



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## **Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal Application**

**Deadline for Submission: December 17, 2015**



**Charter School: Covenant Keepers  
College Preparatory Charter School**

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

## Contact Information

<b>Sponsoring Entity:</b>	<b>City of Fire Community Development, Inc. DBA Covenant Keepers Academy for College Bound Students</b>
<b>Name of Charter School:</b>	<b>Covenant Keepers College Preparatory Charter School</b>
<b>School LEA #</b>	<b>6044-700</b>
<b>Name of Principal/Director:</b> <b>Mailing Address:</b> <b>Phone Number:</b> <b>Fax Number:</b> <b>E-mail address:</b>	<b>Valerie L. Tatum 5615 Geyer Springs Road 501.682.7550 501.682.7577 valerie.tatum@arkansas.gov</b>
<b>Name of Board Chairman:</b> <b>Mailing Address:</b> <b>Phone Number:</b> <b>Fax Number:</b> <b>E-mail address:</b>	<b>James Jones 5615 Geyer Springs Road 501.944.8204 501.682.7577 james32@hotmail.com</b>

**Number of Years Requested for Renewal (1-20) 10 years**

**Renewal Application Approval Date by the School/Entity Board(s) 12/08/2015**

# **Section 1 – General Description of the Charter School’s Progress and Desegregation Analysis**

## **Part A: Charter School Progress**

Provide a narrative about the successes of the charter during the current contractual period.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

### **A New Beginning, 2013-2014**

With our charter’s renewal in the spring of 2013 and the removal of our high school, we set out to refocus our efforts on our middle school (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades). We quickly discovered that concentrating on middle school was simply the best decision we could have made. We began to move toward what works for our students and teachers. It truly allowed us to focus our efforts on teaching and learning. We researched: best practices; educational trends; analyzing data to drive decisions; assisting teachers with their commitment to rigor; and professional development aligned to our students’ and teachers’ needs. We recommitted ourselves to supporting teachers in their efforts. Stephen Covey said it best... “No involvement, no commitment!”

Our first year as a middle school proved to be quite challenging as we were faced with many unavoidable obstacles. The move to 5615 Geyer Springs Road presented us with a major problem in student recruitment. Despite our efforts in making parents and the community aware of our move, many people thought that our vacated building at 8300 Geyer Springs Road meant that our school was no longer in existence. Many parents called, and the phone number was no longer in service due to missteps from the phone service provider, so we used social media, radio stations, commercials, etc. to promote our new location. We were forced to start school a little late because of a lack of Internet connections and the addition of a T1 line for telephone service. School opened on August 11, 2013 with 65 students; approximately 40 were returning students. We ended the 2013-2014 school year with an ADM of 171.

We call our first year as a middle school the “restart” year. During this challenging year, we took the time to re-examine and re-evaluate our areas of setbacks in order to rebuild. The late spring and summer of 2013 was committed to reconstituting our school model with a new leadership team and several new teachers. There was an intense needs analysis of many components of our school. Decisions had to be made to support School Improvement and simultaneously align with the needs of our students. We looked closely at teacher support systems that would help teachers maintain rigor within the classroom. We researched curricula that would support Common Core State Standards while still assessing for Benchmarks. We searched diligently for teachers who demonstrated a heart for our mission. We looked at External Providers; we wanted a team of professionals who could provide resources such as curriculum development, researched-based professional development that matched the needs of our teachers, technology enhancements, legal support, etc. We reached out to Arkansas Public School Resource Center, as we were confident in their expertise and ability to help us turn around quickly. To our disappointment, APSRC did not have the capacity to take us on that summer, as they were over-extended serving other Priority Schools at the time.

Our second choice was to contract with ECS (Educational Consultant Services). This team offered a plethora of collective experience in leadership development, math and literacy support, and teacher development. Their plan for us was to concentrate on equipping our teachers with effective lesson planning through Marzano’s High Yield Strategies and developing a data wall that would reflect student’s progress toward proficiency. With their recommendation, we utilized TLI to assist with developing assessments according to the frameworks, which helped us track student learning and areas of need.

Because our student needs were so great the first year (with over 70% of our students being new to Covenant Keepers), we established relationships with middle schools in our area. We sought out assistance in acquiring student histories within multiple areas of concern such as 504 plans, special education records, LPAC plans, students assigned to mental health facilities, alternative learning

placements, etc. We embraced our challenges, and our enrollment continued to grow. Our fiscal capacity, however, would not allow for the continued growth as we reached the tipping point of student/teacher ratios.

### **The Setting Sail Year, 2014-2015**

We returned to school in the summer of 2014 with a renewed sense of direction. We were fortunate to finally be able to work with APSRC as our External Provider. Their particular model focused on leadership development and instructional support for teachers. As we set sail, Susan Owens, APSRC's Instructional Coach, worked diligently with our teachers during our two-week summer boot camp to demonstrate the "new" CCSS rigor, effective lesson planning (Jane Pollock's GANAG), and researched-backed Interactive Notebooking. These instructional tools set a momentum that brought undeniable success to each classroom. Our teachers embraced this instructional model, and we continued to see the growth our students were making towards proficiency. Each time our students took the quarterly NWEA assessment, we saw the impact that instructional strategies had in moving our students toward grade-level.

A major development that year was our move to regularly scheduled classroom assessments designed to provide teachers with the data necessary to make informed decisions about deficiencies and areas for re-teaching or enrichment on the student level. During weekly PLCs, teachers were held accountable for sharing their data. Additionally, each teacher presented data to leadership, shared data during parent conferences, and discussed data with their students during class to provide feedback and awareness of progress.

Susan Owens worked closely with our teachers twice monthly to ensure curriculum pacing and assessments were on track. Equally important, our literacy coach, Laurette Whipps, implemented Expeditionary Learning and EngageNY for math and literacy to support Common Core Standards and PARCC readiness. These curricula provided adjustable lesson plans, modules, pacing guides, assessments, and other resources to guide teaching and learning.

Thanks to the help of APSRC's leadership coaches, we began to change our instructional team into a professional learning community (PLC). The definition of a PLC, as taken from Solution Tree's website is: "An ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators."

Without formative assessment, a PLC cannot be effective. At each PLC data team meeting, teachers brought disaggregated data from current formative assessments to discuss student progress and for the purpose of making data-driven decisions. Starting out, our focus was on assessing literacy standards in each class (with the exception of math class where math standards were assessed). During data team meetings, our instructional team members presented data from assessments on literacy standards, discussed best practices for teaching literacy within different content areas, and determined next steps for students who were in need of additional support.

### **Growth Mindset**

We were honored for State Representative Bill Gossage to serve as our Leadership Coach and guide us in a book study on *Good to Great* by Jim Collins. The principles within this book set a momentum for change among our leadership members. Mr. Gossage encouraged us to, "keep everything simple and clear," and he helped us nail our "Hedgehog Concept"!

It was during that book study that we began to face some brutal facts. 72% of our 6th-8th grade students arrive at Covenant Keepers at 5th grade level or below in reading; the majority being on 3rd or 4th grade level. 76% of 6th-8th grade students arrive at Covenant Keepers at 5th grade level or below in Math, the majority being on 4th grade level. As we analyzed our NWEA interim assessments and reconciled that data with the principles we learned from the book, we began to experience a paradigm shift. Taking a

hard look at how far behind students are when they come to us, and the amount of growth they achieve while they are with us, we began to realize that, as we learned from *Good to Great*, our commodity, our “hedgehog” (the intersection of what we are passionate about, what we are best at, and what we offer the community) is student growth—in both the academic and personal sense. We began to celebrate our students’ incredible progress as we realized that our students are not likely to grow five grade levels in one year to become “proficient”, but they can certainly grow from reading on a third grade level to reading on a fifth grade level. For an eighth grader, this is true progress. It was simply refreshing to embrace this “Growth Mindset”.

This set a momentum for our teachers, students, and staff. We are deeply passionate about helping underserved families in the SW Little Rock community, as we have strategically placed ourselves in this area to provide families with school choice. We are the best at educating students who have entered our school at least 4-5 grades levels behind. Independent data analysis by statisticians with the Office of Education Policy has shown when students remain with us for 3 years, they show higher than expected growth.

We are driven by our “economic engine”, which involves writing a prescription for every child enrolled in our charter school. This direction starts upon enrollment. During intimate meetings with parents and newly enrolled students, many areas of concern are discussed to support the student from the onset. These meetings have proven incredibly beneficial in pinpointing student needs and learning deficiencies, or simply finding ways for students to continue to grow at advanced levels. Parents find these meetings to be innovative, as no school has ever invested that kind of time to focus on their student as an individual in the past.

Individual growth is spotlighted by way of data chats with our students. They are often surprised and overjoyed to see their progress corroborated on paper. The culture of growth has created the yearning for students to learn as they begin to take pride in their development, often for the first time. They have acquired an appreciation for time set aside to dialogue with their teacher about their growth goals and their plan for working hard to meet those growth goals every quarter.

We do not leave the aspiration for growth solely to our students; we involve our parents, as we feel that they must take on a certain degree of accountability in helping their students meet growth goals. Parents are called to student led conferences where students explain their scores to parents and describe areas of weakness that require their attention. Our parents have applauded the conferences we have scheduled to ensure their child succeeds.

As we move toward renewal, we often contemplate our presentation to the Charter Authorizing Panel and the State Board of Education in the spring of 2015 where our work was validated with cautions to remain on track as we move away from academic distress. As was mentioned by the SBE, “it feels right,” and “keep up the good work” as they are looking for continued growth.

### **The Come Back Year- 2015-2016**

The 2015-2016 school year has been, by far, the year of greatest progress among teachers and leaders at Covenant Keepers. Our team has reached a level of understanding of the needs of our stakeholders and how to best fill those needs that finally allows us to focus on the carrying out of effectual plans rather than a continual cycle of revamping ineffective plans. Our strength this year has come from finally aligning ourselves with the right partners, building a strong team, and embracing the growth mindset that is helping us build students and adults based on data and awareness of our needs.

2015-2016 has brought CK and its teachers to new levels of professionalism and best practices. Our teachers started a grass-roots effort to incorporate a lesson plan schema school-wide based on brain research along with Interactive Notebooks for all students in all classes. The results have been a more engaged student body than we have ever seen at CK. We also offer teaching and learning alternatives through computer-aided websites for remediation, reinforcement, and research such as Khan Academy,

Skills Navigator, Reading Plus, Math.com, IXL Math, quarterly NWEA Testing, etc.

Our success in turning around at-risk students has led us to desire expanding our network of student services to allow area agencies to “Wrap Around” our students and provide much-needed support. We have evidence of success in growing students through various data sets, through the accounts of our service providers, by referrals from traditional public schools, from the support of community businesses, etc. It’s humbling to have other schools entrust us to make a difference as they refer families to enroll in our charter school. We plan to build on what we have learned to further develop Covenant Keepers and to create an innovative program for unprecedented student support within a school-based Wrap Around model.

## **Part B: Desegregation Analysis**

Describe the impact, both current and potential, of the 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.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font.

Covenant Keepers Charter School (Covenant Keepers) is applying for the renewal of its current charter. Covenant Keepers expects to obtain most of its students from within the boundaries of the Little Rock School District (LRSD), as well as students who formerly attended private schools and home schools. This analysis is provided to inform the decision making of the charter authorizer with regard to the effect, if any, that the proposed charter renewal would have on the efforts of LRSD to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.

### I. The Status of Pulaski County Desegregation Litigation

Covenant Keepers is providing this desegregation analysis in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 to review the potential impact that its charter renewal would have upon the efforts of LRSD to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. In conducting its review, Covenant Keepers has substantiated that LRSD has been declared unitary in all respects of its school operations. The Pulaski County desegregation litigation was first filed in 1982. *Little Rock School District, et al v. Pulaski County Special School District, et. al.*, Case No. 4:82:cv-00866-DPM. In 1989, the parties entered into a settlement agreement (the “1989 Settlement Agreement”) under which the Arkansas Department of Education, the three Pulaski County school districts, and the intervenors agreed to the terms of state funding for desegregation obligations. LRSD successfully completed its desegregation efforts in 2007 and was declared fully unitary by the federal court in 2007. *Little Rock School District v. Pulaski County Special School District*, Case No. 4:82-cv-0866 (E.D. Ark.), Order filed February 23, 2007. In 2010, LRSD filed a motion to enforce the 1989 Settlement Agreement. The motion contended that operation of open-enrollment public charter schools within Pulaski County interfered with the “M-M Stipulation” and the “Magnet Stipulation.” On January 17, 2013, Judge D.P. Marshall Jr. denied LRSD’s motion, stating:

“The cumulative effect of open enrollment charter schools in Pulaski County on the stipulation magnet schools and M-to-M transfers has not, as a matter of law, substantially defeated the relevant purposes of the 1989 Settlement Agreement, the magnet stipulation, or the M-to-M stipulation.”

*Little Rock School District v. Pulaski County Special School District*, Case No. 4:82-cv-0866 (E.D. Ark.), Order filed January 17, 2013. LRSD appealed to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

One year later, on January 13, 2014, Judge Marshall approved a Settlement Agreement that included a provision stipulating to the voluntary dismissal with prejudice of the pending appeal concerning the charter school issues. In light of LRSD’s unitary status and the parties’ 2014 Settlement Agreement, Covenant Keepers’ proposed charter renewal cannot interfere with the purposes of the Pulaski County desegregation litigation, which has been fully concluded as to LRSD. After the dismissal and the settlement agreement, the case was completely concluded for all purposes as to LRSD, and the federal court terminated all jurisdiction in the matter. Because of that, there is no possibility that Covenant Keepers’ proposed charter renewal could impact LRSD’s unitary status. To be clear, Covenant Keepers’

proposed charter renewal cannot impact LRSD's unitary status because 1) there is no case in which LRSD's unitary status could be an issue; 2) LRSD made a claim regarding operation of open-enrollment charter schools in federal court in 2010 and lost it; and 3) LRSD settled the charter school claim in 2014, and as a consequence released or waived any such claim.

## II. The Requested Charter Renewal

According to the 2015-2016 school year enrollment figures as maintained by the ADE Data Center, LRSD had a student population of 23,164 students. Covenant Keepers' 2015-2016 student population would constitute approximately seven tenths (7/10) of one (1) percent of the total LRSD population, or 171 students. Under Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-306(6)(A), Covenant Keepers must be race-neutral and non-discriminatory in its student selection and admission process. While it is impossible to project its future racial composition accurately, Covenant Keepers will continue to implement admissions policies that are consistent with state and federal laws, regulations, and/or guidelines applicable to charter schools. For the 2015-2016 school year, 98 of Covenant Keepers' students are African-American (57.3%) and 72 are Hispanic (42.1%).

