

EXALT ACADEMY OF SOUTHWEST LITTLE ROCK

Sponsoring Entity:	Exalt Education, Inc.
IRS Status:	Applied for 501(c)(3) non-profit status
Grade Levels:	K-8 (K-2 or 3 in Year 1)
Student Enrollment Cap:	540
Address of Proposed Charter:	6111 W. 83 rd Street, Little Rock, AR 72209

PRE-APPLICATION MATERIALS

The Arkansas Department of Education requires that all applicants submit a Letter of Intent, outlining a general description of the proposed charter school.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will guarantee that:

- A Letter of Intent was filed with Arkansas Department of Education on time and included all the necessary information.

Meets the Standard

PART B EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Arkansas Department of Education requires all applicants to include an executive summary.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A mission statement (with content to be evaluated for Prompt #3 of Part C); and
- The key programmatic features of the proposed charter school.

Meets the Standard

C-1 PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS

All proposed school design teams must conduct a public hearing before applying for an open- enrollment charter school, to assess support for the school's establishment. Applicants are asked both to document the logistics of the hearing and to include a narrative of the hearing results.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A thorough description of the results of the public hearing;
- Evidence of public support exhibited at the hearing;
- Documentation of required notices published to garner public attention to the hearing; and
 - Published on a weekly basis for at least three 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
 - The notice of the public hearing was not published in the classified or legal notice section of the newspaper.
 - The last publication date of the notice was no less than seven days prior to the public meeting.

- Documentation of required notices of the public hearing to superintendents of districts from which the proposed school is likely to draw students and to superintendents of districts that are contiguous to the district in which the charter school would be located
 - Within seven calendar days following the first publication.

Meets the Standard

C-2 GOVERNING STRUCTURE

The Governing Structure section should explain how the school will be governed. It should present a clear picture of the school’s governance processes and composition, what responsibilities various groups and people will have and the relationships among the groups.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Documentation of proper legal structure of the governing board and sponsoring entity;
- A comprehensive description of the planned relationship between the governing board of the school and governing board of the sponsoring entity;
- A clear description of the governing board’s roles and responsibilities;
- Adequate policies and procedures for board operation, including board composition, member term length, and member selection;
- A clear, sensible delineation of roles and responsibilities in relation to governance and school management; and
- A reasonable plan for involving parents, staff, students and community in the decision- making of the school.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- **Provide information about the beginning of Bonnie Johnson’s career in education.**

Bonnie Johnson holds an undergraduate degree in elementary education and special education from Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. In obtaining this degree, Ms. Johnson participated in an innovative program in which the University students spent an entire school year working full time in elementary school classrooms in a low-income community while University faculty provided on-site supervision and instruction.

Upon graduation, Ms. Johnson worked for three years at the Camphill-Rudolf Steiner School in Aberdeen, Scotland, a residential school for children with moderate to severe disabilities (www.camphillschools.org.uk/).

Ms. Johnson later served for eight years as Executive Director of the Arkansas Disability Coalition. One of the Coalition’s major programs is working with parents of special education students across Arkansas to ensure the development and implementation of effective Individualized Education Programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. She served on the board of directors of the Arkansas Disability Rights Center, an agency that protects special education rights.

- **Confirm the understanding that all charter board meetings, including retreats and planning sessions, will be open meetings.**

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock (EASW) will comply with the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which provides that “all meetings, formal or informal, special or

regular, of governing bodies” of school districts shall be public meetings. Ark. Code Ann. § 25-19-106. In accordance with FOIA, the time and place of regular meetings will be furnished to anyone who requests the information. Ark. Code Ann. § 25-19-106(b)(1). In the event of emergency or special meetings, the person calling the meeting will make the notifications required under Ark. Code Ann. § 25-19-106(b)(2). Executive sessions will be held in accordance with FOIA, Ark. Code Ann. § 25-19- 106(c), which provides that executive sessions may be held only for specific purposes and that the purpose must be announced in public before the executive session. As is provided in Ark. Code Ann.§ 25-19-106(c)(3), executive sessions will not be called for the purpose of defeating the reason or spirit of FOIA.

- **Explain “Executive Limitations policies.”**

To ensure consistent, sound governance, all Exalt schools use the Policy Governance Model (PGM), a comprehensive and well-regarded system of nonprofit governance which was developed by John and Miriam Carver. The foundation of the PGM approach is that an effective nonprofit board will focus on governance and allow the details of management to be overseen by the organization’s executive staff. The board controls management by developing policies and holding its top executive, the Chief Executive Officer, accountable for the implementation of those policies. The board of directors of Exalt Education, Inc., the Arkansas non-profit organization that will manage the EASW, will assist and support the school board of EASW in adopting and implementing the PGM system in a rigorous, effective manner.

Under the PGM, a board establishes two types of policies, Ends Statements and Executive Limitations. Ends Statements are broad statements of the goals toward which management must work. Most nonprofit governance models include similar board statements of ends, goals or objectives.

While Ends Statements establish broad goals, Executive Limitations, a hallmark of PGM, describe limits as to how the organization must meet those goals. They are a means by which a board controls the complexity and details of staff operations without involving itself in day-to-day management. The Carvers describe Executive Limitations as a form of proactive constraint.

For example, a board wants to ensure that its organization’s actions are prudent, so it will establish Executive Limitations proscribing what the board would consider imprudent. The CEO must manage within those limitations. A typical Executive Limitation under the category of fiscal oversight would be that the organization may not manage its finances without internal controls that have been approved by the organization’s board and auditor. Another finance-related Executive Limitation would be that the organization’s reserve fund may not be allowed to drop below the amount needed to pay fixed costs for sixty days without the express approval of the Board.

Executive Limitations establish the parameters within which the CEO must manage the organization. The board holds the CEO accountable for managing within the stated Limitations, but does not involve itself in the details of management. Thus, the board stays focused on governance while ensuring effective management of the organization.

The Executive Limitation policies will not cause the governing board nor the Chief Executive Officer to be out of compliance with any applicable laws or ADE rules governing the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock’s board activities or school operations.

C-3 MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement should be meaningful and indicate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A mission statement that is clear and succinct.

