this Entity (Name and Location):
Not Applicable

The applicant is an "eligible entity" under the following category (check one):

- a public institution of higher education;
- a private nonsectarian institution of higher education;
- a governmental entity; or
- an organization that is nonsectarian in its programs and operations, and is, or will be, exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. (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 the proper documentation will not be reviewed.

Name of Contact Person: Dennis Beck

Address: 2224 East Tall Oaks City: Fayetteville

ZIP: 72703 Daytime Phone Number: (479) 422-9365 FAX: (479) 510-1454

Email: ArkansasConnectionsAcademy@gmail.com

Charter Site

Address: 609 SW 8th Street City: Bentonville

ZIP: 72712 Date of Proposed Opening: August 22, 2016

Chief Operating Officer

of Proposed Charter (if known): Virginia Walden Ford Title: Board Treasurer

Address: 2206 S. Park Street City: Little Rock

ZIP: 72202 Daytime Phone Number: (209) 297-8738

The proposed charter will be located in the Bentonville School District.

Provide a comprehensive list of all individuals, including but not limited to entity board members and charter school board members, involved in the organization and design of the proposed school as well as the proposed application process. Please note that Ark. Code Ann. §6-24-105 prohibits charter school board members from contracting with or being employed by the charter school except in certain limited circumstances.

Name: Dennis Beck Position: Board President State of Residence: AR

Name: Virginia Walden Ford Position: Board Treasurer State of Residence: AR

Name: Carla Hartwell Position: Board Secretary State of Residence: AR

Name: Melissa Nelson Position: Connections VP State of Residence: MN

Name: Bryce Adams Position: Connections Exec Dir State of Residence: TX

Name: Lyn McCullen Position: Connections Sr Dir State of Residence: PA

Name: _____ Position: _____ State of Residence: _____

List the current K-12 student enrollment of the district where the proposed public charter school would be located.

15,081 (Total District Enrollment)

List the school districts from which the charter school expects to draw students.

See Attachment 13 for full list _____

B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide the mission statement of the proposed school.

Applicant Response:

Arkansas Connections Academy (ARCA) will offer families throughout the state access to a quality education by providing the personalized learning inherent in a high quality online school. ARCA will provide a complete public school experience for students in grades K-12 focusing on the students' academic growth, social and emotional needs, and post-secondary goals.

The school will embody multiple hallmarks of excellence: a rigorous curriculum aligned to the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks; licensed teachers actively engaged with students and families; and an educational management system designed to provide accountability through data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Briefly describe the key programmatic features that the school will implement in order to accomplish the mission.

Applicant Response:

In "The Rise of Online Education" Clayton Christensen and Michael Horn observed, "...[T]he rise of online learning carries with it an unprecedented opportunity to transform the schooling system into a student-centric one that can affordably customize for different student needs by allowing all students to learn at their appropriate pace and path, thereby allowing each student to realize her fullest potential." (Clayton Christensen and Michael Horn. "The Rise of Online Education". Washington Post, 11 October 2011. Available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/on-innovations/the-rise-of-online-education/2011/09/14/gIQA8e2AdL_story.html>)

ARCA will provide students with a student-centric, whole-school experience with academic, behavioral, emotional, and post-secondary supports. The personalized approach to learning will benefit each and every student, including those who struggle academically as well as high achievers. The placement process will ensure that each learner is provided with the most appropriate curriculum, pacing, teaching approach, and support from the first day.

ARCA's full-time public school experience will include licensed teachers, award-winning curriculum aligned to the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks, and personalized learning plans for each student. ARCA will promote academic and emotional success for all learners by combining the best in online education with real and engaging connections among students, families, teachers, and the community. Students at all grade levels participate in clubs, activities, field trips, and electives. In addition, high school students will have individualized and supported progression plans focused on college and career readiness in order to realize their full potential after graduation.

C. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL

The applicant for the proposed charter school, if approved by the authorizer, agrees to operate the educational program described below in accordance with the provisions described within this document, Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-101 et seq., the State Board of Education Rules Governing Public Charter Schools, and the attached assurances.

Provide a narrative description of the various components of the proposed charter school by responding to the following prompts:

1. Describe the results of the public hearing, which was held for the purpose of assessing support for the establishment of this public charter school. Provide copies of supporting evidence.

Applicant Response:

The ARCA Board hosted three public hearings to assess support for its charter application:

- July 17, 2015 at 6:00 PM
Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bentonville
2205 S.E. Walton Blvd
Bentonville, AR 72712
- July 18, 2015 at 2:00 PM
Hilton Garden Inn North Little Rock
4100 Glover Lane
North Little Rock, AR 72117
- July 27, 2015 at 9:00 AM
Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bentonville
2205 S.E. Walton Blvd
Bentonville, AR 72712

The July 17th public hearing in Bentonville was attended by six people. Board President Dennis Beck spoke about the effectiveness of online learning. The audience discussed the flexibility available to students in an online school, particularly in pursuing extracurricular activities, and the differences between a public online school and homeschooling. It was made clear to the audience that while there is flexibility in scheduling coursework, ARCA will have required state assessments, certified teachers, and a curriculum aligned to state standards.

The July 18th public hearing in North Little Rock was attended by three people. The audience had some prior knowledge of online schools from speaking with parents of student-athletes in other states and previous enrollment with other providers (both private and public). The response to the presentation was overwhelmingly positive, with interest in the personalized instruction, IEP services, and connections with other students.

The July 27th public hearing in Bentonville received two RSVPs but was unattended.

Evidence of Public Support Exhibited at the Hearing

There were nine attendees at the hearings. Response at the hearings was positive and participants made the following comments:

- "I've heard great things about Connections from [Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas] parents at gymnastics meets. I wish Arkansas had this option too."
- "We need the flexibility but I don't want to homeschool. I really like that you have certified teachers and NCAA accreditation."
- "I think my son would learn better with the one-on-one attention."
- "My son wants to be an FBI agent and was told he needs to study Chinese, Arabic, and computer programming. It's great you can offer those across the state."
- "There are so many parents out there who don't even know about this option who are going to love it."

Documentation of Required Notices Published to Garner Public Attention

Copies of the notices are provided in Attachment 2.

The notice for the first and second public hearings ran in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette (statewide edition) on 6/21/15, 6/28/15, and 7/5/15. It was not placed in the Legal Notices or Classifieds section. The hearings were held on 7/17/15 and 7/18/15. The notice was posted for three consecutive weeks with the last notice being not less than seven days before the first hearing. Superintendents throughout the state were notified via email.

The first notice stated, "Notice of Public Hearings: Arkansas Connections Academy announces two public hearings on the creation of a new statewide online open-enrollment charter school. Arkansas Connections Academy will serve students in grades K-12 with quality curriculum and personalized instruction. Please attend to learn more.

Friday, July 17, 2015 - 6:00 PM

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bentonville, 2205 S.E. Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

Saturday, July 18, 2015 - 2:00 p.m.

Hilton Garden Inn North Little Rock, 4100 Glover Lane, North Little Rock, AR 72117"

The notice for the third public hearing ran in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette (statewide edition) on 7/9/15, 7/15/15, and 7/20/15. It was not placed in the Legal Notices or Classifieds section. The hearing was held on 7/27/15. The notice was posted for three consecutive weeks with the last notice being not less than seven days before the first hearing. Superintendents throughout the state were notified via email.

The second notice stated, "Notice of Public Hearings: Arkansas Connections Academy announces a public hearing on the creation of a new statewide online open-enrollment charter school. Arkansas Connections Academy will serve students in grades K-12 with quality curriculum and personalized instruction. Please attend to learn more.

Monday, July 27, 2015 - 9:00 AM

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bentonville, 2205 S.E. Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712"

In addition to the three public hearings, nine online and twelve in-person information sessions were conducted to ensure information regarding the school reached as many students and families throughout the state as possible. In-person sessions were offered:

- 5/27/15 at 10:00 AM - The Perfect Cup in Camden
- 6/8/15 at 6:00 PM - Mylo Coffee Co. in Little Rock
- 6/10/15 at 10:00 AM - Community Bakery in Little Rock
- 7/19/15 at 7:00 PM - Old Sawmill Cafe in Forrest City
- 7/20/15 at 9:00 AM - Howard's Donuts in West Memphis
- 7/20/15 at 12:00 PM - Shipley's Do-Nuts in Blytheville
- 7/20/15 at 7:00 PM - Starbucks in Jonesboro
- 7/21/15 at 9:00 AM - Midnight Oil Coffee House in Searcy
- 7/21/15 at 12:00 PM - Starbucks in Conway
- 7/21/15 at 7:00 PM - Anne's Country Cafe in Pine Bluff
- 7/22/15 at 9:00 AM - Shipley's Do-Nuts in Monticello
- 7/22/15 at 11:00 AM - Community Bakery in Little Rock

Documentation of Required Notices of the Public Hearing to Superintendents

On 7/6/15, Dennis Beck, ARCA Board President, sent an email to superintendents throughout the state notifying them of the first two public hearings with an additional email sent on 7/9/15 notifying superintendents of the third public hearing. Email addresses were gathered from the Arkansas Department of Education and district websites. Several email addresses were returned as not having been delivered. New email addresses were located for those recipients and new emails were sent to ensure that the superintendents received notice of the public hearings. Copies of the emails are provided in Attachment 2.

Attach documentation to demonstrate that each of the following requirements of Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-302 was met:

- A. The notice of the public hearing was published on a weekly basis for at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the date of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the school district in which the school will likely be located.
 - B. The notice of the public hearing was not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.
 - C. *The last publication date of the notice was no less than seven days prior to the public meeting.***
 - D. Within seven calendar days following the first publication of the notice of the public hearing, emails announcing the public hearing were sent to the superintendent of each of the school districts from which the open- enrollment public charter school is likely to draw students for the purpose of enrollment and the superintendent of any district that is contiguous to the district in which the open-enrollment public charter school will be located.
2. Describe the governing structure of the open-enrollment charter school, including board composition, selection process, and responsibilities. Also describe the role of the administrators, faculty, parents, students, and community members in the leadership and decision-making of the school. As part of your response, answer the following specific questions:
- A. Identify what individual, job position(s), or entity(s) will have final decision-making authority for the school in the areas of (1) finance and purchasing; (2) student discipline; (3) hiring and firing of staff; and (4) hiring and firing of the school director or superintendent.
 - B. Specify how the final decision-maker(s) identified in response to (A)(3) will be selected or elected, including (1) length of term, (2) method of selection or election, and (3) who will have the authority to participate in the selection or election process.
 - C. Explain how and to what extent the school's leadership will be accountable to parents.

Applicant Response:

ARCA acknowledges the Charter Authorizing Panel and the State Board of Education are both authorizing agents for charter schools in the State of Arkansas.

ARCA will be governed by an independent Board of Directors specially trained and supported to serve in this role. The Board will be responsible for negotiating and overseeing all contracted services, including those provided by Connections Academy (a division of Connections Education, collectively referred to as Connections throughout this application), the proposed educational services provider for the school.

ARCA received non-profit 501(c)(3) status in January 2015 and is eligible to sponsor a public charter school in Arkansas (documentation provided in Attachment 1). The school will conduct its affairs as a governmental entity

exempt from federal income taxes under Section 115 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code or any successor law.

Dennis Beck, Board President, is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Arkansas, where he has taught Theoretical Foundations of Educational Technology and Grant Writing in Instructional Technology and has maintained an active research agenda in the areas of K-12 virtual school leadership, virtual schooling and special education students, and social studies technology integration. He received the 2013 Southeastern Conference Visiting Faculty Travel Grant and the 2011 New Faculty Teaching Excellence Award from the University of Arkansas. He earned his Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Technology from the University of Florida and a B.S. in Economics from Pennsylvania State University.

Virginia Walden Ford, Board Treasurer, is Executive Director of the Arkansas Parent Network, working to make more educational choices available to Arkansas parents. Virginia was the recipient of the Heritage Foundation's prestigious 2004 Salvatori Prize for American Citizenship, the Black Alliance for Educational Options' (BAEO) 2004 Vision Award, the National Catholic Education Agency's (NCEA) 2005 Leonard F. DeFiore Parental Choice Advocate Award, and the 2008 John T. Walton Champions for School Choice Award from the Alliance for School Choice.

Carla Hartwell, Board Secretary, is a parent of three children, former substitute teacher, and homeschooler of her second child. Carla has experience as a Learning Coach with her middle child, who was previously enrolled in Arkansas Virtual Academy with much success. She strongly believes in providing online learning options for all Arkansas children and expects to enroll her youngest child in Arkansas Connections Academy.

Relationship between Board of School and Board of the Sponsoring Entity

The Board of the school (ARCA) is the same as the Board of the sponsoring entity (Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc.). ARCA is a standalone corporate entity with non-profit status and is not a division or part of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). The relationship between ARCA and the ADE will be based on the terms of the charter. The Board anticipates a positive and effective relationship with the ADE and the State Board of Education.

Board of Directors Roles and Responsibilities

The Board will have all the powers and duties permitted by law to manage the business, property, and affairs of the school and to adopt policies by which the school will be governed. The Board will be responsible for assuring that the school operates according to its charter and applicable law.

ARCA will be a fully autonomous, fully accountable public charter school. The Board will have the tools and resources necessary to ensure a combination of autonomy and accountability. The Board will oversee the charter and use appropriate access to student performance data (abiding by student data privacy laws and regulations) as well as frequent reporting on school operations and finance to carry out its tasks. The Board will monitor such data closely to ensure that the school is meeting its academic performance goals and remaining operationally effective and fiscally sound. The entire Board will have academic performance as its purview; the Treasurer will serve as first reviewer of fiscal data; and the Board will appoint members to monitor operations issues such as staffing and facilities during both the start-up and implementation phases. The Board will hold its partners and vendors accountable for performance, and will in turn be accountable to the ADE.

The operating structure of ARCA will be similar to that of a traditional educational environment. The Board will oversee and support the Principal and administrative team, who while implementing the policies and procedures of the Board, will in turn supervise and support the teaching staff. The Board will oversee the management of the charter school and be legally accountable for its operations. The Board will set policy and select contractors, including those providing the school's day-to-day operations, curriculum, technology, and instructional services. ARCA anticipates contracting with Connections for educational and operational support, with the approval and oversight of the Board. Working with the Principal and School Leadership Team, Connections will hire and employ the instructional staff with Board approval. The Board will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems fulfill the school's obligations to the ADE and to stakeholders. The Board will meet approximately ten times per year in open session to fulfill its duties and may create subcommittees or task forces to carry out special tasks.

ARCA's instructional leader will be the Principal, who will be selected by the Board and serve at its pleasure but will be employed and supervised by Connections under the guidance of the Board. The Principal will build

consensus as well as inspire teachers to teach, students to learn, and parents to engage in their children's learning. The Principal is responsible for overall school operation, working with parents, students, support staff, and teachers. The Board evaluates the Principal annually and, based on that evaluation, approves the Principal's compensation. The Board is supported in the evaluation process by Connections. Since the Board selects, evaluates, approves compensation for, and retains the power to fire the Principal, the Board has influence over the Principal.

Policies and Procedures for Board Operation

Board Composition

The Board will consist of parents, educators, and business and community leaders who are committed to bringing a high-quality, highly accountable online public school to Arkansas. The founding members may recruit additional members to form a diverse and well-balanced Board. The Board will be deemed public agents authorized by the State Board of Education to supervise and control the charter school.

The Board will be comprised of no fewer than three and no more than seven voting members. No member of the Board will be an employee or independent contractor or otherwise be compensated by ARCA or its partner, Connections. The Board intends to recruit at least one parent of an enrolled student to serve as a member.

Each Board member brings unique skills and expertise to support ARCA and to make decisions regarding operations of the school, including budgeting and curriculum. ARCA will be a statewide school and as such, the Board members have community ties across the state. The wide range of expertise on the Board demonstrates the capacity for initial start-up operations and the successful launch of the school for fall 2016.

The officers will be a President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. All will be voting Board members. The members will choose officers in accordance with the Bylaws.

Member Term Length

Members will serve staggered terms of one, two, or three years. The Board may renew a Member with an expiring term for an additional three-year term.

Member Selection

The Board is self-perpetuating with new members selected by the Board as membership terms expire. Any member of the greater Arkansas community may seek election to the Board of Directors, with the exception of employees of ARCA, employees of Connections, and any person who has been convicted of a felony. The Board anticipates selecting members through an involved review process which includes identifying and interviewing interested candidates to ensure eligibility and that the candidates are supportive of the school's mission. During an open meeting, the Board will meet with the candidates as described in the Bylaws. The Board members shall be elected at any duly organized meeting of the Board by a majority of the Directors then in office.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board sets policy and selects contractors, including those providing management, curriculum, technology, personnel, and instructional services. The Board will be responsible for assuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems fulfill the charter agreement. The Board will:

- Create and monitor the vision/mission of the school
- Set Board and school policy
- Govern the operations of the school
- Practice strategic planning
- Select contractors, negotiate service agreements, and hold contractors accountable for performance under such agreements
- Assess the school's performance
- Exercise sound legal and ethical practices and policies
- Ensure that the school adheres to the same safety, civil rights, data privacy, and disability rights requirements as are applied to all public schools operating in Arkansas
- Comply with state and federal reporting requirements
- Manage assets, revenue, and liabilities wisely and in compliance with applicable state and federal laws
- Ensure adequate resources for administration, teachers, and students and manage them effectively
- Oversee, protect, and defend the legal interests of the school

- Advocate good external relations with the ADE and its Charter Office in the Division of Learning Services, the State Board of Education, school districts, parents, students, media, and the wider community

Once the charter is approved, the Board expects to attend trainings and meetings as may be appropriate to governing the school. Members will have the opportunity to attend national conferences such as the annual International Association for K-12 Online Learning's (iNACOL) Virtual School Symposium on Blended and Online Learning and the National Charter School Conference, as well as training sessions conducted by groups such as Greater Capacity Consortium and Above Board Training. Training topics will include charter school governance, non-profit management, conflicts of interest, budgeting and financial oversight, effective meetings, policy development, and human resources oversight. Board members will participate in national conferences to network with other charter school board members and further their development as effective board members.

School administrators and staff will also support the school. School administrators and staff will be employed by Connections through a professional services agreement, but will serve at the pleasure of the Board. The employee wages related to these positions, which are 100% dedicated to ARCA, will be reimbursed to Connections at cost. The school will be staffed with the following positions:

- Principal
- Assistant Principal(s)
- Administrative Assistant(s)
- Manager of Special Education
- Manager of Counseling
- Qualified Teachers
- Advisory Teachers/School Counselor(s)
- Special Education Teachers

Involving Parents, Staff, Students and Community

Administrators, faculty, parents, students, and community members will provide leadership and input in school decision-making. The Board will meet approximately ten times per year in open, public session to ensure transparency in operation.

Administrators lead the school, direct the goal setting and improvement planning process, and create a positive education environment conducive to student academic success and teacher professional growth. Administrators ensure compliance with applicable state and federal law and regulations.

Faculty members participate in the leadership of the school through professional learning communities (PLCs) and provide direct feedback and guidance to administrators. Extensive professional development ensures faculty members are familiar with best practices for online instruction and also provides an opportunity for instructors to provide input to the school. Faculty members will be responsible for serving Special Education and English Language Learner (ELL) students. Teachers also influence the curriculum and instruction of the school by:

- Collaborating with the Curriculum team to review planning documents
- Reviewing and providing feedback on unit and lesson content
- Evaluating lesson/assessment alignment
- Providing suggestions for Curriculum Based Assessments and LiveLesson session content

Parents actively participate in the school and with the Board. The Board may create ad hoc parent/Learning Coach advisory groups to provide guidance on particular subjects such as community partnerships and neighborhood outreach. Parents are also encouraged to be involved with the Board's activities. The schedule and agenda for all Board meetings will be posted to the school website. ARCA will make all Board minutes available to families on request and will report on Board activities in the newsletter. The Board will aim to have at least one parent of an ARCA student on the Board. The Board will also have a public comment policy to support parent interaction.

Volunteer parents will serve as Community Coordinators and develop a vibrant and active school community. In addition to facilitating family get-togethers and formal field trips, Community Coordinators and ARCA staff will also reach out to community-based organizations and businesses to coordinate face-to-face community service opportunities. Students and families will have the opportunity to participate in regular field trips and outings throughout the state, so that all students may join. Once students have enrolled, administrators will select field trip locations based on the location of students throughout the state. Field trips may include visits to the

Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock, the Arkansas River Valley Nature Center in Fort Smith, the Garvan Woodland Gardens in Hot Springs, the Heifer Ranch & International Learning Center in Perryville, and the University of Central Arkansas Archives in Conway. (<http://www.arkansas.com/kids/parents-teachers/field-trips.aspx>)

Community Coordinators provide an important communication link between families and the school, ensuring through phone conferences and news updates that school staff are attuned to needs of the parent community. Parental feedback is an important hallmark of the school's outreach and information sessions in the community. The school will take full advantage of this valuable communication with families to ensure that the school reflects their unique needs and creative ideas.

Parent satisfaction will be a main focus of the Board. ARCA families will be given an annual opportunity to participate in a thorough parent satisfaction survey, conducted by an independent market research firm. The school will aim for at least 90% of families to agree that the curriculum is high quality and that they are satisfied with the educational program and instruction.

The independent evaluation results are used to ensure effective parent satisfaction with the program. Faculty and administration use these results to undertake continuous school improvement and focus on areas where improvement is needed. Parent satisfaction is key to monitoring the success of the program.

An independent February 2015 survey of families with students enrolled in schools supported by Connections found the following:

- 95% of parents agree that the curriculum is high quality
- 95% of parents agree that their children are satisfied with the program
- 96% of parents are satisfied with their teachers' helpfulness
- 93% of parents are satisfied with the variety of learning activities
- 93% of parents would recommend Connections Academy to other families
- 93% of parents agree that our technology tools improve their child's learning experience

Students provide feedback on courses and teachers. Input will be gathered on an ongoing basis via StarTrack. A StarTrack box requesting text feedback and ratings on a five-star scale is embedded in virtually every lesson in the curriculum and on the home page for each Learning Coach. Data gathered from this feedback is examined carefully and acted upon by school staff and Connections. As of March 2015, 736,049 lesson ratings have been submitted during the 2014-15 school year in schools supported by Connections, with an average rating of 4.20 out of five stars.

Community members are crucial to the planning process of the school, as well as its operation. The Board has actively solicited feedback from the community. The school will continue to take full advantage of valuable community partnerships to ensure that the school reflects the needs and wishes of the wider Arkansas community.

The school will actively seek out community organizations to partner with and provide real connections among students and the community. As part of the planning process for the school, the following community organizations were contacted to see if they would be interested in collaborating:

- Arkansas Hospitality Association
- Northwest Arkansas Council
- William J. Clinton Presidential Library
- Pea Ridge National Military Park
- Arkansas Studies Institute
- Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center
- Fort Smith National Historic Site
- Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site

Information was provided to educate and inform these organizations about ARCA's unique school model and to find opportunities to work together. The Board plans to continue these discussions after the school has been approved and identify specific activities in which students may participate.

A. (1) The Board will have final decision-making authority for the school in the areas of finance, and purchasing.

(2) and (3) The Principal will have final decision-making authority in the areas of student discipline and hiring and firing of staff, with the advice, recommendation, and approval of the Board.

(4) The Board will have final decision-making authority in the hiring and firing of a school Principal.

The Board will govern ARCA and maintain responsibility for ensuring that the charter school program meets all of the educational, fiscal, and programmatic goals outlined in the charter. The Board, with input and guidance from school leadership, will decide matters related to the operation of the school, including budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures. The Principal will run the day-to-day operations of the school.

The Principal, in consultation with the Board and following the Board-approved Employee Handbook, will be the final decision-maker in employment matters. Connections will ensure that all personnel undergo required background checks before they are employed in the school. The Board will approve pay scales, performance criteria, a performance appraisal system, and disciplinary policies for all employees.

The Board will ensure that the school adheres to the same safety, civil rights, data privacy, and disability rights requirements as are applied to all public schools operating in Arkansas. The Board will also be responsible for ensuring that the public as well as students, parents, and employees have the ability to communicate appropriately with the Board in keeping with state law and regulation.

New policies may be suggested by parents, school staff, or others, but the development of those policies will be the responsibility of the Board with advice from its independent legal counsel. The Board will be well-informed regarding Charter School Law, ADE Policy, and operating policies established by the Charter Office in the Division of Learning Services. Such knowledge is imperative for the Board to make appropriate policy decisions that will affect the operation of the school and the work environment for students and staff.

The Board is a non-profit entity with 501(c)(3) status. By conferring this status to the Board, the IRS validates the independence of the school's corporation. ARCA is not related to nor is it a part of a holding company system and the Board does not include, and will never include, an employee or former employee of Connections.

B. The Board plans to contract with Connections to recruit the Principal (the final decision-maker identified in A(3)) and provide human resource services, including recruiting, to ensure ARCA is staffed by well-trained and effective online learning professionals. Daily management of the school will be the Principal's responsibility, while overall governance is the responsibility of the Board. The Board will annually evaluate the Principal's performance. Annual performance will be based upon meeting school goals, staff evaluations, and input from Connections based upon their experience interacting with Principals and supporting successful online school programs nationwide. The Board will adopt pay scales, performance criteria, a performance appraisal system, and disciplinary policies for the Principal.

C. ARCA's leadership will also be accountable to the parents. The parents will participate annually in a survey to provide feedback and input to the school.

The Board will also institute a parent grievance resolution process to ensure parent needs are met and issues are addressed.

3. Give the mission statement for the proposed charter school.

Applicant Response:

Arkansas Connections Academy (ARCA) will offer families throughout the state access to a quality education by providing the personalized learning inherent in a high quality online school. ARCA will provide a complete public school experience for students in grades K-12 focusing on the students' academic growth, social and emotional needs, and post-secondary goals.

The school will embody multiple hallmarks of excellence: a rigorous curriculum aligned to the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks; licensed teachers actively engaged with students and families; and an educational management system designed to provide accountability through data collection, analysis, and reporting.

4. Describe the educational need for the school by responding to the following prompts.

Complete the following charts to include 2014 literacy and mathematics performance assessment data and graduation rates for the district in which the charter would be located and the schools closest to the proposed charter.

DISTRICT DATA - DISTRICT IN WHICH THE CHARTER WOULD BE LOCATED			
District Name	Bentonville Public School District		
District Status	Needs Improvement		
	LITERACY 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	MATH 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	Graduation Rate 2013-2014 2014 Report Card Percent Graduated
All Students (Combined)	88.59	87.08	85.92
Targeted Achievement Gap Group	74.14	74.55	77.90
African American	82.64	79.73	75.00
Hispanic	83.85	79.31	83.90
White/Caucasian	89.17	88.00	86.76
Economically Disadvantaged	78.91	77.26	75.80
English Language Learners/ Limited English Proficient	77.52	76.80	92.11
Students with Disabilities	45.34	53.99	76.32

CAMPUS DATA - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLOSEST TO THE PROPOSED CHARTER LOCATION		
District Name	Bentonville Public School District	
Campus Name	RE Baker	
Grade Levels	Grades K-4	
Campus Status	Needs Improvement	
	LITERACY 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	MATH 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced
All Students (Combined)	84.88	91.22
Targeted Achievement Gap Group	58.97	74.36
African American	n < 10	n < 10
Hispanic	n < 10	n < 10
White/Caucasian	85.03	91.44
Economically Disadvantaged	68.18	86.36
English Language Learners/ Limited English Proficient	n < 10	n < 10
Students with Disabilities	43.48	60.87

CAMPUS DATA - MIDDLE SCHOOL CLOSEST TO THE PROPOSED CHARTER LOCATION		
District Name	Bentonville Public School District	
Campus Name	Old High Middle School	
Grade Levels	Grades 5 and 6	
Campus Status	Needs Improvement School	
	LITERACY 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	MATH 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced
All Students (Combined)	85.53	77.84
Targeted Achievement Gap Group	70.10	64.71
African American	66.67	66.67
Hispanic	78.13	65.63
White/Caucasian	86.32	78.95
Economically Disadvantaged	76.65	67.07
English Language Learners/ Limited English Proficient	72.73	63.64
Students with Disabilities	33.87	37.10

CAMPUS DATA - HIGH SCHOOL CLOSEST TO THE PROPOSED CHARTER LOCATION			
District Name	Bentonville Public School District		
Campus Name	Bentonville High School		
Grade Levels	Grades 9-12		
Campus Status	Needs Improvement School		
	LITERACY 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	MATH 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	Graduation Rate 2013-2014 2014 Report Card Percent Graduated
All Students (Combined)	91.52	88.98	85.92
Targeted Achievement Gap Group	74.22	80.42	77.90
African American	86.21	85.90	75.00
Hispanic	84.54	80.43	83.90
White/Caucasian	93.17	90.39	86.76
Economically Disadvantaged	83.23	84.59	75.80
English Language Learners/ Limited English Proficient	73.91	79.05	92.11
Students with Disabilities	40.51	67.72	76.32

Explain the educational need for the charter in light of the academic performance by the district in which the charter would be located and at the schools closest to the charter and other significant factors. Be certain to include the source for information presented.

Applicant Response:

Valid, Reliable, and Verifiable Data Substantiate an Educational Need for the Charter

Per the ADE's guidance, we are providing two sets of data for comparison in this application. The first set, provided in the tables herein, pertains to the Bentonville Public School District where the physical teaching/learning center will be located. In the second, provided in Attachment 14, we provide data for statewide averages.

ARCA will operate as a K-12 statewide online public school, meaning its positive impact will not be constrained to the Bentonville Public School District. As such, in this section of our application, we address the statewide data provided in Attachment 14. We also address the specific benefits for those students in school districts statewide, including Bentonville, in need of a flexible and personalized online public school option. In the subsequent section, which asks for a demonstration of need in districts not represented in the previous charts, we consider the statewide benefits provided by ARCA.

The school will address an unmet need for students to be educated outside of traditional brick-and-mortar schools, substantiated by the dramatic growth of online public schools across the country. According to the 2014 Keeping Pace Report, 30 states plus Washington DC have fully online schools operating statewide in 2014-15. Statewide virtual schools had about 740,000 course enrollments in 2013-14. About 315,000 students took all of their courses online in 2013-14, growing 6.2% from 2012-13. (<http://www.kpk12.com/states/>)

ARCA will serve students who want or need a full-time online educational environment for a variety of reasons, including:

- Students not on pace with their peers in school, including students coping with social issues.
- High-achieving students who wish to take AP, language, and elective courses that may not be offered locally
- Students who have been bullied or subjected to unwanted social pressures.
- Students with special learning needs. Arkansas reported in 2014 that 11% of students qualified to receive

special education services. (<https://adesrc.arkansas.gov/ReportCard/View?lea=AR&schoolYear=2014>) As shown previously in the charts, these students significantly lag in proficiency rates.

- Students undergoing medical treatment or are homebound due to illness or physical/emotional disability.
- Students in rural communities who may spend several hours on a school bus each day and lack access to public school options. According to the Rural School and Community Trust, 40% of Arkansas students are rural (http://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/2013-14-Why-Rural-Matters.pdf)
- Students with family livelihood responsibilities. According to Kids Count, there were 288,969 students qualifying for free and reduced lunch in 2014, representing a large population that may need flexibility for the parents' or students' work. (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/256-number-of-students-receiving-free-and-reduced-school-lunch?loc=5#detailed/2/any/false/869,36,868,133/any/9778>) Participation rates in the FRL program are higher in rural areas.
- Students who need a more flexible learning environment, including students pursuing artistic or athletic careers.

Some of these students will enroll for a shorter period of time then return to their previous schools; others will choose to stay enrolled as long as is appropriate for their child.

In the 2014-15 school year, there were 476,083 public school students across Arkansas. (<http://www.arkansased.org/about-ade/fast-facts>) In the majority of districts, families are assigned to their closest school, regardless of fit, and homeschooling is the only alternative. Families in some districts have limited choices based on local charter school availability. As of now, only 2,000 Arkansas students are able to enroll in the state's sole full-time online public school option (an average of 165/grade for the whole state). The choice of a second online public school will encourage online schools, as well as traditional schools, to innovate.

There is strong demand in Arkansas for alternatives and in particular for online education. Since January 2011, without any marketing or parental outreach efforts, over 4,000 Arkansas families have expressed interest in learning more about a Connections program once available. The Board anticipates that a broad range of students from across the state will enroll once information about the school is widely available. ARCA's student population may have an over-representation of students who are struggling academically or credit deficient and would benefit from an individualized program.

As indicated in the statewide data provided in Attachment 14, economically disadvantaged students and Students with Disabilities do not perform as well as their peers. Schools supported by Connections have performed particularly well with these underserved populations. Among all schools supported by Connections, low-income students in nearly 80% of school grades outpace the statewide reading performance for low-income students. Schools supported by Connections also have substantial experience serving students with disabilities. Nationally, these schools serve an average of 9.8% of students with IEPs, with percentages as high as 18%. Schools supported by Connections have also demonstrated their high quality in surrounding states and are the top-performing online schools in neighboring Texas and Louisiana. (<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2013/statelist.pdf>) (<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/data/reportcards/2013/>)

ARCA will provide opportunities for students who may have otherwise been unsuccessful in their educational and non-academic goals. Supporting the academic and non-academic goals of students will ultimately have a positive impact on individual student's lives and the state's economic future.

View the videos at the following URLs for personal stories from online school students attesting to how online schooling helped them succeed:

- Tori is a cancer survivor and high school student who has aspirations to become a speech pathologist. (<http://www.connectionsacademy.com/our-program/students/tori-hornick.aspx>)
- Beau is a high school student who chose to attend an online school to avoid the bullying he experienced in his brick-and-mortar school. (<http://www.connectionsacademy.com/our-program/students/beau-patterson.aspx>)

If the performance of students at schools and or/districts not noted in the previous charts demonstrate the need for the charter, provide the student performance data and its source and explain.

Applicant Response:

In addition to supporting students in each school district, ARCA will also meet the needs of students and families statewide, bringing new courses, particularly college-level and career/technology electives, to students who previously lacked access to these courses. A high-quality statewide online school leverages excellent teachers and curriculum to meet the needs of students who need this option.

ARCA will bring opportunities similar to what is currently provided at Louisiana Connections Academy (LACA), a school supported by Connections in Louisiana. LACA students have access to:

- Advanced Placement® (AP) courses, including several in STEM subjects such as calculus, statistics, computer science, biology, and environmental science
- Foreign languages, including courses that many Arkansas students are not typically offered, such as Chinese, Japanese, German, French, and American Sign Language
- Technology courses such as Emergent Computer Technology, Engineering Design, and Game Design
- Career/Technical courses that allow students to explore future career interests in business, law, criminal justice, medicine, management, and marketing

In addition to these courses, ARCA can offer students anywhere in the state dozens of clubs and activities as well as resources that will help prepare them for the global economy. The personalized approach at ARCA will help students develop critical skills, including independent thinking and problem solving. Students are also able to collaborate with people in their community and potentially across the globe.

Students will have access to more than 27 clubs and 14 special events (e.g., talent shows, virtual art galleries, cards for hospitalized children) through which they can explore interests beyond the classroom, develop leadership skills, and make friends within the school. An online yearbook allows each student to create a personal page including photos, videos, responses to poll questions, and autographs collected from friends. Clubs and activities include online and in-person meetings. Some of the online clubs and activities include:

- **Art Club:** The Art Club sparks students' creativity by exploring art, photography, and graphic design. Students explore the nuances of each medium and have opportunities to create and share their own creative designs. Optional LiveLesson sessions let students interact with art experts. This club is available to students in grades 6-12.
- **Broadcast and Theater Arts Club:** Students in grades 6-12 learn about choreography, set design, and tech crew for on- and off-Broadway productions. Working both individually and collaboratively, students are encouraged to write their own plays and musical scores. Students also learn about the history of and trends in broadcast media, exploring print, audio, and video mediums. LiveLesson sessions provide opportunities for students to share their theatrical talents as well as segments similar to those on television news magazines.
- **Career Club:** The Career club encourages students to learn about potential careers and explore fields that interest them. The club enables middle school students to enter high school with a direction in mind, making them more likely to embrace and succeed in a high school program that prepares them to pursue their career interests. At the high school level, this club facilitates the identification of a career goal and guides students to the postsecondary education needed to achieve it.
- **Chess Club:** Club members learn, socialize, and play in an atmosphere of friendly competition. After completing an online tutorial for either beginner or advanced players, students are matched with competitors of the same skill level and the games begin. Students can even play in a national tournament on an exclusive Connections site.
- **College Planning Club:** Designed for students in grades 9-12, this club helps those students who plan to attend college develop a portfolio that focuses on elements sought by college admissions committees.
- **First Generation Student Club:** Exclusively for high-achieving students who aspire to be the first in their families to graduate from college, this club provides high school students mentoring, advice, and personal development activities to help them prepare for a challenging and successful future.
- **Leadership and Global Awareness Club:** Students in middle and high school who are natural leaders in their communities are challenged to take on a leadership role at the state, national, and international levels. Students meet regularly to discuss, plan, and share service learning projects and outcomes. Additionally, students learn about various global cultures historically and presently in an effort to better prepare themselves for careers and lives in our global economy.

In addition to clubs and activities, ARCA will produce monthly newsletters that celebrate student and school successes, showcase student work, provide tips from teachers, and highlight upcoming events. ARCA will apply for a chapter of the National Honor Society. Of schools supported by Connections nationwide, 19 are members of the National Honor Society and 15 are members of the National Junior Honor Society.

Students who have demonstrated outstanding talent in the performing arts, competitive sports, or math and science will have the opportunity to flourish in the school's proposed Talent Networks devoted to fostering focused growth. The Talent Networks will give exceptional students the opportunity to network with other students in their areas of interest. The programs will also provide guest speakers, collaborative projects, activities, and competitions to help students excel in their fields.

ARCA will focus on post-secondary plans for high school students. Graduates of schools supported by Connections have been accepted at Hendrix College, the University of Central Arkansas, University of Alabama, Savannah College of Art and Design, Louisiana State University, Southern Methodist University, University of California, Berkeley, Yale University, Tulane University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and hundreds of other colleges. The counselor(s) will work with post-secondary institutions to arrange college explorations for ARCA students.

All of these features will help students statewide and ensure ARCA does its part to improve student outcomes.

Describe three (3) innovations that will distinguish the charter from other schools.