In addition, Ark. Code Ann. §6-23-106 requires that Covenant Keepers' operation will not serve to hamper, delay, or in any manner negatively affect the desegregation efforts of a public school district or districts within the state. As explained in more detail above, Covenant Keepers' careful review of the relevant statutes and court orders affecting LRSD and its student population shows that such negative impact is not present here. LRSD is completely unitary and no longer has any ongoing desegregation obligations.

## III. Conclusion

Covenant Keepers submits that upon the basis of its review, neither any existing federal desegregation order affecting LRSD nor the 1989 Settlement Agreement prohibit the State's charter school authorizer from granting the requested charter renewal for an open-enrollment public charter school in Pulaski County.

# **Section 2 – Composition of the Charter School's Governing Board and Relationships to Others**

## **Part A: Composition of Governing Board**

Describe the governance structure of the charter, including an explanation of the board member selection process and the authority and responsibilities of the charter board.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 5 pages.

The sponsoring entity, City of Fire Community Development, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3). The governing board includes 6 people from varied backgrounds and areas of expertise such as fundraising, entrepreneurs, finance, management, law, and marketing. One of the sponsoring entity members serves as a member with the authority to nominate new board members. He/she is also able to nominate and appoint according to the board's bylaws.

Each board director is nominated and confirmed by the majority of the board. Each director holds office until the expiration of the term for which he/she was elected and until his successor has been nominated and has qualified, or until his prior resignation or removal by the executive director.

The governing local school board has the following duties:

- final authority to adopt or amend the budget of the charter holder or the charter school, or to authorize the expenditure or obligation of state funds or the use of public property;
- final authority to adopt policies governing charter school operations;
- final authority to approve audit reports;
- initial or final authority to select, employ, direct, evaluate, renew, non-renew, terminate, or set compensation for chief executive officer;

- final authority to direct the disposition or safekeeping of public records; except that the governing body may delegate this function to any person; and
- final authority to hear or decide employee grievances, citizen complaints, or parental concerns.

The school Director will keep the governing local school board informed on board training, academic policies, personnel issues, community relations, finance, facilities and equipment, and other items for review.

**Part B: Disclosure Information**

Identify any contract, lease, or employment agreement in which the charter is or has been a party, and in which any charter administrator, board member, or an administrator’s or board member’s family member has or had a financial interest.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

There are no contracts in which the charter board or family member have a financial interest.

Complete the table on the following page.

**Relationship Disclosures**

**In the first column, provide the name and contact information of each board member and/or administrator. In the second column, provide the name and position (e.g., financial officer, teacher, custodian) of any other board member, charter employee, or management company employee who has a relationship with the board member/administrator or state NONE. Describe the relationship in the third column (e.g., spouse, parent, sibling).**

<b>Charter School Board Member’s/ Administrator’s Name and Contact Information</b>	<b>Name and Title of Individual Related to Board Member</b>	<b>Relationship</b>
<b>James Jones jonesempowers@gmail.com</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Noland Buckley noland62@aol.com</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Jorge Bazan georgebv_7@hotmail.com</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Ernest Sanders esanderslaw@yahoo.com</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Cynthia Townsend Cynthia.r.townsend@usbank.com</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Dr. Carol Lott-Dunn dr.lottdunn@gmail.com</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>

## Section 3 – Student and Teacher Retention and Recruitment

### Part A: Student Retention and Recruitment

Complete the following Student Retention Table:

<u>Group Combined 2013-2014 School Year Through October 1, 2015</u>	<u>Total Number Enrolled</u>	<u>Number Left Without Completing the Highest Grade Offered</u>	<u>Total % Left the Charter</u>	<u>% Left for Other Arkansas Charter</u>	<u>% Left for Arkansas Traditional Public School</u>	<u>% Left for Arkansas Private School</u>	<u>% Left for Home School in Arkansas</u>	<u>% Left the State</u>	<u>% Left for Unknown Reasons</u>
<u>All</u>	505	103	20.2%	0.20%	18.02%	0.40%	0.20%	1.58%	0.00%
<u>Two or More Races</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Asian</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Black</u>	286	82	28.67%	25.87%	0.35%	0.35%	0.35%	1.75%	0.35%
<u>Hispanic</u>	218	21	9.63%	8.26%	0.00%	0.46%	0.00%	0.72%	0.00%
<u>Native American/ Native Alaskan</u>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>White</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Migrant</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b><u>LEP</u></b>	84	12	14.3%	1.1%	4.7%	2.3%	0	5.9%	1.1%
<b><u>Gifted &amp; Talented</u></b>	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b><u>Special Education</u></b>	50	10	20%	2.0%	16%	0.00%	0.00%	2.0%	0.00%
<b><u>Title I</u></b>	505	103	20.2%	.20%%	18.02%	0.40%	0.20%	1.58%	0.00%
<b><u>Free and Reduced Lunch</u></b>	458	96	20.2%	0.20%	18.02%	0.40%	0.20%	1.58%	0.00%

Review the data in the Student Retention Table and discuss the reasons that students leave the charter without completing the highest grade offered at the charter. Specifically address the reasons that students belonging to the TAGG demographic groups (economically disadvantaged, special education, and English language learners) leave the charter without completing the highest grade offered at the charter, if they do so at a higher rate than students belonging to other demographic groups. Discuss the reasons that other demographic group(s), if any, leave the school at disproportionate rates.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

Covenant Keepers is committed to the recruitment and retention of a student population that mirrors and reasonably represents our surrounding community. Our demographics are comprised of a current 42% Hispanic student body and approximately a 58% African-American student body. Approximately 10% of our student body is classified as having special needs. Approximately 98% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch.

Southwest Little Rock, “Southwest”—as it is known around the city—is a depressed community. The area has seen a dramatic increase in families living below the poverty level since the 1990s. This neighborhood has average income levels lower than 80.2% of U.S. neighborhoods. (“About Geyer Springs,” n.d.). Decades of these economic conditions have resulted in multi-generational welfare recipients.

In regard to student mobility, a large number of our students come from low income, single parent homes. Though unfortunate, the nature of these households necessitates frequent moving about the city and often requires that the children change schools—often unexpectedly. Many of our students have a parent incarcerated or are in the foster care system. Many of our students live with extended families or even non-family, and by definition, these students are classified as homeless. The result of any of these unstable living conditions is that the children are subject to the needs of the family or the caregivers regardless of the outcome. The impact on the student’s morale or even the student’s character can be difficult to overcome as evidenced by many of the instances we have seen over the years. Of course, there are numerous exceptions, but far too often our students find themselves in situations that leave them with far greater difficulties than they deserve.

Our student mobility rate for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 is an astounding 20.2%. This mobility takes quite a toll on the emotional and academic development of a child. We are pleased to see a dramatic decrease in mobility for the first quarter of 2015-2016 to only 11.97%. Exit interviews were conducted upon each student’s withdrawal. These interviews support the findings above regarding family dynamics and family mobility.

We know that students who transfer frequently between schools during the school year are at greater risk for academic and behavioral problems. The Wrap Around component of our school (detailed later in this application) is designed to help students who find themselves affected by home and family instability such as high mobility. This ever-growing program affords students the opportunity to receive counseling, therapists, and other supports on-site within the school day to overcome many obstacles from their personal lives that hinder their academic and social growth.

Complete the following Student Recruitment Table:

	2014-2015 Little Rock School District (District in Which the Charter Is Located)		2014-2015 Covenant Keepers		2015-2016 Covenant Keepers		2016-2017 Projected	2017-2018 Projected	2018-2019 and Beyond Projected
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	%	%	%
<b>All</b>	23,363		157		180		200	220	240
<b>Two or More Races</b>	271	1.16%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Asian</b>	557	2.38%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Black</b>	15,371	65.79%	89	56.69%	99	58%	50%	45%	40%
<b>Hispanic</b>	2,925	12.52%	68	43.31%	72	42%	50%	55%	60%
<b>Native American/ Native Alaskan</b>	65	0.28%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander</b>	10	0.04%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>White</b>	4,164	17.82%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Migrant</b>	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>LEP</b>	2,693	11.53%	51	32.48%	53	29.4%	30%	35%	38%
<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>	5,024	21.50%	0	0.00%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Special Education</b>	2,755	11.79%	12	7.64%	13	7.22%	10%	12%	12%
<b>Title I</b>	18,466	79.04%	0	0.00%	180	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	17,499	74.90%	143	91.08%	177	98%	98%	98%	98%

Review the data in the Student Recruitment Table.

Explain why the charter serves a much higher percentage of Hispanic students than the Little Rock School District.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 2 pages.

Little Rock's largest population of Hispanic families and individuals call southwest Little Rock home. ("About Geyer Springs," n.d.). Several Hispanic businesses operate in the area. Our school demographics reflect this in that our racial make-up is approximately 58% African American and 42% Hispanic.

The number of Hispanic students we serve in our school has grown each year as families share with each other about the success their children have had with our school and the programs within. The culture of these families is very intertwined and supportive of both family and nonfamily members. The families have grown to support each other as so many of them arrive in the southwest Little Rock community directly from various sections of Mexico and other Latin countries. When families share the news of their students' success at Covenant Keepers, families new to the area seek out our school in hopes of finding that same success for their children.

Hispanic families are also comfortable at Covenant Keepers because we partner with community groups that support those who have recently immigrated to the United States. Covenant Keepers has hosted events in conjunction with CDAH (Centro de Apoyo Hispano) and Arkansas United Community Coalition, which offer services specific to recent immigrants and Hispanic families. We also distribute information about adult English language classes and other resources offered by El Zocalo, another non-profit in Southwest Little Rock. Our director also communicates with Catholic Charities and LULAC, who have a presence in the Southwest Little Rock community. Our school also sends representatives to Working Together In The Community with Joan Adcock and Senator Frederick Love, a coalition that works to provide information to Hispanic families on applying for drivers licenses, applying for bank accounts, and immigrant support services, such as applying for deferred action.

Covenant Keepers ensures that every memo or notification that is sent home to families is printed in both English and Spanish. Our front office assistant is bilingual and responsible for interpreting during meetings and translating documents as needed. Our Hispanic families feel comfortable coming to school for parent/teacher conferences and other events knowing that someone on staff is able to communicate with them and address their needs.

Explain why "0" Title I students were reported in the 2014-2015 Cycle 4 School Report when the charter received FY15 funding for Title I students.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 2 pages.

This is the first time this situation has been brought to our attention. In the past seven years, we have not marked individual students as Title I because of our School Wide Title I status. However, this school year (2015-2016), all students have been marked as Title I in the Cycle 4 School Report. Through the process of submitting reports, we have been in constant contact with ADE, which keeps us abreast of any information related to federal funds.

Provide any additional commentary on student recruitment for the charter school, if needed.

This OPTIONAL response can be no longer than 2 pages in 11 point Times New Roman font.

We use several mediums such as radio, print, door-to-door marketing, word of mouth, and social media to recruit students. The most effective method for Covenant Keepers' recruitment is face-to-face conversations with families in their own neighborhoods. We also receive several referrals from other schools in the LR, NLR, and PCSSD Schools. Our PALS (Parent Association Leading and Serving) and the Southwest Community embrace our niche and play a vital role in recruiting and branding. Covenant Keeper's small intimate family atmosphere is accommodating to the students we serve.

**Part B: Lottery Procedures**

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.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 4 pages.

Any Arkansas student can enter the school lottery if the school has open seats in the grade level the student will be entering. *Covenant Keepers does not admit students based on test scores, essays, interviews, auditions or other measures of ability.*

There are three basic steps to enrollment at our charter school.

First, a parent or guardian fills out a short form with the student’s name, grade level, and basic contact information. The student is granted admission if there is space available in the appropriate grade level. (The school may also ask if the student is eligible for any approved lottery preferences.)

Second, the school holds a random drawing, either manually or using a computer program. The lottery procedure must follow the school’s approved admissions policy.

Third, students who were selected in the lottery may choose to enroll in the school, or decline the offer. Students who were not selected go on a randomly-ordered waiting list.

Covenant Keepers will hold their annual lottery no later than April 1. The lottery must be held in an accessible place and open to the public, with an impartial observer present and detailed records kept. Applicants do not need to be present to be selected. Students must confirm enrollment by April 15. If the student declines the offer, the next student on the randomly-ordered waiting list will be notified.

To this point, enrollment numbers have not made it necessary for Covenant Keepers to hold a lottery.

Part C: Teacher Retention Complete the following Teacher Retention Table:

School Year	Total Number of Teachers	Teachers Who Left During the School Year		Teachers Who Returned to Teach a the Charter the Following Year		Teachers Who Took Other Positions within the Charter Organization	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2012-2013	9	1	11.00%	5	56.00%	1	11.00%
2013-2014	13	3	23.08%	6	46.15%	0	0.00%
2014-2015	14	5	35.71%	6	42.86%	0	0.00%
2015-2016	11	3	27.27%				

Review the data in the Teacher Retention Table.

Discuss the reasons that teachers leave the charter and current practices and future plans to retain teachers.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

Covenant Keepers has averaged a 24.27% rate of teachers departing over the last four years. Nationally, charter schools had an 18 percent teacher turnover rate during the 2012-13 school year, according to the latest National Center for Education Statistics survey. That's a drop from the survey conducted four years earlier, which found a 24 percent turnover rate (Barshay 2014).

To gain some perspective, we have noted that the rate is slightly lower at traditional public schools: during the 2012-13 school year, nearly 16 percent of teachers left. The problem is worse at high-poverty schools. In the 2012-13 school year, at public schools where at least 75 percent of students qualify for a free or reduced-priced lunch, 22 percent of teachers left their jobs. (Barshay 2014).

At charters like Covenant Keepers, which serve a student body that falls *almost entirely* into one or more subgroups, teachers work considerably longer hours than is typical—a minimum of 50 hours, sometimes as much as 60 or 70 hours a week. New teachers quickly realize they must do overwhelming amounts of after-hours work. They pour physical and emotional energy into their work, which breeds quick exhaustion. And they experience the frustrating uphill battle that comes along with teaching—particularly in low-performing schools. Sometimes the energy and emotion they invest seems to yield low or at least very slow dividends.

This heavy workload doesn't even take into account the impact of championing and advocating for students or internalizing the trauma and anguish of working with children who suffer all the physical and emotional indignities of poverty.