Meets the Standard

C-4 EDUCATIONAL NEED

The Educational Need section should explain the need for a charter school in the proposed location and the innovative educational option offered by the charter school.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A description of the educational need for the charter school substantiated with valid and reliable data, and
- A description of the innovations that would distinguish the charter from other schools.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Explain how the students will use technology

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will have a fully networked, stationary computer lab. All staff members will be issued school laptop computers or a comparable device. Projectors and document cameras will be provided for every classroom so that teachers can deliver multimedia lessons. A wireless network will be installed that provides high-speed Internet access throughout the facility and networks with high-speed copier/printer/scanner machines. Once the Academy has grown to 3rd grade, a mobile computer lab will be added that can be moved from classroom to classroom.

As the Academy grows from grades K-2 towards grades K-8, Smartboards may also be

added. EASW's technology plan will support the following student functions:

- Students will use the computer lab on a regular basis in various subject areas as an integrated extension of classroom learning;
- Students will take the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) electronically in the fall and spring as a pre- and post-test;
- Students will use document cameras and other means to develop and share their portfolios with their parents during student-led conferences; and
- Students will be asked to use classroom technology on a regular basis as an aide to instruction.

Teachers are encouraged to use the computer lab with their students on a regular basis. Teachers are required to integrate hands-on computer lessons into every Global Studies and Natural World Unit. Meeting the technology standards is part of the approval process for completing Global Studies and Natural World units. Students will use technology to facilitate learning, conduct research on assigned subjects, practice skills that require repetition for mastery, and/or to access electronic knowledge repositories.

To help facilitate the use of technology, EASW plans to contract with Wired!, Taleo Cloud Service, Illuminate, the Educators Handbook and other technology support services. EASW will also provide an approved, age-appropriate website list that teachers can have students

explore. To ensure that students are using computers, EASW will provide approved lesson units to teachers that integrate technology.

Teachers use classroom technology several times a day. Teachers also assign different students the opportunity to operate technology equipment on a regular basis. Every classroom has a job duty chart. Technology support is one of the jobs that students are assigned on a rotating basis.

C-5 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Educational Program section should describe the educational foundation of the school and the teaching and learning strategies that will be employed.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A clear description of the proposed educational program, including but not limited to the foundational educational philosophy and curricular and instructional strategies to be employed;
- Specific reasons that the school would be viable; and
- A description of the length of school day and school year that meets minimum state requirements.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Provide the schedules for all grade levels K-5, including the instructional time for each grade level.

Sample Daily Schedule for Grades K-5

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will employ a co-teacher model in grades K-5. The first teacher arrives at 7:00 am and finishes her day by 3:30 pm. The second teacher arrives at 8:30 am and finishes her day by 5:00 pm. During the middle 7 hours of the day, teachers partner closely together to break student classes down into small groups, deliver instruction, and support each other with behavior management and other needs. During these periods, the average student-to-teacher ratio will be approximately 15-to-1, which is designed to provide students with the individualized attention that they need for optimal learning. A sample of the daily schedule is shown below.

Time	Subject / Event	Co-Teacher 1 7:00 – 3:30 pm	Co-Teacher 2 8:30 – 5:00 pm	Minutes
7:00	Breakfast			25 min
7:30	Morning work/Calendar	Morning work/Calendar		30 min
8:00	Tuesday- Assembly, Mon, Wed, and Friday SBI Math and Math Centers, Tue and Thurs WW. Math Facts Daily.	Assembly/morning meeting/SBI		30 min
8:30	Transition time		Monitor Transition	5 min

8:35	DI Reading/Spelling	DI Reading/Spelling	DI Reading/Spelling	110 min
9:25*	*Staggered morning recess, break, snack and transition	Supervise Recess	Prep Period	20 min
10:25	Transition Time			5 min
10:30	Math	Math	Math	80 min
11:50	Transition time	Monitor Transition	Monitor Transition	5 min
11:55	Lunch K,1 / PE 2-4	Lunch Duty/Teach PE	Lunch Break	35 min
12:30	Lunch 2-4 / PE K,1	Lunch Break	Teach PE / Lunch Duty	35 min
1:05	Transition time	Monitor Transition	Monitor Transition	5 min
1:10	<u>Double Dose Block:</u> Math on Monday and Thursday. Tuesday and Friday is Reading, Advanced Literacy Block, or DI Reading.	<u>Double Dose Block:</u> All groups below grade level taught DI Reading or Math by teacher.	Advanced Literacy for students at or above grade level.	40 min
1:50	Transition/Recess	Supervise recess if not teaching core	Supervise recess if not teaching core	20 min
2:10	Natural World / Global Studies	A/B Schedule or Units Other teacher prep	A/B schedule or Units Other teacher prep	65 min
3:15	Transition		Monitor Transition	5 min
3:20	DI Language whole class		DI Language whole class	40 min
4:00	Classroom Building Activities /pack up		Classroom building pack up	30 min
4:30	Dismissal		Dismissal	4:30

- Explain how the educational time exceeds the requirement of traditional public schools.

Traditional school programs typically last for a 7-hour school day. Exalt Academies operate for a nine-hour school day with an extended 200-day calendar year. The extended hours provide teachers with the time to help students learning at an accelerated pace and achieve mastery. Frequently, standards are not taught to mastery because there are so many standards that need to be covered that there is not enough time to address all of them fully. Our goal is to create a solid foundation of concepts, knowledge and skills that can be built upon for years to come.

- Explain if some students will be dismissed at 4:00 and how it will be determined who is dismissed at 4:00.

Our plan calls for all students at Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock to be dismissed at 4:30 pm.

- Describe the positive behavior support system that will be implemented.

In an effort to accomplish our mission, Exalt Academies is dedicated to implementing a positive and proactive behavior management plan. The behavior management plan is system-based and focused on the idea that appropriate behavior is a major aspect of academic success. This behavior management system is focused on creating and sustaining school-wide, classroom, and individual systems of support that improve lifestyle results for all of our students. This is accomplished by making desired behavior more efficient and acceptable to students and problem behavior less effective and less functional.

School wide and consistently we teach our students to be RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL, SAFE and HARD WORKING. These four expectations are defined as:

1. RESPONSIBLE: We do what we are supposed to do; we follow through.
2. RESPECTFUL: We treat others as we would want to be treated.
3. SAFE: We are careful with our words, bodies, & choices.
4. HARDWORKING: We work with energy until the job is done.