Applicant Response:

ARCA's instructional methods, educational philosophy, and program include many unique elements. ARCA anticipates contracting with Connections for educational and operational support, with the approval and oversight of the Board. Connections' program includes:

Education Management System

- **Connexus® Education Management System (EMS):** Connexus will be the platform for organizing and supporting the school's entire educational environment. This proprietary, web-based software delivers assignments and tracks activity (whether on or offline) while monitoring the completion of individual lessons as well as the mastery of discrete skills and knowledge. This all occurs under the watchful eye of administrators, teachers, and Learning Coaches. Data-driven homepages provide teachers and administrators real time data to facilitate personalized instructional programming. Connexus operates within a secure technology infrastructure, protecting data from loss and intrusion while maintaining a safe environment. Students and Learning Coaches will access Connexus to organize, document, and interact, ensuring an unprecedented level of time-on-task documentation. New releases and updates are automatically provided.
- **StarTrack™:** This integrated rating system allows every student, Learning Coach, and teacher to rate each lesson in which they engage from one to five stars and to give detailed feedback.
- **Progression Plan:** A Progression Plan, automated in Connexus, will define and track requirements that must be accomplished to meet a goal. Teachers and counselors will use four-year academic progression plans for students to ensure they are on target for graduation and for meeting their college and career goals. In the future, progression plans will also be used to track speech therapy goals and completion of middle school courses.
- **WebMail:** This proprietary email system is securely located within Connexus. Students, Learning Coaches, and teachers may only use it to communicate with each other, protecting them from spam, contact from strangers, and other mainstream email issues.

Student Performance Data

- **Student Status/Escalation Process:** The school will track and report ongoing student progress based on objective data generated by Connexus. Staff will analyze attendance, participation, performance, assessments, and teacher contact. The student status is displayed on the home page for instant identification of potential problem areas. The Escalation Process goes into effect when students are in

statuses other than “On-Track” in order to ensure students are effectively participating and learning.

- **Intervention Indicators:** Intervention Indicators will be displayed on the teacher home page in Connexus to facilitate teachers' ability to identify students who may be in need of an instructional intervention. These indicators are data-driven codes and are the first phase of a multi-phase initiative to facilitate teachers' ability to ensure that all students learn at high levels of achievement. These codes will be used to identify at-risk students, determine and implement appropriate instructional interventions, and monitor the effectiveness of interventions.
- **Assessment Objective Performance Reports (AOPR):** These reports will provide real-time student performance data on essential skills and standards based upon individual math, language arts, and science assessment items. These reports identify the objectives students should master by the end of a grade level based upon the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and display students' performance against the objectives. Data can be sorted to identify students who have or have not mastered specific objectives.
- **Curriculum-Based Assessments:** The program will use eight curriculum-based assessments (CBA) via telephone conversation per year as a quick and effective way to gather additional information on students' understanding of concepts. Diagnostic curriculum-based assessments (DCBA) pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts and verification curriculum-based assessments (VCBA) gauge authentic student learning of concepts previously graded as successfully completed.
- **Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP):** LEAP is a technology-facilitated pre-, mid-, and post-test that will be used for students in grades K-8. LEAP will provide essential diagnostic information for developing and planning instruction. It will provide an early read on a student's performance on state-mandated tests, and report key accountability data on student progress.

Instructional Model

- **Personalized Performance Learning™ (PPL):** This instructional process creates a unique learning experience for each student. During enrollment, Academic Placement Advisors and School Counselors will review students' past records and performance to place them in appropriate courses. A Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) will then be developed collaboratively by the teacher, Learning Coach, and student to tailor curriculum and instruction. Throughout the year, teachers will monitor students' progress and adjust their learning programs to identify areas where students need to improve and areas in which they can build on their strengths.
- **SSTAIR™:** This instructional model links curriculum, standards, assessments, and interventions that have a direct impact on student mastery and resulting assessment performance. The SSTAIR program targets Essential Skills/Standards by subject/grade level, uses specified assessments within the curriculum to measure student mastery of these skills and standards, provides tiered interventions for non-mastered skills and standards, and tracks students' response to the implemented interventions by skill/standard. SSTAIR is an acronym for Skills, Standards, Assessments, Intervention, and Response.
- **Multi-tiered Intervention:** The school will employ a multi-tiered intervention model so that every student has access to the resources they need to be successful: Tier 1 - Core Instructional Program; Tier 2 - Supplemental Programs and Supports; Tier 3 - Alternative Support Programs. Student Support Teams will meet regularly to develop an intervention plan and strategies for improvement for students who are struggling.
- **Learning Coach:** A parent, extended family member, or similarly qualified adult designated by the parent/guardian selected during the enrollment process who will work in person with the student under the guidance of the certified teacher. The Learning Coach and student will interact with the teacher via telephone, WebMail message, LiveLesson sessions, and in-person meetings. The school will provide a unique login and ongoing training to help the Learning Coach carry out this important role while making optimal use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support. Connections' “Get Coaching” program provides direct support to Learning Coaches through its three program components: Learning Coach Resources (synchronous and asynchronous), Learning Coach Link (monthly newsletter), and Learning Coach Central (web-based site for connecting Learning Coaches to one another and essential resources).
- **LiveLesson® Session:** A real-time, interactive web conferencing tool, LiveLesson sessions allow teachers to work synchronously and directly with individual or groups of students using voice-over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing based on Adobe® Connect™.
- **Teachlet® Tutorials:** Teachlet tutorials are proprietary, interactive, asynchronous graphic/video/audio tutorials, incorporated into most lessons to provide students a dynamic, fun, and engaging way to learn the concepts they need to master learning objectives and standards.

Students learn best in a safe and positive environment in which they are respected, accepted, valued, and

nurtured as unique individuals and challenged to achieve their full potential. Students succeed academically when instruction is tailored to their unique needs and when they are supported by adults who are committed to their success. The centerpiece of instruction at ARCA will be the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP), which provides for individualized instruction tailored to the learning needs of each student. Supported by Connexus and student performance data, the school will use the PLP and a variety of interventions to ensure students are on track and thriving academically.

5. On the following table, list the specific measurable goals in reading, reading comprehension, and mathematics, based on the state mandated assessments, and any other assessment tools if used, for improving student academic achievement for each year of the public charter school's initial five-year period. For each goal, include the following:
- The tool to be used to measure the academic performance;
 - The level of performance that will demonstrate success; and
 - The timeframe for the achievement of the goal.

GOAL	Assessment Instrument for Measuring Performance	Performance Level that Demonstrates Achievement	When Attainment of the Goal Will Be Assessed
1) Proficiency 3-5: Official published state test proficiency rates for school grades 3-5 will meet	ACT Aspire	0.90 ratio of school results to state averages on ACT Aspire. Ratio calculated for each grade, and overall	End of School Years 2-5
or exceed state averages		average weighted by number of each test taken by ARCA students	
2) Proficiency 6-8: Same goal as above for grades 6-8	ACT Aspire	Same performance level as above for grades 6-8	End of School Years 2-5
3) Proficiency HS: Same goal as above for high school grades	ACT Aspire and ACT	Same performance level as above for high school grades	End of School Years 2-5
4) Growth 4-5: Students returning in grades 4-5 will demonstrate proficiency or improvement from the lowest	ACT Aspire	70% of reading and math tests taken by students returning in grades 4-5 result in passing scores or in	End of School Years 2-5
score level or range of scores to the next higher level or range of scores in reading and math		improvement from the lowest score level or range of scores to the next higher level or range of scores	
5) Growth 6-8: Same goal as above for grades 6-8	ACT Aspire	Same performance level as above for grades 6-8	End of School Years 2-5
6) Growth HS: Same goal as above for high school grades	ACT Aspire and ACT	Same performance level as above for high school grades	End of School Years 2-5

Explain how the attainment of the goals will demonstrate that the charter is meeting the identified educational need for the school and fulfilling its mission.

Applicant Response:

ARCA will have specific, measurable, and attainable objectives for success based upon the academic progress of its students and the school's performance on several academic measures.

Attaining Goals Demonstrates that ARCA is Meeting Educational Need and Fulfilling its Mission

By attaining these goals, the school will fulfill its mission of offering students access to a quality education.

ARCA will support a complete public school experience for students by focusing on students' academic growth,

social and emotional needs, and post-secondary goals.

ARCA administration will use Connexus, the EMS provided by Connections, to closely monitor the school's overall success and ensure students are on track for success on state assessments and the ACT. The Principal, in collaboration with school staff and the Connections administrative support team, will develop a list of measurable annual school goals that are designed to ensure continuous improvement. The Board will approve these goals and the performance of the Principal and staff will be measured in part against them.

As a public school, ARCA will measure and annually report the academic achievement of all students, as well as the ongoing progress and performance of cohorts and the school as a whole. ARCA students will participate in state proficiency tests depending upon grade level. The school will set up in-person, proctored locations for state testing. State assessment data will be reported through the ADE and logged in Connexus to complete a data snapshot of student academic performance.

The school will periodically account for its progress against its student performance goals to all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, the ADE, and community. In addition, the Board may contract with an outside evaluator (such as a university) to assess the school's overall performance against its mission on a longer-term basis. In addition, in an effort to ensure transferability of credits, ARCA will apply for accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and School Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CAS) within the first three years of operation. This accreditation is similar to those received by other schools supported by Connections.

Responsibility for monitoring, evaluating, and adhering to the school's assessment policies and practices will follow a traditional model. Teachers will have primary responsibility for administering assessments and providing feedback to administrators. The Principal will oversee the assessment program and work with education specialists in evaluating and making recommendations for changes. The Board will have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the school is fulfilling the expectations and obligations under charter school law, its charter, and Board-approved school policy.

Valid and Reliable Assessment Approach to Measure Progress Toward Goals

Each student will be assigned an Advisory Teacher/School Counselor who, in collaboration with the Learning Coach, develops a Personalized Learning Plan for each student and closely tracks their overall academic progress. Student academic progress will be tracked on a daily basis via online discussions, quizzes, tests, science labs, and portfolio items to ascertain mastery of the material. They will also track other parameters of student success, such as attendance and participation.

In keeping with the school's mission and overall educational priorities, ARCA will utilize ongoing online and offline assessments to measure student progress and a technology-based assessment tool to measure student gains over the school year. The Board understands and will ensure the school will comply with the statewide system of assessment and accountability applicable to all Arkansas public schools.

The following paragraphs describe the assessments ARCA will use to evaluate the progress of students and cohorts toward school goals.

State Testing: ARCA will meet all requirements for state-mandated assessments. In keeping with the school's mission and overall educational priorities, ARCA will utilize ongoing online and offline assessments to measure student progress and a technology-based assessment tool to measure student gains over the school year. The Board of Directors will ensure the school complies with the statewide system of assessment and accountability applicable to all Arkansas public schools.

Whenever possible, state standardized test results will be integrated into an incoming student's basic information in Connexus. Likewise, results for state standardized tests that students take while enrolled at ARCA, which are proctored face-to-face at a physical location, will be included in Connexus, along with internal pre-, mid-, and post-test data. This data will be used to track student progress from year to year and within the year, and to inform the course placement and instructional needs of students.

Assessment Objective Performance Reports (AOPR): This report provides real-time student performance data on essential skills and standards based upon individual math, language arts, and science assessment

items. The report will identify the objectives students should master by the end of that grade level based upon the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and display students' performance against the objectives. Data can be sorted to identify students who have or have not mastered specific objectives.

Teachers can run this report as frequently as they like to see exactly how students are progressing with regard to each of the skills and standards for that subject and grade. This method:

- Enhances the multi-tiered instruction model
- Identifies essential skills and standards by subject/grade level
- Identifies how and where these essential skills and standards are assessed within the program
- Supports a Response to Intervention model
- Provides access to and analysis of real-time data to determine mastery/proficiency
- Incorporates data-driven decisions throughout instruction
- Maximizes use of the instructional support programs, resources, and data; identifies tiered interventions for non-mastered/proficient skills and standards, and identifies students' response to the implemented interventions

LEAP: LEAP provides essential yearly progress diagnostic information for developing the PLP and planning instruction. It provides an early predictor of performance on state-mandated tests and reports key accountability data on progress throughout the academic year. This assessment tool, updated annually based on a review of student performance on specific questions, is a web-based criterion-referenced test which gives teachers diagnostic results on reading and math. LEAP was updated for content in 2013-14 and aligns with state standards and required state tests. At ARCA, it will be used for students in grades K-8. It includes a technology-facilitated pre-, mid-, and post-test.

The assessment systems are designed based on a pre-test and post-test to ensure that:

- The pre-test and post-test assess the same objectives
- Ample opportunity is given to students to demonstrate mastery in each sub-category
- The pre-, mid-, and the post-tests are at the same difficulty level

To ensure content validity, items are selected from a larger databank of test questions previously tested for grade appropriateness, readability, and item difficulty. Each item is also evaluated to be included based on specific criteria such as clearly assessed content standards and that it contained a set of alternatives that were plausible.

Teachers monitor the results of the LEAP through Connexus. Results from the LEAP are included in the data (a combination of prior year test scores and current and prior LEAP and the Scantron® Performance Series scores) used to assign student intervention indicators on a teacher's home page.

Teachers then take action and modify instruction based on the intervention indicators. Students assigned a red indicator require intervention. Students assigned a yellow indicator may require an intervention in math and reading. Students assigned a green indicator will be monitored for changes but will not require additional assistance at that time.

ARCA administrators and teachers may assess high school students with the Scantron® Performance Series, a web-based, computer-adaptive, norm-referenced test. It is a valid, reliable, current test that measures student proficiency in reading and mathematics. It provides a scaled score that can be used to measure academic growth, and therefore serves as a useful tool in assessing student curricular needs. The online test is a computer-adaptive assessment which automatically adjusts to each student's ability level, generating more difficult questions if the student is answering correctly and easier ones if the student is answering incorrectly. It provides a valid and reliable scale score in math and reading so that student learning growth can be tracked over time. The version that ARCA will use provides teachers with reports and information to address individual student needs.

The Scantron® Performance Series gives the teachers' diagnostic results in English Language Arts, reading, and mathematics. It provides a large pool of items to pull from in order to create test session for students. The Scantron® Performance Series provides a wide variety of normative scores, as well as sub-test scores. The Scantron® Performance Series uses standards from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress

(NAEP).

Ongoing Informal Assessments: In all courses, students will engage in formative assessments that tap into all levels of student learning such as scored daily assignments, daily checks for understanding requiring students to apply and integrate new skills in a thoughtful manner, and regular online quizzes and tests to measure understanding of newly presented material.

Unit Assessments and Offline and Online Portfolio Assignments: Throughout each logical unit of study, students are required to complete series of offline and online assessments. Offline assessments include written compositions, science lab reports, short-answer questions and essays, book responses, and a variety of work samples. These assessments require direct teacher evaluation. Online assessments include quizzes and a unit test. While the quizzes are brief and frequent, the more comprehensive unit tests occur at the end of an entire unit. Online assessments provide students and families with immediate objective feedback, while offline assessments provide valuable reflection, feedback, and expertise from certified teachers. Student progress reports and grades will include a combination of quizzes, tests, work samples, and teacher feedback.

Curriculum-Based Assessments: The school will use curriculum-based assessments (CBA) as a quick and effective way to gather additional information on students' understanding of concepts, through telephone conversation. Diagnostic curriculum-based assessments (DCBA) pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts. Verification curriculum-based assessments (VCBA) authenticate student learning of concepts previously graded as completed with scores of B or higher.

Response to Intervention: Data is used throughout the school year to implement a Response to Intervention model for all students. Students who are struggling with the curriculum are identified by teachers and assigned Tier 1 (adaptations) and Tier 2 (supplements) interventions. This process is facilitated by Connexus which uses data to help identify students' intervention needs. A teacher's home page displays a student performance dashboard and shows, for each student, an icon indicating if interventions have been identified and if they have been assigned. The teacher can use his or her professional judgment to override these indicators and log the decision and rationale within Connexus. Also, the school has a Student Support Team (SST) and an on-going process of identifying student intervention needs, assigning those interventions, tracking their success, communicating with parents, and escalating, if necessary, from Tier 1 to Tier 2 and ultimately Tier 3 (alternative placement, most of which involve an IEP). All efforts are made to meet each student's needs within the general education program.

Tracking Student Work Online: Connexus captures all necessary data about students, their attendance, and their performance. This data will be accessible to school administrators, teachers, and Learning Coaches on a moment-by-moment, day-by-day basis. The school will track and report ongoing student progress based on the objective, quantitative data generated by Connexus.

Staff members will analyze attendance, participation, performance, assessment submissions, lesson completion, and teacher contact. The student status will be displayed to parents, Learning Coaches, and students on the home page for instant identification of potential problem areas. The Escalation Process will go into effect when students are in statuses other than "On-Track" to ensure students being educated appropriately and receiving any appropriate interventions.

Both Learning Coaches and teachers will have access to an electronic grade book that tracks all results and serves as the basis of changes in the student's learning plan. ARCA will also use a variety of advanced data visualization tools that provide students, parents, teachers, school administrators, institutional education partners, regulators, and researchers with views of how students are performing.

Tracking Student Work Offline: Teachers will track students work offline through multiple avenues, including communications with students and Learning Coaches to monitor the student's progress. Scheduled phone calls, WebMail, LiveLesson sessions, and face-to-face meetings will all be used to help teachers gauge student's mastery of concepts and to determine appropriate instructional recommendations. Communications that take place offline are documented in each student's log in Connexus; the data can be accessed by teachers and school administrators through a variety of reports.

Throughout each unit of study, students may be required to complete offline or phone-based assessments when

the format requires, including submitting certain kinds of work samples.

Training Teachers to Monitor Student Work: Teachers will receive intensive professional development both prior to and throughout the school year. Training for teachers at a new virtual school includes a combination on in-person and online training. Professional development throughout the school year will focus on monitoring student performance both online and offline based on available data. The school will use the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching published by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (INACOL) ([available at http://www.inacol.org/resources/nationalstandards/NACOL%20Standards%20Quality%20Online%20Teaching.pdf](http://www.inacol.org/resources/nationalstandards/NACOL%20Standards%20Quality%20Online%20Teaching.pdf)) and the Connections Core Standards for Facilitating Student Learning as guides for pinpointing necessary teacher skills and professional development requirements.

The Principal and all teachers will complete the Teacher Orientation Course, which is delivered through Connexus and contains lessons, assessments, and links to online tutorials. This course focuses on preparing teachers to teach through the Connexus platform. It covers curriculum, assessment, personalizing instruction, school year events, grading and the Grade Book, communication, and essential Connexus tools. This course also covers how to monitor student progress, assign tiered-supplemental instructional support programs based on that data, and how to log offline communications within Connexus.

In April 2015, Connections was recognized with a Silver Award for Best Practices for Distance Learning Programming by the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) for its Professional Learning Model. This prestigious award recognizes organizations that have designed and delivered outstanding and comprehensive best practices in distance learning programming, including program content and delivery, integration of technology, presentation, and impact on participant learning. The USDLA International Distance Learning Awards are presented to five major sectors of distance education and training and include the PK-12, Higher Education, Corporate, Government, and Telehealth markets.

Ongoing Communication with Learning Coaches: At ARCA, communication with parents and Learning Coaches will be frequent and purposeful throughout the school year and will communicate formative and summative progress. Communication will serve three main objectives: to help the teacher monitor the student's progress, to keep parents "in the loop" with current school happenings, and to help ARCA grow and improve from parent feedback. Scheduled phone calls, LiveLesson sessions, progress within the curriculum including frequent and substantive feedback from the teacher, and optional face-to-face meetings will all be used to help teachers gauge students' mastery of concepts and to determine appropriate instructional recommendations. A student's teacher will conduct follow-up conversations by parent-teacher/teacher-student conferences at least on a weekly basis using WebMail messages, LiveLesson sessions, feedback when grading, Message Board postings, phone conversations, and/or face-to-face interactions.

6. For elementary charter schools, provide a daily schedule for all grade levels indicating the classes that will be provided for a one week time period.
For secondary schools, provide required and elective courses for every grade level. If the school plans to phase in grade levels, include expansion grade levels by year with courses to be offered.

Applicant Response:

Typical Student Day

The instructional time commitment required by ARCA's online program is comparable to that of a traditional school day. Because online learners do not face the distractions and interruptions of a typical school setting, students often use their learning time much more efficiently. The in-depth application of concepts that is often relegated to homework in a conventional school setting will be an integral part of the learning day; the application of discrete skills, extended projects, and remedial and enrichment activities will be part of the daily routine for students and their Learning Coaches. The program provides for and offers more than the minimum requirements for instructional time for every grade.

Activities vary based upon student needs, coursework, and personal schedules. Learning is integrated within

individual activities as well as LiveLesson sessions and phone calls with teachers. Learning can occur when students learn best - not just between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Students create daily checklists to ensure they are staying on-task. The daily routine may include checking WebMail, looking at the To Do List on their Connexus home page, reviewing the daily planner in Connexus, attending scheduled synchronous sessions, and completing lessons listed in the planner. Students see which lessons are due in bolded text and as lessons are completed, they change from bold to regular text. Students can access lessons directly from their daily planners. In addition, students can access any notes or tips provided by their teachers and view important course-related information like LiveLesson schedules, recordings, and supplemental materials. Students in grades 3-12 can track their progress and grades at any time in the Grade Book. Learning Coaches can view their students' Grade Book at all grade levels.

For example, a school day for first grade student might consist of the following:

Morning

- Learning Coach logs on, reads Webmail messages, and reviews lessons the student is expected to complete.
- Student reads and responds to WebMail messages from teacher about student progress (with the help of the Learning Coach depending upon reading level).
- Student participates in a LiveLesson session for math with teacher and classmates.
- Student completes a math lesson. Learning Coach monitors and facilitates learning as necessary.
- Student completes a Language Arts lesson, including reading, writing, and discussing the lesson activities and text. Student takes a quiz online.
- Student goes outside for a playground activity with Learning Coach.

Afternoon

- Student makes sandwich for lunch, as part of the Practical Living Skills activity.
- Student completes a science lesson and finishes reading a non-fiction reading selection (with the help of the Learning Coach depending upon reading level).
- Student does hands-on science experiment outside with Learning Coach.
- Student goes to soccer practice and the local library.
- After returning, student completes art lesson and then participates in Book Club.
- Learning Coach confirms completed lessons and records student attendance.
- Learning Coach and student review next day's schedule and prepare accordingly.
- Learning Coach and student review next day's schedule and prepare accordingly.

Elementary Schedule for All Grade Levels

ARCA will meet state requirements of courses offered at appropriate grade levels and will comply with Standards for Accreditation 9.03.2 (annual instruction content areas for Grades K-4) and Standards for Accreditation 9.03.3 (annual instruction content areas for Grades 5-8).

Although students in a full-time online school have flexibility in their daily schedules, the following lessons will be scheduled on a weekly basis for students in elementary grade levels, K-8:

Kindergarten-4th Grade:

- Language Arts, 5 lessons per week
- Mathematics, 5 lessons per week
- Social Studies, 3-4 lessons per week
- Science, 3 lessons per week
- Fine Arts, 1-2 lessons per week
- Educational Technology, 1 lesson per week, which introduces Tools for Learning
- Physical Education & Health, 1 lesson per week, which includes safety content

Practical Living Skills/Career Exploration are integrated in all courses with real world connections through portfolio activities and career exploration connected to student's learning in content areas.

5th-8th Grades:

- Language Arts, 5 lessons per week
- Mathematics, 5 lessons per week
- Social Studies, 3-5 lessons per week

- Science, 4-5 lessons per week
- Fine Arts, 1-2 lessons per week
- Educational Technology, 1 lesson per week, which introduces Tools for Learning
- Physical Education & Health, 1 lesson per week, which includes safety content

Career and Technical Education are integrated into all courses and career education is woven throughout the content areas so that students can see the connections between the content they are learning and associated careers.

Social Studies in each elementary grade level will include units on the history and culture of Arkansas, with an emphasis on Arkansas history and culture in Grades 4 and 5. Social Studies lessons at all grade levels will include foreign language experiences.

Secondary Grade Level Expansion

To accommodate a phasing in of secondary grade levels, ARCA is requesting an initial but expiring waiver from the Standards for Accreditation 9.03.1.2 and 9.03.4 requirements that 38 units be taught annually in secondary schools.

ARCA anticipates serving Grades K-9 in Year 1 (2016-17), Grades K-10 in Year 2 (2017-18), Grades K-11 in Year 3 (2018-19), and Grades K-12 in Year 4 (2019-20) and beyond. The required 38 units, less any waived unit requirements, will be available and taught annually, except as otherwise allowed by §6-15-213 and §6-15-214, by the 12th grade year of ARCA's first graduating class.

Secondary Required and Elective Courses

ARCA will offer all required courses, less any initially or permanently waived unit requirements or as otherwise allowed by §6-15-213 and §6-15-214.

To ensure all ARCA students can graduate under the Smart Core curriculum, or the Core curriculum if a parent or guardian waives the student's right to participate in Smart Core, ARCA will offer a full course load to its first 9th grade cohort. These students will be offered and directed toward course units that are required to graduate on time. Please see Attachment 5 for ARCA's suggested course progression.

Students who elect to graduate under the Smart Core curriculum will be expected to complete the required and elective courses to ensure they meet the Smart Core requirements for graduation:

- English - 4 units
- Mathematics - 4 units (or 3 units of math and 1 unit of Computer Science)
- Science - 3 units with lab experience (or 2 units with lab experience and 1 unit of Computer Science)
- Social Studies - 3 units
- Oral Communications - ½ unit
- Physical Education - ½ unit
- Health and Safety - ½ unit
- Economics - ½ unit which may count towards Social Studies or Career Focus
- Fine Arts - ½ unit
- Career Focus - 6 units
- Computer Science - optional

Descriptions of the Connections curriculum, which can be modified to align with Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks, are provided at the following URL. If the licensure waiver is approved, ARCA students will have access to most of these elective and foreign language courses. (<http://www.connectionsacademy.com/curriculum/online-high-school>)

Length of School Day and School Year

ARCA will follow a traditional school year calendar that includes 180 school days during which instruction is provided by school staff, with 200 work days for teachers. The Board will approve the school calendar annually. ARCA will abide by observance days as required by state law. To support the mission of an online school, the school calendar may be extended to allow families more flexibility in completing work or to provide extra learning time for students who are at risk, though generally not by more than two weeks. Although there is flexibility in an

online school program regarding when instruction occurs, students are still held fully accountable for meeting all state-mandated attendance requirements.

Because students will not physically attend the teaching/learning center, ARCA is requesting a waiver to state seat-time requirements. Attendance hours recorded by the Learning Coach in Connexus and verified by the student's teacher will be the legal record of school attendance. These records will ensure ARCA is properly calculating and adequately monitoring that students complete 30 instructional hours per week and 180 instructional days per school year. Students are able to work across the entire week rather than five days, so instructional time may average less than six hours per day.

The calendar includes days when teachers will not be available due to professional development (all other Support Services are available during these days), and days when the school is completely closed (no Support Services are available during these days, summer break, and any holidays). During the school year, student learning may continue during any days when the school is closed, as students still have access to their online courses, learning content, and personalized learning plans.

For teachers, the school day is not limited to certain hours for start and end times. However, the teaching staff will be available during the school's hours of operation, typically 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Teachers will work primarily from the teaching/learning center in Bentonville. Teachers collaborate to share ideas, information, and teaching techniques among the full staff both vertically (same subject across grade levels) and horizontally (different subjects in the same grade level). Families are always welcome to visit the teaching/learning center.

Calculating Instructional Days

While students will have a great deal of flexibility regarding when and where they complete their coursework, they will nevertheless be held fully accountable for meeting all state-mandated attendance requirements. Attendance recorded by the Learning Coach and verified by teachers will ensure ARCA is properly calculating and adequately monitoring that students complete 30 instructional hours per week and 180 instructional days per school year.

Entering attendance is expected to be taken seriously as a regular part of the school day for the Learning Coach. ARCA will verify that the attendance records are accurate, which includes not only the attendance hours recorded by the Learning Coach, but also the lesson and assignment completion rates and the amount of communication the student has with the teacher. During course design and alignment, lesson and assignment completion times are estimated, thus student lesson and assignment completion can be used to estimate amount of student time spent on learning.

If a teacher has concerns about the validity of a student's attendance records, he or she may revise the student's recorded hours of attendance based work completion rates and/or contact the school's Attendance Coordinator for further assistance. A Learning Coach will be notified if attendance records are changed. Therefore, even if a Learning Coach records a high number of instructional hours in the attendance records, if a student's work completion rates are not on track and/or if he or she fails to communicate on a regular basis with the teacher, he or she will be flagged for review. This Approaching Alarm or Alarm status is displayed in Connexus and will require follow-up action from the school to ensure that the student completes his or her lessons, assessments, and required weekly hours of attendance.

ARCA's administration will monitor and review attendance records on a weekly basis. After a predetermined amount of time (usually 10 days) or as of a specific date (per state regulations), Connexus will no longer allow a teacher or Learning Coach to edit past attendance records. Any requests for adjustments to the "locked" records must first go to the Homeroom Teacher (in writing via WebMail or email) for review and approval and then to the Attendance Coordinator for adjustment.

Students may record attendance hours on Saturday and/or Sunday to meet their weekly requirements. However, if a student does not participate in school activities on any day Monday - Friday, his or her Learning Coach MUST enter 0 hours on this day.

These expectations and procedures for attendance will be documented in the School Handbook, alongside the state requirements for weekly and annual hours of instruction. Parents must agree to the policies in the Handbook when completing enrollment. Attendance procedures will be addressed in trainings for all

stakeholders (Learning Coaches, students, teachers, and administrators). If a student accrues too many unexcused absences, ARCA will follow state law in reporting non-attendance and truancy.

Unexcused Absences and Truancy

Regular attendance is imperative to maximize student learning. ARCA will offer flexibility regarding how many hours each day students spend on school work and which days of the week they complete that work. Due to this flexibility, ARCA will have a zero tolerance policy for truancy. Parents will be held legally responsible for ensuring that their students are fully participating in school, even if they have designated another adult as their student's Learning Coach.

In order to avoid truancy, the parent must ensure that the following activities take place:

- Learning Coach enters attendance hours each day of school
- Student completes all assigned lessons and assessments
- Student participates in educational activities for an appropriate number of hours, as outlined in the school handbook
- Student is available for regularly scheduled telephone calls with teachers
- Student attends all assigned LiveLesson® sessions
- Student demonstrates that he/she is doing his/her own schoolwork
- Student attends mandatory state testing
- Learning Coach communicates with the homeroom teacher in advance if student needs to deviate from the regular school calendar (for example, switching a vacation and school day)

If a student's teachers become aware that the student is not fully participating in school as required by state law and Board policy, the student may be marked with an unexcused absence at the teacher's discretion. In addition, the Attendance Coordinator may override the number of attendance hours previously entered by a Learning Coach by entering the code for an unexcused absence (U) if the student's teachers believe the student has not participated as required. The final decision about whether an absence is considered unexcused will be made by the Principal.

Missing a day of school will be defined as missing a day's worth of hours in one week.

7. Provide a description of curriculum, programs, and instructional methods used to support core classes. ***Include all associated costs in the proposed budget.***

Applicant Response:

Grade Levels and Maximum Enrollment by Year

The ARCA Board is requesting a cap of 2,000 students over the first three years of the school's operation and a cap of 3,000 for years four and five. The Board anticipates the following enrollment levels in the specified grade ranges. The ARCA Board will approve enrollment levels annually.

Year 1 - Grades K-9; Projected Enrollment - 600; Enrollment Cap - 2,000
Year 2 - Grades K-10; Projected Enrollment - 1,200; Enrollment Cap - 2,000
Year 3 - Grades K-11; Projected Enrollment - 2,000; Enrollment Cap - 2,000
Year 4 - Grades K-12; Projected Enrollment - 2,500; Enrollment Cap - 3,000
Year 5 - Grades K-12; Projected Enrollment - 3,000; Enrollment Cap - 3,000

Foundational Educational Philosophy

ARCA will reach students who need a flexible schedule and for whom a cutting-edge virtual approach provides the best pathway to successful completion of their educational program. ARCA will provide a full-time school experience with clubs, activities, and electives. ARCA will promote academic and emotional success for every learner through an individualized learning program combining the best in virtual education with real and engaging connections among students, families, teachers, and the community. Beginning in 9th grade, guidance counselors work with each student individually on graduation plans with a focus on courses, credits, and post-secondary planning.

Educational Program

Curriculum

The developmentally appropriate curriculum increases its integration of technology as students advance through the grades. Each Connections course is designed to promote student learning and includes active learning elements (including online and offline interaction) that address diverse learning styles and preferences, including textual, visual, auditory, and/or hands-on. Connections' courses include 1,800 Teachlet® proprietary instructional movies and more than 1,000 primary source and instructional videos. Integrated "i-text" electronic textbooks are licensed from a variety of leading publishers including Pearson, Perfection Learning and others, while non-proprietary technology-based content is licensed from "best of breed" providers such as Grolier Online™, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and Discovery Education. The instructional design includes interactive LiveLesson® sessions and threaded discussions.

Clubs and Activities

As an integral part of the academic program, students will also be offered access to 27 clubs, 14 special events, and an online yearbook. Through each of these, students can explore interests beyond the classroom, develop leadership skills, and make friends within ARCA and other schools supported by Connections. The online yearbook allows each student to create their own personal page including photos, videos, and autographs collected from friends.

Talent Networks

Connections offers three different Talent Networks with a focus on sports, the visual and performing arts, and science and technology. These Talent Networks are virtually facilitated programs designed for enrolled middle and high school students who are actively involved at a high level in competitive sports, the visual and performing arts, or advanced STEM coursework. These programs provide exceptional students in grades 6-12 the opportunity to network with other students with similar talents, hear from engaging guest speakers, and participate in collaborative projects and competitions.

Instructional Methods used to Support Core Classes

Personalized Performance Learning (PPL)

Students learn best when lessons match their interests and abilities. Studies have shown that in conventional classrooms, many instructional tasks are not matched to students' skill levels. Through its personalized educational program, the school's proposed placement process will align with the needs of the students. ARCA will help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely personalized learning program. Through the placement process and the school's pre-, mid-, and post-test assessments, students will be provided with curriculum materials and instructional resources appropriate to their achievement level, with the goal of attaining at least one year's academic progress within the school year.

The Personalized Performance Learning process is an academic road map for each student that provides differentiated instruction in a unique, tailored way. Students, Learning Coaches, and teachers meet throughout the year to review progress, modify the student's program, and adjust goals as needed. A parent or other caring adult will serve as a Learning Coach and play an active role in the learning process by supporting students and communicating regularly with teachers.

- **Review of Student Background and Learning Styles.** Teachers, Learning Coaches, and students will discuss student strengths, skill deficiencies, and previous school performance. Students will complete a questionnaire to identify their unique learning style to help inform and guide the best teaching and learning approach.
- **Performance Testing.** In grades K-8, students will take the LEAP test at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. The LEAP test identifies areas of strength and need in the student's learning profile and measures student growth during the school year to help formulate learning goals and monitor student progress. Students in grades 9-10 may take the Scantron® Performance Series.
- **Schedule Modifications and Electives.** Once the school year gets started, teachers will help personalize the learning schedule. For students in grades K-8, teachers will inquire about the student's daily routines and make adjustments to the student's online learning schedule. They will also add an elective course when students are ready to handle the additional challenge. At the high school level, students are able to add electives during the initial placement and course selection.

The PLP displays a comprehensive number of data points, and allows for teachers to document notes and use the information to personalize instruction for each student. Teachers regularly review the student's PLP Data View (a screen within Connexus providing snapshots and views of student data) and document any change in

instructional interventions, goals, or student performance. Progress Notes in the PLP Data View are visible to Learning Coaches and students in grades 3-12 and summarize the student's overall progress, and intervention plans (if applicable).

Learning needs that go beyond the purely academic (such as study habits and interpersonal skills) will be addressed in the PLP as well. The PLP will then guide the student's course through the Connections curriculum that supports the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. All lessons will be provided to students and families online directing them step-by-step through the instructional sequence and use of the comprehensive set of instructional resources such as textbooks, trade books, simulations, interactives, manipulatives, and consumables.

The PLP tool will place at each teacher's fingertips all of the assessment data available for students (e.g. state test scores, LEAP and the Scantron® Performance Series pre-, mid-, and post-test assessment data, participation and performance metrics, and any IEP information). Teachers will also be trained to use the Accountability Radar report. The report can be updated daily and has several metrics that show which students' PLPs have been recently updated. The report also contains data elements for tracking completion of LEAP, LEAP results, and intervention indicators based in part on those results.

High-quality Teaching

ARCA will employ licensed teachers trained in online delivery and individualized instruction. Depending on the needs of the learner, teacher contact with the student varies and may be as frequent as several times a day.

In April 2009, John Watson and Butch Gemin on behalf of the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) published the *Management and Operations of Online Programs* as part of the series Promising Practices in Online Learning. The authors noted, "Most programs agree that new online teachers must 1) put their role as a facilitator of student learning above other aspects of teaching, 2) have the ability to adapt and manage change, 3) have a high level of content mastery, and 4) be ready to make the shift to online instruction." (Watson, J. and Gemin, B., (April 2009) Promising Practices in Online Learning: Management and Operations of Online Programs: Ensuring Quality and Accountability. Evergreen Consulting Associates, iNACOL http://www.inacol.org/research/promisingpractices/iNACOL_PP_MgmntOp_042309.pdf) For example, 2005's *A Synthesis of New Research on K-12 Online Learning* shows that the unique ability of an online teacher to communicate one-on-one with students and offer personalized feedback is key to student success in virtual learning environments. (NCREL Synthesis of New Research on K-12 Online Learning, 2005, North Central Regional Education Laboratory/Learning Point Associates. www.ncrel.org/tech/synthesis)

LiveLesson Sessions and Teachlet Tutorials

LiveLesson sessions allow teachers and students to interact with one another in real time in an online classroom. Teachers will use the LiveLesson session tool as needed to convene groups of students together to focus on particular learning topics, and may also use LiveLesson sessions for independent student work groups to collaborate on activities via voice-over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing. Threaded discussions on course-based message boards are also used as appropriate by grade level to provide important opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students.

Teachlet tutorials increase the effectiveness of the instructional model. Teachlets, highly interactive asynchronous tutorials, are incorporated into most lessons and provide students a dynamic, fun, and engaging way to learn. They incorporate graphics, video, and audio to show students the concepts and ideas they will need to complete the lessons. In addition, the high school courses will incorporate graded asynchronous online discussions, which are required for all students. These discussions provide important opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students, increase writing skills, and provide opportunities for a "real-world" audience.

Focus on Literacy in the Elementary Curriculum and Program

Literacy skills become more complex as students gain mastery. The five main components shift from Kindergarten to Grade 3 in Connections' language arts courses. **Phonemic awareness**, the awareness of discrete sounds or phonemes is present at the earliest stages of literacy growth. As students master the recognition and production of individual sounds, the need for targeted phonemic awareness instruction declines. **Phonics instruction** capitalizes on phonemic awareness and focuses on the relationship between written letters, their names, and their sounds. Instruction progresses from letter sounds and small combinations to syllabic awareness. **Fluency**, the ability to read quickly and accurately, improves as the other components of

literacy also improve. In the early years, **vocabulary and text comprehension** instruction is primarily listening-focused. As students improve in their ability to decode, vocabulary and comprehension instruction shifts to involve more reading. Direct instruction in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension continues throughout elementary school. In the earliest years, literacy instruction is largely a collaborative process as students interact regularly with their teachers and Learning Coaches to build the foundations for success in reading and writing. As students grow in their literacy skills and enter into upper elementary courses, they assume more independence.

