Please review the **Example Form** found on the Charter School Office website prior to working on your request form. *Also, edit the footer on this form to display your school's name.*

Charter School Office

Waiver Request Form

For Requests Submitted during the 2025 – 2026 School Year

Section 1: Administrative Data

District/ School/ Applicant Name	The Grove Academy
Superintendent/ Point of Contact	Terri Guy
Email Address	tguy@thegroveacademyk5.org
Phone Number	
District/ School LEA (if assigned)	
Date of Waiver Request Submission	

Section 2: Waiver Requests – *Total of 12 Requests*

Request # 1	**Waiver Topic: Alternative Learning Environment (ALE)**		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-15-1005(b)(5) 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i) 6-48-102 6-48-103	
	Standard for Accreditation:	Standard 2-I.1	
	DESE Rules Governing:	Governing Student Special Needs Funding – Section 4	
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will provide academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support through a schoolwide Multi-Tiered System of Supports designed to address student needs proactively within the core instructional program. Students who might otherwise be referred to a traditional Alternative Learning Environment will receive individualized interventions, progress monitoring, counseling support, behavior plans, restorative practices, and family collaboration designed to promote student success while maintaining access to grade-level instruction. The school's climate and culture model emphasizes prevention, relationship building, and early intervention. Support services will be coordinated by school leadership and appropriate staff and delivered through tiered academic and behavioral support rather than through a separate Alternative Learning Environment. When necessary, the school may partner with outside agencies and service providers to provide additional support for individual students. This integrated approach is intended to improve student outcomes, strengthen school connectedness, and reduce the need for removal from the	

		core instructional setting.	

Request # 2	Waiver Topic: Board of Directors		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	Board of Directors Ark. Code Ann. 6-13-613 6-13-615 6-13-631 6-14-101, et seq.	
	Standard for Accreditation:		
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove is requesting flexibility primarily from the statutory provisions governing elected school district boards, including geographic board zones (§§ 6-13-615, 6-13-630, and 6-13-631) and school-election requirements (§ 6-14-101 et seq.). Because The Grove is an open-enrollment public charter school governed by an appointed nonprofit board rather than an elected local school district board, these election and geographic-zone structures do not fit its governance model. The Grove will continue to conduct regular public board meetings, provide required notice, and comply with applicable open meeting and transparency requirements.	

Request # 3	Waiver Topic: Gifted and Talented		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-20-2208(c)(6) 6-42-109	
	Standard for Accreditation:	2-G.1	
	DESE Rules Governing:	Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards	
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will identify and serve advanced learners through a comprehensive instructional model designed to provide qualitatively differentiated learning experiences that differ in depth, complexity, pace, and product. Gifted services will be embedded within the school day and delivered through differentiated Tier I instruction, curriculum compacting, flexible grouping, acceleration, and enrichment opportunities aligned to individual student needs. Students who demonstrate mastery of grade-level standards will engage in advanced texts, higher-order questioning, complex problem-solving tasks, interdisciplinary projects, independent research, and self-directed inquiry.	

		Project-based learning and authentic application experiences will provide opportunities for students to extend and apply their learning in meaningful contexts. Student progress and instructional needs will be reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate challenges and continued academic growth.	

Request # 4	Waiver Topic: Library Media Services – includes standard for balance of instructional materials		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§ 6-25-103	
	Standard for Accreditation:	2-D.1	
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will provide students with access to a balanced collection of print, non-print, and digital resources through classroom libraries, instructional materials, and community partnerships that support literacy development, research, and independent learning. Each classroom will maintain developmentally appropriate classroom libraries aligned to students' reading levels, interests, and instructional needs. Students and families will have access to additional resources through partnerships with the Oley E. Rooker Library and other community organizations that support reading and literacy development. The Grove will be responsible for: • Coordinating library access; • Monitoring library-media standards; • Maintaining classroom resources; • Supporting research and digital-literacy instruction; and • Confirming implementation across classrooms.	

Request # 5	Waiver Topic: Library Media Specialist		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§ 6-25-104	
	Standard for Accreditation:	4-F.1, 4-F.2	
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy requests a waiver from the Library Media Specialist requirements because the school will provide access to print, non-print, and	

		digital resources through classroom libraries, instructional materials, technology resources, and community partnerships. Each classroom will maintain developmentally appropriate libraries aligned to students' reading levels, interests, and instructional needs, ensuring daily access to high-quality texts. • Library-media standards will be mapped to grade-level instruction; • Teachers will embed the standards within ELA, research, digital literacy, and interdisciplinary lessons; • Lesson plans or curriculum maps will identify the relevant standards; • Classroom libraries will include print and nonprint resources; • Students will have access to digital resources; and • The Oley Rooker Library partnership will supplement—not replace—the school's instructional responsibility.

Request # 6	**Waiver Topic: Personnel Policies – Classified Employees Personnel Policies**		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-17-2301(c) 6-17-2301(c)(1) & (d)(2) 6-17-2302 6-17-2303 6-17-2304 6-17-2305	
	Standard for Accreditation:		
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will maintain written personnel policies adopted by the Board of Directors that establish employment expectations, compensation practices, evaluation procedures, benefits, and conditions of employment for classified employees. Personnel policies will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal employment laws and to support effective school operations. Compensation and staffing decisions will be aligned with the school's strategic priorities, enrollment, and financial resources. The school will implement a compensation system designed to attract and retain high-quality employees while providing flexibility to allocate resources in a manner that best supports student achievement and organizational sustainability. Salary and benefit decisions will be incorporated into the annual budgeting process and monitored through Board oversight and established financial controls. School leadership, in collaboration with the contracted back-office provider and the Board of Directors, will oversee human resources administration,	

		including payroll, benefits administration, employee records, hiring processes, and personnel procedures. This structure provides operational flexibility while ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public resources.	