We teach these expectations by setting and maintaining consistent and clear expectations for the entire student body. Attached is a behavior matrix that will be supported and taught to all students by the entire faculty and administrative team.

When expected behaviors are demonstrated, students are consistently rewarded and celebrated. This method is not consistent with what happens in many traditional schools. One simple example to illustrate this point is the practice of putting names on the board with check marks after the student's name. In a traditional school an educator would use names on the board for discipline. If a student broke a rule, their name would go on the board and that would be tied to some sort of consequence. Each additional check mark would then increase the severity of the consequence. In an Exalt school, a student's name would be on the board if a student did someone exemplary. Each additional check would go toward the reward the student was earning for his or her good conduct. We recognize and reward the behaviors that we want to see more of.

Supporting our universal expectations of responsible, respectful, safe and hardworking, we also have class wide expectations. We recognize there are many classroom expectations that will change throughout the day depending on the classroom activity the students are engaged in. To make sure we are explicate and consistent with our students, we use the CHAMPS behavior management board. Using this board sets student up to be successful, avoiding unwanted behavior before it happens.

C.H.A.M.P.S. is an acronym for the following:

- Conversation: Can students talk to each other during this activity/transition?
- Help: How can students ask questions during this activity? How do they get your attention?
- Activity: What is the task/objective of this activity? What is the expected end product?
- Movement: Can students move about during this activity? Can they sharpen their pencil?
- Participation: What does appropriate student work behavior for this activity look/sound like?

A C.H.A.M.P.S. board will be located in every student work area in the school. As expectations for our students change, the board will change; giving clear directions for what are students are to be doing during any given time. By answering these questions ahead of time for your students and setting explicate clear expectations for your students, you avoid many of the misbehaviors that can take away from the academic excellent environment Exalt academies is achieving with their students.

The third level of our positive behavior plan is our individual plan. We recognize that some students need more structure and feedback to shape their behavior. Those students will be place on positive incentive point cards. The teacher will score their behavior at the end of every class and the students will have the opportunity to earn a reward on a daily basis for staying on track. These students will have several check-ins throughout the day to make sure we are giving them the support they need to be successful.

- Provide the grade levels to be served by year with the maximum enrollment for each year. Information in the General Information Section indicates that K-3 will be served in Year 1, but other sections of the application indicate that K-2 will be served in Year 1.

Below, the chart illustrates the grade levels that the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock plans to enroll by year. To allow for the school to be fully enrolled – which ensures financial stability – EASW’s founders are requesting some flexibility in enrolling students, especially during the first couple of years.

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
K	50	50	50	50	50
1	65	65	65	65	65
2	65	65	65	65	65
3		60	60	60	60
4			60	60	60
5				60	60
6					60
7					
8					
	180	240	300	360	420

- Confirm the understanding that every digital course must be offered from a provider approved by the Arkansas Department of Education and must meet or exceed curriculum standards and requirements established by the Arkansas State Board of Education in accordance with all laws, rules, and procedures promulgated to ensure access to quality digital learning content and online blended learning.

EASW will offer a digital course from a provider approved by the Arkansas Department of Education and will meet or exceed the standards and requirements established by the Arkansas State Board of Education in accordance with laws, rules and procedures promulgated to ensure access to quality digital learning content and online blended learning.

C-6: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

The Academic Achievement Goals section should define the performance expectations for students and the school as whole.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Specific goals in:
 - Reading;
 - Reading Comprehension;
 - Mathematics; and
 - Mathematics Reasoning;
- Goals that are clear, measurable and data-driven;
- Goals on improving student achievement; and
- Valid and reliable assessment tools for measuring each of the defined goals.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Provide the specific school year by which the charter will be expected to have an achieving designation based on academic performance on state-mandated assessments.

This question cuts at the heart of a problem that the leadership of the Exalt Academy of Southwest sought to resolve in formulating the achievement goals presented in the charter application. Some background information is necessary to explain this problem.

First, the founders of the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock embrace the Arkansas Department of Education's commitment to excellence in public education for all students. When determining how to set performance goals for the charter application, members of our leadership team have consulted with members of the Public School Accountability Division at the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). **We worked hard to set charter performance goals that will stand the test of time and guide the development of an excellent academic institution, not just become obsolete within 12-24 months after the charter is awarded.**

When formulating the goals, three factors prevented us from being able to be too specific:

- Unique Nature of Student Population: We expect that EASW will enroll a high concentration of high-poverty students from the neighborhoods immediately around the facility that we have identified in Southwest Little Rock. Last year, 84 percent of the students at Little Rock Preparatory Academy, another school managed by Exalt Education, qualified for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program and nearly 100 percent were minority. With the target population, the focus is on sustaining strong student achievement gains over time versus operating under the assumption that students will arrive already scoring at high levels.
- Transition to Common Core and PARCC: This year, public schools in Arkansas are required to align with both the Arkansas Learning Standards and the Common Core Standards. The State of Arkansas is continuing to administer the ACTAAP assessments. For the 2014-2015 year, the State of Arkansas is expecting to adopt the Common Core Standards fully and implement the PARCC assessments. When these standards and assessments are implemented, they are likely to have a very significant impact on the performance of public schools statewide, which may cause adjustments in the AMO performance measures and school designations.

- **ESEA Waiver:** This year, the state of Arkansas is implementing a public school performance evaluation system that was put in place under a waiver from the requirements of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This waiver is being continued year-by-year, but it is difficult to know what the future will hold as the Federal government moves towards ESEA reauthorization.

Because of these factors, it is not possible to predict exactly which years the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock would be able to reach an “Achieving” designation or an “Exemplary” designation under the State’s current AMO-based designation system.

