



New Mexico Public Education Commission

2015 New Charter School Application Kit Part C. Application & Rubric



School Information:

Name of Proposed Charter School: **Academic Opportunities Academy**

School Address (if known): **South 8th Street and West Florida Street**

School Location (City/Town): **Deming, New Mexico**

School District within which your school will be located: **Deming Public School District**

Grades to be served: **6th, 7th and 8th Grades**

Projected Enrollment Cap: **400**

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Directions: Please answer each and every prompt, if applicable (e.g., if you are an elementary school you will not answer questions about graduation), where indicated in red below. Use the rubrics following the prompts to guide your answers and responses. As you will see from those rubrics, it is best to provide clear, comprehensive, cohesive, reasonable, and at times, innovative responses. Too often, an applicant leaves something out (comprehensive) or does not explain how pieces in their proposal fit together (the educational program aligns with the budget—cohesive). The reviewers are also interested in reasonable answers; often applicants are excited to try many new things and this can be taken too far. Finally, remember to showcase the innovation in your charter school proposal whenever possible. Charter Schools are in existence for this reason.

Please note: The PEC has determined which questions are of greater importance than others. Therefore, certain scores are increased if your answers receive “Exceeds” or “Meets” score as indicated in the scoring rubric as set forth below.

Academics

A. School size. State the projected enrollment, grade levels to be served and student/teacher ratio.

Academic Year	Number of Students	Grade Levels	Student/Teacher Ratio
Year 1	125	6,7,8	40/1
Year 2	200	6,7,8	40/1
Year 3	275	6,7,8	40/1
Year 4	350	6,7,8	40/1
Year 5	400	6,7,8	40/1
At Capacity (Enrollment Cap)	400	6,7,8	40/1

	Included	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Not included
A. School Size	The applicant provides all of the required information.			The application does not provide the required information.
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	

The Student/Teacher ratio above is above the normal ratio. Our intention is to have a ratio of Teachers and Educational Aides to Students of under 20/1. When additional funding becomes available our Teacher and Educational Aides to Students will be as low as financially feasible.

B. Mission. Note: The School shall report each year on implementation of its mission as set forth in the mission-specific indicator(s) as set forth in the Performance Framework, Academic Framework (see glossary).

B. State the mission or the driving force that guides this school proposal. The mission should answer questions such as: 1) what does your school seek to accomplish; 2) how will it accomplish that; and 3) what is innovative and unique about your school? The best mission statements are clear, cohesive, comprehensive, reasonable, and innovative, and have a focus on outputs rather than inputs.

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 including an extended day for grade level recovery and computer programming enrichment.

	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
B. School Mission	The mission statement incorporates all three questions above and therefore meets or exceeds the expectation by providing a clear, cohesive, comprehensive, reasonable, and innovative purpose for the school.	The mission statement answers most of the three questions above and therefore meets the expectation at an appropriate level by providing a clear and reasonable purpose for the school.	The mission statement does not adequately address the three questions above and therefore partially meets expectations.	The mission statement is inadequate or incomplete. --OR-- The application does not respond to this prompt.
Comments:				

C. Indicators/Goal(s) Related to the School’s Mission. The Amended Charter School Act **requires schools to identify at least two mission-specific indicators/goals in the application** that set targets for the implementation of the school mission. Mission-specific indicators/goals **MUST BE** provided within the application. If the application is approved, these indicators/goals will be used as the initial draft indicators during the negotiations with the Authorizer.

For the purposes of this application, the indicators/goals will show the capacity of the applicant to identify appropriate indicators/goals aligned with the mission of the proposed school. During the later contracting process after approval, these indicators/goals that are finally negotiated and put into the Performance Framework allow the school to demonstrate its achievements related to the school mission. The Performance Framework is assessed on an annual basis and may be revised yearly.

Mission-specific indicators/goals put into the application should:

- (1) demonstrate the school’s ability to implement the school’s mission;
- (2) be in format set forth below which is a SMART goal format (specific, measureable, attainable, rigorous, and time-bound—see below); and finally,
- (3) include metrics and measures using the following criteria: “Exceeds standards,” “Meets standards,” “Does not meet standards,” and “Falls far below standards.”

For instance, if a school's mission focuses on language acquisition, then a school may choose a mission-specific indicator/goal that measures student progress and performance in this special area. These indicators/goals are monitored on an annual basis and then potentially revised yearly.

Again, please note that **these indicators/goals are subject to change through the negotiation process as the school works with their Authorizer in the contract negotiation process during the planning year.**

Please note: The criteria for SMART Format is as follows:

- **Specific.** A well-defined goal must be specific, clearly and concisely stated, and easily understood. Educational goals should be tied to learning standards that specify what students should know and be able to do, for each subject or content area and for each grade, age, or other grouping level.
- **Measurable.** A goal should be tied to measurable results to be achieved. Measurement is then simply an assessment of success or failure in achieving the goal.
- **Ambitious and Attainable.** A goal should be challenging yet attainable and realistic.
- **Reflective of the School's Mission.** A goal should be a natural outgrowth of the school's mission, reflecting the school's values and aspirations.
- **Time-Specific with Target Dates.** A well-conceived goal should specify a timeframe or target date for achievement.

C.(1) Mission-Specific Indicators/goals *Required*

Identify and provide at least two mission-specific indicators/goals in the following section. Include the following key elements:

- First, ensure that the annual indicators/goals provided show the implementation of the school's mission.
- Second, for each indicator provided, use SMART format (specific, measureable, attainable, rigorous, and time-bound—see glossary). Your indicators should include all of these key SMART elements, be clear, comprehensive, and cohesive.
- Third, include measures and metrics in your mission-specific indicators/goals. Specifically, determine what percentage constitutes “exceed standards,” what constitutes “meets standards,” what falls under “does not meet standards” and what it means to “fall far below standards.” **NOTE: Please see examples in the glossary or in Part A of this application.**

Goals for Academic Opportunities Academy

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy's mission is our committed to the highest levels of real student success. Our goal is to excel in every metric utilized and developed by the state of New Mexico to measure real student success. Students will succeed due to our blend of self-paced, individualized instruction focusing on core curriculum, computer programming, character development, enrichment activities and an extended day.

The goals selected are intended not only to align with the Academic Opportunities Academy mission, but also the mission and vision of the state of New Mexico and their quest for academic excellence for all their schools and students.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work diligently with Deming Public Schools to develop a collaborative and supportive environment in which we each complement each other to provide the best education for all the students in Luna County. We will collaboratively work on routines and procedures to interface in a helpful and supportive manner for the interests of all the students we collectively serve. We know some students will do better in Deming Public Schools and they offer programs, sports and extra-curricular activities we are not able to provide efficiently with our limited resources and there are students who need an alternative educational setting to be successful that is not offered within Deming Public Schools.

New Mexico Academic Performance Goals for Academic Opportunities Academy

Previous Established Goals Have Been Deleted

In previous versions of this cycle's application we included performance goals for all of the state mandated assessments. They were removed from our application due to conversations with the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division. We seek to meet or exceed all New Mexico mandated assessments as part of our quest for excellence. We intend to achieve these goals even if they are not included in this application.

Our Other Goals

Academic Opportunities Academy wants all reviewers to have excellent insight into our goals and ideas. We have one opportunity to communicate our plan to all that may review our application. We have other goals we wish to document in our application in addition to goals that are considered part of our application. These other goals are significant and important to Academic Opportunities Academy.

We strive to be the best cooperative partner to all the staff of the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division, all the New Mexico Public Education Commissioners, and all other government entities who we will work with in the operation of our charter school.

We have evolved and will continue to evolve. We are committed to academic excellence. We believe in our quest to create an outstanding charter school. We believe in our project. We have heart, we have commitment, we have desire, we have motivation, and we have what it takes to create a super charter school. We are unique, creative, pioneering, innovative and imaginative.

We strongly believe that schools should not only prepare students to enter post-secondary educations, but to also be able to earn a self-sustaining income not only for themselves but their families. A self-sustaining income has been defined in some states as an income equal to two times the poverty rate established by the federal government. We are committed to working to eliminate the very devastating effects of poverty on our students and their families.

We have looked at a variety of career fields that would meet our objective and believe computer programming is the field that will generate incomes of \$40,000 to \$60,000. Computer programming is a field of significant need, now and in the future. Employment of computer programmers is projected to grow 8 percent from 2012 to 2022. (Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

We believe that students who live near Mexico should learn both English and Spanish. In our previous applications we have included having a two-way, dual-language program. This is not included in this application. We hope to include a two-way, dual-language program into our charter school model sometime in the future.

In previous applications we included a STEAM after school program which is not included in this application. We desire to do as much as we can for our students and realize that our desires are outside of our capacity.

In previous applications we included Real World, Real Life and Financial Literacy. All of these components are important in preparing a student to enter the real world as an independent, self-sustaining and productive citizen. In the future we intend to also serve high school students and we believe that some of the missing components of this application may become part of our future high school application in Deming, New Mexico.

We consider character education to be a very important component of our charter school. Preventing students from being a burden on our society is a very important goal.

The Need for Our Charter School in Deming, New Mexico

Businesses tell us students graduate from Deming High School unable to count money. I have been told by graduates of Deming High School that many of their valedictorians drop out from college.

Bullying is a significant problem in Deming Public Schools. Students know bullying is occurring. Students tell me that teachers and administrators have not been effective in preventing bullying. Students tell me that teachers and administrators ignore the bullying problem. A few students have told me they were injured while attending Deming Public Schools. Students need a safe and engaging learning environment. Students who have been bullied tell us that they would attend our charter school as they seek a safe environment free from pain and injury.

We have also been told that racism is prevalent in Deming Public Schools. Many Deming Public School staff will tell you all the problems they have are due to the "Mexicans". Hispanic students tell me teachers will not answer their questions and they have a more difficult time in school than non-Hispanic students. Hispanic students and their families tell me they would attend our charter school as they seek a welcoming environment.

Dr. Dan Lere, the Superintendent of Deming Public Schools has made significant improvements. Academic Opportunities Academy believes we will complement Deming Public Schools to serve those students who have not been successful in a traditional public or private school.

Academic Opportunities Academy knows we will improve education in Luna County. Mark Casavantes made excellent improvement in the schools he been a Teacher. At Guillen Middle School in the El Paso Independent School District Mark had the best results of the entire math staff as a rookie teacher. He worked on improving his systems until he was able to get almost every student to pass state mandated exams. Mark has been on a quest to be able to demonstrate his ideas to prove success is possible, particularly with the students who have been traditionally unsuccessful. In Texas there is a score teacher get based on how far they are able to advance students each year. Mark has gotten some students to learn two grade levels in one year and has consistently had a Texas Learning Index (TLI) of 1.15 to 1.18. A one indicates an average of one year of academic growth. Mark as consistently been

given the students other teachers were not able to deal with. Mark has taught alternative education students who were significant discipline problems with other teachers. Mark did his student teaching under Mr. Charlie Rizzo. Mr. Rizzo was a master teacher. In my teaching career I never met a teacher who exceeded his talents. Mr. Rizzo was the Alternative Education Teacher at Wiggs Middle School in the El Paso Independent School District. Mark learned a lot about education, teaching and discipline under Mr. Rizzo. Mr. Rizzo made a strong and significant impact on Mark. Mark observed Mr. Rizzo transform the roughest students into angels in usually one day, but at the most three days. Mark also believes that quality teaching needs to be made public. Very few individuals asked or cared about what the best teachers were doing in their classrooms. Mark believes that in the same way that Sir Roger Banister improved the mile by proving you could beat the four minute mark we want to prove that we can break barriers in education and prove that success is possible for every student. We want to make New Mexico a leader in education and not a state that is fighting to stay off the bottom. We want to make Luna County a leader in education and not a district that is fighting to stay off the bottom. We hope that we are given this opportunity to prove our abilities. Mark has known Mr. Ben Tice for many years and was thrilled to have him become a member of our team. Mr. Ben Tice turned around El Paso Academy East and West, a charter school system in El Paso, which was in the process of being shut down. He turned that charter school system into a success that was catching students up and getting them graduated on time. During his ten year tenure as their Superintendent, Ben prides himself in his being able to get virtually all freshmen to graduate on time no matter how many years behind they were when they entered El Paso Academy East and West. Ben brings outstanding knowledge and skills of operating a charter school successfully and complements the skills of Mark Casavantes and others on our team. Academic Opportunities Academy has a significant number of administrators that we can call on in both Texas and New Mexico to guide and assist us. We have reached out to various administrators for advice and guidance. Mrs. JoAnn Myers of MAS in Albuquerque, Mr. Richard Robinson of Las Montanas Charter High School in Las Cruces, Mr. Jacob Montano of Health Sciences Academy in Santa Teresa, Mr. Michael Rodriguez of Cien Aguas International School in Albuquerque, Mr. Wes Clarkson of Carlsbad Public Schools and Mr., Raymond Aguilar, Director of Human Resources of Socorro Independent School District are a few administrators who we are grateful to be able to consult with.

The Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) publishes a report on the performance of students across countries. The United States ranks 15th in Reading, 26th in Science and 31st in Math. (Wikipedia)

Quality Counts 2015 Report Card places New Mexico just above Mississippi and Nevada.

There is a significant need for high technology jobs in New Mexico. Currently New Mexico has 1961 unfilled computing jobs and only 200 computer science graduates. There are 40 schools in New Mexico that teach computer science classes. In New Mexico, computer science does not count for math or science credit. There are no clear teacher science certification pathways or any computer science curriculum standards in New Mexico. (Code.org)

The goals selected are intended to not only align with the Academic Opportunities Academy mission, but also the mission and vision of the state of New Mexico and their quest for academic excellence for all their schools and students.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work diligently with Deming Public Schools to develop a collaborative and supportive environment in which we each complement each other to provide the best education for all the students in the Deming, New Mexico area. We will collaboratively work on

routines and procedures to interface in a helpful and supportive manner for the interests of all the students we collectively serve. We know some students will do better in Deming Public Schools as they offer programs, sports and extra-curricular activities we are not able to provide efficiently with our limited resources and there are students who need an alternative educational setting to be successful that is not offered within Deming Public Schools. Academic Opportunities Academy has reached out to Dr. Dan Lere and some of his staff with Deming Public Schools in our quest to develop a strong and effective partnership in Deming, New Mexico for all the children who reside in this outstanding community.

Academic Opportunities Academy will continuously improve our educational model by empowering our staff, students, families, and community to evaluate, study, research, experiment and innovate through our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups. We seek to improve the education for all our students in Deming and New Mexico. We are committed to work cooperatively and energetically to achieve these goals with the New Mexico Public Education Department, the New Mexico Public Education Commission, the Deming Public Schools, the City of Deming, New Mexico, businesses, the community and others who can also be a positive influence for all our students. We have reached out to Columbus Community School, Mr. David Moss of Wasatch Institute of Technology a computer science/programming charter school near Salt Lake City, Utah, Mr. Eddie Lares of Volcanic Labs a computer programming and web-design company in San Antonio, Texas. We have reached out to other computer programming firms in New Mexico (we obtained no response). We placed Craig's List ads seeking advice for our charter school from Silicon Valley, El Paso, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces. Additional individuals and groups we have reached out to be included in the section Community Relationships. I am sure there are individuals and groups who we have omitted due to oversight or we did not obtain their names.

Our Application Re-write

Since our new mission statement was developed during the second meeting on April 16th with the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division our charter school application has gone through a major re-writing.

Selecting the Computer Programming Language

Our new mission statement: Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare our students for high school success through individualized computer programming instruction.

We have discussed and sought the advice of all of the computer programmers we know as to what is the most important computer programming language or languages. During these discussions we have received a variety of answers without a consensus. We know programmers and IT professionals with Xerox, ADT Security, school districts, Volcanic Labs, Wells Fargo Bank and other firms.

We searched to find the top ten computer languages. The top ten computer programming languages differ by different groups. In researching various lists of the top ten computer languages by Computer World, IEEE and others we came up with eleven top programming languages. These three languages are primarily used in the creation of web-sites. We compiled these lists and ended up with eleven computer programming languages to consider. Our initial list included Java, (C, C++, C#), PHP, Visual Basic.NET, Python, JavaScript, Perl, (Ruby, Ruby on Rails), (SQL, MySQL), HTML, and CSS)

In consulting with our computer programmers we eliminated Java, C, C++, C# as they informed us that

these were the most difficult languages from our list and not a good starting point for middle school students. Some of the programmers did not consider HTML, CSS or JavaScript to be computer languages. As our mission statement states we are teaching computer programming we did not want to not teach a computer language. We heard that Perl is losing its popularity. PHP, SQL, and MySQL are database applications and we were told that these programs would probably not be a good starting point for middle school students. Similar comments were given regarding Visual.Basic.NET. We learned that both Ruby and Python are both good starting computer programs to start with, but between these two choices Python would be best for middle school students. As a result of this work, we will be teaching Python.

Mark Casavantes has begun learning to computer program as well with TeamTreehouse.com and other sources. He has begun to write computer programs and develop his skills. He feels it is important that he learns to be proficient in computer programming to lead Academic Opportunities Academy to outstanding success as a computer programming charter school. Mark has experienced the problems our students will face in learning the challenging knowledge and skills needed to computer program. Even simple programs such as counting from 1 to 10, drawing a blue square or a red circle takes some skill. Each language is different and they vary in their complexity. His Treehouse report is available at <https://teamtreehouse.com/markcasavantes>.

New Mexico Academic Performance Goals

We have communicated with Dr. Son Tran who is the Department Chair of the Computer Science Department of NMSU about our charter school and our goals. He concurred that Python is a good starting computer language for middle school students. He is willing to work with us in establishing appropriate standards and curriculum for our Python programming program. The details of the established standards and curriculum will be defined by January 1, 2016.

Dr. Son Tran, the Department Chair of NMSU Computer Science Department told us that computer languages will come and go, but the thinking and problem-solving skills are most important in the preparation of a potential Computer Science student. He recommended alignment with the Common Core standards in Computer Science and the Advanced Placement guidelines for Computer Science as the framework to develop our curriculum. Also, it was recommended that our curriculum vertically align so that a student would be able to complete CS 111: Computer Science Principles (4 credits), this course provides a broad and exciting introduction to the field of computer science and the impact that computation has today on every aspect of life. It focuses on exploring computing as a creative activity and investigates the key foundations of computing: abstraction, data, algorithms, and programming. It looks into how connectivity and the Internet have revolutionized computing and demonstrates the global impact that computing has achieved, and it reveals how a new student in computer science might become part of the computing future. Prerequisite(s): MATH 120 (Intermediate Algebra) or higher.

Python is an open source programming language and there is no certification available for this program. We contacted O'Reilly School of Technology about their "Certificate of Professional Development in Python". They were very clear that they do not offer a certification in Python. O'Reilly School of Technology charges over \$2000 for their certificate.

Ruby does have a low level certification which would make making a SMART goal easier. We decided that we would not compromise what we consider to be the best starting computer language for our students. Developing our goal will be more difficult.

One year of computer programming instruction is defined as 150 school days of 2 hours of instruction or 300 hours. Using the same pattern, two years of instruction equals 600 hours and three years of instruction equals 900 hours.

Goal/Indicator 1 - Academic Opportunities Academy students will learn to program in Python according to standards and curriculum developed by Dr. Son Tran of the Computer Science Department of New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico. We will refer to the above as the "NMSU Python Standards". The curriculum will be developed into three, one year increments.

This goal is in alignment with our mission that Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare its students for high school success through individualized computer programming instruction.

Year One

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 300 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 1/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 25%

Year Two

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 300 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 1/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 50%

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 600 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 2/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 60%

Year Three

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 300 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 1/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 60%

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 600 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 2/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 70%

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 900 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 3/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 80%

Year Four

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 300 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 1/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 70%

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 600 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 2/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 80%

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 900 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 3/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 90%

Year Five

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 300 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 1/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 80%

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 600 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 2/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 90%

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 900 hours of computer programming with Academic Opportunities Academy will complete 3/3 of the NMSU Python Standards.) 95%

Goal/Indicator 2 – Academic Opportunities Academy students will be prepared to be successful in the 9th grade with Deming Public Schools. Students who transfer from Academic Opportunities Academy to Deming Public Schools will complete their freshman year successfully. A student will be considered to be “successful” if they are classified as sophomores after completing their freshman year in Deming Public Schools. This goal aligns with our mission that 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 school day for grade level recovery and computer programming enrichment and this goal aligns with our mission.

The article On Track: Setting the Trend for Freshmen written by Deming High School Teacher by Ms. Sufrin on 15 December 2014

<https://prezi.com/eg2qniymuyou/on-track-setting-the-trend-for-freshmen/> claims half of the Deming High School faculty failed half of their freshmen students.

Year One

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 50%)

Year Two

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 60%)

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years of with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 70%)

Year Three

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 70%)

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 80%)

Cohort 3 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended three school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 90%)

Year Four

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 80%)

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years with Academic Opportunities

*Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 90%)
Cohort 3 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended three school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 95%)*

Year Five

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 90%)

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 95%)

Cohort 3 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended three school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will become sophomores after one year of attending Deming High School will exceed 97.5%)

Goal/Indicator 3 – Goal/Indicator 3 – Academic Opportunities Academy students will be prepared to be successful in the 9th grade with Deming Public Schools. Students who transfer from Academic Opportunities Academy to Deming Public Schools will pass their freshman classes at Deming High School. This goal complements our mission that 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 school day for grade level recovery and computer programming enrichment. This goal is in alignment with our mission.

The article On Track: Setting the Trend for Freshmen written by Deming High School Teacher by Ms. Sufrin on 15 December 2014 <https://prezi.com/eg2qnijmuyou/on-track-setting-the-trend-for-freshmen/> claims half of the Deming High School faculty failed half of their freshmen students.

We agree that our goals 1 and 2 are similar, but different. We consider these metrics important in the improvement of education in Luna County, New Mexico.

Year One

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 50% of their classes.

Year Two

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 60% of their classes.

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years of with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 70% of their classes.

Year Three

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 70% of their classes.

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 80% of their classes.

Cohort 3 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended three school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 90% of their classes.

Year Four

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 80% of their classes.

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years with Academic Opportunities

Academy will pass at least 90% of their classes.

Cohort 3 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended three school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 95% of their classes.

Year Five

Cohort 1 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 90% of their classes.

Cohort 2 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended two school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 95% of their classes.

Cohort 3 (Graduating 8th graders who have attended three school years with Academic Opportunities Academy will pass at least 97.5% of their classes.

Academic Opportunities Academy looked at the criteria used by U.S. News and World Report to determine the best high schools in the United States. We used their third criteria for college readiness performance. Our goal, in alignment with our mission, is to prepare our students for high school. U.S. News and World Report used Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate test data as the benchmarks for success, depending on which program was largest at the school. We decided to use pre-AP test data as our benchmark for success in preparing our students for high school in alignment with our mission. This goal complements our mission that 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 school day for grade level recovery and computer programming enrichment.

Goal/Indicator 4 – Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare all our students for high school by having a rigorous and relevant education.

Academic Opportunities Academy will increase our student's pre-AP test participation rates each school year.

Year One

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 15%)

Year Two

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 20%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 30%)

Year Three

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 25%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 40%)

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 50%)

Year Four

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 30%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 50%)

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 60%)

Year Five

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 40%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 60%)

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participation rate will exceed 70%)

Goal/Indicator 5 – Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare our students for high school success by increasing our student's pre-AP test participant passing rates each school year.

This goal complements our mission that Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare its students for high school success through individualized computer programming instruction.

Year One

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 20%)

Year Two

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 25%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 30%)

Year Three

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 20%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 35%)

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 40%)

Year Four

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 30%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 40%)

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 45%)

Year Five

Cohort 1 (Students who have attended 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 40%)

Cohort 2 (Students who have attended 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 45%)

Cohort 3 (Students who have attended 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities

Academy pre-AP test participant passing rate will exceed 50%)

Goal/Indicator 6 – Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by providing a rigorous and relevant education. Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare our students to pass the Algebra I EOC examination for our 8th graders in order to prepare our students for high school success. This goal complements our mission that 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 school day for grade level recovery and computer programming enrichment.

Year One

Cohort 1 – 8th grade students with 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 5%)

Year Two

Cohort 1 – 8th grade students with 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 10%)

Cohort 2 – 8th grade students with 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 20%)

Year Three

Cohort 1 – 8th grade students with 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 15%)

Cohort 2 – 8th grade students with 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 30%)

Cohort 3 – 8th grade students with 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 50%)

Year Four

Cohort 1 – 8th grade students with 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 20%)

Cohort 2 – 8th grade students with 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 40%)

Cohort 3 – 8th grade students with 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 60%)

Year Five

Cohort 1 – 8th grade students with 150 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy. (Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 25%)

Cohort 2 – 8th grade students with 300 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy.

(Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 50%)

*Cohort 3 – 8th grade students with 450 or more school days with Academic Opportunities Academy.
(Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by preparing them to pass the Algebra I EOC examination with a passing rate that exceeds 70%)*

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—12	Meets—9	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet- 1
C.(1) Goal(s) Related to the School's Mission	The applicant includes all key elements in the indicators/goals provided. As such, the indicators/goals reflect the implementation of the school's mission, are in SMART format, and include measures and metrics for assessing the progress toward achievement of each goal/indicator.	The applicant includes most of the key elements in the indicators/goals provided. As such, the indicators/goals may somewhat reflect the implementation of the school's mission, contain most elements of the SMART format, and attempt to include measures and metrics for assessing the progress toward achievement of each goal/indicator.	The applicant includes some or a limited amount of the key elements in the indicators/goals. As such, what is provided may not reflect implementation of the school's mission, may not be written in SMART format, and/or the measures and metrics provided are unclear.	The applicant's response to the indicators/goals are inadequate or incomplete. --OR-- The applicant does not state indicators/goals.
Comments:				

C.(2) Provide a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable rationale for the indicators/goals developed. In that rationale, offer a detailed plan, and specific methods of assessment to be used annually for the indicators/goals listed above. It is best to use an assessment developed by experts outside of the school (i.e. Discovery short cycle assessment) rather than using grades provided by teachers in the classroom.

Rationale for Goal/Indicator 1:

The basic fundamentals of coding are becoming a basic digital literacy that everyone should to learn. In the Lost Interview with Steve Jobs, Apple's co-founder said, "I think everybody in this country should learn how to program a computer because it teaches you how to think.

Now that software is eating the world by automating all kinds of routine jobs, the basic knowledge of how lines of code create the digital worlds we explore every day is becoming a fundamental digital literacy. Coding isn't particularly easy to learn but that's exactly why it's so valuable. Even if you have no plans to become a software developer, spend a few weeks or month learning to code and I can guarantee it will sharpen your ability to troubleshoot and solve problems.

*Coding is the new “superpower” that isn’t being taught in in 90% of schools.
(<http://www.diygenius.com/learn-to-code-online/>)*

On the importance of the computer as a tool for advancing human abilities: A Scientific American article Jobs had read compared the efficiency of various animal species in terms of kilocalories expended per kilometer of movement. Humans ranked about a third of the way down the list when walking, but far exceeded any other animal when using a bicycle. "Humans are tool builders, and we build tools that can dramatically amplify our innate human abilities," Jobs said. "I believe that the computer will rank near, if not at the top, as history unfolds—it is the most awesome tool that we have ever invented."

On the importance of computer programming to cognitive ability: Jobs was asked what practical purpose he and other early Apple employees envisioned for programming personal computers. "It didn't have to do with using them for anything practical; we used it as a way to mirror our thought process. I think everyone should learn how to program a computer, because it teaches you how to think. I view computer science as a liberal art, something everyone should learn to do."

Steve Jobs comments on the importance of having good product people running the company: "When you have a market monopoly, the sales and marketing people end up running the company. The product people get run out of the company. Then the companies forget what it means to make great products. The [researchers] at Xerox PARC used to call the people who ran Xerox 'toner heads.' as they just had no clue about a computer or what it could do."

On the importance of craftsmanship: "One of the things that really hurt Apple was after I left, John Sculley got a very serious disease. And that disease—I've seen other people get it, too—it's the disease of thinking that a having a great idea is really 90 percent of the work. And if you just tell people, 'here's this great idea,' then of course they can go off and make it happen. The problem with that is that there's a tremendous amount of craftsmanship between a having a great idea and having a great product."

On the importance of software to the computer industry from 1995 on: "There hasn't really been a revolution in how we created software, at least not in the last 20 years. [But] software is infiltrating everything we do these days. Software is going to be a major enabler in our society."

On the importance of the Web: "It's really sort of the realization of our original dream, that the computer would not be a machine for computation, but would be metamorphosed into a tool for communication. And with the Web, that's finally happening. I think the Web is going to be profound in what it does to our society. The Web is going to be the defining technology, the defining social moment for computing."

On the importance of taste: "The way that we're going to ratchet up our species is to take the best [stuff], and spread it around to everybody, so everybody grows up with better things... If we can nudge [the computer] in the right direction, it will be a much better thing as it progresses. I think we've had a chance to do that a few times." And how do you know the right direction to nudge it? "Ultimately, it comes down to taste." (Steve Jobs 1995 interview with Robert Cringely for a PBS special called Triumph of the Nerds.)

Python - For becoming skilled at all-in-one language, you should begin learning Python language that has the ability to expand web apps, data analysis, user interfaces, and many more, and frameworks are also available for these tasks. Python is utilized by bigger companies mostly that can evaluate vast data sets, thus this is a huge chance to learn it and be a Python programmer.

Besides being awesome, Python should be your first programming language because you will quickly learn how to think like a programmer. Python is very readable. You won't waste a lot of time

memorizing the arcane syntax that other programming languages will present you. Instead, you will be able to focus on learning programming concepts and paradigms. Once you have those tools under your belt you can move on to other more powerful, specific languages and readily understand a given piece of code. But, don't be mistaken. You are not playing with a kid's toy. Python is super-powerful! There's a reason NASA uses it. As a beginner, you'll be able to accomplish anything you need with Python.

Python is easy to learn. The learning curve is very gradual. Other languages can be quite steep. With Python and the proper combination of ambition and attention, you could whip together a game in a day knowing nothing before you started. As I mentioned above, Python places an emphasis on readability. (<http://www.thehelloworldprogram.com>)

For practical reasons, we propose to use an existing programming language. The design and implementation of a new language can take several years, and we have picked one that is good enough to start working on the other three points. Our choice is Python, an advanced scripting and prototyping language. There is enough (anecdotal) evidence that Python is easy to learn for people who are (nearly) computer-illiterate. There are currently no development tools or training materials for Python that suit such an audience. We will make development of these the main focus of our task. We want to foster a community specifically focused on our tools and materials, so we can collect the necessary feedback; there is already interest in the use of Python by "newbies" in the existing Python community (estimated at 20,000 programmers, and growing rapidly), so we expect that it will be a fertile deployment ground. (Python.org)

Rationale for Goal/Indicators 2 and 3:

Goal/Indicator 2 – Academic Opportunities Academy students will be prepared to be successful in the 9th grade with Deming Public Schools.

Students who transfer from Academic Opportunities Academy to Deming Public Schools will complete their freshman year successfully.

A student will be considered to be “successful” if they are classified as sophomores after completing their freshman year in Deming Public Schools.

Academic Opportunities Academy is assuming that about 50% of the students at Deming High School do not pass their classes and that there is about 50% of students do not become Sophomores after attending one school year as a Freshman. We asked for this data from Deming Public Schools. They informed us that this data is not available. We assume this data will be available once we obtain our charter school.

We believe that most if not all students should be passing their classes and therefore be promoted from being freshmen to sophomores after attending one school year as a Freshman.

Goal/Indicator 3 – Academic Opportunities Academy students will be prepared to be successful in the 9th grade with Deming Public Schools.

Students who transfer from Academic Opportunities Academy to Deming Public Schools will pass x% of their classes. This goal could not be completed because data was not available from Deming Public Schools. We would like to include this goal when data is made available to us. We left this goal in our

application as we believe it is relevant to establish our intent to develop this goal and to provide the framework of what we intended to do.

Goals 2 and 3 are two measures of student success in the 9th grade and are therefore related.

Educators are increasingly focusing on the ninth grade as the year that determines whether a young person will move on or drop out of school. According to research published in the journal Education, ninth graders have the lowest grade point average, the most missed classes, the majority of failing grades, and more misbehavior referrals than any other high-school grade level. Ninth grade has increasingly become a “bottleneck” for students: A joint report from Princeton University and the Brookings Institution found “in 1970, there were 3 percent fewer tenth graders than ninth graders; by 2000, that share had risen to 11 percent.”

Researchers target 9th grade as the make or break year for completing high school. During the 9th-grade year, many students for the first time have to earn passing grades in core courses, and these core courses are typically some of the toughest and most rigorous academic classes a student must take in high school. Furthermore, the rising use of standardized tests to measure school performance, and exit exams required to earn a diploma add to the difficulty and importance of doing well in high school. Statistics generated from freshman year are concerning. Ninth graders have the lowest grade point average, the most missed classes, the majority of failing grades, and more misbehavior referrals than any other high school grade level. The 9th grade also has the highest enrollment rate in high schools, mainly due to the fact that approximately 22% of students repeat 9th-grade classes. This number can be even higher in large urban high schools. While the transition from middle school to high school can represent an important milestone, it can also be a time of loneliness, isolation, and disconnection for some students. This transition period is frequently marked by declining academic performance, increased absences, and increased behavior disturbances. These factors put freshmen more at risk than any other school-aged group. The differences, both academically and socially, between middle school and high school make the transition difficult. The authors contend that it is important to consider what can be done in middle school to better prepare students for new challenges and also important to not drop the ball on students after 9th grade, but to continue support during their remaining high school years. (The Importance of the Ninth Grade on High School Graduation Rates and Student Success McCallumore, Kyle Megan; Sparapani, Ervin F. Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, v76 n2 p60-64 Oct 2010)

Rationale for Goal/Indicators 4 and 5

Goal/Indicator 4 – Academic Opportunities Academy will increase our student’s pre-AP test participation rates each school year.

Goal/Indicator 5 – Academic Opportunities Academy will increase our students pre-AP test participant passing rates each school year.

Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare its students for high school success through individualized computer programming instruction aligns with our Goals 4 & 5.

In researching the best schools in the United States we found that one of the key factors used in evaluating excellent schools was the percentage of students who took pre-AP or AP classes and what percentage of these students passed the Pre-AP or AP exams.

Pre-AP is based on the following two important premises. The first is the expectation that all students can perform well at rigorous academic levels. This expectation should be reflected in curriculum and instruction throughout the school such that all students are consistently being challenged to expand their knowledge and skills to the next level.

The second important premise of Pre-AP is the belief that we can prepare every student for higher intellectual engagement by starting the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge as early as possible. Addressed effectively, the middle and high school years can provide a powerful opportunity to help all students acquire the knowledge, concepts, and skills needed to engage in a higher level of learning. (College Board)

Goal/Indicator 6 – Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare students for high school by providing a rigorous and relevant education.

Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare our students to pass the Algebra I EOC examination for our 8th graders in order to prepare our students for high school success.

This goal complements our mission that Academic Opportunities Academy exists to prepare its students for high school success through individualized computer programming instruction.

Algebra is considered a “gateway” course for the sequence of mathematics and science courses that prepares students for success in later schooling (Matthews and Farmer 2008). Mathematics courses are typically organized sequentially with enrollment in progressively more advanced courses dependent upon the successful completion of prerequisite courses. The earlier a student proceeds successfully through algebra, and then on to courses such as geometry and algebra II, the more opportunities he or she has for reaching higher level mathematics courses (e.g., trigonometry, pre-calculus, and calculus) in high school and completion of higher-level mathematics courses is related to a higher likelihood of entering a 4-year college or university (Schneider, Swanson, and Riegle-Crumb 1998). Recent research has related completion of advanced mathematics courses in high school with entering into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics majors in college (Chen 2009). Algebra may be integral to preparing students for success in college and the labor force, including careers in competitive mathematics- and science-related disciplines. The National Mathematics Advisory Panel (2008) noted that completing algebra II coursework during high school correlates positively with college graduation and employment income. The panel suggested that elementary and middle school mathematics curricula should put students on a path to learn algebra and have more students prepared to enroll in algebra by the eighth grade. Looking at international data, Schmidt (2004) reported that algebra concepts are commonly taught in the eighth grade in many other countries and suggested that U.S. students would benefit from increased opportunities for algebra instruction in the eighth grade.