Request # 7	Waiver Topic: Personnel Policies – Committee on Personnel Policies		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-17-203 6-17-205 6-17-209	
	Standard for Accreditation:		
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy's Board of Directors will establish and maintain written personnel policies through an employee handbook that clearly communicates employment expectations, workplace practices, employee rights, and operational procedures while ensuring compliance with applicable state and federal laws.	

Request # 8	Waiver Topic: Personnel Policies – Grievance Procedure		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-17-208 6-17-210	
	Standard for Accreditation:		
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will establish a formal grievance procedure designed to promote fairness, transparency, and timely resolution of employee concerns. Consistent with the school's professional culture, employees will have access to clearly defined procedures, timelines, and opportunities for review and appeal. The grievance process will emphasize communication, problem-solving, and progressive resolution at the lowest appropriate level while providing employees with access to school leadership and Board review when necessary. Written procedures will be included in the employee handbook and administered in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.	

Request # 9	Waiver Topic: Personnel Policies – Requirements		
	Arkansas Code	§ 6-17-201(a) &	

	Annotated:	(c)	
	Standard for Accreditation:		
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will establish and maintain board-approved personnel policies through employee handbooks, employment agreements, and operational procedures that clearly communicate employment expectations, compensation practices, benefits, evaluation procedures, workplace practices, and conditions of employment. Employees will have timely access to applicable policies and will be informed of revisions and updates as necessary. School leadership, the Board of Directors, and the contracted back-office provider will annually review personnel policies to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws, support effective operations, and align personnel practices with the mission and educational program of the school.	

Request # 10	**Waiver Topic: Principal**		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§ 6-17-302	
	Standard for Accreditation:	4-C.1, 4-C.2	
	DESE Rules Governing:		
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy seeks flexibility to identify and develop school leaders based on demonstrated instructional expertise, leadership capacity, and alignment with the school's mission and educational model rather than solely on possession of a traditional administrative license. The Grove Academy will implement a distributed leadership structure consisting of a Chief Executive Officer, Principal, Assistant Principal, and Dean of Operations, with clearly defined responsibilities and shared accountability for student outcomes and organizational performance. The Chief Executive Officer will provide strategic leadership and oversee governance, talent, finance, and organizational performance. The principal will serve as the instructional leader responsible for curriculum implementation, teacher development, instructional coaching, and academic achievement. The Assistant Principal will support Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, school culture, and student services, while the Dean of Operations will oversee operations, compliance, facilities, enrollment, and logistical systems.	

Request # 11	Waiver Topic: Superintendent		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-13-109 6-17-427	
	Standard for Accreditation:		
	DESE Rules Governing:	Superintendent Mentoring Program Standard 4-B.1, 4-B.2	
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy requests a waiver from the superintendent licensure and mentoring requirements to implement a charter-specific leadership structure appropriate for a single-site public charter school. The school will be governed by an independent Board of Directors and led by a Chief Executive Officer who will be responsible for the academic, operational, financial, and organizational performance of the school and will report directly to the Board of Directors. The Chief Executive Officer will work with school leadership personnel, including the principal, assistant principal, and dean of operations, to ensure effective implementation of the school's educational program and daily operations. Leadership responsibilities will be distributed across the administrative team to provide appropriate oversight of instruction, operations, compliance, and organizational performance. The Chief Executive Officer will receive ongoing support and professional learning through Building Excellent Schools (BES), state charter school support, professional networks, and relationships with experienced charter school leaders. In addition, the Board of Directors will provide regular performance monitoring and accountability through established goals, reporting structures, and annual evaluations.	

Request # 12	Waiver Topic: Teacher Licensure		
	Arkansas Code Annotated:	§§ 6-15-1004 6-17-309 6-17-401 6-17-418 6-17-902 6-17-908 6-17-919	
	Standard for Accreditation:	Standard 4-D.1	
	DESE Rules Governing:	Educator Licensure – Section 7	
	Rationale:	The Grove Academy will implement a strategic talent model designed to recruit, develop, and retain effective educators while maintaining flexibility to utilize multiple pathways to licensure. The school will prioritize the	

		employment of licensed teachers and may employ individuals participating in Arkansas-approved licensure pathways, including teacher residency programs, Teacher Licensure Plans (TLPs), the Arkansas Professional Educator Pathway (ArPEP), and other state-approved alternative routes to licensure. These pathways provide opportunities to expand the educator pipeline while maintaining compliance with Arkansas licensure requirements. Students will continue to receive instruction from teachers who meet applicable state requirements and are supported through structured professional learning and supervision. The Grove Academy will maintain a partnership with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Teacher Residency Program to develop teacher residents within the school's instructional model and establish a sustainable pipeline for future educators. Beginning teachers, teacher residents, and educators pursuing alternative licensure pathways will receive support through mentoring, instructional coaching, collaborative planning, and ongoing feedback designed to strengthen instructional practice and accelerate professional growth. Teachers will participate in weekly professional learning communities, grade-level data meetings, and job-embedded professional development focused on high-quality instructional materials, structured literacy practices, intervention, assessment, and student progress monitoring. School leaders will conduct regular observations, coaching cycles, and performance reviews to provide individualized support and ensure instructional effectiveness. Professional learning will be aligned with the school's academic model and continuous improvement goals. This approach emphasizes instructional effectiveness and professional growth while providing the flexibility necessary to recruit, develop, and retain a strong and sustainable workforce aligned to the mission and instructional model of The Grove Academy.

Add Waiver request boxes as needed