Because of the demanding nature of the jobs here at Covenant, departures are always expected. Several of our teacher exit interviews have echoed a common sentiment that being successful here at school directly conflicted with being successful mothers, fathers, and spouses. Indeed, we know that it takes a special kind of person to be successful here.

While we are not necessarily surprised by high turnover, and we certainly do not like it, it might be an unfortunate but necessary byproduct of an intense, results-driven approach. Because of the high needs of our students, charters such as ours embody the “no excuses” mentality with extremely high expectations of students and employees.

Sometimes are teachers are not renewed by Administration. Given the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act waiver, which most charters hold, teachers enjoy less job security than they would find in a traditional public school. This, in turn, means that teachers who are not performing to standard are dismissed at much higher rates than in traditional schools. We maintain that when a teacher is given copious amounts of documented support, development, and guidance yet fails to show progress, dismissing the teacher is what's best for students. While we do everything within our power to help teachers grow and meet expectations, we have an urgency that does not allow us to keep teachers who are impeding student growth.

Covenant Keepers' leadership has come to realize over the years that good teachers and support staff are our most valuable commodity. We know that we cannot give students what they need if we cannot recruit and retain individuals who have a heart for these kids and the spirit to do whatever it takes to help them grow. To that end, this year Covenant Keepers' leadership team introduced a series of initiatives designed to improve teacher and staff satisfaction. We know that employees won't stay unless they feel valued; they won't stay unless they have input; they won't stay unless they like their team of teachers and leaders; and they won't stay unless they feel supported. In short, in order to overcome all the difficulties of teaching or working in a high-needs school, a person has to love his or her job. Below are just a few of the ways we are helping make that happen.

- Covenant Keepers has adopted a Common Core–aligned math and literacy curriculum in part so teachers will not have to spend so much time devising their own maps or lesson plans. High quality lesson plans are very important

to us, and we have found that our new curriculum meets the rigor our students need. While teachers must still customize the lesson plans to suit our students’ needs and pacing requirements, teachers are reporting that they spend as much as 8 hours less per week (approximately 50% less total time) on creating lesson plans.

- Our Teacher Support Cycle was implemented this fall to bring an unprecedented amount of support to all teachers whether new or returning. Each member of our Leadership Team visits one-on-one with every teacher at least one time every two weeks. The focus of these meetings can be anything from offering advice and resources to solving particular problems in the Leader’s field of expertise, to just listening while a teacher talks out an issue and reflects on possible solutions. After analysis of notes from individual Teacher Support Cycle meetings, weekly professional development is provided based on teacher needs.
- Meetings weekly to reinforce the school’s mission and vision as well as develop camaraderie amongst the team.

## Section 4 –Data and Best Practices

### Part A: Test Data

Review the following assessment data, 2012-2014, for the charter and the district in which the charter resides.

		Little Rock School District (District in Which the Charter Is Located)		Covenant Keepers		Cloverdale Middle School (Additional comparison for comparing to similar, neighborhood school)	
		Literacy Proficient or Advanced	Mathematics Proficient or Advanced	Literacy Proficient or Advanced	Mathematics Proficient or Advanced	Literacy Proficient or Advanced	Mathematics Proficient or Advanced
2012	All Students	68.56%	61.58%	63.64%	38.52%	44.51%	43.69%
	TAGG	61.49%	53.79%	63.64%	37.84%	43.35%	42.78%
2013	All Students	67.00%	59.08%	55.21%	39.64%	46.23%	35.70%
	TAGG	59.15%	51.27%	53.76%	39.62%	45.26%	34.63%
2014	All Students	65.21%	59.74%	45.86%	40.54%	43.03%	35.19%
	TAGG	57.23%	51.96%	44.09%	40.14%	42.29%	34.41%
				Middle school data used for 2012 and 2013 Only served middle school in 2014			

Describe the ways in which the testing data support the achievement of, or progress toward achieving, the charter’s current approved academic goals.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 6 pages.

While we are working hard to meet state prescribed proficiency levels on mandated tests, we are also invested in our NWEA MAP assessments as they give us a frequent and very accurate look at student growth, strengths, and areas of weakness. Since 2013, we have continually studied and responded to our data and have made gains as evidenced by NWEA. It has been documented that 72% of our students enter our middle school at achievement levels as low as three to four grades behind. Our NWEA growth reports have shown students are moving towards grade level.

### NWEA MAP Growth

School Conditional Growth Percentile:

When looking at our Fall 2014-Spring 2015 Growth Report, our school is compared to other schools across the nation using NWEA’s Conditional Growth Index (CGI).

A typical growth index is .00- any positive number on the index means a school is meeting *more* than typical growth in a school year, while a negative number means a school is not meeting typical growth.

Grade/Subject Area	School Conditional Growth Index	School Conditional Growth Percentile
6th Grade Math	0.89	81
6th Grade Reading	1.70	96
6th Grade Language	2.54	99

Grade/Subject Area	School Conditional Growth Index	School Conditional Growth Percentile
7th Grade Math	-0.17	43
7th Grade Reading	1.74	96
7th Grade Language	2.66	99

Grade/Subject Area	School Conditional Growth Index	School Conditional Growth Percentile
8th Grade Math	1.16	88
8th Grade Reading	3.30	99
8th Grade Language	4.86	99

Growth in MAP is different than proficiency, as each student has their own individual growth targets based on where they start at the beginning of the school year on the fall assessment. Growth is determined by how students perform during the spring assessment. Students can meet growth, but still be below grade level.

- NWEA MAP growth is a good tool for measuring **academic growth** of students.
- Covenant Keepers is demonstrating recent **increases** in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding typical growth in both math and reading.
- A high percentage of students who are low performing are making **more than one and a half years of growth in one year**.
- Students are demonstrating more growth in reading than in math.
- More students are below grade level in math than in reading.

Last year, 73% of our lowest performing students (at or below the 33rd percentile nationally) met their growth goal for Reading, while 64% of our lowest performing students met their growth goal for Math.

However, 66% of our lowest performing students exceeded their growth goal for Reading, making what we consider to be “catch up growth”: making gains equal to 1.5 years of growth. 54% of students at or below the 33rd percentile nationally made “catch up growth” in math.

For a deep analysis of our NWEA growth data for 2014-2015, we asked Sara McKenzie, Executive Director, Office of Education Policy, to examine our reports. Her conclusions were as follows:

- The expectation is that 50% of students at a typical school will meet or exceed annual growth goals. 68% of CK students met or exceeded typical fall to spring growth targets in reading and 59% met or exceeded typical growth targets in math. The percent of students meeting or exceeding typical growth targets is a large improvement from the growth in 2012-2013, which was 41% in reading and 39% in math.
- Of students who began the year as low performing (scoring at or below the 33<sup>rd</sup> percentile nationally) 73% met or exceeded typical fall to spring growth targets in reading and 64% met or exceeded typical growth targets in math for the 2014-2015 school year. Additionally, 66% of these students were making at least 1.5 times annual growth in just one year in reading and 54% of these students were making at least 1.5 times annual growth in just one year in math.
- As evidenced by NWEA MAP scores, the growth of Covenant Keepers' students during 2014-2015 is very strong in both reading and math.

Although our students made stellar growth on their NWEA MAP assessments from fall to spring last year, this did not translate to students scoring proficient (a score of a 4 or 5) on the PARCC assessments last year in Math or ELA. As our students enroll lacking skills the state expects them to have already mastered in mathematics, writing, or comprehension, we are able to support students to make significant growth, but growth does not equal proficiency, or moving from below grade level to grade level in one year. It may mean a 6th grader, who enters Covenant Keepers on a 2nd grade reading level grows to a 4th grade reading level by the end of the year. Our goal is to utilize this significant growth, and over time we can remediate the deficits which allows the students who are enrolled at Covenant Keepers to reenter the public schools at grade 9 competitive and academically prepared for high school content.

### **What Are We Doing to Turn Things Around?**

Years of working to fulfill our school's original vision for Southwest Little Rock families has equipped us to take on the many challenges we face as each new school year begins. We have found that our strength is in supporting our students and their families in ways that go well beyond the classroom. Our system for addressing the needs of those we serve is early needs assessment followed by action planning and coordination of services from instruction to physical and mental health. While we have done a great deal to address the needs of the "whole child" in previous years, in SY 15-16, Covenant Keepers has taken steps toward fully developing an innovative model that wraps services around the child.

Our goal is to partner with area organizations to assist students who are perpetually in an out of school due to the repercussions of childhood trauma and other issues that impede students' progress. The severe needs of the students we work with in Southwest Little Rock has driven us to embrace our responsibility with genuine passion, and we have heard the desire of our community: a school that will generate authentic transformation in individuals and the community as a whole. The goal is to "Wrap-Around" various services for students who need extensive daily support through resources that are not immediately available in traditional schools.

Wraparound services are student and family supports integrated with and often delivered directly within schools. Wraparound services help schools address social and non-academic barriers to student learning.

Examples of wraparound services are broad and include:

- Health, dental, and vision care
- Mental health services
- Behavioral health, nutrition, and wellness counseling
- Parent and family targeted services

While our school has offered these services in previous years, we have intensified our efforts to establish partnerships during SY 15-16, and are currently developing MOUs with additional partners and providers to roll out in the spring of 2016. (see attached letters of support/partnership). These organizations will provide their services to our students on campus primarily during school hours. Our master schedule has 60 minutes built into the middle of each day to provide academic, social, emotional, behavioral, or other interventions or services so time is not lost in core or elective classes.

Wraparound services have the potential to help children, families, and teachers alike. The idea behind wraparound services is that students whose health and wellness needs are addressed will be healthier, more focused, and better able

to learn. Similarly, families engaged with schools and supportive services will have increased capacity to support child learning and health. Finally, for schools, having additional systems for confronting social challenges that impede learning, will allow teachers and administrators to focus on instruction.

An Oklahoma Center for Education Policy study showed that in developed sites, wraparound services dramatically increased the performance of low-income students (Adams, 2010). The study shows that fully developed sites outperformed all other schools, including those with more affluent populations. The Tulsa Area Community School Initiative (TACSI), with wraparound services within a public school district, has shown the potential to help lower income students perform on par with higher income peers in math, while drastically reducing gaps in reading.

The extended Wrap Around model at Covenant Keepers brings a new wave of innovation to help students and families work through the many challenges they face daily. We address many layers of childhood and family need including dentistry, physical health, professional counseling services, and tax preparation in English and Spanish to name just a few. The Wrap Around process is directed by a team consisting of family, service providers, and key members of the family's personal support network. The goal of this team is to collaborate weekly to arrive at a coordinated family-driven plan of care that is tailored to meet the needs of the individual students. The team's ultimate goal is to implement, monitor, and continually adjust the plan until all members conclude that the Wrap Around support is no longer needed.

### **The Wrap Around Placement Criteria and Placement Procedures**

Students in need of this type of non-traditional learning services are placed in the CK Wrap Around program through a referral placement process. Referrals are made by a school administrator, teacher, counselor, doctor, mental health provider, or by way of a written request from parent/guardian. A committee headed by our Resource Coordinator works to determine an individualized course of action for the student and places the student with the appropriate provider(s). The Resource Coordinator continuously reviews progress, regularly reports data to school leadership, and works with the parent and the child to maintain personal progress according to the WA plan. As we continue to develop this model, and as our first cohort of eighth grade students transition to high school, we will coordinate with parents and the student's high school counselor to monitor progress and make recommendations as needed.

The documents used for student placement include:

- Referral Form
- Teacher referral with prior interventions and RTI (Special Education Teacher when appropriate)
- Student Action Plan
- Student Commitment Form
- Student grades/progress – interim reports, report cards, NWEA pre & post-tests
- Standardized test scores (prior and current years)
- Disciplinary reports – Principal's Commitment Meeting notes, prior behavior documents  
Teacher notes, Dean of Students notes, etc.
- Exit & Transition Plan – high school, attendance, progress report, teacher report, student goal targets
- High school determination meeting (LRSD, NLR, PCSSD, other charters)

When a student is referred to or requests placement in the WA program, the committee convenes to craft an action plan for the student based on criteria that has negatively affected the student's academic and social progress. This may include the following:

- Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy and mathematics
- Abuse; physical, mental, or sexual
- Frequent relocation of residency (high mobility)
- Inadequate emotional support- family members, foster parents, etc.
- Mental/physical health problems
- Pregnancy or single parenting
- Personal or family problems or situations

- Chronic disruptive behavior

The WA committee is made up of the following individuals: The Principal, Dean of Students, the student, one of the student's regular classroom teachers, an LEA special education supervisor and/or 504 representatives when needed, and a parent/guardian. The students are monitored through mandatory weekly contacts (including phone calls, face to face meetings, or home visits) from the Resource Coordinator to the parent/guardian to review academic, social, and behavioral progress.

Monthly review by the committee includes the following: monitoring attendance, reviewing of academic progress, review of notes from service providers, and review of goals checklist.

### **The WA As a Supportive/Non Punitive Program**

Covenant Keepers Charter School's Wrap Around model is a supportive program that offers students highly individualized paths to social, emotional, academic, and behavioral success. On the classroom level, students are allowed extended time, small group or pairs to meet the learning expectation and experience success. We offer a variety of instructional learning alternatives through computer-aided websites for remediation reinforcement and research such as Khan Academy, Skills Navigator, Reading Plus, Math.com, IXL Math, quarterly NWEA Testing, etc. CK students who participate in this WA program find themselves immersed in a culture that recognizes and values their individual needs and goals.

### **How Individual Services Are Provided**

- Individual counseling services are provided on site to the students through Life Strategies Counseling Organization. We are in talks with other local providers as we anticipate exceeding the maximum capacity that Life Strategies is able to provide for our campus. Services are required on a weekly basis at minimum. Counseling sessions are built into the child's daily/weekly schedule to ensure consistency and accountability.
- The Wrap Around Program is staffed with a Resource Coordinator who works with local businesses in Southwest Little Rock, service providers, and with the student and parent to individualize services and resources.
- We plan to have an academic counselor to help each student make course selections before exiting to high school. We also plan to prepare students for college and career readiness through exposure to career options/job shadowing and through various volunteer programs matched to the interests of the child.