Eighth-grade algebra enrollment in the United States has been on the rise. While approximately 16 percent of all U.S. 13-year-olds (the age at which many students are in eighth grade) were enrolled in algebra in 1986, this figure rose to 22 percent in 1999 and to 29 percent in 2004 (Perie, Moran, and Lutkus 2005). This trend affects the average level of mathematics course attainment students have achieved by graduation. An example of this trend is provided by Dalton et al. (2007), who compared course-taking information from high school transcripts gathered from three nationally representative studies: the High School and Beyond (HS&B) Longitudinal Study, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), and the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002). They found an increase between 1982 and 2004 in the number of high school graduates taking advanced mathematics courses and a concurrent drop in the percentage of students finishing high school having

completed only lower level mathematics courses (e.g., algebra I and plane geometry). While the overall number of students in advanced mathematics courses is increasing, there are differences between the populations of students who do and who do not take advanced mathematics courses in high school. For example, using the ELS:2002 data, Bozick and Ingels (2008) found that advanced high school mathematics courses (i.e., classes that are part of course sequences containing pre-calculus) were being taken by larger percentages of Asian students, White students, students of high socioeconomic status (SES), students living in two-parent households, students attending Catholic and other private schools, and students expecting to earn a bachelor's degree than by other students. Similar differences in mathematics course participation (e.g., differences by race/ethnicity and SES) were also found by Dalton et al. in their 2007 study. Furthermore, students who enter seventh grade with higher mathematics achievement have been found to be more likely to take advanced mathematics courses earlier than their grade-level peers (Ma and Wilkins 2007). The present Brief examines how various characteristics are related to enrollment in algebra or higher in the eighth grade. <http://www.edpubs.gov/document/ed005137p.pdf>

Algebra is not just for the college-bound. Even high school graduates headed straight for the work force need the same math skills as college freshmen, the ACT found. This study looked at occupations that don't require a college degree but pay wages high enough to support a family of four. Researchers found that math and reading skills required to work as an electrician, plumber, or upholsterer were comparable to those needed to succeed in college.

Algebra is, in short, the gateway to success in the 21st century. What's more, when students make the transition from concrete arithmetic to the symbolic language of algebra, they develop abstract reasoning skills necessary to excel in math and science.

<http://www.greatschools.org/students/academic-skills/354-why-algebra.gs?page=all>

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet- 1
C.(2) Rationale for Goal(s) Related to School's Mission	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable rationale , for their goal/indicators as related to their mission. The school provides a detailed plan , and specific methods of assessment to be used annually for the indicators/goals listed above.	The school provides a clear and reasonable rationale for their goal/indicators as related to their mission. The school provides a plan , and methods of assessment for the indicators/goals listed above.	The school provides a general rationale for its indicators/goals as related to their mission. The school provides a limited plan , and may or may not offer general methods of assessment for the indicators/goals listed above.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete rationale for indicators/goals as related to their mission. --OR-- The application does not provide a rationale for indicators/goals as related to their mission. The school provides an incomplete and inadequate plan and methods of assessment for the indicators/goals listed above.
Comments:				

D. Curriculum, Instructional Program, Student Performance Standards.

D.(1) Provide a description of a curriculum and instructional program with the potential to raise the achievement of the intended student population. The description provided must be research-based, clear, comprehensive, cohesive, reasonable, and innovative, and clearly align with the New Mexico Common Core State Standards, and the school's mission.

If approved, the PEC recommends one semester's curriculum to be fully completed by the charter school during the planning year and approved before commencement of operations is approved.

Curriculum, Instructional Program, student performance standards OR Timeline for Development Process

Academic Opportunities Academy presents the current status of our curriculum and instructional performance standards, which are in progress. We will complete our curriculum and student performance standards by January 1, 2016. We felt it best to present our current status, as well as our plan to have a finished product by January 1, 2016.

6th Grade

Language Arts Competencies using Edmentum

Social Studies – World History and Geography using Edmentum

Pre-Algebra I using Edmentum

Science using Edmentum

Heath using Edmentum

Physical Education (Program to be determined)

Computer Skills / Keyboarding / A+ Certification (Program to be determined)

7th Grade

Language Arts Competencies using Edmentum

Social Studies – New Mexico History (Program to be determined)

Pre-Algebra II using Edmentum

Science using Edmentum

Health using Edmentum

Physical Education (Program to be determined)

Computer Skills / Word, Excel, Power-Point and Access (Program to be determined)

8th Grade

Language Arts Competencies using Edmentum

Social Studies – U.S. History using Edmentum

Algebra I using Edmentum

Science using Edmentum

Health using Edmentum

Physical Education (Program to be determined)

Computer Skills / Web-design (HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Computer Graphic Arts) (Program to be determined)

After-School Program for Grades 6th, 7th, and 8th

Our after school program will offer grade level or course recovery for our students who are behind. Recovery instruction will be offered four days per week with computer programming enrichment offered one day per week. Enrichment in computer programming will be offered for our students who are on grade level or above. The computer programming curriculum will be determined in coordination with Dr. Son Tran, Department Chair in Computer Science and his staff at NMSU.

Company Overview of Edmentum, Inc.

Edmentum, Inc. provides online learning solutions to support students' academic and career success. Edmentum offers an extensive suite of programs that target intervention, individualized learning, dropout prevention, school improvement, instructional assistance, college and career readiness, data analysis, and adult and higher education programs. Specifically, Edmentum's suite includes:

- Study Island, a standards mastery and test preparation program*
- Plato Courseware, a standards-based online learning program*
- EducationCity, a program that offers teaching and learning resources with whole group, small group, or individual activities, correlated to state and common core standards for pre-K through 6th grade language arts, math, science, and ESL*
- EdOptions Academy, an online learning provider, complete with instructor, which partners with schools and districts to deliver research-based and pedagogically sound curriculum*
- Edmentum Reading Suite, online reading programs to motivate readers of all ages and ability levels*
- Edmentum Assessments, a range of solutions, including diagnostic and formative assessments to help educators more effectively guide instruction around each student's needs; and*
- Edmentum Adult and Higher Education, online curriculum, personalized instruction, and assessments designed to prepare adult learners for college and career success*

Edmentum also offers Edmentum Educator Essentials and Edmentum Educator Advantage services. The company serves public, private and charter schools, school districts, educators, and administrators.

Edmentum is a privately funded corporation with approximately 526 employees and 2 corporate locations. With more than 50 years of experience driving significant advances in the industry, Edmentum offers a wide variety of innovative solutions spanning a variety of program areas to empower 21st century teaching and learning. Edmentum's online educational solutions provide web-based instruction to 14 million students in nearly 40,000 schools in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Currently, Edmentum provides Plato Courseware to 1,734 Districts and EdOptions Academy to 64 Districts, which includes customers for hospital/homebound students, suspended special education students, incarcerated special education students, and pregnant students. Plato Courseware/EdOptions Academy has an approximately 95.67% success rate with all of its homebound or similar students. An example success story for Expo Alternative Learning Center has been provided in the attachments.

Edmentum has not had any settlement or terminations for default and has no pending terminations.

The leadership of Academic Opportunities Academy believes that Edmentum offers the best curriculum for our charter school. Edmentum products will be used for our core curriculum in Math, Science, English, and Social Studies except for New Mexico History. We enjoy an excellent working relationship with Edmentum, and they are committed to our success. Members of their staff have met with us to discuss our charter school model and to design complementary solutions to support our goals. Edmentum's solutions come with numerous resources to enable instructors and administrators to realize success, including invaluable data feedback. They have been researching how they can be of assistance in our computer programming instruction. SIATech Charter School who is now Albuquerque Charter Academy uses Edmentum as part of their curriculum.

Edmentum Products:

Sensei

Academic Opportunities Academy will develop a Curriculum Mapping Database and Software program for our campus. We have had conversations with Edmentum on the development of this Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to either be our system or an Edmentum system. Sensei would be our initial data reporting program until ours can be developed. Academic Opportunities Academy will work cooperatively with Edmentum on our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. Also, since we are a computer programming middle school, we will have programming talent on staff which will be instrumental in the development of our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. Sensei provides learning communities with an unprecedented way to seamlessly access and interact with data from Edmentum online learning products. Program data comes to life in via intuitive charts, graphs, and visual cues, providing a real-time picture of what's going on in the classroom. This interactive, engagement hub, designed with the educator in mind, dynamically responds to help teachers and administrators identify patterns, measure growth, and glean insights. Sensei allows educators to:

- Easily explore onscreen actionable data from Edmentum's 21st century solutions*
- Make faster, more informed decisions through robust analytics and app-like ease of use*
- Visualize and track overall school, teacher, and student progress to allow educators to focus their energies where they are needed most*

Sensei is mobile-optimized for the 21st century classroom. It will allow us to efficiently monitor and manage academic progress and achievement to make faster, more informed decisions anywhere, anytime, from a laptop or mobile device. It also provides tools to connect and engage with students and parents to improve performance. For instance, teachers can connect with students to ask questions, give praise, offer encouragement, or encourage them to dig a little deeper. The interface dynamically responds to help teachers identify patterns, measure growth, quickly identify achievement gaps and immediately take action to intervene. Teachers can also monitor student engagement, subject mastery, recent activity, grades, and other data in just a few clicks.

Until Academic Opportunities Academy is able to develop our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software, we will be able to use Sensei. We have discussed our vision with Edmentum as our aspirations for our Curriculum Mapping Database and have discussed integrating their data with ours through a possible modification of Sensei to include all the functionality of our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software.

Plato Courseware

When Academic Opportunities Academy enrolls a new student, the student will begin with PLATO as their initial curriculum. Academic Opportunities Academy is committed to an individualized program for each student, a goal which is fully supported by Edmentum's solutions.

Plato Courseware is a standards-based online learning program grounded in solid research (including third party research), sound pedagogy, and applied innovation. Edmentum develops rigorous, relevant curriculum that challenges students academically through interactive, media-rich content, aligned to 21st century and Common Core standards.

Plato's flexible design can be customized to meet the learning requirements of a wide variety of students, from the struggling learner to the advanced student. Content can be used for original credit, supplemental learning, credit recovery, unit recovery and extended learning. Plato curriculum can be implemented in a lab setting, a blended model in which online courses supplement the traditional classroom, or through a completely virtual experience.

Plato's library includes a generous array of choices, including core subjects, electives, world languages, honors, and Advanced Placement®. Courses consist of integrated assessments, including exemptive pretests that allow learners to forgo content they have already mastered in order to focus on the concepts where additional work is needed. Course-level assessments also include tests for each course module to ensure concept mastery.

PLATO courseware can also be paired with other Edmentum products as student needs dictate. Initially, additional digital solutions will be initiated for students by our teachers and/or administrators, but we envision our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software eventually automating the assignment of additional products, based on teacher and/or Campus Improvement Team criteria.

Edmentum Assessments

Edmentum Assessments offer a full range of assessment solutions, including diagnostic and formative assessments designed to help educators effectively guide instruction according to each student's needs. The assessments allow students to bypass objectives they have already mastered, gain

confidence, and focus on topics that challenge them for a more relevant and satisfying learning experience.

Edmentum Assessments provide tools that integrate with curriculum, monitor student progress, and engage students through a personalized and effective learning environment.

Upon enrollment, Academic Opportunities Academy will test all students to establish an initial baseline and to determine the appropriate starting point for each student. We plan to have our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software direct students to the appropriate starting point in Plato after the initial assessment data has been compiled.

Adaptive Intervention Solution

Edmentum's Adaptive Intervention Solution (AIS) provides tools to create a targeted intervention program using individualized, data-driven instruction. Instructors can select from a variety of formative assessment tools to create an assessment or series of assessments to identify student's strengths and needs against state standards reporting categories. AIS then provides a way for educators to instantly generate curricula based on assessment results, thus targeting lessons for whole class, small group, or one-on-one instruction. In addition, instructors can track individual progress with actionable, "at your fingertips" data that makes it easy to make daily instructional decisions.

Academic Opportunities Academy will use Edmentum Assessments for initial, periodic short cycle assessments and for our final/formative assessments.

Study Island

Study Island's data-driven standards mastery program is designed to help K–12 students master the content specified in state and Common Core standards and to improve performance in core skill areas. Study Island's high-impact, high-value learning programs provide quality academic support, practice, and real-time assessment data. The immediate feedback and built-in remediation, coupled with actionable data, enables educators to easily monitor student progress and differentiate instruction. Study Island is ideal for self-paced, individualized learning or teacher-led, whole-class instruction. Teachers can easily guide students through the program, communicate expectations, and create class assignments. Students can work through questions using a standard test format, an interactive game format, printable worksheets, or a classroom response system.

Education City

EducationCity is an engaging online program that offers a variety of teaching resources and student activities for pre-K through 6th grade language arts, math, science, matemáticas, English as a second language, and a brand new subject that is especially suited to our program—computing! Designed to inspire teachers and engage students in learning, EducationCity is ideal for introducing and reinforcing topics for whole-class, small group, or individual instruction. In addition, it correlates to state, Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards.

EducationCity's newest subject, computing, provides a friendly introduction to Digital Literacy, Information Technology, and Computer Science through relatable lessons and activities. This will enable us to reinforce students' computing skills to build a foundation for college and career

readiness, beginning in the earliest grades. It encourages English-language development with clusters of thematically linked activities. Education City offers teaching resources, lesson plans and activities developed by teachers for teachers—perfect for regular classrooms or as an enhancement for RTI, remediation, and special education programs. It engages students through whiteboard activities that include virtual manipulatives for topic introduction and reinforcement. Individualized instruction, through “MyCity” allows teachers to assign activities to individuals, groups or to the whole class. Real-time math and language arts competitions challenge and engage students. Finally, EducationCity also offers easy-to-use, real-time reports to track progress and mastery.

Ed Options Academy

EdOptions Academy partners with schools and districts to deliver rigorous, research-based, and pedagogically sound curriculum in a virtual environment. Trusted nationally, EdOptions Academy provides extensive and effective online learning to all types of learners. Fully accredited, EdOptions will allow us to enhance, expand, and extend our program offerings.

Academic Opportunities Academy will use EdOptions to expand our curriculum to subjects where an instructor may not be available where limited interest precludes hiring an instructor. Through EdOptions Academy, students gain a wide variety of choices, along with major benefits in terms of flexible scheduling and 1:1 instruction. Whether a student is a struggling learner or is academically advanced, the online teacher can tailor the learning process for the needs of each student. Math & ELA Courses have been added to EdOptions Academy.

This winter, Edmentum continues to update to our math and ELA courses, including mobile optimized content, rigorous curriculum, and technology-enhanced item types. Updated courses are: English 9 A/B, English 10 A/B, and Pre-Calculus.

Reading Eggspress

Reading Eggspress builds reading and comprehension skills, focusing on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension through a wide range of learning resources, lessons, motivational games, and e-books. Idea for Response to Intervention, acceleration, special education, and reading and literacy needs.

Five Key Reading Pillars

Reading Eggs is grounded in extensive educational research, building on and reinforcing the five key reading pillars:

- ***Phonemic awareness***
- ***Phonics***
- ***Fluency***
- ***Vocabulary***
- ***Comprehension.***

Reading Eggspress introduces students to the fundamentals of reading as outlined by the Common Core Standards.

Placement and Individualized Learning

The program has many features that support core literacy teaching to get students successfully started on their journey to becoming proficient readers. Students take diagnostic placement test to ensure they are working at the proper levels. Teachers can also move students to an appropriate level.

All student results are recorded in the teacher center in the form of student reports. These include test results and lessons completed. Teachers and administrators also have access to a complete scope and sequence of content covered, word lists, and skills charts.

The program provides constant assessment, as students must reach a mastery level during each lesson in order to move on. After 10 lessons, students are required to take a summative assessment to ensure they are able to correctly use the information they have learned in that unit. In addition, students are able to take quick assessments to test their skill on sight words, letters and sounds, and content words through the Driving Test area. These student-driven assessments are provided in a fun atmosphere in order to engage and encourage students to test their knowledge. Because students receive rewards in the form of a game to play for their mastery of the test, students are motivated to do their best work.

Lexile Levels

Edmentum uses Lexile levels, to match students to materials that meet and challenge their abilities. Lexile levels were developed by researchers at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The text is analyzed by Lexile software and given a measure from below zero to 2000 based on the number of words per sentence and word frequency. Students are given a measure on the same scale, based on standardized tests, and matched to appropriate materials.

Reading Eggspress Library

- 900+ e-books, including:
 - illustrated chapter books
 - full-color nonfiction books
 - range of classics

Students can search for books by topic, series, author, reading age, or book title.

The Library includes a wide range of leveled fiction and nonfiction titles with an online reading quiz included for each title. Students can “fave,” bookmark, and rate each book. When students first choose a book, they will see the number of people who have read it and its average rating according to their peers.

Teachers can see how many books students have read, date read, type of book, word length, and quiz scores. The totals provide an excellent overview of student progress. Teachers can track students' progress from start to finish with real-time reporting using “Student Stats.” Reading Eggspress provides teachers and parents with a simple “dashboard” to show each student’s reading progress. Each learner also has his or her own web-based dashboard that displays a brief overview of the reading skills covered and the number of books read. At the end of each map, each child will complete a quiz. After completion of this quiz you will receive a personalized e-mail describing each child's reading progress and the skills and concepts covered.

Students can easily access Reading Eggspress in class, at home, or anywhere with an Internet connection. Parents receive a personalized e-mail describing each child's reading progress and the skills and concepts covered. In addition, parents can be a part of their child’s development, gain access to important reporting tools, and track their child’s progress by using the home-school link code that can be provided by the student’s teacher.

ESL Reading Smart

ESL ReadingSmart is a web-based learning environment designed to accelerate English language development for English Language Learners (ELLs) in grades 4 through 12. The program contains activities and reading selections for students and online lesson plans, worksheets, and printable handouts for teachers. Instructional materials are written at a variety of English proficiency levels. This helps teachers solve the challenge of teaching ELLs in multilevel classrooms.

ESL ReadingSmart:

- *Accelerates English language development*
- *Supports TESOL and state ESL learning objectives*
- *Tracks students' English language development*
- *Integrates language arts and ESL objectives*
- *Integrates reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills*

North Star Learning***Northstar Workforce Readiness***

Northstar Learning provides targeted, Web-based curriculum that is easy to use and accessible online anytime, anywhere. These online programs help students achieve their academic or vocational training goals, upgrade their job skills in preparation for employment or advancement, and aid in attaining their certification or license.

While we are aware that Mrs. JoAnn Myers of MAS charter school in Albuquerque uses Compass Learning, which is better known in New Mexico, Edmentum prepared an analysis between Compass Learning and Edmentum to compare both products. Academic Opportunities Academy strongly believes that Edmentum is the best educational program available. The information is provided below to inform others who are not yet aware of what Edmentum offers.

Northstar prepares students for exams with affordable, easy-to-use, online practice and preparation. Northstar provides review programs for vocational tests, certification exams and licensing tests in Allied Health professions, the Pre-Professional Skills Tests, Adult Education, Developmental and remedial classes, and other college courses.

- *Helps students prepare for certification and licensing exams*
- *Easy-to-use programs are affordable and enhance student learning and retention*
- *Web-based means 24/7 access from the campus or home*
- *Student understanding increases through assessment questions, immediate feedback, and automated instruction*
- *Live support is included for all users*
- *Gauge student progress through teacher-led or individual assignments*
-

Actionable data***Plato Courseware***

- *Edmentum Sensei provides educators with actionable data and robust reporting*
- *Grade Tracker provides ability to manage and modify grading*

Compass Learning

- *Does not offer any type of Sensei equivalent functionality*
- *Impact Teacher Academy® provides professional development for teachers and administrators to effectively use Compass Learning resources and tools*

Course Quality***Plato Courseware***

- § *New, built to Common Core, mobile-optimized math and ELA courses*
- § *Mobile-enabled and optimized courses*
- § *124 middle and high school semester courses*

§ 80 Career & Technical Education semester courses

§ 51 Test Prep courses

§ Translation tool with 16 languages

§ 20+ interaction types

§ Text-to-speech tool

§ Standards browser

§ Discussion boards

Compass Learning

§ Recently repositioned to build excitement; however, their actual course content has remained the same

§ The new credit recovery program, Gradbound, is not available until 2015

§ Provides full K-12 courses

§ Third-party partnerships with NWEA, Scantron and Renaissance learning to provide a personalized learning path into Odyssey

§ Lots of flash content

§ Only offers 127 courses for grades K-12

§ No mobile friendly courses

§ No third party efficacy

§ No translation tool

§ 11 interaction types

§ No text-to-speech tool

§ No standards browser

§ No discussion boards

Customization and sharing

Plato Courseware

§ Advanced customization

§ District content sharing of customized content

Compass Learning

§ Does offer standard and advanced customization

§ Does not allow content sharing of custom content between schools or districts, which adds a lot of inefficiencies for educators

Third party efficacy

Plato Courseware

§ Third-party research available to prove solution efficacy

§ Key state-specific white paper research to support course efficacy

- *Marzano Study <http://www.edmentum.com/resources/efficacy/marzano-study>*

- *Construct Validity in Study*

Island: <http://www.edmentum.com/resources/efficacy/construct-validity-study-island-comparing-student-achievement-state-test>

- *School Improvement Study: <http://www.edmentum.com/resources/efficacy/school-improvement-study>*

-

Compass Learning

§ Does not offer third-party efficacy or research

Curricula for Art and Physical Education have not been identified, but we believe we will be able to make a selection prior to January 1, 2016.

A curriculum for computer programming has not been fully developed, but components that we could use in developing our curriculum have been identified.

A curriculum for computer programming will be developed prior to January 1, 2016.

Code.org®

This website and their computer classes are excellent for beginning programmers, as early as second grade through middle school. Code.org introduces drop and play programming which takes much of the tedium out of programming. The courses provided on this web-site are an excellent starting point in programming, with a focus on JavaScript.

Launched in 2013, Code.org is a non-profit dedicated to expanding participation in computer science by making it available in more schools, and to increasing participation by women and underrepresented students of color. Their vision is for every student in every school to have the opportunity to learn computer science. Code.org believes that computer science and computer programming should be part of the core curriculum in education, alongside other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses, such as biology, physics, chemistry and algebra.

Code Combat

Code Combat teaches several computer programming languages in a game format. We have experimented with this program and have found that the level of difficulty varies from very simple to quite complex. This program expects players to experiment or to learn to code from other sources. Some parents may not like the fantasy violence including myself. The game can select several computer programs including Python, JavaScript, CoffeeScript, Clojure, Lua and IO. Academic Opportunities Academy intends to only teach Python and JavaScript from the list of programs they provide. Parent permission would be required for students to use this program.

KhanAcademy.org,

Khan Academy provides excellent videos, lessons and programming activities on their website. They teach HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and a minor introduction into SQL. These are all computer languages that Academic Opportunities Academy will teach our students. We will definitely integrate this web-site into our computer programming curriculum.

dash.generalassemb.ly,

Has five projects to teach web-design, blogs, and introductory game design using HTML, CSS, JavaScript languages. Outside resources and assistance will be needed to assist our students as this course is designed for adults.

freeCodeCamp.com,

freeCodeCamp.com teaches HTML, CSS, JavaScript and Databases which might include SQL. It requires about 1000 hours to complete their program, but students who complete the program should be able to earn an entry level computer programming position. Mark Casavantes has completed three of their assignments and considers that our middle school students would need support to perform the work in this program. The quality of the web-site and the content it teaches is excellent. The other students

are adults. Monitoring by AOA and permission from parents would be needed with this program. At the end of this program, students complete computer programming assignments for non-profit organizations that have programming projects approved by freeCodeCamp.

*We're thousands of professionals, all learning to code together
We're building projects for dozens of nonprofits
Our community is 100% free and open source
You'll learn Full Stack JavaScript and become a Software Engineer
You'll work through our focused, interactive courses and tutorials
You'll learn to code at your own pace, in your browser or on your phone
You'll become qualified for thousands of jobs currently going unfilled
You can get help in real time from our community chat rooms and forum
We all share one common goal: to boost our careers with code
(freeCodeCamp.com)*

getbootstrap.com,

Bootstrap is the most popular HTML, CSS, and JavaScript framework for developing responsive, mobile first projects on the web.

Notepad Plus Plus

*Notepad++ is a free source code editor and Notepad replacement that supports several languages. Running in the MS Windows environment, its use is governed by GPL License. Computer programming in a variety of computer languages can be written using Notepad ++ and then run in a browser. The program is free.
NetBeans IDE is a computer program that assists in checking computer programs and assists programmers by color coding the program.
Windows Microsoft Power Shell is needed to run Notepad ++.
Windows Power-Shell is a task automation and configuration management framework from Microsoft, consisting of a command-line shell and associated scripting language built on the .NET Framework.*

Codecademy.com

Teaches HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Python, PHP, and Ruby through guided lessons. Our students will need guidance and outside resources to complete these classes.

Edmentum has high school computer science classes which we may use as a framework for developing our computer programming curriculum.

Learning Python the Hard Way, 3rd Edition by Zed. A Shaw, Addison Wesley is being considered as part of our Python computer programming curriculum. These items have not been reviewed by Dr. Son Tran from NMSU at this time.

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(1) Academic Program & Curriculum	<p>The description provided has the potential to raise the achievement of the intended student population. What is provided is research-based, clear, comprehensive, cohesive, reasonable, and innovative, and clearly aligns with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the school's mission.</p> <p>--OR--</p> <p>If not fully developed, the applicant has provided and described a clear, comprehensive, and reasonable timeline and plan for its development, including identification of responsible staff and deadlines and assurances and plans for aligning with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the school's mission.</p>	<p>The description provided is clear and reasonable and mostly aligns with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the school's mission.</p> <p>--OR--</p> <p>If not fully developed, the applicant has provided a clear timeline and plan for its development, including identification of responsible staff and deadlines and assurances and plans for aligning with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the school's mission.</p>	<p>The description provided is limited and does not support or partially supports CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the school's mission.</p> <p>--OR--</p> <p>If not fully developed, the applicant has provided a limited timeline and plan for its development, including limited identification of responsible staff and deadlines and assurances and plans for aligning with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the school's mission.</p>	<p>The description OR the timeline provided is incomplete or inadequate.</p> <p>--OR--</p> <p>The application does not respond to this prompt.</p>
Comments:				

D.(2) Substantiate how the curriculum and instructional program will help the school achieve high outcomes for students. (Required if a curriculum program is provided)

Research/Data

Note to reviewers: If you download the study from the links provided below you will be able to see a better document with tables, graphs and improved formatting.

- *Marzano Study <http://www.edmentum.com/resources/efficacy/marzano-study>*

*A Study of Best Practices in Edmentum Online Solutions
An analysis and interpretation of a Marzano Research Laboratory study
March 2012*

*5600 West 83rd Street
Suite 300, 8200 Tower
Bloomington, MN 55437*

Marzano Research Laboratory

Our Mission

To provide the best research, the most useful actions, and the highest level of services to educators.

Our Vision

To continuously develop tools that translate high quality educational research into practical applications educators can put to immediate use.

Our Goal

To be the place educators go for the latest information and data, synthesized into clear, concise resources that facilitate immediate action.

MARZANO STUDY

Overview

In traditional classrooms, educators and students arrive with a certain set of expectations, shaped largely by past experiences. Although students may need occasional reminders of what is required of them, this educational setting is familiar to both students and teachers. In addition, decades of research has explored classroom practices related to student achievement and identified instructional strategies that show positive, measurable effects on student achievement in a traditional classroom setting (Hattie, 1992; Marzano, 1998; Wenglinsky, 2002; Marzano, 2003). Teacher-level variables associated with raising the academic achievement of students are commonly grouped into three categories: instruction, classroom management, and curriculum design (Marzano, 2000).

In contrast to the considerable research into instructional strategies used in a traditional classroom setting, there is a dearth of literature that examines the effect of instructional strategies on student academic outcomes in an online learning environment. While comprehensive standards for online teaching—such as the International Association for K-12 Online Learning’s (iNACOL) 2011 Quality Standards for Online Teaching—have been established, existing frameworks for online instruction are not based on research that has specifically addressed the effectiveness or impact of these guidelines on student achievement.

To address this void, Edmentum contracted with Marzano Research Laboratory (MRL), an education firm led by Dr. Robert Marzano that seeks “to continuously develop tools that translate high-quality education research into practical applications educators can put to use,” to evaluate the relationship between student learning and effective teacher pedagogical practices with respect to the use of online instructional solutions. Using the Marzano Instructional Model (The Art and Science of Teaching, Marzano, 2007) as the framework, this study sought to identify effective instructional practices in the online learning environment. The full report—Best Teaching Practices in Online Learning—is available at

www.edmentum.com. Results from the study are summarized below. Please refer to the full study report for additional detail on the study design, participants, analyses, and complete results.

Summary of Results

The Marzano Observation Protocol is structured around ten instructional design dimensions representing three categories of teacher behavior, practices, and strategies that are commonly observed during instruction and that have been found to positively impact student achievement. Table 1 below details instructional strategies and behaviors implemented by teachers in the study sample that were found to be significantly related to higher levels of student achievement in an online learning environment.

Table 1. Teacher practices positively impacting student achievement in the online environment Analysis

In the past, the process of learning was often viewed as a largely passive experience in which knowledge is received and stored for future use. Over the past 20 years, however, cognitive research has led to theories and paradigms that reflect a more active model of knowledge acquisition. Similarly, one of the criticisms levied against online learning has been that with the teacher removed from the direct instruction, the role of the educator is transformed into that of a passive observer. Results from this study provide resounding evidence to the contrary, as teacher engagement in the online learning process was found to have the strongest relationship to student achievement outcomes.

Figure 1. Illustrates the relationship between student achievement and teacher engagement in the Plato Learning

Environment (PLE).

Teacher practices positively impacting student achievement in the online environments

- *Persistent, active engagement in the online learning environment*
- *Total time spent logged into the Plato Learning environment (PLE)*
- *Number of times logged into PLE*
- *Average amount of time logged into PLE*

Marzano Dimension: Strategies involving routine events

- *Communicating course/assignment rules and procedures*
- *Providing students with all materials needed to complete an assignment*
- *Clearly presenting the goal/objective for each assignment*
- *Offering encouragement and positive feedback to students*
- *Allowing students to keep track of their learning progress*
- *Accessibility to students via electronic communication as well as face-to-face*

Marzano Dimension: Strategies enacted on the spot

- *Monitoring student work*
- *Knowing every student by name and being able to recognize them outside of the online environment*
- *Allowing students to progress through assignments at their own pace*
- *Providing help to understand and practice new knowledge*
- *Allowing students to ask questions during online course/assignment*
- *Treating all students equally*

Marzano Dimension: Strategies addressing content

- *Adding external resources to assignments aligned to local objectives*

Across all categories of teaching strategies, teachers reported frequent engagement of instructional behaviors and practices that have been found to positively impact learner outcomes up to 99% of the time. Student perceptions of teaching strategies corroborated the self-reported practices of teachers, reporting that teachers frequently implement effective instructional strategies using Plato Courseware up to 88% of the time. Regardless of instructional setting (pure virtual, blended, classroom/lab) or course purpose, teachers consistently and frequently implement effective instructional strategies.

Interpretation

The instructional strategies listed in Table 1 are those that were observed to significantly impact student achievement. Simply stated, teachers who implemented those strategies and engaged in those behaviors in the online learning environment more frequently saw their students achieve at higher levels. That is not to say that additional instructional strategies are not effective or necessary, but the teaching practices listed in Table 1 are best practices relative to impacting student learning. Table 2 provides strategies for implementing the best online teaching practices that impact student learning. Table 2. Strategies for implementing best online teaching practices.

Best Practice: Allowing students to keep track of their learning progress Strategies

Provide resources that allow students to self-monitor their academic progress throughout the course.

Provide timely and meaningful feedback on assignments, assessments, and related course learning activities, allowing students to be continuously aware of their progress in the course.

Best Practice: Accessibility to students via electronic communication as well as face-to-face

Strategies

Facilitate meaningful and timely communications (electronically and face-to-face).

Best Practice: Monitoring student work

Strategies

Closely monitor individual student data to guide instruction and provide intervention activities for unsuccessful learners.

Identify and monitor course assessments that correlate to state high-stakes tests to assure mastery of those key concepts and provide additional learning experiences when needed.

Best Practice: Knowing every student by name and being able to recognize them outside of the online environment

Strategies

Communicate with each student prior to, or early in, a course to answer any questions and to build a supportive instructor-to-student relationship.

Provide a supportive and engaging learning community environment for all students.

Best Practice: Allowing students to progress through assignments at their own pace

Strategies

Ensure that the curriculum is at the correct level for students and has appropriate rigor.

Provide multiple learning pathways based on student ability to achieve content mastery.

Provide ample assessment styles throughout the course to monitor student mastery of content and provide remedial instruction when needed.

Best Practice: Providing help to understand and practice new knowledge

Strategies

Provide synchronous learning activities in large and small learning groups to support key concepts within the course content.

Provide multiple opportunities for students to be actively engaged in content that includes meaningful and authentic learning experiences, such as collaborative learning groups, student-led review sessions, instructional games, analyses, discussions, case studies, etc.

Provide a wide range of activities, assignments, assessments, and resources to allow students to demonstrate mastery of content.

Provide high-level thinking and critical reasoning activities in increasing complexity throughout a course.

Best Practice: Allowing students to ask questions during online course/assignment

Strategies

Foster teacher-student and student-to-student interaction.

Ensure students have accessibility through various communication methods.

Best Practice: Treating all students equally

Strategies

Provide multiple learning resources with engaging and meaningful learning activities to all students.

Best Practice: Adding external resources to assignments aligned to local objectives

Strategies

Adapt the course content to meet students' needs by providing additional assignments, resources, and activities for remediation or enrichment during the course experience.

Assure that course content, assignments, and assessments are of appropriate rigor and align to state standards.

Augment, as needed, course content, learning activities, and assessments to meet all required standards within a course.

Best Practice: Communicating course/assignment rules and procedures

Strategies

Provide clear course policies and procedures at the beginning of the course/assignment.

Provide clear information about the timeline for the course, including all assignments, assessments, and course activities.

Provide clear information about methods of instructor-to-student communication and about all student course support resources.

Ensure that all students have directions, resources, and a working understanding of how to navigate and successfully operate all student systems within the online learning environment prior to engagement with the course content.

Best Practice: Clearly presenting the goal/objective for each assignment

Strategies Provide or reinforce clearly stated course goals and learning objectives for each major concept within the course.

Best Practice: Providing students with all materials needed to complete an assignment

Strategies

Provide multiple learning resources with engaging and meaningful learning activities.

Provide clear and complete instructions (how to proceed, assignment requirements, and assessment expectations) with rubrics for all activities.

Provide information about student course support resources.

Best Practice: Offering encouragement and positive feedback to students

Strategies

Begin interacting with students early in a course to affirm each student's successful participation.

Provide timely, supportive, individualized, and frequent feedback on student progress that emphasizes the intended learning outcome.

Analyze a student's mastery level of standards content and provide additional instruction to help the student meet mastery level.

Implementation of these instructional practices and strategies in the online learning environment is associated with higher levels of student achievement. Teachers who use the features and

characteristics of Plato Courseware and the Plato Learning Environment frequently engage in instructional strategies that have been found to positively impact student academic outcomes. The study found that teacher engagement—as measured by the number of times teachers logged into Plato and the amount of time spent in the system—was the strongest predictor of higher levels of student achievement. Said another way, student learning in the online environment increases when teachers are actively involved and engaged in the process. The Plato Learning Environment provides teachers with tools and features that have significant, positive effects on increased levels of student learning. The more educators engage with Plato Courseware, the more students benefit.

Summary of Study Design

The study examined perceptions of instructional practices and achievement data from 1,828 students and 141 teachers at 23 sites in 12 states (California, Florida, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania), looking specifically at Edmentum’s online solutions in three instructional settings (pure virtual, blended, and classroom/lab) across four purposes (original credit, credit recovery, intervention, and Advanced Placement). MRL adapted the Marzano Observation Protocol, a comprehensive framework for effective instruction, into student and teacher surveys that measured perceptions of instruction and administered the surveys to the study participants. In addition, student achievement data was collected to analyze the relationship between teacher practices and learner outcomes.