So, in formulating our goals, we resolved this problem by taking a four-pronged approach:

1. **Focus on Strong Student Achievement Gains Over Time:** First, we committed to enabling our students to make strong student achievement gains over time. Such a value-added emphasis will be essential in moving students who frequently score in the lowest bands of proficiency at the time of enrollment (“Below Basic” or “Basic”) to the highest bands of proficiency by the time they exit from the Academy (“Proficient” or “Advanced”).
2. **Use of Second Highly Valid-and-Reliable Assessment:** Second, EASW’s leadership committed to administering the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), which is already aligned with the Common Core Standards, in all years of the charter term. The MAP provides a second valid-and-reliable, nationally normed means of assessing student achievement relative to peers nationally. The use of the MAP also gives an indication of how effectively students are learning against the Common Core Standards and Arkansas Learning Standards.
3. **Strong Performance Relative to Comparison Groups:** Third, we committed to enabling successive cohorts of students to move from achieving among the lowest performing students in the state upon arrival to surpassing the average of the surrounding district in 5th grade to surpassing the average of the surrounding state when they leave us in 8th grade. Whether or not we are accomplishing this goal should be measurable regardless of whether the PARCC or the ACTAAP is in place.
4. **Exit Standards:** Finally, our goal is for EASW’s graduating students to matriculate into college- preparatory programs at public high schools in Little Rock after they graduate from 8th grade. So we set rigorous exit standards because, even though we are starting with students at a young age, we intend to realize our mission of strengthening public education by placing our students into area public high schools so that they can move onto public colleges and universities.

We believe that it is this framework of performance goals and specific emphasis on enabling our students to make rigorous value-added gains over time that makes our application strong. By giving our students more runway and providing them with more learning time, we are enabling them to catch up to their more affluent peers when they would simply fall further and further behind in most general- purpose public schools.

- Provide the specific school year by which the charter will be expected to have an exemplary designation based on academic performance on state-mandated assessments.

Please see the response to the first question above.

- Define the term “returning student.”

A “returning student” is a student who will have returned to the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock for a new year after having been enrolled the previous year. This student is able to take the state tests two or more times while being enrolled at the Academy. Examining the performance of returning students is important because it serves as a measure of the value-added gains that EASW is enabling students to make while they are continuously enrolled.

- If it is a goal to have students performing at proficient and advanced levels before eighth grade graduation, define “vast majority.”

The word “majority” refers to 51 percent. The word “vast” means very great in size or amount, especially in extent or range. The terms “vast majority” were used in the application to mean far more than a majority. A specific number could not be stipulated because EASW does not know exactly what the state tests will look like by the time it has its first 8th grade graduating class. Elsewhere in the section, EASW committed that, on average, more students in successive classes of 8th graders would achieve proficient than the state-wide average. EASW’s leadership believes that this standard is rigorous considering that EASW would be serving a region where surrounding elementary and middle schools have been among the lowest performing in the state for many years.

- Explain the specific percentage of students that, by their fifth grade year, must score higher in all tested subjects than students in the surrounding districts to demonstrate “impressive performance relative to surrounding districts.”

The section in question states: “By the spring of their 5th grade year, a higher percentage of students at the EASW will achieve proficient or advanced in all tested subjects than the average among students in surrounding school districts. By surpassing the county average in the 5th grade year, classes of students will demonstrate that they have eliminated the skill gap between a public school that will serve a high concentration of low-income students and the average among all public schools county-wide.” It is not possible to elaborate on the percentages that are requested with greater specificity because they are referring to a future period four years after EASW opens. The particular percentages will not be known until the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock has a 5th grade class that can be tested and the surrounding districts have comparable 5th grade classes to be tested.

- State the school districts that will be considered “surrounding districts” for the purposes of this goal.

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will be surrounded by the Little Rock School District on all sides and will focus its recruitment efforts on enrolling students from within LRSD. Thus, the Little Rock School District is the surrounding district. The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock does not expect to enroll a significant number of students from the

Pulaski County Special School District. However, if the Academy were to unexpectedly enroll a significant number of students from PCSSD, the surrounding districts would then include the Little Rock School District and the Pulaski County Special School District.

- Confirm the understanding that if the charter is approved and begins with K-2 or K-3 and adds one grade per year, data on eighth grade students will not be available when the charter comes up for renewal in its fifth year of operation.

Under the proposed expansion scenario, the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock would serve: 180 students in grades K-2 in year 1, 240 students in grades K-3 in year 2, 300 students in grades K-4 in year 3, 360 students in grades K-5 in year 4, and 420 students in grades K-6 in year 5. So, in the fifth year of the charter term, the Exalt Academy is projected to serve 420 students in grades K-6. The charter application sets forth measurable goals for 8th grade students because setting measurable exit standards and preparing students for 8th grade graduation is important in clearly defining the institution's goals.

- Define "returning student" in relationship to NWEA measures of academic progress.

A "returning student" is a student who will have returned to the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock for a new year after having been enrolled the previous year. This student is able to take the NWEA MAP tests two or more times while being enrolled at the Academy. Examining the performance of returning students is important because it serves as a measure of the value-added gains that EASW is enabling students to make while they are continuously enrolled.

- Confirm the understanding, that during the first year of operation, the charter's annual measurable objectives (AMOs) will be based on the state AMOs, and that in following years, the charter's AMOs will be based upon the academic performance of the students who attend the charter.

The charter school's AMOs would be based on the state AMOs in its first year. After year one, which is the baseline year, it is our understanding that the AMOs would be based upon the school's student performance.

C7: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ALIGNMENT

The Curriculum Development and Alignment section should define the process by which the design team developed (or chose) the curricular program of the school and illustrate alignment with Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core State Standards.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard of a curricular development and alignment program will present:

- Evidence that the curriculum aligns with, or a sound plan and timeline for aligning the curriculum with, the Arkansas Department of Education's content standards, benchmarks and performance standards.
- Evidence that the applicant is prepared to implement the requirements and timeframe of the Common Core State Standards.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Provide the complete K-8 curriculum that is being used to support the support of the Little Rock Preparatory Academy.

The complete K-8 curriculum is attached that supports Little Rock Preparatory Academy.

- Provide details about the “monthly bench mark electronic system.”

Exalt has implemented Illuminate, which is a formative assessment system that allows for student achievement gains to be evaluated or “benchmarked” up to 12 times annually. The Illuminate formative assessment system is aligned with Common Core standards and administered to all students in grades K-8 in literacy and mathematics.