Parent Involvement: A parent or another adult will play an active role in the learning process as a Learning Coach by supporting the student and communicating regularly with teachers. Surveys and the StarTrack rating system allow Learning Coaches to provide feedback about the curriculum, learning process, and overall academic program. Training will be provided to ensure Learning Coaches have the necessary tools and supports to be successful in their role.

Decades of research show that parent participation in education is closely related to student achievement. (Fan, X., & Chen, M. Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13, 1, 1-22.,2001) In a 2010 article titled "Parent Involvement and Student Academic Performance: A Multiple Mediation Analysis," in the *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, authors David R. Topor, Susan P. Keane, Terri L. Shelton, and Susan D. Calkins noted that, "Parent involvement in a child's education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance. Results indicated a statistically significant association between parent involvement and a child's academic performance, over and above the impact of the child's intelligence." (Topor, David R., Keane, Susan P., Shelton, Terri L., & Calkins, Susan D. 2010). Parent Involvement and Student Academic Performance: A Multiple Mediation Analysis, *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, 38:3, 183-197 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2010.486297>)

Carrie A. Semke and Susan M. Sheridan researched the effects of parental involvement on student academic achievement in their working paper published in 2011, *Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature*, and found, "Parental participation and cooperation in their child's educational affairs is related to several outcomes deemed important in educational arenas: increased student achievement and academic performance, stronger self-regulatory skills, fewer discipline problems, better study habits, more positive attitudes toward school, improved homework habits and work orientation, and higher educational aspirations..." (Semke, C. A., & Sheridan, S. M. (2011). *Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature* (R2Ed Working Paper No. 2011-1). Retrieved from the National Center for Research on Rural Education website: <http://r2ed.unl.edu>)

The Learning Coach Instructional Support Team will offer supports for Learning Coaches through Connections' Get Coaching program including:

- Learning Coach Central - accessed from the Learning Coach Home Page in Connexus and includes FAQs, social networking opportunities, and resources to assist in providing instructional support to their students.
- Learning Coach Link - a monthly communication with articles on instructional best practices, Connexus updates, tips and strategies for motivating reluctant learners, and information about upcoming Learning Coach Resource sessions.
- National Learning Coach Resource sessions -virtual sessions designed to provide Learning Coaches with strategies for working with and supporting their student. Sample session topics include: Effective Questioning Techniques to Assess Learning, Improving Student Writing Skills, Providing Valuable Feedback, and Unlocking Math in a Virtual World.

Ample Resources to Ensure that Students Achieve Academic Goals and Excel Accreditation

Connections Academy is a division of Connections Education LLC, which is accredited by AdvancED. (an Accreditation agency serving 27,000 public and private schools and districts (<http://www.advanc-ed.org/>)) AdvancED recently recommended Connections Education LLC for accreditation in April 2015 with an overall score exceeding AdvancEd's average score for the 32,000+ schools and corporations they accredit. Connections Education received many commendations from the review committee. The following quotes are from the visiting team's exit report (the full report still going through the review and final approval process at AdvancED):

- “A culture and commitment focused on student learning permeates throughout the Connections Education organization.”
- “The corporation embodies a culture of collaboration that exists throughout all aspects of the corporation and schools.”

In addition, in an effort to ensure transferability of credits, ARCA will, within the first three years of operation, apply for accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and School Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CAS). This is similar to the accreditation of schools supported by Connections in South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and Florida. High school AP courses are approved by the College Board and many high school core and elective courses are approved for use towards initial eligibility by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility Center. (http://www.connectionsacademy.com/Libraries/PDFs/NCAA_Approved_Course_List.pdf)

Revenue to Pay for all Curriculum Expenses as Outlined in the Budget

As demonstrated in the budget, ARCA has sufficient revenue to pay for all curriculum expenses outlined in the budget included in Attachment 6. In addition, we have included a letter from Connections in Attachment 12 assuring that the school will have sufficient funds to launch and start operations before beginning to receive per-student funding and will maintain a balanced budget thereafter.

8. Describe the process that will be used to ensure all curriculum materials used in the educational program are aligned with the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and the state standards as adopted, and periodically revised, by the State Board of Education.

Applicant Response:

In March 2015, Connections was approved as a Digital Learning Provider and its math and English courses will be available through Virtual Arkansas starting 2015-16.

Through Connections' curriculum and instructional design, ARCA will be aligned with Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and leading standards for effective online course development and instruction. Alignment details and documents are easily accessible to teachers within Connexus. Research underscores the importance of integrating tools for student-to-teacher and student-to-student interaction and the central role of licensed, specially trained professional teachers. (Smith, Rosina, Clark, Tom, and Blomeyer, Rober, A Synthesis of new Research on K-12 Online Learning, Learning Point Associates/North Central Regional Educational Laboratory; Naperville, IL; 2005.)

In addition, the school will follow the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching which focus on teacher use of assessments, data, and ongoing communication to bring out the best in each unique online learner. (The National Standards for Quality Online teaching, International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/iNACOL_TeachingStandardsv2.pdf, 2011) The proposed curriculum and instructional design accommodate the range of learning styles and is designed for individualized pacing, balanced with optimal interaction. The rigorous program includes both fundamental skills and higher-order thinking, which together prepare students for further education as well as lifelong, independent learning.

Curriculum Development Approach

Each course is mapped to the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. With these standards in mind, the Connections curriculum development team employs a “backwards mapping” approach. After an in-depth analysis of standards, the team identifies the types of assessments necessary to allow students to showcase their new understanding and demonstrate their growth on essential skills and standards. Once evidence of mastery is determined, an assessment map is created to indicate the types of assessments to be used to monitor and evaluate performance on each standard. Curriculum designers then work backwards to design curriculum maps comprised of learning objectives, lesson activities, and digital and interactive resources that will lead students to successful mastery of concepts.

Connections utilizes ADDIE, a five-phase curriculum development framework consisting of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation, to guide and inform curriculum development and maintenance.

Each step has an outcome that feeds into the next step in the sequence.

- *Analysis* - During analysis, the curriculum team identifies the goals and objectives, the audience's needs, existing knowledge, and any other relevant characteristics. This step also considers the learning environment, any constraints, the delivery options, and the timeline for the project.
- *Design* - During this systematic process of specifying learning objectives, detailed storyboards and prototypes are often made. The look and feel, graphic design, user-interface, and content are determined.
- *Development* - In this step, production and actual creation of the content, assessments, and learning materials based on the Design phase occurs.
- *Implementation* - During implementation, the plan is put into action and a procedure for training the learner and teacher is developed. Materials are delivered or distributed to the student group. After delivery, the effectiveness of the training materials is evaluated.
- *Evaluation* - This phase consists of formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation is present in each stage of the ADDIE process. Summative evaluation consists of tests designed for criterion-related referenced items and providing opportunities for feedback from the users. Revisions are made as necessary.

These key principles are reflected in a consistent instructional design for all courses, allowing ease of use by students and Learning Coaches.

9. Describe the manner in which the school will make provisions for the following student services, even in each area for which a waiver is requested:

A) Guidance program;

Applicant Response:

The guidance program will serve all students and will be delivered by certified school counselors with the support of the Connections Director of Counseling. The program will offer individual and group counseling as needed and will focus on academic development, personal and social growth, and college and career readiness activities through a variety of communication tools (LiveLesson sessions, phone calls, message boards, Virtual Library, newsletters, and/or face-to-face events). The counseling team will work to engage students and support both their academic and emotional growth. The team will communicate with students and parents to ensure post-secondary plans are established and students are following through on actions to realize their post-graduation goals. Technology in Connexus supports this effort with the Progression Plan Manager and the College and Career Readiness Data View.

With specialized training, counselors will be skilled at helping students address the personal, social, and academic issues that can affect their success in school and life. Counselors will have appropriate certification. The program will be built on relationships, so counselors will be readily accessible to students and families online, in person, and by phone. Counselors are at the heart of fostering students' engagement, safety, and wellness. As they become aware of issues concerning students' school participation, mental and emotional health, or overall well-being, the counselor will collaborate with school staff to ensure the student is supported by teachers and the family is connected with resources, as needed. With the additional support from Connections and its collaborative network of school counselors, ARCA will bring both individual attention and extensive expertise to students and families.

Counselors will review each student's transcripts to determine when an Honors or AP course is appropriate. Counselors will help high school students prepare for college and career with:

- The College and Career Readiness Data View, which focuses on tasks that will prepare students to meet their post-graduation goals
- Interactive LiveLesson sessions connecting families with real-time information on financial aid and scholarships, college application processes, entrance requirements, and more
- College test preparation courses for the SAT/ACT
- 1-to-1 counseling with seniors to provide resources and assistance with post-secondary planning, including career options, vocational training, and selecting the right college

High school students will have access to the national counseling LiveLesson session program, which delivers weekly guidance curriculum lessons and national college admissions sessions throughout the school year. The

sessions include the Career Fireside Chats on the fourth Friday of each month. Previous sessions have covered such topics as Teen Dating Violence Awareness, Educational/Training Opportunities After High School, Why School Matters: Navigating Your Educational Development Plan, How to Develop a Growth Mindset, Aligning Individual Goals & Abilities, and ACT & SAT Overview. A college newsletter is sent to high school students each month.

In addition, students will be encouraged to enroll in clubs such as College Planning (grades 9-12) and Career Explorations (grades 6-12), which include regular LiveLesson sessions with a college counselor. ARCA will also offer Student Development courses (for example: Career Exploration, College Prep with SAT/ACT, and Life Management Skills). There are several clubs focused on post-secondary planning including:

- College Planning Club (grades 9-12)
- First Generation Club (grades 9-12)
- High School Career Club (grades 9-12)
- Middle School Career Club (grades 6-8)

The counselor will also plan additional sessions for students which will address specific student needs. The counselor will be a resource to students, families, and staff in order to ensure that all students are safe and will confirm all staff members are trained on student distress protocols. The counselor will actively seek resources in the communities in case families need to address the personal and social needs of the child. The counseling program will be based on the American School Counselor Association framework, encouraging membership for all professional school counselors, and abiding by their legal and ethical standards of practice.

B) Health services;

Applicant Response:

The health services program will serve all students.

Nurse

ARCA is requesting a waiver from §6-18-706 since students will not be on-site to receive services.

Should the waiver not be approved, ARCA will comply with state laws and ADE rules regarding school nurses. Connections would either employ or contract with an agency or individual(s) to provide one licensed nurse per 750 students or the proportionate ratio thereof, or at a higher rate if designated as a district with a high concentration of children with disabling conditions. Nurses would be available via Internet and phone. Since nurses would see students in-person, they would not administer medication or treatment but may inform and advise.

ARCA is requesting a waiver from §6-18-1501 et seq. for mandated eye and vision tests. If required, ARCA would contract with local providers for screenings and services at reduced or no cost to the families.

Physical Education

This program will be contracted through the professional services agreement with Connections. ARCA will ensure students participate in a planned physical education program designed to optimize their physical, mental, emotional, and social development. Teachers will encourage students to engage in a variety of physical activities and sports they enjoy and could pursue throughout their lives. The physical education program supports state standards and aims to accomplish the following goals:

- Maintain physical, social, and emotional health in students by practicing healthy behaviors and goal setting
- Engage students in a physically active lifestyle
- Focus on the acquisition of important personal, interpersonal, and life skills
- Engage parents and community members
- Be periodically reviewed, evaluated, updated, and improved

Physical education is a core course and will be implemented as such. Students will complete assignments and will be graded to measure their progress in the course. Teachers may use synchronous instruction and/or CBAs to differentiate instruction, demonstrate techniques, ascertain student knowledge, grade class participation, and/or evaluate demonstration of knowledge, skills, and concepts. Teachers also monitor students' participation and

progress through the Activity Tracker and periodic performance tests.

Throughout ARCA's physical education program, students will document goals and activities in an online Activity Tracker. This tracker includes activities that align to curriculum goals and state-specific standards. Students choose an exercise that aligns with the activity and indicate the frequency, intensity, time, and type (FITT). As students engage in the physical activities, they input data to track their progress. Students then export their tracked activity into an Excel file and send this to their teachers in an online dropbox. Teachers access the students' files to grade and provide feedback to the students on their FITT goals. These activity assessment portfolios are incorporated throughout each physical education course in grades K-12. Learning Coaches mark lessons complete for students and teachers monitor the completion of assessments and grade students based on participation and success in meeting their physical education goals. Additionally, to ensure reliability and accountability, teachers may conduct CBAs to verify completion of physical activities, discuss their progress, give fitness tips and feedback, and differentiate instruction to meet students' needs.

To ensure students utilize safe, efficient, and effective movement to develop and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle and apply health-related and skill-related fitness concepts and skills, students will be enrolled in a comprehensive, sequential physical education program that includes:

- The Presidential Fitness Challenge.
- Health, safety, and physical education in all grades (unless otherwise specified by state requirements and/or students' educational plans).
- Grade K-8 physical education courses integrating: Connections' Physical Fitness Program, Personal Fitness Program, and Yoga. The courses provide students the option to start with one program and choose another as they proceed through the course or to participate in the same program throughout the course. Course content generally includes nutrition guidelines and tips for leading a healthy lifestyle. Teachers monitor students' activity through the submission of activity logs which are reviewed by Learning Coaches and submitted for a grade.
- High School core and elective courses in physical education, personal fitness, and health fitness and nutrition, plus an optional yoga component. Students' activities are monitored and assessed by teachers who grade activity logs submitted online.

C) Media center;

Applicant Response:

ARCA is applying for a waiver from §6-25-103 and §6-25-104. Should the waiver not be approved, ARCA will hire or contract with the required trained and certified library media services program personnel and administer a library media services program as specified in state law. The media center will be available for use by all students.

Regardless of waiver status, media resources and support will be available through the professional services agreement with Connections. Extensive educational media resources will be available online via the Internet to online school students, including the Connections' Virtual Library. While some hard copy resource materials will be housed at the teaching/learning center, the school will not provide a traditional brick-and-mortar library or media center for students. All resources will be provided online with guidance on how to utilize online resources provided by teachers.

D) Special education;

Applicant Response:

The Board anticipates contracting this program to Connections. ARCA will comply with all applicable requirements of IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq. and implementing regulations, including Section 300.209 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794. ARCA will also comply with Arkansas Procedural Requirements and Program Standards and state caseload maximums. ARCA will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including identifying, evaluating, and planning educational programs and placement in accordance with state and federal regulations.

After submitting an application, all families will be asked if their child has had an IEP within the last three years

and if that IEP is currently active. The Manager of Special Education will review the student's special education documentation (IEP and Evaluation Report) and recommend course placement. Upon enrollment, ARCA will convene an IEP meeting to adopt or amend the student's IEP and will provide services comparable to those of the previous district. Special education staff will work closely with the general education teachers to ensure that every student receives accommodations, modifications, and all needed services to access and progress in the general education curriculum in the Least Restrictive Environment.

To support students with IEPs, ARCA will:

- Conduct IEP team meetings, including the parents, for all new students to adopt or amend the IEP. Prior Written Notice detailing the decisions of the IEP team will be provided to parents along with Parental Rights.
- Hold annual reviews of the IEP, including reviewing progress within the existing IEP, reevaluating whether the student is benefitting from the program and creating new IEP goals. A full continuum of special education and related services will be provided, including but not limited to assistive technology and accessibility tools. Program adjustments will be made based on student performance.
- Provide required services including but not limited to speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, social works services, and transportation. Services may be provided in-person or in the virtual classroom, as determined by the IEP team. ARCA will contract with quality providers across the state and proximate to students' homes for face-to-face related services. These services and any necessary transportation will be provided to students for free.
- Conduct triennial evaluations, or more frequently as appropriate, or, if no new data is needed, conduct a review of the records.
- Ensure student participation in state-mandated assessments.

Training is provided throughout the year for the Manager of Special Education and special education teachers. A Connections mentor with experience in online implementation of special education and corresponding state regulations will be assigned to ARCA. Connections will provide extensive training for the entire school leadership team regarding the identification of students suspected of having a disability and types of services available for all students with disabilities. To identify students entering without prior special education identification, the Principal and general and special education staff will conduct Child Find exercises including regular review of teacher observations, assessment results, and other data to identify any possible special education needs among students. Parents will provide input and may initiate a Child Find request.

Section 504 Eligible Students:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a statute designed to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those of non-disabled students. An eligible student under §504 is a student who (a) has, (b) has a record of having, or (c) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, self-care, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and performing manual tasks. §504 plans are typically written for students who are not receiving services under IDEA but who require accommodations and modification to their instructional program. §504 plans may also be written for students who need modified instructional materials or assistive technology due to their disability. Preexisting §504 plans will remain in place for new students, and potentially revised for the virtual environment, and will be updated periodically. ARCA personnel will be alert for and will identify §504-eligible students and will complete a §504 plan for each identified eligible student.

E) Transportation;

Applicant Response:

As ARCA will be an online school serving students throughout Arkansas, routine transportation will not be necessary. Students will not require transportation services for regular school activities which will occur primarily in their homes and immediate vicinities. The only mandatory school events that may require students to report somewhere other than their home or immediate neighborhood will be special orientation sessions and state standardized tests, which students will take at proctored locations.

As a statewide online school, ARCA's obligation to provide transportation services will be limited to those students whose IEP and/or 504 Plan requires services to be provided outside the home. ARCA will utilize three options for providing students with access to these services.

1. ARCA will compensate a service provider to provide services in the student's home whenever possible.

2. For parents who prefer students to receive services outside the home, or when a service provider is not available to provide services inside the home, ARCA will provide mileage reimbursement to parents who are available to transport the student.
3. In all other circumstances, ARCA will contract with one or more third-party transportation providers, at no cost to the student or caretaker, to transport the student to the service provider location.

F) Alternative education, including Alternative Learning Environments;

Applicant Response:

ARCA is applying for a waiver from §6-48-101 et seq.

ARCA will provide academic support, student success plans, interventions, and counseling to students who are experiencing academic, social, or emotional issues to help those students make continued educational progress. ARCA will assist students with achieving their highest potential through flexible educational experiences designed to enhance students' academic growth and foster life-long learning. As the IEP team deems appropriate, if a student requires alternative curricula and is assessed based on alternative standards, ARCA will provide said curriculum at the student's instructional level. Licensed instructors will deliver this rigorous curriculum and innovative strategies in a non-traditional setting through the use of technology. ARCA will assess student learning with continuous assessments and will use data to address students' specific needs. Furthermore, ARCA will strive to eliminate barriers for students and will provide interlocking structured academic and behavioral Response to Intervention (RTI) supports. Moreover, ARCA will provide performance-based education for students to move at their own paces.

Should a student need a more restrictive placement, ARCA will work with the student's local zoned district to find an appropriate alternative placement.

G) English Language Learner (ELL) instruction

Applicant Response:

ARCA will follow state procedures to identify English Language Learners (ELLs). ARCA will designate an ELL Lead Teacher, who will work with content teachers, Learning Coaches, and students to ensure material is adapted and accessible for all ELL students. ARCA will aim to hire an ELL Lead Teacher with TESOL certification. The ELL Lead Teacher will maintain student files, consult with Learning Coaches, provide direct instruction to ELL students via LiveLesson sessions and telephone calls, conduct progress monitoring throughout the school year, create and implement targeted interventions based on the data from progress monitoring, monitor exited ELL students for academic progress using state-specific criteria for two years, and comply with state and federal law pertaining to ELL students.

In hiring staff, consideration will be given to selecting an ELL-certified leader/teacher; ELL roles will be distributed to those staff with proper certification. Staff will have access to Connections' ELL experts who will support the school and its efforts to identify and educate ELL students.

Incoming families will fill out a Home Language Survey (HLS) which will be retained in the student's record. If the HLS indicates any responses other than English, students will be flagged as a potential ELL student. The student's records will be reviewed to determine the need for possible further language testing to identify the specific level of English proficiency. If an enrolled student has transferred from another Arkansas district or a state that uses English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21), he or she may have already participated in the yearly language proficiency assessment. If administered within the last calendar year, the ELL Lead Teacher will use those test results to determine the student's English language proficiency. If none of the student's records indicate former language testing, a trained test administrator will administer the screener assessment and the results determine whether the student will or will not be identified as an ELL student.

ARCA will notify parents/guardians of the initial screening results and program placement decisions within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or within two weeks if the student enrolls during the school year. ARCA will provide these parent notifications both in English and in the parent's language, to the extent feasible.

Once identified as an ELL, a student will receive support based on English proficiency via LiveLesson sessions

by a certified ELL teacher. Instruction will be aligned to standards based on scientific research for English acquisition in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

The ELL Lead Teacher will use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) framework to help students attain English and will participate in monthly professional development sessions. ELL teachers will work with content teachers to ensure that grade level content is accessible for ELL students and the development of academic language skills are promoted in content classes. ELL students at ARCA will fully participate in the core curriculum and will be provided with additional supplementary instructional support software and progress monitoring throughout the school year. In addition, all teachers will consult with Learning Coaches to guide instructional support and will modify content lessons and/or assessments as needed.

When a student demonstrates proficiency, a school-based team consisting of the ELL Lead Teacher, student's content teachers, and the parent/guardian will decide whether the student continues to require ELL instruction. They will use the English language proficiency scores, class performance, academic grades, and teacher recommendations to determine the student's language classification. If the team determines that the student is English proficient and can successfully perform in classes without significant language support, he or she will be reclassified and moved to the monitoring stage. ARCA will monitor ELL students for academic progress using state-specific criteria for two years after exiting the program.

ARCA will also inform parents of the rights to opt out of ELL services. Although parents may choose not to participate in the language programs, ARCA will still be required to ensure that the students' language and academic needs are being met. Students who opt out of services must continue to participate in the state's annual language proficiency assessment until they meet the state exit requirements. ARCA will continue to notify parents/guardians of the assessment results annually and continued participation in or exit from the ELL program.

H) Gifted and Talented Program.

Applicant Response:

ARCA is applying for a waiver from §6-20-2208(c)(6) and §6-42-101 et seq. If the waiver is not approved, ARCA will administer a program complying with §6-42-101 et seq. and will expend revenues in accordance with §6-20-2208(c)(6).

Regardless of whether the waiver is approved, ARCA will provide services to address the needs of gifted and talented students. This program will be contracted through the professional services agreement with Connections via the Gifted and Talented program for elementary and middle school students and the Honors/Advanced Placement® (AP) program for high school students. Both programs have a history of success, as demonstrated by a national survey of families with students enrolled in gifted or AP classes at a school supported by Connections. In the survey conducted in February 2015 by Shapiro (an independent market research company), 94.2% of parents stated they were satisfied with the courses and instruction and 93% said the courses are high quality.

The placement process will ensure gifted students are provided with the most appropriate curriculum, pacing, and teaching approaches from day one. Founded on ADE Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards, the identification process will make use of a multi-criterion approach for identifying gifted students from school entry through grade 12. An identification team of five members, chaired by a gifted education specialist, will identify gifted students by using objective and subjective measures. At no point will a cut-off score be used to include or exclude a student from the program.

Students may be placed in different curriculum levels for different subjects, thus allowing them to specialize in their areas of strength. Students will be able to work significantly above grade level without fear of ostracism or other negative social repercussions that gifted students may encounter in a brick-and-mortar setting.

ARCA will also offer a focused gifted program for selected grades that will include specially designed gifted courses in language arts, mathematics, and science which will be taught by licensed teachers. Grouped together with other gifted learners, students in these courses will cover the same educational standards as they would in the standard offerings, but with more challenging assignments covered at an accelerated pace. These courses will offer additional activities that will build upon lesson topics by promoting higher-level thinking and understanding. These students will also be provided with opportunities to work collaboratively and to interact

with other gifted learners, particularly through LiveLesson sessions.

ARCA will also offer an exclusive online version of Junior Great Books®. Gifted students will enjoy age-appropriate works and participate in online literary inquiry and discussions together with other high-ability students.

The gifted math program allows a student to accelerate their learning with the potential of working two years above his/her peers.

As the school grows to add all grades the full high school program will offer a rigorous college preparatory curriculum through the provision of dozens of Honors courses and up to 16 AP courses. Students with special interests will also be able to design their own focused course of study through an "Independent Study" course. These courses will provide advanced students with opportunities to participate in extension projects, investigations, and activities centered on integrated skills application and higher-level thinking and understanding. Placement within these courses will be made through careful review by school counselors and in close consultation with students, parents, and the assigned teacher of the course.

In addition to providing specialized education to students on the basis of general intellectual ability and specific academic aptitude, ARCA will also provide programs for those who excel with regards to artistic ability. Through student portfolios, self-referrals, or referral by parents, peers, or members of the community, gifted students may be placed in the Visual and Performing Arts Academy. A student may be referred to a club or activity within their field of interest and/or giftedness.

Gifted program availability and enrollment information will be communicated to families and the ARCA community through website postings and school wide communications. Opportunities for community involvement in the gifted and talented program, including but not limited to annual committee meetings, will also be communicated through these mediums.

All staff will be provided with opportunities to attend monthly gifted and talented professional development sessions in order to further their own practice and understanding of gifted educ

10. Describe the geographical area to be served by the charter. List all school districts within the geographical area likely to be affected by the open-enrollment public charter school.

Applicant Response:

Specific Geographical Area Served by ARCA

ARCA will be open to all students statewide. As requested by the Charter School Program Advisor, we provided a list of school districts in Attachment 13. ARCA will actively recruit students across the state through extensive community outreach and full disclosure about the school's program and expects to attract those students and families who are most committed to student success in a virtual school setting. ARCA will utilize a broad-reaching student recruitment effort, thereby ensuring outreach to families with a wide variety of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. In addition, ARCA may focus on certain subgroups for extra recruitment efforts in order to achieve a pool of potential students that reflects a balanced student population. Partnerships and outreach efforts using a variety of community and youth organizations may aid in this process.

There is strong demand for online schooling throughout Arkansas. Without any marketing efforts, over 4,000 families have expressed interest in learning more about a statewide, online school supported by Connections. In addition, three public hearings were held on 7/17/15, 7/18/15, and 7/27/15 and nine online and twelve in-person information sessions were held in May, June, and July 2015, during which information was shared about the proposed public charter school. The Board anticipates that a broad range of students from across the state will enroll once information about the school is widely available.

Information on the School Districts likely to be Affected by ARCA, including Data on the Expected Number of Students to Transfer to ARCA

While ARCA will enroll students statewide, Connections' experience in other states where they support schools indicates that no single district will be severely impacted. For example:

- In Georgia, 5,472 students from 170 of the 180 school districts in the state have enrolled in the school, representing 0.32% of statewide public school enrollment.
- In Louisiana, 2,358 students from 76 of the 76 school districts in the state have enrolled in the school, representing 0.35% of statewide public school enrollment.
- In Oklahoma, 1,551 students from 255 of the 517 school districts in the state have enrolled in the school, representing 0.23% of the statewide public school enrollment.

ARCA requests an initial enrollment cap of 2,000 students for Years 1, 2, and 3 and a cap of 3,000 students in Years 4 and 5. ARCA anticipates enrolling 600 students in Year 1; 1,200 students in Year 2; and 2,000 students in Year 3.

Students whose academic and social needs will be effectively met by ARCA include:

- Students who are far ahead of or far behind their peers in school, including students at risk of academic failure and those coping with social or bullying issues
- Students who are homebound due to illness or disability
- Students with special learning needs
- Rural students with limited curricular options
- Students pursuing artistic or athletic careers or career development opportunities requiring a flexible schedule

As a public school, ARCA will not charge tuition. Outreach communications will inform families that the school is tuition-free. ARCA is committed to making sure all students can access the program regardless of socio-economic status and will ensure everyone has access to the education program. This will include providing a computer and Internet subsidy to enrolled families who require these to access the school. Computers shall remain the school's property and must be returned upon graduation or dis-enrolling.

As a public school, ARCA will be non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Admission to the school will not be determined according to the place of residence of any pupil or his/her parent or guardian within Arkansas.

11. Describe the plan for the school officials to provide an annual report to parents, the community, and the authorizer that demonstrates the progress made by the charter school during any previous academic year in meeting its academic performance objectives. (*See ADE Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts.*)

Applicant Response:

ARCA will follow ADE Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts (http://www.arkansased.org/public/userfiles/Legal/Legal-current%20Rules/ade_282_standards_0709_current.pdf) ARCA will maintain reports and records necessary for effective planning, operation, and education. ARCA will submit timely and accurate reports appraising student performance to the ADE.

Timeline for Data Compilation

The school will begin compiling data in the spring of the current school year and will finalize all reports during the summer following the school year. All reports and information will be final, available, and disseminated by November 15 of each year for the previous school year.

Disseminating Annual Report to Stakeholders

- ARCA will develop, with staff and community participation, a plan to disseminate the annual report. Goals will be compatible with state and national educational goals and address state needs. ARCA will file the plan with the ADE.
- ARCA will provide and publish before November 15 of each school year a report to the public detailing progress toward accomplishing program goals, accreditation standards, and proposals to correct deficiencies. In addition, ARCA will notify parents of the report via email.
- ARCA will systematically and at least annually explain its policies, programs, and goals to the community in a

public board meeting and provide opportunities for parents and other members of the community to ask questions and make suggestions.

Measuring, Analyzing, and Reporting Academic Progress

As described previously, ARCA will have very specific and measurable objectives for success, based upon the academic progress of its students and the school's performance on several academic and non-academic measures. The school administration will use Connexus to watch each of these variables closely to monitor the school's overall success. The Principal, in collaboration with the staff and with the Connections administrative support team, will develop a list of measurable annual school goals that are designed to ensure continuous improvement. The Board will approve these school goals and the performance of the Principal and staff is evaluated in part by using the school goals.

As a public school, ARCA will measure and report the academic achievement of all students annually, as well as ongoing progress and performance of cohorts and the school as a whole. ARCA students will participate in state proficiency tests depending upon grade level. The school will set up in-person, proctored locations for state testing. Results of these assessments will be reported through the ADE. In addition, state assessment data is logged in Connexus to complete a data snapshot of student academic performance. The Board and school leadership will also include the results of the state-mandated testing in the evaluation of the school's overall performance.

Responsibility for monitoring, evaluating, adjusting, and adhering to the school's assessment policies and practices will follow a traditional model. Teachers will have primary responsibility for administering assessments and providing feedback to administrators. The Principal will oversee the assessment program and work with education specialists in evaluating and making recommendations for changes. The Board will have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the school is fulfilling the expectations and obligations under charter school law, the charter, and Board-approved school policy.

12. Describe the enrollment criteria and recruitment processes, that will provide an equal opportunity for all parents and students to learn about and apply for admission to the proposed public charter school.

Applicant Response:

Enrollment Criteria - Eligible students must reside in Arkansas and submit a valid proof of residency such as a recent mortgage statement, current lease, or utility bill (gas, electric, or water) showing service or property address. ARCA has an expected enrollment of 600 students for the 2016-2017 school year. The school will obtain from the state data system or incoming students a most recent report card, unofficial transcript, or prior academic history to verify prior schooling. Students must meet minimum/maximum age requirements or qualify for an exception as noted in state regulations. Kindergarten students must turn five on or before August 1 of the year in which they are seeking initial enrollment. First grade students, initially enrolling, must be six on or before October 1. The maximum age of a student to enroll is 21. Prior to completing enrollment, a birth certificate, a statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child's date of birth, passport, or United States military identification must be provided. Prior to admission, a copy of the student's up-to-date immunization record or the appropriate and current exemption form must be provided. ARCA has the right to not enroll any student that is currently expelled.

Equal Opportunity Student Recruitment Plan - Student recruitment and enrollment policies need to be balanced with the mutual goals of ensuring that families are aware of their choices with the Board's need to be fiscally conservative. Enrollment will generally begin in March for the school year starting in August, with reasonable public notice given at least 30 days before the open enrollment deadline and according to all Arkansas rules and regulations. Upon approval of the charter, ARCA will actively recruit families that represent the full cultural, demographic, and socioeconomic range of Arkansas. ARCA will use a variety of means to inform families about its services and provide them an opportunity to enroll, including:

- **Direct Mail:** ARCA will conduct direct mail campaigns announcing the school to families.
- **Information Sessions:** ARCA will conduct multiple information sessions across the state to assure that families from a variety of communities are able to attend. Information sessions may also be online and families may attend from home via their computers.

- **Website:** Connections will create and maintain a website specific to ARCA. The website will include enrollment and school information and also create opportunities for parent-to-parent communication through Contact-A-Parent (an opportunity provided through the Connections website to [χοννεχτ ωιτη α παρεντ](#) of a student enrolled in a school supported by Connections).
- **Telephone/email information service:** ARCA will launch and maintain a toll-free information line and an email information service to answer parents' questions.
- **Community and youth services partnerships:** ARCA will provide information about the charter school to the community that may include youth-serving organizations.
- **Media Outreach:** ARCA will make use of paid advertisements in local media outlets.
- **Search Engines and Social Media:** ARCA will be linked to leading Internet search engines with local reference capability to help Arkansas families looking for an online school option find this high-quality charter school (Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites).

Open and Fair Admissions Process - ARCA will be open to all students statewide on a space available basis and will not discriminate in its admission policies or practices. ARCA admissions procedures will comply with IDEA 2004 and Civil Rights protections. ARCA will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and will comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other public schools in Arkansas. The school will comply with the McKinney-Vento Act regarding homeless students. Students who meet the definition of homeless shall not be barred from enrolling due to lack of required documents. All students who enroll in ARCA will be full-time public school students. As a public school, ARCA will not charge tuition.

Check which of the following enrollment preferences, as permissible in Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306(14)(C), would be allowed at the charter school.

1. Children of founding members of the charter
2. Siblings of enrolled students
3. No enrollment preferences (No other boxes may be checked in order to select this option.)

If box 1 and/or 2 are checked, explain the policy.

Applicant Response:

Children of Founding Board Members and siblings of enrolled students will be given enrollment preference. Up to five spaces will be held for the children of founding board members. The spaces will be reserved until a published date and will be released if not filled.

The children of Founding Board Members who were not exempt from the lottery process and were not accepted in the lottery will be placed on a Founder Preference List. These students will be given the first opportunity to enroll as space becomes available. Students on this list with the lowest lottery number will be placed first.

Siblings of enrolled or accepted students who were not accepted in the lottery will be placed on a Sibling Preference List. These students will be made an offer of enrollment after students on the Founder Preference List as space becomes available. Students on this list with the lowest lottery number will be placed first.

It is affirmed that a random, anonymous student selection method will be utilized in the event that more students apply for admission to the open-enrollment public charter school than can be accommodated under the terms of the charter, except as allowed for in Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306(14)(C).

- Yes
- No

Describe procedures for conducting the an annual single lottery enrollment process, including the timeline for enrolling, the date of the lottery, and the way in which students will be placed on waiting lists, and the process for notifying parents about each child's selection or order on the waiting list. Explain how the charter will ensure that the lottery process is transparent to the public.

Applicant Response:

Tentative Open Enrollment and Lottery Dates (Subject to Change)

Open Enrollment begins: Tuesday 3/1/ 2016

Lottery Determination Date/Close of Open Enrollment: Friday 4/1/2016

Lottery If Needed: Monday 4/11/2016

Random and Anonymous Lottery - As an online school, ARCA will not be subject to the same facility space restrictions a brick-and-mortar school might face in accommodating as many students as may wish to attend. Each year the school will conduct an open application period. If it becomes necessary, ARCA will conduct a random selection process that is in keeping with state and federal guidelines.

No applicants will be enrolled during the open application period. During this period, applicants who are interested in enrolling must begin and proceed through the enrollment process with the exception of course placement. If a random lottery is needed, ARCA will post the date and time of the lottery on its website enrollment page. Attendance is not required. Following the first year of operation, returning students and siblings will be accounted for when determining the need for a random lottery.

Lottery selection allows for fair and equitable selection of students in the event more students apply than can be accommodated. Sibling preference in the lottery process helps committed families handle the logistics of successful participation in the online school. The random selection process provides all applicants who have completed all enrollment tasks by a specified, publicly-announced deadline an equal chance of being admitted. ARCA will notify students with preferences of their right to enroll and then shall conduct a random selection process to fill remaining openings. ARCA will give preference to students who were enrolled in the school in the prior year (once enrolled, students will not be required to reapply) and siblings of students presently enrolled.

ARCA will post the date and time of the lottery on its website Enrollment page. The lottery will be conducted in three clusters: Grades K-5, 6-8, and 9. The school will open with grades K-9 but will eventually serve grades K-12. As high school grades are added, they will be clustered together. The order in which those clusters are drawn and the total number of students selected for each cluster may vary each year in consideration of the school's overall enrollment limit, the expected number of returning students and any of their siblings who complete an enrollment application during the open application period, and/or other operational factors. This allows for as many students who are interested in enrolling the opportunity to enroll up to the overall enrollment limit each year. If the number of applicants exceeds the overall allowed amount, then the school will determine which grade cluster has exceeded its limit and conduct a lottery accordingly for the oversubscribed grade clusters.

For each grade cluster, a computer program will randomly select a student name from the pool of enrollment applicants for that grade cluster until the number of available slots is filled, or the pool of enrollment applications is exhausted. As each student in a grade cluster is selected, siblings of that student who have also completed the applicable enrollment steps, excluding course placement, will be accepted as long as a slot in their grade cluster is available. When all available slots have been filled, students not selected will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which they completed enrollment tasks based on the automated Connexus waitlist time/date stamp. Waitlisted siblings of selected students will be given the first priority to enroll. The parents of selected students will receive an email confirmation within five business days after the lottery and must confirm student attendance within 10 business days. Students without confirmed attendance within 10 business days will forfeit their slots to the next eligible students on the waiting list.

ARCA will continue to accept applications after the open application period. If the school is oversubscribed these students will be placed on the waiting list in order they complete the applicable enrollment process steps, including course placement. These students will be allowed to enroll based on the availability of space in their

grade cluster and their place on the waiting list. Students who complete the entire process first will be offered the space first, after siblings.

If the school is not oversubscribed by the end of the open application period, no lottery will be held and ARCA will continue to accept applications and admit eligible students in the order they completed all enrollment tasks, based on availability in their respective grade clusters. Again, once the enrollment limit has been met, students will be placed on a waitlist and allowed to enroll if space becomes available in their grade cluster. Siblings of enrolled students will receive preference on the waitlist.

If it is believed that the use of a weighted lottery is required by federal court or administrative order, explain and furnish a copy of the order.