The Marzano Observation Protocol is structured around ten instructional design questions representing three categories of teacher behavior, practices, and strategies (referred to as “lesson segments”) that are commonly observed during instruction and that have been found to significantly impact student achievement. Here are the three categories:

1. Strategies involving routine events:

What do teachers do to establish and communicate learning goals, track student progress, and celebrate success?

What do teachers do to establish or maintain classroom rules and procedures?

2. Strategies enacted on the spot:

What do teachers do to engage students?

What do teachers do to establish or maintain classroom rules and procedures?

What do teachers do to recognize and acknowledge adherence and lack of adherence to classroom rules and procedures?

What do teachers do to establish and maintain effective relationships with students?

What do teachers do to communicate high expectations for all students?

3. Strategies addressing content:

What do teachers do to help students effectively interact with new knowledge?

What do teachers do to help students practice and deepen their understanding of new knowledge?

What do teachers do to help students generate and test hypotheses about new knowledge?

References

Hattie, J. A. (1992). Measuring the effects of schooling. Australian Journal of Education, 36(1), 5-13.

International Association for K-12 Online Learning (2011). National Standards for Quality Online Teaching. Vienne, VA: iNACOL.

Marzano, R. J. (1998). A theory-based meta-analysis of research on instruction. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continental Regional Educational Laboratory.

Marzano, R. J. (2000). A new era of school reform: Going where the research takes us. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning.

Marzano, R., Marzano, J., and Pickering, D. (2003). Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. (2007). The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Wenglinsky, H. (2000). How teaching matters: Bringing the classroom back into discussions of teacher quality. Washington, DC: Educational Testing Service

The research in these two links below is substantial. They are not copied and placed in this application. We encourage reviewers to visit these sites and review the research presented.

Construct Validity in Study Island: <http://www.edmentum.com/resources/efficacy/construct-validity-study-island-comparing-student-achievement-state-test>

School Improvement Study: <http://www.edmentum.com/resources/efficacy/school-improvement-study>

	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D. (2) Research/Data	The applicant provides clearly defined research and data to substantiate how the curriculum and instructional program will help the school achieve high outcomes for	The applicant provides research and data to substantiate how the curriculum and instructional program will help the school achieve high outcomes for students.	The applicant provides some research and data that appears to substantiate how the curriculum and instructional program will help the school achieve high outcomes for students.	The school provided incomplete or inadequate research or data. --OR-- The application does not respond to this prompt.

	students.			
Comments:				

D.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and reasonable** Scope and Sequence that **clearly** aligns with the description of the curriculum and instructional program and is aligned with the school's mission. Insert Course Scope and Sequence as Appendix A. (Required if a curriculum and academic program are provided)

Scope and Sequence

Scope and Sequence documents will be included in the Appendix A

Academic Opportunities Academy has provided a framework for most of our curriculum and has identified some of our academic programs. The frameworks we have provided are clear, comprehensive and reasonable.

As of this writing Academic Opportunities Academy is planning to use New Mexico Connections Academy – New Mexico History for our curriculum. New Mexico Connections Academy is requiring that we use their teachers. We have requested a copy of their Scope and Sequence to include in our application. I looked at their New Mexico Charter School Application for a copy of their New Mexico Scope and Sequence, but was unable to find it. I assume that you have their scope and sequence, that it is approved by the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission. Although this information has been requested, it might not get sent to us to include in our application. We hope you consider that the New Mexico Connections Academy scope and sequence is included in our application.

Edmentum Computer Science

Computer Programming A/B

Part of the Plato Courseware Career Technical Education (CTE) Library, Computer Programming combines engaging online and offline activities in a rigorous one semester course for your high school students who may be aspiring to technical careers. Building on lessons covering the software development lifecycle and software development methodologies, the course uses online discussions, activities, and lessons to lead your students through additional key topics such as quality control, system implementation and maintenance and the increasingly important issue of system security.

Digital and Interactive Media (coming fall of 2015)

This is an effective and comprehensive introduction to careers in the rapidly expanding world of digital art. The course covers creative and practical aspects of digital art in 15 lessons that are enhanced with online discussions and a variety of activities. Beginning with a history of digital art, the course goes on to issues of design, color, and layout. While students will experience creation of digital art, they will also learn about converting traditional art to digital formats.

Game Development

Are any of your students gamers? That's what we thought. In this course, they'll learn the ins and outs of game development to prepare them for a career in the field. Whether it is the history of video games, character development, mobile game design, user interface design, social gaming, or the principles of development design and methodologies, this 20-lesson course covers it all. As you might guess, games are included in the course to enhance the learning experience and help assess student progress. While fun and highly engaging, the course focuses on laying a strong foundation for a career in game development.

Other courses that might fit your computer-related emphasis:

Graphic Design and Illustration (coming in fall of 2015)

Digital Photography I and II

Computer Applications and Technology

Data Skills for Today

	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(3) Scope and Sequence	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and reasonable Scope and Sequence that clearly aligns with the description of the curriculum and instructional program and is aligned with the school's mission.	The school provides a clear and reasonable Scope and Sequence that aligns with the description of the curriculum and instructional program and school mission.	The school provides a limited Scope and Sequence that partially aligns or does not align with the description of the curriculum and instructional program or mission.	The school provided an incomplete and inadequate Scope and Sequence. --OR-- The application does not provide a description of the school's Scope and Sequence.
Comments:				

E. Graduation Requirements.

E.(1) Identify your school's proposed requirements for graduation, if applicable, and explain any

additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirements. Provide high school graduation requirements that clearly articulate and meet state requirements. If you provide additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirement they are clearly explained. For further information please see the following link:

<http://ped.state.nm.us/GradReqs/Graduation%20and%20Course%20Offering%20Requirements.pdf>.

If you are seeking any change from mandated minimum graduation requirements, identify the change and explain why you are seeking it. Clearly explain how the change supports the mission and ensures student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities.

Graduation Requirements:

N/A as we are a middle school.

	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
E.(1)(2) Graduation Requirements / Graduation Waiver If Necessary – High Schools Only	Only applicable for high school proposals High school graduation requirements are clearly articulated and meet state requirements. Any change proposed by the school that vary from state minimum requirement are clearly explained.			Only applicable for high school proposals The application does not address graduation requirements.
Comments:				

F. Instruction.

F.(1) Provide a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive overview of the instructional strategies and methods to be implemented that clearly support and align with your school's mission, curriculum, instructional program and performance standards.

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy's is committed to the highest levels of real student success through using a blended model of instruction to obtain success for all our students. This blended curriculum, focusing on state and national standards with innovative tutorial and after school supports will enable our students to be successful. Our teachers will develop our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to assign appropriate Edmentum products or their teacher prepared projects and assignments. Our teachers and our Community Advisory Groups are encouraged to seek out and find

educational products that would improve the success of all our students to supplement or replace Edmentum products.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software will assist in assigning appropriate assignments and projects including a variety of Edmentum products. Our teachers will establish criteria for when to assign students to various Edmentum products or other teacher created projects, and/or assignments. Initially students will be assigned to Plato Courseware as a starting point when our students begin attending Academic Opportunities Academy. Our teachers will evaluate our students and establish criteria for assigning students into other Edmentum products or their own projects and assignments. Our IT staff will program our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to automate the assignment process based on our teacher created criteria. Our teachers will periodically and on an ongoing basis refine and improve their criteria, projects and assignments.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software will be a “super gradebook” with all available data included in our database. This database will automate the assigning students to classes based on teacher developed criteria. Students will be monitored by Teachers and educational aides to help identify those who are in need of additional assistance. With this system we do not believe any students will get lost in the cracks. Also, our system is designed for all students, including all special populations. Our special education teacher will be able to monitor their students to ensure all are being successful and if they are not to go through the process of changing any existing individual education plan in order to ensure all of these students are successful. Our lead bilingual education teacher will also be able to monitor their students to ensure they also are successful and to provide and additional support or instruction these students may need. Although not a formal individual education plan our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software seeks to modify every student’s educational plan based on a data driven set of criteria developed and improved upon by our teachers.

AOA Primary Instructional Strategies

The following methods and systems will be implemented for teachers and will provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students:

Student Choice

Student choice refers to the process of allowing students to choose learning activities from a lesson selection group when appropriate. The learning activities within a lesson selection group will provide for a variety of teacher-led, cooperative learning and individual practice activities that vary in depth, complexity and learning styles. Additionally, modified assignments to meet Limited English Proficiency (LEP) needs, simplified English lessons to meet the needs of ESOL (English Students of Other Languages) students and challenging assignments to meet the need of GT (Gifted and Talented) and Special Education students will be offered, as is appropriate.

Self-Paced Mastery Learning with Tutorial Support

AOA plans to work with students in a self-paced program that promotes students advancing from one lesson to another based on a 90% mastery of the knowledge and skills related directly to that lesson. Students will receive a computer tablet at the start of each school day and work through the various lessons in a blended fashion of autonomy and teacher assisted instruction. Multiple activities organized as a lesson selection group will be available for each lesson that a student is required to learn.

The corollary to self-paced mastery learning is the dissolution of the typical grade level classroom. If individual needs are to be met, then large classroom instruction that aims primarily at the students in the middle of the group needs to be avoided. Students will be pulled out of the Main Academic Area Classroom when instruction is needed on the same concept based on data collected within the

Curriculum Mapping and Database Software. Algorithms will be developed that will identify students needing instruction and place them in “classes”. The teacher will prepare for these classes, and when ready, will notify the students in that “class” where and when this instruction will begin. The teacher will notify these students by messages sent to the student’s tablet computer. The teacher will provide instruction for as long as necessary, not to exceed 90 minutes at a time. If additional instruction is needed, then two or more periods of instruction will be given until all students master the concept. The teacher also may dismiss some students earlier if these students have demonstrated mastery of the concept. All teachers will be held accountable to the effectiveness of their teaching based on data collected from the Curriculum Mapping and Database Software. Teachers will be expected to reflect on their teaching practice based on the data. If a class conflict occurs, students already in a class will be rescheduled for the next available class that they missed.

Our plan includes a large number of highly trained teachers and certified educational aides. AOA’s plan will employ two educational aides for every teacher employed as the budget will support. These individuals will assist the teachers by carrying out instructional duties under the guidance of the teachers. We believe that having more adults present will better motivate all the students to excel while also providing lower performing students with the individual attention that they require. AOA will maintain a staff ratio of 20:1.

AOA has studied other successful charter schools and there are three that reflect best practices that AOA hopes to adopt: Breakthrough Schools, YES Prep School and Match School. Breakthrough School in Ohio is a distinguished school receiving high ratings from the Ohio Department of Education. Breakthrough School has components that AOA can adapt and modify to use in its educational plan. Similar Breakthrough Schools, AOA will have multi-age classes that align with children’s developmental stages, and if available AOA will recruit a cadre of volunteers and college interns to assist in various aspects at the school. We hope to achieve similar success as seen in Breakthrough Schools where in 2010 students (90% African American and 80% low-income) “significantly outperformed Ohio public school students on average on every single test at every single grade level” (Business of Good, 2013).

A second role-model school that AOA will emulate is YES Prep in Texas. YES ranked twenty-fourth in the nation for charter schools and graduates 100% of its seniors. Serving a similar demographic (80% economically disadvantaged and 95% minority), YES Prep has built a model of success through an extended school calendar, longer school days, rigorous academic curriculum, and a support system that provides instructional and tutoring assistance for any student who requires it. The YES model strives to complement the teacher’s instruction and provides individualized attention to those students requiring additional instruction.

Like YES, AOA will place certified educational aides in our Main Educational Space Classroom and provide teachers supports that benefit the students in small group and one-to-one assistance. AOA will also base its approach on the MATCH charter school in Boston. MATCH relies heavily on full-time Educational Aides to provide educational assistance to students, including a majority of the “grunt work, like practicing math skills with struggling students” (Carr, 2010). This assistance allows full-time teachers to focus on their lesson plans and collaborating with parents. Ranked 63rd nationally among charter schools, MATCH provides students with an extended school day and two hours of tutoring for every student. AOA will base its model on MATCH’s success, providing individualized instruction and an extended school day to ensure students are given the opportunity to be successful in their educational and future endeavors.

In the same manner, AOA will recruit as many volunteers as possible from among the parents and grandparents of our students. These individuals will receive the same training and direction as the Educational Aides. This recruitment will also add to the intergenerational system that the Breakthrough Schools in Ohio have successfully implemented. This approach allows members of the community to be directly involved in students' education, regardless of their age. This intergenerational approach has proven successful, primarily because students are introduced to older members of their community who have gained years of wisdom and education and who are able to pass that along to students. This approach also bridges many of the community gaps that can occur in an economically disadvantaged community and improve the relationships of the community members. Working toward a common goal has been shown to bring communities together, as evidenced in the Cleveland area.

Tiered Instruction

AOA's proposed model of education represents a self-paced, individualized, multi-grade educational program that will offer students choices that fit their desires, strengths, learning styles, interests, and educational needs. Our model utilizes a detailed curriculum-mapping database that provides real-time data to everyone involved in each child's education. This database has algorithms we designed to offer several instructional activity options to each student based on his or her current educational needs. This database provides accurate reports, and is designed to measure student success as effectively as possible. This data will also be easily accessible to parents, allowing them to become more involved in their children's education.

This model, referred to as "tiered" or "differentiated" instruction, is "a process to approach teaching and learning for student of differing abilities in the same class. The intent is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is...rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum" (Huebner, 2010). This form of instruction ensures that each student is appropriately challenged, thus maximizing learning. A growing body of research shows positive results of tiered instruction. One study found that tiered instruction "consistently yielded positive results across a broad range of targeted groups" (Huebner, 2010). An example of differentiated instruction can be seen in the Trenton Public Schools located in New Jersey. The Trenton Public School district requires all teachers to "develop lessons and units that...accommodate various learning styles" (Trenton, 2013).

Edmentum

Edmentum, Inc. is a leading provider of online learning programs designed to drive student achievement for academic and career success. With more than 50 years of experience driving significant advances in the industry, Edmentum offers a wide variety of innovative learning programs to empower 21st century teaching and learning.

Research and our Scope and Sequence is included in other parts of this application and is not duplicated here.

Pull-Out Classes

We know the problem of catching students up to their grade level is a significant task. Some students are three and four years behind their peers. It is easier to get behind than it is to catch up. To address this problem Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to be as efficient as we can in the teaching and

learning of our students. In the traditional classroom there are students of various abilities. A classroom can have students a grade level above their peers, some students up to four years below their peers, as well as special education students and ELL students. This is a huge undertaking for a teacher and even with differentiation all students are not learning at optimal levels.

Our approach and an approach of Responsive Education Solutions are to utilize pull out classes. These classes will only include up to twenty students who are in need of instruction in one objective. Classes can be further separated into students who need the objective and are ELL students or other sub-group.

Pull out classes will be created using our scope and sequence, campus data, as well as student data. Classes will be taught according to the scope and sequence and campus needs by priorities set by our teachers. If only one student needs instruction in a particular objective as he/she is farthest behind the teacher will have just one student in their class. The teacher will instruct that one student until they are able to be successful before dismissing them from their class. Once these students begin to catch up the size of the classes will grow. When there are enough students to make two classes the students will be grouped in two equally sized groups to the extent that is possible. All our teachers will teach all our students. All our students will be exposed to the strengths of all our teachers. Once a teacher has taught all students on our campus for a particular objective they will view the data on their Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to determine what the next class or classes will be taught. They will prepare for their next class and when they are ready, they will teach all the students on the campus in need of instruction in that objective in classes of twenty or fewer students until all the students with that need in that objective have been taught. The process will then repeat.

Academic Opportunities Academy believes that students should be active learners in their educational process rather than passive students in a classroom. AOA recognizes that students will need classroom instruction periodically to teach objectives in which a student is having difficulty. Students in a particular class will be needing instruction in one objective and the prerequisite knowledge has already been taught. This will assist the teacher by creating classes where they are working with students of similar abilities limiting the need for extensive differentiated instruction.

Academic Opportunities Academy students will only attend a pull-out class if they have demonstrated that they are not able to be successful in the individual and group learning environment of the Main Academic Space. Students who have been identified by data, educational aides or teachers will attend pull-out classes in the areas of instruction that they need additional assistance in order to be successful. Students who are not needing pull-out classes are able to progress satisfactorily without interference by having to attend classes. All the students in a particular class all need the identical objective to be taught to them. Another advantage of our pull-out classes is that these classes are not dictated by bell schedules. The teacher determines how long the class will meet up to a 90 minute limit. Teachers have the academic freedom to have students meet for more than on class session. Teachers can release a student if the teacher has assessed that the student is now capable of working on this objective independently and/or in small groups successfully. Our teachers will be held accountable for all the students they have provided instruction to and the objectives they taught. Our teachers will have access to their data in order to reflect on their teaching practice to become better and more effective teachers.

Educational Aids and the Main Academic Space

Academic Opportunities Academy will have a large main classroom which we have named as the Main

Academic Space where our students will do most of their work under the supervision of educational aides. Our educational aides will monitor all the students in the Main Academic Space and provide brief tutorial assistance when needed by the student. The educational aides will be able to monitor every student's performance using the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. One of the screens our educational aides will be able to access is a heat map of every student and their progress. The students will be sorted from weakest to strongest. Educational aides will seek out our weakest students in order to provide assistance, guidance, motivation and encouragement to these students.

Educational aides will be able to make entries into the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software in order to refer a student for a pull-out class.

Extended Day Program

Students who are behind will work on catching up to four school days per week. All students will participate in our after school enrichment program designed to meet the educational needs of all classes of students and prepares our graduates for the challenges of the real world and real life. Our students will be prepared for college, and post-secondary opportunities which enable our students to succeed in the work place and earn a self-sustaining income for themselves and their families.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
F(1) Strategies/Methods	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive overview of the instructional strategies and methods to be implemented that clearly support and align with the school's mission, curriculum, instructional program, and performance standards.	The school provides a clear overview of the instructional strategies and methods to be implemented that adequately support and align with the school's mission, curriculum, instructional program, and performance standards.	The school provides a limited overview of the instructional strategies and methods to be implemented that partially or do not support and align with the school's mission, curriculum, instructional program, and performance standards.	The school's overview of instructional strategies and methods is incomplete or inadequate. --OR-- The application does not address instructional strategies.
Comments:				

F.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive and cohesive** explanation of how the proposed methods/strategies are effective with the target student population.

Effectiveness

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Our charter school model is designed to be efficient with our limited resources in order to provide the best education possible for our students that are relevant in a 21st Century world.

Our students are paired to help our students adjust to our unique charter school model. We will pair our students with a new student and a student familiar with our charter school model. In the beginning our educational aides will assist our students to become familiar with our charter school model.

Students will have up to three pairs of students sitting at one table. These three pairs of students will form a team of students. This team will provide peer tutoring to support and assist all the students on their team.

Students will be monitored in the Main Academic Space by educational aides who will have a tablet computer with our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. The educational aide will have every student on our campus ranked overall and by content area so the educational aides will know which students are in need of additional support, motivation and assistance. When a student finds a student who is in need of teacher assistance the educational aide is empowered to let the teachers know that the students is in need of additional support and assistance.

Teachers will teach classes where only students who are in need of education in a particular objective will be in each class. This will reduce the amount of differentiation each teacher will need to do in each classroom. Small class sizes of 20 or fewer students makes teaching and learning easier than larger class sizes. Our teachers will be empowered to assess how the students in their class are doing and dismiss them to the Main Academic Space if they are prepared to be successful independently. Our teachers are empowered to teach multiple sessions on an objective if they believe it will result in all their students being successful. Teachers are empowered to teach their classes up to 90 minutes per session. The teacher determines when the class ends and not a bell schedule. All the experimentation with various bell schedules do not accommodate the time necessary to teach an objective to all classes of students. Rather than have some arbitrary time limit imposed on the teacher and their students the teacher is empowered to take all the time necessary to prepare all their students to be successful.

Our application contains many innovations not found in most charter school models. We will empower our staff to evaluate all aspects of our charter school model and question all assumptions. We will have a Campus Improvement Team which will include all our administrative intern/teachers. They will study our campus performance and organize and be the clearing house for all ideas to improve the campus. We will have several Community Advisory Groups that will coordinate with the Campus Improvement Team on research, brainstorming and other creative activities to improve our campus.

Our Social Workers will work with all our students to improve their performance through social work activities, home visits, and counseling type activities. We know many families face a variety of problems which influences a child's ability to learn. We want our social workers to solve these problems. We also want our social workers to be the first line of defense in dealing with behavior issues rather than a referral to an administrator. We want our social workers to be proactive in being able to identify students who are having problems with behavior and discipline and work with these students. If our social workers are unable to solve the discipline issues or there is a serious offence that needs to be forwarded to an administrator they will forward these students to an administrator.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software will collect all available data and generate reports for each stake holder in our learning community. Our administrators will know how well each staff

member is assisting our students academically and how our students are performing individually and collectively on every New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards and Common Core Standards. Our teachers will also see our student's data, view their classes that have been identified by objective and the students who need that instruction, and how they have influenced the students they have taught by viewing the improvement their students achieved after being taught in their class. Our educational aides will be able to see a heat map of every student in our campus according to their performance. Our educational aides will be able to see which students need the most help and support. Our students, parents and guardians will be able to see their student's data in close to real time reducing the need for report cards and progress reports. Parents and guardians who do not have access to a computer and internet will be able to have reports sent home on a periodic basis.

With our Knowledge per Second metric, our learning community will be able to know if their student is progressing to learn one school years' worth of knowledge and skills per school year by seeing their current knowledge per second score. A score of 1000 will indicate a student is on track to earn one year's worth of knowledge and skills in one school year. A score of 2000 will indicate that a student is on track to earn two years' worth of knowledge and skills within one school year. A score of 500 would indicate a student is on track to learn only one half of one year's knowledge and skills in one school year. This metric will have a floating average to smooth out the data due to sporadic data entries. No matter what the question or product requested, it will take time to prepare a response and the appropriate data entry into the data base. The time where a student is preparing a response will appear as if no progress is taking place and when an entry is made it will appear as huge progress is being made. A floating average will need to be provided to smooth out the data. At this time a time period for the floating average has not yet been determined.

Our special education populations will be included with our general population. Modifications in the student products and other Individual Education Plan modifications can be written into Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. Contact hours by specialists can be provided as needed for all our special education students. Pull-out sheltered classes can be provided as needed to all students who require a sheltered class. Our charter school model provides the ability to have a variety of modifications in a least restrictive environment for all students who are in need of special education services and an individual education plan. Our special education teacher will be able to monitor all of their students to ensure they are all being successful. In the event a student is not being successful, the teacher will be able to identify the student(s) needing assistance and what additional modifications might be needed through an advisory panel.

Our English Language Learners (ELL) will also have the benefit of our individualized and self-paced charter school model as our special education students. Modifications can be written into our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. Our ELL students will be able to have sheltered classes based on those student's needs and needed. Our TESOL certified bilingual education teacher will be able to monitor all of their students to ensure all of their students are being successful. In the event a student is not being successful the TESOL certified bilingual teacher can provide the assistance and supports those students would need.

Academic Opportunities Academy has built a charter school model designed around all our students and their needs. All students (special ed, regular ed, ELL, 504, etc...) learn at a different pace and as a result we created a self-paced and individualized charter school model. All students will need different levels of support and instruction. As a result we developed a blended computer and in-class model of instruction. We recognize that many of our potential students are significantly behind their peers. As a

result we created the extended day program to provide the required and significant resources to provide the grade level recovery our students will need. We know that a significant number of our students will be performing at the level of their peers or beyond. As a result we created our computer programming enrichment program for these students. We believe our charter school model is very effective in being able to serve our student populations.


The proposed strategy for AOA's charter school has been researched with a target group that mirrors the results of successful schools and projects positive student outcomes based on proven strategies and qualified methods. Statistics and data are provided in Section D.

The basis of effectiveness at AOA is a self-empowered, student-directed set of courses within a supportive and familiar student body. Students who are self motivated and have excellent study skills are given the academic freedom to progress as fast as they are able, without anyone else slowing them down. Students who need assistance are given the attention they need. Those students who need intensive assistance will work in small groups or individually with an educational aide. Based on our campus data, educational aides will be given assignments as to which students they will be responsible to monitor and assist.

Classroom instruction will be provided to students and coordinated within the overall needs of the campus. Approximately half of the students will be in the pull out classrooms at any given time. If a student has a conflict between two or more classes, the student will be instructed based on which class has the highest priority based on that student's needs. The student will be included in the next available class also based on the priorities for each student's needs.

All teachers responsible for all students. Academic Opportunities Academy believes this is a much better utilization of our teaching staff. All students will have the opportunities to see all our teachers strengths and variety of teaching styles. All our teachers will have a relationship with all our students which will enrich all our students. Teachers will provide instruction to students in all grade levels within their content area. Students will attend classes based on their instructional need and not their particular grade level. Students from each grade level may be in a particular pull out classroom as defined by their current academic needs.

Students will have access to a variety of educational products available from Edmentum based on their individual needs. The computer based instruction will work in conjunction with the support and guidance of teachers and educational aides.

Ranking				
				
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
↳	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1

	The school provides a clear, comprehensive and cohesive explanation of how the proposed methods/strategies are effective with the target student population.	The school provides a clear explanation of how the proposed methods/strategies are effective with the target student population.	The school provides a limited explanation of how the proposed methods/strategies are effective with the target student population.	The school provides an inadequate and/or incomplete explanation of how the proposed methods/strategies are effective with the target student population. --OR-- The school does not address the prompt.
Comments:				

F.(3) Provide a **clear and comprehensive** description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and provide **specific** examples.

Differentiated Instruction

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

Academic Opportunities Academy differentiates instruction based on our student's needs in a variety of ways. Our charter school model provides differentiation by providing an individualized, self-paced, blended computer and in-class instruction as well as our extended day. Our mission statement screams differentiation. Our pull-out classes differentiate instruction by having only the students who need an objective in a particular class. The teacher will be able to differentiate by being able to dismiss students from a class once they have assessed they can be successful independently. The teacher will be able to differentiate instruction as the teacher will be empowered to keep students up to 90 minutes per class period and is empowered to have as many class sessions and needed to ensure all students are successful. Our computer based instruction provides differentiated instruction to each student according the student's knowledge and skills. Our educational aides will provide most of their assistance and support with the students who need the most assistance and support. Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software assists our staff in providing differentiated instruction based on each student's performance.

Some examples of how instructions will be differentiated include pre-tests to determine if a student has mastered the material previously and if the student demonstrates mastery, to let the student skip the lesson. Edmentum products provide this ability. For students who need fewer answer choices that can be programmed in to our computer instruction options. Students will be offered a choice between several assignments particularly when dealing with their selection of the books they would like to read or the type of project they would like to do.

Our teachers will be able to differentiate instruction by using differentiated instruction strategies in their classrooms such as by teaching the same material to all students using a variety of instructional strategies, or it may require the teacher to deliver lessons at varying levels of difficulty based on the ability of each student. Formative assessment is an essential ingredient of this method. Teachers will differentiate instruction by designing their lessons based on a student's learning styles, assess student's learning by using formative assessment, continuously assess and adjust the lesson content to meet all their student's need.

There are a variety of differentiated instruction strategies that our teachers and educational aides will be able to provide our students. Teachers can differentiate the process and activities in a lesson based on the needs of their students. Teachers can vary the texts, experiments, and methods used in a lesson. Manipulatives can be used to assist in teaching mathematical concepts. Teachers can differentiate using a variety of graphic and student organizers. Teachers can differentiate using flexible groupings. The teacher and the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software can differentiate the student product, outcome or assessment. Differentiation can occur by allowing student choice or design of an assignment. Teachers can differentiate by providing different content, topics and materials to their students. Teachers can use leveled reading texts and indicate important text sections.

Academic Opportunities Academy has provided clear and comprehensive description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and specific examples have been provided.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
F.(3) Differentiated Instruction	The school provides a clear and comprehensive description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and specific examples are provided.	The school provides a clear description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and at least one specific example is provided.	The school provides a limited description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and no examples or inadequate examples are provided.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate description of how instruction will be differentiated. --OR-- The application does not address differentiated instruction.
Comments:				

G. Special Populations. This includes those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Accommodation plans, and English language learners (ELLs).

G.(1) Special Education.

G.(1)(a) Provide a **clear, cohesive, and comprehensive** explanation of the practices and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, and ensure students' in special populations

access to the general education curriculum.

Access to Services

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will provide all suggested modifications to a special education student's educational plan to meet their student needs according to their Individual Education Plan.

Academic Opportunities Academy will provide Child Find Screening to determine possible speech, vision and hearing disabilities.

All requirements for the New Mexico Department of Education corresponding State regulations will be met by AOA, and will address the needs of special populations through appropriate public education methods provided in the least restrictive environment. AOA will ensure that students who are gifted or who have a diagnosed disability participate with their peers to the fullest extent possible as determined by their personalized IEP.

Students who require special education services will be assisted appropriately within regular education classrooms. The continuum of special population services will range from a level at which students are monitored minimally with minor modifications, such as extended assessment time, to a higher level of service that could include 1:1 support from a full-time educational assistant or direct instruction from a licensed special education teacher. A revised curriculum will be developed in direct partnership with special education staff for students who require it. The student's IEP will be reviewed at each semester to assist in goal setting, transition objectives, and the student's interests. The academic and transition goals set will meet New Mexico State Standards as well as NMCCSS.

Addressing individual needs in the special student population could include allowing for an extra class in order to master a specific subject, or a sheltered instruction plan to ensure a student can gain mastery in the English language and be successful in a general classroom setting.

We seek to serve all students who wish to attend Academic Opportunities Academy. We will accept those students that have had documented behavioral issues. Our charter school model is designed to provide individualized, self-paced instruction to every student, not just those in special education/504.

We seek to achieve academic success for those students who have not been successful in other settings.

Academic Opportunities Academy shall accept referrals, as per child find provisions, from any source that suspects a child may be eligible for special education and related services. (71 Fed. Reg. 46636 (August 14, 2006))

Student Intervention System (e.g., SAT, Rtl, PBS):

- Academic Opportunities Academy shall follow a three-tier model of student intervention as a proactive system for early intervention for students who demonstrate a need for educational support for learning or behavior. (6.29.1.9(D) NMAC)*
- In tier 1, the Academic Opportunities Academy shall ensure that adequate universal screening in the areas of general health and well-being, language proficiency status and academic levels of proficiency has been completed for each student enrolled. If, through universal screening, a referral from a parent, a school staff member, or other information available to a school or district suggests that a particular student needs educational support for learning or behavior, then the student shall be referred to the SAT for consideration of interventions at the tier 2 level. (6.29.1.9(D)(1) NMAC)*
- In tier 2, a properly-constituted SAT at each school, which includes the student's parents and the student (as appropriate), shall conduct the student study process and consider, implement and document the effectiveness of appropriate research-based interventions utilizing curriculum-based measures. (6.29.1.9(D)(2) NMAC)*
- In addition, the SAT shall address culture and acculturation, socioeconomic status, possible lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, teaching and learning styles and instructional delivery mechanisms in order to rule out other possible causes of the student's educational difficulties. (6.29.1.9(D)(2) NMAC).*
- When it is determined that a student has an obvious disability or a serious and urgent problem, the SAT shall address the student's needs promptly on an individualized basis, which may include a referral for a multi-disciplinary evaluation to determine possible eligibility for special education and related services. (6.29.1.9(D)(2) NMAC)*
- In tier 3, a student has been identified as a student with a disability and deemed eligible for special education and related services, and an IEP is developed by a properly constituted team. (6.29.1.9(D)(3) NMAC)*

For gifted and talented students will be identified through the following process. Some recommend that students who score in the top 85% of students be considered for evaluation to determine if the student is gifted and talented. Academic Opportunities Academy will evaluate all our students who score in the top 75% for evaluation. Teachers will be asked to nominate all potential gifted and talented candidates to add to the students already identified.

A letter of notification and a comprehensive description of the program will be forwarded to the parents of all prospective gifted and talented students indicating that their child has been placed in the Talent Pool for the year. The letter does not indicate that a child has been certified as "gifted," but rather explains the nature of the program and extends an invitation to parents for an orientation meeting. At this meeting a description of the three-ring conception of giftedness is provided, as well as

an explanation of all program policies, procedures, and activities. Parents are informed about how admission to the Talent Pool is determined, that it is carried out on an annual basis, and that additions to Talent Pool membership might take place during the year as a result of evaluations of student participation and progress. Parents are also invited to make individual appointments whenever they feel that additional information about the program in general, or their own child, is required. A similar orientation session is provided for students, with emphasis once again being placed on the services and activities being provided. Students are not told that they are "the gifted," but through a discussion of the three-ring conception and the procedures for developing general and specific potentials, they come to understand that the development of gifted behaviors is a program goal as well as part of their own responsibility. (Albuquerque Public Schools)

The Gifted and Talented Evaluation Process

- *Districts and charter schools must develop in their local policy a suitable evaluation timeline for gifted evaluations.*

- *The evaluation must be conducted by appropriately qualified/licensed individuals, diagnosticians, or school psychologists, and completed in a timeframe according to local policy after obtaining written parent consent*

- *Districts and charter schools must adopt an alternative assessment approved by the NMPED to be used by trained examiners with students who are identified as having "factors" (e.g., cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic status, and disability conditions) unless the district submits a different alternative assessment that is approved by the NMPED. Currently, the two approved alternative assessments are:*

- *Discovering Intellectual Strengths and Capabilities while Observing Varied Ethnic Responses (DISCOVER®)*

- *Frasier Talent Assessment Profile2 (FTAP 2)—Multistage Edition*

Again, these assessments must be conducted by teams of properly-trained individuals who have been certified in their use. See pages 41–47 for more information. Clinical Considerations in Testing for Giftedness Prior to testing a student for giftedness, the examiner develops an evaluation plan which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- *Review previous records and documentation—especially looking at documentation supporting the results of instruction/interventions in Tier 1 (general education) and Tier 2 (individual SAT Intervention Plan)*

- *Review standardized group achievement scores and grades.*

- *If possible, meet with student and/or the student's teacher(s).*

- *Review test manuals*

- *Ascertain if there are any visual, hearing, physical, motor, or medical concerns (e.g., asthma, hay fever, allergy, etc.) Gifted Education in New Mexico Page 40 Technical Assistance Manual*

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Examine or look for the best intelligence measure for the age, sex, racial, ethnic and socio-economic status, or background of the student. Some intelligence tests rely heavily on timed tests; others use “power tests.”

-

Conduct a behavioral observation, if necessary

-

Learn about the culture of the student and its impact on assessment. For example, the Diné (Navajo) are different from the Hasidim. Time frames and perception of time vary in different cultures. Some cultures are past-oriented, while others are present-oriented, and still others are future-oriented. In some cultures, time is relative. There is a stressed, rushed, pushed time emphasis in most large urban cities. In rural towns, there is more of a relaxed atmosphere and environment, and less emphasis on doing things quickly.

-

Review all subtests to ascertain any possible alternative reasons for low scores. For example, was the student yawning or inattentive during directions? Was fatigue noted? Did the examiner make the necessary change of arrangement for the handedness of the student? Was the student wearing glasses, or using a hearing aid? Was the student comfortable, agitated, upset, ill, or nervous during testing? In many instances, students may be doing very well in achievement areas as measured by standardized testing instruments, but may not perform well on a given intelligence test. In such instances, it may be wise, prudent, judicious, and reasonable for the diagnostician or school psychologist to administer a different intelligence test. For example, a non-verbal intelligence test (language-free) may be more appropriate to accurately determine intelligence than a verbal intelligence test. In other instances, it may be left to the clinical judgment of the diagnostician or school psychologist to suggest, for example, retesting one year later, with a different intelligence test. Traditional assessment for identification for giftedness in New Mexico requires testing in four areas: intelligence, achievement, critical thinking, and creativity.