C-8: STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services section should describe how the school will address specific services for its student body.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will describe the ways in which the following services will be provided to students even in those areas for which a waiver is requested:

- A guidance program that will serve all students;
- A health services program that will serve all students;
- A plan for a media center for use by all students;
- Sound plans for educating special education students that reflect the full range of programs and services required to provide such students with a high quality education;
- A transportation plan that will serve all **eligible** students;
- An alternative education plan for eligible students, including those determined to be at-risk and to offer access to one or more approved Alternative Learning Environments;
- A plan to serve students who are English language learners; and
- Plans for offering access to one or more approved Alternative Learning Environments; and
- Plans for a gifted and talented program for eligible students.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

Health Services

- Explain how the charter will comply with health and safety services outlined in 16.03 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation.

EASW will request a waiver from Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation 16.03

Media Center Services

- Explain how the charter will provide for utilizing printed material beyond what is available at the school.
- Confirm that waivers of media center requirements are requested as they were not mentioned in the waiver section of the application.

EASW will establish a relationship with the Dee Brown Library, a part of the Central Arkansas Library System, which is located in the heart of southwest Little Rock, to enable our students the opportunity to access a wider variety of printed material beyond what is available at the school.

Special Education Services

- Include the Director of Learner Supports in the budget.
- Confirm that understanding that it cannot be predetermined that students with an IEP will be served in the general program with differentiated instruction and that the charter will be prepared to offer a full continuum of special education services to meet the needs of any student who may enroll.

The Director of Learner Supports is included in the budget under the Special Education section. The expected salary for the Director of Learner Supports is \$40,000.00 for 2014-15 and \$41,200.00 for 2015-16.

It is understood that students with an IEP may not be able to be served in the general program and EASW will be prepared to offer a full continuum of special education services to meet the needs of any student who may enroll.

Transportation Services

- Confirm the understanding that transportation will be provided when a student's IEP indicates that transportation should be provided.
- Revise this section to focus exclusively on transportation services to be provided at Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock.

Although EASW will provide transportation in the event that a student's IEP indicate that transportation should be provided under the terms of the IEP.

Alternative Education Services

- Confirm that waivers will be requested for alternative education as they were not mentioned in the waiver section of the application.

EASW will request a waiver for Alternative Education Services.

English Language Learner Services

- Explain why there is no budget for the English language learner program

EASW will incorporate ELL services into the general classroom. EASW will make a concerted effort to hire bi-lingual teachers and to train teachers on how to work with ELL students in the classroom to keep them in the general population.

Gifted and Talented Services

- Explain how gifted and talented students will be identified.

EASW will use SRA Direct Instruction, which tests each student and places them at their academic level. This enables them to advance only when they have completely learned the subject matter. Students are tested frequently. This method enables those who are gifted and talented to move ahead to more challenging work.

- Explain which teachers will serve gifted and talented students and describe specific training that the teachers will receive in meeting the needs of gifted and talented students.

Teachers will be provided with feedback on how each of their groups are progressing via Illuminate formative assessments. They will be able to use the data to customize lesson plans so that they meet students where they are. Those students who are exceeding the expected norms can then receive customized lessons that meet their needs.

- Explain how the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students will be met.

EASW's gifted and talented students will receive constant feedback on their progress and be encouraged to work at the academic levels at which they can be successful and continue growing and achieving. Students will experience success because they will receive instruction that is differentiated to their performance level. Between that experience of academic success and EASW's positive behavior reinforcement program, their social and emotional needs will be met.

C-9: GEOGRAPHICAL SERVICE AREA

The Geographical Service Area section must outline the impact of a new school opening within the current public education system.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- The specific geographical area that would be served by the charter school; and
- Information on the school districts likely to be affected by charter school, including data on the expected number of students to transfer to the charter school.

Meets the Standard

C-10: ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

The Annual Progress Reports section should define how the academic progress of individual students and the school as a whole will be measured, analyzed, and reported.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A timeline for data compilation and completion of an annual report to parents, the community and the Charter Authorizing Panel that outlines the school's progress; and
- A plan for dissemination of the annual report to appropriate stakeholders.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Revise to state that the fiscal year will be July 1-June 30.

The fiscal year will run from July 1st to June 30th.

- Confirm that the charter will prepare an annual report and hold the meeting in compliance with the requirements outlined in Standard LL of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation.

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will prepare an annual report and hold the public meeting in compliance with the requirements outlined in Standard II of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation.

C-11: ENROLLMENT CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

The Enrollment Criteria and Procedures section should describe how the school will attract and enroll its student body, including any criteria for admission and enrollment. Applicants must also provide assurances for a random, anonymous lottery selection process. **Evaluation Criteria:**

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A student recruitment plan that will provide equal opportunity for all parents and students to learn about and apply to the school;
An enrollment and admissions process that is open, fair, and in accordance with applicable law; and
- A process for, and a guarantee of, a random, anonymous lottery process should there be more student applications than can be accommodated under the terms of the charter.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Remove the statement that all students who meet legal age requirements applicable to a particular grade level will be eligible for enrollment as, other than the legal age to begin kindergarten, there are no legal ages for specific grade levels.

The statement has been amended as requested.

- Confirm that Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) rules will be upheld when attempting to contact parents of children in Head Start centers, childcare centers, preschools, and community centers about the charter school.

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will be diligent in following the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) rules in all aspects of its programs and activities including student recruitment and enrollment.

C-12: STAFFING PLAN

The Staffing Plan section should describe the job duties of the school director and other key personnel. This section should also describe the professional qualifications which will be required of employees.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A job description for the school director and other key personnel, including but not limited to an operations director, board members, teachers, etc.;
- An outline of the professional qualifications required for administrators, teachers, counselors, etc.;
- A staffing plan that clearly outlines both the types and numbers of positions to be filled at the school and salary scales for such positions, and
- The staffing plan presented in this section matches the staff members noted in the budget.