Applicant Response:

ARCA will not use a weighted lottery, as the conditions required by §6-23-306(14)(c) in order to use a weighted lottery do not exist. ARCA and Connections have no history of discriminatory practices and the lotteries, if necessary, are public and monitored for fairness. The current racial/ethnic demographics of students attending the 29 schools supported by Connections nationwide are representative of similar demographics to the 26 states in which the schools are located. Currently schools supported by Connections serve students of the following races/ethnic groups, as reported by families during the enrollment process: 67% White, 10% Black/African American, 2% Asian, and 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native. Additionally, 13% of families identified their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino and 87% Non-Hispanic/Latino. Based on these figures, it is evident that schools supported by Connections do not include discriminatory practices in the enrollment process and furthermore encourage families regardless of their socio-economic circumstances to enroll. ARCA will continue this in adherence with state and federal regulation and anticipates enrolling students of similar demographics to the public school population in Arkansas.

13. Name any founders or board members of the proposed charter's sponsoring entity, management company staff, and/or leaders of the proposed charter who have any prior involvement in the operation of one or more other charter schools and complete a Prior Charter Involvement **template** for each individual listed.

Applicant Response:

We have provided prior charter involvement forms for the Board of Directors (Dennis Beck, Virginia Walden Ford, and Carla Hartwell) and for members of the team from our proposed partner, Connections (Melissa Nelson, Bryce Adams and Lyn McCullen) in Attachment 9.

Dennis Beck has previous involvement with Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School (West Chester, PA).

Virginia Walden Ford has previous involvement with Premier Public Charter School (Little Rock, AR) and Booker T. Washington Public Charter School (Washington DC).

Carl Hartwell has no previous involvement with charter schools.

Melissa Nelson has previous involvement with the following schools supported by Connections:

- MTS Minnesota Connections Academy (MTSMCA)

- Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
- Kansas Connections Academy (KCA)
- Iowa Connections Academy (IACA)
- Oklahoma Connections Academy (OKCA)
- New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA)
- Texas Connections Academy at Houston (TCAH)
- Wisconsin Connections Academy (WCA)
- Colorado Connections Academy (COLOCA)
- North Carolina Connections Academy (NCCA)

Bryce Adams has previous involvement with the following schools supported by Connections:

- Texas Connections Academy @ Houston (TCAH)
- Oklahoma Connections Academy (OKCA)
- Louisiana Connections Academy (LACA)
- Utah Connections Academy (UCA)

Lyn McCullen has no previous involvement with charter schools.

14. Summarize the job descriptions of the school director and other key personnel. Specify the qualifications to be met by professional employees (administrators, teachers, counselors, etc.) of the program. List the types of administrative positions, teaching positions, and support positions for the school.

Applicant Response:

Staffing levels are described in full-time equivalent units (FTE). FTE represents the total hours worked divided by the maximum number of hours in a full-time schedule for that position, allowing for fractional representation of some positions.

FTE Staffing for 2016-2017 (360 students in grades K-5/240 students in grades 6-9/total of 600 students)

1 Principal
 1.5 Administrative Assistants
 1 Manager of Special Education
 1 Manager of Counseling
 7.2 Teachers (K-5)*
 7.3 Teachers (6-9)*
 0.8 Advisory Teachers/School Counselors
 1.8 Special Education Teachers
 21.6 TOTAL STAFF
 35:1 Student-to-teacher ratio

FTE Staffing for 2017-2018 (654 students in grades K-5/546 students in grades 6-10/total of 1,200 students)

1 Principal
 1 Assistant Principal
 3 Administrative Assistants
 1 Manager of Special Education
 1 Manager of Counseling
 13 Teachers (K-5)*
 15.3 Teachers (6-10)*
 1.8 Advisory Teachers/School Counselors
 3.7 Special Education Teachers
 40.8 TOTAL STAFF
 35.5:1 Student-to-teacher ratio

*A licensed, qualified, and trained teacher will also perform the role of ELL Lead Teacher.

Salary Scales

The Board anticipates hiring staff at the following base salary ranges and also intends to offer incentive compensation for eligible staff. The Board reserves the right to alter the scales accordingly.

Principal: \$70,000 - \$85,000/year

Assistant Principal: \$58,000 - \$65,000/year

Administrative Assistants: \$25,000 - \$35,000/year

Manager of Special Education: \$53,000 - \$65,000/per year

Manager of Counseling: \$50,000 - \$60,000/per year

Teachers (K-5 and 6-12): \$40,000 - \$52,750/per year

Advisory Teachers/School Counselors: \$40,000 - \$52,750/per year

Special Education Teachers: \$40,000 - \$52,750/per year

Job Descriptions

Ideally, candidates will meet the listed requirements; however, requirements may change based on potential candidates' strengths.

Principal/School Director/Operations Director (contracted position)

The Principal will manage teachers as they teach students and consult regularly with Learning Coaches, ensuring that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. The Principal is responsible for overall school operation working with parents, students, staff and teachers.

- Administrative credential required
- Minimum of five years teaching experience and some administrative/management experience
- Online teaching experience is preferred.
- Advanced degree is preferred
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Demonstrated ability to work well in fast paced environment
- Technologically proficient

Assistant Principal (contracted position)

The Assistant Principal will work collaboratively with the Principal. He/she will manage all of the site-based, non-academic school operations. Additionally, he/she will work closely with the enrollment, technical support, materials management, fulfillment, finance, human resources, payroll, and facilities management functions. He/she will manage a range of special projects.

- Administrative certification
- Minimum of five years of relevant work experience
- Some operational/logistical experience and/or administrative/management experience
- Relevant advanced degree is preferred
- Education experience
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Technologically proficient

Administrative Assistant (contracted position)

The Administrative Assistant will be responsible for daily administrative tasks of the school such as answering phones and email, receiving visitors, assisting the Principal and teachers with administrative tasks, filing and other duties as assigned.

- Proficient with Microsoft tools and web-based applications
- Ability to multi-task in a fast paced environment
- Good interpersonal skills and attention to detail
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- High degree of flexibility
- Ability to work well in fast-paced team environment

Manager of Special Education (contracted position)

The Manager of Special Education will oversee all aspects of educational service delivery for students with special education needs. The Manager will ensure that the school operates in compliance with all state and federal regulations, and data is being collected, stored, and updated in a manner that meets all compliance expectations.

The Manager will ensure that the school is providing appropriate programs in the least restrictive environment for all students with special needs. This will include managing the pre-referral and IEP processes, maintaining student data, communicating with parents, locating and contracting with service providers, and ensuring that the school operates in compliance with special education law and procedures at all times. The Manager may also have a reduced teaching load.

- Masters' Degree in Special Education or related Education Field
- Valid Special Education credential in Arkansas
- Teaching experience in Special Education
- Expertise in special education law and compliance
- Experience in IDEA administration
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Ability to work well in fast paced environment
- Technologically proficient

Manager of Counseling (contracted position)

The Manager of Counseling will work with the leadership team to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. The Manager will provide direction to staff and will assist students and parents in understanding and meeting graduation requirements, course selection and scheduling, post-secondary school planning, and crisis intervention.

- Minimum of 5 years teaching experience, some counseling/management experience
- Arkansas Counseling Credential endorsement
- Advanced degree
- Technologically proficient
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Ability to work well in fast paced environment

K-5 and 6-12 Teachers (contracted position)

Certified teachers will teach students and support the instructional programs. They will consult regularly with Learning Coaches to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. In hiring the staff, consideration will be given to selecting ESOL/TESOL certified leaders and teachers and ELL roles will be distributed to those staff with proper certification.

- Licensed to teach (appropriate to grade and subject level responsibilities)
- Strong technology skills
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Demonstrated ability to work well in fast paced environment
- Team player track record
- Ability to work some occasional evening hours, as needed to support some families

Advisory Teacher/School Counselor (contracted position)

The Advisory Teacher/School Counselor will assist students and Learning Coaches with course selection, scheduling and will be the initial point of contact for student concerns that span multiple subject areas as well as non-academic issues. The Advisory Teacher/School Counselor will become an expert on course and credit requirements to establish counseling processes. The Advisory Teacher/School Counselor may also carry a teaching load in addition to advisory duties.

- Arkansas teacher certification in a secondary content area or grade level or Arkansas Counseling certification
- Strong technology skills
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Excellent attention to detail and organizational skills
- High degree of flexibility
- Team player with demonstrated leadership skills
- Ability to work well in fast-paced environment

Special Education Teachers (contracted position)

The Special Education Teacher will teach students with special needs and manage instructional programs for students with special needs. They will consult regularly with Learning Coaches and students to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. Special Education Teachers will participate in all steps of the IEP process. They will work closely with other teachers and district/state professionals to ensure that the school's special education program is successful and operating in compliance with federal and state

regulations. The Special Education Teacher will utilize technology to deliver online instruction and teach students.

- Degree in Special Education or related Education Field
- Valid Special Education credential in Arkansas
- Experience in policy (IDEA) and/or administration with Special Education
- Strong technology skills
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written
- Ability to work well in fast paced environment

Connections Support Services

Connections will provide the following support products and services as described in the agreement.

- Aligned Curriculum
- Connexus Access
- Enrollment Processing
- Course Placement
- Recruitment and Community Education
- Management of Instructional Materials
- Professional Development
- Special Education Support
- Student Records Support
- Professional and Technical Support Services (including Help Desk for staff and families)
- Human Resources
- Facilities and Finance Support
- Training on Connexus and Connections products

Finance Support (contracted position)

The school will contract with Connections for finance support. The school will follow a financial and accounting plan compliant with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and will provide an accurate accounting of all of its finances, ensure sufficient information for audit purposes, and provide data in the format needed for accurate and timely annual financial reports. ARCA will comply with Federal monitoring requirements for any Federal funds it receives. Each month, the Board will receive a set of detailed financial statements that will include a revenue and expense statement, a balance sheet, invoice detail (vendor, amount, date, purpose), any grant fund expenditures, cash receipts from all sources, and a transaction listing of all activity in the school's bank account.

15. Explain how the school will conduct its business office. Tell about business office personnel and describe the plan for managing procurement activities, and the process by which the school governance will adopt an annual budget.

Applicant Response:

The Board is responsible for the completion and results of all accounting reports as required by law, regulation, or the charter, including a report of budgeted and actual expenses. The Board will provide any information required by the ADE or its auditors. ARCA will use the chart of accounts outlined in the Arkansas Financial Accounting Handbook, as reported via APSCN.

The Board designated Virginia Walden Ford, one of its members, to serve as the Treasurer of the school. The Treasurer has the oversight responsibility for all funds and securities and for monies due and payable from any source, including the deposit of monies in the banks, trust companies, or other depositories as will be selected in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws.

The Treasurer will receive supporting documentation for all invoices as well as a transaction listing of all activity in the school's bank account. In addition to reviewing the actual monthly and year-to-date results for the school, the Treasurer will review a monthly projection for the balance of the school year in order to provide the Board with visibility to the projected financial position of the school at the end of the fiscal year. This report will be reviewed at each Board meeting to ensure that the school has sufficient funds to meet all of its obligations and to

stay on a sound financial footing. Potential shortfalls will be identified with sufficient time to make adjustments in the school's operations to ensure that a sufficient fund balance is always available at the end of each school year.

ARCA will use industry-standard accounting software to ensure proper bookkeeping. ARCA will also establish policies and procedures and will institute rigorous financial controls including the following:

ARCA will develop and maintain simple check request and purchase order forms to document the authorization of non-payroll expenditures. All proposed expenditures must be approved by a designee of the Board. The designee will review the proposed expenditure for approval and to determine whether it is consistent with the Board's adopted budget. Supporting documentation will be required for all expenditures.

To ensure fiscal responsibility and compliance, the Board will meet regularly to review the operations and financial performance of the school.

ARCA will maintain its accounts at a federally insured commercial bank or credit union. Funds will be deposited in non-speculative accounts including federally-insured savings or checking accounts or invested in non-speculative federally-backed instruments. Access to these accounts will be limited to individuals designated by the Board.

Each month, ARCA will produce a set of detailed financial statements that include a statement of activities, a balance sheet, bank reconciliations, invoice detail, payroll registers, any grant fund expenditures, cash receipts from all sources, and a transaction listing of all activity. The Treasurer will be provided with access to such financial documents for review as an increased measure of oversight and governance.

The Board will use a sound budgeting and forecasting policy and procedures to monitor revenue and authorize expenditures according to any restrictions placed on such revenue. A detailed revenue and expense statement will be reviewed at each Board meeting and will serve as the vehicle to authorize future expenditures, along with the adopted budget and other policies.

Plan for Managing Procurement Activities

ARCA is requesting a waiver from §6-21-301 et seq. to contract with Connections for Connections' education services, which are only available from a single source and thus exempt under §6-21-305. The Board will follow state regulations regarding all other procurement activities. Should the waiver not be granted, ARCA will follow the required process for a contract with an education services provider.

Members have experience operating businesses and schools and are familiar with standard procurement processes including the Request for Proposal process. The Board will work with legal counsel to ensure all required procurement steps are completed and that all regulations are met.

Personnel who will Perform Business Duties

ARCA intends to contract with Connections for business support and assistance with performing various financial functions. Connections will be required to provide financial reports and supporting documentation for all expenditures to the Treasurer and the Board as a whole. The Charter School Financial Services team at Connections currently performs this similar function for 28 other charter schools in 17 other states and has an exemplary audit record. Functions performed by this team, under the direction of the various boards, include:

- Preparing financial reports and disclosures to meet the reporting needs of multiple schools in various states.
- Performing daily accounting activities and general ledger maintenance to record charter school financial activity.
- Providing accounting and financial/legislative audit support services for schools reporting under non-profit and governmental GAAP.
- Monitoring federal/state accounting and regulatory requirements unique to various states to ensure school compliance.
- Assisting with developing internal control design and providing support for the implementation of school financial processes and procedures.
- Assisting with financial budgeting and forecasting functions on behalf of the schools.
- Providing training sessions to school management to increase their awareness of financial and compliance matters unique to their school.

Connections will work closely with the Treasurer and the Board to deliver information in a manner that ensures proper oversight is maintained over the school's financial operations.

Timeline and Process by which the Board will Review and Adopt an Annual Budget

On an annual basis and prior to any deadline specified in the charter, ARCA will present a balanced budget (i.e., not resulting in a cumulative net asset deficit) for the following fiscal year to the ADE or its auditors.

Developing ARCA's annual budget will be an iterative process incorporating input from key stakeholders including the designated members of the Board including the Board Treasurer and the school's Principal. A preliminary budget based on initial assumptions will be presented to the Board for approval before the start of the school year. Once the beginning enrollment and updated per-pupil funding figures are known, a revised budget will be prepared. On a monthly basis, the budget will be compared to actuals and a reforecast will be prepared. This process will provide the Board with the ability to change the financial direction of the school at any point.

Balanced Two-Year Budget

A balanced two-year budget estimate is included in Attachment 6. The budget does not rely on one-time grants or other funds not presently guaranteed. It includes costs for all personnel, programs, and expenses.

Complete the budget template showing a balanced budget with realistic expectations of revenue and expenditures.

Provide the minimum number of students who must attend the charter in order for the school to be financially viable. Describe the method used to calculate this number. Tell who made the calculations and describe the financial expertise of the individuals who assisted in this assessment.

Describe the contingency plan if fewer students than necessary for financial viability enroll before the first day of school. Provide a detailed explanation of the ways in which the charter leaders will provide the education program outlined in the application to fewer students that determined necessary for financial viability or a date certain by which charter leaders will notify the parents, leaders of surrounding districts and open-enrollment charters, and staff at the Arkansas Department of Education that the school will not open as anticipated.

Explain how charter leaders will provide the education program outlined in the application if enough students for financial viability enroll and are admitted but fail to arrive when school begins.

Describe preparations to pay for any unexpected, but necessary and possibly urgent expenses.

Applicant Response:

The school's mission is to offer families throughout the state access to a quality education by providing the personalized learning inherent in a high quality online school. In order to achieve its mission, the school must remain fiscally sound.

The completed budget template, provided in Attachment 6, is carefully aligned to the mission of the school and demonstrates a school with sound financial planning.

Revenue is limited to State Charter School Aid. Enrollment figures have been based on the projections for the initial size of the school and subsequent school growth and are consistent with demand in Arkansas for full-time virtual education.

Expenditures are based upon reasonable estimates of anticipated expenses and are aligned to the school's mission and performance goals. A majority of the school's expenses will be variable instead of fixed.

Personnel assumptions are based on staffing ratios that have been found to be effective in other online schools and according to best practices in teaching in an online environment. The budget provides for a student-to-teacher ratio (on an FTE basis) of approximately 35:1 in Year 1 and 35.5:1 in Year 2. Substitute teachers are usually not required in an online environment, as the staff of the school can typically cover when a colleague is absent. ARCA does intend, however, to identify some substitute teaching resources to address longer-term absences if needed.

School administrators and staff will be employed by Connections through the professional services agreement, but serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors. The positions reflected in the budget are 100% dedicated to ARCA. Wages will be reimbursed to Connections at cost.

For expenditures other than personnel, the budget assumes that expenses will be consistent with the full-time online schools supported by ARCA's proposed partner, Connections. Unless specifically itemized in the budget template, it was assumed that products and services will be provided by Connections under their Standard Fee Schedule (included as Attachment 16 of this application). In the completed budget template, the anticipated expenses can be found under the following expenditure types:

- Administration
- Regular Classroom Instruction
- Special Education
- Fiscal Services
- Maintenance and Operations

For Administration, the budgeted Connections expenditure covers expenses such as:

- School Launch Support
- School Oversight
- School Leader Support and Development
- Legislative, Policies, Rules and Regulations Monitoring
- Accreditation Support
- Research and Analysis
- School Handbook Support
- Outreach Support
- Enrollment Services
- Academic Placement Services
- Student Records Management
- Professional Development and Training
- External Reporting Support
- State Testing Support
- Accountability Support
- Grant Identification, Writing, and Administration
- General Board Support
- Governance Training
- Authorizer Compliance and Reporting Support
- Human Resources Support

For Regular Classroom Instruction, the budgeted Connections expenditure covers expenses such as:

- Core and Elective courses
- Gifted and Talented Curriculum
- Advanced Placement (AP) courses
- Career Technology Education (CTE) courses
- Clubs and Activities

- Specialty Academies
- Connexus Education Management System (EMS)
- LiveLesson (Online Classroom)
- Staff Instructional Technology, and Software
- Student Instructional Technology, and Software
- Supplemental Instructional Support Programs

Connections' courses include 1,800 Teachlet proprietary instructional movies and more than 1,000 primary source and instructional videos. Integrated "e-text" electronic textbooks are licensed from a variety of leading publishers including Pearson, Perfection Learning, and others, while non-proprietary technology-based content is licensed from "best of breed" providers such as Grolier Online®™ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and Discovery Education™. In addition, the instructional design includes interactive LiveLesson sessions and threaded discussions.

The Board understands that Gifted and Talented, ELL, and guidance services are not special education programs. These bundled purchased services are included within the "Special Education Oversight and Support" fee. For Special Education, the budgeted Connections expenditure covers expenses related to special populations such as:

- Special Education Protocol Development
- Special Education Training and Professional Development
- Special Education Oversight and Compliance Support
- IEP Management Software and Support
- Assistive Technology Procurement
- Special Education Service Provider Coordination
- Accessibility Support
- 504 Plan Guidance
- Gifted Program Support
- At-Risk Population Support Services
- Homeless and Migrant Support
- ELL Support (provided by ESOL/TESOL certified leaders and teachers)
- School Counseling Support

For Fiscal Services, the budgeted Connections expenditure covers expenses such as:

School Financial Services

- Federal Programs Support
- Payroll
- Accounts Payable
- Cash Flow Protection
- School Business Support
- Internet Subsidy Management and Payment Processing

For Maintenance and Operations, the budgeted Connections expenditure covers expenses related to:

- Systems Administration
- Telecommunications Support
- Networking & Internet Connectivity
- MIS Help Desk
- Facilities Support Services
- Insurance/Risk Management Support
- Purchasing Support

Minimum Number of Students Required for Financial Viability

Although ARCA can budget for a minimum enrollment level, the revenue would not support some of the features proposed in this application. Any changes to the model presented in this application would require discussion and a decision by the Board.

In the event that enrollment is less than anticipated, the school would remain financially viable and the model would remain consistent with the adopted budget. Most expenses of the school are anticipated to be variable instead of fixed. This will ensure the majority of expenses will flex up and down with enrollment, thus cushioning

the impact of lower than estimated revenue due to an enrollment shortfall. Therefore, unlike a brick-and-mortar charter school, there is no minimum number of students required for financial viability.

Contingency Plan to Provide the Education Program outlined in the program if fewer students than Necessary for Viability Enroll and/or Attend

As stated, most expenses of the school are anticipated to be variable instead of fixed. As an added measure Connections has pledged to protect ARCA from deficits by offering "service credits" (discounts on Connections-provided products and services) as needed. A letter from the Connections' CFO is provided in Attachment 12. These factors ensure that the school would remain financially viable and that the model would remain consistent with the adopted budget.

Plans to Pay for Unexpected but Necessary Expenses

The budget includes a contingency fund balance which should allow for unexpected but necessary expenses. Connections Education is ARCA's proposed partner and will, as part of its Educational Products and Services Agreement, protect the school from cash flow volatility by awaiting reimbursement of charges until the school has the funds available to make payment and by allowing the school to pay in installments.

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

Applicant Response:

Annually, the Board will arrange for an audit of ARCA's financial statements in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and the OMB Circular A-133. The financial statements will be presented using a fund basis format which will include, at a minimum, the general fund and the special revenue fund presented separately and all other funds presented in the aggregate. These statements will be prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and applicable ADE requirements.

ARCA requests the first year financial statement audit to be performed by a licensed Certified Public Accountant in good standing with the Arkansas Division of Legislative Audit. If approved, Rasco Winter Abston Moore & Associates, LLP in Little Rock is the preferred CPA firm.

Alan Abston, CPA
Partner
Rasco Winter Abston Moore & Associates, LLP
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-375-8500

The audit will be completed and filed with the ADE and the Arkansas Division of Legislative Audit within nine months as in required by §6-20-1801.

The Board will review the results of the audit and all comments provided by the auditor in accordance with requirements specified under §6-1-101 and, if needed, develop a corrective action plan to amend any material weakness noted by the auditor.

17. It is affirmed that the public charter school will participate in the Arkansas Public School Computer Network, as required by state statute and by State Board of Education rule, for reporting **both education data and financial data, including grant funds or private donations received directly by the charter school.**

Yes

No

18. Describe the facilities to be used. Give the present use of the facility. If the facility to be used for the school is a facility of a school district, describe the terms established by the local school board of the district stipulating the relationship between the proposed public charter school and the district pertaining to the use of the facility. Attach a copy of the agreement, signed by the president of the local school board, the chair or president of the governing body of the proposed open-enrollment public charter school, and the chief operating officer of the proposed charter. If the facility is not operated by a school district, attach a copy of the Facilities Utilization Agreement, signed by the entity owning or operating the facility and the chief operating officer of the proposed charter. A proposed lease may also be submitted but is not required. Please note that any lease or other debt must be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

Applicant Response:

Identified Facility

ARCA will lease permanent space for administrative and teaching staff in Bentonville to serve as the teaching/learning center where administrative and teaching staff will work. Currently, the Board has an agreement in place with Regus to lease office space at 609 SW 8th Street in Bentonville. (<http://www.regus.com/locations/business-centre/arkansas-bentonville-bentonville-plaza>). The teaching/learning center will include at least one conference room with doors for use in IEP conferences and other special education related activities. In addition, the Board has discussed potentially securing an additional satellite office after the charter is approved to serve as a resource center for students.

Having the teachers located in physical centers allows for expanded professional development opportunities, ensures quality control and visibility into the teaching process by school administration, and promotes collaboration amongst teachers to excel student achievement. The teaching/learning centers can also host parent teacher conferences as needed.

ARCA students will participate in state proficiency tests depending upon grade level. The school will set up in-person, proctored locations for state testing throughout the state based on the geographic location of the student population.

As the school grows, the Board may explore additional satellite teaching/learning centers throughout the state that are allowed under current rules and regulations. This would allow regional teaching/learning centers where families may visit and teachers could be involved in local school field trips and state testing.

Remodeling or Adapting Facility

The facility will be appropriate and adequate for the school's program, the targeted population, and the public.

Online education requires minimal build out and can be accomplished in the timeframe needed. Criteria used to analyze facilities include:

- Central location - easy access from major roadways, allowing students and staff from various areas to reach the facilities easily. The facilities will have adequate space for teacher cubicles, a Principal's office, a conference room, and a break room/kitchenette.
- A certificate of occupancy, air-conditioning, heating and illuminated fluorescent lights, male and female bathrooms, parking, handicapped accessible, and fully equipped with sprinklers and other fire safety equipment.
- Necessary infrastructure to support the computer network and phone system.
- In compliance with or capable of modification to bring them into compliance with all local building, zoning and health and safety requirements.
- Meet all local minimum Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
- Ample parking accommodations.
- Comprised of approximately 20% office space and 80% open area for cubicles.
- Secure location for storing testing materials and protected student data.

ARCA has Access to the Necessary Resources to Fund the Facility Plan

The facility has been accounted for in the budgeting process.

Lease Terms

While the lease has not yet been negotiated with Regus or approved by the Commissioner of Education, the Board anticipates doing so once the charter is approved. Certain key terms will likely be included in the lease. These include, but are not limited to:

- Early termination provision in the event of charter revocation or non-renewal
- Turnkey demo and build-out of space by landlord at landlord's expense
- Options for renewal
- Rights of First Offer or First Refusal, when possible, on contiguous space
- Inability of landlord to re-locate the premises
- Rent abatement in the event of diminution of space
- Insurance terms consistent with ARCA's policies
- Pre-approval for tenant's improvements (voice/data/electric)

ARCA's demos and build-outs will encompass setting up a typical office environment. The landlord will provide turnkey solutions with standard building finishes, pursuant to a Computer Aided Design (CAD) test fit provided to landlords by ARCA. Given this method of securing space, ARCA plans to primarily provide the space layout and understand the landlord's amortization schedule for tenant improvements.

Continued Operation, Maintenance, and Repair of Facility

ARCA will take the necessary steps to secure the Certificate of Occupancy for the teaching/learning center.

The lease for the selected teaching/learning center provides for necessary repairs and for janitorial service.

The facilities will comply with all applicable state and local health and safety requirements. ARCA will follow applicable city planning review procedures.

Identify the owner(s) of the proposed facility and describe their relationship, if any, with:

- (1) Members of the local board of the public school district where the proposed open-enrollment public charter school will be located,
- (2) Employees of the public school district where the proposed open-enrollment public charter school will be located,
- (3) The eligible entity sponsoring the open-enrollment public charter school, or
- (4) Employees/directors/administrators of the sponsoring entity or proposed open-enrollment public charter school.

Applicant Response:

Regus is publicly traded on the London Stock Exchange. To the best of their management's knowledge, they do not have any ties to members of the Bentonville Public School District board, employees of Bentonville Public School District, Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc., or employees/directors/administrators of Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc.

The facility will be in compliance with all requirements for accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and all other state and federal laws and local zoning ordinances.

Yes

No

If the facility does not currently meet these requirements, provide a list of items that will need to be addressed to bring the facility into compliance. Also include a statement of permissible uses for the facility from the local zoning authority, and whether there are any alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility.

Applicant Response:

The facility will meet all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements. The property is zoned C-2 (General Commercial) which permits standard office use as well as multiple other uses specified in the attached statement of permissible uses for the facility (Attachment 15). There are no alcohol sales within 1,000 feet of the facility.

19. For each and every individual specifically identified by name in Section A of the application (the contact person, chief operating officer, board members, and other individuals), identify any family or financial relationship which may exist between that individual and:

(A) Any other individual specifically identified by name in Section A of the application;

(B) Any individual or entity with whom the sponsoring entity or charter school has contracted, or intends to contract, to provide any services or products for the proposed charter school; and/or

(C) The owner(s) of the facilities to be used.

For the purpose of this prompt, an individual has a financial relationship with another individual or entity if he or she:

(1) Receives compensation or benefits directly or indirectly from the entity or individual;

(2) Is an officer, director, partner, employee, or owner of more than 5% of the shares of an entity that is a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, or LLC; and/or

(3) Has a family member (spouse, sibling, parent or child, or the spouse employee, or owner of more than 5% of the shares of an entity that is a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, or LLC.

Applicant Response:

The following Board Members, who are volunteers and not receiving any pay for being on the Board or working on this application, were identified in Section A of the application:

- Dennis Beck, Board President
- Virginia Walden Ford, Board Treasurer
- Carla Hartwell, Board Secretary

The following people work for and are paid by the Board's support partner, Connections, and were identified in Section A of the application:

- Melissa Nelson, Connections Education, Vice President
- Bryce Adams, Connections Education, Executive Director
- Lyn McCullen, Connections Education, Senior Director

None of the Board Members have a family or financial relationship with any other individual specifically identified by name in Section A of the application; or any individual or entity with whom Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc. or ARCA have contracted, or intends to contract, to provide any services or products for ARCA; or Regus, the owner of the facilities to be used.

None of the Board Members receive compensation either as an employee or independent contractor, from Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc., ARCA, or Connections. Further, none of the Board Members are an officer, director, partner, employee, or owner of more than 5% of the shares of an entity that is a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, or LLC.

None of the Board Members have a family member (spouse, sibling, parent or child, or the spouse of a sibling,

parent, or child) who is an officer, director, partner, employee, or owner of more than 5% of the shares of an entity that is a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, or LLC.

The Connections staff support team, Melissa Nelson, Bryce Adams, and Lyn McCullen do receive compensation from Connections. These individuals were involved in the application process at the behest of the Board.

Explain the procedures to be followed if a conflict of interest is identified. The procedures must ensure that all actions are in the best interest of the school and the students at the school.

Applicant Response:

The Board is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct. The purpose of a Conflict of Interest policy is to protect ARCA when the Board is contemplating a transaction or arrangement that might impermissibly benefit the private Financial Interest of an Officer or Director of the Board. In addition, the Conflict of Interest policy provides the Board with a procedure which, if observed, will allow a transaction or arrangement to be treated as valid and binding even though Board Director has, or may have, a Conflict of Interest with respect to the transaction.

The Board places great importance on making clear any existing or potential Conflicts of Interest. All such Conflicts of Interest shall be declared by the member concerned and noted in the Board meeting minutes.

Duty to Disclose

In connection with any transaction or arrangement that might give rise to a Conflict of Interest, an Interested Person must disclose the existence of his or her Financial Interest and must be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board. The Interested Person must make this disclosure at the start of the regularly scheduled Board meeting following discovery of the Financial Interest; provided, however, that no action can be taken on such disclosure unless the issue was identified in the posted agenda for the meeting where required by the Open Meetings Law.

Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the Financial Interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the Board, the interested Board member shall not participate in the discussions or vote on the matter. The remaining Board members and Board Counsel will determine whether a Conflict of Interest exists.

Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- If the Board determines that a Financial Interest of a Board member constitutes a Conflict of Interest, the Board Chair (or acting Board Chair if the sitting chair is the Interested Person) shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement giving rise to the conflict.
- After exercising due diligence, the Board shall determine whether it can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a Conflict of Interest.
- If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable, and the State's Ethics Laws do not prohibit or invalidate the proposed transaction, the Board or committee shall determine by a majority vote whether the proposed transaction or arrangement is in the School's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to the School. Based on this determination, the Board shall decide whether to enter into the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- The Board shall make its determination using the Rebuttable Presumption Checklist (Property) as a guide.

Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy

- If the Board or committee has reasonable cause to believe that a member has failed to disclose an actual or possible Conflict of Interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- If, after hearing the response of the member and making such further investigation as the Board deems warranted under the circumstances, the Board determines that the member has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible Conflict of Interest, the Board shall take appropriate corrective action.

Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the Board shall document the Conflict of Interest and contain:

- The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a Financial Interest giving rise to an actual or possible Conflict of Interest, the nature of the Financial Interest, any action taken to determine whether a Conflict of Interest was present, and the Board's decision as to whether a Conflict of Interest in fact existed.
- The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken on the subject.

Compensation

- A voting member of the Board who receives direct or indirect compensation from the School for services that are necessary for carrying out ARCA's purposes (other than serving as a Board Director), where this is permitted by law or not otherwise prohibited, is precluded from participating in discussions or votes pertaining to that member's compensation.
- A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives direct or indirect compensation from ARCA for services is precluded from participating in discussions or votes pertaining to that member's compensation.
- When setting compensation for any individual, the Board committee with jurisdiction over compensation matters shall set such compensation using the Rebuttable Presumption Checklist (Compensation).
- No Board member is precluded from providing information to the Board of Directors or any committee of the Board regarding member compensation.

Annual Statements

Each Director and member of the Board shall annually sign the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement, which affirms that the Board member:

- Has received a copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy
- Has read and understands the Policy
- Has agreed to comply with the Policy
- Understands that ARCA is a charitable organization and that in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities that accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes

Periodic Review

The Board shall conduct periodic reviews to ensure that ARCA operates in a manner consistent with its charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its status as an organization exempt from federal income tax.

The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, address the following subjects:

- Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable and the result of arm's-length bargaining and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.
- Whether partnership and joint venture arrangements and third party transactions conform to written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable payments for goods and services, further the ARCA's charitable purposes, and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.
- Whether agreements with employees and third-party payers further the ARCA's charitable purposes and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.

In conducting the periodic reviews provided for above, ARCA may use outside advisors. The use of outside advisors does not relieve the Board of its responsibility for ensuring that periodic reviews are conducted.

20. Describe the manner in which the school will make provisions for food services. State whether the proposed charter school will apply to participate in the federal National School Lunch program or other federal nutrition programs.

Applicant Response:

ARCA is requesting a waiver from the Food Services requirement, including the School Breakfast Program in

§6-8-705. Since ARCA serves students statewide primarily out of their homes, the school will not be offering a food service program. Parents will be fully informed of this fact prior to their students' enrollment so that they may make the best school choice for their family. The school does not intend to participate in the National School Lunch program.

For purposes of demographic documentation, ARCA will request during the enrollment process that families who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals, based on past eligibility for these services or current family income, to identify themselves. The purpose of collecting this information is to ensure that the school will be prepared to arrange supplemental educational resources with income-based eligibility requirements for students and the school. Parents will be fully informed that volunteering this information will not entitle their family to food service. ARCA staff will refer families who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals to local social service agencies for food assistance upon request. In the event that the federally funded lunch program is changed to permit the distribution of direct assistance to families, ARCA will be prepared to seek funds to provide this service.

21. Describe how the parents or guardians of the enrolled students and other members of the community will be involved with the school to positively impact the charter school's educational programs.

Applicant Response:

Plan for Involving Parents and Guardians in ARCA's Education Programs

ARCA understands parental engagement is vital to student success. Parents may serve as Learning Coaches and play an active role in the learning process, providing input and communicating regularly with teachers. ARCA will promote the significant role of parents by providing training for parents and multiple avenues for communication. Regular feedback through surveys and the StarTrack system encourages involvement in the learning process.

Frequent and purposeful communication with parents and Learning Coaches help the teacher monitor the student's progress, keep parents informed of current school happenings, and help the school grow and improve. Scheduled phone calls, LiveLesson sessions, WebMail messages, and face-to-face meetings will all be used to help conduct parent-teacher conferences. ARCA will regularly distribute important information in collaboration with the Principal through school newsletters, the school's website, and must-read WebMail messages. Teachers will document all communication with parents and/or students in the log section of Connexus, which allows for detailed tracking of interactions as well as seamless support for students and their families from multiple individuals.

Families are encouraged to participate in various events such as picnics, educational field trips, and service opportunities offered throughout the year. These activities are organized through the school staff and Community Coordinators (volunteer parents) throughout the state. Families are notified through WebMail and the school newsletters.

Parents can also join Club Orange. This exciting club brings together currently-enrolled parents and parents of prospective students. Parents in Club Orange reach out to their local communities to spread the word about ARCA.

Engaging Learning Coaches

Although ARCA teachers will ultimately be responsible for delivering instruction, checking for student understanding, and administering any necessary interventions, Learning Coaches have an important role to play in conferencing with teachers and recording student attendance. ARCA will work with Learning Coaches to help them become effective educational partners and will encourage them to engage in all support activities including

the Getting Started onboarding program, the Get Coaching Learning Coach support program, and the Get Connected socialization and connectedness program.

During the enrollment process, Learning Coaches will be provided with the School Handbook, which clearly outlines the role of and expectations for the Learning Coaches. Learning Coaches will also be provided an online orientation course detailing how the program works, how to use Connexus, and particulars about their specific role. Homeroom teachers provide ongoing support to Learning Coaches and ARCA will provide support for Learning Coaches throughout the year with modules on participation, motivation, assessments, and summer learning.

If a student is not having attendance taken, is not completing work, or is not succeeding in the school, the student's teachers will intervene and conference with the Learning Coach. If it is determined this stems from a Learning Coach issue (rather than from academic difficulties), the staff would take action such as creating an action plan or contract with the Learning Coach that further specifies expectations and tasks. The school will conduct check-in meetings with the Learning Coach, student, teacher, and administrator throughout the process.

Involve the Parents, Employees, and Broader Community in Carrying Out the Terms of the Charter

Active involvement of all stakeholders will ensure the success of ARCA and the successful fulfillment of the school's charter. Parents, employees, and community members will be actively involved in the planning the school's future and developing close relationships with each other.

Administrators and teachers will have regularly scheduled staff meetings to discuss issues important to the school and maintaining the charter. Professional development will also be conducted at the staff meetings and offered virtually periodically throughout the year.

Connections will contract with a third party to survey parents and employees annually to evaluate ARCA on several criteria including student progress, teacher support, and quality of the curriculum. Parents and employees will be surveyed to get their feedback on the program to help identify what the school is doing well and how it can improve.

To keep families and community members informed and involved, ARCA will maintain a public website and social media pages (Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, etc.) that contains all required and relevant information. ARCA will develop a student information and community education plan to inform potential students, their parents/guardians, and other interested parties about the education program.

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

Applicant Response:

A.C.A. § 6-23-106 requires each open-enrollment charter school applicant to review the potential impact of the proposed charter school on the efforts of affected public school districts to comply with court orders or statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. The following desegregation analysis explains that ARCA's charter approval will not negatively impact the desegregation efforts of any public school district in the state. ARCA will operate as an online school; since all learning and assignments are delivered to students online, ARCA may attract and enroll students across the entire state. ARCA cannot fully predict the demographics of its student body, but it will not discriminate in its admissions on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or academic or athletic eligibility. If applications for enrollment exceed the set enrollment cap, ARCA will use a random, anonymous lottery for admissions.

Since ARCA will draw students statewide, enrollment is not expected to be concentrated in any particular district, meaning that no particular school district will be severely or adversely affected. It is reasonable to expect that at least some of the students that choose to enroll in ARCA may previously have been enrolled in private, parochial, or home schools. These students would have no impact on the desegregation efforts of any public school district. Even if all students that enroll in ARCA do come from public school districts, this is a small fraction of the approximately 460,000 Arkansas public school students.