Note: Standard error of measure applies to all testing instruments used. Testing Instruments

A variety of testing instruments may be used to evaluate students who are potentially gifted and determine if they meet the criteria for gifted education services in New Mexico. The categories of testing instruments used for traditional assessment include: (a) intelligence testing instruments, (b) achievement testing instruments, (c) group screening instruments for achievement, (d) critical-thinking test instruments, (e) creativity testing instruments, and (f) referral checklists. A list of testing instruments is provided for each of these categories on pages 130 to 136 of this manual. Gifted Education in New Mexico Page 41 Technical Assistance Manual The Eligibility Determination Team The diagnostician or alternative assessment examiner(s) will notify the Eligibility Determination Team when the evaluation is complete. This team is comprised of a group of qualified professionals (including individuals knowledgeable about gifted education and the student), the parent, and the student, if appropriate. This team reviews the evaluation results and determines whether the student is eligible by virtue of meeting criteria for giftedness and demonstrating a need for specially-designed instruction. If so, an IEP team will develop an IEP for the student. In many cases the Eligibility Determination Team and the IEP team are the same individuals, so the process happens smoothly at one meeting. In other cases, the teams may be comprised of different individuals. Or, the eligibility determination and IEP development processes may happen at different meetings. In any event, this step needs to happen in a timely manner according to local policy. Please see the flowchart on page 38 for other eligibility determination possibilities. Alternative Protocols for the Identification of Gifted The NMPED has approved two alternative protocols for use in the identification of students who are gifted—DISCOVER© and FTAP 2. The purpose of these alternative protocols is to address long-standing disparities in the state in the proportions between the numbers of ethnic minority students in

a school's overall population and the numbers of those students identified as gifted and included in gifted programs. Although these issues can be addressed to some extent by the use of non-verbal tests, it may ultimately be the overall testing procedure that is inappropriate for many of our students who are determined to have factors: cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic status, and disability conditions. Alternative protocols are needed to address these issues. Although the alternative protocols are implemented in a manner similar to group screening instruments, they provide much more in-depth information about a student's abilities. Therefore, they can be considered as equivalent to standardized measures of intelligence. Students identified as gifted through their use may be eligible to receive gifted services. The evaluation process using alternative assessments allows for advancing directly to the eligibility meeting after the assessment and bypassing the SAT Intervention Plan process. (Subsection E (3) of 6.31.2.12 NMAC) The NMPED recommends that districts adopt one of these approved protocols to be used with all students who are identified as having "factors" unless the district submits a different alternative assessment that is approved by the NMPED. Although neither DISCOVER® nor the FTAP 2 requires a licensed diagnostician for its administration, proper and sometimes extensive training is necessary for the examiner(s) who conduct these assessments. Districts and charter schools are responsible for ensuring that staff receives the initial training and updates. Gifted Education in New Mexico Page 42 Technical Assistance Manual Districts and charter schools must also keep detailed records of the results obtained from the use of these alternative protocols for reporting to the NMPED, if requested, or for audit purposes.
<http://ped.state.nm.us/gifted/Gifted%20TA%20manual.pdf>

Each public school child who receives special education and related services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Each IEP must be designed for one student and must be a truly individualized document. The IEP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities. The IEP is the cornerstone of a quality education for each child with a disability.

To create an effective IEP, parents, teachers, other school staff--and often the student--must come together to look closely at the student's unique needs. These individuals pool knowledge, experience and commitment to design an educational program that will help the student be involved in, and progress in, the general curriculum. The IEP guides the delivery of special education supports and services for the student with a disability. Without a doubt, writing--and implementing--an effective IEP requires teamwork.

This guide explains the IEP process, which we consider to be one of the most critical elements to ensure effective teaching, learning, and better results for all children with disabilities. The guide is designed to help teachers, parents and anyone involved in the education of a child with a disability--develop and carry out an IEP. The information in this guide is based on what is required by our nation's special education law--the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA.

The IDEA requires certain information to be included in each child's IEP. It is useful to know, however, that states and local school systems often include additional information in IEPs in order to document that they have met certain aspects of federal or state law. The flexibility that states and school systems have to design their own IEP forms is one reason why IEP

forms may look different from school system to school system or state to state. Yet each IEP is critical in the education of a child with a disability.

The Basic Special Education Process under IDEA

The writing of each student's IEP takes place within the larger picture of the special education process under IDEA. Before taking a detailed look at the IEP, it may be helpful to look briefly at how a student is identified as having a disability and needing special education and related services and, thus, an IEP.

Step 1. Child is identified as possibly needing special education and related services.

"Child Find." The state must identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities in the state who need special education and related services. To do so, states conduct "Child Find" activities. A child may be identified by "Child Find," and parents may be asked if the "Child Find" system can evaluate their child. Parents can also call the "Child Find" system and ask that their child be evaluated. Or —

Referral or request for evaluation. A school professional may ask that a child be evaluated to see if he or she has a disability. Parents may also contact the child's teacher or other school professional to ask that their child be evaluated. This request may be verbal or in writing. Parental consent is needed before the child may be evaluated. Evaluation needs to be completed within a reasonable time after the parent gives consent.

Step 2. Child is evaluated.

The evaluation must assess the child in all areas related to the child's suspected disability. The evaluation results will be used to decide the child's eligibility for special education and related services and to make decisions about an appropriate educational program for the child. If the parents disagree with the evaluation, they have the right to take their child for an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). They can ask that the school system pay for this IEE.

Step 3. Eligibility is decided.

A group of qualified professionals and the parents look at the child's evaluation results. Together, they decide if the child is a "child with a disability," as defined by IDEA. Parents may ask for a hearing to challenge the eligibility decision.

Step 4. Child is found eligible for services.

If the child is found to be a "child with a disability," as defined by IDEA, he or she is eligible for special education and related services. Within 30 calendar days after a child is determined eligible, the IEP team must meet to write an IEP for the child.

Step 5. IEP meeting is scheduled.

The school system schedules and conducts the IEP meeting. School staff must:

- *contact the participants, including the parents;*

- *notify parents early enough to make sure they have an opportunity to attend;*
- *schedule the meeting at a time and place agreeable to parents and the school;*
- *tell the parents the purpose, time, and location of the meeting;*
- *tell the parents who will be attending; and*
- *tell the parents that they may invite people to the meeting who have knowledge or special expertise about the child.*

Step 6. IEP meeting is held and the IEP is written.

The IEP team gathers to talk about the child's needs and write the student's IEP. Parents and the student (when appropriate) are part of the team. If the child's placement is decided by a different group, the parents must be part of that group as well.

Before the school system may provide special education and related services to the child for the first time, the parents must give consent. The child begins to receive services as soon as possible after the meeting.

If the parents do not agree with the IEP and placement, they may discuss their concerns with other members of the IEP team and try to work out an agreement. If they still disagree, parents can ask for mediation, or the school may offer mediation. Parents may file a complaint with the state education agency and may request a due process hearing, at which time mediation must be available.

Step 7. Services are provided.

The school makes sure that the child's IEP is being carried out as it was written. Parents are given a copy of the IEP. Each of the child's teachers and service providers has access to the IEP and knows his or her specific responsibilities for carrying out the IEP. This includes the accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided to the child, in keeping with the IEP.

Step 8. Progress is measured and reported to parents.

The child's progress toward the annual goals is measured, as stated in the IEP. His or her parents are regularly informed of their child's progress and whether that progress is enough for the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year. These progress reports must be given to parents at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress.

Step 9. IEP is reviewed.

The child's IEP is reviewed by the IEP team at least once a year, or more often if the parents or school ask for a review. If necessary, the IEP is revised. Parents, as team members, must be invited to attend these meetings. Parents can make suggestions for changes, can agree or disagree with the IEP goals, and agree or disagree with the placement.

If parents do not agree with the IEP and placement, they may discuss their concerns with other members of the IEP team and try to work out an agreement. There are several options, including additional testing, an independent evaluation, or asking for mediation (if available) or a due process hearing. They may also file a complaint with the state education agency.

Step 10. Child is reevaluated.

At least every three years the child must be reevaluated. This evaluation is often called a "triennial." Its purpose is to find out if the child continues to be a "child with a disability," as defined by IDEA, and what the child's educational needs are. However, the child must be reevaluated more often if conditions warrant or if the child's parent or teacher asks for a new evaluation.

Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all federal, state laws, regulations and policies. We will comply with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. seq. (IDEA) and implementing regulations, including Section 300.209 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504). As well as the guidelines of the NM Special Education Scope and Standards in identifying Special Education students and implementing appropriate programs and services for its special education students. The school will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, and planning educational programs, and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts. The National Center for Educational Outcomes reports that "Students with disabilities continue to demonstrate the capacity to succeed in the general curriculum with appropriate specialized instruction, accommodations and supports, and that students with a variety of learning profiles are continuing to demonstrate greater capacity to acquire and express all levels of knowledge than was previously anticipated." Special education students, who attend public charter schools and their parents, retain all rights including the right to a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Additionally, these students can expect access to appropriate special education and related services. We will use the NMPED "Student Assistance Team Manual" for guidance in identifying students and providing their support. Teachers will be instructed to implement the three tiered approach to support student learning, as recommended in the manual, and outlined briefly below:

- 1. A classroom teacher observes that a student shows signs of academic difficulty with little or no academic gains.*
 - 2. The teacher independently implements Tier I interventions for six weeks. The teacher monitors and documents the student's performance.*
 - 3. If the student continues to underachieve, the student is referred to the Student Assistance Team for Tier II interventions for another 4-6 weeks. The teacher completes a referral form.*
 - 4. The Student Assistance Team in coordination with the teacher plans additional instruction and support. Performance of the student is monitored and document by the Student Assistance Team. If the student continues to demonstrate academic deficits, the student may be referred for additional academic screening or psychological/behavioral testing.*
 - 5. A parent may make a written request for an evaluation for special education services for their child. Parents must be informed in writing of the school's decision to evaluate or not. IDEA assures specific rights and safeguards to students with disabilities and their parents and contains six principals that provide the framework upon which special education services are designed and provided to students with disabilities. These six principles are:*
 - 1. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE),*
 - 2. Appropriate Evaluation,*
 - 3. Individualized Education Program (IEP),*
 - 4. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE),*
 - 5. Parent and Student Participation in Decision Making, and*
 - 6. Procedural Safeguards. New Mexico Public Education Department—Amended 2/21/13 Page 19*
- Application 2013 IDEA assures specific rights and safeguards to students with disabilities and their parents and contains six principals that provide the framework upon which special education services are designed and provided to students with disabilities. These six principles are:*

1. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE),
2. Appropriate Evaluation,
3. Individualized Education Program (IEP),
4. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE),
5. Parent and Student Participation in Decision Making, and
6. Procedural Safeguards.

We have discussed how modifications can be included in our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. Our programmers have told us that they can modify assignments based on the requirements of an IEP. Once an additional modification has been added to our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software it can be assigned to any student who would benefit from that modification.

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(1)(a) Special Education	The school provides a clear, cohesive, and comprehensive explanation of the practices and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, and ensure students' access to the general education curriculum.	The school provides a clear explanation of the practices and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, and ensure students' access to the general education curriculum.	The school provides a limited explanation of the practices and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, and ensure students' access to the general education curriculum.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate explanation of the practices and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, and ensure students' access to the general education curriculum. --OR-- The application does not address Special Education.
Comments:				

G.(1)(b) Provide a **clear, cohesive, and comprehensive** description of how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals.

IEP Goals

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will follow all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. The following guide from the Department of Education will be used as a guide to comply with all IEP requirements to ensure attainment of all IEP goals.

A Closer Look at the IEP

Clearly, the IEP is a very important document for children with disabilities and for those who are involved in educating them. Done correctly, the IEP should improve teaching, learning and results. Each child's IEP describes, among other things, the educational program that has been designed to meet that child's unique needs. This part of the guide looks closely at how the IEP is written and by whom, and what information it must, at a minimum, contain.

Contents of the IEP

By law, the IEP must include certain information about the child and the educational program designed to meet his or her unique needs. In a nutshell, this information is:

- Current performance. The IEP must state how the child is currently doing in school (known as present levels of educational performance). This information usually comes from the evaluation results such as classroom tests and assignments, individual tests given to decide eligibility for services or during reevaluation, and observations made by parents, teachers, related service providers, and other school staff. The statement about "current performance" includes how the child's disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general curriculum.*

- *Annual goals. These are goals that the child can reasonably accomplish in a year. The goals are broken down into short-term objectives or benchmarks. Goals may be academic, address social or behavioral needs, relate to physical needs, or address other educational needs. The goals must be measurable-meaning that it must be possible to measure whether the student has achieved the goals.*
- *Special education and related services. The IEP must list the special education and related services to be provided to the child or on behalf of the child. This includes supplementary aids and services that the child needs. It also includes modifications (changes) to the program or supports for school personnel-such as training or professional development-that will be provided to assist the child.*
- *Participation with nondisabled children. The IEP must explain the extent (if any) to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and other school activities.*
- *Participation in state and district-wide tests. Most states and districts give achievement tests to children in certain grades or age groups. The IEP must state what modifications in the administration of these tests the child will need. If a test is not appropriate for the child, the IEP must state why the test is not appropriate and how the child will be tested instead.*
- *Dates and places. The IEP must state when services will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided, and how long they will last.*
- *Transition service needs. Beginning when the child is age 14 (or younger, if appropriate), the IEP must address (within the applicable parts of the IEP) the courses he or she needs to take to reach his or her post-school goals. A statement of transition services needs must also be included in each of the child's subsequent IEPs.*
- *Needed transition services. Beginning when the child is age 16 (or younger, if appropriate), the IEP must state what transition services are needed to help the child prepare for leaving school.*
- *Age of majority. Beginning at least one year before the child reaches the age of majority, the IEP must include a statement that the student has been told of any rights that will transfer to him or her at the age of majority. (This statement would be needed only in states that transfer rights at the age of majority.)*
- *Measuring progress. The IEP must state how the child's progress will be measured and how parents will be informed of that progress.*

More information will be given about these IEP parts later in this guide. A sample IEP form will be presented, along with the federal regulations describing the "Content of the IEP," to help you gain a fuller understanding of what type of information is important to capture about a child in an IEP. It is useful to understand that each child's IEP is different. The document is prepared for that child only. It describes the individualized education program designed to meet that child's needs.

Additional State and School-System Content

States and school systems have a great deal of flexibility about the information they require in an IEP. Some states and school systems have chosen to include in the IEP additional information to document their compliance with other state and federal requirements. (Federal law requires that school districts maintain documentation to demonstrate their compliance with federal requirements.) Generally speaking, extra elements in IEPs may be included to document that the state or school district has met certain aspects of federal or state law, such as:

- *holding the meeting to write, review and, if necessary, revise a child's IEP in a timely manner;*
- *providing parents with a copy of the procedural safeguards they have under the law;*
- *placing the child in the least restrictive environment; and*
- *obtaining the parents' consent.*

The IEP Team Members

By law, certain individuals must be involved in writing a child's Individualized Education Program. These are identified in the figure at the left. Note that an IEP team member may fill more than one of the team positions if properly qualified and designated. For example, the school system representative may also be the person who can interpret the child's evaluation results.

These people must work together as a team to write the child's IEP. A meeting to write the IEP must be held within 30 calendar days of deciding that the child is eligible for special education and related services.

Each team member brings important information to the IEP meeting. Members share their information and work together to write the child's Individualized Education Program. Each person's information adds to the team's understanding of the child and what services the child needs.

Parents are key members of the IEP team. They know their child very well and can talk about their child's strengths and needs as well as their ideas for enhancing their child's education. They can offer insight into how their child learns, what his or her interests are, and other aspects of the child that only a parent can know. They can listen to what the other team members think their child needs to work on at school and share their suggestions. They can also report on whether the skills the child is learning at school are being used at home.

Teachers are vital participants in the IEP meeting as well. At least one of the child's regular education teachers must be on the IEP team if the child is (or may be) participating in the regular education environment. The regular education teacher has a great deal to share with the team. For example, he or she might talk about:

- *the general curriculum in the regular classroom;*
- *the aids, services or changes to the educational program that would help the child learn and achieve; and*
- *strategies to help the child with behavior, if behavior is an issue.*

The regular education teacher may also discuss with the IEP team the supports for school staff that are needed so that the child can:

- *advance toward his or her annual goals;*
- *be involved and progress in the general curriculum;*

- *participate in extracurricular and other activities; and*
- *be educated with other children, both with and without disabilities.*

Supports for school staff may include professional development or more training. Professional development and training are important for teachers, administrators, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and others who provide services for children with disabilities.

The child's special education teacher contributes important information and experience about how to educate children with disabilities. Because of his or her training in special education, this teacher can talk about such issues as:

- *how to modify the general curriculum to help the child learn;*
- *the supplementary aids and services that the child may need to be successful in the regular classroom and elsewhere;*
- *how to modify testing so that the student can show what he or she has learned; and*
- *other aspects of individualizing instruction to meet the student's unique needs.*

Beyond helping to write the IEP, the special educator has responsibility for working with the student to carry out the IEP. He or she may:

- *work with the student in a resource room or special class devoted to students receiving special education services;*
- *team teach with the regular education teacher; and*
- *work with other school staff, particularly the regular education teacher, to provide expertise about addressing the child's unique needs.*

Another important member of the IEP team is the individual who can interpret what the child's evaluation results mean in terms of designing appropriate instruction. The evaluation results are very useful in determining how the child is currently doing in school and what areas of need the child has. This IEP team member must be able to talk about the instructional implications of the child's evaluation results, which will help the team plan appropriate instruction to address the child's needs.

The individual representing the school system is also a valuable team member. This person knows a great deal about special education services and educating children with disabilities. He or she can talk about the necessary school resources. It is important that this individual have the authority to commit resources and be able to ensure that whatever services are set out in the IEP will actually be provided.

The IEP team may also include additional individuals with knowledge or special expertise about the child. The parent or the school system can invite these individuals to participate on the team. Parents, for example, may invite an advocate who knows the child, a professional with special expertise about the child and his or her disability, or others (such as a vocational educator who has been working with the child) who can talk about the child's strengths and/or needs. The school system may invite one or more individuals who can offer special expertise or knowledge about the child, such as a paraprofessional or related services professional. Because an important part of developing an IEP is considering a child's need for related services (see the list of related services in the box on the previous page), related service professionals are often involved as IEP team members or participants. They share their special expertise about the child's needs and how their own professional services can address those needs. Depending on the child's individual needs, some related service professionals attending the IEP meeting or otherwise helping to develop the IEP might include occupational or

physical therapists, adaptive physical education providers, psychologists, or speech-language pathologists.

When an IEP is being developed for a student of transition age, representatives from transition service agencies can be important participants. (See the box below for more information about transition.) Whenever a purpose of meeting is to consider needed transition services, the school must invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. This individual can help the team plan any transition services the student needs. He or she can also commit the resources of the agency to pay for or provide needed transition services. If he or she does not attend the meeting, then the school must take alternative steps to obtain the agency's participation in the planning of the student's transition services.

And, last but not least, the student may also be a member of the IEP team. If transition service needs or transition services are going to be discussed at the meeting, the student must be invited to attend. More and more students are participating in and even leading their own IEP meetings. This allows them to have a strong voice in their own education and can teach them a great deal about self-advocacy and self-determination.

The Regular Education Teacher as Part of the IEP Team

Appendix A of the federal regulations for Part B of IDEA answers many questions about the IEP. Question 24 addresses the role of the regular education teacher on the IEP team. Here's an excerpt from the answer:

"...while a regular education teacher must be a member of the IEP team if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment, the teacher need not (depending upon the child's needs and the purpose of the specific IEP team meeting) be required to participate in all decisions made as part of the meeting or to be present throughout the entire meeting or attend every meeting. For example, the regular education teacher who is a member of the IEP team must participate in discussions and decisions about how to modify the general curriculum in the regular classroom to ensure the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum and participation in the regular education environment.

"Depending upon the specific circumstances, however, it may not be necessary for the regular education teacher to participate in discussions and decisions regarding, for example, the physical therapy needs of the child, if the teacher is not responsible for implementing that portion of the child's IEP.

"In determining the extent of the regular education teacher's participation at IEP meetings, public agencies and parents should discuss and try to reach agreement on whether the child's regular education teacher that is a member of the IEP team should be present at a particular IEP meeting and, if so, for what period of time. The extent to which it would be appropriate for the regular education teacher member of the IEP team to participate in IEP meetings must be decided on a case-by-case basis."

Related Services

A child may require any of the following related services in order to benefit from special education. Related services, as listed under IDEA, include (but are not limited to):

- *Audiology services*
- *Counseling services*
- *Early identification and assessment of disabilities in children*
- *Medical services*
- *Occupational therapy*
- *Orientation and mobility services*
- *Parent counseling and training*
- *Physical therapy*
- *Psychological services*
- *Recreation*
- *Rehabilitation counseling services*
- *School health services*
- *Social work services in schools*
- *Speech-language pathology services*
- *Transportation*

If a child needs a particular related service in order to benefit from special education, the related service professional should be involved in developing the IEP. He or she may be invited by the school or parent to join the IEP team as a person "with knowledge or special expertise about the child."

Transition Services

Transition refers to activities meant to prepare students with disabilities for adult life. This can include developing postsecondary education and career goals, getting work experience while still in school, setting up linkages with adult service providers such as the vocational rehabilitation agency-- whatever is appropriate for the student, given his or her interests, preferences, skills, and needs. Statements about the student's transition needs must be included in the IEP after the student reaches a certain age:

- *Transition planning, for students beginning at age 14 (and sometimes younger)--involves helping the student plan his or her courses of study (such as advanced placement or vocational education) so that the classes the student takes will lead to his or her post-school goals.*
- *Transition services, for students beginning at age 16 (and sometimes younger)--involves providing the student with a coordinated set of services to help the student move from school to adult life. Services focus upon the student's needs or interest in such areas as: higher education or training, employment, adult services, independent living, or taking part in the community.*

8. Writing the IEP

To help decide what special education and related services the student needs, generally the IEP team will begin by looking at the child's evaluation results, such as classroom tests, individual tests given to establish the student's eligibility, and observations by teachers, parents, paraprofessionals, related service providers, administrators, and others. This information will help the team describe the student's "present levels of educational performance" -in other words, how the student is currently doing in school. Knowing how the student is currently performing in school will help the team develop annual goals to address those areas where the student has an identified educational need.

The IEP team must also discuss specific information about the child. This includes:

- the child's strengths;*
- the parents' ideas for enhancing their child's education;*
- the results of recent evaluations or reevaluations; and*
- how the child has done on state and district-wide tests.*

In addition, the IEP team must consider the "special factors" described in the box below.

It is important that the discussion of what the child needs be framed around how to help the child:

- advance toward the annual goals;*
- be involved in and progress in the general curriculum;*
- participate in extracurricular and nonacademic activities; and*
- be educated with and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children.*

Based on the above discussion, the IEP team will then write the child's IEP. This includes the services and supports the school will provide for the child. If the IEP team decides that a child needs a particular device or service (including an intervention, accommodation, or other program modification), the IEP team must write this information in the IEP. As an example, consider a child whose behavior interferes with learning. The IEP team would need to consider positive and effective ways to address that behavior. The team would discuss the positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports that the child needs in order to learn how to control or manage his or her behavior. If the team decides that the child needs a particular service (including an intervention, accommodation, or other program modification), they must include a statement to that effect in the child's IEP.

Special Factors to Consider

Depending on the needs of the child, the IEP team needs to consider what the law calls special factors. These include:

- If the child's behavior interferes with his or her learning or the learning of others, the IEP team will consider strategies and supports to address the child's behavior.*
- If the child has limited proficiency in English, the IEP team will consider the child's language needs as these needs relate to his or her IEP.*
- If the child is blind or visually impaired, the IEP team must provide for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille, unless it determines after an appropriate evaluation that the child does not need this instruction.*
- If the child has communication needs, the IEP team must consider those needs.*
- If the child is deaf or hard of hearing, the IEP team will consider his or her language and communication needs. This includes the child's opportunities to communicate directly with classmates and school staff in his or her usual method of communication (for example, sign language).*

- *The IEP team must always consider the child's need for assistive technology devices or services.*

For more information about these special factors, see §300.346.

Will Parents Need an Interpreter in Order to Participate Fully?

If the parents have a limited proficiency in English or are deaf, they may need an interpreter in order to understand and be understood. In this case, the school must make reasonable efforts to arrange for an interpreter during meetings pertaining to the child's educational placement. For meetings regarding the development or review of the IEP, the school must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that parents understand the meetings--including arranging for an interpreter. This provision should help to ensure that parents are not limited in their ability to participate in their child's education because of language or communication barriers.

Therefore, if parents need an interpreter for a meeting to discuss their child's evaluation, eligibility for special education or IEP, they should let the school know ahead of time. Telling the school in advance allows the school to make arrangements for an interpreter so that parents can participate fully in the meeting.

9. Deciding Placement

In addition, the child's placement (where the IEP will be carried out) must be decided. The placement decision is made by a group of people, including the parents and others who know about the child, what the evaluation results mean, and what types of placements are appropriate. In some states, the IEP team serves as the group making the placement decision. In other states, this decision may be made by another group of people. In all cases, the parents have the right to be members of the group that decides the educational placement of the child.

Placement decisions must be made according to IDEA's least restrictive environment requirements--commonly known as LRE. These requirements state that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities must be educated with children who do not have disabilities.

The law also clearly states that special classes, separate schools, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment may occur only if the nature or severity of the child's disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

What type of placements are there? Depending on the needs of the child, his or her IEP may be carried out in the regular class (with supplementary aids and services, as needed), in a special class (where every student in the class is receiving special education services for some or all of the day), in a special school, at home, in a hospital and institution, or in another setting. A school system may meet its obligation to ensure that the child has an appropriate placement available by:

- *providing an appropriate program for the child on its own;*
- *contracting with another agency to provide an appropriate program; or*
- *utilizing some other mechanism or arrangement that is consistent with IDEA for providing or paying for an appropriate program for the child.*

The placement group will base its decision on the IEP and which placement option is appropriate for the child. Can the child be educated in the regular classroom, with proper aids and supports? If the child cannot be educated in the regular classroom, even with appropriate aids and supports, then the placement group will talk about other placements for the child.

10. After the IEP is Written

When the IEP has been written, parents must receive a copy at no cost to themselves. The IDEA also stresses that everyone who will be involved in implementing the IEP must have access to the document. This includes the child's:

- regular education teacher(s);*
- special education teacher(s);*
- related service provider(s) (for example, speech therapist); or*
- any other service provider (such as a paraprofessional) who will be responsible for a part of the child's education.*

Each of these individuals needs to know what his or her specific responsibilities are for carrying out the child's IEP. This includes the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that the child must receive, according to the IEP.

Parents' Permission

Before the school can provide a child with special education and related services for the first time, the child's parents must give their written permission.

11. Implementing the IEP

Once the IEP is written, it is time to carry it out-in other words, to provide the student with the special education and related services as listed in the IEP. This includes all supplementary aids and services and program modifications that the IEP team has identified as necessary for the student to advance appropriately toward his or her IEP goals, to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum, and participate in other school activities. While it is beyond the scope of this guide to discuss in detail the many issues involved in implementing a student's IEP, certain suggestions can be offered.

- Every individual involved in providing services to the student should know and understand his or her responsibilities for carrying out the IEP. This will help ensure that the student receives the services that have been planned, including the specific modifications and accommodations the IEP team has identified as necessary.*
- Teamwork plays an important part in carrying out the IEP. Many professionals are likely to be involved in providing services and supports to the student. Sharing expertise and insights can help make everyone's job a lot easier and can certainly improve results for students with disabilities. Schools can encourage teamwork by giving teachers, support staff and/or paraprofessionals time to plan or work together on such matters as adapting the general curriculum to address the student's unique needs. Teachers, support staff, and others providing services for children with disabilities may request training and staff development.*

- *Communication between home and school is also important. Parents can share information about what is happening at home and build upon what the child is learning at school. If the child is having difficulty at school, parents may be able to offer insight or help the school explore possible reasons as well as possible solutions.*
- *It is helpful to have someone in charge of coordinating and monitoring the services the student receives. In addition to special education, the student may be receiving any number of related services. Many people may be involved in delivering those services. Having a person in charge of overseeing that services are being delivered as planned can help ensure that the IEP is being carried out appropriately.*
- *The regular progress reports that the law requires will help parents and schools monitor the child's progress toward his or her annual goals. It is important to know if the child is not making the progress expected-or if he or she has progressed much faster than expected. Together, parents and school personnel can then address the child's needs as those needs become evident.*

12. Reviewing and Revising the IEP

The IEP team must review the child's IEP at least once a year. One purpose of this review is to see whether the child is achieving his or her annual goals. The team must revise the child's individualized education program, if necessary, to address:

- *the child's progress or lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in the general curriculum;*
- *information gathered through any reevaluation of the child;*
- *information about the child that the parents share;*
- *information about the child that the school shares (for example, insights from the teacher based on his or her observation of the child or the child's classwork);*
- *the child's anticipated needs; or*
- *other matters.*

Although the IDEA requires this IEP review at least once a year, in fact the team may review and revise the IEP more often. Either the parents or the school can ask to hold an IEP meeting to revise the child's IEP. For example, the child may not be making progress toward his or her IEP goals, and his or her teacher or parents may become concerned. On the other hand, the child may have met most or all of the goals in the IEP, and new ones need to be written. In either case, the IEP team would meet to revise the IEP.

Look at Those Factors Again!

When the IEP team is meeting to conduct a review of the child's IEP and, as necessary, to revise it, members must again consider all of the factors discussed previously. This includes:

- *the child's strengths,*
- *the parents' ideas for enhancing their child's education,*

- *the results of recent evaluations or reevaluations, and*
- *how the child has done on state and district-wide tests.*

The IEP team must also consider the "special factors," as listed earlier.

13. What If Parents Don't Agree With the IEP?

There are times when parents may not agree with the school's recommendations about their child's education. Under the law, parents have the right to challenge decisions about their child's eligibility, evaluation, placement, and the services that the school provides to the child. If parents disagree with the school's actions-or refusal to take action-in these matters, they have the right to pursue a number of options. They may do the following:

- *Try to reach an agreement. Parents can talk with school officials about their concerns and try to reach an agreement. Sometimes the agreement can be temporary. For example, the parents and school can agree to try a plan of instruction or a placement for a certain period of time and see how the student does.*
- *Ask for mediation. During mediation, the parents and school sit down with someone who is not involved in the disagreement and try to reach an agreement. The school may offer mediation, if it is available as an option for resolving disputes prior to due process.*
- *Ask for due process. During a due process hearing, the parents and school personnel appear before an impartial hearing officer and present their sides of the story. The hearing officer decides how to solve the problem. (Note: Mediation must be available at least at the time a due process hearing is requested.)*
- *File a complaint with the state education agency. To file a complaint, generally parents write directly to the SEA and say what part of IDEA they believe the school has violated. The agency must resolve the complaint within 60 calendar days. An extension of that time limit is permitted only if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to the complaint.*

OSEP Monitoring

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) regularly monitors states to see that they are complying with IDEA. Every two years OSEP requires that states report progress toward meeting established performance goals that, at a minimum, address the performance of children on assessments, drop-out rates, and graduation rates. As part of its monitoring, the Department reviews IEPs and interviews parents, students, and school staff to find out:

- *whether, and how, the IEP team made the decisions reflected in the IEP;*
- *whether those decisions and the IEP content are based on the child's unique needs, as determined through evaluation and the IEP process;*
- *whether any state or local policies or practices have interfered with decisions of the IEP team about the child's educational needs and the services that the school would provide to meet those needs; and*

- *whether the school has provided the services listed in the IEP.*

This guide is intended to help states and school districts write IEPs that comply with IDEA. Writing effective IEPs is a very important first step in improving educational results for children with disabilities.

14. Summary

The IEP is the cornerstone of special education. Writing and implementing an effective IEP involves many people, many different steps, and collaborative decision making.

The information provided in this guide about the IEP has been fairly general. To help you get better acquainted with the various parts of the IEP, a sample IEP form is presented on the next pages. The sample IEP form includes space for all of the information that an IEP must contain under federal law. (Remember that IEP forms in your area may require more information that may be of value to the student and those implementing the IEP.) The different parts of the sample are paired with direct quotes from the law, so that you can easily see:

- *how the law defines what type of information goes into the various parts of a child's IEP, and*
- *how this information goes together to create an educational program for a particular child.*

Attachment A presents the IDEA's regulations for "Individualized Education Programs" (§§300.340-300.350). Under §300.347, where "IEP content" is described, we have included additional information primarily from Appendix A and Attachment 1 of the regulations. This information can be very useful in developing a fuller understanding of what type of information is important to capture about a child in the IEP.

15. Sample Form

Use of this IEP form, or any other form, will not, in and of itself, ensure compliance with IDEA's Part B requirements. Whether or not a state or local education agency chooses to require or recommend that teams use this form for IEPs, all IEP team participants including parents need to receive clear guidance and training regarding Part B requirements and to understand the importance of the IEP in focusing instruction to meet the unique needs of each child with a disability.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Student Name [Space to write]

Date of Meeting to Develop or Review IEP [Space to write]

Note: For each student with a disability beginning at age 14 (or younger, if appropriate), a statement of the student's transition service needs must be included under the applicable parts of the IEP. The statement must focus on the courses the student needs to take to reach his or her post-school goals.

From the Regulations:

Statement of Transition Service Needs--34 CFR §300.347(b)(1)

"The IEP must include...[f]or each student with a disability beginning at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), and updated annually, a statement of the transition service

needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's courses of study (such as participation in advanced- placement courses or a vocational education program);"

Present Levels of Educational Performance

From the Regulations:

Statement of Present Levels of Educational Performance--34 CFR §300.347(a)(1)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . . a statement of the child's present levels of educational performance, including

"(i) How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children); or

"(ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities;"

Measurable Annual Goals (Including Benchmarks or Short-Term Objectives)

From the Regulations:

Statement of Measurable Annual Goals, Including Benchmarks or Short-Term Objectives--34 CFR §300.347(a)(2)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . . a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to

"(i) Meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children), or for preschool children, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities; and

"(ii) Meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;"

Special Education and Related Services

- ***Start Date***
- ***Location***
- ***Frequency***
- ***Duration***

Supplementary Aids and Services

- ***Start Date***
- ***Location***
- ***Frequency***
- ***Duration***

Program Modifications or Supports for School Personnel

- ***Start Date***
- ***Location***
- ***Frequency***
- ***Duration***

From the Regulations:

Statement of the Special Education and Related Services, Supplementary Aids and Services, Program Modifications, and Supports For School Personnel--34 CFR §300.347(a)(3)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include... a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child

"(i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;

"(ii) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with 34 CFR §300.347(a)(1) and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and

" (iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the activities described in this section;"

--ALSO--

Beginning Date, Frequency, Location, and Duration of Services and Modifications--34 CFR §300.347(a)(6)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . . the projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in 34 CFR §300.347(a)(3), and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications;"

Explanation of Extent, if Any, to Which Child Will Not Participate with Nondisabled Children

From the Regulations:

Explanation of Extent, if Any, to Which Child Will Not Participate with Nondisabled Children 34 CFR §300.347(a)(4)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . . an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in 34 CFR §300.347(a)(3);"

Administration of State and District-wide Assessments of Student Achievement

Any Individual Modifications In Administration Needed For Child To Participate In State Or District-wide Assessment(s)

From the Regulations:

Statement Of Any Individual Modifications in Administration of State or District-wide Assessments 34--CFR §300.347(a)(5)(i)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . . a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment;"

If IEP Team Determines That Child Will Not Participate In A Particular State Or District-Wide Assessment

- Why isn't the assessment appropriate for the child?[space to write]*
- How will the child be assessed?[space to write]*

From the Regulations:

If Child Will Not Participate in State or District-wide Assessment--34 CFR §300.347(a)(5)(ii)

"If the IEP team determines that a child with a disability will not participate in a particular State or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of an assessment), the IEP must include a statement of

"(A) Why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and

"(B) How the child will be assessed;"

How Child's Progress Toward Annual Goals Will Be Measured

From the Regulations:

How Child's Progress Will Be Measured--34 CFR §300.347(a)(7)(i)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . .

a statement of how the child's progress toward the annual goals described in 34 CFR §300.347(a)(2) will be measured;"

How Child's Parents Will Be Regularly Informed Of Child's Progress Toward Annual Goals And Extent To Which Child's Progress Is Sufficient To Meet Goals By End of Year

From the Regulations:

How Parents Will Be Informed of Their Child's Progress--34 CFR §300.347(a)(7)(ii)

"The IEP for each child with a disability must include . . . a statement of how the child's parents will be regularly informed (through such means as periodic report cards), at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress, of

"(A) Their child's progress toward the annual goals; and

"(B) The extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year." <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/iepguide/index.html>

Ranking					
		<div> <div>←</div> <div>Satisfied</div> <div>Not Satisfied</div> <div>→</div> </div>			
		Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(1)(b) Special Education	The school provides a clear, cohesive, and comprehensive description of how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals.	The school provides a clear description of how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals.	The school provides a limited description of how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate description of how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals. --OR-- The application does not address the regular evaluation and monitoring of students with special needs.	
	Comments:				

G.(1)(c) If applicable, provide a **clear, cohesive and comprehensive** plan for graduating students with

special education needs that complies with federal and state regulations. (high schools only)

Not applicable as Academic Opportunities Academy will only serve students in grades 6th, 7th and 8th.