### **The Role of Technology**

- The purpose of technology in the WA program is to expand students' view of the world beyond Central Arkansas and help them move toward personal and academic growth in a manner with which these digital natives are accustomed.
- Beginning in the spring of 2016, WA sessions will be enhanced by the use of technology to supplement and reinforce concepts covered within the program. Technology, however, will never take the place of a live therapist or facilitator.
- The technology incorporated:
  - Computers
  - Educational software
  - Streaming video to review current events
  - LCD projectors and document cameras
  - Other supplemental usage programs to provide enrichment
  - Digital coursework for remediation and enrichment

### **Special Education Students in WA**

Students with disabilities receive services as prescribed by their IEPs and be are monitored by a certified SpEd instructor. The Principal/ Resource Coordinator monitor all students placed in the WA program to ensure that appropriate services are provided. All services are provided within the Covenant Keepers building.

**Behavioral Intervention Services**

Interventions designed to support core behavior transformation and character development are required for all students involved with the WA program. Some of the components include, but are not limited to social skills, career exploration, life skills, Positive Behavior Intervention System, and character education. The behavioral intervention services are provided onsite by Life Strategies and address anger management techniques, decision-making, coping with peer pressure, etc.

**Part B: Discipline and Attendance Data**

Review the following discipline data.

**\*Please note that some demographic categories are intentionally left out due to the school not having more than 10 students enrolled that fall into those categories.**

<b>2014-2015 Discipline Data</b>								
<b>Disciplinary Infractions</b>								
<b>Type</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>FRL</b>	<b>SPED</b>	<b>LEP</b>
Drugs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcohol	2	2	0	2	0	1	0	0
Tobacco	2	1	1	2	0	1	0	1
Truancy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Student Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Knife	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Handgun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rifle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shotgun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Club	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gangs	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Vandalism	3	3	0	3	0	2	1	0
Insubordination	18	14	3	8	9	12	1	3
Disorderly Conduct	51	30	3	21	12	27	4	2
Explosives	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	141	89	8	64	33	70	16	5
Bullying	6	5	0	3	2	4	1	0
Fighting	7	7	0	4	3	6	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2014-2015 Discipline Data</b>								

Disciplinary Actions								
Type	Total	Black	Hispanic	Male	Female	FRL	SPED	LEP
In-School Suspension	109	68	11	50	29	54	10	8
Out-of-School Suspension (non-injury)	122	84	4	58	30	70	14	3
Expelled	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expelled for Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Corporal Punishment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alternative Learning (full year)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expelled for Drugs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expelled for Dangerousness (non-injury)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expelled for Dangerousness (injury)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Out-of-School Suspension (injury)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alternative Learning (less than year)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>

Discuss the disciplinary infraction and action data. Be certain to discuss any disproportionate representation by a subgroup.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 2 pages.

We did not have an In School Suspension program in place for the 2013-14 school year. For school year 2014-15, Covenant Keepers implemented ISS and developed an “Automatic Point Accumulation” System (APA system). It is designed to dispense consequences in 15-point intervals. This system allows students to reflect and adjust behavioral decisions before consequences become serious, effectively diminishing occurrences of more significant infractions. More serious infractions supersede the APA system, and consequences are dispensed immediately. These serious infractions result in consequences on a leveled system based on recurrence of violations where penalties are progressively more severe with repeated offenses.

For the past 3 years as a middle school, the data reflects that our African-American students have incurred the majority of the behavioral infractions in the school (74%). Our Latino population accounted for 26% of our disciplinary infractions.

After working closely with African-American and Hispanic families over the last 7.5 years and conducting quite a bit of research on the significance of poverty, cultural variances, motivations, and attitudes among races, we have come to certain conclusions. While it is difficult to hold conversations about race and the impact that various cultures have on our students, we have taken an empirical approach to understanding the phenomenon so that we can equip ourselves to

help our students rise above any circumstances that may impede their growth. Following are some of the noteworthy conclusions we have come to.

Almost all of our Hispanic students are first- or second-generation immigrants, and they retain much of the hierarchical and familial tendencies of their elders. Hispanics tend to be exceedingly group-oriented; especially in areas that are highly populated with recent immigrants such as southwest Little Rock. A strong emphasis is placed on family as the major source of one's identity and direction. The term that Hispanics use to describe their loyalty to family and extended family is "familismo". Decisions and behavior of each individual in the extended family are based largely on pleasing the family and satisfying their allegiance to familismo. We have witnessed over the years that there is a good deal of pride that goes along with this idea of familismo; pride to be a part of the family, pride in contributing to the well-being of the family, and the pride of being a good citizen and bringing honor to the family.

Many of our Hispanic students are greatly influenced by the family's desire to always show respect to those in authority; to the degree that they do want to offend any of our teaching staff or administration. This manifests as model behavior for most of our Hispanic students. Because we understand that these children have such a desire to be compliant, we have to make an extra effort to ensure that their needs are met as they rarely complain or ask questions.

Of course we do have Hispanic students who have occasional behavior issues. We find that these matters are almost always tied to an insult to their pride or disrespect of a family member within our school. We have also found that our Hispanic students with the most behavior issues are the ones who are the most assimilated to American culture and have begun to shed their familismo values.

In regard to our African-American students, we have likewise accumulated a great deal of insight into their dispositions through careful observations of them and their families, research, and through working extremely closely with community resources in place to serve these families. While the following comments are stated in general terms, it should, of course, be understood that we are in no way implying that all of our African-American students are troubled, or that they are all socially or academically challenged. Once again, while it is difficult to speak in terms of race and ensuing inequities, we are compelled to face brutal facts in order to better understand how to deal with these issues.

While 98% of our students are from low-socioeconomic households, our Hispanic students, as noted above, have the distinct advantage of familismo. They are fortunate to have the family support and values that are associated with familismo. Conversely, a rather high number of our African-American students come from single-family homes and other situations that place them at a disadvantage. In fact, many of our African-American students are referred to us by Administrators and behavior interventionists within the Little Rock and North Little Rock school districts when it becomes evident that these students are not thriving in the traditional school and need an opportunity for success in a more supportive environment.

Recent research by noted psychology researcher, Judith Harris suggests that the social relationships students experience—with peers, adults in the school, and family members—have a much greater influence on their behavior than researchers had previously assumed (2006). This process starts with students' core relationships with parents or primary caregivers in their lives, which form a personality that is either secure and attached or insecure and unattached. Securely attached children typically behave better in school (Bali, Granger, Kivlighan, Mills-Koonce, Willongby & Greeberg, 2008). Absent of strong, secure relationships, students are unable to stabilize behavior and receive the core guidance needed to build lifelong social skills. Children who are raised in poor households often fail to learn healthy, appropriate emotional responses to everyday situations to the detriment of their school performance and behavior (Bali, Granger, Kivlighan, Mills-Koonce, Willongby & Greeberg, 2008). We see the reality of this at Covenant Keepers every day.

Our students who are raised in poverty rarely choose to behave differently, but they are faced daily with overwhelming challenges that affluent children never have to confront, and their brains have adapted to these difficult conditions in ways that undermine good school performance (Bali, Granger, Kivlighan, Mills-Koonce, Willongby & Greeberg, 2008). This reality does not mean that success in school or life is impossible. On the contrary, a better understanding

of these challenges points to actions that we as a school community can take to help our less-advantaged students succeed.

During the spring 2015 semester, we began to advertise for an individual with a strong background in building leadership skills and positive attitudes with all students. We were fortunate to hire Mr. Lenard Blocker who has established “LEADERS, Inc.”. This program worked successfully in several schools in the Pulaski County School District.

Mr. Blocker’s program began to change the thought processes of many of our students and the way they handled certain situations in supervised “unstructured” environments (lunch time or during transitions). His program worked so well, we decided to hire Mr. Blocker as our building principal. He is serving as a strong influence and powerful source of inspiration for our students, particularly our African-American males. We are already seeing the impact of his work in our school.

Explain why a significant majority of disciplinary infractions documented are labeled as other.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 2 pages.

“Other” was not used by the school disciplinary team in the 2013-14 school year. We processed all of our incidents as insubordination, disorderly conduct, fighting, bullying, and assault.

In 2014-2015, 76% of all behavior incidents fell into the category of “other”, which is a reflection of our Automatic Point Accumulation (APA) system. These incidents within the APA system include infractions such as: gum chewing, cursing, excessive talking out, disrupting class, disorderly transition in hallways, chronic lack of supplies, chronic lack of homework, breaking class rules, etc. While none of these infractions on their own warrant in-school suspension or other disciplinary actions, they do garner demerits. Under our APA demerit system, accumulation of 15 demerit points results in an assignment to in-school suspension. Because this disciplinary action represents a composite of minor infractions, it is recorded in eSchool as “other”. For example, an assignment to ISS may be based on a student compiling 15 demerits in smaller increments over time as follows: walking out of class 5 demerits, eating in class 5 demerits, chewing gum 1 demerit, out of line in hallway 2 demerits, and horse playing 3 demerits. At this point the student would have received 16 total demerits and an assignment to ISS. Because the single disciplinary action was the result of five separate behavior incidents, it is recorded in eSchool as “other” (behavior incidents are not recorded in eSchool until an action is prescribed). Individual student records reflect each incident and action the student has received.

<b>Automatic Point Accumulation</b>	
Off Task Computer Use (Social Media, Music, Messenger, Games, Google Image, etc.)	5
Lack of Materials	5
Sleeping in class	5
Running in Hallway	5
Walking Out Of Class	5
Not Following Directions During Dismissal	5
Eating and Drinking W/O Permission	5
Talking Back/Argumentative Behavior	5
Vulgar Language	5
Using any school phone w/o permission	3
Inappropriate cafeteria behavior	3
Horse-Playing	3
Refusal to follow directions from faculty/staff	3
Throwing objects	2-5
Out of Line in Hallway	2
Gum Chewing	1

Covenant Keepers maintains a very structured environment. The majority of our student body has histories of serious behavior incidents. Our goal is to greatly diminish those incidents by tackling minor incidents and holding students to very high expectations. The result is that relatively minor misbehaviors, which are often overlooked in other schools and lead to more significant misbehaviors, are addressed at Covenant Keepers and are met with consequences. These “other” infractions and corresponding penalties serve to eliminate a great deal of more serious issues when students learn that we are serious about our expectations and imposing punishments.

Explain how the numbers of out-of-school and in-school suspensions impact student achievement.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 2 pages.

Our Out-of-School Suspension rate for 2014-2015 was quite high. It is important to understand, however, that the number of suspensions does not represent the number of *students* suspended through the year, but rather the number of *suspensions assigned*. In other words, one student who had a bad year may account for several of the suspension actions within that total number.

As stated in previous sections, Covenant Keepers’ desire is to help students grow emotionally, behaviorally, and socially as well as academically. In an effort to solve the problem of suspensions and the resulting harms, we are examining solutions that fall within these four broad categories:

1. Phasing out suspensions & promoting creative alternatives
2. Improving data collection & analysis as to alert us to the need for interventions
3. Building the capacity of students, teachers, Dean, and Principal in an effort to diminish behavioral incidents
4. Pushing comprehensive approaches such as our Wrap Around services

There has been quite a bit of talk in recent years of the “School to Prison Pipeline” that essentially declares that many local, state, and federal policies have the effect of pushing students out of schools and into the criminal justice system. As anyone who has worked closely with Covenant Keepers knows, our goal is to disrupt this pipeline to keep children in school and out of the juvenile justice system. We have developed a quite effective system for transforming students over time and setting them on a new trajectory. This system involves investing ourselves in our students and seeing them through challenges and periods of instability. At times, however, temporary removal from school or class is necessary.

Our in-school suspensions (ISS) or out-of-school suspensions (OSS) are effective in that they: temporarily remove a student from the school or classroom which has the effect of disconnecting the student from a potentially more volatile situation; demonstrate to all students that serious misbehaviors will be addressed; support teachers in their desire to maintain an environment conducive to learning; and alert parents to the seriousness of their child’s actions.

Because we are more interested in transforming students than punishing students, we are very proactive in our measures to keep children from misbehaving and in our efforts to work with students to prevent recurring misbehavior. We understand that a student cannot learn if he or she is not in class and a negative correlation between suspension and achievement exists. We also understand that, as noted in previous pages, many of our students are “at risk” and whether they realize it or not, they depend on us to help them rise above their circumstances. All of this to say, our desire is not to exclude students from class or from school. Our deepest desire is to have them excel academically and socially. We work toward this goal everyday, and we are patient with our students as they progress, but we do impose consequences when necessary.

Discuss the strategies used by the charter to ensure that discipline is administered in a fair and equitable manner.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

Our student handbook very clearly lays out the school’s discipline policy including infractions and correlating consequences. Every behavior incident that is submitted to the Dean of Students is carefully reviewed, investigated as

needed, and documented meticulously. Consequences are applied *precisely* as prescribed by the handbook to avoid bias.

Parents are supplied with a physical copy of the handbook (in English and in Spanish); the handbook also appears on the school’s website.

Teachers receive a great deal of training in regard to the discipline system, so that every teacher is aware of protocol and there is no uncertainty as to its application.

For instances when a judgment call has to be made, all involved parties are questioned thoroughly by the Dean, and a decision is made based on the facts as they are determined. We avoid subjectivity by considering all perspectives and applying the school protocol as outlined in the handbook. Our handbook details a review and/or appeals process should parents wish to pursue that.

Review the following attendance data.

2014-2015 Attendance				
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
ADA	127.53	139.82	158.21	166.98
ADM	132.34	147.89	162.88	177.51
Rate	96%	95%	97%	94%

Describe the methods used by the charter to improve student behavior and attendance.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

Covenant Keepers recognizes the importance of regular school attendance and strives for consistently high attendance rates for each student. Absentee situations are promptly identified and addressed to maintain maximum attendance of enrolled students. Attendance policies are in compliance with Arkansas’ compulsory attendance laws, including without limitation, hour requirements and the distinction made between excused and unexcused absences. Covenant Keepers maintains excellent daily attendance rates with a three-year average of 95.6%. Absentee rates are relatively equal among races and genders. Communicating the importance of attendance to parents has created high expectations and, in turn, high response.

Current attendance rate: 97%  
2014-2015 attendance rate: 96%  
2013-2014 attendance rate: 94%

It is our goal to identify strategies to intervene with truancy and delinquency, address the root causes, and stop youth’s progression from truancy into more serious and violent behaviors. Project REACH is an intervention program developed and managed by our Principal for our students who are at risk of academic failure, truancy and juvenile delinquency. This program is designed to encourage students to reach their full potential by providing tutoring, mentoring, workshops, recreation, cultural activities, and exposure to various career paths. This program also serves as a resource for parents by providing quarterly seminars to address their needs.

Covenant Keepers prides itself on embracing the “whole child” and supporting families and households where children are at risk. We have a cadre of community resources at the ready to help us with students or families when needed. Although providing these additional support services and resources is not always the “magic bullet” that turns a student around, we have seen remarkable transformations in students’ academic and behavior profiles upon receiving these supports.