All school districts, of course, are continuously bound by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* which requires the operation of a unitary and desegregated system of public schools. It is extremely unlikely, however, that the enrollment of a mere 2,000- 3,000 students or less from numerous school districts across the state will hamper any active efforts to maintain a unitary school system for any particular school district or districts. (ARCA is seeking an enrollment cap of 2,000 students for the first 3 years of operation, and a cap of 3,000 students for years 4 and 5.)

ARCA plans to operate a teaching/learning center in Bentonville within the boundaries of the Bentonville School District. Even assuming that the majority of the 2,000- 3,000 students who may enroll in ARCA come from the Bentonville School District and its six contiguous districts, which again is not likely, it's hard to imagine that 2,000- 3,000 students could affect the racial makeup of the over 57,000 students enrolled in the seven school districts in question. The Bentonville, Pea Ridge, Gentry, and Gravette School Districts all currently have a student body of over 65% white students with Hispanic students being the highest minority concentration. The Rogers and Decatur School Districts both have a student body of approximately 50% white students, again with Hispanic students making up the highest minority concentration at 44% and 33% respectively. The only school district with less than a 50% white student body is Springdale. The Springdale School District has a student body of just under 40% white students. These seven districts, as a whole, enjoy a fairly diverse student body. (Student body information is based on that published by the ADE Data Center for the 2014-2015 school year.) It's unlikely that any of these districts are struggling to maintain desegregated schools. It's even more unlikely that ARCA could negatively impact any desegregation efforts currently in place.

Based on the analysis presented, ARCA will not negatively impact the desegregation efforts of the Bentonville School District (where administrative offices will be housed) the six contiguous districts to the Bentonville School District, or any other school district throughout the state. ARCA will operate in full compliance with all state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements for the creation and maintenance of desegregated public schools.

23. Explain what the charter founders and other leaders are doing or will do to ensure the success of the charter school in perpetuity.

Applicant Response:

Student academic success will be monitored and evaluated by all stakeholders: parents, teachers, students, administrators, and the Board. Strong accountability metrics and a high-quality curriculum will ensure the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks are implemented with fidelity. Comprehensive but appropriate data collection and analysis through Connexus will be used to design and implement student supports and interventions. To increase transparency and accountability, the school's performance will be measured and communicated annually to parents and reported monthly by the Board.

To ensure the success of the charter school in perpetuity and the sustainability of the charter in the future, the Board will focus on ongoing professional development for the Board, school leaders, and teachers to ensure professional growth; continue the staggered term limits of board members to ensure the Board can maintain the organizational knowledge base; and maintain appropriate levels of staffing at the school. In addition, the Board will receive ongoing support from the Connections' Compliance Team to ensure all state laws are met.

ARCA will ensure everyone has access to the education program, including providing a computer and Internet subsidy. ARCA is committed to making sure all students can access the program regardless of socio-economic status.

Additionally, the Board will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems meet the obligations to the ADE. Plans for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of curriculum, instructional methods, and practices include:

- Student learning: The Board will hold the school faculty, staff, and its support partner accountable for student learning. Examples of student learning outcomes include measurable learning gains, performance on the state standardized tests, and meeting or exceeding Arkansas's Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO).
- Curriculum Alignment: The content is aligned to the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. If the state standards change, the curriculum can also change to maintain alignment.

- Stakeholder feedback: The Board will take into account and hold the school responsible for implementing constructive and actionable stakeholder feedback, including feedback received from parents and students via StarTrack. This integrated rating system allows every student (along with every teacher and Learning Coach) to rate each lesson from one to five stars and give comments. Ratings are used by curriculum staff to identify areas of strength, as measured by student learning outcomes, as well as areas in need of improvement. This same tool is also used to measure the school's success. The StarTrack system will be fully embraced by students, teachers, and the school's leadership as a dynamic means to provide real-time feedback on the quality of the curriculum and the school.
- Parent satisfaction: The Board is focused on parent satisfaction. Parents enroll students in online schools for a variety of reasons. ARCA will measure parental satisfaction and use the data to improve the school. ARCA families will be given an annual opportunity to participate in a thorough parent satisfaction survey, conducted by an independent market research firm and overseen by the Board. The school will aim for at least 90% of families to agree that the curriculum is high quality and that they are satisfied with the educational program and instruction.
- School growth: ARCA has a responsible plan for school growth, balancing the desire to serve as many students as possible with the challenges of a growing school that positions both the students and ARCA for future success. The school hopes to responsibly grow from 600 students (Year 1) to up to 2,000 (Year 3) through a combination of parent outreach, high student retention rates, and word-of-mouth recommendations and referrals by current ARCA families.
- Compliance with state and federal laws: The Board will ensure the school is compliant with all applicable state and federal laws regarding public education and specifically charter schools, including ADE policies. This compliance will include the timely and accurate reporting of required state data.
- Fiscal accountability: The Board is fully committed to fiscal accountability, including cost control, responsible growth, and regular audits. At a minimum on a monthly basis, the Board Treasurer will review all invoices and expenditures and the Board will review a re-forecasted budget in order to adjust to unexpected financial events on a timely basis. The Board will also continually examine processes to make sure best practices are being followed and solid financial accountability is being upheld.

ARCA is partnering with an experienced organization, Connections, which will help ensure that the school can open on time the first year. In the event that enrollment is less than anticipated, the school would remain financially viable and the model would remain consistent with the adopted budget. Most expenses of the school are anticipated to be variable instead of fixed. This will ensure the majority of expenses will flex up and down with enrollment, thus cushioning the impact of lower than estimated revenue due to an enrollment shortfall.

24. Complete the following table showing all sections of Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated (Education Code) and State Board of Education rules, including the *Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts*, from which the public charter school seeks to be exempted in order to meet the goals of the school. Identify the specific statute, rule, or standard requested to be waived by title and number if applicable. **Provide a rationale for each waiver requested that explains how the waiver will increase student achievement and how the increase in achievement will be measured.**

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
School Year/Day	ACA §6-10-106 Uniform dates for beginning and end of school year ACA §6-16-102 School day ACA §6-18-211 Mandatory attendance for students in grades nine through twelve ACA §6-18-213(a)(2) Attendance records and reports generally ADE Rules - Mandatory Attendance Requirements for Students in Grades Nine through 12 Standards for Accreditation 10.01.4 Standards for Accreditation 14.03	Students in an online school are able to work on their own schedules. ARCA will track student attendance electronically based on student engagement and work rather than physical attendance and seat-time. Planned instruction time will not average less than 30 hours per week. Students are able to work across the entire week rather than five days, so instructional time may average less than six hours per day over a seven-day week. Learning coaches will record school day attendance and ARCA staff will ensure those records match completed student work.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Student Safety	ACA §6-10-122 Automated external defibrillators required ACA §6-15-1302 Emergency plans for terrorist attacks ACA §6-17-102 Emergency first aid personnel ACA §6-21-106 Fire hazards inspection prior to closing for breaks ADE Rules - Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Devices and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) ADE Rules - Automated External Defibrillators, Requirement of Schools to Have ADE Rules - School Fire Marshal	Students will not be physically present at the ARCA teaching/learning center. ARCA will ensure a safe working environment for its staff. The Board will adopt its own student discipline, school safety, and transportation policies in consultation with Connections Education and independent Board counsel.	N/A	N/A
CPR Instruction	ACA §6-16-143 Cardiopulmonary resuscitation instruction	Students will receive CPR instruction but since instruction will be online, instruction will not include a psychomotor (“hands-on”) component.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Alternative Learning Environment	ACA §6-15-1005(b)(5) Safe, equitable, and accountable public schools ACA §6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i) Written student discipline policies required ACA §6-48-101 et seq. Alternative Learning Environments ADE Rules – Student Discipline and School Safety Policies 4.10 ADE Rules – Student Special Needs Funding 4.00 Standards for Accreditation 19.03	Students will not be physically present at the ARCA teaching/learning center and therefore will not need a separate ALE program. Students, their families, and their Learning Coaches choose the environment in which the student learns online. ARCA will provide appropriate discipline and intervention responses for students with disciplinary, socially dysfunctional, or behavioral problems, but will not provide a physical ALE center.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Licensure	<p>ACA §6-13-109 School Superintendent</p> <p>ACA §6-15-1004 Qualified teachers in every public school classroom</p> <p>ACA §6-17-302 Public school principals - Qualifications and responsibilities</p> <p>ACA §6-17-309 Licensure – Waiver</p> <p>ACA §6-17-401 Teacher's license requirement</p> <p>ACA §6-17-427 Superintendent license - Superintendent mentoring program required</p> <p>ACA §6-17-802 Twelve-month contracts for vocational agriculture teachers</p> <p>ACA §6-17-902 Definitions [Arkansas Teachers' Salary Law]</p> <p>ACA §6-17-919 Warrants void without valid certificate and contract</p> <p>ADE Rules – Licensure - Educator Licensure</p> <p>ADE Rules – Superintendent Mentoring Program</p> <p>Standards for Accreditation 15.01 through 15.03</p> <p>ADE Rules Governing Parental Notification of an Assignment of a Non-Licensed Teacher to Teach a Class for More Than Thirty (30) Consecutive Days and for Granting Waivers</p>	<p>The Board will contract with Connections Education for and Connections Education will employ effective administration, licensed teachers, and support staff. All staff will be subject to background checks and the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators.</p> <p>Teachers will be licensed in Arkansas except for those situations where an in-state teacher cannot be identified or for classes with low student interest (eg foreign language & AP courses). In those circumstances, ARCA intends to utilize the resources of Connections' private school, which employs teachers who are licensed in the states they reside. This will enable ARCA to offer the full Connections' catalogue of courses to its students. ARCA estimates that over 90% of course enrollments will be taught by Arkansas-licensed staff, as this is a goal jointly shared by the Board and Connections. While certified administrators will be sought, the Board would like the discretion to hire the best leader for the school that is available. This will increase student achievement by providing students with the most effective teachers and a robust catalogue of courses.</p>	See Section C.5 Goals	See Section C.5 Goals

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Professional Development & AP/IB Training	<p>ACA §6-17-701 et seq. Professional development ADE Rules - Professional Development Emergency Rule Effective July 1, 2014 ADE Rules – Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Diploma Incentive Program 4.00 Standards for Accreditation 10.01.3 Required Time for Instruction and School Calendar Standards for Accreditation 15.04 Professional Development and In-Service Training</p>	<p>ARCA's teachers who are licensed in Arkansas will complete required professional development as a condition for maintaining their state licenses. Teachers licensed in other states and providing instruction in an area where a state-based teacher could not be found or in courses with low student interest (e.g. foreign language & AP courses) will receive professional development in their own home states. This will increase student achievement by providing students with the most effective teachers and a robust catalogue of courses.</p>	See Section C.5 Goals	See Section C.5 Goals
Business Manager Qualifications	<p>ACA §6-15-2302 General Business Manager ADE Rules - Business Manager Qualifications</p>	<p>ARCA anticipates contracting with Connections for financial management services, which will include a business manager responsible for the fiscal operations of the public charter school. The Connections financial services team maintains a sterling record with charter finance experience in 17 states and will support ARCA under the direction of its Board-designated treasurer through its team of professional staff, many of whom possess CPA and/or CFE designations. Contracting with Connections for a business manager will avoid potential duplication of effort, enabling the school to direct resources to its educational program.</p>	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Personnel Policies & Salary Schedules	ACA §6-17-201 et seq. Personnel Policies ACA §6-17-913 Audit of Accounts ACA §6-17-1201 et seq. The Teachers' Minimum Sick Leave Law ACA §6-17-1301 et seq. The School Employees' Minimum Sick Leave Law ACA §6-17-1501 et seq. Teacher Fair Dismissal Act ACA §6-17-1701 et seq. Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act ACA §6-17-2201 et seq. Classified School Employee Minimum Salary Act ACA §6-17-2301 et seq. Personnel Policy Law for Classified Employees ACA §6-17-2401 et seq. Teacher Compensation Program of 2003 ACA §6-20-2208(c)(1) Monitoring of expenditures ADE Rules - Personnel Policies and Salary Schedules	ARCA intends to contract with Connections for its administrators and teachers and wishes to use the performance-based compensation model Connections has successfully pioneered in the schools it supports. This model, which consists of competitive salary, incentive compensation based on school outcomes, responsibility-driven stipends, a rich benefit plan, and a flexible paid time off program, is tailored to the unique aspects of a virtual school setting and will enable ARCA to attract, retain, and promote staff who share our vision of a focus on student outcomes.	See Section C.5 Goals	See Section C.5 Goals

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Insurance	ACA §6-17-1111 Life and disability insurance - Employee eligibility - Allocation of costs ACA §6-17-1117 Health insurance	ARCA staff will be eligible for benefits through Connections' plans, including health, life, disability, vision, dental insurances and other benefits/programs. As a nationwide educational services provider, Connections is able to pool risk to offer a competitive benefits package and recruit and retain effective administrators and teachers.	N/A	N/A
Class Size & Teaching Load	Standards for Accreditation 10.02	ARCA educators utilize Connections' curriculum and assessments rather than preparing their own and will not face the typical challenges of classroom management, as instruction is delivered online. The Board will adopt class size and teaching load requirements that are more appropriate for an online setting to allow for a more effective allocation of school funds. ARCA proposes the following specific alternative maximum student-to-teacher ratios: Teachers (K-5) 50:1 Teachers (6-8) 38:1 Advisory Teachers 300:1 Special Education Teachers 35:1	See Section C.5 Goals	See Section C.5 Goals
Food Services	ACA §6-18-705 Breakfast program ACA §6-20-701 et seq. School Lunch Program	As an online school, ARCA will not serve meals.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Gifted & Talented	ACA §6-20-2208(c)(6) Monitoring of expenditures ACA §6-42-109 Reports by school districts ADE Rules - Gifted And Talented Program Approval Standards Standards for Accreditation 18.0	The Board will contract with Connections Education to offer a gifted and talented program as described in this application, though not as prescribed by ACA and ADE Rules. The Connections program, described above, is designed to increase student achievement for gifted & talented students.	N/A	N/A
School Nurse & Media Services	ACA §6-18-706 School nurse ACA §6-25-103 & 104 Public School Library Media and Technology Act ADE Rules – Public School Student Services 3.01.6 Standards for Accreditation 16.02 and 16.03	As an online school, ARCA will not need a school nurse or library media specialist. Teachers will work to ensure students understand research and technology.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Guidance Counseling Services	ACA §6-18-1001 et seq. Public School Student Services Act ADE Rules – Public School Student Services 3.01.1 Standards for Accreditation 16.01.3	ARCA will provide its own set of student services programs that will be possible and appropriate in a full-time online charter school setting. The ratio required for brick-and-mortar schools in which counselors and students must meet face-to-face is not necessarily appropriate for a full-time online program. The Board believes in the importance of guidance and counseling services and will ensure appropriate staffing levels are maintained. One or more properly certified guidance counselors will be on staff, but the services provided to students can be distributed differently among staff. Advisory teachers (estimated 300:1 ratio) will handle most course scheduling and post-graduation planning support.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
School Boards	<p>ACA §6-13-608 Length of directors' terms ACA §6-13-611(b) and (c) Vacancies generally</p> <p>ACA §6-13-612 (c) Vacancy – Conviction of a felony ACA §6-13-613 Temporary vacancies – Vacancies created by failure to participate</p> <p>ACA §6-13-619(c)(1)(A) and (d)(2) Meetings ACA §6-13-620(5)(A) Powers and duties</p> <p>ACA §6-13-630 Election by zone and at large ACA §6-13-631 Effect of minority population on election</p> <p>ACA §6-13-1301 et seq. Site-Based Decision Making ACA §6-14-101 et seq. School elections</p>	<p>ARCA's Board will select its own members and adopt its own bylaws. All Board Members will be Arkansas residents and none will be employed by the school or Connections Education. The Board will provide for its own site-based decision making committee and school board member training.</p> <p>The ARCA Board will allow board members to call in to a public conference line for quorum and/or voting to ensure statewide representation on the board.</p> <p>Connections will be the employer of school leader, even though he/she will serve at the pleasure of the Board. This flexibility will allow the Board to focus on student achievement.</p>	N/A	N/A
Instructional Materials	<p>ACA §6-21-406(b) Conditions for offering textbooks for adoption, sale, or exchange ADE Rules - Instructional Materials 6.02</p>	<p>Connections maintains a national array of instructional material/book depositories across the country linked by an efficient logistics network. Any new depository would be redundant and the expenses passed onto the school would be better spent serving ARCA students.</p>	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Annual Progress Report Reporting	ACA §6-15-2006(b) Annual report Standards for Accreditation 7.02.2 School District Goals	ARCA will operate as a statewide school making it cost-prohibitive to publish a report in newspapers with general circulation in all served districts. ARCA will report to parents online and to the State Board of Education in writing, which will be more effective in engaging parents.	N/A	N/A
Flags/Period of Silence/ Pledge of Allegiance	ACA §6-10-115 Period of Silence ACA §6-16-105 United States flag ACA §6-16-106 Arkansas flag ACA §6-16-108 Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance	ARCA will display the U.S. and Arkansas flags, though not as prescribed by the ACA. The online nature of ARCA does not lend itself to a group Period of Silence or recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Time is available for students to do so individually.	N/A	N/A
Adult Education	Standards of Accreditation 19.04	ARCA may make summer school available depending on student need and demand but will not offer an adult education program. The ARCA Board prefers to focus on serving students in grades K-12, from which an adult education program may distract.	N/A	N/A
Materials Allotment to Teachers	ACA §6-21-303(b)(1)(A) Rules [Acquisition of Commodities Generally]	ARCA teachers will not have traditional classrooms and will be provided with all materials necessary for class activities.	N/A	N/A

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Eye & Vision Screening	ACA §6-18-1501 et seq. Mandated Eye and Vision Screening Procedures and Tests for Children ADE Rules - Eye and Vision Screening Report in Arkansas Public Schools	ARCA students will not be physically present at the teaching/learning center to receive eye and vision screening exams. Should these waivers be denied, ARCA will comply with state law and ADE rules in one or more of the following ways: contracting with screening providers in students' local areas, subsidizing households to provide for screening, providing for screening at sites where students will be present (eg state assessments, field trips). Transportation may be provided for those families who require it in a similar fashion to state assessments procedure.	N/A	N/A
Secondary Units Offered	Standards for Accreditation 9.03.1.2 and 9.03.4	ARCA will not initially serve all secondary grades. ARCA's initial high school cohort will have access to a full course load that will allow students to graduate on time under Smart Core requirements. By the start of this initial cohort's 12th grade year, ARCA will offer all 38 required units, less any waived requirements.	Number of secondary units offered in ARCA's first year of operation Number of secondary units offered in ARCA's fourth year of operation	Full course load leading to Smart Core graduation offered to initial 9th grade class All 38 required units, less waived requirements, offered by initial 12th grade class
Secondary Units Offered – Instrumental and Vocal Music	Standards for Accreditation 9.03.4.5	ARCA will not offer a unit of instrumental music or a unit of vocal music. ARCA will offer at least 3 ½ fine arts units better suited to an online environment, which will benefit student achievement. Connections has music theory, music appreciation, digital arts, and art history courses in its catalogue.	Number of fine arts secondary units offered annually	3 ½ fine arts units offered by initial 12th grade class

Topic	Statute/ADE Rule/Standard to be Waived	Rationale	Tool to be Used to Measure Impact on Achievement	Level of Achievement that will Show Positive Impact
Commodity Bidding	ACA §6-21-301 et seq. Acquisition of Commodities Generally	<p>ARCA intends to contract with Connections for provision of its education program. Connections' education program integrates technology, curriculum, instructional materials and tools, staff, and support services into a single education services offering. The Connections program is proprietary and Connections is the only source from which ARCA can obtain access to the Connections education program. ARCA believes that this service offering falls within the single source exemption of ACA §6-21-305. Because of the unique nature of the Connections education program, the Board would prefer RFP requirements be waived only for its contract with Connections. This will increase student achievement as ARCA will have more time to establish its program. All other purchases will be subject to ACA §6-21-301 et seq. Should this waiver not be granted, ARCA will follow the required RFP process for a contract with an educational services provider.</p>	N/A	N/A

Attachment 1 – Arkansas Connections Academy 501(c)(3) Application

- 501(c)(3) Determination Letter
- Articles of Incorporation
- Employer Identification Number

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **JAN 08 2015**

Employer Identification Number:
46-5766559
DLN:
17053153307004
Contact Person:
SHERRY Q WAN ID# 31052
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
June 30
Public Charity Status:
170 (b) (1) (A) (vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
May 30, 2014
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

ARKANSAS CONNECTIONS ACADEMY INC
C/O PROCOPIO CORY HARGREAVES & SAVITCH
KEVIN M DAVIS
525 B ST STE 2200
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to www.irs.gov/charities. Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Sincerely,



Director, Exempt Organizations

Letter 947

STATE OF ARKANSAS



Mark Martin

ARKANSAS SECRETARY OF STATE

To All to Whom These Presents Shall Come, Greetings:

I, Mark Martin, Arkansas Secretary of State of Arkansas, do hereby certify that the following and hereto attached instrument of writing is a true and perfect copy of

Articles of Incorporation

of

ARKANSAS CONNECTIONS ACADEMY, INC.

filed in this office May 30, 2014 in compliance with the provisions of the law and are hereby declared a body politic and corporate, by the name and style aforesaid, with all the powers, privileges and immunities granted in the law thereunto appertaining.



In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official Seal. Done at my office in the City of Little Rock, this 30th day of May, 2014.

Mark Martin

Arkansas Secretary of State



We, the undersigned, acting as incorporators of a corporation under the Arkansas Non profit Act (Act 1147 of 1993), adopt the following Articles of Incorporation of such corporation.

- 1: The name of the corporation is:**
ARKANSAS CONNECTIONS ACADEMY, INC.
- 2: The corporation is:** PUBLIC - BENEFIT CORPORATION
- 3: Will this corporation have members:** NO
- 4: Power of the corporation:**
A. IRS (501)(C)(3) SUGGESTED LANGUAGE:
10/29/2007:
 NO PART OF THE NET EARNINGS OF THE CORPORATION SHALL INURE TO THE BENEFIT, OR BE DISTRIBUTABLE TO ITS MEMBERS, TRUSTEES, OFFICERS, OR OTHER PRIVATE PERSONS, EXCEPT THAT THE CORPORATION SHALL BE AUTHORIZED AND EMPOWERED TO PAY REASONABLE COMPENSATION FOR SERVICES RENDERED AND TO MAKE PAYMENTS AND DISTRIBUTIONS IN FURTHERANCE OF THE PURPOSES SET FORTH IN PREVIOUS ARTICLES HEREOF. NO SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CORPORATION SHALL BE THE CARRYING ON OF PROPAGANDA, OR OTHERWISE ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE LEGISLATION, AND THE CORPORATION SHALL NOT PARTICIPATE IN, OR INTERVENE IN (INCLUDING THE PUBLISHING OR DISTRIBUTION OF STATEMENTS) ANY POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ON BEHALF OR IN OPPOSITION TO ANY CANDIDATE FOR PUBLIC OFFICE. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF THESE ARTICLES, THE CORPORATION SHALL NOT CARRY ON ANY OTHER ACTIVITIES NOT PERMITTED TO BE CARRIED ON (A) BY A CORPORATION EXEMPT FROM FEDERAL INCOME TAX UNDER SECTION 501(C)(3) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, OR THE

CORRESPONDING SECTION OF ANY FUTURE FEDERAL TAX CODE, OR (B) BY A CORPORATION, CONTRIBUTIONS TO WHICH ARE DEDUCTIBLE UNDER SECTION 170(C) (2) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, OR THE CORRESPONDING SECTION OF ANY FUTURE FEDERAL TAX CODE.

5: The purpose for which this corporation is organized:

A. IRS (501)(C)(3) SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: 10/29/2007:
 SAID CORPORATION IS ORGANIZED EXCLUSIVELY FOR CHARITABLE, RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL, AND SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES, INCLUDING, FOR SUCH PURPOSES, THE MAKING OF DISTRIBUTIONS TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT QUALIFY AS EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS UNDER 501(C)(3) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, OR THE CORRESPONDING SECTION OF ANY FUTURE FEDERAL TAX CODE.)

6: Distribution of assets on dissolution:

A. IRS (501)(C)(3) SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: 10/29/2007:
 UPON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION, ASSETS SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED FOR ONE OR MORE EXEMPT PURPOSES WITHIN THE MEANING OF SECTION 501(C)(3) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, OR CORRESPONDING SECTION OF ANY FUTURE FEDERAL TAX CODE, OR SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, OR TO A STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FOR A PUBLIC PURPOSE. ANY SUCH ASSETS NOT SO DISPOSED OF SHALL BE DISPOSED OF BY A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION IS THEN LOCATED, EXCLUSIVELY FOR SUCH PURPOSES OR TO SUCH ORGANIZATION OR ORGANIZATIONS AS SAID COURT SHALL DETERMINE WHICH ARE ORGANIZED AND OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR SUCH PURPOSES.

7: Corporation's initial registered agent:

Name CORPORATION SERVICE COMPANY
Street Address 300 SPRING BUILDING, SUITE 900, 300 S. SPRING ST.
City: LITTLE ROCK
State: AR
ZIP: 72201-

8: The name and address of each Incorporator is as follows:

Name 1 JENNIFER FLINN
Address 124 W. CAPITOL AVE., SUITE 1 1500, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72203

Name 2
Address
2

Name 3
Address
3

Name 4
Address
4

Name 5
Address
5

Name 6
Address
6

Name 7
Address
7

Name 8
Address
8

Name 9
Address
9

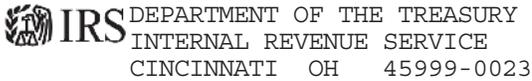
Name 10
Address

10

Optional Info:

**Signature of an
Incorporator:**

JENNIFER FLINN



Date of this notice: 05-28-2014

Employer Identification Number:
46-5766559

Form: SS-4

Number of this notice: CP 575 A

ARKANSAS CONNECTIONS ACADEMY INC
% ASHLI GOBLE
1001 FLEET ST FL 5
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

For assistance you may call us at:
1-800-829-4933

IF YOU WRITE, ATTACH THE
STUB AT THE END OF THIS NOTICE.

WE ASSIGNED YOU AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Thank you for applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). We assigned you EIN 46-5766559. This EIN will identify you, your business accounts, tax returns, and documents, even if you have no employees. Please keep this notice in your permanent records.

When filing tax documents, payments, and related correspondence, it is very important that you use your EIN and complete name and address exactly as shown above. Any variation may cause a delay in processing, result in incorrect information in your account, or even cause you to be assigned more than one EIN. If the information is not correct as shown above, please make the correction using the attached tear off stub and return it to us.

Based on the information received from you or your representative, you must file the following form(s) by the date(s) shown.

Form 1120

09/15/2014

If you have questions about the form(s) or the due date(s) shown, you can call us at the phone number or write to us at the address shown at the top of this notice. If you need help in determining your annual accounting period (tax year), see Publication 538, *Accounting Periods and Methods*.

We assigned you a tax classification based on information obtained from you or your representative. It is not a legal determination of your tax classification, and is not binding on the IRS. If you want a legal determination of your tax classification, you may request a private letter ruling from the IRS under the guidelines in Revenue Procedure 2004-1, 2004-1 I.R.B. 1 (or superseding Revenue Procedure for the year at issue). Note: Certain tax classification elections can be requested by filing Form 8832, *Entity Classification Election*. See Form 8832 and its instructions for additional information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR S CORPORATION ELECTION:

If you intend to elect to file your return as a small business corporation, an election to file a Form 1120-S must be made within certain timeframes and the corporation must meet certain tests. All of this information is included in the instructions for Form 2553, *Election by a Small Business Corporation*.

If you are required to deposit for employment taxes (Forms 941, 943, 940, 944, 945, CT-1, or 1042), excise taxes (Form 720), or income taxes (Form 1120), you will receive a Welcome Package shortly, which includes instructions for making your deposits electronically through the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS). A Personal Identification Number (PIN) for EFTPS will also be sent to you under separate cover. Please activate the PIN once you receive it, even if you have requested the services of a tax professional or representative. For more information about EFTPS, refer to Publication 966, *Electronic Choices to Pay All Your Federal Taxes*. If you need to make a deposit immediately, you will need to make arrangements with your Financial Institution to complete a wire transfer.

The IRS is committed to helping all taxpayers comply with their tax filing obligations. If you need help completing your returns or meeting your tax obligations, Authorized e-file Providers, such as Reporting Agents (payroll service providers) are available to assist you. Visit the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov for a list of companies that offer IRS e-file for business products and services. The list provides addresses, telephone numbers, and links to their Web sites.

To obtain tax forms and publications, including those referenced in this notice, visit our Web site at www.irs.gov. If you do not have access to the Internet, call 1-800-829-3676 (TTY/TDD 1-800-829-4059) or visit your local IRS office.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- * Keep a copy of this notice in your permanent records. **This notice is issued only one time and the IRS will not be able to generate a duplicate copy for you.** You may give a copy of this document to anyone asking for proof of your EIN.
- * Use this EIN and your name exactly as they appear at the top of this notice on all your federal tax forms.
- * Refer to this EIN on your tax-related correspondence and documents.

If you have questions about your EIN, you can call us at the phone number or write to us at the address shown at the top of this notice. If you write, please tear off the stub at the bottom of this notice and send it along with your letter. If you do not need to write us, do not complete and return the stub.

Your name control associated with this EIN is ARKA. You will need to provide this information, along with your EIN, if you file your returns electronically.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Attachment 2 – Public Hearing Documentation

Attach documentation to demonstrate that each of the following requirements of Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-302 was met:

A. The notice of the public hearing was published on a weekly basis for at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the date of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the school district in which the school will likely be located.

As evidence of meeting this requirement we are including:

- **Copies of the notices posted on 6/21/15, 6/28/15, 7/5/15, 7/9/15, 7/14/15, and 7/20/15 in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, a newspaper with statewide circulation**
- **Copies of the notices as provided by the Arkansas Democrat Gazette**
- **A copy of the flyer distributed by Board Members**

B. The notice of the public hearing was not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.

As evidenced by the notices, they were not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.

C. The last publication date of the notice was no less than seven days prior to the public meeting.

The last publication date for the public hearings held on 7/17/15 and 7/18/15 was 7/5/15, which was not less than seven days prior to the public hearings. The last publication date for public hearing held on 7/27/15 was 7/20/15, which was not less than seven days prior to the public hearing.

D. Within seven calendar days following the first publication of the notice of the public hearing, emails announcing the public hearing were sent to the superintendent of each of the school districts from which the open-enrollment public charter school is likely to draw students for the purpose of enrollment and the superintendent of any district that is contiguous

As evidence of meeting this requirement we are attaching:

- **A copy of the email that was sent by Dennis Beck, Board President, to Superintendents on 7/6/15 and 7/9/15.**
- **Copies of the subsequent emails that were sent to the email addresses that had been returned as undeliverable in the previous email.**

Notice of Public Hearing Published 6/21/15

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

International

SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2015 • 5A



People use the ATMs on Friday at a bank in Athens, Greece. Uncertainty about the country's future with the euro currency has led Greeks to withdraw \$4 billion from banks since December.

Edgy Greeks take \$34B out of banks

Country no stranger to economic woes

MEHUL SRIVASTAVA AND KARIA FETTERIS BLOOMBERG NEWS

ATHENS, Greece — Dorotea Lambros stood outside an ETEC branch in central Athens on Friday afternoon, an envelope stuffed with cash in one hand and a \$5,000 cashier's check in the other. She was a few minutes too late to make her deposit at the London-based bank. She was too scared to take her life savings back to her Greek bank.

She worried it wouldn't survive the weekend. "I don't know what happens on Monday," said Lambros, a 55-year-old government employee.

Nobody does. Every shifting deadline, every last-gasp effort has built up to this nation that went to sleep Friday not knowing what Monday will bring. A deal, or more bric-a-brac? Shattered banks and empty cash machines, or a few more days of euros in their pockets and dollars in their past?

On a street corner, a performance artist burned what he said were his last euros. Nearby, an Albanian teenager joked about how he should have gone to Sweden instead. A mother grabbed her toddler's hand as a dozen police officers rode by on motorcycles, heading to a rally outside Parliament.

In his neighborhood restaurant, Frangis Youloumas — a 78-year-old chief executive officer, current investment banker, and survivor of coups, dictators and communists — leaned forward and laid his worries on the table.

"We thought we had escaped the past, but we were a normal country now," he said. "But instead, we are living day to day."

"This, today now, is the worst I have ever seen." For Greeks, the fear is that Monday will be de facto a return to a past not that distant. Before the euro replaced the drachma in 2002, the Greeks were already a European before their currency mostly trapped inside their nation, where cash was king and checks a novelty.

Since December, Greeks have been preparing for a weekend such as this, pulling more than \$14 billion out of banks.

Week after week, the Bank of Greece borrowed banknotes from the rest of the continent to replenish this hoarding of the one last Greek still trust — cold, hard cash.

Its liabilities to the rest of the euro area for the excess physical cash it has to put to circulation quadrupled between December and April, the last month for which there's available data.

Without access to capital markets, Greek lenders have to rely on almost \$10 billion of Emergency Liquidity Assistance to stay afloat, subject to weekly audits by the European Central Bank.

This time, it didn't last a week. On Friday, the ceiling of the assistance was raised by \$2.04 billion, just a couple of days after a \$1.25 billion injection. On Monday, the banks will be back, asking for more.

Everything comes together Monday. Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, back from a visit with Vladimir Putin in St. Petersburg, Russia, will spend his weekend coming up with a proposal to take to a Monday showdown with euro-area leaders.

No weekend off for Greece talks

Nation, EU leaders set up for crucial week of negotiations

IAN WISHART, REBECCA CHRISTIE AND THEOPHILUS AGOSTIS BLOOMBERG NEWS

LUXEMBOURG — European Union leaders and Greece's creditors headed into a flurry of behind-the-scenes high-stakes talks before high-level meetings to unlock aid for the nation floundering with default.

With markets closed, the weekend gave negotiators trying to avert a Greek exit from the euro some room to lay out a road map for what may be a high-stakes week with an emergency summit of EU chief Monday. The clock is running down on a nine-50 deadline to make payments and work out a new deal amid disagreements on pension, tax and a deficit target.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her Greek counterpart, Francois Hollande, spoke by phone Friday. As leaders of the two biggest economies in the 19-nation euro bloc, they've presided over a united front against Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, who has spent his five years in power trying to roll back the austerity policies underpinning the country's bailout.

"I want to say very clearly on expectation, that the summit meeting on Monday can only be a decision-making summit if a basis for making decisions is there," Merkel said in a Christian Democratic party event in Berlin.

The euro-area bailout of Greece expires at the end of the month and that's when about \$1.7 billion is owed to the International Monetary Fund.

Greece's negotiating team met on Saturday to discuss the bailout talks and the country's Cabinet will gather in the prime minister's residence this morning. Tsipras on Saturday canceled a planned trip to Strasbourg on Tuesday, the day after the summit.

Minister of State Nikos Pappas told Ethnos newspaper that the government "was working toward a solution." He said it includes no cuts to pensions or wages, an end to austerity and a "comprehensive" response to the overseas debt.

Budget-cut plans protested in U.K.

LONDON — Thousands of people from across the U.K. marched from the Bank of England to Westminster on Saturday to protest planned government spending cuts.

The organizers said 250,000 people attended the events in central London, the Press Association reported. A Metropolitan Police spokesman declined to give an estimate. No incidents were reported during the demonstration, he said.

The People's Assembly Against Austerity, which organized the rally, says the new Conservative government will deliver "massive, destructive cuts" to the National Health Service, welfare, education and public services. It staged the march "right on the doorstep of the very people who created the

crisis in the first place, and marching to the doorstep of Parliament," according to a statement on its website.

The Conservatives' outright victory in last month's election means they can implement their manifesto without having to offer concessions to coalition partners.

Chancellor George Osborne, who will announce a budget next month, is seeking \$48 billion in spending cuts by 2018, including \$10 billion in welfare savings, to help return Britain to a surplus.

"There's no need for austerity," said Ray Hutchinson, a pensions administrator at the National Health Service. "We should be investing in infrastructure, getting more jobs, which will then pay taxes and then pay off the debt."

European Union President Donald Tusk discussed what awaits Greece with European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi. IMF head Christine Lagarde and EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. Those institutions control the purse strings.

Returning from a visit to Russian President Vladimir Putin, Tsipras will buckle down in Athens with his closest advisers to come up with a game plan. His country was given a few more days of financial breathing space from the European Central Bank, which Friday increased again the maximum amount of emergency funding Greek banks can access.

On Monday, the central bank will review the emergency funding as deposits continue to flee Greek banks at dizzying rates. About \$2 billion was withdrawn in the past two days alone, according to the bank familiar with the matter.

The 40-year-old Tsipras, contending with hard-liners in his Syriza party who don't want him to capitulate to creditors' demands, has escalated the rhetoric in search of a better deal. He is expected to speak by phone with Juncker.

After their meeting Thursday ended in frustration, European finance ministers will convene again Monday, before the summit of leaders that could determine the future of the eurozone and Greece's place in it.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew said in an interview on CNN's "Pundit @ 2" that he will air today a Greek exit from the euro would have a major impact on the country's citizens and economy.

"Within Greece, the consequence of a failure here would mean a terrible, terrible decline in their economic performance," Lew said. "They will bear the first brunt of a failure."

While all parties in the negotiations must be flexible, the burden is on Greece, Lew said, according to a copy of the transcript of the interview provided Saturday. "The best solution for Greece to make some tough decisions."

Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis, in an opinion piece published Saturday by The Irish Times, blamed his European counterparts for showing no willingness Thursday to consider his "well-thought-out" proposals.

"Regrettably, my presentation was met with deafening silence," Varoufakis wrote.

He also warned that the ruling Syriza party would be replaced by neo-Nazis if Greece ends up defaulting and leaving the euro.

It's not yet clear if Tsipras will come to Brussels armed with a new plan, a Greek government official said. Near the end of the week, the same leaders will reconvene again for a scheduled two-day summit.

Information for this article was contributed by Rainer Buegler, Richard Shaw, Kevin Costello, Mark Osoo, Jonathan Osorio, Conna Riba, Stephanie Skodras, Karl Skagro, Kwanara, Scott Linnay, Andrew Maynard, Hans-Nichols, David Reed, Nikos Chrysokostas, Marcus Rosencranz, Alessandro Spaccato, Gary Clempa and Elizabeth DeWolfe of Bloomberg News.

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Border rules cut off jobs, homes

Dominicans' door closing to Haitians

JOSHUA PARTLOW
THE MASSACHUSETTS

QUANAMINTHE, Haiti — Several mornings a week for the past five years, Smith Laflur has left his second-floor cinder-block shack, walked past the stray goats and the sour-cherry tree, down the quiet dirt lanes and out into the shouts and motorcycle roar of the clamoring border town of Quanaminthe.

