

# Charter Amendment Request for Digital Learning Program

The Charter Amendment Request Form and all required documentation must be received via email ([ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov](mailto:ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov)) at the Arkansas Department of Education at least 35 days prior to the Charter Authorizing Panel meeting.

**Charter Name:** Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy

---

**LEA Number:** 0442700

---

**Superintendent or Director:** Steven Gast

---

**Email:** SGast@responsived.com

---

**Phone:** 956-703-9053

---

Schools	Grades/Courses	Interaction	Delivery	Platforms
NWACA	KF-6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous & Synchronous	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Virtual (online) <input type="checkbox"/> Remote (distance) <input type="checkbox"/> Blended (hybrid)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LMS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CMS
NWACA High School	7-12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous & Synchronous	<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual (online) <input type="checkbox"/> Remote (distance) <input type="checkbox"/> Blended (hybrid)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LMS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CMS
West Little Rock Classical (Quest)	6-12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous & Synchronous	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Virtual (online) <input type="checkbox"/> Remote (distance) <input type="checkbox"/> Blended (hybrid)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LMS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CMS

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the school is applying for the waiver and explain how the waiver will be utilized.
<b>Attendance</b>			6-18-213(a)(2)	Daily attendance will be recorded based on student logins into the LMS/CMS system(s) and completion of lessons, and/or a daily check-in or two-way communication in a manner acceptable to the school with the assigned teacher. If a student logs into the system and completes a lesson, and/or has direct and acceptable communication with a teacher regarding academic work, they will be counted present for that day. It is very important for parents to communicate with school officials regarding their student's attendance. Consequences for excessive and prolonged absences include: parent conferences, administrative actions (up to and including being dropped from the school), and a possible referral for truancy.
<b>Class Size</b>	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812 (a)(2)	Exemption from this portion of the Education Code because the school's education program requires flexibility in addressing the unique needs of its at-risk student population by having students complete courses required to gain their High School Diploma. Students work at an individualized pace using a mastery based program that will help them gain credit faster than 120 clock hours which lends itself to larger class sizes (30-35) which ultimately affects Class Size and Teaching Loads of the teaching staff. Increasing the class size will not create any additional work for the teachers or the need for additional pay due per pay to teachers due to teachers not having to create lesson plans and students working at their own place. Students must pass with a grade of 70 or higher and they work on an individualized pace using a mastery based program that will help them gain credit faster

				than 120 clock hours.
<b>Teaching Load</b> Teacher of Record provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per <a href="#">DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning</a> and teaching load would not apply as per <a href="#">DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load</a> .	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812	Exemption from this portion of the Education Code because the school’s education program requires flexibility in addressing the unique needs of its at-risk student population by having students complete courses required to gain their High School Diploma. Students work at an individualized pace using a mastery based program that will help them gain credit faster than 120 clock hours which lends itself to larger class sizes (30-35) which ultimately affects Class Size and Teaching Loads of the teaching staff. Increasing the class size will not create any additional work for the teachers or the need for additional pay due per pay to teachers due to teachers not having to create lesson plans and students working at their own pace.
<b>Six Hour Instructional Day</b> Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only	1-A.4.2		6-16-102; 6-16-126	Exemption from this portion of the Education Code because the school’s education program requires flexibility in addressing the unique needs of its at-risk student population by having students complete courses required to gain their High School Diploma. As such, Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy requests that “school day” be defined as a day in which classes are in session and students receive at least four (4) hours of instructional time. Students will have the opportunity to participate in extended day academic programs. The instructional day will be extended up to and beyond (6) hours for students in need of additional assistance.
<b>Clock Hours</b>	1-A.2			
<b>Recess</b> Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only	1-A.4.3	DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index, Section 7.11	6-16-102(a)(5)	Families in grades K-8 will be given instruction as to how this may look for the virtual students. This is not applicable for high school students.



<b>Digital Model</b>	
<b>Please complete the following application with complete responses describing the school digital programming.</b>	
<b>Interaction / Delivery</b>	
What are the ways teachers and students will interact with digital content? (Synchronous or Asynchronous) Please describe instructional expectations and participation for students.	Asynchronous-students will be expected to complete coursework at a level that will show mastery of content. Students will be expected to complete work on a daily basis and maintain a completion level that will allow them to continue the prescribed curriculum on a timely basis (quarterly and semester).
What delivery approach will the school utilize to meet the needs of both teachers and students? (i.e., virtual (online) / remote (distance) or blended (hybrid)? Please explain.	The virtual approach will be utilized for both teachers and students. Students will be enrolled in courses from our CMS that exceed state standards. They must show mastery of content to receive the credit needed to attain the grade level standards. As stated earlier, the teacher will also utilize the virtual model to assist the student, as needed, with curricular questions that may arise.
Will teachers be dedicated to primarily remote instruction or serving in a dual role, teaching both remote and in-person learners. *If teachers will serve in a dual role, describe whether it will be simultaneously, meaning remote and in-person at the same time with course/schedule specific considerations.	Teachers will be dedicated to primarily remote instruction.
Describe the expectation for teacher instruction, interaction, and frequency with digital learning students.	“Teacher instruction” will be in the form of a Success Coach or Facilitator. Each Success Coach will be expected to communicate with students weekly via written or digital methods.
If utilizing waivers for <b>class size</b> , what supports will the school put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the charter monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed class size in digital learning settings.	Instructional aides will be utilized to assist both students and teachers. Flexible working hours for teachers will also be in place to assist with class load. Weekly meetings with the teachers will allow the charter to monitor and determine if supports are adequate.
If utilizing waivers for <b>teaching load</b> , what supports will the school put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the school monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed teaching loads in digital learning settings.	Instructional aides will be utilized to assist both students and teachers. Weekly meetings with the teachers will allow the school to monitor and determine if supports are adequate.
<b>Technology / Platforms</b>	