## **Part C: Best Practices**

Identify and describe one (or more) best practice(s) that support the achievement of, or **progress toward achieving, the charter's current approved academic goals.** Provide the data that led to the determination that this practice is effective.

Respond in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 3 pages.

Given our small size and location within the city of Little Rock, we attract many families seeking an alternative to the less personal approach available in larger, more policy-controlled public schools. Indeed, many of the students that come to us have not engaged in education available at the public school and as a result enter our school as basic or below basic performers. In addition to being behind academically, many of our students have social and emotional issues that further interfere with their ability to achieve in school. The analysis of our progress over the past three years has led us to the conclusion that we must make significant internal modifications in our approach for these high need students.

We understand that the intent of open enrollment charter schools is to provide parents and their children with choice and options. Within the concept of choice is the expectation by the State Legislature and the Arkansas Department of Education that with choice will also come improved performance. Additionally, within the concept of choice is the concept that a heterogeneous mix of families will elect to access a local charter simply for the innovations offered.

However, some communities are not comprised of heterogeneous populations. The socio-economic status of a community can result in a public charter attracting either high achieving students from families seeking an accelerated learning experience; or, large numbers of students that have struggled in the public school environment. Thus, it can be expected that a charter school located in a high poverty area will attract either large numbers of achieving students seeking to avoid an at-risk public school, or they will attract large numbers of low achieving students from families hoping the change will permit their child to experience more support and improved learning. In our case, our small size and nurturing environment has attracted students from families seeking a more personalized or supportive environment for their students that are significantly struggling in their public school.

In working closely with students and their families over the years, it has become clear that we have many students who suffer from the effects of childhood trauma and that a more intensive "wrap around" of services is needed to help these students stabilize and remain in one school long enough to access and benefit from the instruction being offered.

To this end, during the first semester of SY 15-16 we have been meeting with and developing partners with the intent to integrate an RTI model; not only for academics, but for social, emotional and behavioral needs. We have secured commitments from area service agencies and organizations to assist us as we strive to create a trauma-sensitive school. Background on Trauma-Sensitive Schools can be found in the article "Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Supportive Policies and Practices for Learning" published by the National Association of School Psychologists in a research brief. [http://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Research%20and%20Policy/Research%20Center/Trauma\\_Sensitive\\_Schools\\_2015.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Research%20and%20Policy/Research%20Center/Trauma_Sensitive_Schools_2015.pdf)

Further, the Center for Disease Control has published several documents related to creating safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children experiencing trauma [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/essentials\\_for\\_childhood\\_framework.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/essentials_for_childhood_framework.pdf). The essential conclusion of researchers studying the effects of childhood trauma is that, "When exposure to traumatic events occurs frequently or when traumatic stress is left unaddressed, children are susceptible to: Relationship problems, drug and alcohol abuse, violent behavior, suicide and depression, lower grades, increased school suspensions, and dropout, bullying and victimization."

We have developed a comprehensive approach to significantly increase the services for students that demonstrate the characteristics of childhood trauma. We feel by doing this, in collaboration with other service agencies, we can address the lack of success many students have experienced prior to coming to Covenant Keepers, and at the same time move the school out of Academic Distress status.

## **Best Practices For Literacy**

### **Adopted Curriculum: Expeditionary Learning**

Because we wanted to be sure our students were getting the push to Common Core, we chose a curriculum that would help with this transition. Expeditionary Learning contains research-based teaching strategies that have transformed education for over 20 years. Its network comprises 152 EL educational schools across 39 states serving over 45,000 teachers and over 4 million curriculum downloads. Studies have shown that schools that have implemented Expeditionary Learning have shown tremendous growth in ELA over a 3-year period. Upon further research, it was found that these schools mirror our Hispanic and African American population of students. It takes time to develop and deliver rigorous instructional experiences to students of all reading levels and needs.

### **Reading Plus**

Reading Plus Literacy software has been used in small groups within the classroom, and/or computer lab. This gives students an opportunity to practice their literacy skills. This software helps reinforce students' reading skills, which can assess a child's reading level, or practice specific vocabulary words.

### **6-Week Program—Success Per Student**

Success Categories	7th Grade	Special Education
Total Words Read	36,500	22,750
Total New Vocabulary Words Learned	350	189
Total Stories Read	90	55
Reading Rate (wpm) Increase	25%	40%
NWEA Winter to Spring Growth	5.5 points	12.5 points

Because of the implementation of Expeditionary Learning and our teaching strategies, we saw an increase in the number of students meeting their spring growth goals on their NWEA MAP assessment for Reading and Language, as compared to the 2013-2014 percentages.

### **NWEA Growth Results for Reading (Note: 50% of students making their growth goal is the average nationwide)**

Grade	Percentage of Students Meeting their NWEA Growth Goal: 2013-2014	Percentage of Students Meeting their NWEA Growth Goal: 2014-2015
6th	40.0%	59.4%
7th	46.7%	70.5%
8th	38.2%	72.0%

### **NWEA Growth Results for Language (Note: 50% of students making their growth goal is the average nationwide)**

Grade	Percentage of Students Meeting their NWEA Growth Goal: 2013-2014	Percentage of Students Meeting their NWEA Growth Goal: 2014-2015
6th	41.5%	67.7%
7th	60.6%	73.8%
8th	42.9%	82.6%

## **Best Practices For Math**

### **Adopted Curriculum: EngageNY**

The team of teachers and mathematicians who wrote EngageNY took great care to present mathematics in a logical progression from PK through Grade 12. This coherent approach allows teachers to know what incoming students already have learned and ensures that students are prepared for what comes next. When implemented faithfully, EngageNY will dramatically reduce gaps in student learning, instill persistence in problem solving, and prepare students to understand advanced math.

### **Plus Time**

Plus Time is a 60-minute period in the middle of the day where students are grouped according to their NWEA MAP

scores. Teachers provide intense interventions based on student need, using the NWEA Learning Continuum to guide individualized instruction.

After analysis of Fall 2015 NWEA MAP data, we discovered that 77% of our students were below grade level in math. The leadership team collaborated with APSRC and studied the Learning Continuum to determine the gaps in student learning. APSRC helped Covenant Keepers develop a plan for teachers to teach remedial math skills during Plus Time, including multiplication facts, place value, and operations with fractions. All teachers received professional development on strategies for teaching these skills.

Because the implementation of EngageNY and our teaching strategies, we saw an increase in the number of students meeting their spring growth goals on their NWEA MAP assessment for Math, as compared to the 2013-2014 percentages.

**NWEA Growth Results for Math (Note: 50% of students making their growth goal is the average nationwide)**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage of Students Meeting their NWEA Growth Goal: 2013-2014</b>	<b>Percentage of Students Meeting their NWEA Growth Goal: 2014-2015</b>
<b>6th</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>61.3%</b>
<b>7th</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>57.1%</b>
<b>8th</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>58.3%</b>

**Best Practices For All Instruction**

**Establishing Professional Learning Communities:** Our teachers have successfully engaged in PLCs to address key issues, such as meeting the needs of English language learners, and working with at-risk students. Covenant Keepers’ school day is also structured to value teachers’ collaborative work and professional dialogue. All content area teachers have common preparation time each day and teachers have an extra hour built in at the end of the day for collaboration after students are dismissed. This allows teachers to work closely with colleagues and encourages them to engage in ongoing discussions about their curriculum and how to meet the needs of each learner.

**Data Driven Instruction:** Teachers and administrators use test data, compiled through professional learning communities, to tailor instruction to different skill levels. Teachers at Covenant Keepers track student data of pre-tests, post-tests, and formative assessments to inform them of school-wide, class-wide, and/or individual progress in the areas of math and literacy. When ADE’s Academic Distress Team visited our school in the fall of 2014, the question they continued to ask our leadership team was "how do you know your students are moving toward proficiency?" The academic distress team made the recommendation that our teachers conduct pre- and post-tests every 7 to 15 days.

Because of this recommendation and the support of our ADE school improvement specialists, our teachers are more aware of student learning and mastery at the standards level and use assessment data for action planning based on results.

**Teacher Support:** This year, Covenant Keepers’ leadership team developed the Teacher Support Cycle, to improve and individualize professional development for teachers. Every two weeks, each leadership team member meets one on one with every teacher, guiding the teacher in their specific area of expertise. These meeting notes are compiled and reviewed during leadership team meetings to determine additional professional development or targeted support teachers may need. Teachers have been favorable toward the Teacher Support Cycle. When 100% of teachers were surveyed, 83% of teachers said the support cycle helped them improve their classroom management skills, their assessment methods, and their instructional techniques.

**Parents/Community Involvement**

Covenant Keepers’ builds strong alliances with parents and welcome their active participation in the classroom. Teachers inform parents of the school’s educational goals, and importance of high expectations for each child. Partnerships with a wide range of community organizations including business, higher education, and other agencies, provide critically needed materials, technology, and experiences for students and teachers.

60% of our parents participated in our most recent survey, conducted in Fall 2015. Of the parents surveyed, 91% said they were satisfied with the learning environment at Covenant Keepers. 97% of parents said they felt welcome at their child's school, and 93% of parents said they would recommend Covenant Keepers to other families with middle school children. 90% of parents believed that Covenant Keepers has had a positive impact on their child's behavior. When 6th and 7th grade parents were asked if they planned to re-enroll their child at Covenant Keepers for the 2016-2017 school year, 80% replied positively, while 14% remained unsure, and only 5% said no.

### **Student Empowerment**

Because we deal with such a high-needs population, students need a sense of empowerment that will enable them to succeed beyond their educational career. Various programs such as GEMS, Express Yo' Self, S.O.A.R. as well as counselors and therapists have been put in place to help students overcome many obstacles they encounter in their daily lives.

For example, Principal Blocker holds intervention meetings with individual students and their teachers to help repair the teacher/student relationship. His collected data has shown that these meetings are 100% effective at alleviating classroom behavioral issues, with zero incidents reported for these students by the individual teacher two months after the meeting.

## **Section 5 – Academic Performance Goals**

### **Part A: Current Performance Goals**

Each of the charter's student academic performance goals, as approved by the authorizer, is listed. Describe the charter's progress in achieving each goal and provide supporting documentation that demonstrates the progress. If a goal was not reached, explain why it was not reached and the actions being taken so that students can achieve the goal.  
**REDACT ALL STUDENT IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.**

#### *Goals as stated in 2013 renewal application:*

Describe the charter's progress to achieving each goal and provide supporting documentation that demonstrates the progress.

### **Goals in Literacy**

Achieve measurable growth, based on tracking the AMO for students as demonstrated by state testing and NWEA MAP testing. Each of the following sub objectives will be considered as indicators for meeting this goal.

1. Meet the growth targets of AMO in literacy annually the school level  
Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

We did not meet our growth target for literacy for the 2013-2014 school year. Because of this, we realized we needed to take a different approach with our students to meet their academic needs, based on the fact that 72% of our students enter at 5th grade level or below in literacy.

During the 2014-2015 school year, we:

- began a more aggressive approach using NWEA to allow students to understand their areas of deficiency
- changed our curriculum
- spent time and resources developing stronger teachers and leaders
- partnered with APSRC due to their expertise in building capacity in small schools and charters.
- ADE's academic distress team visited our school and gave us specific recommendations based on their findings. The leading question was "how do you know your students are moving toward proficiency?"
- Later in the year, ADE evaluated our implementation of their recommendations.
- Roxie Browning met weekly with our leadership team and a leadership coach representative from APSRC.

We are proving every day that change is possible. Our students are proving that they can close the achievement gap over time. We now understand that we have to clearly define success for each *individual* student and develop multiple interventions and individualized goals, focus intently on those goals, measure and monitor every child frequently, and quickly respond to changing needs.

2. Covenant Keepers will track literacy growth at each grade level and compare our outcomes to similar schools in the Little Rock School District, such as Cloverdale, Mabelvale, Pulaski Heights, based on AMO in literacy. Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

We have compared growth in literacy at a school level with area schools.

2013-2014 School Performance: Growth for Literacy

School	All Students
Covenant Keepers Charter School	49.09
Mabelvale Middle School	53.87
Pulaski Heights Middle School	75.44
Henderson Middle School	44.81
Cloverdale Middle School	45.28

3. NWEA growth data will be tracked in literacy with a goal of increasing the number of students meeting their growth target annually  
Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

During the 2013-2014 school year, we were guided by our external provider ECS to use TLI as well as continuing our use of NWEA MAP. Typically, 50% of students nationwide make typical growth from fall to spring on NWEA MAP assessments, but only 41% of our students met their growth goals for reading. However, during the 2014-2015 school year, our fall to spring NWEA MAP scores showed unprecedented growth. **68% of our students met or exceeded their growth goal for reading from fall 2014 to spring 2015.** Our 6th grade students were in the 96th percentile nationwide for growth in reading, while our 7th and 8th grade students were in the 99th percentile for growth.

We attribute this growth to our support from APSRC, having individual data talks with students, the adoption of Expeditionary Learning as our ELA curriculum, and training teachers in the use of the Learning Continuum so they can individualize their lessons to address student learning gaps.

4. Establish and monitor “Student Learning Profile Logs” for students demonstrating proficiency and borderline students  
Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.
  - We developed Student Learning Profile Logs and used them to help teachers and students determine progress toward proficiency in literacy.

- It also allowed teachers to share assessment data with instructional team members to develop a plan for interventions (Plus Time).
- As we received training from APSRC specialists, they introduced us to the concept of interactive notebooking, and all teachers are now required to implement it in their classes.
- These notebooks not only track assessment data, but also contain information given directly from the teacher and classwork, reflections, and peer feedback to support student understanding as recorded by the student. These currently serve as our student profile learning logs.

Documentation of examples of assessments, rubrics, and interactive notebooks:

7/9/80

Date: 11/10/14

**Theme** → Growing up

**What characters say or do**

- The father is a cowardly old man.
- The father is the source of the old man's fear.
- The father is the one who is afraid of the old man.

**3. What is important to learn (a possible THEME STATEMENT)**

As you grow up you will be learning to stick together.

**Summary:** This old man had three sons and they were hard working but they do not agree on anything, and they quarrel. The man decided to teach them a practical lesson. He want the sons to break a bundle of sticks one by one and the first son breaks a stick they did but began to quarrel when he said that they should break a bundle of sticks and they did not. The man said that he would break the bundle of sticks and they did not.

Directions: Use the context to help you find the definition of the underlined term. L.7.4 You will get a grade 3.

