

# **Executive Summary for Academic Opportunities Academy**

## **Mission Statement**

Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare our students to be able to complete high school in four or fewer years through an individualized, self-paced, blended computer and in class instruction including an extended day for grade level recovery and employment preparation in computer programming.

## **Need for our Charter School in Deming, New Mexico**

Statistics show that the United States performs near the middle compared to other OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) nations. Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to improve the education of all the students we serve.

First, let's look at the United States' rankings, as reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics:

### **Science**

- 2000: the U.S. scores ranked 14th among the 28 OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries and 14th of 32 total nations.
- 2003: 19th among 30 OECD countries and 22nd among 41 overall.
- 2006: 21st among 30 OECD countries and 27th among 57 overall.
- 2009: 17th among 34 OECD countries and 23rd among 65 overall.
- 2012: 20th among 34 OECD countries and 28th among 65 overall.

### **Math**

- 2000: the U.S. was 18th among 28 OECD countries and 19th of 32 total nations.
- 2003: 24th among 30 OECD countries and 27th among 41 overall.
- 2006: 25th among 30 OECD countries and 35th among 57 overall.
- 2009: 25th among 34 OECD countries and 31st among 65 overall.
- 2012: 27th among 34 OECD countries and 36th among 65 overall.

<http://www.politifact.com/>

## **Statistics show that New Mexico is 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states of the United States.**

The nation receives an overall grade of C on its 2015 report card, with a score of 74.3 out of a possible 100 points. This marks a decline from a C-plus in 2013, when summative grades were last issued under the report's previous grading framework. Massachusetts finishes first this year with a grade of B and a score of 86.2. A perennial high-performer, the state has consistently finished among the nation's top five. Also earning grades of B this year are New Jersey, 2013 front-runner Maryland, and Vermont. Wyoming makes its first appearance in the top 10 since Quality Counts started issuing summative grades. At the other end of the grading scale, Mississippi earns a D and ranks last, with New Mexico and Nevada also posting grades of D. [http://www.edweek.org/media/qualitycounts2015\\_release.pdf](http://www.edweek.org/media/qualitycounts2015_release.pdf)

## **Statistics show that Deming Public Schools is a low performing school district within New Mexico.**

School Digger ranks Deming Public Schools as 99<sup>th</sup> out of 119 school districts.

<http://www.schooldigger.com/go/NM/districtrank.aspx>

## **Academic Opportunities Academy will Improve Education in Deming, New Mexico**

Academic Opportunities Academy knows we will significantly improve education in Deming, New Mexico. Our model seeks to be as efficient as we can with our resources to improve teaching and learning. Having students sit in a class where they already know the information presented is a complete waste of time for these students. We propose an individualized, self-paced, blended computer and in class instruction in our mission to solve this problem. Students who have demonstrated a need for instruction in an objective are pulled out of the Main Academic Space. We will monitor all our students to insure every student is doing well and provide our struggling students with all the assistance and support they need to be successful. We will monitor our students using our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. We are innovative, hardworking and dedicated to the success of all our students.

### **Current Status of Deming Education**

Businesses tell us students are unable to make change or do basic math computations upon graduating from Deming High School. Students tell me that the valedictorians drop out of community college and universities. Teachers tell us they do not want their children to attend Deming Public Schools. A Deming teacher wrote an article that about half of freshmen fail their classes and about half do not enter their sophomore year. Students tell us that teachers will not answer student's questions. Students tell us that bullying is a significant problem with students getting injured and no action being taken by teachers or school administrators. Some Deming Public School teachers blame much of their problems on the ELL students within their school district and state that these ELL students are the reason for the low performance of their school district.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy will Empower Teachers**

Teachers are empowered to collaborate with other teachers. Teachers are empowered to have all the time necessary to prepare quality lessons. Teachers will notify their students they are ready to teach their class though a text message to their students. Teachers are empowered to teach their lesson up to 90 minutes per session. The teachers are empowered to teach more than one session if they believe it is in the best interest of our students. Teachers are further empowered to dismiss students when the teacher has assessed the students are adequately prepared to return to the Main Academic Space. Our teachers will be able to reflect on their practice by seeing the results of their performance and influence on their students and the campus from their Curriculum Mapping Database and Software reports.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy will assist Our Students**

Students will be grouped in pairs when they enroll. A new student will be paired with an experienced student who can guide the new student though the intricacies of our charter school model. Each table will have up to three pairs of students who will provide collaborative tutoring to the other members of their team. Students will work on their individualized assignments on their tablet computers. Data will be collected into our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to monitor all our students in order to identify every student who is in need of assistance. Our teachers and educational aides will have this data available on their computer tablet in order to prioritize their assistance to our students. Students who have the greatest need will get the greatest assistance they need to be successful. Pull out classes will be automated through the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software using teacher defined criteria. Teachers will be able to override and modify the criteria in the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software as they determine is in the best interests of their students. Teachers will obtain feedback to allow them to evaluate and optimize their decisions. We look forward to solving all our challenges. We seek success of every student we have.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy will Innovate**