Ranking				
<div> <div>←</div> <div>Satisfied</div> <div>→</div> <div>Not Satisfied</div> </div>				
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(1)(c) Special Education	<i>High Schools Only</i>	<i>High Schools Only</i>	<i>High Schools Only</i>	<i>High Schools Only</i>
	The school provides a clear, cohesive and comprehensive plan for graduating students with special education needs that complies with federal and state regulations.	The school provides a clear plan for graduating students with special education needs that complies with federal and state regulations.	The school provides a limited plan for graduating students with special education needs.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate plan for graduating students with special education needs. --OR-- The application does not address graduating students with special education needs.
Comments:				

G.(1)(d) Provides a **clear, cohesive and comprehensive** plan that addresses how the school will provide ancillary staff support for special need students

Address Staffing Needs

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in

this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to use the ancillary staff support for special needs students from Cooperative Educational Services (CES) of Albuquerque, New Mexico when any ancillary services are required.

*Cooperative Educational Services
4216 Balloon Park Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 344-5470*

Cooperative Educational Services is a Purchasing Cooperative united by a Joint Powers Agreement to aid Public Schools in New Mexico. CES is an organization comprised of New Mexico's 89 school districts plus many other public education institutions, including charter schools, two and four-year post-secondary institutions, BIE schools and state schools. CES also serves cities, counties, municipalities, and qualifying nonprofits.

CES has been providing Ancillary services to member districts and schools since its inception in 1979. These services are provided through an annual contractual arrangement with CES between the schools and the providers. Through this program CES assists schools by providing support for their special education program.

Qualified related service providers are employed and may be placed in any of the member schools throughout New Mexico on a full or part time basis during the school year. These include all of the K-12 school districts in New Mexico and over 75 charter schools, BIE schools and other member agencies.

Cooperative Educational Services provides a core group of trained personnel in the following areas:

- Interim administrative positions*
- Special needs services in administration, program audits, Least Restrictive*
- Transition strategies*
- Positive Behavior Support/Bullying Training*
- STARS/ADS consultancy*
- Transportation training*
- Data Driven Decision Making*

- *Federal Programs Review and Audits*
- *Needs Assessment*
- *Grant Writing*
- *Leadership Team Training*
- *Turnaround Specialist Team Training*
- *Writing Policy*
- *Hearing Officer*
- *Facilitating administrative teamwork*
- *Superintendent Searches*
- *Evaluator (program effectiveness)*
- *Technology*
- *Business and financial services*
- *Procurement consulting*

These are areas that the CES Professional Services program is able to assist districts in by providing access to mid-level and executive team personnel in meeting their consultancy needs.

<http://www.ces.org/ancillary-overview.aspx>

Academic Opportunities Academy plans to use T & T Staff Management Inc. as our Human Resource provider for non-ancillary needs, to screen and perform all necessary background checks on prospective employees.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(1)(d) Special Education	The school provides a clear, cohesive and comprehensive plan for budgeting and staffing to meet the identified needs and educational plans for students needing special education support/services. The plan fully addresses how the school will provide ancillary staff support.	The school provides a clear plan for budgeting and staffing to meet the identified needs and educational plans for students needing special education support/services. The plan adequately addresses how the school will provide ancillary staff support.	The school provides a limited plan for budgeting and staffing to meet the identified needs and educational plans for students needing special education support/services. The plan does not or minimally addresses how the school will provide ancillary staff support.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate plan for budgeting and staffing to meet the identified needs and educational plans for students needing special education support/services. --OR-- The application did not address budgeting, staffing, and ancillary services.
Comments:				

G.(2) Students with Section 504 Accommodation Plans.

H.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of how the school will serve, evaluate, and monitor the progress and success of students with Section 504 Plans.

Monitoring 504

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other

sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with the following seven requirements and all of these requirements of the Guidelines for Educators and Administrators for Implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973—Subpart D:

- 1. Provide written assurances of nondiscrimination when applying for federal funds.*
- 2. Take steps to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities.*
- 3. Appoint a 504/ADA Coordinator for local educational agencies with 15 or more employees to coordinate efforts to comply with this law.*

—Best Practice—

Even if a district/school has fewer than 15 employees, they should appoint a Section 504/ADA Coordinator.

- 4. Develop an ongoing process to locate and identify children who are not receiving services.*
- 5. Provide public notice regarding nondiscrimination and responsibilities.*
- 6. Develop a grievance procedure.*
- 7. Conduct a self-evaluation of their programs and activities to ensure facilities are accessible and discriminatory practices are eliminated.*

Three Required Elements of Section 504

The identification process for 504 is not the first step in determining the needs of students.

- 8. The first step begins with the school's Student Assistance Team (SAT) process who determines if the student has a need that warrants evaluation.*

9. *The determination of impairment must limit a major life activity.*
 10. *3. Limitation on the major overall life activity must be substantial, not mild or moderate.*

Some information in this document was adapted from Guidelines for Educators and Administrators for Implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is a copyright-free technical assistance manual prepared by the New Mexico Public Education Department, Quality Assurance Bureau, January 2010. www.ped.state.nm.us

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(2) Students with Section 504 Plans	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of how the school will serve, evaluate, and monitor the progress and success of students with Section 504 Plans.	The school provides a clear description of how the school will serve, evaluate, and monitor the progress and success of students with Section 504 Plans.	The school provides a limited description of how the school will serve, evaluate, and monitor the progress and success of students with Section 504 Plans.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate description of how the school will serve, evaluate, and monitor the progress and success of students with Section 504 Plans. --OR-- The application does not address Section 504 Plans.
Comments:				

G.(3) English Language Learner (ELLs):

G.(3)(a) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** explanation of how English language learners will be identified.

Identifying ELL

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

All students who enroll with Academic Opportunities Academy will be given a home language survey to determine if a student may need ELL sheltered instruction. Students or parents, who indicate that English is the student's second language, will be given an initial assessment of the student's language skills. Our Bilingual TOEFEL Teacher will be notified so that individualized instruction can be provided to the student.

A uniform initial identification procedure must be used with all students enrolling with Academic Opportunities Academy. The recommended procedure to identify LEP/ELL students for language instruction educational programs is based on the following steps:

Step 1. Identification of LEP Students:

Home Language Survey

A Home Language Survey is an Academic Opportunities Academy developed tool to be given to all entering students and used to identify students who may not be proficient in English.

The Home Language Survey is designed to identify, for possible further evaluation:

- Students who communicate in a language other than English; or*
- Students whose families use a primary language other than English in the home; or*
- Students who use a language other than English in daily non-school surroundings.*

Note: Having another language spoken in the home or routinely used in other settings is not an automatic identification of a student as LEP/ELL.

The preliminary evaluation conducted in the next step determines the students who should be referred for placement in a language instruction educational program.

Step 2. Preliminary Evaluation:

Academic History

The student's academic history should be thoroughly assessed including:

- Academic records from within or outside the United States*
- Course grades which, in relation to the student's grade level, indicate that lack of progress is due to limited English language acquisition*
- Information on everyday classroom performance*

- *An academic assessment may be administered to support educator judgment (e.g., locally developed, commercially available assessments, and/or reading inventories).*

Step3. Screener Evaluation

Screener Evaluation for Instructional Placement Students with limited English language skills who have recently arrived in the United States, or are newly enrolled with Academic Opportunities Academy and are potential ELLs, should be formally screened to help determine whether or not the student is in need of a language instruction educational program. The WIDA ACCESS Placement Test™, or W-APT is Wisconsin's initial English language "screener." The W-APT score should be used to determine the initial tier placement for English language assessment and assist in determining the student's initial English language proficiency (ELP) level. In sum, the screener serves to identify ELLs, and assists in placement into an appropriate language instruction educational program that meets the needs of the student. In addition, screener scores provide an initial tier/level placement on the annual ELP assessment, ACCESS for ELLs®. Finally, the ELP level determined on the screener identifies students as ELLs in student enrollment systems.

New Mexico is a member of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment), joining in 2008. WIDA is a consortium of states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for English language learners which offers states programming for identifying and annually assessing the English language development of its English learners.

*ELL Website: Bilingual and Multicultural Education NCLB Title III
http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Bilingual_index.html*

Laws & Regulations

The following documents offer additional information about statewide ELL regulations:

- *As of the 2007-2008 school year, New Mexico's schools were home to more than 60,600 English language learners (ELLs), which marks a 15% decrease from the 1997-98 school year (NCELA, 2010). The top five languages or language groups spoken by ELLs in New Mexico are Spanish, Navajo, Zuni, Vietnamese, and North American Indian languages (EPE, 2009).*
- *New Mexico is a member of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment), joining in 2008. WIDA is a consortium of states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for English language learners which offers states programming for identifying and annually assessing the English language development of its English learners.*
- *English Language Development* [NMAC Standards for Excellence (Title VI, Chapter 29, Part 5)]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Act* [Chapter 22 Article 23 NMSA 1978]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Guidelines* [NMAC 6.32.2 - Bilingual Regulation]*
- *English Plus Declaration in New Mexico* [House Joint Memorial 16: Supporting Language Rights in the United States]*
- *NCLEA: Title III Information*
- *[NMAC Standards for Excellence (Title VI, Chapter 29, Part 5)]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Act* [Chapter 22 Article 23 NMSA 1978]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Guidelines* [NMAC 6.32.2 - Bilingual Regulation]*
- *English Plus Declaration in New Mexico* [House Joint Memorial 16: Supporting Language Rights in the United States]*

The WIDA MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language) is a series of English language proficiency assessments for Kindergarten through Grade 12. MODEL can be used by educators as an identification/placement assessment for newly enrolled ELLs or as an interim progress monitoring assessment.

Unlike ACCESS for ELLs and the W-APT, MODEL is available for use in schools around the world. Learn more about the similarities and differences between WIDA's assessments.

Features

MODEL test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards:

- *Social & Instructional Language*
- *Language of Language Arts*
- *Language of Mathematics*
- *Language of Science*
- *Language of Social Studies*

Test forms are divided into five grade level clusters:

- *Kindergarten*
- *Grades 1–2*
- *Grades 3–5*
- *Grades 6–8*
- *Grades 9–12*

Each form of the test assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

MODEL is an adaptive test allowing flexible placement within sections of the test based on student performance.

Purpose and Use

As a flexible, on-demand language proficiency assessment, this test can be administered at any time during the school year, depending on the needs of the district, school, teacher, or student. MODEL can be used for these purposes:


- *To identify students who may be candidates for English as a Second Language (ESL)/bilingual services;*
- *To determine the academic English language proficiency level of students new to a school or to the U.S. school system;*
- *To place students into the necessary amount and type of instructional services and support; and*
- *To serve as an interim assessment during the school year, providing information that informs instructional planning and other decisions related to students' education.*

In WIDA Consortium member states, the WIDA MODEL may serve two additional purposes:

- To determine tier placement on ACCESS for ELLs, the annual language proficiency assessment used for accountability purposes.*
- To guide instructional and curricular decisions while waiting for ACCESS for ELLs score reports.*

Please note that MODEL is not designed to satisfy the U.S. federal legal requirements for annual assessment and accountability and should not be the only measure used in exiting students from language support services.

Sample Items

Sample items specific to the MODEL assessment are currently not available. Item specifications for the MODEL test are very similar to ACCESS for ELLs, therefore, to get a better understanding of how WIDA assessments relate to its English Language Proficiency Standards and for a better idea of what items may look like; we invite you to review the [ACCESS for ELLs sample items](#) .

Test Development

The MODEL assessment was first introduced in 2008 with the release of the Kindergarten assessment. Grades 1-2 and 3-5 were released in fall of 2010. Finally, in fall of 2011, grades 6-8 and 9-12 were released to complete the series. The series of assessments was developed in partnership with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and as a collaborative effort of consortium member states. Each item or performance-based task on MODEL was carefully developed and reviewed to ensure that it allows students to demonstrate meeting the targeted model performance indicator at the targeted performance level from the standards. Items were reviewed for content and bias, and then field tested to ensure that the test works as intended, to examine data and the test's psychometric properties, and to link performances on MODEL to performances on ACCESS for ELLs.

<https://www.wida.us/assessment/MODEL/>

Federal Requirements

All ELL students must be assessed annually regarding their English language proficiency. There are also special considerations for their assessment in the statewide academic tests.

Participation of English Language Learners (ELL) in the state assessment: The State of New Mexico is committed to the ideal that all students can learn and achieve high standards. Both state and federal laws require that ELL students be assessed for their academic performance, as well as their proficiency in English.

English Language Proficiency Assessment: Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and subsequent federal and state mandates, all public school districts/schools must screen, identify, and provide services to English Language Learners.

The student's English language proficiency is determined by his/her ability to listen, speak, read, and write.

All ELLs must participate in the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA) the state of New Mexico is committed to the ideal that all students can learn and achieve high standards. Historically, English Language Learners were often excluded from statewide assessment efforts. As a result, alternative or specialized language programs were not provided with data that could inform and improve instruction. Since 2001, state and federal laws require English Language Learners (ELL) to appropriately participate in the New Mexico Statewide Assessment Program, which currently measures academic performance in Language Arts, Reading, Math, and Science. The state recognizes that students who are still in the process of acquiring academic English may not be able to adequately understand and interpret the information contained in the English version of the assessments. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the subsequent federal and state mandates, all public school districts/schools must screen, identify, and provide services to English Language Learners. Initially, New Mexico school districts/schools shall identify students with a Home Language Survey that determines whether a language other than English is spoken in the home. If there is an indication of a language other than English, the district/school must classify the level of the student's English language proficiency, using the state-approved English language proficiency placement test (W-APT). Once the level of language proficiency has been determined, all currently identified ELLs must be assessed annually with the full ACCESS for ELLs until proficiency is attained. Trained personnel must administer the W-APT and the ACCESS. Test administrators are not required to be certified or endorsed teachers in order to administer this test. However, test administrators must be trained in the administration, interpretation, and scoring of the tests, especially the oral component. They must administer the tests under the supervision of a licensed school instructor or administrator. This training is provided by WIDA via online training modules.

SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INCLUDE:

Length of Enrollment in the U.S. Schools—The options for how ELLs may participate in the NM Standards Based Assessment depend, in large part, on the length of time that the student has been enrolled in the U.S. public schools. Students who are New to U.S. Schools – Students who are enrolled in their first year in school in the United States may receive a language exemption for the Reading subtest ONLY. In this situation, the student's language proficiency assessment (ACCESS for ELLs) score, if available, will be substituted for the Reading Subtest in determining the school's and district's participation rate. In all other content areas, however, the new student must participate in the Spanish language version of the assessment (if available and appropriate), or in the English language version, with accommodations provided if these are determined to be appropriate by the local school's Student Assistance Team. Because the student has not been in the school for a full academic year at the time of the testing, his or her test results will not be included in the performance data used to determine School Growth Targets (SGTs). If this option is chosen, the Student Bio-grid bubble for the "Language Exemption for Reading ONLY" should be filled in. For the subtests other than Reading, the test completion status should be "Student Tested All Session," and the type(s) of accommodations that are provided, if any, should be indicated by bubbling in. Students Who Have Been in the U.S. Schools for Less than Three Consecutive Years—These students may participate in the NM Standards Based Assessment in one of three ways:

- 1. The student may participate in the standard administration of the Spanish language version of the assessment (where available and appropriate);*
- 2. The student may participate in the English language version of the assessment with appropriate accommodations; or*
- 3. The student may participate in the standard administration of the English language version of the assessment without accommodations.*

Locally developed portfolio assessments are not permitted under the terms of the ESEA (NCLB 2001).

Students Who Have Been in U.S. Schools for Three or More Consecutive Years- These students must participate in the English language version of the assessment (with or without allowable accommodations) unless a waiver to continue testing the student in his/her home language has been approved by the secretary. Waivers to Continue Assessing Students in Their Home Language-If after three consecutive years in U.S. schools, the district determines (on a case-by-case basis) that academic assessments in the student's home language would yield more accurate and reliable information about his/her knowledge of a subject, the district may request a waiver from NMPED to continue to assess the student in his/her home language. Approved waivers are effective for the current year only. Waivers may be requested for a maximum of two years. The waiver request must be submitted in advance by the district superintendent to the New Mexico Secretary of education for approval. This request must take the form of a memorandum that includes the following information:

- 1. Student name*
- 2. State student ID number*
- 3. School in which the student is currently enrolled*
- 4. Grade level*
- 5. English language proficiency scores and date(s) of most recent administration*
- 6. Consecutive years in U.S. public schools*
- 7. Indication of whether this is the first or second waiver requested for the student*
- 8. Percentage of content instruction in English*
- 9. Percentage of content instruction in Spanish*
- 10. Language of instruction in the content area*
- 11. Reason or justification for the waiver request*
- 12. Name of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) members in the decision*

Recommendation for Test Scheduling-It is the school test coordinator's (STCs) responsibility to inform test administrators (TAs) about the testing schedule. The ACCESS is an untimed test. Students must be allowed to continue working as long as they are making progress. Testing Sessions May Not Be Interrupted-Do not begin testing if you feel students may not be able to finish the session. Once a testing session has begun, students must be allowed to finish. Students may be allowed to use the restroom as long as they are escorted to and from the facility. Students are not allowed to stop in the middle of the session and resume at a later point in time. Invalidating Tests for ACCESS for ELLs-The test in a particular subtest area must be invalidated if there are testing irregularities or unusual circumstances that prevent the completion of any testing session. The invalidated test will not be scored. Testing irregularities must be reported by the DTC to the NMPED Assistant Secretary of Assessment and Accountability Division within three (3) days of learning of the testing irregularities. [NMAC.6.10.7] Time and Setting-Time and setting is an adaptation that is allowed for all students; however, if breaks are allowed within subtests, repeat directions before restart. As with all other students, ELL students may receive adaptations of setting and timing. Students are not allowed accommodations in the areas of language knowledge and skills. However, students with special needs, such as the physically or mentally handicapped, may be allowed accommodations that relate to their disabilities. Testing accommodations shall be similar to those accommodations used in the classroom instruction. Each school shall utilize a team to review the individual student progress in order to determine accommodations. For the students being served on an Individualized Education Plan or a Section 504 Plan, those plans will respectively determine appropriate test accommodations. For all other students, the school may use its Student Assistance Team (SAT) or form another school-

based team for this purpose, but the team must be comprised of at least three school staff and ones who are familiar with the student's abilities and language needs, standardized test procedures, and valid ELL test accommodations. Accommodations for ELL Students Taking the Statewide Academic Assessments—to determine the appropriateness of participation of ELL students in the NM Standards Based Assessment, districts should consider each student's level of proficiency in all domains of language (speaking, reading, writing, listening, and comprehension) as well as the nature of the student's instructional program. The district must ensure that the students do not receive accommodations without current justification supported by the data. English Language Learners maybe provided appropriate accommodations.

- 1. It should be noted that not all speakers of languages other than English are limited in their English language proficiency. Second-language students who are proficient speakers, readers, and writers of English must be assessed with the English version of the statewide assessments.*
- 2. The language of instruction in the content area is also critically important. If the student has been receiving instruction in English in the content area, it may be more beneficial to have the student participate in the English language version of the assessment. Although the student may have limited proficiency in English, he or she may not have acquired sufficient academic vocabulary in the home language so as to perform well on the Spanish language assessment.*
- 3. Each school may use its Student Assistance Team (SAT) or form another school-based team for the purpose of reviewing student progress and determining needed interventions and/or accommodations.*

Team members may include:

- a. The Bilingual Education program coordinator*
- b. The student's bilingual education or TESOL–endorsed teacher*
- c. The student's other classroom teachers*
- d. Test administrators and school test coordinators*
- e. The school principal and/or counselor*
- f. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s), when appropriate*
- g. The student, when appropriate*

The SAT school-based team shall base its decisions about appropriate accommodations on the following criteria:

- a. Annual review of the student's progress in attaining English language proficiency*
- b. The student's current English language proficiency level*
- c. The student's experience and time in U.S. schools*
- d. The student's expected date for exiting ELL accommodations*
- e. The student's familiarity with using the accommodations under consideration in instruction and assessment*
- f. The primary language of instruction in the content and the length of time that the student has received instruction in that language*
- g. The student's grade level*

The accommodation provided to an English language learner shall be similar to those accommodations used in classroom instruction. The test situation should not be the first time the

student has utilized the specific accommodation(s). Students should already have sufficient experience in the use and application of the accommodations being considered.

<http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/BilingualDocs/SY%202013-2014%20BMEB%20Technical%20Assistance%20Manual.pdf#page=13&zoom=auto,-265,677>

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
G. (3)(a) English Language Learners (ELLs)	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive explanation of how English language learners will be identified.	The school provides a clear explanation of how English language learners will be identified.	The school provides a limited explanation of how English language learners will be identified.	The school provides an inadequate and/or incomplete explanation of how English language learners will be identified. --OR-- The application does not address the identification of English Language Learners.
Comments:				

G.(3)(b) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** explanation of how the school will provide services/supports to identified students.

Services

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Our TESOL endorsed bilingual education teacher will provide pull-out dual-language classes to assist our ELL students in a sheltered environment as needed to provide the necessary support for these students to be successful.

Academic Opportunities Academy will pair these students with a bilingual student to assist the ELL student when in the Main Academic Space.

The TESOL endorsed bilingual education teacher will evaluate all their ELL identified students and monitor their performance using our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. The TESOL endorsed bilingual education teacher will identify and provide any additional supports their students will need to be successful. They will notify the principal if additional resources or staff is necessary.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G. (3)(b) English Language Learners (ELLs)	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive explanation of how the school will provide services/supports to identified students.	The school provides a clear explanation of how the school will provide services/supports to identified students.	The school provides a limited explanation of how the school will provide services/supports to identified students.	The school provides an inadequate and/or incomplete explanation of how the school will provide services/supports to identified students. --OR-- The application does not address how the school will provide services/supports to identified students.
Comments:				

G.(3)(c) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of how instruction will be

differentiated or sheltered based on identified ELL student needs. Please include relevant examples.

Differentiated Instruction

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy differentiates instruction based on our student's needs in a variety of ways. Our charter school model provides differentiation by providing an individualized, self-paced, blended computer and in-class instruction as well as our extended day. Our mission statement screams differentiation. Our pull-out classes differentiate instruction by having only the students who need an objective in a particular class. The teacher will be able to differentiate by being able to dismiss students from a class once they have assessed they can be successful independently. The teacher will be able to differentiate instruction as the teacher will be empowered to keep students up to 90 minutes per class period and is empowered to have as many class sessions and needed to ensure all students are successful. Our computer based instruction provides differentiated instruction to each student according to the student's knowledge and skills. Our educational aides will provide most of their assistance and support with the students who need the most assistance and support. Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software assists our staff in providing differentiated instruction based on each student's performance.

Some examples of how instructions will be differentiated include pre-tests to determine if a student has mastered the material previously and if the student demonstrates mastery, to let the student skip the lesson. Edmentum products provide this ability. For students who need fewer answer choices that can be programmed in to our computer instruction options. Students will be offered a choice between several assignments particularly when dealing with their selection of the books they would like to read or the type of project they would like to do.

Our teachers will be able to differentiate instruction by using differentiated instruction strategies in their classrooms such as by teaching the same material to all students using a variety of instructional strategies, or it may require the teacher to deliver lessons at varying levels of difficulty based on the ability of each student. Formative assessment is an essential ingredient of this method. Teachers will differentiate instruction by designing their lessons based on a student's learning styles, assess student's learning by using formative assessment, continuously assess and adjust the lesson content to meet all their student's need.

There are a variety of differentiated instruction strategies that our teachers and educational aides will be able to provide our students. Teachers can differentiate the process and activities in a lesson based on the needs of their students. Teachers can vary the texts, experiments, and methods used in a lesson. Manipulatives can be used to assist in teaching mathematical concepts. Teachers can differentiate using a variety of graphic and student organizers. Teachers can differentiate using flexible groupings. The teacher and the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software can differentiate the student product, outcome or assessment. Differentiation can occur by allowing student choice or design of an assignment. Teachers can differentiate by providing different content, topics and materials to their students. Teachers can use leveled reading texts and indicate important text sections.

Teachers can shelter special education, 504 and/or ELL students by pulling out those students who are in need of sheltered instruction.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
G. (3)(c) English Language Learners (ELLs)	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of how instruction will be differentiated or sheltered based on identified student needs. Relevant examples are provided.	The school provides a clear description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs. Examples are provided.	The school provides a limited description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs, Limited or inadequate examples are provided.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs. --OR-- The application does not address differentiated or sheltered instruction for English Language Learners.
Comments:				

G.(3)(d) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** to regularly evaluate and monitor the progress of English language learners.

Monitoring

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

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Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

All students who enroll with Academic Opportunities Academy will be given a home language survey to determine if a student may need ELL sheltered instruction. Students or parents, who indicate that English is the student's second language, will be given an initial assessment of the student's language skills. Our Bilingual TOEFEL Teacher will be notified so that individualized instruction can be provided to the student.

A uniform initial identification procedure must be used with all students enrolling with Academic Opportunities Academy. The recommended procedure to identify LEP/ELL students for language instruction educational programs is based on the following steps:

Step 1. Identification of LEP Students:

Home Language Survey

A Home Language Survey is an Academic Opportunities Academy developed tool to be given to all entering students and used to identify students who may not be proficient in English.

The Home Language Survey is designed to identify, for possible further evaluation:

- *Students who communicate in a language other than English; or*
- *Students whose families use a primary language other than English in the home; or*
- *Students who use a language other than English in daily non-school surroundings.*

Note: Having another language spoken in the home or routinely used in other settings is not an automatic identification of a student as LEP/ELL.

The preliminary evaluation conducted in the next step determines the students who should be referred for placement in a language instruction educational program.

Step 2. Preliminary Evaluation:

Academic History

The student's academic history should be thoroughly assessed including:

- *Academic records from within or outside the United States*
- *Course grades which, in relation to the student's grade level, indicate that lack of progress is due to limited English language acquisition*
- *Information on everyday classroom performance*
- *An academic assessment may be administered to support educator judgment (e.g., locally developed, commercially available assessments, and/or reading inventories).*

Step3. Screener Evaluation

Screener Evaluation for Instructional Placement Students with limited English language skills who have recently arrived in the United States, or are newly enrolled with Academic Opportunities Academy and are potential ELLs, should be formally screened to help determine whether or not the student is in need of a language instruction educational program. The WIDA ACCESS Placement Test™, or W - APT is Wisconsin's initial English language "screener." The W- APT score should be used to determine the initial tier placement for English language assessment and assist in determining the student's initial English language proficiency (ELP) level. In sum, the screener serves to identify ELLs, and assists in placement into an appropriate language instruction educational program that meets the needs of the student. In addition, screener scores provide an initial tier/level placement on the annual ELP assessment, ACCESS for ELLs®. Finally, the ELP level determined on the screener identifies students as ELLs in student enrollment systems.

New Mexico is a member of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment), joining in 2008. WIDA is a consortium of states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for English language learners which offers states programming for identifying and annually assessing the English language development of its English learners.

*ELL Website: Bilingual and Multicultural Education NCLB Title III
http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Bilingual_index.html*

Laws & Regulations

The following documents offer additional information about statewide ELL regulations:

- *As of the 2007-2008 school year, New Mexico's schools were home to more than 60,600 English language learners (ELLs), which marks a 15% decrease from the 1997-98 school year (NCELA, 2010). The top five languages or language groups spoken by ELLs in New Mexico are Spanish, Navajo, Zuni, Vietnamese, and North American Indian languages (EPE, 2009).*
- *New Mexico is a member of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment), joining in 2008. WIDA is a consortium of states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for English language learners which offers states programming for identifying and annually assessing the English language development of its English learners.*
- *English Language Development* [NMAC Standards for Excellence (Title VI, Chapter 29, Part 5)]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Act* [Chapter 22 Article 23 NMSA 1978]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Guidelines* [NMAC 6.32.2 - Bilingual Regulation]*
- *English Plus Declaration in New Mexico* [House Joint Memorial 16: Supporting Language Rights in the United States]*
- *NCLEA: Title III Information*
- *[NMAC Standards for Excellence (Title VI, Chapter 29, Part 5)]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Act* [Chapter 22 Article 23 NMSA 1978]*
- *Bilingual Multicultural Education Guidelines* [NMAC 6.32.2 - Bilingual Regulation]*
- *English Plus Declaration in New Mexico* [House Joint Memorial 16: Supporting Language Rights in the United States]*

The WIDA MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language) is a series of English language proficiency assessments for Kindergarten through Grade 12. MODEL can be used by educators as an identification/placement assessment for newly enrolled ELLs or as an interim progress monitoring assessment.

Unlike ACCESS for ELLs and the W-APT, MODEL is available for use in schools around the world. Learn more about the similarities and differences between WIDA's assessments.

Features

MODEL test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards:

- *Social & Instructional Language*
- *Language of Language Arts*
- *Language of Mathematics*
- *Language of Science*
- *Language of Social Studies*

Test forms are divided into five grade level clusters:

- *Kindergarten*
- *Grades 1–2*
- *Grades 3–5*
- *Grades 6–8*
- *Grades 9–12*

Each form of the test assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

MODEL is an adaptive test allowing flexible placement within sections of the test based on student performance.

Purpose and Use

As a flexible, on-demand language proficiency assessment, this test can be administered at any time during the school year, depending on the needs of the district, school, teacher, or student. MODEL can be used for these purposes:


- To identify students who may be candidates for English as a Second Language (ESL)/bilingual services;*
- To determine the academic English language proficiency level of students new to a school or to the U.S. school system;*
- To place students into the necessary amount and type of instructional services and support; and*
- To serve as an interim assessment during the school year, providing information that informs instructional planning and other decisions related to students' education.*

In WIDA Consortium member states, the WIDA MODEL may serve two additional purposes:

- To determine tier placement on ACCESS for ELLs, the annual language proficiency assessment used for accountability purposes.*
- To guide instructional and curricular decisions while waiting for ACCESS for ELLs score reports.*

Please note that MODEL is not designed to satisfy the U.S. federal legal requirements for annual assessment and accountability and should not be the only measure used in exiting students from language support services.

Sample Items

Sample items specific to the MODEL assessment are currently not available. Item specifications for the MODEL test are very similar to ACCESS for ELLs, therefore, to get a better understanding of how WIDA assessments relate to its English Language Proficiency Standards and for a better idea of what items may look like; we invite you to review the [ACCESS for ELLs sample items](#) .

Test Development

The MODEL assessment was first introduced in 2008 with the release of the Kindergarten assessment. Grades 1-2 and 3-5 were released in fall of 2010. Finally, in fall of 2011, grades 6-8 and 9-12 were released to complete the series. The series of assessments was developed in partnership with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and as a collaborative effort of consortium member states. Each item or performance-based task on MODEL was carefully developed and reviewed to ensure that it allows students to demonstrate meeting the targeted model performance indicator at the targeted performance level from the standards. Items were reviewed for content and bias, and then field tested

to ensure that the test works as intended, to examine data and the test's psychometric properties, and to link performances on MODEL to performances on ACCESS for ELLs.

<https://www.wida.us/assessment/MODEL/>

Federal Requirements

All ELL students must be assessed annually regarding their English language proficiency. There are also special considerations for their assessment in the statewide academic tests.

Participation of English Language Learners (ELL) in the state assessment: The State of New Mexico is committed to the ideal that all students can learn and achieve high standards. Both state and federal laws require that ELL students be assessed for their academic performance, as well as their proficiency in English.

English Language Proficiency Assessment: Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and subsequent federal and state mandates, all public school districts/schools must screen, identify, and provide services to English Language Learners.

The student's English language proficiency is determined by his/her ability to listen, speak, read, and write.

All ELLs must participate in the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA) the state of New Mexico is committed to the ideal that all students can learn and achieve high standards. Historically, English Language Learners were often excluded from statewide assessment efforts. As a result, alternative or specialized language programs were not provided with data that could inform and improve instruction. Since 2001, state and federal laws require English Language Learners (ELL) to appropriately participate in the New Mexico Statewide Assessment Program, which currently measures academic performance in Language Arts, Reading, Math, and Science. The state recognizes that students who are still in the process of acquiring academic English may not be able to adequately understand and interpret the information contained in the English version of the assessments. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the subsequent federal and state mandates, all public school districts/schools must screen, identify, and provide services to English Language Learners. Initially, New Mexico school districts/schools shall identify students with a Home Language Survey that determines whether a language other than English is spoken in the home. If there is an indication of a language other than English, the district/school must classify the level of the student's English language proficiency, using the state-approved English language proficiency placement test (W-APT). Once the level of language proficiency has been determined, all currently identified ELLs must be assessed annually with the full ACCESS for ELLs until proficiency is attained. Trained personnel must administer the W-APT and the ACCESS. Test administrators are not required to be certified or endorsed teachers in order to administer this test. However, test administrators must be trained in the administration, interpretation, and scoring of the tests, especially the oral component. They must administer the tests under the supervision of a licensed school instructor or administrator. This training is provided by WIDA via online training modules.

SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INCLUDE:

Length of Enrollment in the U.S. Schools—The options for how ELLs may participate in the NM Standards Based Assessment depend, in large part, on the length of time that the student has been

enrolled in the U.S. public schools. Students who are New to U.S. Schools – Students who are enrolled in their first year in school in the United States may receive a language exemption for the Reading subtest ONLY. In this situation, the student’s language proficiency assessment (ACCESS for ELLs) score, if available, will be substituted for the Reading Subtest in determining the school’s and district’s participation rate. In all other content areas, however, the new student must participate in the Spanish language version of the assessment (if available and appropriate), or in the English language version, with accommodations provided if these are determined to be appropriate by the local school’s Student Assistance Team. Because the student has not been in the school for a full academic year at the time of the testing, his or her test results will not be included in the performance data used to determine School Growth Targets (SGTs). If this option is chosen, the Student Bio-grid bubble for the “Language Exemption for Reading ONLY” should be filled in. For the subtests other than Reading, the test completion status should be “Student Tested All Session,” and the type(s) of accommodations that are provided, if any, should be indicated by bubbling in. Students Who Have Been in the U.S. Schools for Less than Three Consecutive Years–These students may participate in the NM Standards Based Assessment in one of three ways:

- 1. The student may participate in the standard administration of the Spanish language version of the assessment (where available and appropriate);*
- 2. The student may participate in the English language version of the assessment with appropriate accommodations; or*
- 3. The student may participate in the standard administration of the English language version of the assessment without accommodations.*

Locally developed portfolio assessments are not permitted under the terms of the ESEA (NCLB 2001).

