

Leaders in the Pulaski County Special School District are taking the next steps needed to offer an online kindergarten through 12th grade education program that would target home-school families in the district, and eventually move statewide.

The Arkansas Democrat Gazette voted 6-0 on Tuesday to authorize staff members to enter into contract negotiations with Epic Charter Schools of Tulsa and Oklahoma City to be the providers of the service.

The group would hire and train Arkansas-licensed teachers to help parents with instruction. It would also supply computers and other needed supplies. The program could be ready as early as the 2019/2020 school year.

Rachel Blackwell, an informational technology facilitator for the district, told the board Tuesday, Epic Charter School was the best option of three vendors because it serves all grades and has an available 22 curriculum options to families.

This program would not be the first in Arkansas. Arkansas Virtual Academy Charter School and Arkansas Connections charter school are both statewide online schools. d