He has stepped around the smoldering trash piles and the clothes drying on the bank of the Massacre River, which separates Haiti from the Dominican Republic, and hopped up onto the border bridge on his way to another day's work. At the metal gate, he hasn't shown a passport — or papers of any kind — but mentioned his boss, a customs official who owns several houses, and with that he has crossed into Dajabon.

Over the years, Laflur has built a swimming pool, erected concrete walls, fixed toilets and swept the patio at the Drink Bar — the type of manual labor that feeds his five children. And that is far harder to find in his native Haiti. But his daily routine, and the livelihood for hundreds of thousands of Haitians, has been put at risk by new immigration rules that intend to oust Haitians who don't have documentation to stay in the Dominican Republic, even those who were born there.

"Everything we can get is here," Laflur said at one of the Drink Bar's wooden tables. "I don't know how to find work in Haiti."

In the days before the June 17 deadline for foreigners to register for residency permits — if they could prove they lived in the Dominican Republic before 2011 — many predicted police roundups and waves of deportations. So far, what has happened instead is voluntary departure by more than 120,000 Haitians who fear that such a crackdown could turn violent.

Quanaminthe is now the scene of returning Haitian families packed into trucks lashed high with suitcases and bulging sides. In the worst moments in the troubled relationship between these island-nearby neighbors, when sugar prices fell in the 1930s, the Dominican government sought to drive out Haitian cane cutters. Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo ordered a bloody military campaign that became known as "The Harvest," with soldiers slaughtering more than 10,000 Haitians along the Massacre River using machetes and shotguns.

Leonilda just moved with her aunt to the Dominican Republic decades after that. In 1974, but the jobs available were the same. She grew up cutting sugar cane, picking tomatoes, digging onions. She gave birth to 12 children, nine of whom survived, and eventually moved from the outskirts of the capital to the



Haitians just deported from the Dominican Republic stand on the Haitian side of the border June 16 in Massape, unsure of what to do next.



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northern city of Santiago. The sugar cane industry has shriveled, but her sons found jobs in construction and on farms. On a recent day, two of them, Thony Dume, 29, and Felix Mendez, 24, worked on an addition to her rented shack in Quanaminthe where they had moved four days before, to make room for more relatives returning from the Dominican Republic.

"I wasn't a problem living there before. The police and my other kids knew me," Dume said. "But now things are too hot."

On March 2, before deciding to move, Dume stood in line at one of the government's immigration offices to register himself. That gave him 45 days to prove he had the right to live in the Dominican Republic, even though he was born there.

During that time, he needed to get written documentation from seven neighbors to vouch for his endocrine, plus testimony from a corner store where he shopped, and a proof of residency from his landlord, in addition to a birth certificate or other government papers, none of which he had. To hire a lawyer to complete the process would cost up to \$900, he said, equal to what he could earn in five months at his job making cows in Santiago.

Instead, he got on a bus and headed for Dajabon.

Over the years, the Dominican border town has grown into a bustling commercial center with vendors from around the country selling their wares at the market to Haitian customers. The shoppers cross the border bridge with goods stacked on their heads, loaded into wheelbarrows and motorcycle carts.

"They make our economy dynamic," said Ana Carrasco,

53, who retired from local government to run a restaurant in Dajabon. "People come to buy eggs, chicken, spaghetti. If they don't buy it this market, they don't eat. Hunger doesn't have a flag, nor a border, nor a color, nor politics. It changes its necessity."

Until June 17, when they couldn't cross the border, Carrasco used Haitian laborers to work in her restaurant and clean her home. She said she supported the registration effort, but she worried about the harm the policy might cause to the economy. Dominicans in town have come to rely on the shadow services offered by Haitians. All day at her restaurant, Haitians drop by with their orders and wares: doeshine boys, girls selling baby clothes, a woman who sells brand-name tampons at half the price offered in the stores.

"This issue affects my business, because my employees can't come to work," she said. "But we have to resolve this — the country should be able to know who they are. You have to do it for everyone's safety. No matter what the cost, it

needs to happen."

Other Dajabon business owners have more to lose. On the 1,700 acres of Hiroshi Rodriguez's rice farm, the manual laborers done by trained-in Haitian workers because, as he said, "Dominicans don't want to work."

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On separate occasions over the past two months, soldiers and immigration officials have arrived and taken them away. He finds it particularly frustrating because soldiers, he said, take bribes from the farmers to let the day laborers pass the highway checkpoints.

"This makes me enraged. They don't let me work, but they're trafficking Haitians!"

"The government is going to have to recognize that all the companies need them," he added. "Pretty soon this is going to explode."

On June 20, Smith Laflur

headed for the bridge. It was his son's third birthday, and if he was going to afford a present, he needed to get to the Drink Bar. He pushed through the crowd to the border gate. He told the guard who he was, and his boss's name, but this time the guard shook his head.

"Not today," he said. "Things aren't good right now." Laflur argued for a while, then turned away and sat on the railing over the river. In the past, he'd considered trying to get to the United States, but he was afraid of the open ocean. He didn't have the money to apply for a Haitian passport, and his boss in the Dominican Republic had never helped him with a work permit. He was tired of sneaking around.

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Other Daj

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Anime Expo



Anime fans in costumes pose for photos Friday at the 24th annual Anime Expo held at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

State's 'pot' tax revenue soars
Washington tweaks laws after retailers, farmers complain

GENE JOHNSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE — Washington state opened its second-in-the-nation legal marijuana market July 8, 2014, with just a handful of stores selling high-priced marijuana to long lines of customers. A year later, the state has about 160 shops open, tax revenue has met past expectations and sales top \$1.4 billion per day.

Washington on marijuana farmers, processors and retailers have complained all year that heavy state and federal tax burdens, along with competition from an unregulated medical marijuana market, have made it difficult for them to do business.

But at least some relief is here: This month, two new laws take effect, one to regulate and tax medical marijuana, and one to cut Washington's three-level excise tax on marijuana to a single, 37 percent tax.

Despite some industry gripes and those tweaks to Washington's legal marijuana law, which voters passed in 2012 to legalize marijuana for adults over 21, officials and legislators say the state's slow and deliberate effort to regulate marijuana has been a success.

Washington has raked up more than \$200 million in marijuana sales in the past year — roughly \$60 million of which constitute marijuana excise taxes. That's beyond the state's original forecast of \$30 million. And when state and local sales and other taxes are included, the total per day for the state and local governments tops \$70 million.

"That's real money, if only a drop in Washington's \$13 billion two-year budget. Colorado recreational sales began Jan. 1, 2014, and brought in taxes of \$44 million in the first year.

The tax revenue could continue to climb.

And as other states watch Washington and Colorado, the only other state with legal marijuana sales, bring in more money, they're ever more seriously considering lowering such, as Oregon and Alaska have already.

"Nobody's counting on the revenue from cannabis sales to save us, but it has an impact," David Zuckerman, a Vermont state senator and legalization advocate, said during a recent visit to Seattle. "The more important thing is that the sky didn't fall in Colorado. The tidal wave hasn't hit Seattle. They're showing us that this can be done."

The flip side has been the burden of the taxes on marijuana businesses, with marijuana taxed 25 percent each time it moves from the growers to the producers to the retailers. That's been especially



Cannabis City employees Will Bibbs (left) helps a customer looking over a display case of marijuana products at the Seattle shop in this file photo.

tough on retailers, who must pay federal income tax on the marijuana tax they turn over to the state.

James Lathrop, who owns Seattle's first legal marijuana shop, Cannabis City, said that through the end of 2014, his estimated federal tax liability was \$240,000, on top of the \$770,000 he owed the state on \$1.1 million in sales.

"I'm basically doing this for free," Lathrop said. "Nobody's gone out of business, but I'm not driving a new truck either."

Lathrop has been in the business since 1995. "It hasn't been much easier on the growers."

"Looking back now, it's amazing we could be so successful and unsuccessful at the same time," said Jeremy Moberg, a longtime black-market grower who now legal now runs cannabis farms in north-central Washington. "We're the No. 2 grower in the state, and my bank account just seems to stagnate."

The new tax law makes clear that the 37 percent tax is the responsibility of the customer — not the retailer. That means stores won't have to claim that money as income on their federal filings.

With few growers harvesting by the time the first stores opened, the average price of a gram of legal marijuana spiked to nearly \$50 last summer — about three times the cost in medical marijuana shops. But prices have been dropping as more marijuana gets harvested. In fact, Washington has harvested its ton of marijuana flower intended to be sold as bud, but stores have only sold about 10 tons.

Some of the excess can be turned into marijuana extracts, such as oil, but the harvest has helped drive down the price to an average of about \$11.50 per gram.

Nevertheless, Lathrop said that in addition to tourists eager to visit the city's historic first legal marijuana shop, his clientele primarily consists of four people here who have been injured by jumping sturgeon.

Leaping sturgeon kills Florida girl, 5

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAKE CITY, Fla. — A 5-year-old Florida girl riding in a boat has died after a sturgeon leaped from the Suwannee River and struck her.

Wildlife officials said Jaylon Egger died after being struck Thursday night. Her mother and 9-year-old brother were also injured and taken to a Gainesville hospital. Their condition was not known.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said this is the first fatality recorded from a sturgeon strike on the Suwannee River. Four people have been injured by jumping sturgeon this year.

The fish are known for leaping more than 7 feet above the water. They can grow up to 8 feet long and weigh up to 200 pounds and can cause serious injuries.

N.C. looking for patterns in string of shark attacks

JULIET EILPERIN
AND **ROBERT GEBELHOFF**
THE WASHINGTON POST

This is the coming-of-age summer of the shark. The last one was in 2001, when a series of shark attacks on the East Coast combined with a period of generally slow news to whip up a spasm of shark mania.

This time, the fears are most acute in North Carolina, where there have been seven recent shark attacks — including one Wednesday on a former Boston Herald editor-in-chief — that caught the attention of government officials and raised the question of what might be bringing the usually shy sharks so close to shore and among the swimmers they usually avoid.

There's no obvious explanation for the uptick in attacks. The sharks have ranged from 5 to 8 feet, according to victim estimates. That suggests that different sharks — possibly from different species — were responsible, scientists say.

There is also no evidence that people are staying out of the water during this long holiday weekend. Tim Holbrook, a manager for Oak Island, N.C., where two teenagers lost limbs in separate attacks June 14, said he's seen a lot of people in the water and that there are no plans to close the beach.

But the town is handing out pamphlets to raise awareness of sharks in the water. And the sheriff's office is flying a helicopter along the shore throughout the weekend. The National Park Service, which oversees beaches in the Outer Banks, has asked swimmers to be aware that there have been attacks, and two ambulances with paramedics are standing ready.

"We can never guarantee anyone's safety when they enter the water," David Hobbie, the park service's superintendent of parks on the Outer Banks, said in a statement. "The only way to be sure you do not encounter sharks or other marine wildlife that may be harmful to humans is to stay out of the water."

North Carolina's seven shark attacks is an unusual number for a state that recorded 25 attacks between 2005 and 2014, according to the International Shark Attack File. North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory said Thursday that state officials are looking for patterns.

George Burgess, director of the International Shark Attack File at the University of Florida's Fish and Wildlife Museum of Natural History, said it would be a mistake to start rounding up sharks. A better solution, he said, would be for beachgoers to stay on dry land or for the government to close any beaches where there has been multiple shark attacks — at least for a few days.

"I would be my recommendation that closing a beach for a day or two is a good way to stop a rowdial that's rolling downhill," Burgess said.

Even with the recent attacks, researchers emphasize that sharks are a very low-level

threat to humans, compared with other forms of wildlife. Bees, for example, are much more dangerous. And swimming is hazardous even without sharks around.

"Any injury or death is a tragedy, but the chances of being bitten by a shark is still a rare occurrence," said David Shiffman, a doctor's candidate at the University of Miami's E.J. Dunlap Marine Conservation Program. "Thousands of Americans drown when they're vacationing by the beach. Only one dies a year due to a shark."

The scientific consensus is that there are too few sharks these days. Many large species off the East Coast have been decimated by decades of overfishing, with populations falling by as much as 90 percent. Sharks are targeted directly — their fins are used in soup — and are collateral casualties from efforts to harvest tuna and swordfish.

Although stricter federal and state management has led to population gains among some faster-reproducing species, such as blacktip and sharpnose sharks, Burgess and Shiffman said it will take many decades for sharks to fully recover. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, 46 percent of shark species worldwide are

threatened or endangered.

"Any idea that sharks have come back in large numbers in a few years is patently false," Burgess said, adding, "We are better off with healthy shark populations off our coasts than without them."

Burgess speculated that several environmental factors could have pushed sharks to congregate in the Outer Banks. It is a warm year and the water has a higher level of salinity because of a low-level drought in the area, he said. Also, a common species of forage fish — menhaden — has been abundant this year and might have attracted more sharks to the area. Burgess also said some fishermen put bait in the water near piers, which could lure the predators closer to shore.

Two of the encounters took place within 100 yards of a pier. "That's a formula for shark attacks," Burgess said of these conditions, taken together. "Now, does that explain seven attacks in three weeks? No, it doesn't."

Information for this article was contributed by Joel Achenbach of The Washington Post.

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Medicare

Continued from Page 1A

making Medicare the largest insurer at the end of life, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

"As a practicing physician, and a son, and someone who has dealt with this in his own family, I would say these are discussions — that are critical to high-quality care," said Patrick Conway, Medicare's chief medical officer. "I would want any American who wanted to have this conversation with their clinician to have the opportunity to do so."

Medicare is using a relatively new term for end-of-life counseling: advance care planning. That's meant to refer to people who make their wishes known about end-of-life care at different stages of their lives, as early as when they get a driver's license.

The counseling aims to discern the type of treatment patients want in their last days, with options ranging from care that's more focused on comfort than extending life, to all-out medical efforts to resuscitate a dying patient.

"This is a patient-centered policy intended to support a careful planning process that is assisted by a physician or other qualified health care professional," Andrew Gorman, president-elect of the American Medical Association, said in a statement. "This issue has been mischaracterized in the past and it is time to facilitate patient choices about advance care planning decisions."

Before former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin ignited the "death panels" outcry, there was

long-standing bipartisan consensus about helping people to better understand their end-of-life choices and decisions.

A 1992 law passed under Republican President George H.W. Bush required hospitals and nursing homes to help patients who want to prepare living wills and advance directives for their care.

Similar efforts gained resonance after the 2005 death of Terri Schiavo, a brain-damaged Florida woman whose family fought for years over whether she would want to be kept alive in a vegetative state.

Then-Florida Gov. Jeb Bush got embroiled in the family's ordeal, ordering feeding tubes reinstated for Schiavo against her husband's wishes. The husband ultimately prevailed in a legal battle with Schiavo's parents, who wanted her kept alive.

In 2008, a year before defying the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act spiraled into Tea Party protests, Congress over-riding presidential agency requiring doctors to discuss matters like living wills with new Medicare enrollees.

And, just months before being tapped as running mate for GOP presidential nominee John McCain, Palin herself signed a proclamation endorsing Healthcare Decision Day in Alaska, with the goal of a statewide effort of educating voters about the importance of advance-care directives.

That history dissipated almost instantly when Palin said the provision on end-of-life conversations in Obama's health care legislation would create "death panels" where bureaucrats force the ef-

change for Arkansians with incomes of up to 138 percent of the poverty level. \$16,242 for an individual or \$33,465 for a family of four.

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figure out the right balance between quality of life and pursuing intensive treatments, said the academics then called the Institute of Medicine.

The report said few people make their wishes known, resulting in many deaths that are filled with breathing machines, feeding tubes, powerful drugs and other treatments that fail to extend life, and make its final chapter more painful and unpleasant.

Because most people who participate in effective advance care planning choose maximizing independence and quality of life over living longer, advance care planning can potentially save health care costs," the academy said in the report. "The misrepresentation of the Affordable Care Act provisions for advance care planning as 'death panels' confused many Americans about the benefits and goals."

Supporters have said counseling would give patients more control and would free families from painful decisions or conflicts, such as in the Schiavo case.

After the report, Medicare said it would consider a change in policy for 2016.

"End-of-life discussions should be part of the life cycle," said Dr. Philip Pizzo, former dean of Stanford University medical school and the report's co-chairman. "Beginning healthcare is one of those times, since it can be a point of awareness and reflection."

Information for this article was obtained from Matt Scuderi and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar of The Associated Press; by Zachary Isaac of Bloomberg News; by Pam Selsky of The New York Times; and by Noam N. Levy of Tribune News Service.

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Senators pitch tax shift to fund roads

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — Two top tax writers on the Senate Finance Committee on Wednesday released a proposal that includes an option to use revenue generated by overhauling parts of the corporate tax code to help pay for transportation projects, despite warnings from Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch that he does not want to raise taxes to pay for a highway bill.

The international tax overhaul framework released by Sens. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., and Rob Portman, R-Ohio, does not specify how much money it would raise or how much could be applied to the Highway Trust Fund, which needs to be reauthorized by the end of the month. Instead, Schumer and Portman write that their outline builds on two earlier proposals from President Barack Obama and former House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp, R-Mich., both of whom proposed using revenue from international repatriation to pay for long-term highway funding.

Camp and Obama both released proposals that would rewrite tax rules for international corporations, shift to a territorial system of taxation, cut tax rates for all businesses and use one-time revenue raised in the transition to pay for transportation investment. The broader business tax overhaul outline included in Obama's fiscal 2016 budget was projected to raise about \$288 billion for the program.

Schumer and Portman stop short of specifying what tax rate companies would pay or how to implement the new system, but it could provide a starting point for the kind of limited business tax change that House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., has discussed in recent months.

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The nation in brief

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We're flying into the unknown. This is the risk we take with all kinds of exploration."

Alan Stern, principal scientist for NASA's New Horizons spacecraft, on waiting to celebrate the probe's mission as it neared a historic flyby of the dwarf planet Pluto

NYC to pay \$5.9M to Garner's family

NEW YORK — New York City reached a settlement Monday with the family of Eric Garner, agreeing to pay \$5.9 million to resolve the claim over his killing by the police last July on Staten Island, according to Jonathan Moore, a lawyer representing the family.

The agreement, made days before the deadline to file suit in the death, was reached by the city comptroller, Scott Stringer, who has sought to settle major civil-rights claims even before a lawsuit is filed. Stringer said the aim is to save taxpayers the expense of a drawn-out trial and to give those bringing the suits and their families a measure of closure.

Last year, Garner's relatives, including his wife, Esaw Garner, and his mother, Gwen Carr, filed a notice of claim seeking damages. Garner died July 17, 2014, after a police officer, Daniel Pantaleo, placed him in a chokehold during an arrest as other officers wrestled him to the ground. The confrontation was captured in a cellphone video taken by a bystander. The medical examiner ruled the death a homicide, citing the chokehold and compression of Garner's chest by police. In December, a Staten Island grand jury declined to indict Pantaleo.

Military to review transgender ban

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Ash Carter on Monday said the Pentagon is reviewing its ban on transgender service members, a move that could allow transgender individuals from the military to be retained, and allows willing to serve the country to be able to do so.

Carter is creating a working group to do a six-month study on the impact of lifting the ban. Carter said the group will begin with the presumption that transgender people should be able to serve openly.

The plan, which was first reported by The Associated Press, gives the service time to work through questions about health care, housing, physical standards, uniforms and costs associated with the change.

Pier victim's kin back prison plan

SAN FRANCISCO — The parents of a woman fatally shot on a San Francisco pier said Monday in an interview that they support a proposal to give mandatory prison time to deported people who return to the U.S. illegally.

Kathryn Steink, 52, was shot by a gun allegedly fired by Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, 45, a Mexican national who was in the country illegally. Lopez-Sanchez, who has pleaded innocent, had been released from jail months before the shooting, despite a federal immigration order sending local authorities to hold him. Jim Steink and Liz Sullivan of Pleasanton, Calif., were interviewed by Bill O'Reilly on Fox News' 'The O'Reilly Factor.'

Steink and Sullivan said the proposed "Kate's Law" would be a good way to keep her memory alive. O'Reilly is collecting signatures for a petition supporting the proposal, which would impose a mandatory five-year in federal prison for people who are deported and return and 10 years for people caught a second time.

— COMPILED BY ERIC LIPPETT FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama cuts sentences of 46 drug offenders

JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama announced Monday that he was commuting the sentences of 46 federal drug offenders, more than doubling the number of nonviolent criminals to whom he has granted clemency since taking office.

"These men and women were not violent criminals, but the overwhelming majority had been sentenced to life for non-violent drug offenses, so their punishments didn't fit the crime," Obama said in a video released on the White House Facebook page, in which he shows signs the commutation letters. "I believe that America, at its heart, is a nation of second chances, and I believe these folks deserve their second chance."

Obama's action Monday brought the total number of commutations he has issued to 89, exceeding that of any president since Lyndon Johnson, who commuted 226 sentences during his term. It also meant that he has commuted more sentences



President Barack Obama speaks Monday in the East Room of the White House.

than the last four presidents combined. In a letter written to each of the inmates in which he notifies them that their sentences have been commuted, Obama says he has chosen them out of the thousands who apply for clemency because "you have demonstrated the potential to turn your life around."

"I believe in your ability to prove the doubters wrong," Obama had already commuted the sentences of 43 prisoners as part of an initiative begun last year by James Cole, the deputy attorney general at the time, who set criteria for who might qualify: generally nonviolent inmates who have served more than 10 years in prison, have behaved well while incarcerated, and who would not have received as lengthy a sentence under today's revised sentencing rules.

Obama plans to spend much of the week talking about a criminal justice overhaul that would include changes to sentencing guidelines, lessening penalties for drug offenders. The president plans to introduce his proposal today in Philadelphia before the NAACP's annual convention.

Under the Constitution, the president has the power to grant "pardons for offenses against the United States" or to commute federal sentences. A pardon is an act of presidential forgiveness and wipes away any remaining legal liabilities from a conviction. A commutation reduces a sentence but does not eliminate a conviction or restore civil rights lost as a result of the conviction.

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Pluto's size provides surprise

MARCIA DINN THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Little Pluto is a little bigger than anyone imagined. On the eve of NASA's historic flyby of Pluto, scientists announced Monday that the New Horizons spacecraft had

measured the diameter of the dwarf planet at 1,473 miles, plus or minus 12 miles. That's about 50 miles bigger than previous estimates in the low range.

Principal scientist Alan Stern said this means Pluto has a lower density than thought, which could mean an ice and less rocky interior.

New Horizons' 3 billion-mile, 94-year journey from Cape Canaveral culminates this morning when the spacecraft zooms within 770 miles of Pluto at 31,000 mph.

Mission managers said there's only one chance in 10,000 something could go wrong like a debilitating debris strike, this late in the game. But Stern cautioned: "We're flying into the unknown. This is the risk we take with all kinds of exploration."

"It sounds like science fiction, but it's not," Stern said as he opened a Monday news conference at mission headquarters in Maryland. "Tomorrow morning, a United States spacecraft will fly by the Pluto

system and make history." Discovered in 1930, Pluto was a full-fledged planet when New Horizons roared toward it in 2006 only to become demoted to dwarf status later that year.

New Horizons has already beamed back the best-ever images of Pluto and big moon Charon the far fringes of the solar system.

"The Pluto system is enchanting in its strangeness, its alien beauty," said Stern, planetary scientist at Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, Colo.

With the encounter finally in hand, it all seems surreal for the New Horizons team gathered at Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory.

Project manager Glen Fountain said New Horizons, at long last, is like a freight train barreling down the track "and your seatbelts are light coming at you and you know it's not going to stop, you can't slow it down."

"Of course, the light is Pluto, and we're all excited," Fountain said. Besides the revised size of Pluto — still a solar system runt, not even one-fifth the

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National

MONDAY, JULY 20, 2015 • 3A

The nation in brief

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We don't want to leave our folks out there as targets when we've had such a horrible event happen just three days ago."

Bill Haslam — the governor of Tennessee, calling for a review of security policies at National Guard armories and other military installations after shootings in Chattanooga that killed four Marines and a sailor

Japanese apologize to American POW

LOS ANGELES — A Japanese corporation gave an unprecedented apology Sunday to a 94-year-old U.S. prisoner of war for using American POWs for forced labor during World War II.

At the solemn ceremony hosted by the Museum of Tolerance at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, James Murphy of Santa Maria accepted the apology from executives of Mitsubishi Materials in front of a projected image of the U.S. and Japanese flags.

Murphy, who was forced to work in Mitsubishi copper mines, called the apology step and remorseful. "This is a glorious day," Murphy said. "For 70 years we wanted this."

Japan's government issued a formal apology to American POWs in 2009 and again in 2013. But the dwindling ranks of POWs used as slaves at mines and industrial plants have so far had little luck in getting apologies from the corporations who used them.

Some 12,000 American prisoners were shipped to work at more than 50 sites to support imperial Japan's war effort, and about 10 percent died, according to Kinze Takami, director of the U.S.-Japan Dialogue on POWs.

Police arrest man in deaths of five
MODESTO, Calif. — A man was arrested Sunday in the deaths of his daughter, two other girls and two women whose bodies were found Saturday in a California home, police said.

Bridge collapses on California's I-10
LOS ANGELES — An elevated section of Interstate 10 collapsed Sunday during heavy rains in a remote desert area of California, cutting off traffic between the state and Arizona and leaving a driver injured.

Carter to pitch nuke deal in Mideast trip

WASHINGTON — U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter arrived in Israel on Sunday on a mission to reassure allies and Arab partners about American resolve after agreeing to a nuclear deal with Iran.

Carter said his trip to Israel, Saudi Arabia and Jordan "comes at a very important moment because of the Iran deal," which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has condemned as a threat to Israel.

The Pentagon chief said he will use the visit to discuss ways to improve military cooperation without trying to persuade Israeli leaders to support the deal, which bars an easing of economic sanctions on Iran for curbs on the Islamic Republic's nuclear program.

Carter is scheduled to meet with Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon today and with Netanyahu on Tuesday before traveling to Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

The deal "places no limitations on the United States or the Department of Defense" to carry out its strategy, he said, which includes countering the "malicious influence" of Iran, he said.

Netanyahu, in an interview Sunday on ABC's "This Week" with George Stephanopoulos, reiterated his opposition to the deal, saying it will pave the way for Iran to develop nuclear weapons and give Tehran billions of dollars to spend on a "war machine."

Netanyahu said the agreement made with Iran by the U.S. and five other world powers "is not a good deal" that "removes a critical element of danger, threat and uncertainty from the region."

Netanyahu said the deal "places no limitations on the United States or the Department of Defense" to carry out its strategy, he said, which includes countering the "malicious influence" of Iran, he said.



U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter (center) and U.S. Department of Defense press secretary Peter Cook (left) listen to a question during a news conference aboard a military aircraft en route to Israel on Sunday.

Carter said he plans to meet with King Salman of Saudi Arabia to discuss ways to counter Iranian aggression and combat Islamic State forces. When asked if he has plans to increase U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf region, Carter said, "We're always looking for ways to strengthen our posture."

For Saudi Arabia, the U.S. will work to improve counterterrorism activities, maritime security, special operations, integrated air and missile defenses, and cybersecurity, he said.

Calling Israel "a critical friend, a critical ally," Carter said he plans to travel with Yaalon to the country's northern border with Jordan and

Syria. The visit will help Carter assess the threat posed by Iran-backed Hezbollah, which the U.S. considers a terrorist organization.

When asked if he was concerned that Israel could take preventive military action against Iran because of the nuclear deal, Carter said only that military options have been discussed with Israeli officials and that the U.S. military option is preserved.

The U.S. has invested hundreds of millions in an Israeli air defense system known as Iron Dome, designed to shoot down short-range rockets, and mortar and artillery shells fired into northern Israel from southern Lebanon and into Israel's south from the Gaza Strip.

Two months ago, Washington announced a \$1.9 billion arms sale to Israel for a range of missiles and bombs, including bunker busters that can penetrate reinforced defenses to reach underground targets.

The trip also includes a stop in Jordan that will focus on the U.S.-led coalition campaign to defeat the Islamic State, which declared a self-styled caliphate, state under Islamic law, in parts of Iraq and Syria.

The visit will include a meeting with the squadron of a Jordanian pilot who was burned alive by Islamic State extremists, said the U.S. defense official, who briefed reporters Friday on condition of anonymity to discuss unannounced plans.

Information for this article was contributed by David Lerman and Sara Bush of Bloomberg News and by Robert Burns and Josef Federman of The Associated Press.

State budgets worry over Medicaid expansion

CHRISTINA A. PASSIDY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS ATLANTA — More than a dozen states that opted to expand Medicaid under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act are now long run because Medicaid will allow some state-run services to be eliminated and will stimulate the economy through new revenue and job creation, Beshear, a Democrat, released a study earlier this year touting the creation of 12,000 jobs and nearly \$1.2 billion in new revenue to health care providers as a result of expansion.

Thirty states and the District of Columbia have opted to expand Medicaid, or plan to do so, to include all adults with incomes at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level, currently \$16,243 for an individual.

The federal government agreed to pay all costs for the new enrollees through 2016, but it will begin lowering its share in 2017. States will pay 10 percent of the costs by 2021.

At least 14 states have seen new enrollees exceed their original projections, causing at least seven to increase their cost estimates for 2017, according to an Associated Press analysis of state budget projections. Medicaid enrollments and cost details in the expansion states. A few states said they could not provide original projections.

California has enrolled nearly 2.3 million people so far — almost three times more than the 800,257 the state had anticipated. Enrollment in Washington state more than doubled.

Oregon originally estimated 222,000 newly eligible Medicaid recipients would sign up by the end of June, but that number ballooned to 386,000. Paying for the new enrollees isn't the only Medicaid cost troubling Oregon lawmakers. Starting in 2017, the

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS Arkansas Connections Academy announces a public hearing on the creation of a new statewide online open-enrollment charter school.

MONDAY, JULY 27 9 A.M. Holiday Inn Express 2205 SE Walton Blvd Bentonville, AR 72712

Man kills himself in motel standoff MORGAN, Pa. — Authorities said a man killed himself in western Pennsylvania after a standoff at a motel involving a teenage girl reported missing in Oklahoma.

Man kills himself in motel standoff MORGAN, Pa. — Authorities said a man killed himself in western Pennsylvania after a standoff at a motel involving a teenage girl reported missing in Oklahoma.

Police in Allegheny County said officers were called to the South Fayette Township motel about 1 p.m. Saturday after being told that a man was with a 15-year-old girl he had apparently met online.

Police Chief Danny Ford of Duncan, Okla., told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that investigators believe the man went to Oklahoma to get the girl and took her back to Pittsburgh. After being informed of her disappearance Friday morning, investigators the following day traced her phone to Ohio and contacted the FBI. They later called a number on her phone records that turned out to be the man's, and were able to trace his phone to the Pittsburgh area, Ford said.

Police at the scene were joined by the county bomb squad and SWAT teams, and officials said they knew the man was armed. For hours, they tried to get him to surrender, officials said.

"We thought he was going to come out to negotiate — he said numerous times he was going to come out," said Jim Morton, assistant superintendent of county police. Officials said a gunshot was heard just before 9:20 p.m. Saturday, after which officers entered the room. Walter Morris, 46, of Pittsburgh died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, the county medical examiner's office said Sunday. No one else was injured.

Officials said the girl was taken to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh for examination.

Notices as provided by the Arkansas Democrat Gazette

-NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS-

Arkansas Connections Academy announces two public hearings on the creation of a new statewide online open-enrollment charter school. Arkansas Connections Academy will serve students in grades K-12 with quality curriculum and personalized instruction.

Please attend to learn more.

FRIDAY, JULY 17 **SATURDAY, JULY 18**
6:00 P.M. 2:00 P.M.

■ ■
Holiday Inn Express Hilton Garden Inn
2205 SE Walton Blvd 4100 Glover Ln
Bentonville, AR 72712 N. Little Rock, AR 72117

-NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS-

Arkansas Connections Academy announces a public hearing on the creation of a new statewide online open-enrollment charter school. Arkansas Connections Academy will serve students in grades K-12 with quality curriculum and personalized instruction. *Please attend to learn more.*

MONDAY, JULY 27
9 A.M.

■
Holiday Inn Express
2205 SE Walton Blvd
Bentonville, AR 72712

Flyer Distributed by Board Members



Arkansas Connections Academy announces three public hearings on the creation of a new statewide online open-enrollment charter school. Arkansas Connections Academy will serve students in grades K-12 with quality curriculum and personalized instruction.

Attend to learn more.

Friday, July 17, 2015 at 6:00 PM
Monday, July 27, 2015 at 9:00 AM

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
2205 S.E. Watson Blvd
Bentonville, AR 72712

Saturday, July 18, 2015 at 2:00 PM

Hilton Garden Inn North Little Rock
4100 Glover Lane
North Little Rock, AR 72217

Email from Board President Dennis Beck to Superintendents on 7/6/15

From: Arkansas Connections Academy [mailto:arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 1:47 PM

To: Idardenne@dewitt.k12.ar.us; jcouch@bergman.k12.ar.us; bradfordr@quitman.k12.ar.us; David Woolly; Scott Spainhour; newton.jerry@poyenschool.com; gerald.cooper@melbourneschools.org; Fred Walker; Larry Bennett; cshannon@bulldogs.k12.ar.us; backlin@dollarwayschools.org; linda.watson@pbsd.k12.ar.us; hazelwd@WCMAIL.K12.AR.US; lesmith@whitehallsd.org; pnicholsanderson@lighthouse-academies.org; ccook@responsiveed.com; Roy Hester; brendahaynes@sheridanschools.org; tgardner@msd.gaggle.net; lovethesixtiesman yeah; dsmith@paragouldschools.net; blee@blevins.swsc.k12.ar.us; Bobby Hart; Angie Raney; susan.stewart@bsd-lions.net; ngills@grbeavers.org; mcclurg@magnetcove.k12.ar.us; bgolden@malvernleopards.org; kissirer@osd.k12.ar.us; ddavis@outlaw.dmsc.k12.ar.us; turnerc@mssd2.k12.ar.us; doug.graham@nashvillesd.com; Randy Willison; roger.rich@southsideschools.org; dstanley@midlandschools.org; Ann Webb; skid@calico.k12.ar.us; David.Hopkins@cstar.org; willie.murdock@lcsd.grsc.k12.ar.us; suzanne.bailey@lonokeschools.org; becky.kesler@tasd7.net; arthur.tucker@brinkleyschools.com; terry.belcher@bobcats.k12.ar.us; jwarren@iacs.k12.ar.us; mwalker@ashdownschools.org; John K. Parrish; sbeck@mag.wsc.k12.ar.us; Wayne Fawcett; tony.thurman@cps.k12.ar.us; Dale Query; Larry.Ivens@yellvillesummitschools.com; rwaters@dragons.k12.ar.us; ratwill@blythevilleschools.net; bmace@gosnellschool.net; castorp@mps.crsc.k12.ar.us; ksay@jasper.k12.ar.us; drozenberg@beardenschools.org; Walton Pigott; phughey@stephens.k12.ar.us; mcox@osd1.org; ventl@lions.grsc.k12.ar.us; wkey@caddohills.org; dennistonr@deer.k12.ar.us; rdavis@cfsd.k12.ar.us; ESAUNDERS@BIGELOW.K12.AR.US; ron.wilson@perryvilleschool.org; twilson@blsd.grsc.k12.ar.us; smc@griver.grsc.k12.ar.us; rdenson@marvell.grsc.k12.ar.us; scott.shirey@kipdelta.org; butchera@ck.k12.ar.us; jeffalex123@yahoo.com; feather@mboro.k12.ar.us; thompsona@mtree.k12.ar.us; Myra Graham; mpierce@mail.epc.k12.ar.us; benny.weston@menaschools.org; Danny Sample; scrumpler@orsd.k12.ar.us; lamartin@cossatot.k12.ar.us; Mark Gotcher; jerry.owens@doverschools.net; walt.davis@hector.k12.ar.us; Larry Dugger; Randall Williams; burnsr@desarc.wmsc.k12.ar.us; mdonaghy@hazen.k12.ar.us; dexter.suggs@lrsd.org; Kelly Rodgers; jguess@pcssd.org; rob.mcguill@academicsplus.org; ekin@lisaacademy.org; ssides@arva.org; valerie.tatum@arkansas.gov; jbacon@estemlr.net; Fatih Bogrek; blindquist@lrprep.org; Katie Tatum; jim.hill@asb.k12.ar.us; mikep@asd.k12.ar.us; brett.smith@arkansas.gov; Larry Sullinger; Daryl Blaxton; joye.hughes@fcsd.grsc.k12.ar.us; sowens@hsd4.org; jestes@pwsd.k12.ar.us; williams@bauxiteminers.org; jcollum@bentonschools.org; tkimbrell@bryantschools.org; dhenley@cardinals.dsc.k12.ar.us; wayman.gary@waldronsd.org; jhulsey@omsd.k12.ar.us; john.ciesla@greenwoodk12.com; Teresa Ragsdale; Andrew Vining; bgooden@fortsmithschools.org; bill.pittman@hacketthornets.org; steve.rose@lavacaschools.com; ross@mansfieldtigers.org; Bruce Hill; Lee Smith; sgreen@cavecity.ncsc.k12.ar.us; Tracy Webb; rowdyr@mvdistrict.k12.ar.us; lvoris@esd-15.org; lower@jcdragons.k12.ar.us; asnow@norphlet.k12.ar.us; lusks@strong.scsc.k12.ar.us; jones@clinton.k12.ar.us; Vicki Thomas; allen.williams@pigtigers.org; Michael White; dave.wilcox@smackover.net; Betty McGruder; Billy Jackson; jordan@elkinsdistrict.org; BLAW@FARMCARDS.ORG; ccudney@greenlandsd.com; Mary Ann Spears; missy.hixson@pigtigers.org; Vol Woods; jrrollins@sdaie.org; John Karnes; MartinSchoppmeyer@haashall.org; Sheila Whitlow; cspann@rbsd.k12.ar.us; dbarrett@searcyschools.org; kieth.williams@baldknobschools.org; Belinda Shook; adunn@bradford.k12.ar.us; Delena Gammill; kathy.berryhill@pangburnschools.org; Ray Nassar; scottb@mccrory.k12.ar.us; JOHN.THOMPSON@DARDANELLE.K12.AR.US; clevelandl@wolverines.k12.ar.us; loydj@trgators.org; mbryant@sps.k12.ar.us; bwood@csd.k12.ar.us; mdyson@hslions.org; Don Sharp; Lonnie Myers; mike.seay@norfolk.k12.ar.us; mpoore@bentonvillek12.org; lben@decatursd.com; Randy Barrett; richard.page@gravetteschools.net; jdarr@rps.k12.ar.us; ken.ramey@sssd.k12.ar.us; rneal@prs.k12.ar.us; phines@bcsa.k12.ar.us; amartin@alpena.k12.ar.us; jholland@westsiderebels.net; hal.landrith@mountida.k12.ar.us; rpoole@prescott.k12.ar.us; rick mcafee; Melinda Moss; jerry.parrett@omaha.k12.ar.us;