1. I lay inert, motionless, after the accident.  
Inert: be accident

2. In the southern United States, "you all" is a typical vernacular (characteristic of a particular region).  
Vernacular: characteristic of a particular region

3. That spider isn't harmful. It's innocuous.  
Innocuous: is not harmful

4. We have to correct this situation. Can you rectify it before tomorrow?  
Rectify: correct

5. We must discourage anyone from coming in while we are testing. How can we dissuade people?  
Dissuade: dissuade

6. That information is completely inessential. I wish you would quit interjecting extraneous comments.  
Extraneous: intersect comments

4/6

Date: 11/10/14

**Common Core Student Performance Rubric**  
Grade 7  
English Language Arts  
Reading Standards for Literature

Category: Craft and Structure

Standard L.7.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Emerging 1	Developing 2	Satisfactory 3	Proficient 4
The student is not able to determine the meaning of words in a text based on context clues.	The student is able to determine the meanings of a few words in a text based on context clues.	The student is able to determine the meanings of most of the words in a text based on context clues.	The student is able to determine the meanings of words in a text based on context clues.

Directions: Select the score from the category that best reflects student performance.

Student Score 3

Teacher Comments: work on using context clues at all times

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Term \_\_\_\_\_

**Common Core Student Performance Rubric**  
Grade 7  
English Language Arts  
Reading Standards for Literature

Category: Key Ideas and Details

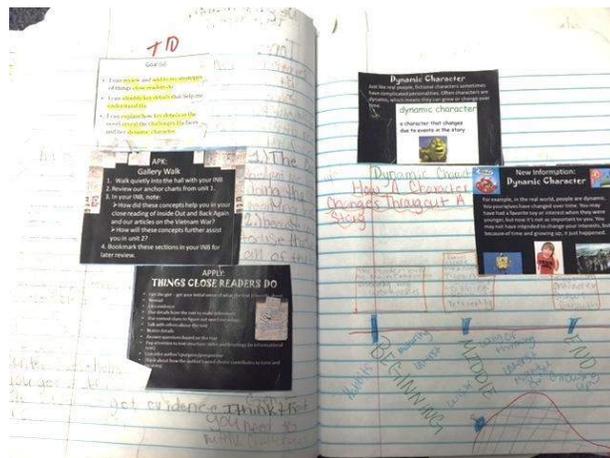
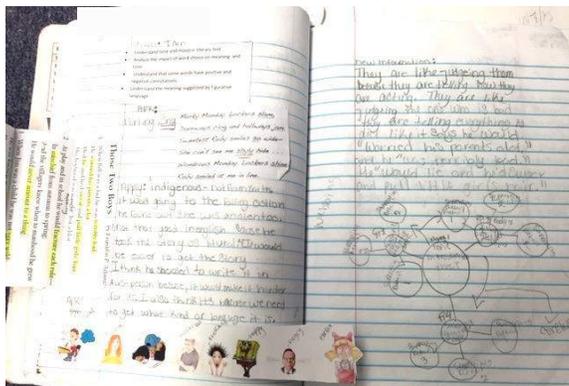
Standard RI.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Emerging 1	Developing 2	Satisfactory 3	Proficient 4
A theme is not included. Very few details are included. If the student has provided a summary, it includes few details that do not or some of the details are inaccurate.	A theme is not included. Some details are provided but are not fully explained. If the student has provided a summary, the summary includes a few important details from the text.	The theme is stated but is partially supported with details from the text. If the student has provided a summary, some of the important details are mentioned.	The theme of the text is stated and fully supported with text details. If the student has provided a summary, all of the most important details from the text are mentioned.

Directions: Select the score from the category that best reflects student performance.

Student Score 4

Great Job!



**Goals in Mathematics**

Achieve measurable growth, based on tracing the AMO for students as demonstrated by state testing and NWEA MAP testing. Each of the following sub objectives will be considered as indicators for meeting this goal.

- 5. Develop an initiative “C.O.O.L” to meet AMO targets annually at the school level  
Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

We did not meet our growth target for math for the 2013-2014 school year. Math has been our challenge each year, as 76% of our students are entering at 5th grade level or below, and many of these students are just arriving or have not been with CK over two years.

- C.O.O.L. (Challenging Our Outstanding Learners) Math is our initiative to provide support for students who are below grade level in math.
- To keep math aggressively at the forefront, we revamped Plus Time to provide students with reinforcement in basic math skills.
- All teachers were provided with training in strategies as well as provided an online resource base to support teaching and learning.
- A computerized RTI program, Skills Navigator, assesses students and provides them with lessons to address grade level deficiencies. This program is directly aligned to MAP assessment scores and will reset with each new assessment.
- We continue to provide after school tutoring services for students who continually struggle with grade level standards.

- 6. Track the math growth at each grade level and compare our outcomes to similar schools in the Little Rock School District, such as Cloverdale, Mabelvale, Pulaski Heights, etc.  
Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

We have compared growth in math at a school level with area schools.

2013-2014 School Performance: Growth for Math

School	All Students
Covenant Keepers Charter School	45.67
Mabelvale Middle School	47.48
Pulaski Heights Middle School	65.92
Henderson Middle School	39.06
Cloverdale Middle School	33.76

- 7. Track improvements in mathematics so that in 3 years Covenant Keepers students will be performing at 60% (advanced and proficient) in grades 6-8 on ACTAAP.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

According to our benchmark scores from the 2013-2014 school year, we did not meet our AMOs for math. During the 2014-2015 school year, we participated in the PARCC assessment, and our scores did not show 60% proficiency. Because we did not show proficiency, we continued to track our students' growth through NWEA MAP assessments from fall to spring. Our students made unprecedented growth in NWEA during from fall 2014 to spring 2015, with 59% of our students meeting their growth goals, with only 39% meeting their growth goal from fall 2013 to spring 2014. Our 6th grade students were in the 81st percentile nationally for growth, and our 8th grade students were in the 88th percentile. Our 7th grade students were in the 43rd percentile nationally, as the majority of students did not meet their growth goal. Because we continue to see learning gaps in math, we have established Tier 2 interventions during Plus Time for students who are struggling with basic math facts. APSRC assisted us in looking at our NWEA MAP data to determine what specific math skills were causing students difficulty. Curriculum coaches from APSRC then trained teachers in strategies for reinforcing skills in multiplication, place value, and fractions, and also provided us with resources through Above and Beyond the Core (ABC), Khan Academy, and Skills Navigator. Pre- and post-tests are given in math every two weeks, and data from these assessments are disaggregated, analyzed, and brought to our bi-monthly PLC data team meetings for discussion and action planning. All teachers are required to bring this prepared data to each PLC data team meeting. During the 2014-2015 school year, we adopted EngageNY as our Common Core-aligned math curriculum school-wide. The detailed lessons and accompanying pacing guide allow teachers to have a structured plan for the year.

8. Establish and monitor "Student Learning Profile Logs" for students demonstrating proficiency and borderline students

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Indicate if supporting documentation demonstrating the progress is attached. This response can be no longer than 1 page, excluding the supporting documentation.

We developed Student Learning Profile Logs and used them to help teachers and students determine progress toward proficiency in math. It also allowed teachers to share assessment data with instructional team members to develop a plan for interventions (Plus Time). We also provided after school tutoring through a 21st Century Grant to address deficiencies present in the learning logs. When we noticed that students were lacking in basic mathematical skills, we revamped Plus Time school-wide, providing training to all teachers to address these learning gaps. As we received training from APSRC specialists, they introduce us to the concept of interactive notebooking, and all teachers are now required to implement it in their classes. These notebooks not only track assessment data, but also contain information given directly from the teacher and classwork, reflections, and peer feedback to support student understanding as recorded by the student. These currently serve as our student profile learning logs.

## **Part B: New Performance Goals**

**Confirm the understanding that, during the term of the charter renewal, the charter is expected to meet all goals and/or objectives set by the state.**

List other student academic performance goals for the period of time requested for renewal. For each goal, include the following:

- The tool to be used to measure academic performance;
- The level of performance that will demonstrate success; and
- The timeframe for the achievement of the goal.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 2 pages.

Covenant Keepers affirms that we understand that, during the term of this renewal, we are expected to meet all goals and/or objectives set by the state.

Goals set by the charter include:

Performance Goal	Tracking Tool	Timeframe
Covenant Keepers' proficiency level will be 3% higher than Cloverdale Middle School and Mabelvale Middle School in ELA	ACT Aspire or applicable state assessment	Examined as an average during a 3 year period
Covenant Keepers' proficiency level will be 3% higher than Cloverdale Middle School and Mabelvale Middle School in Math.	ACT Aspire or applicable state assessment	Examined as an average during a 3 year period
Increase provider partnerships of wraparound services by 5% for our population over a three-year time period.	MOUs and letters of support	Examined as an average during a 3 year period
Increase the number of students served by an outside service provider by 5%.	Documentation submitted by providers	Examined as an average during a 3 year period
40% of ELL students will increase their composite score by one level on the state language proficiency test over a 2-year period.	ELPA21 or applicable ELL state assessment	Every 2 years
70% of students will meet their goal as determined by their designation on Covenant Keepers' Wraparound Growth Goal Model. (see illustration below)	NWEA MAP assessment data	Annually

## CK Model of Wraparound Levels and Individualized Goals

Developed based on the trends we see in our population of students

<p><b>Level 1:</b>  <b>Achieving/low motivation</b>          -social/emotional wrap-around          -physical/health wrap-around as needed</p> <p><b>-Goal: 70% of students will make 1.5 years of growth annually as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.</b></p>	<p><b>Level 0</b>  <b>Achieving/high motivation</b>          -minimal to no wrap-around</p> <p><b>-Goal: 70% of students will meet or exceed their individual annual growth goal as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.</b></p>
<p><b>Levels 2/3 (moderate/severe)</b>  <b>Under-achieving/low motivation</b>          -meet social/behavioral/physical/health needs first, then work on academic concerns.</p> <p><b>-Goal: 90% of students will continue receiving necessary wraparound services at Covenant Keepers.</b></p>	<p><b>Level 1:</b>  <b>Under-achieving/high motivation</b>          -academic wrap-around only</p> <p><b>-Goal: 70% of students will make 1.5 years of growth annually as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.</b></p>

**Level 0- Achieving/High Motivation (Minimal to No Wraparound):**

**70% of students will make 1 year of growth annually as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.**

**Level 1- Under-Achieving/High Motivation (Academic Needs Only):**

**70% of students will make 1.5 years of growth annually as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.**

**Level 1-Achieving/Low Motivation (Social/Behavioral Needs Only):**

**70% of students will make 1.5 years of growth annually as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.**

**Level 2- Under-Achieving/Low Motivation (Academic and Social/Behavioral Needs-Moderate):**

**70% of students will make 1 year of growth annually as determined by NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math.**

**Level 3- Under-Achieving/Low Motivation (Academic and Social/Behavioral Needs- Severe):**

**90% of students will continue receiving necessary wraparound services at Covenant Keepers.**

## Section 6 – Finance

Review the charter’s most recent annual financial audit report. For each finding, address the following:

- If the finding had been noted in any prior year audits;
- The corrective actions taken to rectify the issue; and
- The date by which the issue was or will be corrected.

### **2013-2014 Finding (not a finding in prior year)**

Noncompliance with Ark. Code Ann. 6-13-635, Salary Increase of 5% or more

The Charter School failed to review and approve employees with an increase in pay of 5% or more as promulgate in Commissioner’s Meme FIN-14-048, dated February 5, 2014. The memo specified the proper report, which identified pay increases in excess of 5%, and required presentation to the Board of Directors along with a resolution no later than the October board meeting.

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. This response can be no longer than 4 pages.

Covenant Keepers acknowledges that we did not comply with A.C.A. 6-13-635 in that the Charter Board did not review and approve pay increases of 5% for the previous year and file a report with ADE by the stated deadline. In the future, Covenant Keepers will fully comply with this financial management and reporting requirement.

## Section 7 – Waivers

Review the following list of statutes and rules that have been waived for the charter school:

### **Waivers from Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated (Education Code)**

6-10-106	School year dates
6-13-108	Length of directors’ terms
6-15-1004	Qualified teachers in every public school classroom
6-17-201 et seq.	Requirements—Written personnel policies—Teacher salary schedule
6-17-203	Committees on personnel policies—Members
6-17-302	Principals—Responsibilities
6-17-309	Certification to teach grade or subject matter—Exceptions—Waivers
6-17-401	Teacher licensure requirement
6-17-418	Teacher licensure—Arkansas history requirement
6-17-902	Definition (definition of a teacher as licensed)
6-17-919	Warrants void without valid certification and contract (the ability to pay a teacher’s salary only upon filing of a teacher’s certificate with the county clerk’s office, if the requirement of a teacher’s certificate is waived for such teacher)
6-17-980	Teacher’s salary fund
6-17-1001	Teacher Minimum Base Salary (repealed)
6-17-1501-1510 et seq.	Teacher Fair Dismissal Act
6-17-1701-1702 et seq.	Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act
6-17-2201 et seq.	Classified School Employee Minimum Salary Act
6-17-2301 et seq.	Classified School Employee Personnel Policy Law
6-17-2302	Business managers
6-17-2303	Committee on personnel policies for each school district

6-17-2401 et seq.	Teacher Compensation Program of 2003
6-18-706	School nurses—Nurse-to-student ratio
6-18-1001 et seq.	Public School Student Services Act
6-20-1401	Pertaining to school construction standards (approved only as it relates to owned property versus leased property)
6-20-1406	Pertaining to school construction standards (approved only as it relates to owned property versus leased property)
6-20-1407	Pertaining to school construction standards (approved only as it relates to owned property versus leased property)
6-20-2208(c)(6)	Monitoring of expenditures (gifted and talented)
6-25-103	Library media services program defined
6-25-104	Library media specialist—Qualifications
	General Provisions (gifted and talented)
	Examination of teachers' contracts
	(a) It shall be the duty of the county clerk when the teachers' contracts are filed, as required by Sections 6-13-620 and 7-17-919, to examine such contracts.
6-42-101 et seq. 6-17-920	(b) If the county clerk finds that any board of directors has entered into contracts with teachers who have not recorded a valid teacher's certificate with the clerk, he or she shall immediately notify the board of directors in writing to correct the contract(s) to conform to the legal requirements.