<p>Identify the learning management system/content management system that will the school will use? (Canvas, Buzz, Google Classroom, etc.)</p>	<p>Buzz</p>
<p>Describe the digital content that will be available to students, including any digital curriculum and supports that are available to teachers. If the school is using a content management system (CMS), please specify grades levels and subjects that the CMS will address.</p>	<p>We will utilize Bright Thinker for grades 3-12. At the middle and high school levels, all courses needed for credits and state standards will be offered through the CMS.</p>
<p>What video communication software is required for any digital learning student? Please describe the video communication software the teacher will use to facilitate live conferences between two or more participants.</p>	<p>Google Meet and/or Zoom will be the video communication component utilized for facilitation of conferences.</p>
<p>Describe the technology access (device and connectivity) that will be provided to each digital learning student to ensure each student receives a free public education.</p>	<p>Access will be determined based on the Free and Reduced Lunch criteria. Technology provided may include a Chromebook with charger and personal data hotspot.</p>
<p><b>Student Supports</b></p>	
<p>Describe the manner and frequency the school will use to monitor the wellness and safety (food security, physical, mental health, etc.) of students in a digital learning setting. (This may be in-person, video communication, etc.). Identify supports available within the school to assist students.</p>	<p>School staff (teacher, instructional aide, support staff) will have contact with those learning virtually on a weekly basis. Supports in place to assist students will be the same for those learning in person. Examples are: school counselor, cafeteria personnel, academic specialists, administrators and parental involvement coordinator.</p>
<p>Describe the manner and frequency the school will use to monitor the academic and student engagement in a digital learning setting. Describe the additional supports available for students struggling with engagement.</p>	<p>Teachers and/or support personnel will meet with students on a weekly basis. The manner of the engagements will be directed toward academic progress/mastery of content and will be conducted utilizing a video chat platform. Additional district support personnel will be available for those who might struggle with engagement.</p>
<p>Describe the Academic Response to Intervention plan for digital learning students, including additional supports and personnel.</p>	<p>The plan will be the same for those learning in person. In the case of those learning virtually, correspondence will take place in writing and digitally. Additional supports will mimic those utilized regarding the monitoring of academic and student engagement practices.</p>

Describe the school's formative assessment plan to support student learning.	Formative assessments are embedded within the digital curriculum.
Describe how dyslexia screening and services will be provided to digital learning students.	Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy will offer a virtual program that identifies and serves students with characteristics of dyslexia. The school identifies students for characteristics of dyslexia through Response to Intervention (RTI) process, screenings, and through the referral process. NWACA ensures that if a student is experiencing difficulty in reading, additional screening will be conducted. Level 1 and Level 2 dyslexia individual screening components will aid in the identification of characteristics of dyslexia. A level 1 screening uses informal diagnostic assessments and curriculum based assessments. These informal assessments will assess the following components of reading: Phonological and phonemic awareness; sound symbol recognition; alphabet knowledge; decoding skills; and rapid naming; and encoding skills. Level 2 screening uses formal diagnostic assessments to identify a pattern of strengths and weaknesses documenting the characteristics of dyslexia. The following services are considered for students with characteristics of dyslexia: Section 504 services, special education services, accommodations, reading interventions, assistive technology devices, and the Multisensory Teaching Approach (MTA) program. MTA is a program for the remediation of Dyslexia and other reading disabilities. This program is an Orton-Gillingham multisensory approach to teaching reading that combines visual, auditory and kinesthetic (or muscle) instruction. It teaches the science of the written language and addresses reading, handwriting, and spelling.
Describe how Gifted and Talented supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.	Current waiver in place for these services
Describe how English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL /ESL) supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.	NWACA will offer a virtual program that serves students identified as students of limited English proficiency in English. ESOL students will be identified during the enrollment process. As part of the enrollment process, all parents/guardians must complete the home language usage survey (HLUS) form for every student enrolling in the district. The district uses the HLUS results to determine the need for further English language proficiency (ELP) screening and possible English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services. All students identified as Language Minority Students (LMS) will be initially assessed with the ELPA21 screener. The ELPA21 screener is used by all Arkansas public schools to measure the English language proficiency of students who have recently arrived in the U.S. or from another state where the ELPA21 is not used. It can help to determine whether or not a child is in