Arkansas Connections Academy

ctrammell@valley.k12.ar.us; JDAVIDSON@LEADHILLSCHOOLS.NET; Richard Rankin; Marilyn Johnson; jcunningham@hampton.k12.ar.us; RByrd@bobcat.k12.ar.us; dkellogg@es.k12.ar.us; Matt Summers; jvaught@lakeside.sesc.k12.ar.us; Donnie Whitten; Allen Blackwell; kellee.smith@corning.k12.ar.us; charlie.powell@piggottschools.net; jfowler@rector.k12.ar.us; michael.davidson@concord.k12.ar.us; Russell Hester; Sally Bennett; gary.masters@smccolts.com; Andy Chisum; Dudley Hume; Johnnie Johnson; John Moore; hinesg@emerson.k12.ar.us; cbeene@nemo.k12.ar.us; J. Carroll Purtle; Shawn Halbrook; Chip Layne; Bryan Duffie; Kevin McGaughey; gtaylor@buffaloislandcentral.com; kim.wilbanks@jonesboroschools.net; James Dunivan; radius.baker@valleyviewschools.net; Tommy Knight; eddie.johnson@england.k12.ar.us; jclark@carlisle.k12.ar.us; rallen@1hsd.org; Forrest Mulkey; dforeman@cedarvilleschools.org; Dennis Copeland; dhigdon@mpvschools.com; mdickerson@vbsd.us; rnicks5701; collins@wmsd.net; djohnston@msd3.org; Carolyn Wilson; Carl Easley; collinsd@fordycschools.org; david.rainey@dumas.k12.ar.us; Thomas Gathen; billy.williams@drewcentral.org; Bobby Harper; murryg@conwayschools.net; richard.montgomery@scmail.k12.ar.us; jsanders@foremanschools.org; Jim Bridges; cosseyb@guy.afsc.k12.ar.us; jgray@mayflowerschools.org; lwalters@faculty.mve.k12.ar.us; Frank Mitchell; jstubblefield@tigersmail.org; Joan Jones; Jim Ford; david.turnbough@mammothspringschools.com; Ken Rich; John May; nancya@cms.dsc.k12.ar.us; dbeckwith@flcobras.com; Joyce Craft; andy.curry@jsdlions.net; Steve Anderson; shawn_cook@lakesidesd.org; grayr@mpsd.k12.ar.us; keithm@lcscougars.org; Radius.Baker@hoxie.nesc.k12.ar.us; mwalton@sloan-hendrix.com; grantg@dps-littlejohns.net

Cc: ADE Charter Schools

Subject: Public Hearing Notice for Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Superintendents:

Please find an attached PDF of Arkansas Connection Academy's Notice of Public Hearings for the creation of a public charter school. These hearings will take place:

FRIDAY, JULY 17 - 6 pm

Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

SATURDAY, JULY 18 - 2 pm

Hilton Garden Inn, 4100 Glover Ln, N. Little Rock, AR 72117

Dennis Beck

Board President

Arkansas Connections Academy

Email from Board President Dennis Beck to Superintendents on 7/9/15

From: Arkansas Connections Academy [mailto:arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2015 1:59 PM

To: ldardenne@dewitt.k12.ar.us; jcouch@bergman.k12.ar.us; bradfordr@quitman.k12.ar.us; David Woolly; Scott Spainhour; newton.jerry@poyenschool.com; gerald.cooper@melbourneschools.org; Fred Walker; Larry Bennett; cshannon@bulldogs.k12.ar.us; backlin@dollarwayschools.org; linda.watson@pbsd.k12.ar.us; hazelwd@WCMAIL.K12.AR.US; lesmith@whitehallsd.org; pnicholsanderson@lighthouse-academies.org; ccook@responsiveed.com; Roy Hester; tgardner@msd.gaggle.net; lovethesixtiesman yeah; dsmith@paragouldschools.net; blee@blevins.swsc.k12.ar.us; Bobby Hart; Angie Raney; susan.stewart@bsd-lions.net; bgolden@malvernleopards.org; kissirer@osd.k12.ar.us; turnerc@mssd2.k12.ar.us; doug.graham@nashvillesd.com; Randy Willison; roger.rich@southsideschools.org; dstanley@midlandschools.org; Ann Webb; skid@calico.k12.ar.us; David.Hopkins@cstar.org; willie.murdock@lcsd.grsc.k12.ar.us; suzanne.bailey@lonokeschools.org; becky.kesler@tasd7.net; arthur.tucker@brinkleyschools.com; terry.belcher@bobcats.k12.ar.us; jwarren@iacs.k12.ar.us; mwalker@ashdownschools.org; John K. Parrish; sbeck@mag.wsc.k12.ar.us; Wayne Fawcett; tony.thurman@cps.k12.ar.us; Dale Query; Larry.Ivens@yellvillesummitschools.com; rwaters@dragons.k12.ar.us; ratwill@blythevilleschools.net; bmace@gosnellschool.net; castorp@mps.crsc.k12.ar.us; drozenberg@beardenschools.org; Walton Pigott; phughey@stephens.k12.ar.us; mcox@osd1.org; ventl@lions.grsc.k12.ar.us; wkey@caddohills.org; dennistonr@deer.k12.ar.us; rdavis@cfsd.k12.ar.us; ron.wilson@perryvilleschool.org; twilson@blsd.grsc.k12.ar.us; smc@griver.grsc.k12.ar.us; rdenson@marvell.grsc.k12.ar.us; scott.shirey@kipdelta.org; jeffalex123@yahoo.com; feather@mboro.k12.ar.us; thompsona@mtree.k12.ar.us; Myra Graham; mpierce@mail.epc.k12.ar.us; benny.weston@menaschools.org; Danny Sample; scrumpler@orsd.k12.ar.us; lamartin@cossatot.k12.ar.us; Mark Gotcher; jerry.owens@doverschools.net; walt.davis@hector.k12.ar.us; Larry Dugger; Randall Williams; burnsr@desarc.wmsc.k12.ar.us; dexter.suggs@lrsd.org; Kelly Rodgers; jguess@pcssd.org; rob.mcgill@academicsplus.org; ekin@lisaacademy.org; ssides@arva.org; valerie.tatum@arkansas.gov; jbacon@estemlr.net; Fatih Bogrek; blindquist@lrprep.org; Katie Tatum; jim.hill@asb.k12.ar.us; mikep@asd.k12.ar.us; brett.smith@arkansas.gov; Larry Sullinger; Daryl Blaxton; joye.hughes@fcsd.grsc.k12.ar.us; jestes@pwsd.k12.ar.us; williams@bauxiteminers.org; jcollum@bentonschools.org; tkimbrell@bryantschools.org; wayman.gary@waldronsd.org; john.ciesla@greenwoodk12.com; Teresa Ragsdale; Andrew Vining; bgooden@fortsmithschools.org; bill.pittman@hacketthornets.org; steve.rose@lavacaschools.com; rross@mansfieldtigers.org; Bruce Hill; Lee Smith; sgreen@cavecity.ncsc.k12.ar.us; Tracy Webb; rowdyr@mvdistrict.k12.ar.us; lvoris@esd-15.org; lower@jcdragons.k12.ar.us; asnow@norphlet.k12.ar.us; lusks@strong.scsc.k12.ar.us; jones@clinton.k12.ar.us; allen.williams@pgtigers.org; Michael White; dave.wilcox@smackover.net; Betty McGruder; Billy Jackson; jordan@elkinsdistrict.org; BLAW@FARMCARDS.ORG; ccudney@greenlandsd.com; Mary Ann Spears; missy.hixson@pgtigers.org; Vol Woods; jrollins@sdale.org; John Karnes; MartinSchoppmeyer@haashall.org; Sheila Whitlow; cspann@rbsd.k12.ar.us; dbarrett@searcyschools.org; Belinda Shook; adunn@bradford.k12.ar.us; Delena Gammill; kathy.berryhill@pangburnschools.org; Ray Nassar; scottb@mccrory.k12.ar.us; JOHN.THOMPSON@DARDANELLE.K12.AR.US; clevelandl@wolverines.k12.ar.us; loydj@trgators.org; bwood@csc.k12.ar.us; mdyson@hdsdlions.org; Don Sharp; Lonnie Myers; mike.seay@norfork.k12.ar.us; mpoore@bentonvillek12.org; Randy Barrett; richard.page@gravetteschools.net; jdarr@rps.k12.ar.us; ken.ramey@sssd.k12.ar.us; rneal@prs.k12.ar.us; amartin@alpena.k12.ar.us; jholland@westsiderebels.net; hal.landrith@mountida.k12.ar.us; rpoole@prescott.k12.ar.us; rick mcafee; Melinda Moss; jerry.parrett@omaha.k12.ar.us; ctrammell@valley.k12.ar.us; JDAVIDSON@LEADHILLSCHOOLS.NET; Richard Rankin; Marilyn Johnson; jcunningham@hampton.k12.ar.us; dkellogg@es.k12.ar.us; Matt Summers; kelvin.gragg@dermott.k12.ar.us; Donnie Whitten; Allen Blackwell; kellee.smith@corning.k12.ar.us; charlie.powell@pigottschools.net; jfowler@rector.k12.ar.us; michael.davidson@concord.k12.ar.us;

Arkansas Connections Academy

Russell Hester; Sally Bennett; Andy Chisum; Dudley Hume; Johnnie Johnson; John Moore; hinesg@emerson.k12.ar.us; cbeene@nemo.k12.ar.us; J. Carroll Purtle; Shawn Halbrook; Chip Layne; Bryan Duffie; Kevin McGaughey; gtaylor@buffaloislandcentral.com; kim.wilbanks@jonesboroschools.net; James Dunivan; Tommy Knight; eddie.johnson@england.k12.ar.us; jclark@carlisle.k12.ar.us; Forrest Mulkey; dforeman@cedarvilleschools.org; Dennis Copeland; dhigdon@mpvschools.com; mdickerson@vbsd.us; rnicks5701; collins@wmsd.net; djohnston@msd3.org; Carolyn Wilson; Carl Easley; collinsd@fordyceschools.org; Thomas Gathen; billy.williams@drewcentral.org; Bobby Harper; murryg@conwayschools.net; richard.montgomery@scmail.k12.ar.us; jsanders@foremanschools.org; Jim Bridges; jgray@mayflowerschools.org; lwalters@faculty.mve.k12.ar.us; Frank Mitchell; jstubblefield@tigersmail.org; Joan Jones; Jim Ford; david.turnbough@mammothspringschools.com; Ken Rich; John May; nancya@cms.dsc.k12.ar.us; dbeckwith@flcobras.com; Joyce Craft; Steve Anderson; shawn_cook@lakesidesd.org; keithm@lcscougars.org; Radius.Baker@hoxie.nesc.k12.ar.us; mwalton@sloan-hendrix.com; Greg Crabtree; collinsd@bigelow.k12.ar.us; ron.looper@jsdlions.net; jerroddwilliams@sheridanschools.org; Brad Roberts; cjones@1hsd.org; Nanette Belford; Jayme Jones; ngills@sps.k12.ar.us; bryan.russell@valleyviewschools.net; Danny Thomas; dclark@bobcat.k12.ar.us; jcantre@jasper.k12.ar.us; breshearsd@ck.k12.ar.us; tholicer@grbeavers.org; paul.hewitt@fayar.net; mike.smith@smcolts.com; Jeff Gravette; kelvin.gragg@dumas.k12.ar.us; mley@arkansasartsacademy.org; Brian Cossey; grantg@dps-littlejohns.net; holly.cothren@dierksschools.org; robert.gray@mpsdrd.com

Cc: ADE Charter Schools

Subject: Public Hearing Notice for Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Superintendents:

Please find an attached PDF of Arkansas Connection Academy's Notice of Public Hearing for the creation of a public charter school. This hearing will take place:

MONDAY, JULY 27 - 9 AM

Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

Dennis Beck
Board President
Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Connections Academy

Subsequent emails that sent to the email addresses that had been returned as undeliverable in the previous email:

- **July 6, 2015 at 2:54 PM**
- **July 6, 2015 at 9:43 PM**
- **July 7, 2015 at 8:51 PM**
- **July 14, 2015 at 9:33 AM**

From: Arkansas Connections Academy [mailto:arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 2:54 PM

To: collinsd@bigelow.k12.ar.us; ron.looper@jsdlions.net; jerroddwilliams@sheridanschools.org; Brad Roberts; cjones@1hsd.org; Nanette Belford; jjones@omsd.k12.ar.us; ngills@sps.k12.ar.us; bryan.russell@valleyviewschools.net; Danny Thomas; dclark@bobcat.k12.ar.us; jcantre@jasper.k12.ar.us; breshearsd@ck.k12.ar.us; tholicer@grbeavers.org; paul.hewitt@fayar.net; mike.smith@smccolts.com; Jeff Gravette; kelvin.gragg@dumas.k12.ar.us; mley@arkansasartsacademy.org

Cc: ADE Charter Schools

Subject: Arkansas Connections Academy Public Hearing Notice

Arkansas Superintendents:

Please find an attached PDF of Arkansas Connection Academy's Notice of Public Hearings for the creation of a public charter school. These hearings will take place:

FRIDAY, JULY 17 - 6 pm

Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

SATURDAY, JULY 18 - 2 pm

Hilton Garden Inn, 4100 Glover Ln, N. Little Rock, AR 72117

Dennis Beck

Board President

Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Connections Academy

From: Arkansas Connections Academy [mailto:arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 9:43 PM
To: brian.cossey@gptbirds.org
Cc: ADE Charter Schools
Subject: Public Hearing Notice for Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Superintendents:

Please find an attached PDF of Arkansas Connection Academy's Notice of Public Hearings for the creation of a public charter school. These hearings will take place:

FRIDAY, JULY 17 - 6 pm
Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

SATURDAY, JULY 18 - 2 pm
Hilton Garden Inn, 4100 Glover Ln, N. Little Rock, AR 72117

Dennis Beck
Board President
Arkansas Connections Academy

From: Arkansas Connections Academy [mailto:arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2015 8:51 PM
To: holly.cothren@dierksschools.org; robert.gray@mpsdrd.com
Cc: ADE Charter Schools
Subject: Public Hearing Notice for Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Superintendents:

Please find an attached PDF of Arkansas Connection Academy's Notice of Public Hearings for the creation of a public charter school. These hearings will take place:

FRIDAY, JULY 17 - 6 pm
Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

SATURDAY, JULY 18 - 2 pm
Hilton Garden Inn, 4100 Glover Ln, N. Little Rock, AR 72117

Dennis Beck
Board President
Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Connections Academy

From: Arkansas Connections Academy [mailto:arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2015 9:33 AM

To: david.wyatt@yellvillesummitschools.com; thomas.gathen@mcgeheeschools.org;
phughey@dollarwayschools.org; Walton Pigott; shawn_cook@lakesidesd.org; collins@wmsd.net;
kristi.ridgell@dermott.k12.ar.us; dtollett@blsd.grsc.k12.ar.us

Cc: ADE Charter Schools

Subject: Public Hearing Notice for Arkansas Connections Academy

Arkansas Superintendents,

Please find an attached two PDFs of Arkansas Connection Academy's Notices of Public Hearings for the creation of a public charter school. These hearings will take place:

FRIDAY, JULY 17- 6 PM

Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

SATURDAY, JULY 18 - 2 PM

Hilton Garden Inn, 4100 Glover Ln, North Little Rock, AR 72117

MONDAY, JULY 27 - 9 AM

Holiday Inn Express, 2205 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville, AR 72712

Dennis Beck

Board President

Arkansas Connections Academy

Attachment 3 – Evidence of Parental and Community Support

- Parent Support Letter from Samantha Leshner
- Parent Support Letter from Kristi Rohodes
- Parent Support Letter from Marsha McCarver
- Specialist Support Letter from John F. Watson (Founder, Evergreen Education Group), Michael B. Horn (Co-founder & Executive Director, Education, Clayton Christensen Institute), and Tom VanderArk (CEO, Getting Smart)
- List of Additional Letters of Support for ARCA

Parent Support Letter from Samantha Lesher

From: samantha lesher <samilesher@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at 1:20 PM
To: ArkansasConnectionsAcademy@gmail.com
Subject: Support for Arkansas Connections Academy

To whom it may concern:

I'd like to see Arkansas Connections Academy offered as a charter school for Arkansas kids. I have an elementary aged child and I want more options for his education. Many students and families can benefit from flexible schedules and the ability to learn at a students unique pace. Virtual schools offer families who choose to home school, support and structure. They help encourage a high standard. They also offer students who's parents don't feel comfortable homeschooling on their own, or who couldn't otherwise afford home schooling materials, the chance to try a flexible, home-learning environment.

Having more than one virtual school option in Arkansas gives families greater choice. Introducing a second virtual charter school option helps ensure that healthy competition will keep each virtual academy striving to provide a high-quality education to Arkansas families.

Children are so unique--their learning style varies. It is in the best interest of our children and our future to offer a diverse collection of educational choices for Arkansas families. As an Arkansan, I want my tax dollars spent to fund a variety of education options. And as a parent, I want my family to have a variety of options for my son and his peers.

Thank you for working to make education for Arkansas kids the best it can be.

Sincerely,
Samantha Lesher

Parent Support Letter from Kristi Rhodes



Arkansas Connections Academy <arkansasconnectionsacademy@gmail.com>

Support for the Charter for Arkansas Connections Academy

Kristi Rhodes <trixie_0924@yahoo.com>

Wed, Jul 8, 2015 at 3:12 PM

Reply-To: Kristi Rhodes <trixie_0924@yahoo.com>

To: "ArkansasConnectionsAcademy@gmail.com" <ArkansasConnectionsAcademy@gmail.com>

To whom it may concern about the Arkansas Connections Academy:

We live about 4 hours from Little Rock and will be unable to attend the meeting on July 17th and 18th. We are very interested in this subject. We have been homeschooling for 2 years now, and have friends that use the Connections Academy in Texas and know how great the school is. Not only will this open the doors for a great accredited program available from home, but it will also open the doors to available jobs for Arkansas. Please accept this letter as support of consideration of a Connections Academy charter in the great state of Arkansas. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our support.

Sincerely,
Kristi Rhodes

Parent Support Letter from Marsha McCarver

Dear Arkansas Department of Education,

My name is Marsha McCarver and I would like to share with you why I think you need to approve a second on-line public school program. My youngest son, Enoch, decided he wanted to home school this year as a 6th grader. He has been in private Christian schools up until this year. We began to do research last July and found the current on line public school that Arkansas offers. We made inquiries and began the application process. We were told we would be on a waiting list because our son was coming from a private school and not a public school. There was a great deal of paper work to send in, and some of it was rejected for unknown reasons. We became frustrated with the process and knew we had to make a decision and find home school curriculum or an on line school before time for school to start....August 18th. So we gave up on the on line public school and went with an on line private school, Keystone, out of Pennsylvania.

However, after talking to a representative from Connections Academy in person twice since then, I am convinced that Connections Academy would provide a very good well-rounded education for my son two years from now as an 8th grader. He would have the benefits of a public school without the negative influences of one. My son has a quiet and sensitive personality and is a grade ahead for his age since he started school early. We don't want him exposed to the roughness of a traditional public school. We also like the idea of him taking classes that our local public school doesn't offer, like Chinese.

I also like the idea of clubs he can join with other on line public schoolers. Another advantage is that it will be an Arkansas school with Arkansas certified teachers free to us as Arkansas property taxpayers instead of one out of Pennsylvania that we have to pay for. I also like that there is some flexibility in the schedule when it comes to hours of the day and vacation days.

Finally, I just want to say that I believe that this program is one that many people in Arkansas will want to take advantage of if they know about it. It is a progressive program with several other states already setting the example of its benefits. I am disappointed that this new school wasn't approved for the coming school year. Please, please consider this and make it a new charter on line school in Arkansas for the 2016-17 school year. If Arkansas goes to more of these type of schools, think of the money being saved... less building upkeep, utilities, and school bus drivers. Put that money into good teacher training and salaries for teachers of online public schools.

Thank you for your generous consideration.

Sincerely,
Marsha Rowe McCarver

404 Ouachita 16
Chidester, AR 71726

870-685-2605

marsha@chidester.info

Specialist Support Letter from John F. Watson (Founder, Evergreen Education Group), Michael B. Horn (Co-founder & Executive Director, Education, Clayton Christensen Institute), and Tom VanderArk (CEO, Getting Smart)

July 20, 2015

To the Arkansas Charter Authorization Panel and State Board of Education:

Nationwide, families are finding success with online school. In the 2013–14 school year, an estimated 315,000 students in 30 states received their educations from full-time online schools according to *Keeping Pace with K-12 Digital Learning*, a recently released national report.¹

One size does not fit all. This is a key principle in American K-12 public education reform and why charter schools – with their innovative approach to decision-making, scheduling, staffing, and curriculum – have grown so quickly around the country. Nationally, our education system is also being revolutionized by technology. Online programs are utilizing technology to transform and personalize learning.

There are many students for whom the traditional classroom setting may not be the best fit. Some of these students may be better served in an online environment, which, when successfully implemented, can provide students with personalized instruction; flexibility in the time, place, and pace at which learning occurs; and a sense of investment in their education.

This is the paramount goal of online learning. We believe, as Clayton Christensen and Michael Horn explained, that “the rise of online learning carries with it an unprecedented opportunity to transform the schooling system into a student-centric one that can affordably customize for different student needs by allowing all students to learn at their appropriate pace and path, thereby allowing each student to realize her fullest potential.”²

We hope Arkansas will help foster high-quality online learning opportunities for students across the state.



John F. Watson
Founder
Evergreen Education Group



Michael B. Horn
Co-founder & Executive Director, Education
Clayton Christensen Institute



Tom Vander Ark
CEO
Getting Smart

¹ Available at <http://www.kpk12.com/wp-content/uploads/EEG_KP2014-fnl-lr.pdf>

² Clayton Christensen and Michael Horn. “The Rise of Online Education”. Washington Post, 11 October 2011. Available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/on-innovations/the-rise-of-online-education/2011/09/14/gIQA8e2AdL_story.html>

List of Additional Letters (name, title, and affiliation of others who wrote letters of support for ARCA)

- Anne Kraybill, Director of Education and Research in Learning, Crystal Bridges Museum
- Carla and Eric Hartwell, Parent
- James and Brenda High, Parent
- Deanna High, Student
- Bruce Selvog, Parent
- Emily Moore, Parent
- Melinda M. Beers, Parent

Attachment 4 – 2016-2017 Calendar

- 2016-2017 Student and Teacher Calendar
- Sample Field Trip Schedule

2016-2017 Student and Teacher Calendar

Event	Date
<i>First Day of School (Teachers)</i>	August 9, 2016
<i>First Day of School (Students)</i>	August 22, 2016
Labor Day (No School in Session)	September 5, 2016
Columbus Day (No School in Session)	October 10, 2016
Parent Conference Day (No School for Students)	October 21, 2016
Thanksgiving Break (No School in Session)	November 23 – 25, 2016
Winter Break (No School in Session)	December 19, 2016 – January 2, 2017
<i>First Semester End Date</i>	January 13, 2017
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No School in Session)	January 16, 2017
Parent Conference Day (No School for Students)	February 20, 2017
Spring Break (No School in Session)	March 20 – 24, 2017
Memorial Day (No School in Session)	May 29, 2017
<i>Last Day of School (Students)</i>	June 1, 2017
<i>Last Day of School (Teachers)</i>	June 15, 2017

Sample Field Trip Schedule

ARCA and parent Community Coordinators will organize a number of academically enriching field trips that will also serve as a way for ARCA families to meet one another in person. ARCA field trips will be geographically dispersed so that all families may participate and will cover various academic topics. When possible, field trips will supplement students' current topics of study.

Activity Date	Family Activity	City
September 2016	Back to School Picnics	TBD
October 2016	Meet and Greet – Skate Night	Springdale
October 2016	Meet and Greet – Skate Night	El Dorado
October 2016	Meet and Greet – Putt-Putt	Jonesboro
October 2016	Meet and Greet – Putt-Putt	Hot Springs
November 2016	Crater of Diamonds State Park	Murfreesboro
November 2016	Mount Magazine State Park	Paris
November 2016	Cane Creek State Park	Star City
November 2016	Village Creek State Park	Wynne
January 2017	William J. Clinton Presidential Library	Little Rock
January 2017	Crystal Bridges Museum	Bentonville
January 2017	Japanese Internment Museum	McGehee
January 2017	Wings of Honor Museum	Walnut Ridge
February 2017	Little Rock Central HS Historic Site	Little Rock
February 2017	Eddie Mae Herron Center	Pocahontas
February 2017	Arts and Science Center for SE Arkansas	Pine Bluff
February 2017	Arkansas Museum of Natural History	Hot Springs
March 2017	College/Career Visits	TBD
April 2017	J. Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center	Fort Smith
April 2017	Heifer Ranch	Perryville
April 2017	Pea Ridge National Military Park	Garfield
April 2017	Civil War Helena	Helena
May 2017	Spring Picnics	TBD

Attachment 5 – 2016-2017 Daily Schedule

Typical Student Day

The instructional time commitment required by students in ARCA's online program is comparable to that of a traditional school day. Because online learners do not face the distractions and interruptions of a typical school setting, students often use their learning time much more efficiently. The in-depth application of concepts that is often relegated to homework in a conventional school setting will be an integral part of the learning day; the application of discrete skills, extended projects, and remedial and enrichment activities will be part of the daily routine for students and their Learning Coaches.

Figure 5-1 represents an example of a student school day. Activities vary based upon student needs, coursework, and personal schedules. Learning is integrated within individual activities as well as LiveLesson sessions and phone calls with teachers. Learning can occur when students learn best – not just between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Students will create daily checklists to ensure they are staying on-task. The daily routine includes checking WebMail, looking at the to-do list on Connexus, reviewing the daily planner in Connexus, and completing lessons listed in the planner. Students will easily see which lessons are due as they are in bolded text. As lessons are completed they will change from bold to regular text. Students can access the lessons directly from their daily planners. In addition, students can access any notes or tips provided by the teacher and view important course-related information like LiveLesson session schedules, recordings, and supplemental materials. Students can track their progress and grades at any time in the Grade Book.

Figure 5-1. A Day in the Life of a Student

SAMPLE STUDENT "DAY IN THE LIFE"	
Morning	Learning Coach logs on, reads messages, and reviews lessons.
	Student reads and responds to WebMail messages from teacher(s) about progress.
	Student participates in a math LiveLesson session with teacher and classmates.
	Student completes a math lesson. Learning Coach monitors and facilitates learning as necessary.
	Student completes a Language Arts lesson, including reading, writing, and discussing the lesson activities and text. Student completes a spelling lesson and takes a quiz online.
	Student goes outside for half-mile run.
Afternoon	Student completes a science lesson and finishes reading a non-fiction reading selection.
	Student does hands-on science experiment outside and begins a rough draft of science report.
	Student completes art lesson and begins art project, and then participates in club/activity.
	Learning Coach records attendance.
	Student reviews next day's schedule and prepares accordingly.

Figure 5-2. Sample Daily Calendar View for a Student in Connexus

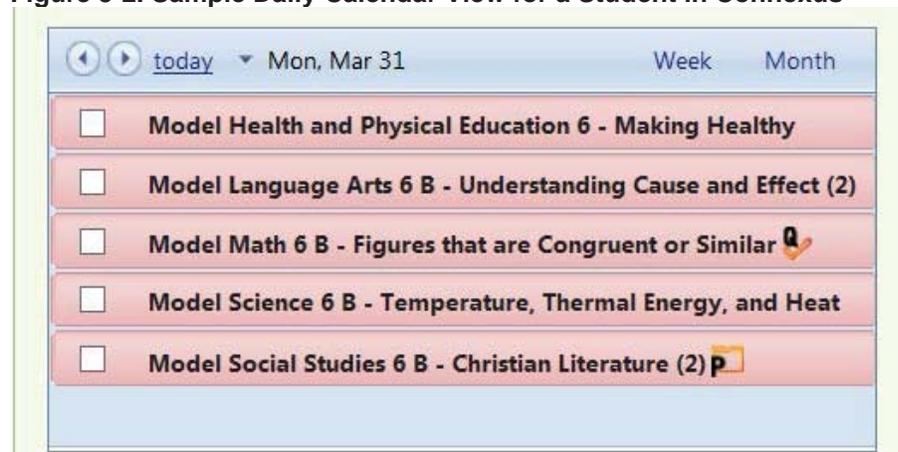
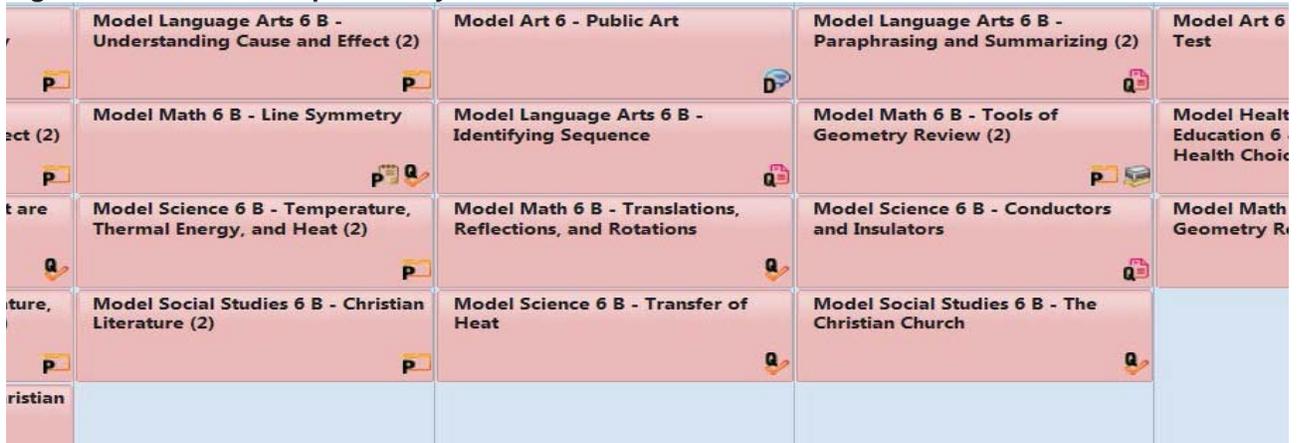


Figure 5-3. Sample Weekly View Student Calendar



Figure 5-4. Another Sample Weekly View Student Calendar



Typical Teacher Day

The school day is not limited to certain hours for start and end times; however, the teaching staff is available during the hours of operation, typically 8 a.m.–4 p.m. Teachers work primarily from a teaching center. Teachers collaborate to share ideas, information, and teaching techniques with the families, who are always welcome to visit.

Figure 5-2. A Day in the Life of a Teacher

SAMPLE TEACHER “DAY IN THE LIFE”	
Morning	Teacher logs on, reads messages, and reviews individual student attendance, participation and performance.
	Teacher sends a WebMail message to a student answering a question; teacher responds to Learning Coaches’ questions/feedback.
	Teacher holds a science LiveLesson session with a group of students and notes who is struggling to follow up with those students with after the lesson.
	Teacher grades student portfolio assignments.
	Teacher has a 1:1 session with a student who had questions on a lesson.
	Teacher meets with other staff for a brown bag professional development lunch to discuss the Assessment Performance Objective Report
Afternoon	Teacher checks WebMail and grades assignments that have been submitted
	Teacher calls five students to do a Curriculum Based Assessment (CBA)
	Teacher confers with the Principal

Figure 5-3. Typical Course Progression Grades 9-12

 TYPICAL COURSE PROGRESSION Grades 9-12				
Subject	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
English	English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Mathematics	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	Advanced Math
Science	Physical Science	Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Social Studies	World History	US History	American Government & Economics	Career Focus
Elective Option 1	Health, Fitness & Nutrition (required) & PE (required)	Oral Communication (required) & Fine Art (required)	College Prep with ACT or SAT (recommended)	Career Focus
Elective Option 2	Career Focus	Career Focus or World Language (recommended)	Career Focus or World Language (recommended)	Career Focus
Total Number of Required Credits				22 Credits
Possible Electives Offerings				
General Electives	Fine Arts Electives	CTE: Family and Consumer Sciences	CTE: Business and Marketing Technology	CTE: Health Sciences
Health, Fitness & Nutrition (required)	Living Music I, II	Personal Finance	Business Communications	Anatomy and Physiology
Physical Education (required)	Digital Arts I	Introduction to Early Childhood Education	Introduction to Law/Business Law	Introduction to Medical Assisting
Oral Communications (required)	3D Art I Modeling	Health, Safety and Nutrition	Business Keyboarding	Medical Terminology
Journalism	Art History		Introduction to Finance	
Elective Science Courses (i.e., Environmental Science, Earth Science, Earth/Space Science)			Introduction to Marketing I/Principles of Marketing	
Elective Social Studies courses (i.e., Psychology, Introductory Sociology)			Entrepreneurship I	
World Languages (Spanish, French, Chinese, Japanese, German, Latin, Sign Language)			Introduction to Computers and Information Technology	
General Reminders				
1.) ARCA does not offer Pre-Algebra. Any student not ready for Algebra 1 will need to take Algebra 1 Foundations. 2.) College Prep-ACT and SAT will be available at this school. Students will need to choose which one they want to take. 3.) Computer Science can be substituted for the 4th Math or the 3rd Science, but not both. 4.) AP course options will also be available to meet graduation requirements.				
World Language Notes				
1.) Students who did not take (or took and did not pass) a World Language course in the Fall should not be placed in a World Language class in the spring.				