Students Who Have Been in U.S. Schools for Three or More Consecutive Years- These students must participate in the English language version of the assessment (with or without allowable accommodations) unless a waiver to continue testing the student in his/her home language has been approved by the secretary. Waivers to Continue Assessing Students in Their Home Language–If after three consecutive years in U.S. schools, the district determines (on a case-by-case basis) that academic assessments in the student’s home language would yield more accurate and reliable information about his/her knowledge of a subject, the district may request a waiver from NMPED to continue to assess the student in his/her home language. Approved waivers are effective for the current year only. Waivers may be requested for a maximum of two years. The waiver request must be submitted in advance by the district superintendent to the New Mexico Secretary of education for approval. This request must take the form of a memorandum that includes the following information:

- 1. Student name*
- 2. State student ID number*
- 3. School in which the student is currently enrolled*
- 4. Grade level*
- 5. English language proficiency scores and date(s) of most recent administration*
- 6. Consecutive years in U.S. public schools*
- 7. Indication of whether this is the first or second waiver requested for the student*
- 8. Percentage of content instruction in English*
- 9. Percentage of content instruction in Spanish*
- 10. Language of instruction in the content area*
- 11. Reason or justification for the waiver request*
- 12. Name of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) members in the decision*

Recommendation for Test Scheduling—It is the school test coordinator's (STCs) responsibility to inform test administrators (TAs) about the testing schedule. The ACCESS is an untimed test. Students must be allowed to continue working as long as they are making progress. *Testing Sessions May Not Be Interrupted*—Do not begin testing if you feel students may not be able to finish the session. Once a testing session has begun, students must be allowed to finish. Students may be allowed to use the restroom as long as they are escorted to and from the facility. Students are not allowed to stop in the middle of the session and resume at a later point in time. *Invalidating Tests for ACCESS for ELLs*—The test in a particular subtest area must be invalidated if there are testing irregularities or unusual circumstances that prevent the completion of any testing session. The invalidated test will not be scored. Testing irregularities must be reported by the DTC to the NMPED Assistant Secretary of Assessment and Accountability Division within three (3) days of learning of the testing irregularities. [NMAC.6.10.7] *Time and Setting*—Time and setting is an adaptation that is allowed for all students; however, if breaks are allowed within subtests, repeat directions before restart. As with all other students, ELL students may receive adaptations of setting and timing. Students are not allowed accommodations in the areas of language knowledge and skills. However, students with special needs, such as the physically or mentally handicapped, may be allowed accommodations that relate to their disabilities. Testing accommodations shall be similar to those accommodations used in the classroom instruction. Each school shall utilize a team to review the individual student progress in order to determine accommodations. For the students being served on an Individualized Education Plan or a Section 504 Plan, those plans will respectively determine appropriate test accommodations. For all other students, the school may use its Student Assistance Team (SAT) or form another school-based team for this purpose, but the team must be comprised of at least three school staff and ones who are familiar with the student's abilities and language needs, standardized test procedures, and valid ELL test accommodations. Accommodations for ELL Students Taking the Statewide Academic Assessments—to determine the appropriateness of participation of ELL students in the NM Standards Based Assessment, districts should consider each student's level of proficiency in all domains of language (speaking, reading, writing, listening, and comprehension) as well as the nature of the student's instructional program. The district must ensure that the students do not receive accommodations without current justification supported by the data. English Language Learners may be provided appropriate accommodations.

1. It should be noted that not all speakers of languages other than English are limited in their English language proficiency. Second-language students who are proficient speakers, readers, and writers of English must be assessed with the English version of the statewide assessments.
2. The language of instruction in the content area is also critically important. If the student has been receiving instruction in English in the content area, it may be more beneficial to have the student participate in the English language version of the assessment. Although the student may have limited proficiency in English, he or she may not have acquired sufficient academic vocabulary in the home language so as to perform well on the Spanish language assessment.
3. Each school may use its Student Assistance Team (SAT) or form another school-based team for the purpose of reviewing student progress and determining needed interventions and/or accommodations.

Team members may include:

- a. The Bilingual Education program coordinator
- b. The student's bilingual education or TESOL-endorsed teacher
- c. The student's other classroom teachers

- d. Test administrators and school test coordinators
- e. The school principal and/or counselor
- f. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s), when appropriate
- g. The student, when appropriate

The SAT school-based team shall base its decisions about appropriate accommodations on the following criteria:

- a. Annual review of the student's progress in attaining English language proficiency
- b. The student's current English language proficiency level
- c. The student's experience and time in U.S. schools
- d. The student's expected date for exiting ELL accommodations
- e. The student's familiarity with using the accommodations under consideration in instruction and assessment
- f. The primary language of instruction in the content and the length of time that the student has received instruction in that language
- g. The student's grade level

The accommodation provided to an English language learner shall be similar to those accommodations used in classroom instruction. The test situation should not be the first time the student has utilized the specific accommodation(s). Students should already have sufficient experience in the use and application of the accommodations being considered.

<http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/BilingualDocs/SY%202013-2014%20BMEB%20Technical%20Assistance%20Manual.pdf#page=13&zoom=auto,-265,677>

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
G. (3)(d) English Language Learners (ELLs)	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan to regularly evaluate and monitor the progress of English language learners.	The school provides a clear plan to regularly evaluate and monitor the progress of English language learners.	The school provides a limited plan to evaluate and monitor the progress of English language learners.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate plan to evaluate and monitor the progress of English Language Learners. --OR-- The application does not address evaluating and monitoring the progress of English language learners.
Comments:				

G.(3)(e) Provides a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of how the school will budget and staff to meet the needs of ELLs.

Staffing

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will hire a TESOL endorsed bilingual education teacher. This teacher will be the lead teacher in all regards to ELL students. This teacher will be responsible for monitoring all ELL students and to ensure that these ELL student's needs are being met. This teacher will be responsible to ensure the educational program and curriculum is meeting the needs of all our ELL students. This teacher will be the lead teacher in providing all necessary ELL instruction to all our ELL students. This teacher will provide instruction and guidance to all our other staff as necessary to provide the support and instruction our ELL students need. This teacher will monitor all our school data to ensure all ELL students are successful. If an ELL student is not being successful, this teacher will study why this ELL student is not being successful and design all curriculum and instructional supports to ensure this student is successful. If this teacher is not able to get this student to be successful, the principal will be notified so the principal can obtain the curriculum and instructional supports to get this student to be successful.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to hire additional bilingual education teachers to support our TESOL endorsed bilingual teacher to the ability of our budget constraints. We know additional money will become available from other sources. Academic Opportunities Academy will aggressively seek these additional funds. We will seek grants, donations and fundraisers to also support our campus and our mission. In preparing our budget that is included in this application salaries are lower than that of our salary schedule. Our budget will be adjusted to reflect additional money when it becomes available. We intend to obtain the funds necessary to pay our employees according to our salary schedule with stipends or other means of additional compensation for multiple certifications and certifications which are in greater demand. We know having an outstanding staff will assist us in becoming an outstanding charter school and our staff will need to be compensated accordingly. We intend to seek out the funding necessary to meet this objective.

Ranking				
<div> <div>←</div> <div>Satisfied</div> <div>Not Satisfied</div> <div>→</div> </div>				
6	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1

	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of how it will budget and staff itself to meet the needs of ELLs.	The school provides a clear , description of how it will budget and staff itself to meet the needs of ELLs.	The school provides a limited description of how it will budget and staff itself to meet the needs of ELLs.	The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate description of how it will budget and staff itself to meet the needs of ELL students. --OR-- The budgeting and staffing does not meet the needs of ELLs.
Comments:				

H. Assessment and Accountability. A charter school application should include a clear plan for evaluating student performance across the curriculum. This plan should align with state performance standards as well as with the school's student performance indicators/goals, and should be presented along with a clear timeline for achieving these standards/indicators/goals. A clear explanation of the types of assessments and frequency of administration should be included reflecting thoughtfulness given to tracking student progress. A plan for the use of data gathered through assessments should include procedures for taking corrective action (both individually and collectively) if pupil performance falls below expected standards.

A quality assessment plan will include summative (end-of-year) assessments as well as formative (more frequent assessments) to track student skill and knowledge development and to inform instruction. The plan will include how this data will be used to guide professional development of teachers, as well as how this data will be used to guide refinement of the curriculum and instruction.

When developing the assessment plan you should consider: 1) the appropriateness of assessments to the curriculum; 2) what will serve as baseline for student progress comparisons; 3) the inclusion of school, state, and other assessments to demonstrate appropriate student growth (i.e., PARCC, SBA, Discovery, DRA, DIBELS, NWEA MAP, AP, IB, SAT, ACT); 4) the ability of the assessment plan to provide for the early detection of students struggling with curriculum content; and 5) the ability of assessments to reflect the use of basic skills at grade-appropriate levels (i.e., reading, writing, problem-solving, etc.).

Note: Be aware that all New Mexico public schools including charter schools are subject to the PARCC Assessments (for English Language Arts—ELA and Math), which are aligned with Common Core State Standards, and the Standards Based Assessment Program (SBA) (for Science), which is aligned with state and federal content standards.

H.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** that identifies what measures will be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, and frequency of assessing. Please provide **clear** evidence that the school has considered the common core standards, the state-mandated PARCC and SBA, the school's targeted student population, and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction.

Academic Progress

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic progress is a very key component as to why Academic Opportunities Academy exists. We seek the outstanding performance of every student. To achieve this goal we need to know the actual performance of our students through data. We will collect and monitor our student data in our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to ensure success and to provide the necessary supports to any student who needs this support.

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks out all state mandated assessments as well as other assessments as it gives our charter school, staff and students opportunities to demonstrate our abilities. We believe that all our students can perform and welcome all assessments which will document our success. We will follow the test assessment windows as defined by the New Mexico Public Education Department.

Academic Opportunities Academy will analyze the results of every assessment to determine where improvements need to be made to our charter school model, curriculum, lessons, instruction, procedures and other areas where improvements can be made. Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will study our data and conduct research and brainstorming to find every solution they are able to obtain in order to provide the best instructions for our students.

Edmentum has developed a close and supportive relationship with us. They have reviewed our application and made recommendations to improve our application. We have discussed our charter school model and how their products can support our students. Academic Opportunities Academy welcomes Edmentum to study and conduct research on our campus to improve their products. Edmentum is strongly committed to student success and they are very open to improvements in their products.

Although not a formal assessment, our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software performs many of the same objectives as other assessments. Academic Opportunities Academy will study the results of every assessment to evaluate our teaching and learning practice and to make improvements. We will identify all our students who are in need of additional instruction. We will review, reteach, and remediate all objectives necessary based on the assessment data. We are committed to our mission and the success of all our students.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to assess our students three times per year on all assessments that are available. We seek to assess our students at the beginning of the school year to provide an initial benchmark where our students are starting the school year. We seek to assess our students at the end of the first semester to provide another benchmark of our student's performance. We seek to assess our students at the end of the school year to provide another benchmark as to the total gains achieved by our students during the school year. Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to use all the below assessments in grades 6th, 7th and 8th grades. DIBELS assessments will only be assessed with our 6th graders.

Discovery

Instructionally Useful Technology

Technology Enhanced Items (TEIs) have become increasingly important with the introduction of new PARCC and Smarter Balanced assessments. These Items have a place in the summative assessments, but can also be beneficial when embedded within instruction and learning with key instructional features. They allow students to receive feedback during learning and allow us to capture digitally what students do well, and just as importantly, not well, throughout the instructional cycle. With that information the teacher can decide what's next for instruction: do I need to go back to remediate or go forward because students are ready to move on?

We have developed multiple Technology Enhanced Item types with three distinct features: an evidence statement, instructional feedback, and scoring expectations.

<http://www.discoveryeducation.com//what-we-offer/assessment-resources/explore-assessment-resources/index.cfm>

DRA Developmental Reading Assessment

Effectively evaluate each student's reading ability with a research-based assessment with demonstrated reliability and validity.

- Development of the DRA2 was based on what educators and the extant research literature identified as being key characteristics and behaviors of good readers. The DRA2 is based upon a number of premises which were drawn from a variety of sources including the research literature concerning reading development and instruction.*
- The following reliability analyses were conducted on DRA2: (1) Internal Consistency Reliability, (2) Passage Equivalency, (3) Test-Retest Reliability, and (4) Inter-Rater and Expert Rater Reliabilities.*
- DRA2 is a valid measurement of accuracy, fluency, and comprehension as evidenced by the following validity measurements: (1) Criterion-Related Validity, (2) Construct Validity, and (3) Content Validity.*

Give educators the tools they need to observe and document student reading abilities as well as inform instructional practice.

- Determine each student's independent (or instructional) level with an evaluation of three components of reading: reading engagement, oral reading fluency, and comprehension*

- *Quickly determine student's instructional needs with the completed Continuum. Based on those needs, teachers create a plan documenting what each student needs to learn next with the Focus for Instruction. Once the assessment is complete, teachers can use this information to differentiate instruction and create instructional groups.*
- *Obtain more in-depth information with DRA Word Analysis, included with DRA2 K-3. This diagnostic assessment provides educators with a systematic means to observe how struggling and emerging readers attend to and work with various components of spoken and written words.*

Easily analyze data, communicate results, and group students with powerful report available on paper and electronically.

- *Determine proficiency and document change over time with a book graph form that enables educators to monitor student reading progress over time, confirm ongoing observations, and track them compared to benchmarks.*
- *Group students for instruction using a class profile form that shows how the class is doing as a whole by reading level and Focus for Instruction areas.*
- *Share results with administrators, parents, and students with the following reports:*
 - *Student Book Graph monitors students' reading level progress across their school years. A shaded area represents below-grade-level performance, so students' proficiency over time can also be tracked.*
 - *Class Reporting Form records students' DRA2 text levels and scores for Reading Engagement, Oral Reading Fluency, and Comprehension.*
 - *Focus for Instruction: Class Profile enables teachers to easily group students for instruction based on specific needs.*
 - *Student Assessment Folder provides storage and longitudinal monitoring of an individual student's progress. Store DRA2 forms inside this folder. Printed on the folder is a record of the student's DRA2 assessments, Student Book Graph, and fiction and nonfiction results.*
- *Provide a secure environment for educators to archive and manage student assessment results over time, review student data that is calculated, and retrieve student data for a variety of purposes with DRA2 Online. Once DRA2 data is entered into DRA2 Online by teachers, the information is available at school and district levels. All the reports provided in the paper forms are created by DRA2 Online with a click of a button.*
- *Use the latest technology – the smarter, better, and faster solution – for administering DRA2, communicating its results, and differentiating instruction: The DRA2 App for iPads doesn't just archive, manage and report results, but is also used during the administration of the assessment. Thus, the DRA2 app saves time, eliminates paperwork (And the expense of photocopying) and ensures consistent administration.*

Bilingual Programs

Research-based and widely field tested, the Evaluacion del desarrollo de la lectura, Segunda Edicion K - 6 (EDL2), helps students become independent successful readers by giving educators the right mix of tools needed to assess accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

<http://www.pearsonschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PSZ4Z4&PMDBSOLUTIONID=&PMDBSITEID=2781&PMDBCATEGORYID=&PMDBSUBSOLUTIONID=&PMDBSUBJECTAREAID=&PMDBSUBCATEGORYID=&>

[lementType=mergedNavGroup&navGroupName=Features%20and%20Benefits&PMDbProgramID=23661](#)

DIBELS Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills.

Benchmark Screening

Benchmark testing is the systematic process of screening all students on essential skills predictive of later reading performance. Benchmark testing is one part of a comprehensive assessment system that includes universal screening, progress monitoring, summative assessments and other formal and informal assessments all designed to get the critical information needed to make informed instructional decisions. It is a foundational link between assessment, instruction and goal setting.

The DIBELS assessments have been researched and validated specifically for benchmark testing in kindergarten through sixth grade. We recommend screening all students three times per year with grade-level materials. Research indicates that early identification and early intervention are essential for helping students who are at risk for future reading difficulties, or are currently having reading difficulties. Screening all students, including those who met earlier benchmark goals, also provides a complete data set that is needed to determine if reading instruction is effective with all students at the school or district level. Benchmark data can help answer the following types of questions:

- Is our reading program effective with all students at all grade levels?*
- Are there exemplar schools (or classes) in our district on which we can model successful reading instruction?*
- What are the strengths of our reading program?*
- What areas of our reading program need improvement?*
- Did we meet our literacy goals this year?*

The testing materials consist of grade-level booklets for each student and a set of display materials. Most testing is done one on one with each student and takes approximately 5-10 minutes per student. Student scores are used to determine how each student is doing in relation to a benchmark goal that is predictive of later reading success. The benchmark goals are criterion-referenced. Each measure has an empirically established goal (or benchmark) that changes across time to ensure students' skills are developing in a manner predictive of continued progress. The goals are the same for all students learning to read in English. Current research indicates that the goals are equally predictive for native English speakers and for English language learners. DIBELS 6th Edition Goals, DIBELS Next Recommended Goals and DIBELS Next Former Goals are available for download.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is a key component of providing differentiated and individualized reading instruction. Student performance and development of literacy skills should be monitored frequently for all students who are at risk of reading difficulty. The data gathered during progress monitoring can be used in the instructional decision making process.

Benchmark testing with DIBELS can help determine which students are at risk for later reading difficulties. Students who receive supplemental instructional support should be progress monitored. The assessment used to monitor progress should align with the instructional priorities of the supplemental reading instruction. For example, if a student's area of weakness is identified as fluency with connected text then monitoring with Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) is the best option since ORF measures reading fluency. See our [Big Ideas in Beginning Reading](#) pages for information on targeting instruction and the relationship between assessment and instruction.

[Read More about Progress Monitoring](#)

DIBELS in the Data System

The DIBELS Data System provides full data management support for DIBELS 6th Edition and DIBELS Next. You can choose the [DIBELS Next Recommended Goals](#) or the [DIBELS Next Former Goals](#) with composite score.

The Data System tracks and measures progress at the student, class, school, and district-level. [Reports](#) can be created immediately after scores are entered, providing immediate feedback and allowing for timely decision making. The DIBELS Data System is operated by the Center on Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the University of Oregon and has been serving schools across the U.S. and internationally since 2001. The Data System has been used in over 15,000 schools. Take a [video tour of the DDS](#).

<https://dibels.uoregon.edu/market/assessment/dibels>

NWEA MAP

Powerful student growth data, empowering results

- *Inform instruction using valid, reliable, and real-time data*
- *Measure the growth of every student over time regardless of on, above, or below grade level performance—and even if standards change*
- *Engage students and families in goal-setting*
- *Create and reinforce evidence-informed instructional practices*
- *Evaluate programs and identify professional development needs*
- *Compare and predict student achievement and growth over time via exclusive normative and growth information*

- See more at: <https://www.nwea.org/assessments/map/#sthash.l26wRJNc.dpuf>

Based on over 30 years of solid research, our computer adaptive interim assessments do more than create personalized test experiences for every student: they provide the most stable scale and data in the assessment industry. Educators around the globe trust MAP and our interactive MAP Learning Continuum to deliver instructional insights that help them accelerate student learning. - See more at: <https://www.nwea.org/assessments/map/#sthash.l26wRJNc.dpuf>

<https://www.nwea.org/assessments/map/>

AP/Pre AP

Academic Opportunities Academy will use the new Computer Science AP guidelines for our after school enrichment program.

<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-computer-science-a-course-description-2014.pdf>

IB Academic Opportunities Academy will not use any International Baccalaureate products to assess our students.

SAT / Pre-SAT

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to eventually have all our students take the Pre-SAT examinations.

The exams included in the SAT Suite of Assessments — the PSAT™ 8/9, PSAT™ 10, redesigned PSAT/NMSQT, and redesigned SAT — work together to provide valuable information about student progress. The suite's underlying content continuum and shared score scale make it possible to provide useful benchmarks and consistent feedback to students and educators, and to support curriculum and instruction by mapping information on student performance to standards.

The suite delivers opportunity to test-takers by connecting them to colleges, scholarship providers, and AP classes. Fee waivers for eligible students and free practice resources for everyone also expand opportunity for all students.

<https://www.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt>

ACT / Pre-ACT

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to eventually have all our students take the Pre-ACT examinations.

Whether you are uncertain about going to college or you just need some reassurance you're on the right track, here are a few reasons to go to college:

- Every bit of education you get after high school increases the chances you'll earn good pay. Most college graduates earn more money during their working years than people who stop their education at high school earn.*
- The more education you get the more likely it is you will always have a job. According to one estimate, by the year 2028 there will be 19 million more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them.*
- Continuing education after high school is much more important for your generation than it was for your parents' generation. Today most good jobs require more than a high school diploma. Businesses want to hire people who know how to think and solve problems.*
- Education beyond high school gives you a lot of other benefits, including meeting new people, taking part in new opportunities to explore your interests, and experiencing success.*

<http://www.actstudent.org/college/>

Curriculum Mapping Database and Software is designed to use all assessment data available to us and use it to provide data driven decision making and to provide our staff with the data to make informed decisions regarding all our teaching planning and instruction activities. Academic Opportunities Academy is keenly aware of collecting all relevant data on our entire student's performance in order to improve the teaching and learning activities of our charter school. We are aligned with this concept with the New Mexico Public Education Department.

Common Core Standards

Implementation of the NMCCSS begins in grades 4-12 mathematics and ELA with teachers receiving the support and structure needed to implement the new standards in the classroom.

Implementation of the NMCCSS literacy standards begins in grades 6-12 social studies/history, science, and technical subjects with teachers receiving the support and structure needed to implement the new standards in the classroom.

All teachers receive support to prepare students to be college and career ready as they increase the focus of teaching and learning the following:

Capacities of the Literate Individual:

- *They demonstrate independence.*
- *They build strong content knowledge.*
- *They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.*
- *They comprehend as well as critique.*
- *They value evidence*
- *They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.*
- *They come to understand other perspective and cultures.*

Mathematical Practices:

- *Make sense of problems & persevere in solving them.*
- *Reason abstractly and quantitatively.*
- *Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.*
- *Model with mathematics.*
- *Use appropriate tools strategically.*
- *Attend to precision.*
- *Look for and make use of structure.*
- *Express regularity in repeated reasoning.*

<http://newmexicocommoncore.org/pages/view/22/transition-timeline/11/>

PARCC

Performance results provide information for various stakeholders, including to:

- *Determine whether students are on track toward being college-and career-ready*
- *Assess the full range of the Common Core Standards, including standards that are difficult to measure*

- Measure student proficiency, including for high and low performing students
- Provide data during the academic year to inform instruction, interventions and professional development
- Provide data for accountability, including measures of growth or improvement in student proficiency

<http://newmexicocommoncore.org/uploads/downloads/assessments-faq-55a33ca20ad7.pdf>

SBA Standards Based Assessments

Algebra I End Of Course Assessments

Academic Opportunities Academy will test all of our students in Algebra I at the end of each semester.

Ranking				
←		Satisfied	Not Satisfied	→
1	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1

	<p>The school provides a clear, comprehensive and cohesive plan that identifies what measures will be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, and frequency of assessing. Clear evidence that the school has considered the common core standards, the state-mandated PARCC and Standards Based Assessment, the school's targeted student population, and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction is provided.</p>	<p>The school provides a clear plan that identifies what measures will be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, and frequency of assessing. Some evidence that the school has considered the common core standards, the state-mandated PARCC and Standards Based Assessment, the school's targeted student population, and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction is provided.</p>	<p>The school provides a limited plan that identifies what measures will be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, and frequency of assessing. Limited or no evidence that the school has considered the common core standards, the state-mandated PARCC and Standards Based Assessment, the school's targeted student population, and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction is provided.</p>	<p>The school provides an incomplete and/or inadequate assessment plan. --OR-- The application did not address plans for assessment or consider the common core standards, PARCC, and Standards Based Assessment.</p>
Comments:				

H. (2) Provides a **clear, comprehensive and cohesive** description of the corrective actions that will be taken if the school falls short of achieving student academic achievement or growth expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) **and** school-wide levels. A **complete** explanation of what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the school will assess effectiveness is provided.

Individual and School-Wide Corrective Action

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public

Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy is and will continue to improve every aspect of our operations on an ongoing basis. We will engage in continuous and individual school-wide corrective action at all times, even when our performance is outstanding. Our goal is to be the best charter school model making the greatest difference for all our students.

Academic Opportunities Academy makes every staff member accountable to our school's performance on an ongoing basis. We will collect data on the school and each component of our operations and hold our staff accountable for the factors they are able to influence. We will recognize our outstanding performers on an ongoing basis. Staff that is unable or unwilling to perform will be placed on growth plans. If corrective actions are not taken and the staff member does not improve, they will be terminated. The Principal is responsible for the performance of each staff member and taking actions necessary to ensure the staff is performing.

The Academic Opportunities Academy Board is responsible for hiring and terminating the Principal. The Board will have all the performance data available to the school to review the Principal's performance. Academic Opportunities Academy will seek up to six Teacher/Administrative Interns who will be groomed for future academic positions. These Administrative Interns will be evaluated and be provided feedback on an ongoing basis. They will be given opportunities to learn and develop their skills necessary to become outstanding Principals. They will substitute for the Principal when he/she is off campus.

In our development of our charter school model, we have always looked at how we can improve. We are open to advice and constructive criticism. We believe in data based decision making. Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software is one major idea which we believe will make a significant improvement in all we do. Our students will know how well they are doing in close to real time. When students know we know how well they are doing they tend to do better.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software will collect and analyze how our school is doing overall, by each grade level, by subject, by objective, by student, student rank, student improvement/decline in rank, by sex, by special populations, and other sub-groups we wish to study. Each student and their parents/guardians will have data as to what the student knows, how rapidly they are progressing, and other related data. Our Educational Aides will have a "heat map" of every student on our campus sorted from best to lowest performing. Our Educational Aides will provide and focus their assistance on the lowest performing students. Our teachers will have data on each objective in each content area according to our scope and sequence. Our Educational Aides will have data as to their effectiveness and the progress they are making with our students. Our teachers will have class lists identified for each content area in order of their priority based on our scope and sequence. Our teachers will have data as to their effectiveness and the progress they are making with our students.

Every morning we will recognize how our school performed, we will recognize our students who are our best performers, who have made the most improvement, any accomplishments (such as

completing a subject, grade level or other accomplishment), and who are our hardest workers (most time on task, most lessons completed, etc...). We will recognize our students who have helped others, who have been well behaved and other related performance. We will present these students with certificates and other incentives. We will recognize the campus and individuals who break our campus records for academic achievement.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software will monitor our student's performance in close to real time or a continuous basis. This data will be analyzed to ensure our students are improving and we are closing the gaps between all our student populations. As soon as any data indicates that there is a decrease in performance or insufficient improvement our Campus Improvement Team, Community Advisory Groups and Administrators will seek to find a solution.

We have been and we will continue to work relentlessly to improve every aspect of our operations to create the best charter school model possible. We believe that being proactive in monitoring and taking corrective action will prevent us from having unfavorable data. In fact we seek to have positive and outstanding data regarding all aspects of our performance.

If Academic Opportunities Academy finds itself in a position where our performance is below the expectations of the New Mexico Public Education Department, the New Mexico Public Education Commissioners or any other government agency we will work diligently to resolve all problems in the most expeditious manner possible. We will be cooperative in all our dealings. The Campus Improvement Team will monitor all aspects of campus improvement; coordinate with our Community Advisory Groups and administrators, board, the New Mexico Public Education Department, the New Mexico Public Education Commissioners and other government groups. Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to create the best charter school model possible for the success of all our students. We actively seek any and all improvements we can make to our charter school model.

Our Campus Improvement Team will be the main and central point for overseeing and directing our campus improvement efforts. We anticipate that this team will be made up of our Teacher/Administrative Interns and other interested staff members. Current administrators will not be a part of this team, but they will collaborate and work with the team to improve campus improvement. The Campus Improvement Team will recommend corrective actions to the Principal for action. The Campus Improvement Team will meet with the Board periodically to present their findings. Under the Campus Improvement Team will be several Community Advisory Groups that will work collaboratively with the Campus Improvement Team. The Community Advisory Groups will be empowered to seek out areas where our campus may improve as well as receive areas that the Campus Improvement Team seeks their research and guidance.

Community Advisory Groups will be made up of staff, students, parents, guardians, and community members. All adult members will require a background check required of all staff. These groups will be limited to five members. They will review all aspects of our operations and make recommendations to the Campus Improvement Team for their action.

We believe that with everyone being involved in our campus improvement we will obtain excellent ideas which will make a significant difference in our performance. Campus improvement is a large component of our charter school model and individual and school-wide corrective action will take place on an ongoing basis at all times. Due to these factors we anticipate outstanding performance.

Any employee or board member that impedes the progress our students will need to be removed. We need a successful team that can and will achieve results. Of course these actions will be done with all appropriate due process and opportunities for all staff members to take corrective action regarding their performance.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
H.(2) Individual and School-wide Corrective Action	The school provides a clear, comprehensive and cohesive description of the corrective actions that will be taken if the school falls short of achieving student academic achievement or growth expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) and school-wide levels. A complete explanation of what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the school will assess effectiveness is provided.	The school provides a clear description of the corrective actions that will be taken if the school falls short of achieving student academic achievement or growth expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) and school-wide levels. An adequate explanation of what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the school will assess effectiveness is provided.	The school provides a limited description of the corrective actions that will be taken if the school falls short of achieving student academic achievement or growth expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) and school-wide levels. A limited or incomplete explanation of what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the school will assess effectiveness is provided.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete response for corrective actions. --OR-- The application does not address corrective actions.
Comments:				

H.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents, the school's Governing Body, the school's Authorizer, and the broader community. Please consider your selected community, their accessibility and communication options when answering this question.

Reporting on Progress

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will use the Discovery Education Progress Zone diagnostics to report on all student levels of progress in each core content subject area, and facilitate communication with parents, classroom teachers, and special education teachers when appropriate.

Analysis of the data and graphic reports generated by the Discovery Education assessment system will allow both teachers and educational aides to develop appropriate educational strategies. Student Subskill reports helps teachers, educational aides and students pinpoint why the students selected the wrong answer(s). Because the Student Skill Report is aligned to the common core standards, it can be used to give an accurate predictor of student success over time on the New Mexico SBA and PARCC assessments. In the Skill Report, a student's performance and proficiencies in various math areas are expressed as levels of proficiency –from beginner to advanced, and may be used as a predictor of individual student proficiencies, as well as evaluates teacher effectiveness in preparing and advancing the proficiency of all students in his/her classroom.

When students have access to quality remediation tools that are relevant and engaging, they will be more likely to believe they can progress and share the responsibility of overcoming learning obstacles in a non-competitive and personalized approach. Special education students can work within an inclusive classroom, and then address the specific strands that build “learning bridges” to reach higher levels of achievement, using the video and support materials to advance and persist.

Academic Opportunities Academy wants all our academic data to be available to all our staff, teachers, educational aides, social workers, administrators, parents, guardians, students and community. Open and transparent distribution of data in accordance with FERPA will allow our learning community to know where everyone stands and what steps are necessary to improve the education, teaching and learning of all our students.

One of Academic Opportunities Academy communication tools for reporting real time student data to students and parents is our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. Individual student academic progress is available to students, parents and teachers 24/7. Our system will require data entry of all assessment data into our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software.

Academic Opportunities Academy will gladly help parents learn how to use computers, the internet and how to access and interpret data within our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software.

Similar to what we have seen with Cien Aguas International School where all information is available in both English and Spanish will be standard procedure with Academic Opportunities Academy. All public meetings will have all information, both spoken and written be translated in both English and Spanish. Academic Opportunities Academy will send report cards and progress reports by mail for all families that do not have access to a computer connected to the internet.

Academic Opportunities Academy plan to conduct open houses on Saturdays to open our campus to the community, to permit periodic formal and informal conferences with parents and guardians to inform them on the progress of their children and how they can be influential partners in their children's success.

Academic Opportunities Academy board will have access to our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software and will be forwarded copies of all assessment data from all assessments conducted by Academic Opportunities Academy. Board members are welcome to attend and communicate with our school community on a regular basis.

Every member of our learning community will have access to their appropriate reports from the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. The New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division, the New Mexico Education Commissioners, our administration and board members will have access to the full spectrum of reports available from our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software. All other groups will have access to their appropriate reports including the community, parents, guardians, students, teachers, educational aides, social workers, office manager and clerks. We believe in being data driven in our decision making and we believe in being open and honest with all our school operations including our data in accordance with FERPA and all other laws, rules and regulations regarding the safeguarding of personally identifiable information.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
H.(3) Reporting on Progress	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents, the school's Governing Body, the school's Authorizer, and the broader community.	The school provides a clear plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents and the school's Governing Body.	The school provided a limited plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents and the Governing Body.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete plan explaining how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents and the Governing Body. --OR-- The application does not address the communication of student assessment and progress.
Comments:				

Organization

A. Governing Body Creation/Capacity.

A.(1) Summarize and incorporate **all** key components of your governance structure, **specifically** outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body members (number of members, length of terms, offices to be created, committees, grounds for removal from office, and relationship with your school's administration). Provide comprehensive "bylaws" or specifically explain how your governing body will develop its governing documents or "bylaws" if not submitted with application. If complete, attach governing documents as Appendix B.

Governance Description

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Provided in Appendix B are the proposed Governing bylaws for AOA.

Academic Opportunities Academy has periodically revised our bylaws to improve them. We are always open to constructive criticism to improve anything and everything we do. We seek to serve our community with the best charter school model we can envision and welcome insight, ideas and improvements.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Academic Opportunities Academy board

Academic Opportunities Academy includes in this application the recommendataions for the LESC Charter School Subcommittee prepared by Heidi Macdonald, Fiscal Analyst on September 24, 2014. Academic Opportunities Academy will incorporate these recommendations in our future amended bylaws and are willing to include these recommendations in any other suggested documents as needed.

CHARTER SCHOOL GOVERNANCE MODELS

The Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) staff reviewed and assessed the provisions within the

Charter School Act that address the governance of charter schools.

This handout includes information on:

- selection of charter school governance boards;*
- composition of charter school governance boards;*
- models of charter school board governance;*
- potential issues of charter school governance boards; and*
- recommendations for effective governance.*

Selection of charter school governance boards Pursuant to the Charter Schools Act, 22-8B-8(I)1-3 NMSA 1978, a charter school application shall include:

1. "I. a description of the governing body and operation of the charter school, including:

(1) how the governing body will be selected;

(2) qualifications and terms of members, how vacancies on the governing body will be filled and procedures for changing governing body membership; and

(3) the nature and extent of parental, professional educator and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school".

The statutory language that addresses charter school governance selection is limited and has, in some instances, proven to be problematic. According to a report by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) on the Program Evaluation of New Mexico Charter Schools dated July 23, 2010, LFC staff noted that there may be a conflict of interest between the school's administrator and its governing body in certain instances:

- for example, administrators who are also founders of schools, select board members and replacements to the governing board; and*
- in turn, the governing board approves administrators' salaries and hiring recommendations.*

Academic Opportunities Academy has a founder that probably will become one of the administrators. We plan to compensate our administrator in line with the salary schedule of administrators of Deming Public Schools and this will not become a problem.

Mark Casavantes believes he is the best candidate for the position to become the administrator of Academic Opportunities Academy because he is very dedicated to the success of his dream. He will out work any potential administrator to achieve the success of his dream which he has dedicated the last five years of his life. He envisions himself being the administrator of Academic Opportunities Academy for the rest of his working life. It is where he wants to be, it is his dream.

Regarding hiring recommendations, Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to develop a process that will hire the best candidates for every position. Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to be innovative and unique in our selection process. We know resumes and interviews do not always reflect who the best candidate is. We will use T & T Staff Management, Inc. as our human resource provider. They will screen our candidates; perform background checks according New Mexico requirements, check employment histories, and references. They tell me they have a questionnaire to determine an individual's ethics which they tell me is quite effective. I think that we will have interviews to screen potential employees but it would not be the ultimate factor. I think we will have a test, writing sample and other activities to help us screen potential employees. We will need to see the candidate perform the duties of the position for at least one day to see how they interact with people. We know people

will on their best behavior at this time but we hope we are able to clearly determine the best candidate. We intend to pay the candidate for this day in they get hired or not. Potential board members will go through the same process of potential employees.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to hire from within whenever possible when a vacancy occurs. In these cases we are confident we know who the best candidate is based on their employment performance we have been able to observe.

To remedy this potential conflict, the LFC suggested in its report:

• “[c]harter school governing body members should have a conflict of interest disclosure form on file with the school or charter authorizer.” Composition of charter school governance boards pursuant to the Charter Schools Act, 22-8B-4 NMSA 1978

Academic Opportunities Academy will have conflict of interest disclosure forms on file for each of our board members on file with our charter authorizer. We seek to have a high quality board to assist us to become the high performing charter school we seek to become. We know having a diverse and talented board will be a welcomed resource to operate in the best possible manner. We seek their guidance and advice.