Partially Meets the Standard

The educational qualifications for each position expected to be filled for EASW are as follows:

- Principal – Master’s Degree in Education or Education Administration
- Business Manager – Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting, Finance, or related field.
- Community outreach coordinator – Bachelor’s Degree (Marketing, General Business, etc.)
- Office manager – Bachelor’s Degree (business)
- Dean of Students – Master’s Degree in Education or Education Administration
- Director of Learner supports – Master’s Degree in Education and certification in special education
- Teachers, including lead teachers – Bachelor’s Degree

C-13: BUSINESS AND BUDGETING PLAN

The Business and Budgeting Plan section should describe how the charter school will organize its business office and manage its fiscal responsibilities.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- An appropriate plan for managing procurement activities;
- A description of the personnel who will perform business duties, including the requisite qualifications of any proposed personnel;
- A realistic timeline and process by which the governance structure will review and adopt an annual budget;
- A balanced two-year budget estimate that accurately reflects the revenue currently available to the school and expenditures for program implementation and does not rely on one-time grants or other funds that are not presently guaranteed, and
- A budget that includes costs for all personnel, programs, and expenses described in other sections of the application.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Explain how the management fees are calculated

Exalt management fees are calculated on the following formula: Equivalent to 15% of (State Funding+NSLA Funding+Professional Development Funding+Child Nutrition Reimbursement+Title 1 Funding+Title IIA Funding)

- Provide information on the vendor and services for \$5,000 in regular classroom instruction

EASW's management will meet all regulatory requirements in soliciting and administering a competitive bidding process for determination of vendors. The \$5,000 in regular classroom instruction will be used for a Performance Coordinator to provide regular testing and performance evaluation so that the instruction can be adjusted as needed.

- Provide the vendors and services for special education services at \$69,000 in 2014-2015 and \$75,000 in 2015-2016

EASW's management will meet all regulatory requirements in soliciting and administering a competitive bidding process for determination of vendors. EASW plans to use the services of the Special Education Charter School Consortium, Pediatrics Plus and KidsSource to provide the necessary services for our special education students.

- Provide the vendors and services for fiscal services at \$12,000 in 2014-2015 and \$14,000 in 2015-2016.

EASW's management will meet all regulatory requirements in soliciting and administering a competitive bidding process for determination of vendors. EASW plans to use the services of an alarm company for security at the new school site. In addition, we will use the services of a technical support company, such as Wired!, to support the electronic needs of the campus.

- Provide the vendors and services for maintenance and operations at \$7,000 in 2014-2015 and \$8,000 in 2015-2016.

Maintenance and operations needs will include utilities not covered in the lease, plumbers and electricians as needed for general repairs and the services of a pest control service such as Bugman.

- Provide the vendors and services for data processing at \$16,800 in 2014-2015 and \$17,500 in 2015-2016.

EASW will engage with a local company such as Xerox to lease to own copy/fax/scanning machines for data processing and duplication needs. In addition, we will use companies such as Office Depot for mass production of handbooks, and other such materials.

- Revise the budget to reflect the number of students expected to qualify for free and reduced price lunches as 100% of the students are listed with the amount per student to be used when 70%-89% of the students qualify.

EASW is estimating that our free and reduced population will be around 83%. In light of that, we have adjusted our NSLA funding to reflect such: \$153,917 in FY2014-2015 and \$205,567 in FY2015-2016. We understand that this reduction in budgeted income will reduce the projected surplus in the budget and have looked at areas that we can possibly reduce to keep the revenue over expenditure ratios relatively the same.

C-14: FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC AUDIT PLAN

The Financial and Programmatic Audit Plan section should provide the procedure and

timeline by which an annual audit will be conducted. This section should also include an outline for the information that will need to be reported to ADE and the community.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A sound plan for annually auditing school's financial and programmatic operations. If the application names an accountant other than the Division of Legislative Audit to perform the first-year audit, the named accountant meets the requirements of Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Publicly Funded Educational Institution Audit Requirements and is not listed on any ineligibility list maintained by ADE or the Division of Legislative Audit.

Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Clarify where the audit expenditure is budgeted.

An additional expense for the annual audit in the amount of \$10,000 per year is hereby included in Fiscal Services section of the budget.

C-15: ARKANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOL COMPUTER NETWORK ASSURANCES The Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) Assurances section should provide documentation of the applicant's understanding of and participation in the required state finance and educational data reporting system.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Assurance that the charter school will participate in APSCN and will comply with all state statutory requirements regarding the APSCN finance and educational data reporting system.

Meets the Standard

C-16: FACILITIES

The Facilities section should identify and describe the facilities to be used by the school, any changes to be made to the facilities, and the owners of the facilities.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- An identified facility appropriate to meet the needs of the school over the term of its charter;
- A realistic plan for remodeling or adapting a facility, if necessary, to ensure that it is appropriate and adequate for the school's program, the school's targeted population, and the public;
- Evidence that the school understands the costs of securing and improving a facility and has access to the necessary resources to fund the facility plan; and
- A sound plan for continued operation, maintenance, and repair of the facility.

For schools that will be using district-owned facilities, a response that meets the standard will present:

- Documentation that the school district and charter school officials are in agreement over the use of the facility and its equipment.

For schools that will NOT be using district-owned facilities, a response that meets

the standard will present:

- Documentation that the property owner and school are in agreement over the use of the facility and its equipment;
- A statement of the facilities' compliance with applicable codes; and
- A detailed outline of any relationships between the property owner and:
 - Members of the local board of the public school district where the charter school will be located;
 - The employees of the public school district where the charter school will be located;
 - The sponsor of the charter school; and
 - Employees, directors and/or administrators of the charter school.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Explain why \$60,000 is budgeted for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 for a lease/purchase contract for the facilities when the Facilities Utilization Agreement states that 4,173 square feet will be leased at \$2.50 per square feet. The cost indicated by the Facilities Utilization Agreement is \$10,432.50 although it does state if that is a monthly fee or annual fee. The budget and the Facilities Utilization Agreement must be revised to be consistent, and the Facilities Utilization Agreement must state if the fee is an annual fee or a monthly fee.

The cost of \$2.50 per square foot that is stated in the Facilities Utilization Agreement is reflective of an annual fee. The Academy would occupy 4,173 square feet of dedicated classroom space, but the budgeted amount also reflects the fact that the Academy would need to have additional office space and common space, including a gymnasium, kitchen, cafeteria and library.

So the \$60,000 amount that was budgeted reflects a conservative approach understanding that there are still significant unknowns related to the facility's condition and needs to prepare for opening. Without a negotiated lease, EASW's leadership determined that it would be better to overestimate the expense than not to budget enough.