Attachment 6 – Salary Schedule and Budget Template

2016-2017
Public Charter School Application
Personnel Salary Schedule

Line#	Administrative Positions:	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2016-2017 Salary	2017-2018 No. FTEs	2017-2018 Salary
1	Principal	1	\$92,000.00	1	\$92,000.00
2	Assistant Principal	0	\$68,250.00	1	\$68,250.00
3	Administrative Assistant	1.5	\$31,500.00	3	\$31,500.00
4	Manager of Special Education	1	\$66,000.00	1	\$66,000.00
5					
6					
7	Subtotal:		\$205,250.00		\$320,750.00
8	Fringe Benefits (rate used 29%)		\$59,522.50		\$93,017.50
9	Total Administration:		\$264,772.50		\$413,767.50

Line#	Regular Classroom Instruction:	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2016-2017 Salary	2017-2018 No. FTEs	2017-2018 Salary
10	Teachers	15.3	\$47,250.00	30.1	\$47,250.00
11	Aides				
12	Subtotal:		\$722,925.00		\$1,422,225.00
13	Teacher Fringe Benefits (rate used 29%)		\$209,648.25		\$412,445.25
14	Aide Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)				
15	Total Regular Classroom Instruction:		\$932,573.25		\$1,834,670.25

Line#	Special Education:	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2016-2017 Salary	2017-2018 No. FTEs	2017-2018 Salary
16	Teachers	1.8	\$47,250.00	3.7	\$47,250.00
17	Aides				
18	Subtotal:		\$85,050.00		\$174,825.00
19	Teacher Fringe Benefits (rate used 29%)		\$24,664.50		\$50,699.25
20	Aide Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)				
21	Total Special Education:		\$109,714.50		\$225,524.25

Line#	Gifted and Talented Program:	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2016-2017 Salary	2017-2018 No. FTEs	2017-2018 Salary
22	Teachers				
23	Aides				
24	Subtotal:				
25	Teacher Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)				
26	Aide Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)				
27	Total Gifted and Talented Program:				

**Alternative Education Program/
Alternative Learning Environments:**

	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2016-2017 Salary	2017-2018 No. FTEs	2017-2018 Salary
28 Teachers				
29 Aides				
30 Subtotal:				
31 Teacher Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)				
32 Aide Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)				
33 Total Alternative Education Program/ Alternative Learning Environments:				

English Language Learner Program:

List Positions	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2017-2018 No. FTEs
34 _____		
35 _____		
36 _____		
37 _____		
38 _____		
39 Subtotal:		
40 Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)		
41 Total English Language Learner Program:		

Guidance Services:

List Positions	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2017-2018 No. FTEs
42 Manager of Counseling	1	1
43 _____		
44 _____		
45 _____		
46 _____		
47 Subtotal:		
48 Fringe Benefits (rate used 29%)		
49 Total Guidance Services:		

Health Services:

List Positions	2016-2017 No. FTEs	2017-2018 No. FTEs
50 _____		
51 _____		
52 _____		
53 _____		
54 _____		
55 Subtotal:		
56 Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)		
57 Total Health Services:		

Media Services:		2016-2017	2016-2017	2017-2018	2017-2018
List Positions		No. FTEs	Salary	No. FTEs	Salary
58	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
59	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
60	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
61	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
62	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
63	Subtotal:	_____	_____	_____	_____
64	Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____	_____	_____
65	Total Media Services:	_____	_____	_____	_____

Fiscal Services:		2016-2017	2017-2018
List Positions		No. FTEs	No. FTEs
66	_____	_____	_____
67	_____	_____	_____
68	_____	_____	_____
69	_____	_____	_____
70	_____	_____	_____
71	Subtotal:	_____	_____
72	Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____
73	Total Fiscal Services:	_____	_____

Maintenance and Operation:		2016-2017	2017-2018
List Positions		No. FTEs	No. FTEs
74	_____	_____	_____
75	_____	_____	_____
76	_____	_____	_____
77	_____	_____	_____
78	_____	_____	_____
79	Subtotal:	_____	_____
80	Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____
81	Total Maintenance and Operation:	_____	_____

Pupil Transportation:		2016-2017	2017-2018
List Positions		No. FTEs	No. FTEs
82	_____	_____	_____
83	_____	_____	_____
84	_____	_____	_____
85	_____	_____	_____
86	_____	_____	_____
87	Subtotal:	_____	_____
88	Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____
89	Total Pupil Transportation:	_____	_____

Food Services:		2016-2017	2016-2017	2017-2018	2017-2018
List Positions		No. FTEs	Salary	No. FTEs	Salary
90	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
91	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
92	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
93	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
94	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
95	Subtotal:	_____	_____	_____	_____
96	Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____	_____	_____
97	Total Food Services:	_____	_____	_____	_____

Data Processing:		2016-2017	2017-2018
List Positions		No. FTEs	No. FTEs
98	_____	_____	_____
99	_____	_____	_____
100	_____	_____	_____
101	_____	_____	_____
102	_____	_____	_____
103	Subtotal:	_____	_____
104	Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____
105	Total Data Processing:	_____	_____

Substitute Personnel:		2016-2017	2017-2018
		No. FTEs	No. FTEs
106	Number of Certified Substitutes _____	_____	_____
107	Number of Classified Substitutes _____	_____	_____
108	Subtotal:	_____	_____
109	Certified Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____
110	Classified Fringe Benefits (rate used _____)	_____	_____
111	Total Substitute Personnel:	_____	_____

112	TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR SALARIES:	<u>\$1,385,105.25</u>	<u>\$2,552,007.00</u>
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**Public Charter School Application
Estimated Budget Template**

REVENUES

State Public Charter School Aid:

<i>Line#</i>		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
	2016-2017		
1	No. of Students <u>600</u> x <u>\$6,646.00</u> State Foundation Funding	<u>\$3,987,600.00</u>	
2	No. of Students <u>600</u> x <u>\$26.00</u> Professional Development	<u>\$15,600.00</u>	
3	No. of Students _____ x _____ eligible rate* NSL Funding		
4	No. of Students _____ x _____ Other: <i>Explain Below</i>		
5	_____		
	2017-2018		
6	No. of Students <u>1200</u> x <u>\$6,646.00</u> State Foundation Funding		<u>\$7,975,200.00</u>
7	No. of Students <u>1200</u> x <u>\$26.00</u> Professional Development		<u>\$31,200.00</u>
8	No. of Students _____ x _____ eligible rate* NSL Funding		
9	No. of Students _____ x _____ Other: <i>Explain Below</i>		
10	_____		
11	Total State Charter School Aid:	<u><u>\$4,003,200.00</u></u>	<u><u>\$8,006,400.00</u></u>
	Other Sources of Revenues:		
	<i>(MUST UPLOAD DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING ALL AMOUNTS LISTED AS OTHER SOURCES OF REVENUE)</i>		
12	Private Donations or Gifts		
13	Federal Grants (List the amount)		
14	Special Grants (List the amount)		
	Other (<i>Specifically Describe</i>)		
15	_____		
16	Total Other Sources of Revenues:		
17	TOTAL REVENUES:	<u><u>\$4,003,200.00</u></u>	<u><u>\$8,006,400.00</u></u>

EXPENDITURES

<i>Line#</i>		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
	Administration:		
18	Salaries and Benefits	<u>\$264,772.50</u>	<u>\$413,767.50</u>
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
19	V - AD 1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	<u>\$435,240.00</u>	<u>\$867,480.00</u>
20	V - AD 2 _____		
21	V - AD 3 _____		
22	V - AD 4 _____		
23	V - AD 5 _____		
24	Supplies and Materials	<u>\$27,000.00</u>	<u>\$54,000.00</u>
25	Equipment		
	Other (List Below)		
26	Community Outreach		<u>\$200,000.00</u>
27	Staff Recruiting	<u>\$5,000.00</u>	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
28	Board Related Expenses	<u>\$5,000.00</u>	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
29	Dues	<u>\$2,000.00</u>	<u>\$2,500.00</u>
30	_____		
31	Total Administration:	<u><u>\$739,012.50</u></u>	<u><u>\$1,547,747.50</u></u>

		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
	Regular Classroom Instruction:		
32	Salaries and Benefits	<u>\$932,573.25</u>	<u>\$1,834,670.25</u>
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
33	V - CI 1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	<u>\$1,383,952.50</u>	<u>\$2,782,600.00</u>
34	V - CI 2 _____	_____	_____
35	V - CI 3 _____	_____	_____
36	V - CI 4 _____	_____	_____
37	V - CI 5 _____	_____	_____
38	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
39	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)	_____	_____
40	<u>Student Testing & Assessment</u>	<u>\$80,000.00</u>	<u>\$150,000.00</u>
41	_____	_____	_____
42	_____	_____	_____
43	_____	_____	_____
44	_____	_____	_____
45	Total Regular Classroom Instruction:	<u><u>\$2,396,525.75</u></u>	<u><u>\$4,767,270.25</u></u>
	Special Education:		
46	Salaries and Benefits	<u>\$109,714.50</u>	<u>\$225,524.25</u>
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
47	V - SE1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	<u>\$100,080.00</u>	<u>\$200,160.00</u>
48	V - SE 2 _____	_____	_____
49	V - SE 3 _____	_____	_____
50	V - SE 4 _____	_____	_____
51	V - SE 5 _____	_____	_____
52	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
53	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)	_____	_____
54	_____	_____	_____
55	_____	_____	_____
56	_____	_____	_____
57	_____	_____	_____
58	_____	_____	_____
59	Total Special Education:	<u><u>\$209,794.50</u></u>	<u><u>\$425,684.25</u></u>
	Gifted and Talented Program:		
60	Salaries and Benefits	_____	_____
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
61	V - GT1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	_____	_____
62	V - GT2 <u>Support is included in Line 47 above</u>	_____	_____
63	V - GT3 _____	_____	_____
64	V - GT4 _____	_____	_____
65	V - GT5 _____	_____	_____
66	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
67	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)	_____	_____
68	<u>ARCA is applying for a waiver from</u>	_____	_____
69	<u>6-20-2208(c)(6) and 6-42-109</u>	_____	_____
70	_____	_____	_____
71	_____	_____	_____
72	_____	_____	_____
73	Total Gifted and Talented Program:	_____	_____

Alternative Education Program/ Alternative Learning Environments:		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
74	Salaries and Benefits	_____	_____
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
75	V - ALE1 _____	_____	_____
76	V - ALE2 _____	_____	_____
77	V - ALE3 _____	_____	_____
78	V - ALE4 _____	_____	_____
79	V - ALE5 _____	_____	_____
80	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
81	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)		
82	ARCA is applying for a waiver from _____	_____	_____
83	6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and _____	_____	_____
84	6-48-101 et seq. _____	_____	_____
85	_____	_____	_____
86	_____	_____	_____
87	Total Alternative Education Program/ Alternative Learning Environments:	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
English Language Learner Program:			
88	Salaries and Benefits	_____	_____
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
89	V - ELL1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	_____	_____
90	V - ELL2 <u>Support is included in Line 47 above</u>	_____	_____
91	V - ELL3 _____	_____	_____
92	V - ELL4 _____	_____	_____
93	V - ELL5 _____	_____	_____
94	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
95	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)		
96	_____	_____	_____
97	_____	_____	_____
98	_____	_____	_____
99	_____	_____	_____
100	_____	_____	_____
101	Total English Language Learner Program:	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
Guidance Services:			
102	Salaries and Benefits	\$78,045.00	\$78,045.00
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
103	v - GS1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	_____	_____
104	v - GS2 <u>Support is included in Line 47 above</u>	_____	_____
105	V - GS3 _____	_____	_____
106	V - GS4 _____	_____	_____
107	V - GS5 _____	_____	_____
108	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
109	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)		
110	_____	_____	_____
111	_____	_____	_____
112	_____	_____	_____
113	_____	_____	_____
114	_____	_____	_____
115	Total Guidance Services:	<u>\$78,045.00</u>	<u>\$78,045.00</u>

		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
Health Services:			
116	Salaries and Benefits		
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
117	V - HS1		
118	V - HS2		
119	V - HS3		
120	V - HS4		
121	V - HS5		
122	Supplies and Materials		
123	Equipment		
	Other (List Below)		
124	ARCA is applying for a waiver from		
125	6-18-706		
126			
127			
128			
129	Total Health Services:		
Media Services:			
130	Salaries and Benefits		
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
131	V - MS1		
132	V - MS2		
133	V - MS3		
134	V - MS4		
135	V - MS5		
136	Supplies and Materials		
137	Equipment		
	Other (List Below)		
138	ARCA is applying for a waiver from		
139	6-25-103 and 6-25-104		
140			
141			
142			
143	Total Media Services:		
Fiscal Services:			
144	Salaries and Benefits		
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
145	V - FS1 Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC	\$98,485.50	\$196,971.00
146	V - FS2 Rasco Winter Abston Moore & Associates, LLP	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
147	V - FS3		
148	V - FS4		
149	V - FS5		
150	Supplies and Materials		
151	Equipment		
	Other (List Below)		
152	Banking fees	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
153			
154			
155			
156			
157	Total Fiscal Services:	\$111,485.50	\$209,971.00

Maintenance and Operation:		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
158	Salaries and Benefits		
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below INCLUDE UTILITIES		
159	V - MO1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	<u>\$105,000.00</u>	<u>\$195,000.00</u>
160	V - MO2 _____		
161	V - MO3 _____		
162	V - MO4 _____		
163	V - MO5 _____		
164	Supplies and Materials		
165	Equipment	<u>\$43,000.00</u>	<u>\$43,000.00</u>
	Other (List Below)		
166	Phone _____	<u>\$20,000.00</u>	<u>\$35,000.00</u>
167	High Speed Internet _____	<u>\$25,000.00</u>	<u>\$40,000.00</u>
168	_____		
169	_____		
170	_____		
171	Total Maintenance and Operation:	<u><u>\$193,000.00</u></u>	<u><u>\$313,000.00</u></u>

Pupil Transportation:			
172	Salaries and Benefits		
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
173	V - PT1 _____		
174	V - PT2 _____		
175	V - PT3 _____		
176	V - PT4 _____		
177	V - PT5 _____		
178	Supplies and Materials		
179	Equipment		
	Other (List Below)		
180	<u>ARCA will not provide pupil transportation</u>		
181	_____		
182	_____		
183	_____		
184	_____		
185	Total Pupil Transportation:	<u><u> </u></u>	<u><u> </u></u>

Food Services:			
186	Salaries and Benefits		
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
187	V - FD1 _____		
188	V - FD2 _____		
189	V - FD3 _____		
190	V - FD4 _____		
191	V - FD5 _____		
192	Supplies and Materials		
193	Equipment		
	Other (List Below)		
194	<u>ARCA is applying for a waiver from</u>		
195	<u>6-18-705 and 6-20-701 et seq.</u>		
196	_____		
197	_____		
198	_____		
199	Total Food Services:	<u><u> </u></u>	<u><u> </u></u>

		<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
	Data Processing:		
200	Salaries and Benefits	_____	_____
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
201	V - DP1 <u>Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC</u>	_____	_____
202	V - DP2 <u>Support is included in Line 145 above</u>	_____	_____
203	V - DP3 _____	_____	_____
204	V - DP4 _____	_____	_____
205	V - DP5 _____	_____	_____
206	Supplies and Materials	_____	_____
207	Equipment	_____	_____
	Other (List Below)		
208	_____	_____	_____
209	_____	_____	_____
210	_____	_____	_____
211	_____	_____	_____
212	_____	_____	_____
213	Total Data Processing:	=====	=====
	Substitute Personnel:		
214	Salaries and Benefits	_____	_____
	Purchased Services - List Vendors Below		
215	V - SB1 <u>Usually not required in an online environment</u>	_____	_____
216	V - SB2 <u>as school staff can typically cover when a</u>	_____	_____
217	V - SB3 <u>colleague is absent</u>	_____	_____
218	V - SB4 _____	_____	_____
219	V - SB5 _____	_____	_____
220	Total Substitute Personnel:	=====	=====
	Facilities:		
221	Lease/Purchase Contract for One Full Year	<u>\$128,000.00</u>	<u>\$128,000.00</u>
	Facility Upgrades - List Upgrades Below		
222	_____	_____	_____
223	_____	_____	_____
224	_____	_____	_____
225	_____	_____	_____
226	_____	_____	_____
227	_____	_____	_____
228	_____	_____	_____
229	Property Insurance for One Full Year	_____	_____
230	Content Insurance for One Full Year	_____	_____
231	Total Facilities:	<u>\$128,000.00</u>	<u>\$128,000.00</u>

Debt Expenditures:

	<u>2016-2017 Amount:</u>	<u>2017-2018 Amount:</u>
232 List Debts Below		
233 _____	_____	_____
234 _____	_____	_____
Total Debts:		

Other Expenditures:

235 List Other Expenditures Below		
235 <u>Staff Training / Professional Development</u>	<u>\$20,000.00</u>	<u>\$40,000.00</u>
236 <u>Travel and Conferences</u>	<u>\$19,440.00</u>	<u>\$36,720.00</u>
237 <u>Internet Subsidy</u>	<u>\$51,637.50</u>	<u>\$103,275.00</u>
238 <u>Legal</u>	<u>\$25,000.00</u>	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
239 <u>Insurance - Directors & Officers</u>	<u>\$1,500.00</u>	<u>\$1,500.00</u>
240 _____		
241 TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	<u><u>\$3,973,440.75</u></u>	<u><u>\$7,661,213.00</u></u>

242 Net Revenue over Expenditures:	<u><u>\$29,759.25</u></u>	<u><u>\$345,187.00</u></u>
-------------------------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------

Note: If any major area is zero, type explanation where items would be listed. Example: No funds budgeted for GT because of waiver.

Attachment 7 – Facilities Utilization Agreement

**OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
FACILITIES UTILIZATION AGREEMENT**

Lessor(Owner): Regus

Lessee(Tenant): Arkansas Connections Academy (ARCA)

Any information regarding affiliation, family ties, or other relationships between the Lessor (Owner) and Lessee (Tenant) must be disclosed with the facilities lease agreement.

Describe the present use of the facility:

The facility is currently used as an office center which provides flexible work spaces for a variety of different business owners and users

Address of Premises: 609 SW 8th Street, Bentonville, AR 72712

Square Footage: 150 to 4,000

Terms of Lease: 1 year with annual renewal options

Rental Amount: \$4,800 to \$128,000 (annually)

Contingency: The terms of this agreement are contingent upon

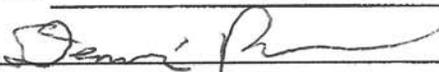
Arkansas Connections Academy
Sponsoring Entity

receiving a charter to operate an open-enrollment public charter school approved by the authorizer by August of 2016

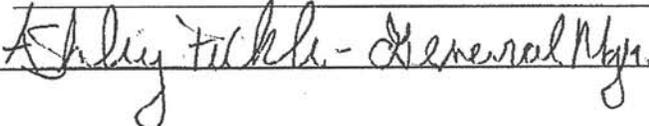
Statutory Language Concerning No Indebtedness:

No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the open-enrollment public charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the State of Arkansas or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of the open-enrollment public charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the state or its political subdivisions. An open-enrollment public charter school shall not incur any debt, including any lease, without the prior review and approval of the Commissioner of Education.

Lessee: Arkansas Connections Academy (ARCA)

By:  Date 6-26-15

Lessor: Regus

By:  Date 06-18-15

Attachment 8 – Statement of Assurances

2015 APPLICATION OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The signature of the president of the board of directors of the proposed public charter school's sponsoring entity certifies that the following statements are and will be addressed through policies adopted by the sponsoring entity and policies to be adopted by the public charter school; and, if the application is approved, that the sponsoring entity, governing body, administration, and staff of the open-enrollment charter shall abide by them:

1. The information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and this application has been sent to the superintendent of all the districts from which we intend to draw students.
2. The open-enrollment public 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 open-enrollment public charter school may adopt admissions policies that are consistent with 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.
3. The open-enrollment charter school shall hold an annual public lottery, followed with notifying parents of enrollment status for all applicants. The waiting list generated by the lottery will be maintained for one year.
4. In accordance with federal and state laws, the open-enrollment public charter school hiring and retention policies of administrators, teachers, and other employees shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, or special need.
5. The open-enrollment public charter school shall operate in accordance with federal laws and rules governing public schools; applicable provisions of the Arkansas Constitution; and state statutes or regulations governing public schools not waived by the approved charter.
6. The open-enrollment public charter school shall not use the moneys that it receives from the state for any sectarian program or activity, or as collateral for debt.

However, open-enrollment public charter schools may enter into lease-purchase agreements for school buildings built by private entities with facilities bonds exempt from federal taxes under 26 USCS 142(a) as allowed by Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-20-402. No indebtedness of an open-enrollment public charter school shall ever become a debt of the state of Arkansas.

7. The open-enrollment public charter school shall not impose taxes or charge students tuition or fees that would not be allowable charges in the public school districts.
8. The open-enrollment public charter school shall not be religious in its operations or programmatic offerings.
9. The open-enrollment public charter school shall ensure that any of its employees who qualify for membership in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System or the State and Public School Employee Insurance Program shall be covered under those systems to the same extent a qualified employee of a traditional school district is covered.
10. The employees and volunteers of the open-enrollment public charter school are held immune from liability to the same extent as other public school district employees and volunteers under applicable state laws.
11. The open-enrollment public charter school shall be reviewed for its potential impact 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.
12. The open-enrollment public charter school shall comply with all health and safety laws, rules and regulations of the federal, state, county, region, or community that may apply to the facilities and school property.
13. The applicant confirms the understanding that certain provisions of state law shall not be waived. The open-enrollment public charter school is subject to any prohibition, restriction, or requirement imposed by Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated and any rule and regulation approved by the State Board of Education under this title relating to:
 - (a) Monitoring compliance with Arkansas Code Annotated § 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;
 - (f) Ethical guidelines and prohibitions as established by Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-24-101 *et seq.*, and any other controlling state or federal law regarding ethics or conflicts of interest; and

14. Health and safety codes as established by the State Board of Education and local governmental entities.
15. The facilities of the public charter school shall comply with all requirements for accessibility for individuals with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and IDEA and all other state and federal laws.
16. Should the open-enrollment public charter school voluntarily or involuntary close, the applicant confirms the understanding that any fees associated with the closing of the school including, but not limited to, removal of furniture, equipment, general expenses, etc., are the sole responsibility of the sponsoring entity. No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the open-enrollment public charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the state or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of the open-enrollment public charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the state or its political subdivisions. Upon dissolution of the open-enrollment public charter school or upon nonrenewal or revocation of the charter, all net assets of the open-enrollment public 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 open-enrollment public charter school. If the open-enrollment public charter school used state or federal funds to purchase or finance personal property, real property or fixtures for use by the open-enrollment public 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.



Signature of President of the Sponsoring Entity Board of Directors

7-8-15

Date

Dennis Beck

Printed Name

Attachment 9 – Prior Charter Involvement

In this attachment, we provide prior charter involvement forms for the following:

- Dennis Beck, Board President
- Virginia Walden Ford, Board Treasurer
- Carla Hartwell, Board Secretary
- Melissa Nelson, Vice President, Connections Academy
- Bryce Adams, Executive Director, Connections Academy
- Lyn McCullen, Senior Director, Connections Academy

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Dennis Beck

Position with Proposed Charter Board President

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School	Educational Technology Consultant	Operating	1332 Enterprise Drive West Chester, PA 19380	http://paayp.emetric.net/CharterSchools

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Virginia Walden Ford

Position with Proposed Charter Board Treasurer

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Premier Pubic Charter School	Board Member	Operating	1621 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Little Rock, Arkansas 72206	https://adedata.arkansas.gov/arc/
Booker T. Washington Public Charter School	Board Member	Voluntarily Closed	1346 Florida Ave., NW Washington, DC 20009	http://osse.dc.gov/publication/dc-cas-results-sy-2012-2013

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Carla Hartwell

Position with Proposed Charter Board Secretary

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Not Applicable - No Previous Charter Experience				

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Melissa Nelson, Vice President, Connections Academy

Position with Proposed Charter School Operations Support

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Georgia Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	2763 Meadow Church Road Suite 208 Duluth, GA 30097	https://usg.gosa.ga.gov/analytics/saw.dll?Dashboard
MTS Minnesota Connections Academy	School Leader School Operations Support	Operating	1336 Energy Park Drive Suite 100 St. Paul, MN 55108	http://rc.education.state.mn.us/testResults
Kansas Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	150 Wildcat Ave. PO Box 999 Elkhart, KS 67950	http://online.ksde.org/rcard/building.aspx?org_no=D0218&bldg_no=0523&rpt_type=1
Iowa Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	807 3rd Street Anita, IA 50020	http://reports.educateiowa.gov/report/
Oklahoma Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	2425 Nowata Place Suite 202 Bartlesville,OK 74006	OKCA was part of Copan School District until July 2014 and has not receive its own disaggregated results.
New Mexico Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	4001 Office Court Dr, Santa Fe, NM 87507	http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/SchoolGrading.aspx
Texas Connections Academy @ Houston	School Operations Support	Operating	10550 Richmond Avenue Suite 140 Houston, TX 77042	http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/src/2014/static/campus/c101912100.pdf

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Melissa Nelson, Vice President, Connections Academy

Position with Proposed Charter School Operations Support

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Wisconsin Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	120 East Harris, Room 213, Appleton, WI 54911	https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/reportcards/
Colorado Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	8 Inverness Drive East, Suite 240, Englewood, CO 80112	https://cedar2.cde.state.co.us/documents/SPF2014/0010%20-%201796%20-%201%20Year.pdf
North Carolina Connections Academy	School Operations Support	Operating	Opening 2015-16	Opening 2015-16

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Bryce Adams, Executive Director Connections AcademyPosition with Proposed Charter Support and Guidance

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Texas Connections Academy @ Houston	Support and Guidance	Operating	10550 Richmond Avenue Suite 140 Houston, TX 77042	http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/src/2014/static/campus/c101912100.pdf
Oklahoma Connections Academy	Support and Guidance	Operating	2425 Nowata Place Suite 202 Bartlesville, OK 74006	OKCA was part of Copan School District until July 2014 and has not receive its own disaggregated results.
Louisiana Connections Academy	Support and Guidance	Operating	4664 Jamestown Avenue Baton Rouge, LA 70808	http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/test-results
Utah Connections Academy	Support and Guidance	Operating	687 West 700 South Woods Cross, UT 84087	https://psdreports.schools.utah.gov/Gateway

Name of Individual with Prior Charter Experience Lyn McCullen

Position with Proposed Charter Support and Guidance

Name of Other Charter	Position at Other Charter	Status of Other Charter	Address of Other Charter	Web Address for State Assessment Results of Other Charter
Not Applicable - No Previous Charter Experience				

Attachment 10 – Facility Lease

ARCA will lease permanent space for administrative and teaching staff in Bentonville to serve as the teaching/learning center where administrative and teaching staff will work. Currently, the Board has an agreement in place with Regus to lease office space at 609 SW 8th Street in Bentonville.¹ In addition, the Board has discussed potentially securing an additional satellite office after the charter is approved to serve as a resource center for students.

While the lease has not yet been negotiated with Regus, the Board anticipates doing so once the charter is approved. Certain key terms will likely be included in the lease. These include, but are not limited to:

- Early termination provision in the event of charter revocation or non-renewal
- Turnkey demo and build-out of space by landlord at landlord's expense
- Options for renewal
- Rights of First Offer or First Refusal, when possible, on contiguous space
- Inability of landlord to re-locate the premises
- Rent abatement in the event of diminution of space
- Insurance terms consistent with ARCA's policies
- Pre-approval for tenant's improvements (voice/data/electric)

ARCA's demos and build-outs will encompass setting up a typical office environment. The landlord will provide turnkey solutions with standard building finishes, pursuant to a CAD test fit provided to landlords by ARCA. Given this method of securing space, ARCA plans to primarily provide the space layout and understand the landlord's amortization schedule for tenant improvements.

¹ <http://www.regus.com/locations/business-centre/arkansas-bentonville-bentonville-plaza>

Attachment 11 – Weighted Lottery

ARCA will not use a weighted lottery, as the conditions required by §6-23-306(14)(c) in order to use a weighted lottery do not exist. ARCA and Connections have no history of discriminatory practices and the lotteries, if necessary, are public and monitored for fairness. The current racial/ethnic demographics of students attending the 29 schools supported by Connections nationwide are representative of similar demographics to the 26 states in which the schools are located. Currently schools supported by Connections serve students of the following races/ethnic groups, as reported by families during the enrollment process: 67% White, 10% Black/African American, 2% Asian, and 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native. Additionally, 13% of families identified their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino and 87% Non-Hispanic/Latino. Based on these figures, it is evident that schools supported by Connections do not include discriminatory practices in the enrollment process and furthermore encourage families regardless of their socio-economic circumstances to enroll. ARCA will continue this in adherence with state and federal regulation and anticipates enrolling students of similar demographics to the public school population in Arkansas.

Attachment 12 – Other Sources of Revenue



June 18, 2015

Dear Arkansas Connections Academy Board of Directors:

Assuming that your charter is granted and that our partnership is formalized, please consider this letter a commitment from Connections Education on behalf of its subsidiary, Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC, to perform the following functions:

- Provide technical assistance, including grant-writing support to pursue and secure Federal Charter School Grant Funds and other grant support to cover the Academy's start-up and early implementation costs.
- Deliver an interest-free advance to the school for any start-up and early implementation expenses not covered by grant funds. The Academy will repay these funds when it has the resources to do so, ideally within the first five years of operation.
- Offer "service credits" as needed (discounts on Connections'-provided products and services) once the school has launched as an in-kind contribution to protect the school against deficits. The school may be required to repay these service credits if adequate funds become available to do so.

We assure you and your authorizer that the school will have sufficient funds to launch and start operations before beginning to receive per-student funding and will maintain a balanced budget thereafter.

To the extent that the foregoing constitutes a lease, loan, and/or credit agreement under the laws of Arkansas, Connections Education, on behalf of its subsidiary, Connections Academy of Arkansas, LLC, acknowledges that Arkansas law pursuant to Arkansas Code Ann. § 6-23-503 (b)(1) provides that "no indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the open-enrollment public charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the state or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of the open-enrollment public charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the state or its political subdivisions." Accordingly, the promises and obligations set forth in this letter shall be read to be consistent with Arkansas Code Ann. § 6-23-503 (b)(1).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted Ochs".

Ted Ochs
COO and CFO

Attachment 13 – List of School Districts

This attachment provides a list of school districts as required in Section A General Information and Section C.9.

Specific Geographical Area Served by ARCA

ARCA will be open to all students statewide. As requested by the Charter School Program Advisor, we have provided a list of school districts in this attachment. ARCA will actively recruit students to reflect the statewide racial and ethnic balance. Through extensive community outreach and full disclosure about the school's program, ARCA will attract those students and families who are most committed to student success in a virtual school setting. ARCA will utilize a broad-reaching student recruitment effort, thereby ensuring outreach to families with a wide variety of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. In addition, ARCA may focus on certain subgroups for extra recruitment efforts in order to achieve a pool of potential students that reflects a balanced student population. Partnerships and outreach efforts using a variety of community and youth organizations may aid in this process.

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
0101000	Dewitt School District
0406000	Siloam Springs School District
0802000	Eureka Springs School District
1304000	Woodlawn School District
1612000	Valley View School District
2104000	Dumas School District
2404000	Ozark School District
2501000	Mammoth Spring School District
2502000	Salem School District
2503000	Viola School District
2601000	Cutter-morning Star School District
2602000	Fountain Lake School District
2606000	Lakeside School Dist(garland)
2903000	Hope School District
2906000	Spring Hill School District
2105000	Mcgehee School District
2202000	Drew Central School District
2203000	Monticello School District
2301000	Conway School District
2303000	Greenbrier School District
2304000	Guy-perkins School District
2305000	Mayflower School District
2306000	Mt. Vernon/enola School District
2307000	Vilonia School District
2402000	Charleston School District
2403000	County Line School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
3001000	Bismarck School District
3301000	Calico Rock School District
3606000	Westside School Dist(johnson)
4603000	Fouke School District
2603000	Hot Springs School District
4605000	Texarkana School District
5403000	Helena/ West Helena School District
7208000	West Fork School District
7240700	Haas Hall Academy
7301000	Bald Knob School District
7302000	Beebe School District
7303000	Bradford School District
7307000	Riverview School District
7309000	Pangburn School District
7401000	Augusta School District
7403000	Mccrory School District
2604000	Jessieville School District
2605000	Lake Hamilton School District
2607000	Mountain Pine School District
2703000	Poyen School District
2705000	Sheridan School District
2803000	Marmaduke School District
2807000	Greene County Tech School District
2808000	Paragould School District
2901000	Blevins School District
3002000	Glen Rose School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
3004000	Malvern School District
5440700	Kipp Delta Public Schools
5604000	Marked Tree School District
5608000	East Poinsett Co. School Dist.
5803000	Hector School District
3102000	Dierks School District
3104000	Mineral Springs School District
3105000	Nashville School District
3201000	Batesville School District
3209000	Southside School District (independence)
3212000	Cedar Ridge School District
3302000	Melbourne School District
3306000	Izard County Consolidated School District
3403000	Newport School District
3405000	Jackson Co. School District
3502000	Dollarway School District
6001000	Little Rock School District
6041700	Lisa Academy
6043700	Arkansas Virtual Academy
6047700	Estem Public Charter School
3509000	Watson Chapel School District
3541700	Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy
3542700	Responsive Ed Solutions Quest Middle School Of Pine Bluff
3601000	Clarksville School District
3704000	Lafayette County School District
3804000	Hoxie School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
3806000	Sloan-hendrix School District
3809000	Hillcrest School District
3810000	Lawrence County School District
3840700	Imboden Charter School District
3904000	Lee County School District
4901000	Caddo Hills School District
5006000	Prescott School District
5008000	Nevada School District
4003000	Star City School District
4101000	Ashdown School District
4102000	Foreman School District
4201000	Booneville School District
4202000	Magazine School District
4203000	Paris School District
4204000	Scranton School District
4302000	England School District
4304000	Cabot School District
4401000	Huntsville School District
4501000	Flippin School District
6202000	Hughes School District
6205000	Palestine-wheatley Sch. Dist.
6302000	Benton School District
6304000	Harmony Grove Sch Dist(saline)
4502000	Yellville-summit School Dist.
4602000	Genoa Central School District
4701000	Armored School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
4702000	Blytheville School District
4706000	Rivercrest School District 57
4708000	Gosnell School District
4712000	Manila School District
4713000	Osceola School District
4801000	Brinkley School District
4802000	Clarendon School District
4902000	Mount Ida School District
7503000	Danville School District
7504000	Dardanelle School District
7509000	Western Yell Co. School Dist.
7510000	Two Rivers School District
5102000	Jasper School District
5106000	Deer/mt. Judea School District
5201000	Bearden School District
5204000	Camden Fairview School District
5205000	Harmony Grove School District (ouachita)
5301000	East End School District
5303000	Perryville School District
5401000	Barton-lexa School District
5404000	Marvell-elaine School District
5502000	Centerpoint School District
5503000	Kirby School District
5504000	South Pike County School District
5602000	Harrisburg School District
5605000	Trumann School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
5703000	Mena School District
5706000	Ouachita River School District
5707000	Cossatot River School District
5801000	Atkins School District
5802000	Dover School District
5804000	Pottsville School District
5805000	Russellville School District
5901000	Des Arc School District
5903000	Hazen School District
6002000	N. Little Rock School District
6003000	Pulaski County Special School District
6040700	Academics Plus School District
6044700	Covenantkeepers Charter School
6049700	Little Rock Preparatory Academy
6050700	Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter
6052700	Siatech Little Rock Charter
6053700	Responsive Ed Solutions Premier High School Of Little Rock
6054700	Responsive Education Solutions Quest Middle School Of Little Rock
6055700	Exalt Academy Of Southwest Little Rock
6091000	Ark. School For The Blind
6092000	Ark. School For The Deaf
6094000	Division Of Youth Services School System
6102000	Maynard School District
6103000	Pocahontas School District
6201000	Forrest City School District
6301000	Bauxite School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
6303000	Bryant School District
6401000	Waldron School District
6502000	Searcy County School District
6505000	Ozark Mountain School District
6601000	Fort Smith School District
6602000	Greenwood School District
6603000	Hackett School District
6604000	Hartford School District
6605000	Lavaca School District
6606000	Mansfield School District
6802000	Cave City School District
6804000	Highland School District
6901000	Mountain View School District
7003000	Junction City School District
7007000	Parkers Chapel School Dist.
0104000	Stuttgart School District
0201000	Crossett School District
0203000	Hamburg School District
0302000	Cotter School District
0303000	Mountain Home School District
0304000	Norfolk School District
0401000	Bentonville School District
0402000	Decatur School District
0403000	Gentry School District
0404000	Gravette School District
0405000	Rogers School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
6701000	Dequeen School District
6703000	Horatio School District
7001000	El Dorado School District
7009000	Strong-huttig School District
7008000	Smackover-norphlet School District
7102000	Clinton School District
7104000	Shirley School District
7105000	South Side Sch Dist(vanburen)
7201000	Elkins School District
7202000	Farmington School District
7203000	Fayetteville School District
7204000	Greenland School District
7205000	Lincoln School District
7206000	Prairie Grove School District
7207000	Springdale School District
0407000	Pea Ridge School District
0440700	Arkansas Arts Academy
0442700	Responsive Ed Solutions Northwest Ark Classical Academy
0501000	Alpena School District
0502000	Bergman School District
0503000	Harrison School District
0504000	Omaha School District
0505000	Valley Springs School District
0506000	Lead Hill School District
0601000	Hermitage School District
0602000	Warren School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
0701000	Hampton School District
0801000	Berryville School District
4301000	Lonoke School District
4303000	Carlisle School District
0803000	Green Forest School District
0901000	Dermott School District
0903000	Lakeside School Dist(chicot)
1002000	Arkadelphia School District
1003000	Gurdon School District
1101000	Corning School District
1104000	Piggott School District
1106000	Rector School District
1201000	Concord School District
1202000	Heber Springs School District
1203000	Quitman School District
1204000	West Side School Dist(cleburne
7304000	White Co. Central School Dist.
7310000	Rose Bud School District
7311000	Searcy School District
1305000	Cleveland County School District
1402000	Magnolia School District
1408000	Emerson-taylor-bradley School District
1503000	Nemo Vista School District
1505000	Wonderview School District
1507000	South Conway County School District
1601000	Bay School District

Arkansas Connections Academy

District LEA	District Name
1602000	Westside Cons. Sch Dist(craigh
1603000	Brookland School District
1605000	Buffalo Is. Central Sch. Dist.
1608000	Jonesboro School District
1611000	Nettleton School District
3505000	Pine Bluff School District
3510000	White Hall School District
3604000	Lamar School District
1613000	Riverside School District
1701000	Alma School District
1702000	Cedarville School District
1703000	Mountainburg School District
1704000	Mulberry School District
1705000	Van Buren School District
1802000	Earle School District
1803000	West Memphis School District
1804000	Marion School District
1901000	Cross County School District
1905000	Wynne School District
2002000	Fordyce School District
3003000	Magnet Cove School Dist.
3005000	Ouachita School District
3211000	Midland School District

Attachment 14 – Statewide Data

Per the ADE’s guidance, we are providing two sets of data for comparison in this application. The first set, provided in the tables in the application narrative, pertains to the Bentonville Public School District where the physical teaching/learning center building will be located. In the second set of data, included in this attachment, we provide data for the statewide averages.

Statewide Arkansas Data			
District Name	Arkansas Statewide		
District Status	NA		
	LITERACY 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	MATH 2014 ESEA Report Percentage Achieving or Advanced	Graduation Rate 2013-2014 2014 Report Card Percent Graduated
All Students (Combined)	76.59	72.74	86.9
Targeted Achievement Gap Group	68.53	64.44	82.9
African American	61.51	52.59	81.0
Hispanic	73.70	70.33	84.5
White/Caucasian	80.31	80.99	89.3
Economically Disadvantaged	69.63	64.93	82.7
English Language Learners/ Limited English Proficient	65.16	63.15	84.1
Students with Disabilities	32.26	40.76	83.1

Attachment 15 – Statement of Permissible Uses



July 7, 2015

Kyle Bell
Connections Education

RE: Zoning Certification for 609 Southwest 8th Street

To Whom It May Concern,

The property located at 609 Southwest 8th Street, Bentonville, Arkansas is zoned C-2, General Commercial. The C-2 zoning designation allows for a variety of Commercial uses and does specifically allow for office and retail as a use by right.

For additional information regarding the specifics of the C-2, General Commercial zoning district, contact the City of Bentonville Planning Department at (479) 271-3126.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Thompson". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Beau Thompson
City Planner

Attachment 16 – Connections Standard Fee Schedule

Connections Academy Standard Fee Schedule

Fee	Description	Factor	Description
	Educational Resource Center	\$126.00	per each enrolled student, calculated as an average over the school year
	Connexus™ Annual License (EMS)	\$600.00	per each enrolled student, calculated as an average over the school year
	Technical Support and Repairs	\$150.00	per each enrolled student, calculated as an average over the school year
	Accounting and Regulatory Reporting	\$50.00	per each enrolled student, calculated as an average over the school year
	Direct Course Instruction Support	\$1.53	per student day; based on enrollment at a point in time each month in a NaCA supported course
	Short Term Substitute Teaching Services	\$300.00	per day, if service is provided by a teacher employed by the EMO Partner
	Hardware/Software - Employees	\$600.00	per each staff member employed at the end of the year
	Human Resources Support	\$1,250.00	per each staff member employed at the end of the year
	School Curriculum Supplies	\$500.00	per each teacher employed at the end of the school year
	Facility Support Services	\$15,000.00	per each school office location
	Student Technology Assistance - Desktop*	\$525.00	per each household enrolled at any time during the school year
	Student Technology Assistance - Laptop*	\$725.00	per each household enrolled at any time during the school year
	Internet Subsidy Payment Processing	\$25.00	per each household enrolled at any time during the school year
	Enrollment and Records Management	\$40.00	per each student enrolled at any time during the school year
	Curriculum Postage	\$33.00	per each student enrolled at any time during the school year
	Tangible and Intangible Instructional Materials - Kindergarten*	\$600.00	per each Kindergarten student enrolled at any time during the school year
	Tangible and Intangible Instructional Materials - 1 st -5 th Grade*	\$950.00	per each 1 st - 5 th grade student enrolled at any time during the school year
	Tangible and Intangible Instructional Materials - 6 th -12 th Grade*	\$1,075.00	per each 6 th - 12 th grade student enrolled at any time during the school year
	Treasury Services	1.5%	of all revenue from governmental sources, excluding any special education revenue
	Marketing Services	1.0%	of all revenue from governmental sources, excluding any special education revenue
	School Administration	6.5%	of all revenue from governmental sources, excluding any special education revenue
	Special Education Oversight and Support	2.5%	of all revenue from governmental sources, excluding any special education revenue
	Special Education Direct Services	100.0%	of all revenue from governmental sources, excluding any special education revenue
	Employee Benefits	20.0%	per actual gross wages and bonus accrual for administration and teachers employed by EMO partner
	Employee Taxes	9.0%	per actual gross wages and bonus accrual for administration and teachers employed by EMO partner
	Community Outreach	TBD	Board to approve budget for school's contribution toward outreach effort

Expenses Reimbursed to Connections Academy at Cost

Employee Wages
Office Supplies
Copiers/Reproduction
Office Postage
ISP Payment Reimbursement
Student Testing and Assessment
Staff Recruiting
Staff Training/Professional Development
Travel and Conferences
Team Building
Maintenance and Repair
High Speed Internet
Phone
Office Rent
Rent Operating Expense
Building Safety Program
M&T Credit Card Suspende
Utilities
Contract School Staff
Employee Pension (if applicable)

Expenses Paid by the School by Contractual Obligation

Banking fees
Bookkeeping and Audit
Dues
Accreditation
Workers Compensation Insurance
Directors and Officers Insurance
Legal
Board-Related Expenses
Other Curriculum
Special Education Related Services
Summer School
Graduation Expense
Student Activities
Relocation Expense
Sponsor Fee
Any other expenses for services not contracted to Connections Academy of State, LLC

*** Items under Student Technology Assistance and Tangible and Intangible Instructional Materials are provided to the school and its students for use during the school year. They remain the property of Connections Academy of State and/or its vendors.**