To remedy this potential conflict, the LFC suggested in its report:

• Composition of charter school governance boards pursuant to the Charter Schools Act, 22-8B-4 NMSA 1978, a “charter school shall be governed by a governing body in the manner set forth in the charter contract; provided that a governing body shall have at least five members; and provided further that no member of a governing body for a charter school that is initially approved on or after July 1, 2005 or whose charter is renewed on or after July 1, 2005 shall serve on the governing body of another charter school. No member of a local school board shall be a member of a governing body for a charter school within the local school board’s school district during the term of office for which the member was elected or appointed.” The statutory language that addresses the composition of charter school governance boards is limited and may prove to be problematic. However, potential concerns may be remedied by amending the Charter Schools Act to include more structure on how charter school governance boards are composed.

For example, according to the National Resource Center on Charter School Finance and Governance’s report on Creating and Sustaining High-Quality Charter School Governing Boards, the laws in at least 14 states specifically address whether charter school governance boards may include certain members, such as parents and teachers. In at least three jurisdictions, pools of potential governance board members are created to assist charter schools with selecting qualified board members. Further, at least four states allow charter school authorizers to approve or appoint governance board members as opposed to allowing each charter school to do so. Models of charter school board governance according to Gary R. Gruber, Ph.D., a consultant with Carney, Sandoe, and Associates in Santa Fe, there are three models of charter school governance boards that are used in most charter schools today:

A school committee or council composed of parents, teachers, administrators, and others:

- according to Dr. Gruber, this model is “the most democratic and representative as it is inclusive, fully representational and delegates management and oversight to one or more of its members”;
- openness and inclusion are guiding principles in this model; 3 members are elected or appointed “and serve at the pleasure of those constituents”; and criteria for membership includes a desire to execute the school’s mission; commitment to actively participate in the decision making process of the school; and responsibility for the program’s success;

A board of directors with officers, by-laws, and delegation of management to a principal, chief administrator/director, or head of a school:

- this model provides a distinct line between the management and administrative work of the paid staff, and the governance work of the board of directors;
- the governance board is responsible for “setting the school’s general policies and overall curriculum policies; approving and monitoring the annual budget and financial procedures; fund-raising; hiring and evaluating the school’s principal; approving personnel policies and monitoring their implementation by the principal; assuring that the charter school fulfills its charter contract; and strategic planning”;
- the governance board composition can include the principal, representatives of the teaching staff, students, parents, professionals, and community leaders; and

Academic Opportunities Academy will not have board members that include the principal, representatives of the teaching staff, or students. The teaching staff will be members of the Campus Improvement Team or Community Advisory Groups. Students are able to be members of our Campus Improvement Teams. Parents, professionals, and community leaders are able to be board members. Academic Opportunities Academy sees potential conflict of interest with employees being included in our board. Also Academic Opportunities Academy does not think that students are competent enough to become board members

- the governance board does not participate in the daily functions of operating the school, nor does it deal with specific personnel issues or individual student needs; and

Owner/operator, either non-profit foundation or for-profit, with or without a board or committee;

- under this model, “an advisory committee functions to provide information and support or a board of directors of the corporation or foundation serve in that capacity”; and
- sometimes, “a larger holding group or company may operate several schools in different locations but still depend upon a local group for advice and guidance.”

Academic Opportunities Academy will operate our New Mexico charter school as a completely separate entity from any other charter schools we may have in the future. We will share information and work to align our charter school models as closely as possible within the constraints of each state in a cooperative and collaborative manner.

<http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/handouts/LCSS%20092414%20Item%204%20Charter%20School%20Governance%20Models.pdf>

By laws

Development of Bylaws

The Academic Opportunities Academy were initially developed by our lawyer, Mr. Mark Berry. Changes have been made based on recommendations by the IRS, the Texas Education Agency and the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division. We will always seek to improve all aspects of our charter school and will always seek guidance and suggestions for improving every aspect of our operations. If there are additional areas where you recommend improvement we will modify those sections to your satisfaction as long as our charter school is not adversely affected by those recommendations. If there is an area that we believe may adversely affect our charter school we will seek to find a solution that is acceptable to all parties.

Comprehensive Bylaws

Our bylaws are in need of additional review and refinement to include all components of a comprehensive set of bylaws. Academic Opportunities Academy will have lawyer(s) review our bylaws for their recommended improvements. We welcome suggestions as to where our bylaws can be improved by the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division, the New Mexico Public Education Commission and any other responsible entity.

Improvement of Bylaws

Our Academic Opportunities Academy lawyer(s) will periodically review and make recommendations to our bylaws. Academic Opportunities Academy will incorporate their recommendations into our revised bylaws

Academic Opportunities Academy welcomes ideas and suggestions on how our bylaws can be improved from the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division, the New Mexico Public Education Department or any other entity with excellent ideas and suggestions are most welcome.

Our Campus Improvement Team and our Community Advisory Groups will review our bylaws and make suggestions for improvement which will be forwarded to our lawyer(s) for their review and recommendations.

Refer to our bylaws in the Appendix.

Ranking			
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1

A.(1) Governance Description	The school incorporates all key components of their governance structure, specifically outlining the roles and responsibilities of the GB members. The school provides comprehensive “bylaws” or specifically explains how its governing body will develop its governing documents or “bylaws” if not submitted with application.	The school incorporates most of the key components of their governance structure adequately outlining the roles and responsibilities of the GB members. The school provides adequate “bylaws” or explains how its governing body will develop its governing documents or “bylaws” if not submitted with application.	The school incorporates some of the key components of their governance structure partially outlining the roles and responsibilities of the GB members. The school provides “bylaws” or somewhat explains how its governing body will develop its governing documents or “bylaws” if not submitted with application	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate outline of their governance structure. --OR-- The application does not address the governance structure.
Comments:				

A.(2) Provide a **compelling and relevant list** of all proposed, initial Governing Body members along with their experience, skills, and qualifications. Ensure that your **membership reflects (or will reflect)** the diverse experiences and skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the school. In your list of proposed initial governing body members, describe the expertise represented in order to demonstrate their capacity to initiate the opening of the charter school (i.e., assure student success, develop, implement, oversee the management of public funds, and oversee the school’s compliance with legal obligations).

Description of Prospective Governance Expertise

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

We have advertised in the area newspapers with no potential board members coming from our advertisements. We have been contacted by several individuals from the Las Cruces area who have become aware of our charter school through our web site, Craig's List and other sources. In our public meetings we have conducted in Deming, New Mexico the community has informed us they want members from Deming. We have therefore decided to wait and determine if we can obtain quality board members from Deming. We obtained potential students and employees from this advertisement but no potential board members. Upon obtaining our charter we will advertise extensively for potential board members. We seek to have an outstanding board for our charter school. Academic Opportunities Academy believes that we will be able to attract quality candidates for our governing board once we have been granted a charter in New Mexico. We have let our community know we are welcome to accepting candidates and forming a board. Currently we have only received interest from individuals from the Las Cruces area and none from Deming, New Mexico. We have the following transitional board that collectively set the bar for the skills and expertise we will be recruiting and developing within the AOA governing board.

The key members of the AOA's current administrative leadership team and interim board members are Mark Casavantes, Wes Clarkson, and Ben Tice. The leadership team represents individual and collective expertise in the capacity building and institutional development that is a vital need for AOA in its first inaugural years. Each team member has over 30 years of individual service in education, as well as the non-profit sector. Mr. Casavantes, Clarkson, and Tice have all been school administrators and/or superintendents. All current members are interested in transitioning to an Academic Opportunities Academy board representative of Deming, New Mexico. Also, Academic Opportunities Academy seeks quality board members that can provide the expertise in a variety of skill sets to ensure a vibrant and talented group of individuals who will provide the guidance and expertise to lead Academic Opportunities Academy toward success and service to our community.

In addition, AOA has been working with organizational consultant, Elena Liberatori. Ms. Liberatori has worked as executive director of non-profit organizations, as well as private foundations, and is currently an adjunct teacher at New York University, teaching courses in non-profit management and best practices in fund development, board governance and strategic planning.

Once a charter is awarded, we plan to initiate the selection process for our New Mexico board using the resources of the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools and T & T Staff Management Inc. to recommend and screen potential candidates. We plan to also include parents/guardians of students who attend AOA as representatives to the governing board.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1

A.(2) Description of Prospective Governance Expertise	The school provides a compelling and relevant list of all GB members and describes their experience, skills, and qualifications. Membership reflects (or will reflect) the diverse experiences and skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the school.	The school provides a list of all GB members along with a description of their experience, skills, and qualifications. Most of the membership appears to reflect (or will reflect) the diverse skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the school.	The school provides a list of GB members. However, the GB membership description appears to lack appropriate and diverse experiences and skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the school.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete list of GB members; or the provided list fails to include descriptions of the members' experience, skills, and qualifications. --OR-- The application does not address the description of the GB members and their experience, skills, and qualifications.
Comments:				

A.(3) Provide a **clear and appropriate process or plan** for selecting new Governing Body members that is focused on selecting **quality leaders** who have the identified skills necessary to govern the proposed school. Describe how future governing body members will be selected as vacancies arise.

Enumerate the qualifications desired for members that will assure your school's governance is competent to operate a public school.

Selection of Members

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

AOA currently has a three member founding board of directors who perform the fiduciary and governance duties that are required for any non-profit organization. Our goal is to develop, build and cultivate a larger, broad-based board of approximately 5 to 7 members whose leadership will be

representative of the community, as well as expertise in education, finance, legal, and whose networks can help undergird and support AOA with additional funds and contributions. New board members will match the current leadership skill set of the existing leadership team and together will be a seasoned group of business and educational experts who are adept at operating successful businesses and educational models/schools, as well as evaluating the organization's success, proven methods and overall quality.

Recruiting the best and the most highly engaged board members with professional backgrounds, and strong skill sets in the areas of business, education, human resources, finance, accounting, law, leadership, management, marketing, strategic planning, fundraising, grants, policy, facilities, technology, Six Sigma, and other related skills is paramount.

All potential board members will be given a full background check in accordance with New Mexico requirements, a full reference and employment check, interviews, and related screenings to insure our board members are the best available. T & T Staff Management will conduct all our screenings and recommend candidates for consideration to be our board members.

Academic Opportunities Academy board members must be effective in communicating the school's mission, vision, and goals; planning for our future; setting sound policy; modeling professionalism; overseeing finances, program evaluation, building sustainable relationships with the Deming community, NMPED, parents, guardians, students, businesses, institutions of higher learning, government entities, charitable foundations, and other stakeholders.

Academic Opportunities Academy board members will be required to volunteer, fund raise, grant write, seek donations and/or donate to our charter school. Board members will be required to actively recruit students to attend Academic Opportunities Academy. All individuals asked to join our board should bring added value to Academic Opportunities Academy. All board members should be ambassadors for Academic Opportunities Academy. We seek board members who have an understanding of our community and its needs; passion for our cause, willingness to commit time for board meetings, committee meetings, planning sessions, special events is a team player - works well in a group, someone who listens well, is thoughtful in considering issues.

The Academic Opportunities Academy board will need to have the expertise and requirements to be able to be certified as a board of finance acceptable to the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission.

In addition, AOA plans to use the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools and T & T Staff Management Inc. to screen candidates to be potential board members. The current AOA board will interview these candidates and select the initial New Mexico board. Once the New Mexico board has been selected the new board will self select future board members that have been screened by either the NMCCS or T & T Staff Management Inc. to meet all of the requirements to serve as a board member in New Mexico. As prospective members are recruited and screened, nominations will be made by current board members. Individuals who are nominated will need to submit a resume, complete a background check and be interviewed by the full board, after the board development committee has made the initial screening. The board will vote to accept or deny the individual nominated.

Once our board has been selected they will be given all of the required training as soon as possible through the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools or other group capable of providing the state

mandated trainings. We plan to offer our board all trainings provided to our staff to educate our board on all aspects of our charter school.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
A.(3) Selection of Members	The school provides a clear and appropriate process or plan for selecting new GB members that is focused on selecting quality leaders who have the identified skills necessary to govern the proposed school. The school fully enumerates the qualifications desired for members and those qualifications clearly demonstrate how the school's governance will be well qualified to operate a public school.	The school provides a clear process or plan for selecting new GB members that is focused on identified skills necessary to govern the proposed school. The school somewhat enumerates the qualifications desired for members and those qualifications demonstrate how the school's governance will be adequately qualified to operate a public school.	The school provides a limited process or plan for selecting new GB members, but skill sets are not identified. The school provides a limited enumeration of the qualifications desired for members and those qualifications not clearly demonstrating whether or not the school's governance is qualified enough to operate a public school.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete process or plan for selecting new GB members. --OR-- The application does not address the process for selecting new GB members.
Comments:				

B. Governing Body Training and Evaluation.

B.(1) Provide an ongoing **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for Governing Body training that complies with state requirements, including the Open Meetings Act, and is **completely supported** by the budget you propose.

Governance Training

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy board members will receive mandatory training from the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools and /or other approved providers of training who can explain PED's rules, policies, procedures, the powers and duties of the governing board, legal concepts for schools, finance and budget matters and any other information PED deems relevant.

Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act NMSA 1978, Sections 10-15-1 to 10-15-4. All board meeting dates, times, and location will be published in the Deming Headlight newspaper, the school's website, and in a prominent place in the lobby of the school campus.

An AOA Board Development Committee will meet regularly to design a board packet and develop a strategy and priorities for prospective new members onboarding and training.

Board expenses are included in our budget.

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
B.(1) Governance Training	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan for GB training that complies with state requirements and is completely supported by the budget.	The school provides a clear plan for GB training that complies with state requirements and is supported by the budget.	The school provides a plan for GB training but it is not clear if it complies with state requirements and/or support in the budget is unclear .	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete plan for GB training. --OR-- The application does not address the training of GB members.
Comments:				

B.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for an annual self-evaluation of the Governing Body that reflects that body's effectiveness and focuses on continuous improvement.

Governance Evaluation

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy strongly believes that the AOA board, administrators, and office managers must be fully responsible for full compliance of all aspects of our charter, federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Our governance evaluation will be based on the effectiveness of our school and our full compliance with all aspects of our charter, federal, state, and local laws and regulations. We recognize that governance, administration, leadership, management, fiscal responsibility, educational responsibility is critical to our success.

AOA has an excellent leadership team which includes Mark Casavantes, Wes Clarkson, and Ben Tice all of whom have been involved in the operation of charter schools. As discussed previously, AOA will implement the Community Advisory team who will assist in monitoring and evaluation processes. In addition, the Curriculum Mapping database and Software will help inform the respective teams, and school groups about student performance. Additionally, AOA may work with a leadership and organizational development consultant, who has experience in grant reporting and evidenced –based evaluation methods and has assisted in evaluation and reporting for a myriad of organizations including large scale up/national models in education and computer science arena, both domestically and internationally. Academic Opportunities Academy board will develop criteria for self-evaluating their effectiveness on an annual basis.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out other administrators in the charter school community in New Mexico to visit our campus and assess all aspects of our operations including our board members and their ability to serve our charter school and its learning community.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out the advice from the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools and other similar entities to evaluate and assess all aspects of our operations including our board members.

Academic Opportunities Academy believes that our board is responsible for the success of Academic Opportunities Academy according to all the performance requirements of New Mexico, and the goals of our charter school application. Whenever we fall short of any performance criteria, our board, administrative team, Campus Improvement Team, and Community Advisory Groups will be held accountable to obtain solutions. We intend for our board to self-police itself to remove all non productive board members or any board members who are involved in actions that are not legal, moral or ethical. We expect our board members to remove any board member who is unable to provide the service that is necessary to operate a high performing charter school in full compliance of all federal and state laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will use a framework to evaluate our board using criteria and procedures recommended by the New Mexico Public Education Commission, New Mexico Public

Education Department, the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools and other related sources. Our board will self-evaluate their performance in accordance with recommended guidelines. The exact self-evaluation product has not been defined. It will follow accepted best practices to provide a quality self-evaluation similar to the link below as an initial starting point, but not a final product.

Also Academic Opportunities Academy will establish routines and procedures to evaluate each board member and the board as a whole. This will probably be an outside group to conduct this evaluation free from any conflicts of interest. This may be done by the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools or some other group. We expect that this evaluation will also provide recommendations for training and identification of areas to improve. We will improve in every area identified to the best of our abilities and resources.

<http://www.ecfa.org/Content/TopicBoardSelfEval>

<http://www.slideshare.net/BoardAdvisor/best-practices-in-board-evaluation-and-director-evaluation>

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
B.(2) Governance Evaluation	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan for an annual self-evaluation of the GB that reflects that body's effectiveness and focuses on continuous improvement.	The school provides a clear plan for an annual self-evaluation of the GB that reflects that body's effectiveness.	The school provides a limited plan for an annual self-evaluation of the GB.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete plan for an annual self-evaluation of the GB. --OR-- The application does not address the self-evaluation of GB members.
Comments:				

C. Leadership and Management.

C.(1) Describe how the governing body will monitor organizational, financial, and academic outcomes on an ongoing basis to ensure that your school is successfully meeting its mission and providing a quality education.

Monitoring

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek the services from the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools, the Vigil Group or other entity to monitor our governance, board, administration, teaching, and organization, our financial and academic outcomes on an ongoing basis to ensure Academic Opportunities Academy is meeting our mission and providing a quality education.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out the advice and guidance of other charter school administrators who will be invited to visit our campus and to give their insights and impressions into our governance, board, administration, teaching, and organization, our financial and academic outcomes on an ongoing basis to ensure Academic Opportunities Academy is meeting our mission and providing a quality education.

Our Campus Improvement Team and our Community Advisory Groups will be tasked with going over every aspect of our campus and our operations to constantly seek out areas where we can improve. The Campus Improvement Team and our Community Advisory Groups will give their insights, impressions, research findings, suggestions, guidance and other support in our ongoing quest for continuous improvement in our organization, our financial operations and procedures and our providing a quality education for all our students.

We have seen the effects of a bad board or the effects of one bad board member on a board. We seek to put in place safeguards to ensure this does not occur with Academic Opportunities Academy. We seek to have the highest quality board members we can attract. We know this is a difficult assignment to attract high quality board members who will not be compensated. We know they exist and we will seek out the best board members by advertising with the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools, local newspapers, radio and other venues in our search for outstanding board members. Our board members will be screened by T & T Staff Management who will do background checks, employment checks and reference checks to ensure they comply with same requirements required by any of our employees.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out other administrators in the charter school community in New Mexico to visit our campus and assess all aspects of our operations including our board members and their ability to serve our charter school and its learning community.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out the advice from the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools and other similar entities to evaluate and assess all aspects of our operations including our board members.

The Academic Opportunities Academy board has strategic responsibility for:

- *the constant pursuit of continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and student achievement and in gaining the commitment of staff, parents and students in achieving its mission;*
- *ensuring students and staff are safeguarded and treated with dignity and respect,*
- *ensuring financial solvency, scrupulousness, proactive sourcing of funding, best value and its effective obtaining of grants, donations and fundraising to achieve the agreed objectives and targets.*

The Academic Opportunities Academy works strategically by:

- *identifying the school's vision, values and aims,*
- *ensuring areas for improvement are robustly identified by the school's Campus Improvement Plan developed by the Campus Improvement Team with clear objectives, targets and timelines.*
- *promoting and monitoring the performance management of quality teaching and professional development,*
- *ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum is delivered that promotes high quality learning and has a positive impact on students' academic achievement and personal development including health, conduct, morals, social responsibility, citizenship, career and college readiness skills*
- *monitoring and evaluating all student's progress and achievement*
- *reviewing the policies that provide a broad framework for the school's operation including students' behavior, welfare and safety,*
- *ensuring all available funding is secured and effectively prioritized and invested to achieve its identified objectives, targets, and our mission*
- *ensuring systems are in place to check progress and gather evidence to evaluate overall progress against its vision, values, aims and improvement targets in order to see whether its quality of teaching, curriculum, policies, practice and investment are effectively improving all student's progress and achievement and in comparison to other schools and our standards*
- *monitoring and evaluating the satisfaction of its key stakeholders including the New Mexico Public Education Agency, New Mexico Education Commission, students, parents, community and staff.*

The Academic Opportunities Academy acts and makes decisions collectively as a team and authority rests with the whole board. The principal has responsibility for the internal organization, management and control of the school and for implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body.

Academic Opportunities Academy board is expected to:

- *accurately understand where and how the school is working to improve*
- *support and encourage when exploring strategies to create change*
- *monitor, probe, supportively challenge and evaluate*
- *recognize and celebrate achievement*
- *help make a difference*

The Academic Opportunities Academy board will meet monthly and more often if necessary. Activities and decisions are also delegated to the principal. The Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will be assigned activities and decisions of the board through the principal. The Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will complete research and make

recommendations. Any key findings, recommended actions and decisions made by a delegated party must be reported back to the Academic Opportunities Academy board.

The Campus Improvement Team will consult between Community Advisory Groups in order for effective decisions to be made.

All Community Advisory Groups will present their progress to the Campus Improvement Team. The Campus Improvement Team will present their progress and that of the Community Advisory Groups to the principal. The principal will report their findings and his/her actions to the board.

Data that might be used to assist in monitoring and evaluating the Academic Opportunities Academy board's decision making and the school's operational delivery could include:

- *Reports and presentation by the school leadership team and staff*
- *Curriculum Mapping Database and Software*
- *Assessment Data*
- *Surveys completed by parents, students, staff and the community*
- *Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups*

Academic Opportunities Academy board members should visit the school as often as they are can. Visits may be informal or part of a planned cycle where a specific purpose has been identified with the principal to learn and collect evidence to evaluate the outcome of its strategic decisions. Board member visits may include visiting lessons, school events, outings, attending inservice days, or other activities.

Academic Opportunities Academy board is accountable to students, parents, staff, the local and wider community, the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Public Education Commission. Evidence to demonstrate how the Academic Opportunities Academy has created and communicated its vision, monitored and evaluated the operational implementation of their strategic decision making, performance managed and tested and challenged data will be examined by our learning community.

Board members bring a range of knowledge, skills and experience to the role. Effective board members are also sensitive, tenacious, curious, ambitious, questioning, collaborative, enthusiastic and innovative.

The Academic Opportunities Academy board will monitor and evaluate the mission statement as part of its responsibility to ensure that the school provides the best possible education for all students.

The Academic Opportunities Academy board will conduct a range of monitoring and evaluation activities, always ensuring that these activities fall within the strategic role of the governing body. The monitoring and evaluation strategies employed by the governing body have been agreed with the school's senior leaders and are detailed below.

The Academic Opportunities Academy board will receive regular reports from the principal on the progress and impact of school improvement actions and will evaluate the impact of those actions on school improvement objectives.

The Academic Opportunities Academy Board will complete the requirements to meet the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division requirements to obtain a Board of Finance Designation. As soon as the Academic Opportunities Academy board has transformed from an interim board to a new board, they will complete the application and obtain their Board of Finance Designation.

Application for Board of Finance Designation

The application shall include:

(1) an affidavit or affidavits, signed by the personnel who will be given the responsibility of keeping the financial records of the charter school, describing the training completed, professional licensure held and degrees earned by them;

(2) a statement signed by every member of the governing body that the governing body agrees to consult with the department on any matter not covered by the manual of accounting and budgeting before taking any action relating to funds held as a board of finance; 6.80.4 NMAC 12

(3) a signed affidavit from each governing body member declaring that the member is not a governing body member of any other charter school and that the member was not a governing body member of another charter school that was suspended or failed to receive or maintain their board of finance designation;

(4) a copy of the certificate of insurance that indicates that the person who will be entrusted with handling the funds of the charter school is adequately insured;

(5) a letter from Poms & Associates verifying that the charter school is a participant in the public school insurance authority; and

(6) a copy of the business manager's current license.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—12	Meets—9	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
C(1) Monitoring	The school's descriptions of how the Governing Body will monitor outcomes clearly demonstrate an understanding of, and capacity to, monitor the organizational, financial, and academic success of the school, to ensure the school is meeting its mission, and able to manage and sustain a quality school.	The school's descriptions of how the Governing Body will monitor outcomes adequately demonstrate its understanding of, and capacity to, monitor the organizational, financial, and academic success of the school, to ensure the school is meeting its mission.	The school's descriptions of how the Governing Body will monitor outcomes demonstrates a limited understanding of, and capacity to, monitor the organizational, financial, and academic success of the school, to help the school meet its mission.	The school's description of how the Governing Body will monitor outcomes is inadequate or incomplete. --OR-- The school does not address the prompt.
Comments:				

C.(2) Identify and provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of the leadership characteristics and qualifications for the head administrator needed to run your school. In your description, take **into account the mission of the school**. Accordingly, include **evidence of a clear plan** (i.e., job search process, timelines etc.) to hire and evaluate a highly- qualified administrator.

If the proposed head administrator is a founder or already identified, provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of his/her leadership characteristics and qualifications for running your school and delivering its unique mission.

Finally, provide **evidence of a clear plan** to both hire and subsequently evaluate a highly- qualified administrator.

Head Administrator Selection

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state

laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to eventually groom and prepare our future administrators from within. Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to hire teachers who aspire to become administrators and have them perform an administrative internship to prepare for becoming an administrator with Academic Opportunities Academy.

Academic Opportunities Academy interim board has selected Mr. Mark Casavantes to be our initial principal and Mr. Ben Tice to be our initial assistant principal. Both will be required to obtain certification as a principal in New Mexico before assuming these duties. Mark Casavantes holds six teacher certifications and a principal certification in Texas. Ben Tice was superintendent for ten years with El Paso Academy East and West.

Mark has worked hard to bring Academic Opportunities Academy to life. He is very dedicated to this project and has dedicated much of his life the last five years to bringing this dream to life. It is an important quality to have the desire and motivation to bring this project to life. No one has more interest in making Academic Opportunities Academy come to life. The experiences of working on this project have been most valuable in developing the skills needed to make this project successful. I have gone through numerous transformations during this process. I believe that those who have seen my initial application and where we are now have seen this transformation. I believe that those who have been involved in the application process have seen this transformation and my sincere desire to make this school come to life. I believe that Academic Opportunities Academy will be the excellent school that the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Public Education Commission seeks for our students.

Mark Casavantes is a native of El Paso, and is the primary head administrator candidate for AOA. Mark brings to the table over 30 years of expertise in education serving in positions as teacher, assistant principal, math, computer science, and architecture teacher/coach in state competitions. Mark served as a Naval Officer in the Civil Engineer Corps managing the Long Beach naval yard and contracts ranging in six and seven figures. Mark supervised over 110 enlisted and an additional 70 civilian employees. He is a visionary for education and student achievement in the El Paso District. He is a highly qualified individual who can lead, innovate and inspire our students and teachers to high achievement.

Mark also has a depth of experience in site development and has been involved in architecture, engineering, design, and construction since 1974. He was a Site Development Specialist in the Air Force with the 823rd Civil Engineering Squadron a R.E.D. H.O.R.S.E. (Rapid Emergency Deployable Heavy Operations Repair Squadron Engineers) unit. He graduated with a degree in Architecture from Southern California Institute of Architecture in Los Angeles and was an architectural and civil

engineering designer for condominiums on 12th and California in Santa Monica with architect James Chuda, Denny's Restaurants, Winchell's Donut Houses, Shell Oil's Scotford Oil Refinery and Terminal Facility rail road tracks. Mark was a general contractor in the Los Angeles area specializing in commercial projects for the cities of Long Beach, El Monte, Rosemead, California. Other projects included Bob Cox Die Casting, Standard Oil Refinery repairs and remodels in El Segundo, California. Mark was involved in the site selection, remodeling, and interior design of Premier High School in El Paso.

Leadership can be hard to define and it means different things to different people. In the transformational leadership model, leaders set direction and help themselves and others to do the right thing to move forward. To do this they create an inspiring vision, and then motivate and inspire others to reach that vision. I believe this is what I have done. I hope that all those who review this application also believe in our vision and mission. I hope that I am able to motivate and inspire those who review our application to approve it. I believe that this charter school is the right thing to do for our students. It will provide an excellent education and career and college readiness that is needed in Deming.

Mark Casavantes has had the vision for creating an outstanding, high performing charter school for several years and has worked to make this vision become reality. Ben Tice turned around a charter school system that was in the process of being closed to a charter school that was well run in full compliance with the Texas Education Agency. Both have had excellent results as teachers to obtain educational success from their students.

Academic Opportunities Academy realizes that the quality of schools administrators is paramount to obtaining success for any school. We will be developing our future administrators by seeking our teachers who desire to become administrators and provide them with an internship to develop their knowledge and skills to become our next administrators. Seeking administrators with the desire and drive to create an outstanding charter school for our students is most important. We will be able to observe these qualities in our interns to determine who is best prepared to be our next administrators. They will know our charter school model very well and know the requirements of the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission very well before taking over these duties.

Academic Opportunities Academy will advertise in a variety of media for all potential employment opportunities to reach out to a wide selection of potential candidates. Candidates will receive screening in a variety of areas prior to being considered by T & T Staff Management, Inc. to ensure all candidates are qualified to become employees of Academic Opportunities Academy. They will meet all background checks, confirmation of all certifications, confirmation of all previous employment, reference checks, and an integrity questionnaire. Potential candidates will be interviewed by our administrators, campus staff, parent representatives, and student representatives. The best candidates will be required to work a day with pay in their potential position, be observed by the principal and other team representatives until a clear and final candidate is determined. The candidate will be made an offer according to our salary schedule and available budget. If they agree, they will be employed by Academic Opportunities Academy.

Since Academic Opportunities Academy will provide computer programming enrichment our administrators should have some knowledge in computer programming and have an interest in this field. Mark Casavantes has been learning computer programming in order to be aligned with our mission and anticipates that he will have the skills and abilities of a computer programmer in a few years.

Due to the importance of a school's administrative team, Academic Opportunities Academy will develop future administrators from within to the extent possible. By doing this, we will develop administrators who are intimately familiar with our school and our mission. They will also know our routines, procedures, policy, staff and students when they assume these duties. It is paramount that an administrator of Academic Opportunities Academy embraces our mission and vision for our school.

The job description of our administrators is included in the Appendix and is a key part in the selection of an administrator.

If in the event that Mark and Ben are not able to obtain the proper certifications in New Mexico, Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out all potential candidates for this position as described above. Mark has been certified as a Level III B administrator before and believes he would be certified again.

If Academic Opportunities Academy is not operating in a high performance manner according to the requirements and expectations by the New Mexico Public Education Commission, the New Mexico Public Education Department and the goals in this charter school application. Mark Casavantes and Ben Tice will immediately seek new administrators for our charter school who have the abilities and expertise to operate our charter school in a high performing manner. We do not believe this will be necessary, but we do not want to hurt our charter school.

As described in other parts of this application we will seek to hire teachers who aspire to become administrators and have them perform an administrative internship, substitute for the administrators in their absence, and to be members of our Campus Improvement Team. They are encouraged to attend board meetings and to pursue a master's degree in School Administration and obtain a Principal Level III-B certification. We seek to hire from within whenever possible and will develop career pathways for every position from clerk to principal. We will provide training to all employees to learn new positions within Academic Opportunities Academy.

In other parts of this application we have defined our employee selection process which included our administrative team.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
0	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1

	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of the desired or, if selected, the head administrator's leadership characteristics and qualifications and takes into account the mission of the school. The school provides evidence of a clear plan to hire and evaluate a highly-qualified administrator.	The school provides a clear description of the desired, or, if selected, the head administrator's leadership characteristics and qualifications and may or may not clearly take into account the mission of the school. The school provided evidence of a plan to hire and evaluate a highly-qualified administrator.	The school provides a limited description of the desired, or, if selected, the head administrator's qualifications. The school provided some evidence of a plan to hire and evaluate an administrator.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete description of the head administrator's qualifications, and the plan to hire and evaluate an administrator. --OR-- The application provides no plan to address the head administrator's qualifications and the hiring and evaluating of an administrator.
Comments:				

C.(3) Describe how the governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of your school's head administrator. Provide a proposed job description for the head administrator including responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders. Attach the job description as Appendix C.

Head Administrator Evaluation

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to be the charter school that exceeds the expectations and desires of the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission. Mark Casavantes has observed a few meetings conducted by the New Mexico Public Education Commission and viewed a few of the concerns that have been brought before the commission. I believe I understand much of what you want to achieve and I believe I am aligned with your desires. I believe that I have been cooperative and responsive to both the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Department. I seek to create the innovative, creative, high quality, high performance charter school you all envision. I seek to be the best charter school in New Mexico. I want every student to succeed. I seek out and desire to teach those that are difficult and hard to teach.

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to be the quality charter school that aligns with the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission. We seek to meet or exceed all your expectations. I believe in servant leadership. Your goals and objectives are our goals and objectives. If in the event anything does not meet your satisfaction I will do all I can to ensure you are satisfied.

I am willing to change any aspect of this charter application that is not to the liking of the New Mexico Public Education Department or the New Mexico Public Education Commission as long as the result maintains or improves the education of all our students.

Mark Casavantes has seen the outcome of a bad board on a charter school during meetings with the New Mexico Public Education Commission. We recognize the need for a good, strong and effective board. We also know that an excellent relationship between the board and the principal are essential to the successful operation of our school. Academic Opportunities Academy will be assisted by annual performance reviews under NMSA 22-10A-11(G) the board directs the principal to evaluate other members of the administrative team in compliance and in accordance with the New Mexico Highly Objective Statewide Standard of Evaluation for Principals and Assistant Principals (HOUSSE). The board shall annually evaluate the job performance of the principal during a meeting of the board. The board may evaluate the principal on the achievement of school goals, student performance, parent satisfaction, and the financial well-being of the school. Academic Opportunities Academy would expect our administrators and board to expect full compliance of our charter and all requirements and expectations of the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission. Included in our charter school application are significant goals that we consider paramount in obtaining these goals as promised to the best of our abilities.

Our board will develop an assessment procedure in full compliance of federal and state laws and regulations to effectively evaluate our principal. Input from our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will be encouraged to develop a quality assessment of our administrator(s). This assessment should include all of the duties and responsibilities of our administrator and full compliance to all requirements of our charter school. The assessment procedure will be reviewed and revised periodically to ensure it is the highest quality assessment procedure that we are able to develop. We will seek out the assessment procedures of other high performing charter schools and other research to establish our best practices.

The governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school's principal and provide a detailed job description for the principal that includes a comprehensive list of responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders. Our detailed job description is included in Appendix C.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
C.(3) Head Administrator Evaluation	The school describes a clear and comprehensive plan for how the governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school's head administrator and provides a detailed job description for the head administrator that includes a comprehensive list of responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders and attaches it as Appendix C.	The school describes a clear plan for how the governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school's head administrator and provides an adequate job description for the head administrator that includes a list of responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders and attaches it as Appendix C.	The school describes a limited plan for how the governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school's head administrator and provides a limited job description for the head administrator that may or may not include a list of responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders and attaches it as Appendix C.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete plan to hire and evaluate an administrator. --OR-- The application provides no plan to hire and evaluate an administrator.
Comments:				

D. Organizational Structure of the School.

D.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable** organizational chart and narrative that **aligns structures with the mission of the school** and demonstrates a **clear** understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the school.

Organizational Structure

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities

that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Our organizational chart is provided as an attachment to our application. Our organizational chart provides a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable organizational chart and narrative that align structures with the mission of the school and demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the school. Our organizational chart seeks to have a clear and simple organization with the least amount of levels or bureaucracy to facilitate a well-organized and well run charter school.

The Academic Opportunities Academy Board will hire and fire the Head Administrator/Principal, oversee the fiscal and legal compliance of all operations, implement policy, hear grievances that have been appealed, and perform all other duties as defined by the Academic Opportunities Academy Articles of Incorporation/bylaws.

The Head Administrator/Principal will report to the Academic Opportunities Academy Board and be responsible for all operations of the campus in accordance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations, the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division, the New Mexico Public Education Commission, our charter, Academic Opportunities Academy Articles of Incorporation/bylaws, and board policy. The Head Administrator/Principal will hire, fire, and supervise all employees as well as provide an annual review of all employees.

The Assistant Principal will assist the Head Administrator/Principal in all of their duties and responsibilities campus in accordance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations, the NMPED charter, and Academic Opportunities Academy Articles of Incorporation/bylaws, and board policy.

The Office Manager, Teachers, Educational Aides, Social Workers, and Clerks will be supervised by the Principal. They will perform all their duties according to their job descriptions.