If EASW is able to procure the anticipated space, it would have the option of leasing up to 16,000 square feet depending upon the amount needed to provide adequate educational space. Leasing 16,000 square feet would require a budgeted amount of \$40,000 for both 2014-15 and 2015-16. The budget can be changed in both academic years to reflect this amount.

- Provide the items, with projected costs, that need to be addressed to bring the facility into compliance 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" as \$200,000 is budgeted for outfitting the facility for school use.

We have completed a walk-through of the proposed facility. We have spoken with former tenants. After having these conversations, we feel confident that the facility is ADA and IDEA compliant.

- Explain why \$200,000 is needed to outfit the facility for school use with the amenities described.

The facility is vacant. As such, funding is needed for a wide variety of items, including but not limited to classroom and office furnishings, equipment and materials, classroom wall hangings decorations, indoor and outdoor signage, technology equipment and materials, and other teaching-and-learning resources.

- Beginning on Line 223 of the budget expenditures, list the items with costs for outfitting the facility for school use.

At this time, we cannot detail by line item the exact items for outfitting the facility as we have not procured the facility and had an architect or engineer present us with the costs and plans to prepare the facility for instructional use. We are basing the amount budgeted on a good faith judgment of past experience.

C-17: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Conflicts of Interest section should identify any potential conflicts of interest among the individuals involved with the proposed charter school and explain how conflicts will be addressed.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present full disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest and explain how conflicts, if any, will be addressed.

Meets the Standard

C18: FOOD SERVICES

This section should describe how the school will address food services for its student body.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A food service plan that will serve all eligible students
- A management plan that reflects a clear understanding of federal law and requirements if the charter school plans to participate in the National School Lunch program.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Remove the statement that that all families will complete a meal application as part of enrollment registration process as this cannot be required per federal law.

The statement is hereby removed.

- Explain how the charter will procure a food service vendor.

Method of Procurement

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will coordinate closely with the Child Nutrition Unit at the Arkansas Department of Education to arrange for food service, procure a state-approved vendor, and secure eligible funding reimbursements. This process will assure open and free competition for providing meals. The following steps will be taken:

1. Contact the Child Nutrition Unit of the Arkansas Department of Education
2. Request materials needed to participate in the Child Nutrition Program, including lunch, breakfast, and afterschool snack

3. Follow Child Nutrition Program guidelines in soliciting bids and evaluating state-approved food service vendors
4. Negotiate a food service contract using the state-approved Model for Vended Meals Contract
5. Obtain, complete and return an application packet to allow for approval and reimbursement of meals including:
 - a. An agreement between the LEA and the ADE
 - b. A policy statement concerning Free & Reduced Lunch Meals
 - c. A questionnaire in compliance of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - d. Verification of a commodity agreement with the Arkansas Department of Human Services Commodity Section
6. Include additional documentation with the application packet:
 - a. IRS non-profit status
 - b. Description of meal service including:
 - i. Specific meal programs
 - ii. Service periods for offered programs
 - iii. Projected number of serving days in school year
 - iv. Projected average daily participation
 - v. Projected percentage of Free & Reduced Lunch Eligible students
7. Return the completed documentation detailed above by May 15th of the year prior to service or a different date set by the Child Nutrition Unit

- Remove the statement that ADE will approve the food service vendor.

The statement is hereby removed. The food service vendor will be selected through the bidding process.

- Confirm that the charter will follow federal procurement requirements using open and free competition when selecting a food service vendor.

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock will follow federal procurement requirements using open and free competition when selecting a food service vendor.

C19: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Parental Involvement section should describe how parents or guardians of enrolled students, the school employees, and other members of the community will make a positive impact on the school and its educational program.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A plan for involving parents and guardians in the school's education programs; and
- A proposal that involves the parents of students, employees and the broader community in carrying out the terms of the charter.

Meets the Standard

C-20: WAIVERS

The Waivers section should discuss all waivers requested from local or state law.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Each law, rule, and standard by title, number, and description for which a waiver is requested;
- A rationale for each waiver request; and
- An explanation of the way that each waiver would assist in implementing the educational program of the charter and/or fulfilling the charter's mission.

Partially Meets the Standard

Legal Comments:

Standard 20 Waivers: Partially Meets Standard

Requested Waivers:

- **Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-102 School Day Hours**
 - The applicant should explain why this waiver is necessary. Based on the application, it appears the proposed charter school would provide at least six hours of instructional time per day.

Waivers Not Requested:

- **Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2201 et seq. Classified Employees Minimum Salary Act and Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2301 et seq. Classified Personnel Policies and Committees**
 - In order to effectuate this waiver, the applicant should request a waiver of Sections 5 and 8 of ADE Rules Governing School District Requirements for Personnel Policies, Salary Schedules, Minimum Salaries, and Documents Posted to District Websites.
 - It does not appear that the applicant requested a waiver of minimum compensation and personnel policies for licensed employees. The applicant should confirm its intention to abide by all statutes and rules regarding compensation and personnel policies of licensed employees.
- **Gifted and Talented**
 - The applicant requested a waiver of gifted and talented services. In order to effectuate this waiver, the applicant should also request a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-2208(c)(6).
- **Media Services**
 - The application indicates a waiver will be requested for library media services. This waiver is not indicated in the waiver section of the application. The applicant should either confirm its intended compliance with all statutes and rules governing library media services or request the appropriate waivers.
- **ALE**
 - The budget does not include any expenditures for Alternative Learning Environments, but the applicant has not requested a waiver of the statutes and rules governing ALEs.
- **School Nurses**

- The budget does not include any expenditures for health services, but the applicant has not requested a waiver of the school nurse statute.

Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock Charter School Response to ADE Review
Comments
Standard 20—Waivers

Waivers Not Requested:

Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-2201 et seq. Classified Employees Minimum Salary Act and

Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-2301 et Seq. Classified Personnel Policies and Committees:

- a) The applicant wishes to clarify and fully effectuate the above, previously requested waiver by additionally requesting a waiver of Sections 5 and 8 of the ADE Rules Governing School District Requirements for Personnel Policies, Salary Schedules, Minimum Salaries, and Documents Posted to District Websites.
- b) The applicant wishes to clarify its application concerning minimum compensation and personnel policies for licensed employees by requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-201 et seq. (concerning licensed employees personnel policies); §6-17-2401 et seq. (concerning licensed employees minimum compensation), and Sections 6, 7, and 8 of the ADE Rules Governing School District Requirements for Personnel Policies, Salary Schedules, Minimum Salaries, and Documents Posted to District Websites.