**Waivers from ADE Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and Districts**

15	Personnel
15.03	Licensure and Renewal
16.01	Guidance and Counseling
16.02	Media Services
16.03	Health and Safety Services
16.03.1	School nurse
18	Gifted and Talented Education

**Waivers from Other Rules:**

- ADE Rules Governing Waivers for Substitute Teachers
- ADE Rules Governing Uniform Dates for Beginning and End of School Year
- ADE Rules Governing Minimum School House Construction Standards
- ADE Rules Governing Length of Directors' Terms of Three Years Appointed
- 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
- ADE Rules Governing Public School Student Services
- ADE Rules for Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards

**Part A: New Waiver Requests**

Complete the waiver request form to include each additional law and rule from Title VI of Arkansas Code Annotated, State Board of Education Rules and Regulations, including the Standards for Accreditation that the charter would like the authorizer to waive. A rationale is required for each new waiver request.

**If no new waivers are requested, state this.**

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font.

### **Planning Period**

- Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-114 (teacher planning time): Covenant Keepers requests this waiver to have flexibility to, as needed, provide its teachers with the required planning time during their regularly scheduled hours of work, but not during the student instructional day (i.e. during a time range of 4:00-5:00). Our teachers do an exceptional amount of collaborative data analysis and planning; having planning time together after dismissal would align well with this practice and allow for much more comprehensive collaboration.

### **Duty-Free Lunch**

- Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-111 ( duty-free lunch): Covenant Keepers requests a waiver from this statute to provide flexibility in making assignments for duty-free lunches. Although we will continue to provide at least 150 minutes of duty-free lunch per week, we request greater flexibility in planning the lunchtime on a daily basis.

### **School Board**

- Ark. Code Ann. §6-13-619(c) and (d) (to be waived of restrictions concerning board members who need to attend meetings electronically instead of in person): Covenant Keepers requests flexibility from this statutory provision to allow for those occasions when board members are only available to participate by telephone or electronic communication.
- Ark. Code Ann. §6-13-615, 616, 621, 628, and 630-634 (sections of the school board portion of the Code that are not applicable to open-enrollment public charter schools): Covenant Keepers seeks exemptions from these portions of the Education Code to the extent that they govern school board operations. CK is requesting this waiver from these statutes, which are on their face applicable only to school districts, to ensure that there is no confusion as to the applicability of the statutes to the governance of CK’s charter.
- Ark. Code Ann. §6-14-101 et seq. (provisions concerning school district board elections which are not applicable to open-enrollment public charter schools): CK seeks exemptions from these portions of the Education Code to the extent that they govern school board operations. CK is requesting this waiver from these statutes, which are on their face applicable only to school districts, to ensure that there is no confusion as to the applicability of the statutes to the governance of CK’s charter.

### **Seat Time**

- Section 14.03 of the ADE Standards for Accreditation Rules (seat time waiver): Due to its implementation of digital coursework, project-based learning, and extensive RTI, Covenant Keepers requests a waiver of seat time requirements. Covenant Keepers hereby affirms that it will adhere to full curriculum alignment with the Arkansas Frameworks or Common Core State Standards, and will be glad to submit to the ADE and/or the Charter Authorizing Panel any additional information that may be desired.

## **Part B: Waivers to Be Rescinded**

List each waiver granted by the authorizer that the charter would like to have rescinded. If no waivers are listed, the charter may be required to adhere to all waivers listed on both the original and renewal charter documentation.

### **If the charter wishes to maintain all currently approved waivers, state this.**

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Contact staff in the Charter Schools Office if this response needs to be longer than 5 pages.

We wish to maintain all currently approved waivers.

## **Section 8 – Requested Amendments**

List any amendment requests and provide a rationale for each (i.e., changes to grade levels, enrollment cap, location, educational plan).

A budget to show that the charter will be financially viable **must accompany** any amendment request to **change grade levels, the enrollment cap, relocate, and/or add a campus**. The budget must document expected revenue to be generated and/or expenses to be incurred if the amendment request is approved.

**A request to add or change a location must be accompanied by a Facilities Utilization Agreement.**

**If no charter amendments are requested, state this.**

Respond below in 11 point Times New Roman font. Contact staff in the Charter Schools Office if this response needs to be longer than 5 pages, excluding any budget pages.

Covenant Keepers is not requesting charter amendments as we renew our Charter Application.

## References

About Geyer Springs / Meadowcliff. (n.d.). Retrieved January 30, 2015, from <http://www.neighborhoodscout.com/ar/little-rock/geyer-springs/>

Adams, Curt. "The Community School Effect: Evidence from an Evaluation of the Tulsa Area Community School Initiative." Oklahoma Center for Educational Policy (2010).

Bleir, C., Granger, D. A., Kivlighan, K. T., Mills-Koonce, R., Willoughby, M. & Greenberg, M. T. (2008). Maternal and child contributions to cortisol response to emotional arousal in young children from low-income, rural communities. *Developmental Psychology*, 44(4), 1095-1109.

Harris, J. R. (2006). *No Two Alike: Human Nature and Human Individuality*. New York: W.W. Norton.



Topic: **Planning Period**

Delete  
This Topic

**Statute/Standard/Rule to be Waived**

Click this button to remove all Ark. Code  
Ann. waivers for this Topic.

Arkansas Code Annotated

Use the +/- buttons to add/remove rows for each waiver.



● §8-17-114

Click to add Standards for Accreditation  
waivers

Click to add ADE Rules waivers

**Rationale**

Covenant Keepers requests this waiver to have flexibility to, as needed, provide its teachers with the required planning time during their regularly scheduled hours of work, but not during the student instructional day (i.e. during a time range of 4:00-5:00). Our teachers do an exceptional amount of collaborative data analysis and planning; having planning time together after dismissal would align well with this practice and allow for much more comprehensive collaboration.

Topic: **Duty-Free Lunch**

Delete  
This Topic

**Statute/Standard/Rule to be Waived**

Click this button to remove all Ark. Code  
Ann. waivers for this Topic.

Arkansas Code Annotated

Use the +/- buttons to add/remove rows for each waiver.



● §8-17-111

Click to add Standards for Accreditation  
waivers

Click to add ADE Rules waivers

**Rationale**

Covenant Keepers requests a waiver from this statute to provide flexibility in making assignments for duty-free lunches. Although we will continue to provide at least 150 minutes of duty-free lunch per week, we request greater flexibility in planning the lunchtime on a daily basis.

Delete  
This Topic

Topic: **School Board**

**Statute/Standard/Rule to be Waived**

Click this button to remove all Ark. Code Ann. waivers for this Topic.

Arkansas Code Annotated

Use the +/- buttons to add/remove rows for each waiver.

- |          |          |   |
|----------|----------|---|
| <b>+</b> | <b>-</b> | ● §6-13-819(c) and (d)                  |
| <b>+</b> | <b>-</b> | ● §6-13-815, 816, 821, 828, and 830-834 |
| <b>+</b> | <b>-</b> | ● §6-14-101 et seq.                     |

Click to add Standards for Accreditation waivers

Click to add ADE Rules waivers

**Rationale**

§6-13-819(c) and (d) Covenant Keepers requests flexibility from this statutory provision to allow for those occasions when board members are only available to participate by telephone or electronic communication.

§6-13-815, 816, 821, 828, and 830-834 Covenant Keepers seeks exemptions from these portions of the Education Code to the extent that they govern school board operations. CK is requesting this waiver from these statutes, which are on their face applicable only to school districts, to ensure that there is no confusion as to the applicability of the statutes to the governance of CK's charter.

§6-14-101 et seq. CK seeks exemptions from these portions of the Education Code to the extent that they govern school board operations. CK is requesting this waiver from these statutes, which are on their face applicable only to school districts, to ensure that there is no confusion as to the applicability of the statutes to the governance of CK's charter.

Delete  
This Topic

Topic: **Seat Time**

**Statute/Standard/Rule to be Waived**

Click to add Arkansas Code Annotated waivers

Click to remove all Standards waivers for this Topic.

Standards for Accreditation

Use the +/- buttons to add/remove rows for each waiver.

- |          |          |  |
|----------|----------|--|
| <b>+</b> | <b>-</b> | ● Section 14.03 of the ADE Standards for Accreditation Rules |
|----------|----------|--|

Click to add ADE Rules waivers

**Rationale**

Section 14.03 of the ADE Standards for Accreditation Rules Due to its implementation of digital coursework, project-based learning, and extensive RTI, Covenant Keepers requests a waiver of seat time requirements. Covenant Keepers hereby affirms that it will adhere to full curriculum alignment with the Arkansas Frameworks or Common Core State Standards, and will be glad to submit to the ADE

and/or the Charter Authorizing Panel any additional information that may be desired.

**Add Another Topic**

**PUBLICCHARTER SCHOOL  
STATEMENTOFASSURANCES  
OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL**

The signature of the charter leader of the public charter school certifies that the following statements are true and will continue to be addressed through policies adopted by the public charter school; and, staff of the public school shall abide by them:

1. I have approval and authority to submit this application on behalf of the sponsoring entity.
2. The information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
3. The open-enrollment public charter school is 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 if approved by the authorizer to do so.

If the open-enrollment charter school becomes over-subscribed, meaning more students apply for admission than can be accommodated given the enrollment cap, the charter school will hold one annual random and public lottery. The results of the lottery will be used to fill the open seats and populate a waitlist to remain in use for the duration of the school year. Any students that apply for admission after the lottery has been conducted will be added to the end of the waitlist in the order in which they apply. All admissions policies and procedures used, including the time and location of the lottery, will be advertised to the public.

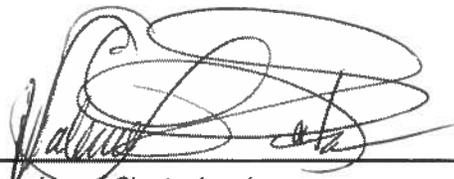
4. In accordance with federal and state laws, the public charter school hiring and retention policies of administrators, teachers, and other employees do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, or special need.
5. The public charter school operates 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 does 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 does not impose taxes or charge students tuition or fees that are not be allowable charges in traditional public school districts.
8. The open-enrollment public charter school is not religious in its operations or programmatic offerings.
9. The open-enrollment public charter school ensures that any of its employees who qualify for membership in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System or the State and Public School Employee Insurance Program are covered under those systems to the same extent any other qualified employee of a traditional school district is covered.
10. The open-enrollment public charter school complies with all health and safety laws, rules and regulations of the federal, state, county, region, or community that apply to the facilities and school property.
11. The employees and volunteers of the open-enrollment public charter school are held immune from liability to the same extent as other school district employees and volunteers under applicable state laws.
12. The open-enrollment public charter school shall be reviewed for its potential impact on the efforts of a public school district to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.
13. Open-enrollment charter board members and other leaders understand that certain provisions of state law shall not be waived. The 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
  - (g) Health and safety codes as established by the State Board of Education and local governmental entities.
14. The facilities of the open-enrollment public charter school comply with all requirements for accessibility for individuals with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and IDEA and all other state and federal laws.
15. Should the open-enrollment public charter school voluntarily or involuntarily close, it is understood that 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.




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Signature of Charter Leader

12.17.2015

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Date

Valerie L. Tatum, Executive Director

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Printed Name/Position



December 17, 2015

Dr. Valerie L. Tatum,

The Arkansas Rice Depot is pleased to support Covenant Keepers Charter School's efforts to provide wrap-around services for families in and around the Southwest Little Rock community.

As food insecurity rates continue to increase we have more children in our state than ever who are in need. As an organization that understands the urgency of this need, we truly believe that it is important for Arkansans to work together to ensure that our children have access to nutritious food.

We appreciate Covenant Keepers for joining our cause of addressing food insecurity. All that you do to support the children in your school and community is deeply appreciated by everyone at Arkansas Rice Depot.

Congratulations on your exciting proposal and I wish you the best of success with your application. I look forward to working with you in the coming years as we take concrete steps to translate the wraparound philosophy into concrete policies and practices needed to bridge and reduce hunger across the state.

Sincerely,

**LaKaija Johnson, MPH**  
Food For Kids Specialist  
Arkansas Rice Depot  
(501) 565-8855, Ext. 104



**PULASKI**  
Technical College

*Dedicated to your success*  
www.pulaskitech.edu

**Dr. Valerie Tatum**  
Superintendent  
Covenant Keepers Charter School  
5615 Geyer Springs Road  
Little Rock, AR 72203

**December 17, 2015**

**Dear Dr. Tatum,**

**Pulaski Technical College is Arkansas largest two-year college. Pulaski Tech's faculty and staff are committed to making Pulaski Tech an exciting and innovative place to learn.**

**Please accept this letter of support and commitment from Pulaski Technical College to provide academic encouragement in the form of: access to campus tours, invitations to participate in our S.T.E.M day activities, and opportunity to register students for our teen college summer course.**

**With the goal of Covenant Keepers to provide wrap-around services to disadvantaged students and their families in this community, we are excited to offer support in helping you to reach your goals.**

**Respectfully,**



**Kareem Moody, Director**  
**Network for Student Success**

Student Services

3000 West Scenic Drive North Little Rock, AR 72118 Phone 501-812-2200



## Overview

New Beginnings Behavioral Health Services, LLC (NBBHS) is pleased to submit this proposal for services to support Covenant Keepers Charter School students in achieving better mental and behavioral health by receiving mental health school-based services. NBBHS has been providing individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, medication management and paraprofessional services to clients who reside in Pulaski County since 2010. Services are provided during school time setting as well as in evening clinic hours; Saturday Clinic hours; and in the home. We are staffed with a board certified Child Psychiatrist; a State licensed APN; several State licensed therapists; and certified paraprofessionals.

## Objective

- Several students have behavior problems at school and at home. They will be taught how to use better coping skills in an effort to reduce less disruptive behaviors.
- The absence of regular classroom instruction causes a decrease in learning; low to failing grades and poor test scores. By having a Mental Health Professional and Mental Health Paraprofessional regularly available to assist students will help alleviate students disciplinary actions such as suspension or expulsion.

## Opportunity

- Our goal is to reduce the number of disruptive behaviors at home and at school.
- Improve the client's mental and behavioral health to allow the client to develop and use appropriate behavior in the school as well as home setting.
- Allows the student to have a greater chance of academic success.

## Solution

- Work together with parents, teachers, staff and administrators at Covenant Keepers Charter School.
- Provide individual therapy; group therapy, and family therapy to the clients and their families as well as provide paraprofessional services in the school setting.
- Provide free mental health presentations to staff and administration.

## Our Proposal

"Serving Arkansas's Families"

7107 W. 12<sup>th</sup> St, Ste 201 LITTLE ROCK, AR 72204 Phone: 501-812-3647 OR 501-663-1837 Fax: 501-812-3667



NBBHS will be able to provide a Mental Health Professional and Mental Health Paraprofessional to Covenant Keepers Charter School in an effort to help alleviate disruptive behavior by it's students. This will allow clients to receive much needed services and allow them to receive a continuation of care.