	<p>need of ESL services, and if so, at what level. The ELPA21 screener is designed to be administered to potential ESOL students by trained staff. All four domains – listening, speaking, reading, and writing, should be completed during the initial administration of the assessment. Students who are not proficient in English will be assessed annually with ELPA21 to determine progress being made towards English proficiency until the child meets exit requirements. Eligibility for ESL services should be determined by the ELPA21 screener or the ELPA21 results. A LPAC (Language Placement and Assessment Committee) will be formed and will meet as needed. The LPAC is required to identify, review, and place EL students in the appropriate instructional ESOL program. The LPAC determines the amount of time allotted for direct service and who will provide the instruction. These decisions are made on a student-by-student basis. The results of the assessment of the student’s language proficiency determination and academic skills provide the basis for determining the ESL instructional placement, time allotment, and focus of services. Parents are notified of placement within 30 days at the beginning of the school year, and 14 days after school has started.</p>
<p><b>Teacher Supports</b></p>	
<p>Describe school supports to provide on-going digital content and instructional supports for teachers.</p>	<p>Continued support and professional development opportunities will continue with Bright Thinker and Buzz. All teachers received valuable support and professional development throughout the 2020-2021 school year and that same support will continue for those who continue as virtual teachers for the 2021-2022 school year.</p>
<p>Identify the daily or weekly amount of time teachers will need to develop and plan for instruction based on interaction and delivery options selected and digital supports provided. How will the school support teachers with digital content and planning?</p>	<p>For those teachers who choose to continue as virtual teachers, prep periods for each grade level will be built into the daily schedules to ensure that proper development and planning of interaction and instruction is consistent with the high level of academic expectations in place at the site. Teachers will be supported with Bright Thinker and Buzz support efforts (these are a continuation of the 2020-2021 school year supports that will remain in place).</p>
<p><b>School Supports</b></p>	
<p>Describe how the school will ensure equitable access to opportunities for success for digital learner’s needs (poverty, homelessness, migrant, foster care, and military connected students) A link (URL) to the school equity plan may be acceptable if it meets this criteria.</p>	<p>ResponsiveEd Arkansas will ensure that all students have equitable access to a digital learning environment, address barriers that may inhibit a student’s ability to participate in a digital learning environment, and provide support and resources to improve learning and communication in a digital environment.</p>
<p>All students are expected to test (statewide summative assessments) onsite as per DESE guidance. Provide an overview of how the school may communicate to parents and test digital learning students at a school site.</p>	<p>NWACA will contact and schedule students by many different methods. There will be an email sent to all students/parents to inform them of their scheduled testing times. Additionally, there will be calls made to all students/parents to inform them again of their scheduled testing time and answer any questions at that time. Social media will be utilized to inform that testing is approaching and to be looking for an email and phone call from the school. The school reserves the right to utilize USPS to send any</p>



	and all communications.
Provide a detailed explanation of how the school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the digital option(s) and the fidelity of implementation as described within this application.	The virtual program's effectiveness will be evaluated through measures such as: student attendance rate, units completed, and summative and formative assessments. These tools will be monitored by both teachers and administrators. Student attendance and units completed will be monitored daily, while student assessments will be evaluated periodically. The fidelity of implementation will be assessed by teachers, building level administrators and district level administrators.
Describe how the teacher(s) will engage families into the digital learning process. (School may link the District Engagement Plan if digital learning is included. The plan must address how the school will support parents/students with digital tools and resources)	<a href="http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d">http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d</a>
Provide a URL to evidence of the local school board's approval of the waiver request(s).	<a href="http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d">http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d</a>
Provide a URL to evidence of stakeholder feedback regarding the waiver request(s) and the school communication plan regarding digital learning program(s).	<a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1arzrHvFByRDR3_N1Z666LcXD1VQjZAv9wUj8kZUnXaM/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1arzrHvFByRDR3_N1Z666LcXD1VQjZAv9wUj8kZUnXaM/edit?usp=sharing</a>
<b>Policies</b>	
Please provide a link (URL) to the attendance policy for digital learning students.	<a href="http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d">http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d</a>
Please provide a link (URL) to the discipline policy for digital learning students.	<a href="http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d">http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d</a>
Please provide a link (URL) to the grading policy for digital learning students.	<a href="http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d">http://www.nwaclassical.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2104655&amp;type=d</a>
<b>Charter</b>	
Describe how the addition of a virtual program is in line with the mission or model of the school.	The addition of a virtual program allows those families who choose NWACA based upon the classical model of instruction and curriculum to remain enrolled in the school without the need to choose another model of instruction or school site. Many families have commented in recent surveys appreciation toward the district and site for allowing families the choice to remain with NWACA while maintaining the integrity of the curriculum and instruction in a virtual setting. The virtues of the school are continually interwoven into the method of instruction and communication with students and families on a daily basis. This continues with the virtual model and is a key component of our mission and model.

**Additional Waiver(s)**

<b>Waiver Topic #1</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #2</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #3</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	

<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #4</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	

<b>Waiver Topic #5</b>	
<b>Arkansas Code Annotated</b>	
<b>Standard for Accreditation</b>	
<b>ADE Rules</b>	
<b>Rationale for Waiver</b>	