Gifted and Talented:

The applicant wishes to clarify and fully effectuate the above, previously requested waiver by additionally requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. §6-20-2208(c)(6).

Media Services

The applicant wishes to clarify its application concerning library media services by requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. §§6-25-103 and 104 and Section 16.02.3 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation.

ALE

The applicant wishes to clarify its application concerning alternative learning environments by requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. §§6-15-1005 (b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i), and 6-48-101 et seq. ; Section 19.03 of the ADE Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation, and Section 4.00 of the ADE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funds.

School Nurses

The applicant wishes to clarify its application concerning school nurse services by requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-706 and 6-18-1001 et seq.; Section 16.03 of the ADE Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation, and the ADE Rules Governing Public School Student Services.

C-21: DESEGREGATION ASSURANCES

The Desegregation Assurances section should describe the applicant's understanding of applicable statutory and regulatory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Assurance that the charter school will comply with all applicable federal and state statutory and regulatory requirements regarding the creation and maintenance of desegregated public schools; and
- An outline of the potential impact of the proposed charter school on those desegregation efforts already in place in affected public school districts.

Meets the Standard

C-22: SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAM

The Sustainability section should describe the applicants' plan to ensure continued success of the charter school over time.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- The names, experience, and qualifications of the individuals responsible for the application; and
- The plan to ensure the sustainability of the charter in the future.

Partially Meets the Standard

Concerns and Additional Questions:

- Explain what the founders are doing or will do to ensure the success of the charter school when others are in leadership roles.

The Founders are Benjamin J. Lindquist, Tina Long and Freddie Scott. All three serve in leadership roles with Exalt Education, an Arkansas non-profit organization that is the sponsoring entity for the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock. The Founders are building the Exalt Education network in order to ensure the continuous improvement and success of all member schools over time.

Exalt Education was incorporated as an Arkansas non-profit corporation in 2011. If the charter application is approved, the Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock would be the first public charter school that Exalt Education has had the opportunity to start from scratch as a member school. As such, the students at EASW would be the full beneficiaries of the expertise, resources and support that Exalt has assembled over the past 2 years.

Membership in the Exalt Education network provides the following advantages, all of which would contribute to EASW's success and sustainability:

1. Leadership development: The purpose of the Exalt Education teaching-and-learning network is to build a network of dedicated educators who are dedicated and equipped to serve children who grow up in poverty conditions. We cannot be successful in achieving

this central objective if we cannot recruit and develop a strong cross-section of leaders. These leaders must be able to serve many more children than would be possible if it were just up to our founders. Some leaders will remain with our network; others will leave or will never lead member schools. We want to embrace, develop and support all educators who seek to serve low-income children and families.

2. Mission clarity and dedication: Exalt Education has a crystal-clear mission. We are uncompromising in our dedication to this mission. This mission commitment and vigilance is central to our work.
3. Shared organizational values: Exalt Education has developed organizational values that inform everything that we do. These organizational values are shared with all teachers and administrators who join the network and viewed as a touchstone that guides our direction.
4. Core ethic of continuous improvement: Exalt's success hinges on realizing the potential of every student, educator and school through continuous improvement. Students from low-income homes typically have cognitive, behavior and academic deficiencies relative to their more affluent peers. It is only by acknowledging that students start at a low achievement level and fueling an ethic of continuous improvement that we can build a program that enables them to achieve their greatest potential. All members of the network must have this ethic in how we function, not just in our view of our students but in our view of ourselves as dedicated educators.
5. Startup assistance, resources and capacity: Increasingly, Exalt is equipped with the central support group, financial resources, and organizational capacity to fulfill our mission. We must be able to provide considerable resources understanding that individual educators and schools who seek to serve low-income children must have access to a continuum of tools and supports.
6. Real estate acquisition, negotiation and financing capacity: Exalt has the expertise to manage facilities acquisition, negotiation and financing, which is lacking among many independent founders who seek to start schools.
7. Managerial training, development and support: Exalt's leadership has developed the tools, frameworks and practices to support effective team-based management of schools.
8. Human resources and professional development support: Exalt's management has developed the job descriptions, staffing charts, human resource systems, and professional development offerings to support the effective management of teachers and administrators.
9. Financial management: Exalt's leadership believes in operating schools on limited public revenues and startup capital. The first three campuses in the network provide students with over 35% more learning time each year on 40% less than the average per pupil expenditure nationally. In Arkansas, Exalt-managed schools operate on approximately \$7,200 per pupil compared to a national average of approximately \$10,600.
10. Performance management: Exalt has invested heavily in putting in place the infrastructure to manage performance, including such leading systems as Illuminate,

the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress, and Reading Mastery.

11. Compliance reporting assistance: Many charter schools struggle with public reporting, including authorizer, state and federal regulations, rules and policies. Exalt's team assists schools with compliance reporting.
12. Access to financial support: Exalt views itself as a last-resort source of funding in the event that the schools it manages experience unforeseen funding difficulties or shortfalls. As government agencies seek to recover from a major recession, there are numerous shortages and gaps in funding. Exalt helps its schools thrive in the face of a challenging fiscal climate.
13. Membership in a Professional Learning Community: Serving low-income children and families is an extremely challenging endeavor. Exalt actively facilitates learning among its school leaders, teachers and administrators so that they can accomplish shared goals by learning from each other and growing together.
14. Transparency, accountability and performance: Exalt's leadership promotes transparency, accountability and performance-driven management of member schools and public education in general.
15. Policy Governance Model: Exalt implements the Carver Policy Governance Model among the school boards of all member schools. This model provides boards with an effective roadmap for governing high-performing schools that operate under complex, challenging conditions.
16. Research-validated academic design: Exalt has developed an academic design that is based upon research-validated programs and practices, not anecdotal bias. Exalt disseminates this design as part of contributing to the public good and fulfilling its mission.