### **Rationale**

- To reduce the number of disruptive behavior and suspensions that the student is having in the school setting.
- Share current information and interventions that may help our clients be successful in school.
- Reduce clients' level of distress while at school by providing additional support.

### **Execution Strategy**

By providing clients' individual therapy and paraprofessional services in the school setting, this will allow teachers and administrators of Covenant Keepers Charter School to reduce the number of disruptions that a student is having in the school setting and furthering a continuation of care for the client.

Clients whom we have access to in the surrounding school districts have benefited greatly from their services from New Beginnings Behavioral Health Services. We have been able to work with the district school administrators, school staff and teachers to help our clients reduce their problematic behaviors and levels of distress. Working with the school district has kept many of our clients in their current educational setting. If our clients have to be removed from their current educational setting, with the proper intervention, support and guidance they were able to return to their previous educational setting with success.

### **Our Approach**

Our clients will receive individual therapy and paraprofessional services at least 3-4 times per month. The therapist and the paraprofessional will communicate with each other and "staff" the client in regularly scheduled meetings with the clinical director and lead therapists to determine the best possible care for the client. We understand that the client's education is the most important factor of the student's success and that we will work with the school staff to determine the appropriate time to provide the client with therapy and paraprofessional. The client's treatment team will also be available for any crisis that the client may have at school. In addition to meetings with the school staff and administrators to aid in the creation of behavioral plans, the student's therapist will attend 504 plan meetings and IEP meetings to benefit the student. Some students may have issues related to trauma due to a parent being in prison; death of a guardian; and DHS custodial cases in which intensive treatment services may be needed. Our therapeutic team is aware of how trauma can impact a clients' life and are able to address those issues using a trauma focused program. The client's treatment team

"Serving Arkansas's Families"

7107 W. 12<sup>th</sup> St, Ste 201 LITTLE ROCK, AR 72204 Phone: 501-812-3647 OR 501-663-1837 Fax: 501-812-3667



will be able to provide information on how to work with our clients who are experiencing anxiety and distress due to surviving traumatic situations.

Our treatment team has developed solutions to help the student in their day to day social and educational interaction and we feel that it would be advantageous for our clients, the school and the district to allow us to share our solutions and interventions with the school staff of Covenant Keepers Charter School.

### **Expected Results**

By being able to provide school-based services to clients at Covenant Keepers Charter School, the students will receive the following benefits:

- A reduction in distress and disruptive behavior for our clients in the school setting.
- Clients remain in school and have a reduction in suspensions.
- Increase the understanding of our clients' unique problems by the school staff.
- Provide additional support for the students, parents and teachers to help deal more effectively with disruptive students.

### **Conclusion**

We look forward to working with Covenant Keepers Charter School and supporting your efforts to improve the educational success of your students. Our office is located at 7107 W. 12th Ste. 201, Little Rock, AR 72204. We can be reached by phone at 501-663-1837.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chirie Bazzelle, M.S.

CEO

"Serving Arkansas's Families"

7107 W. 12<sup>th</sup> St, Ste 201 LITTLE ROCK, AR 72204 Phone: 501-812-3647 OR 501-663-1837 Fax: 501-812-3667



## Memorandum of Understanding

**Between:**

**Our House, Inc.**  
302 East Roosevelt Road  
Little Rock, AR 72206

**Covenant Keepers Charter School**  
5615 Geyer Springs Road  
Little Rock, AR 72209

This memorandum of understanding is hereby entered into between Our House, Inc., hereinafter referred to as Our House and Covenant Keepers Charter School.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to develop and expand a framework of cooperation between Our House and Covenant Keepers Charter School. It is our goal to develop and continue mutually beneficial programs and projects that serve the homeless residents of Our House and the families of the Central Arkansas Family Stability Institute (CAFSI).

CAFSI serves as a long term solution to prevent families from experiencing homelessness and support them on their journey to stability. CAFSI families work collaboratively with a Case Manager for one year and address four key areas: housing, educational, financial and employment stability. Families are connected to resources and programs that can benefit their specific family. Case plans are designed and tailored to meet the needs of each family as every CAFSI family is unique.

Covenant Keepers Charter School will identify families in need of services provided by the CAFSI Program who meet the criteria of having school aged children and are living beneath the poverty threshold.

**Covenant Keeper Charter School shall:**

1. Refer families in need of services who are living beneath the poverty threshold or have experienced homelessness in the past.

**Our House Agrees to:**

1. Provide clients with case management to help support their housing and employment stability.
2. Provide clients with case management to help keep all children in their school of origin.
3. Provide clients with an array of resources and services to further provide support for stability.

**It is mutually understood and agreed by and between the parties that:**

# OUR HOUSE

Hope for the Working Homeless

1. Modifications within the scope of this agreement shall be made by mutual consent of the parties, by the issuance of a written modification, signed and dated by all parties and prior to any changes being performed.
2. This agreement in no way restricts Our House or Covenant Keepers Charter School from participating in similar activities with other agencies, organizations or individuals.
3. Any of the parties, in writing, may terminate this agreement in whole or in part at any time before the date of expiration.
4. While on the grounds of Our House, Covenant Keepers staff members, contractors and program participants will be subject to the policies and norms set forth by Our House. Our House is an alcohol, drug and weapon-free campus.
5. The principal contacts for this partnership are:

### Our House Contacts

Christopher Ramsey  
Our House, Inc.  
302 East Roosevelt Road  
Little Rock, AR 72206

Phone: 501-374-7383 ext. 241  
Fax: 501-374-9611  
Email:  
[chris@ourhouseshelter.org](mailto:chris@ourhouseshelter.org)

### Organization Contacts

Dr. Valerie Tatum  
Covenant Keepers Charter School  
5615 Geyer Spring Road  
Little Rock, AR 72209

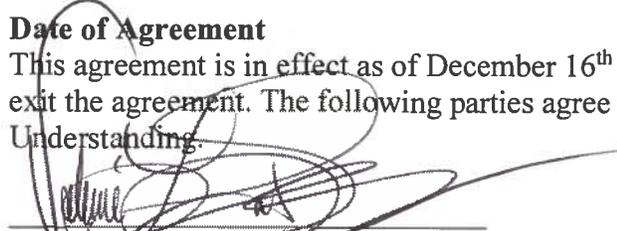
Phone: 501-682-7550  
Fax: 501-682-7577  
Email:  
Valerie.Tatum@arkansas.gov

### Non-fund obligating document

This agreement is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Any endeavor or transfer of items of value involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties to this agreement will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and procedures. Such endeavors will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This agreement does not provide such authority.

### Date of Agreement

This agreement is in effect as of December 16<sup>th</sup> 2015 and will last until either party chooses to exit the agreement. The following parties agree to abide by the details of this Memorandum of Understanding.

  
Valerie Tatum-Covenant Keepers

12. 17. 2015  
Date

  
Georgia Mjartan-Our House, Inc.

DEC. 17, 2015  
Date



# Arkansas Department of Health

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4815 West Markham Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-3867 • Telephone (501) 661-2000

**Governor Asa Hutchinson**

**Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Director and State Health Officer**

December 15, 2015

Dr. Valerie Tatum  
Covenant Keepers Charter School  
5615 Geyer Springs Rd.  
Little Rock, AR 72209

Dr. Tatum:

The Central Region HHI Staff of the Arkansas Department of Health are committed to assisting Covenant Keepers Charter School with providing health related education to students and families as appropriate and as available. We will work with you to coordinate dates for educational opportunities for the aforementioned groups.

In addition, our Community Health Promotion Specialist and Community Health Nurse Specialist will assist in providing technical assistance and training to school health personnel and the school wellness committee.

Information on accessing local health unit services such as WIC, immunizations, and reproductive health services will be provided and services will be promoted at school events and educational programs.

We look forward to working more closely with you to serve your school community in an effort to improve overall health.

Sincerely,

Anna Haver, MCHES  
Community Health Promotion Specialist  
(501) 791-8551

# Brandon House

Cultural & Performing Arts Center

P.O. BOX 466  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72203

(Ph) : (501) 701-0134  
[THEBRANDONHOUSE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:THEBRANDONHOUSE@GMAIL.COM)  
[www.brandonhouseperformingarts.org](http://www.brandonhouseperformingarts.org)

December 16, 2015

Dr. Valerie Tatum  
Superintendent  
Covenant Keepers Charter School  
5615 Geyer Springs Road  
Little Rock, AR 72203

Dear Dr. Tatum:

Please accept this letter of support and commitment from the Brandon House Cultural & Performing Arts Center herein referred to as Brandon House. The mission of Brandon House is to transform lives through creative and performing arts.

Brandon House provides youth with real world hands-on work experiences, on-the-job training, and arts-based career development opportunities in varied professions in the arts including **fine arts** (i.e. engraving, calligraphy); **digital** (i.e., digital technology, web design, news/media, filming, video game design, and graphic design); literary (i.e. poetry, filming, writing); **visual** (i.e., painting, printmaking, crafting, sculpturing); and **performing** (i.e., dance, theater, music). Brandon House PAC provides related education and arts programming opportunities through collaborative efforts for students through partnerships with school districts, community based organizations, and faith-based groups targeting at risk and disadvantaged families.

With the goal for Covenant Keepers to provide wrap-around services to disadvantaged students and their families in this community, we are excited to continue our partnership with Covenant Keepers Charter School. Having worked with you in 2015 to develop and write for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Center grant, we collaborated on developing a program that would offer academic support through math and science clubs, enrichment activities that include music, arts, drama and family involvement activities that include family literacy education and family involvement initiatives.

Again, we look forward to implementing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program activities targeting students from Covenant Keepers.

Most Sincerely,

*Dr. Pamela Bax*

Pamela F. Bax  
Vice President  
Brandon House Cultural & Performing Arts Center



# Pulaski County

Youth Services  
Juvenile Detention Center

3001 West Roosevelt  
Little Rock, AR 72204  
501-340-6697 Phone  
501-340-6888 Fax

December 16, 2015

Dr. Valerie L. Tatum, Superintendent  
Covenant Keepers Charter School  
5615 Geyer Springs Road  
Little Rock, AR 72209

CITIES

ALEXANDER

CAMMACK VILLAGE

JACKSONVILLE

LITTLE ROCK

MAUMELLE

NORTH LITTLE ROCK

SHERWOOD

WRIGHTSVILLE

Dear Dr. Tatum:

It is a pleasure to write this letter in support of Covenant Keepers College Preparatory Charter School and you in your endeavor to provide quality education that allows all students the opportunity to enroll in a high school that can prepare them for career readiness programs. After meeting you a few years ago, I was greatly impressed with your professionalism and remarkable commitment to students and their families, the community in which they live, and affecting positive social change through education. Therefore, it is without reservation I write this letter of support for students who have come to our facility on a first offense.

Our goal is to recommend parents to enroll in a smaller school environment to ensure academic and mental health needs are available onsite. In the past, we've recommended parents to enroll their high school student into the charter school to develop skills that their student may lack. We will work closely with Covenant Keepers to help teachers understand the different dynamics that come along with students who come from impoverish demographics. I believe the school's mission is one that addresses the needs of the students and community as a whole as it prepares the youth for a better future. The location of Covenant Keepers Charter School and its mission are indivisible and perfectly suited to meet the many needs in the 72209 zip code area. Covenant Keepers is a viable option for our students to receive a quality education and develop skills to make the right choices.

The Pulaski County Juvenile Detention Center appreciates the opportunity to partner and share resources that will impact student lives throughout high school.

Respectfully submitted,

Carma Gardner, Director

Pulaski County Juvenile Detention Center

UNINCORPORATED  
AREA

600 SQUARE MILES

MILITARY  
BASES

LRAFB

CAMP ROBINSON

December 14, 2015

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to state my genuine interest in motivating and inspiring the students and workers of Covenant Keepers Charter School for the upcoming 2016-2017 summer and school year. I have nine years of public speaking ranging from elementary kids up through college and adulthood. I have various experiences in entrepreneurship, athletics, and academics. Thus, through this letter, I will show you my qualifications as well as my desire to play a positive role in the environment for your school, programs, and events.

At age 16 I attended Paul Quinn College as a young teen seeking to gain more knowledge on my educational goals. In 2004 the Entrepreneur college class I attended provoked my first company that same summer (Snow Cone Island). I am a former track All American and 2010 Cum Laude graduate of Morehouse College with a Bachelors in Kinesiology and Health Physical Education. Under the supervision of Willie Hill, I trained for the 400 M Dash to compete in the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. During my time at Morehouse I also became one of the "Sons of Oprah" and was brought out to be a special guest on the Oprah Winfrey Finale Show. In 2011 I received my Master's in Education with a concentration in Biomechanics from Auburn University, where I assisted and competed in Long Jump. At age 21, during my time at Auburn University I also began my mission of teaching on the collegiate level. I have assisted in coaching/mentoring both AAU, USA, and Collegiate athletes for the past eight years and have been an advocate for helping the underprivileged attain goals outside of their environmental influences; both academically and athletically. I moved to Little Rock Arkansas after finishing at Auburn to start yet another mission, supporting my youngest brother through Philander Smith College. Faith and confidence in my mission led me to Arkansas with no job and no other family or friends. After 6 months I had become an Assistant General Manager over trainers for the largest chain of gyms in Arkansas (10 Fitness). During that six month period of patiently waiting I was allowed to put my teaching skills to the test part time at two of little rocks HBCU colleges. I am currently a full- time professor and Assistant Head Track/Field coach at Arkansas Baptist College and adjunct at Philander Smith College. I also perform for the Memphis Grizzlies NBA dunk team around the world and previously performed with the Atlanta Hawks before moving to Arkansas. I am currently finishing up a doctorate in Healthcare Education and will help implement it in my nonprofit program (All My God Sons, Inc.), Fitness Company (Total Body Fitness Training LLC), and acrobatic dunk company (Dunk Doctors LLC). I am the Godfather to four energetic boys, whom I have helped raise as my own since their birth. My boys along with family and friends are the driving force that motivates me to keep striving for the top and helping others see their own success. Stay tuned as I continue to create greatness and inspire all. I am confident that I can inspire many to bring out the shining stars that dwell deep within all of our spirits. I look forward to hearing working within your programs.

Yours very truly,

Hasaan J. A. Rasheed  
300 S. Rodney Parham Rd. Ste 1 PMB261  
Little Rock, AR. 72205