Our campus will only have bells for starting the school day, starting lunch, ending lunch, and the end of

our extended school day. Our mission provides for extended day for grade level recovery and employment preparation in computer programming. We know that a significant number of our students are below their peers academically. Summer School is no longer adequate for solving this problem. Even with our extended day we are only able to recover one school year every three years. We know that many students are two or more years behind their peers. We believe with a more efficient charter school model we can hopefully provide an additional year of grade level recovery every three years through our more efficient model. Mark Casavantes has been able to teach a few students to progress two school years in one school year. He estimates that about one third of a student's time is wasted in a traditional public school classroom. If we can recover this time we can recover more students to be on or ahead of their peers. Despite our ideas and innovations we will not stop to seek out other ideas and solutions to help our students.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy is Innovative**

Academic Opportunities Academy is innovative. In visiting several other charter schools, they all use traditional classroom models. It is hard to identify what is innovative in their charter school models. We have numerous innovations and we will always seek to find new and better innovations in our charter school model. Our charter school will look different. Our architecture has been designed to be innovative by providing better security for our students and to reduce the ability for bullies to victimize other students as our campus will provide the ability to supervise all public spaces. Our pull-out classrooms will have metal roll up doors operable from inside the classroom to facilitate lock down situations. The entrance to our Main Academic Space will have a double entry door system to reduce the possibility of an unauthorized entry to the areas where our students occupy. We will utilize a 90% minimum mastery standard to increase the knowledge and skill level of all our students. This standard will be phased in over a 90 day or so period to gradually get our students to adjust to our higher standard. We are working on new metrics to measure student performance such as “Knowledge per Second” and “Knowledge Retention”. To my knowledge no other school is working on these innovations. Knowledge per Second will be part of our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. It is based on the concept that a student should learn one year’s worth of knowledge and skills each school year. If you broke the curriculum a student should learn into smaller increments such as a month, day, hour, minute or second you could monitor every student to see they were on track to achieve one year or more worth of knowledge and skills. To make this metric easier to understand and to accommodate quantum jumps in the data we will provide a factor which will make one year's worth of progress to be equal to 1000. We will also include a floating average of the data to smooth out the data. We will need to adjust the floating average time period to show changes in current performance but not be too volatile to cause extreme changes every time data is entered. Knowledge Retention is designed to measure how long a student retains information. A series of questions would be asked over regular intervals to determine how long knowledge and skills is retained.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy Offers Computer Programming**

Academic Opportunities Academy is excited about our computer programming instruction and the many benefits it will provide our students. Computer programming requires students to think and problem solve to create their computer programs. Creating is a higher order thinking skill which will assist our students to prepare for the job market. Computers are becoming a larger and larger part of all aspects of our lives. Computer programmers can earn a good income and the need for computer programmers is growing. We are excited with how this part of our model will evolve. Meeting with Dr. Son Tran, the Chair of the Computer Science Department of New Mexico State University was very enlightening and we seek to work closely with them to create an outstanding computer programming program. We believe that every student who graduates from high school should be able to earn a self-sustaining income to support not only themselves but also their families. We believe that computer

programming can accomplish this goal for our students.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy Charter School Model Aligns with our Mission**

Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare our students to be able to complete high school in four or fewer years through an individualized, self-paced, blended computer and in class instruction and an extended day for grade level recovery and employment preparation in computer programming. Our mission statement has gone through numerous changes. Each change has been an improvement.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy Thinks Improvement**

From our initial application a few years ago we have thought of every think we can think of to improve education. We are driven to improve education. We are driven to create a very high performance charter school that exceeds the expectations of the New Mexico Public Education Department, the New Mexico Public Education Commissioners, our students, families, and community. We adapt to the feedback we have received. We are responsive to all feedback. We reflect and ponder everything about our charter school model. We question everything. We will continue to innovate. We will continue to improve. We seek to be the trend setter everyone else will follow. We will be noticed for our high performance. We will be noticed for our innovation. We will make significant differences in the lives of all our students.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy Does Not Quit**

Academic Opportunities Academy does not quit. We get up one more time than we fall. We are committed to our venture. We have observed how many entities apply once and quit. We admire our other charter school applicants who do not quit. Those who have viewed our other applications know we have evolved and made significant improvements.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy is Cooperative**

I have observed a few New Mexico Commissioner meetings to see some of the problems you all face and address regarding charter schools in New Mexico. We seek to serve the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division, the New Mexico Public Education Commission, our Deming students, parents, and community. We will cooperate with Deming Public Schools to provide the best opportunities for all the students we collectively serve. We will create open lines of communication, routines and procedures to work collaboratively with Deming Public Schools. We listen and work toward serving your goals and dreams. We believe in servant leadership. We doubt we will ever be low performing, but if that were the case, we would do everything to resolve that problem. We will seek to resolve all issues in a positive and cooperative manner. We seek win-win solutions. We will always listen, and be open minded to new ideas and suggestions. We look forward to all the hard work ahead of us. We know it is a challenge, but we seek this challenge as we seek to improve education.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy Wants a Charter School**

Academic Opportunities Academy sincerely wants to open and operate a very high performing, academically rigorous charter school in Deming, New Mexico.

### **Academic Opportunities Academy Thanks You!**

We appreciate all you have done for us. We appreciate the relationships we have with you all. Best wishes to all of you! Thank you!