



# ACADEMICS PLUS CHARTER SCHOOL

900 Edgewood Drive  
Maumelle, AR 72113  
(501)851-3333

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Academics Plus Charter School (APCS) is to provide academically rigorous college preparatory program for all students regardless of race, ethnic origins, national background, or socioeconomic level. All children can learn when challenged by high expectations. We believe that attitude, behavior, effort and attendance, as well as ability, determine academic success.

## EXPECT SUCCESS!

**What is a charter school?** A charter school is a form of public school that is free from most of the restrictive laws that govern traditional public schools. This allows a charter school more flexibility to implement creative and innovative programs and policies. In return for this freedom, a charter school is held more accountable for student success. Funded like other public schools, a charter school operates under a contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success.

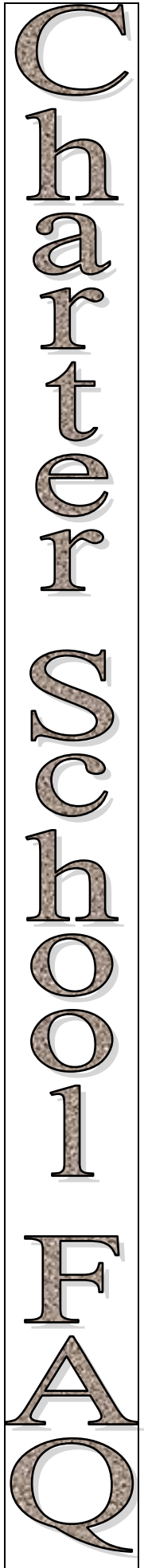
**Who operates APCS?** APCS is operated by Pulaski County Charter School Inc, a non-profit charter school educational foundation, dedicated to improving public education in Central Arkansas. APCS opened in Maumelle for the 2000-2001 school year and is continuing to operate under a charter granted by the Arkansas State Board of Education which was renewed for 5 years in 2007. The charter's cap enrollment is 650 students.

**How is APCS funded?** APCS is funded with public money appropriated by the Arkansas Legislature just as any other public school. In addition, APCS relies on gifts and grants from private and philanthropic organizations and funds received from the federal government.

**Is APCS held accountable for the use of public funds?** Yes. All open-enrollment charter schools are audited in the same manner as traditional public schools. All financial and student data is reported through the Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN) in the same way as public schools.

**Who attends APCS?** Most APCS students come from the three public school districts that serve Little Rock, North Little Rock, and Pulaski County. The remaining students come from outlying areas in Central Arkansas. On average, 25 percent of APCS students qualify for the National School Lunch program. In addition, APCS serves hot lunches to 225 students daily and hot breakfast to 40 students daily. While most students arrive to school each day via parent/guardian transportation, some utilize the Central Arkansas Transportation buses to and from school, and others are transported by private daycares.

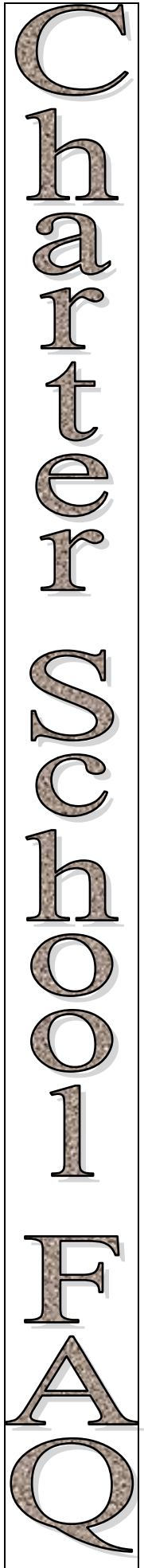
**Who teaches at APCS?** All of APCS's teachers are either certified by the state of Arkansas or are Highly Qualified as defined by the State Board of Education. Over one third of our teachers hold Master Degrees or higher and two have Doctorate Degrees.





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**Is APCS really different from traditional public schools?** Yes. APCS uses an extended school day and a highly focused curriculum to improve the academic success of the students. We also encourage innovative teaching practices to increase opportunities for learning. We offer smaller class size and a safe, nurturing environment.

**Is APCS held accountable for student performance?** Yes. APCS measures student academic performance through periodic assessments provided by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). These assessments are aligned to the student standards set by the state of Arkansas and are administered throughout the school year. The NWEA results enable teachers to adapt their instruction to meet a student's specific needs. Assessment information is shared with parents during regularly scheduled conferences as well as throughout the school year. In addition, APCS students, along with all traditional public school students, take the annual Arkansas benchmark exams. APCS students consistently score much higher on these exams than all three of the surrounding school districts (LR, NLR, PCSSD). Teachers report student progress on coursework weekly through the Edline, which parents can access online for current grade information, assignments and other classroom information.

**How long have charter schools been around?** In the 1970s, an educator in New England proposed giving small groups of teachers contracts to allow for innovative teaching strategies to be put in place. In the early 1980s, schools in Philadelphia began creating schools within schools and calling them charters. Minnesota refined the idea, passing a charter school law in 1991. Arkansas passed a charter school law in 1995 and revised it in 1999. As a result of the legislative revision, the State Board of Education approved four charter schools to open in the fall of 2000. APCS was the first of these flagship schools and is the oldest charter school in Arkansas. Arkansas currently has 27 charter schools in operation.

**Are there different types of charter schools?** Yes. In Arkansas, there are two types. A conversion charter school is a traditional public school that is converted to a charter school. Conversion charters can only serve students from within the school's original district boundaries. APCS is the second type of charter school: an open-enrollment charter school. Open-enrollment charters are public schools that have not been established by a school district. Open-enrollment charter schools can serve students from across district boundaries.

**Who can start a charter school?** Arkansas law establishes the eligible entities as a public institution of higher education, a private nonsectarian institution of higher education, a government entity, or an organization that is nonsectarian in its program, admission policies, employment practices and operations, and is exempt from taxation under Section 501 (c)(3) of the IRS. APCS falls into that final category.

**Who can grant a school a charter?** In Arkansas, only the State Board of Education can grant a charter.

**Can a private school become a charter school?** No private or parochial school in existence on July 30, 1999 is eligible to become an open-enrollment charter school. In addition, private and parochial schools are not eligible for conversion charter school status.