Academic Opportunities Academy will give all parents, guardians, employees, community members, and students a voice through the Campus Improvement Team and our Community Advisory Groups. AOA believes in continuous improvement and democratic operations. Our Community Advisory Groups will study, research, brainstorm, and provide recommendations about all aspects of our operations on an ongoing basis. They will forward their recommendations to the Campus Improvement Team for their review. The Campus Improvement Team will forward their recommendations to the principal for action. The principal will consult and inform the board of their actions.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(1)Organizational Structure	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable organizational chart and narrative that align structures with the mission of the school and demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the school.	The school provides a clear organizational chart and narrative that demonstrate an adequate understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the school.	The school provides a limited organizational chart and narrative of the relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the school.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete organizational chart and narrative of the relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the school. --OR-- The application does not include an organizational chart and supporting narrative.
Comments:				

D.(2) Provide **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** job descriptions for all certified and licensed staff and any other key staff (if your charter requires non-traditional roles or positions, identify and describe here). In the job descriptions, clearly outline necessary qualifications and then **appropriate** reporting lines that are consistent with the organizational chart. Attach staff job descriptions as Appendix D.

Job Descriptions

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities

that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Job descriptions are included in Attachment D and provide clear, comprehensive, and cohesive job descriptions for all certified and licensed staff and any other key staff. In the job descriptions, clearly outline necessary qualifications and appropriate reporting lines that are consistent with the organizational chart.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(2) Job Descriptions	The school provides clear, comprehensive, and cohesive job descriptions for all key staff, including qualifications and clear, appropriate reporting lines that are consistent with the organizational chart. The job descriptions are attached as Appendix D.	The school provides clear job descriptions for most of the key staff, including clear reporting lines that are consistent with the organizational chart. The job descriptions are attached as Appendix D.	The school provides limited job descriptions for some of the key staff, including reporting lines that are somewhat consistent with the organizational chart. The job descriptions are attached as Appendix D.	The school provides inadequate or incomplete job descriptions for key staff.] --OR-- The application does not address job descriptions for key staff.
Comments:				

Staff Evaluation

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to be the quality charter school that aligns with the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division and the New Mexico Public Education Commission. We seek to meet or exceed all your expectations. Your goals and objectives are our goals and objectives.

Our board will develop an assessment procedure in full compliance of federal and state laws and regulations to effectively evaluate our staff. Input from our principal, Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will be encouraged to develop a quality assessment of our staff. This assessment should include all of the duties and responsibilities included in our job descriptions and full

compliance to all requirements of our charter school under their jurisdiction. The assessment procedure will be reviewed and revised periodically to ensure it is the highest quality assessment procedure that we are able to develop. We will seek out the assessment procedures of other high performing charter schools and other research to establish our best practices.

The governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of each position and provide a detailed job description for each staff position that includes a comprehensive list of responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school staff.

The Principal will be responsible for evaluating instructional staff through a process that involves informal as well as formal assessments. Instructional staff will be provided with job descriptions and a list of responsibilities. Formal assessments will include evaluations by their peers and their students. Peer and student ratings of teacher performance will be considered in measuring teacher effectiveness. The evaluation process will consist of an annual performance evaluation based on a professional development plan that meets the requirements of the state standard as provided in 6.69.4.10 NMAC.

At the start of each year, each teacher and the Principal will establish a professional development plan and goals for the teacher with measurable objectives for the school year. Evaluation will include:

1. The PED's nine teaching competencies and indicators for the teacher's licensure level <http://teachnm.org/experienced-teachers/nm-teacher-competencies.html>;
2. Review the previous year's evaluation, if applicable;
3. Metrics to confirm whether the teacher is highly qualified in the core academic subject(s) the teacher teaches and that the school has appropriately assigned the teacher to teach in this subject(s). Annual performance evaluations shall be based on Discovery Education student reports and the objectives of the professional development plan. The Head Administrator shall observe teachers in their classrooms and confirm the teacher's ability to demonstrate state adopted competencies and indicators for each teacher's licensure level, based on qualitative and quantitative assessments. The following areas will be included in developing an evaluation plan for teacher performance.

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE

- The teacher maintains broad, accurate and organized knowledge of subject matter.
- The teacher is knowledgeable of appropriate and current theories and practices / is knowledgeable about the intellectual and social developmental stages of children / is knowledgeable of how content areas relate to each other / is knowledgeable of higher level thinking skills.
- The teacher demonstrates effective communication skills.
- Able to interpret short cycle assessment data, and modify teaching styles as may be needed.

EVIDENCE OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

- participates in professional development activities such as coursework, in service, academic readings, travel, cultural exchange activities, professional organizations and other enrichment activities.
- -continues to develop a general understanding of educational technology and its relationship to the instructional process.

SELECTION, ORGANIZATION OF SUBJECT MATTER WITH APPROPRIATE INTEGRATION OF COMPUTER PROGRAMMING APPLICABILITY**The teacher:**

- has clear goals and objectives and clearly communicates them.
- maintains compatibility with Academic Opportunities Academy curriculum.
- adapts subject matter to relevant computer science and computer programming themes.
- makes clear linkages between core content areas and computer programming.
- promotes parental understanding and cooperation.

MOTIVATION**The teacher:**

- develops student interest in learning
- uses appropriate problem solving strategies to develop higher level problem solving competencies.
- clearly communicates core curriculum objectives and goals to students.
- demonstrates sensitivity to the academic and social needs of students.
- promotes student interest and participation in health and wellness activities.

LESSON PLAN DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION**The teacher:**

- appropriately allocates time, energy and resources to develop lessons plans that integrate computer programming materials with core content.
- uses teacher and student experiences for the enrichment of classroom experience.
- organizes daily lesson plans that are coherent and complementary to grade specific strands.
- demonstrates ability to integrate new Common Core, SBA and PARCC standards.
- is able to adapt instruction to different student learning styles.
- stimulates student learning through varied teaching techniques.
- treats student responses appropriately and fairly.
- complies with Academic Opportunities Academy school culture.
- directs supervised study.
- uses a variety of effective and realistic forms of student assessment and evaluation.
- develops instructional approaches to improve student test taking skills and uses assessments effectively
- involves Instructional assistants in student group learning with ease and purpose

EXECUTIVE ABILITY & MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- organizes the classroom to adapt to different learning situations.
- applies classroom rules and procedures fairly and consistently.
- effectively encourages positive student behavior.
- maintains positive learning climate for students.
- organizes effective transitions for students.
- effective use of instructional assistants in the classroom.
- involves parents, staff, and other agencies as appropriate.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY, ETHICS & INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**The teacher:**

- demonstrates need for confidentiality and personal information.
- shows understanding and sensitivity in working with peers.
- acknowledges the importance of the group decision making process.
- observes school practices and administrative procedures such as designated school hours, punctuality, and attendance.
- demonstrates an interest in the welfare of students and their career paths.
- maintains effective and appropriate communications with students, parents and co-workers.
- understands the school culture and is in harmony with the community.
- is willing to make meaningful self-inventory of personal skills

D.(3)(a) Provide a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive staffing plan that demonstrates an understanding of the school's staffing needs and is reasonable and adequate to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/ curriculum.

Staffing Plan

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Until Academic Opportunities Academy has enrolled at least one student, the staffing will be limited to the Principal, Assistant Principal and Office Manager or service provided by the Vigil Group or other related provider.

The first teacher to be hired will be a TESOL endorsed Bilingual Education Teacher with certifications in more than one content area.

When Academic Opportunities Academy has enrolled its first special education student we will hire a Special Education Teacher with certifications in more than one content area.

The Academic Opportunities Academy board, Principal, Assistant Principal and Office Manager or service provided by the Vigil Group or other related provider, will meet on a monthly basis to make recommendations for additional personnel based on the student enrollment, available budget, and requirements of our charter.

Initially our plan is to hire at least one teacher in each of the content areas needed for our campus. We will seek teachers who also are interested in performing an administrative internship with Academic Opportunities Academy.

Next we will hire educational aides to monitor our Main Academic Space. Teachers and/or administrators will perform this duty until we hire our first educational aide.

Based on the recommendations of the Academic Opportunities Academy board, Principal, Assistant Principal and Office Manager or service provided by the Vigil Group or other related provider, recommendations will be made to hire Clerks, Educational Aides, Teachers and Social Workers until our staffing plan is complete upon reaching our enrollment cap.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(3)(a) Staffing Plan Need	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive staffing plan that demonstrates an understanding of staffing needs and appears reasonable and adequate to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/ curriculum.	The school provides a clear staffing plan that appears adequate to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/ curriculum.	The school provides a limited staffing plan to support adequate implementation of the academic program/ curriculum.	The school provides a staffing plan that is inadequate or, incomplete. --OR-- The application does not provide a staffing plan.

D.(3)(b) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** staffing plan that is clearly aligned with the budget, projected enrollment, and implementation schedule.

Staffing Plan Alignment with Budget

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Our salary schedule reflects approximately 5% over the Deming Public Schools salary schedules. We know this is above our current budget projections as we anticipate additional funding of our charter school from federal money which is not included in our income at this time. Also, Academic Opportunities Academy will actively pursue all grants that may be available and other possible sources of funds and/or donations which are also not included in our current budget. Our budget will

be adjusted as additional sources of income are made available with the intention of paying our teachers based on our salary schedule. We also intend additionally for teachers with additional teaching certifications or in areas where finding a qualified teacher is additionally difficult. The amount of this compensation will be set by the Academic Opportunities Academy board when this situation occurs in consultation with our administrative staff and Office Manager or service provided by the Vigil Group or other related provider.

Academic Opportunities Academy realizes that our extended school day will require two additional hours of teacher and educational aide work and is included in our budget.

In preparing the budget we realize we have limited resources to perform the teaching of our students and every effort to utilize our limited resources to optimize student learning according to our mission will be the focus of all our activities.

Our implementation schedule is included as an attachment.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
D.(3)(b) Staffing Plan Alignment	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school's staffing plan is clearly aligned with the budget, projected enrollment, and implementation schedule.	The school's staffing plan is clear and complete and generally appears to be aligned with the budget.	The school's staffing plan is adequate and partially aligned with the budget.	The school's staffing plan is inadequate or incomplete and does not align with the budget. --OR-- The application does not provide a staffing plan.
Comments:				

D.(5) Provide a calendar and schedule (length of school day and school year including total number of days/hours of instruction) that **completely comply** with **all** state requirements and ensure **effective, successful** implementation of the academic program/curriculum. Describe in detail how this schedule supports your school's educational program and how the calendar is optimal for achieving high outcomes for your target student population.

School Day/Year

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will align our school calendar as closely as possible with the Deming Public School calendar as we know that many families will have our students attending both our campus and a campus from the Deming Public Schools.

Academic Opportunities Academy hopes to obtain funding to operate a summer school program to provide grade level recovery and secondarily computer programming enrichment but this is not currently included in this application.

*Daily Schedule**7:30 a.m. Building Opens**7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Breakfast / Play / Socializing**8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. Opening Activities*

- *Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag*
- *Pledge of Allegiance to the New Mexico flag*
- *Announcements*
- *Awards and Outstanding Student Recognition*
- *Positive Encouragement and Motivation*

8:15 a.m. – 12:00 noon Morning Instructional Day

- *Independent and Small Group Work in the Main Academic Space*
- *Pull-Out Classes*

*12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m. Lunch / Play / Socializing**1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Afternoon Instructional Day*

- *Independent and Small Group Work in the Main Academic Space*
- *Pull-Out Classes*

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Extended School Day

- *Remediation / Grade Level Recovery*
- *Enrichment / Computer Programming Instruction and Projects*

6:30 p.m. Building Closes

This extended day schedule supports our school mission and our charter school model to provide the most optimum instruction possible.

Academic Opportunities Academy will follow the Deming Public School calendar. We plan to develop our own school calendar in the future when our families will attend only Academic Opportunities when we offer a K-12 program in the future.

We contacted Deming Public Schools to see if they have prepared their school calendar for the 2016 – 2017 school year. They informed me it is being developed as of this writing and will be completed probably soon after this application will be submitted. We sent Deming Public Schools our school calendar used in this application and they informed me that they would send us their school calendar as soon as their calendar was available. We would like to make any changes to our calendar during the startup process to align with the Deming Public Schools calendar.

Ranking				
← Satisfied			Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(5) School Day/Year	The school provides a calendar and schedule that completely comply with all state requirements and ensure effective, successful implementation of the educational program/curriculum. The school provides a detailed description of how the calendar optimally supports high achieving outcomes for the target student population.	The school provides a calendar and schedule that comply with most state requirements and are sufficient to ensure successful implementation of the educational program/curriculum. The school provides some detail regarding how the calendar supports high achieving outcomes for the target student population.	The school provides a calendar and schedule that comply with some state requirements. The school provides few details regarding how the calendar supports the target student population.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate calendar and schedule that may or may not comply with state requirements. --OR-- The application does not address a school calendar and schedule.
Comments:				

D.(6) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and compelling** plan for Professional Development that meets state requirements, supports the implementation of the school's educational plan, mission, and performance goals. Ensure that the plan is supported by the budget.

Professional Development Plan

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy knows that our unique and innovative plan will requires extensive professional development. When we have presented our plan to others it takes several hours to present our ideas. We know that we will have to walk through all our processes with our staff several times and provide guidance and assistance until all aspect of our charter school model will be fully comprehended and internalized with our staff. We want a staff that is very well trained in all aspects of our charter school model as well as developing their professional practice for each position.

We want our teachers to know all the requirements for advancing to eventually become a Level III teacher in New Mexico. We would want our Level III teachers to assist all our other teachers in preparing their portfolios and developing their professional practice to be expert teacher for our students. We will seek additional outside staff development as necessary to provide this training to or teachers. We aim to assist all of our staff members to advance to higher level positions who seek advancement.

Academic Opportunities Academy wants all our staff to develop and grow to be able to advance from clerk to principal. We seek to provide career pathways for every position and then support our staff toward achieving advancement. We seek to hire from within when any position is available to the extent possible. We will use our existing staff to become substitutes for every position to the extent possible. Due to the licensing and unique requirements of social workers we do not plan to have other staff substitute for our social workers.

Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will be introduced to all the requirements of operating a charter school and we will seek to provide all the resources and training necessary to be the important teams to keep our charter school on the cutting edge of providing the best education and having the best charter school model in full compliance with all federal and state requirements.

*<http://teachnm.org/experienced-teachers/professional-development-dossier.html>
http://teachnm.org/uploads/docs/professional_development_framework.pdf*

Academic Opportunities Academy will use our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups to also be our learning communities to develop our professional development training for all our staff. Academic Opportunities Academy will provide job embedded learning and continuous improvement in a fully supportive environment for all our staff.

Our school administration and board will provide the focus, continuous support, and advocacy for instructional improvement resources include funding, material, and adequate time for collaboration. Our teachers are empowered to set the time they need for collaboration and can meet with all teachers at the same time to do all the collaboration, problem solving, professional development and other activities they may need to accomplish to support our charter school model, our mission and the quality education of all our students.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software and any other data that our campus has access to will be used to determine our learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continued improvement. Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software embodies this concept. We believe no

other campus uses such a system to determine the educational priorities of our campus in close to real time on an ongoing basis. When we know what our students know and do not know we can compile data in alignment with our scope and sequence to establish learning priorities based on teacher developed criteria. Our teachers are empowered to override any data and to modify our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to best meet the needs of our students.

Our Curriculum Mapping Database has the power to incorporate assessment from multiple sources, at multiple levels, from participant satisfaction to program impact on improved learning.

Data from outside sources can be manually inputted into our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to be included with all our other data regardless of the source or level. Everyone in our learning community has access to their appropriate component of the Curriculum Mapping Database and Software, so it would be easy to incorporate surveys of all kinds into our system which would provide a democratic system to incorporate the ideas and opinions of every individual in our learning community. We could ask about lunch menus, incentives, opinions, satisfactions, ideas, and suggestions on a variety of topics and concepts to continuously improve all aspects of our charter school model and our quest for the best education for all our students.

When you are the cutting edge of education, charter school models and improvement of education it is difficult if not impossible to find research on these cutting edge ideas. We seek all relevant, research based, best practice and ideas when they are available. We will use our internal data when outside research is not available to improve our charter school model. All appropriate data and research regarding our campus is available to all members of our learning community to seek out improvements. We expect that all results are used to select content and prepare educators to apply research to decision-making. We expect our teachers and educational aides will incorporate into our charter school model a sustained process over time using varied models and strategies appropriate to the intended goals and our mission. We expect our teachers and educational aides to base their professional practice based on principles of student learning and knowledge of human learning and change. We expect our teachers and educational aides to collaborate with all members of our learning community to provide our educators with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to collaborate and manage the change process. We expect our teachers and educational aides to actively work toward the success of all our students. We expect our teachers to seek to maintain the highest standards for all our students. We expect our teachers and educational aides to develop the highest quality teaching that deepens content knowledge, enhances pedagogical skills, and expands the repertoire of strategies for student success

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to involve the entire family into our charter school model. We plan on having open houses on almost every Saturday to open our campus to the community and to encourage enrollment provide knowledge and skills for involving communities and families that supports the implementation of the school's educational plan. Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software provides families with a complete report on how their children are performing in close to real time. Although not included in this charter school application we envision providing assistance to our families in a variety of ways including providing training and skills in employment skills to help our families. We encourage family members to volunteer in our campus and to be members of our Community Advisory Groups.

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 computer programming enrichment.

All staff will need to know our mission statement and charter school model. Our charter school has many new and unique components which will need to be explained to all our staff prior to opening our campus. Our staff will need to perform dry runs to learn how to use Edmentum and all other curricular products. Our staff will need to know how our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software is used, the reports it can generate and how this software will be used to help our students succeed. Our staff will need to know all our routines, procedures, and processes of our charter school model. Our staff will form our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups which will be involved in problem solving all unforeseen problems our campus may face and proposing solutions to these problems. Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will identify areas where our staff needs professional development and prepare professional development whenever it can be performed by members of our staff. If outside professional developers are needed they will clearly identify the areas of need.

Performance Goals have been identified in this charter school application and Academic Opportunities Academy considers all performance goals required by the New Mexico Public Education Department or the New Mexico Public Education Commission to be included as our performance goals. All staff members will be made aware of all these performance goals and the reports on these performance goals will be reviewed by all staff members. All staff members are expected to support all our operations to obtain every performance goal. All staff members will be a member of our Campus Improvement Team or our Community Advisory Groups which will study all data from all reports and make recommendations for campus improvement, including all professional development needs.

Ensure that the professional development plan is supported by the budget. To the extent possible, Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to provide professional development with our own staff to conserve all financial resources. When necessary, Academic Opportunities Academy will seek outside professional development. We know that additional money will be made part of our budget when federal funds become available. We also plan to aggressively seek out all additional sources of funds through grants, fund-raising and donations. Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will prioritize our professional development needs against the available funds. We recognize the value of quality professional development in our efforts to continuously improve our charter school model based on our mission statement.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
D.(6) Professional Development Plan	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and compelling plan for Professional Development that meets state requirements, supports the implementation of the school's educational plan, mission and performance goals. The plan is completely supported by the budget.	The school provides a clear plan for Professional Development that meets state requirements, supports the implementation of the school's educational plan, mission and performance goals. The plan is mostly supported by the budget.	The school provides a limited plan for Professional Development that meets state requirements and appears to be somewhat supported by the budget.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete Professional Development Plan. --OR-- The application does not address a Professional Development Plan.
Comments:				

E. Employees.

E.(1) **Clearly describe** the employer/employee relationship and provide **clear terms** and conditions of employment for all classes of employees (administration, professional staff, and administrative staff). Please offer a **complete and appropriate explanation of** how you will address employees' recognized representatives.

Employer/Employee Relationship

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to have the best employer / employee relationship possible. Our employees will be at-will employees. Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will a full and knowledgeable insight into our operations in a very open and transparent manner where they are a fully integrated component into all aspects our school's operations. We seek a charter school model where all staff is really a part of our operations. They know everything about our school. They are involved in all aspects of all decision making. They are empowered to make all appropriate decisions regarding their professional duties. We support every employee with the training and guidance to advance within Academic Opportunities Academy. We value and support our staff. Through our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups, all employees have representation in every aspect of our charter school in an open and transparent manner. They are their own representative and voice within our campus. They are an integral member of our team. Every member of our staff will have open and two-way communication with all members of our staff including our administrative team and board to discuss any grievance or issue. We seek to solve all grievances and issues in a fair and equitable manner in full compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations.

Our administrative team is the educational leader and is ultimately responsible for everything that occurs on the campus. We believe in servant leadership and a collaborative leadership style to the extent possible. Our administrators are the glue to build a well operating team and to provide the resources to support our team within the constraints of available budget, legal, moral, ethical behaviors to support our charter school model and mission. We recognize that quality administration is a paramount component to developing a quality charter school.

Employees of Academic Opportunities Academy are empowered through our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups to be fully involved in all aspects our charter school model and operations including wages, hours, terms and conditions of employment, and grievance procedures. We want a knowledgeable and empowered staff intimately involved in all aspects of our campus and our charter school model. We believe that considering our employees to be our team will result in the highest level of success. We want them to know they are an involved and empowered team member of our charter school. Any employee who wishes to be represented by a union, lawyer, fellow employee or other individual is free to do so.

Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will study and make recommendations regarding EVERY aspect of our school operations. We value our team and believe that our team has the ideas and suggestions to make us become the best charter school with the best charter school model in accordance with our mission, charter and all federal and state laws and regulations.

We want our employees to know this is their charter school. Similar to an employee owned business, we want them to be fully knowledgeable of all our activities in on open and transparent manner. We want them to be involved in the decision making in a collaborative charter school. We believe when our employees are able to see the cause and effect of their actions they will make better decisions for our students and our charter schools. In the process of preparing this charter school application I have seen the diverse knowledge and skills needed to operate our charter school. It cannot be run effectively with one person making the decisions. Better decisions are made in a collaborative manner.

Also, our staff needs to understand our mission, charter, law, regulations, and policy to be able to make quality decision. We want our staff to be knowledgeable and empowered. We want our charter school to be an outstanding place to be employed. We want our charter school to be an outstanding place to be a student as well.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
E.(1) Employer/Employee Relationship	The school clearly describes the employer/employee relationship and provides clear terms of employment for all classes of employees. The school completely and appropriately explains how it will address employees' recognized representatives.	The school describes the employer/employee relationship and provides the terms of employment for all classes of employees. The school explains how it will address employees' recognized representative.	The school provides a limited description of the terms of employment for all classes of employees and may or may not address how the school will address employees' recognized representatives.	The school's description of the employer/employee relationship is incomplete or inadequate. --OR-- The application does not address the relationship between the employer and the employee.
Comments:				

E.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** set of governing body personnel policies and procedures **that are aligned** with the stated employer/employee relationship, and comply with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations (attach as Appendix E). **OR** If you plan to develop those governing body personnel policies and procedures later, state how and when they will be developed and how you will ensure that they comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

Personnel Policies

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

The Board, administration and staff at the Academic Opportunities Academy are committed to treating employees fairly and in compliance with state and federal employment law. We will provide a safe and positive work climate that encourages employees to be creative risk-takers and to strive to constantly improve the educational climate in their classrooms. All personnel at Academic Opportunities Academy will be trained to recognize and understand the importance of their role in the school's success the administration is committed to providing a variety of professional development opportunities. The Board, administration and staff will maintain the highest standards of ethical behavior. Academic Opportunities Academy personnel policies and procedures are in full compliance with local and state rules and regulations. The Head Administrator and Governing Board will follow the provisions of the School Personnel Act [22-10A-1 NMSA 1978]. Upon approval of the charter, the Principal shall recruit, employ, fix salaries, assign responsibilities as outlined in job descriptions, terminate and discharge all employees.

Academic Opportunities Academy administration and its Governing Board shall comply with the requirements and procedures for collective bargaining as set forth in the Public Employees Bargaining Act as outlined at NMSA 1978, Section 10-7E-1 et seq.

Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will study and make recommendations regarding EVERY aspect of our school operations. We value our team and believe that our team has the ideas and suggestions to make us become the best charter school with the best charter school model in accordance with our mission, charter and all federal and state laws and regulations. When Academic Opportunities Academy has our first employee they will begin to be knowledgeable and involved in all aspects of our campus operations.

Also, Academic Opportunities Academy will consult with the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools, other charter schools, and others to establish some initial policies, routines and procedures for until our Community Advisory Groups and Campus Improvement Team is prepared to perform their duties during the startup and early formation of our charter school.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
E.(2)Personnel Policies	<p>The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive set of personnel policies and procedures that are aligned with the stated employer / employee relation-ship, and comply with all applicable state and federal regulations (attached as Appendix E).</p> <p>—OR—</p> <p>The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan that states how and when personnel policies will be developed and how it will ensure that they comply with all applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.</p>	<p>The school provides a clear set of personnel policies and procedures that mostly complies with all applicable state and federal regulations (attached as Appendix E).</p> <p>—OR—</p> <p>The school provides a clear plan that states how and when personnel policies will be developed and how it will ensure that they comply with most of the applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.</p>	<p>The school provides a limited set of personnel policies and procedures that somewhat comply with all applicable state and federal regulations (attached as Appendix E).</p> <p>—OR—</p> <p>The school provides a plan that states how and when personnel policies will be developed and how it will ensure that they comply with some of applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.</p>	<p>The school provides an incomplete or inadequate set of personnel policies and procedures.</p> <p>--OR--</p> <p>The application does not address personnel policies and procedures or plans to develop the policies.</p>
Comments:				

E.(3) Provide a staff discipline process that is **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** and that is aligned with the stated employer/employee relationship, and follows an appropriate route ensuring due process.

Staff Discipline Process

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to hire a quality staff that will have positive, long-term employment with our charter school. We will seek to guide and improve our staff in a positive and confidential manner when needed. We plan to provide ongoing training and professional development to create the best charter school we can for our students. Every effort will be made to work with employees who are working hard to improve their shortcomings. Termination will only be initiated as a last resort and providing due process for the employee. Employees who place other employees and/or students at risk of any harm or injury will be removed immediately from the campus pending the completion of all due process procedures leading to termination of the employee.

In the event that an employee demonstrates behavior requiring disciplinary process, AOA will:
Present a Verbal warning and discussion in private with the Principal and Social Worker.
Present a Written warning and discussion in private with the Principal and Social Worker.
Engage the employee in a Growth Plan developed with a timeline to remedy unsatisfactory behaviors.
Serious infractions will result in immediate termination where the safety of students and staff are involved and/or criminal behavior (misdemeanor or felony) is involved.
Meeting with the Academic Opportunities Academy board and legal counsel to investigate termination.

Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all laws and regulations relating to employee termination and we will follow the advice of our legal council to ensure full compliance with the law and full exercise of due process requirements.

Ranking					
		Satisfied ←	Not Satisfied →		
E.(3) Staff Discipline Process	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1	
	The school provides a staff discipline process that is clear, comprehensive, and cohesive and aligned with stated employer/employee relationship, and follows an appropriate route that ensures due process.	The school provides a staff discipline process that is clear and follows an appropriate route that ensures due process.	The school provides a limited staff discipline process that partially follows an appropriate route that ensures due process.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete staff discipline process. --OR-- The application does not address a staff discipline process.	
Comments:					

E.(4) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** employee grievance process that is aligned with the stated employer/employee relationship, and includes provisions for appropriate protections and appeals, and time frames that follows legal guidelines.

Grievance Process

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to avoid situations which would result in a grievance by treating every employee, student, parent, guardian, contractor, and our community in a fair and equitable manner. In the event a grievance does occur, we seek to resolve the grievance if at all possible.

Any employee may present a grievance regarding a personnel decision to the Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal will have ten (10) working days to review the grievance and make their decision. If the employee is still not satisfied with the decision they may appeal to the Principal. The Principal will have ten (10) working days review the grievance to reach their decision. If the party who has a grievance is not satisfied to the decisions provided may appeal to the Academic Opportunities Academy board at the next scheduled board meeting. The board may or may not make a decision. The board's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Academic Opportunities Academy may have legal council involved to provide guidance through this process if the grievance may lead to litigation.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
E.(4) Grievance Process	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive employee grievance process that is completely aligned with the stated employer/employee relationship, and includes provisions for appropriate protections and appeals, and time frames that follows legal guidelines.	The school provides a clear employee grievance process that mostly aligns with the stated employer/employee grievance process, and includes provisions for appropriate protections and appeals, time frames, and that follows legal guidelines.	The school provides an employee grievance process that partially follows appropriate legal guidelines.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete employee grievance process. --OR-- The application does not address the school's employee grievance process.
Comments:				

F. Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance.

F.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan that describes school structures that will provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school. The plan includes how **parental involvement will help to advance** the school's mission.

Please note that charter schools *may not require* community or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting or not accepting a student.

Community Involvement

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

AOA strongly encourages all parents/guardians, students, community members, businesses, nonprofits, and all others who wish to participate in our continuous improvement program to do so. AOA seeks to be the most outstanding charter school and we intend to continuously seek our new and innovative ideas to make these continuous incremental improvements. Every aspect of AOA operations will be reviewed periodically by our community advisory groups. Our Community Advisory Groups and Campus Improvement Team will brainstorm, research, test, evaluate, refine and improve every aspect of our charter school operations. These groups will report their work to the principal and/or AOA board for approvals.

Academic Opportunities Academy will have open houses most Saturdays to welcome our community to learn more about our charter school, to have parents and guardians meet with school staff, to enroll with our charter school, to have a tour of our facilities, to ask questions about our charter school, to bring up questions and/or concerns and other related activities.

Academic Opportunities Academy will establish routines and procedures to collaborate and align our operations with Deming Public Schools. We will gladly meet to collaborate on how we can best meet the needs of all our students. We will gladly meet with Deming Public Schools to align our policies, procedures, routines and any other aspect of our operations on an ongoing basis. We seek to have an outstanding and positive relationship with Deming Public Schools.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to build excellent relationships with all businesses in the Deming area and will collaborate on how we may be able to serve our community. As we seek to be a computer programming charter school, we would gladly be interested in appropriate computer programming projects to assist Deming businesses. Some ideas brought to our attention so far with businesses is developing a point of sale platform and marketing of their businesses through websites.

Academic Opportunities Academy will meet with any group to discuss our charter school and to share ideas in a collaborative manner.

Community Involvement

We have met with two Community Advisory Groups in Deming. One group is primarily business owners and community members. The second group is a group made up of past students from Deming Public Schools. Many of these students have dropped out, many have had problems with the law, and most are having problems with employment. Both of these groups are dissatisfied with Deming Public Schools.

Deming Public Schools

Academic Opportunities Academy has had conversations with the Superintendents of Deming Public Schools. We have met and had conversations with Ms. Harvey Lee Moore and Dr. Dan Lere. We greatly appreciate the relationship we have with Dr. Dan Lere and we seek to work closely with him

and his staff to improve education for all our students. We have attended Deming Public School board meetings and have conversations with most of their board members. We have met and had conversations with some administrators, teachers, parents and students of Deming Public Schools regarding a variety of issues.

Chamber of Commerce

We have met with the Deming Chamber of Commerce on a few occasions. We have had the opportunity to meet with several of their members.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
F.(1) Community involvement.	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan that describes school structures that will provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school. The plan includes how parental involvement will help to advance the school's mission.	The school provides a clear plan that describes school structures that will provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school.	The school provides a limited plan that identifies opportunities for parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance or operation of the school.	The school provides an inadequate and incomplete plan or description of meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school. --OR-- The application does not address community involvement.
Comments:				

F.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents. The plan is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and assures a timely and meaningful response from school administration or the GB.

Complaint Resolution

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities

that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to be responsive to our learning community and we seek to resolve any and all issues in a fair and equitable manner in a fair, ethical, legal and moral manner in accordance with our charter and mission statement. We seek to serve our learning community in the best manner possible.

Any member or our learning community are welcome to address their concerns with the Assistant Principal or Principal.

Any member or our learning community are welcome and encouraged to join a Community Advisory Groups to bring up concerns regarding any and all aspects to our operation.

Any member or our learning community may bring their concerns to any one of our Community Advisory Groups.

Any member or our learning community are welcome to address their concerns with the Academic Opportunities Academy board during scheduled board meetings.

Any member of our learning community is welcome to appeal any decision using the chain of command beginning with our Community Advisory Groups, Assistant Principal, Principal, and board in this order. Appeals will be heard within ten (10) school days by the next level up the chain of command except the board. Grievances will need to be presented at the next scheduled board meeting. The board may choose to not take any action on any matter brought before it if it so chooses. Presenting to the board is the final step in any grievance with Academic Opportunities Academy.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
F(2) Complaint Resolution	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents. The plan is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and assures a timely and meaningful response from school administration or the GB.	The school provides a clear plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents. The plan is somewhat transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and assures a timely and meaningful response from the school administration or the GB.	The school provides a limited plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents, and assures a timely response from the school administration or the GB.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete plan to address community and parent complaints. --OR-- The school does not address complaint resolution.
Comments:				

G. Student Policies.

G.(1) Provide and attach as Appendix F, **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** Student Discipline Policies (6.11.2 NMAC) that comply with the Student Rights and Responsibilities as set forth in the Public Education Department rules. The school provides a **detailed explanation** of how it will take into account the rights of students with disabilities.

Student Discipline Policy

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to have as few rules as possible to have a safe, effective learning environment for all students and staff.

Students will have the right to due process:

- Prior to each school year the staff will be trained to implement the discipline policy.*
- A thorough investigation will be conducted by the Social Workers, Assistant Principal and/or Principal.*
- The student will be given the opportunity to respond and present evidence.*
- The Social Workers, Assistant Principal, and Head Administrator will meet with the parents/guardians to discuss the appropriate corrective action.*
- The student may be assigned to a separate classroom in order to receive instruction on following the campus rules as well as detention until the behaviors are corrected.*

Rules:

- 1. All students need to manage their time so that they complete one academic day's worth of work each school day.*
- 2. All students will behave in a manner that is not disruptive to other students or staff.*
- 3. All students need to treat everyone with dignity and respect. This includes the eradication of bullying, fighting, intimidation, aggressive behaviors, use of profanity, racial or ethnic slurs, derogatory terms, sexual harassment, throwing objects, etc.*

4. All students need to ensure the proper care of all property within their control.
5. All students need to follow all staff directions the first time they are given.

Students will always be afforded due process. These discipline procedures and rules are consistent with state and federal laws.

Like all students, those with disabilities can be suspended or expelled for violating the school's code of conduct. However, IDEA provides some additional procedures that schools must follow when disciplining students with disabilities. These procedures were put into IDEA to prevent schools from suspending or expelling students without considering the effects of the child's disability. These procedures are different depending on:

- *the length and type of disciplinary action the school proposes to take;*
- *the nature of the conduct that led to the disciplinary action; and*
- *whether the conduct is found to be connected to the student's disability.*

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to avoid suspending or expelling any student to the extent possible without putting other students at risk of harm or injury.

IDEA 2004 Discipline Rules

For disciplinary actions lasting 10 school days or less:

- *A student with a disability who has an IEP in effect can be disciplined like any other student who violates the school code of conduct.*
- *During the time the student is in the disciplinary setting, the school is not required to provide any educational services (including special education) to the student, unless the school district provides educational services to non-disabled students in the same circumstances.*
- *Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to provide educational service at all times to the extent possible for all our students including special education students when the student is in a disciplinary setting.*
- *Parents may request that the school continue educational services for the student during the time of the disciplinary action or somehow allow the parent to facilitate the student's completion of school work. While the school is not required to grant such requests, many will agree so that the student doesn't fall behind.*
- *Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to provide educational service at all times to the extent possible for all our students including special education students when the student is in a disciplinary setting therefore reducing or eliminating the need for parents to request we continue educational services. We want to provide the best education for all our students and do not want any of our students to fall behind. We anticipate that time taken from teaching and learning to provide discipline will result in the student needing to be in our remedial program to catch up rather than be involved in enrichment activities.*

For Disciplinary actions resulting in removal of more than 10 school days in the same year (whether or not the days are consecutive):

- *The school must provide special education services that allow the student to:*
 - *continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting; and*

- *progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the student's IEP.*
- *If the action does not result in exclusion from school for more than 10 consecutive school days and does not constitute a change of placement (i.e., when there is evidence that there is a pattern of exclusions that do not exceed 10 school days), school personnel, in consultation, must determine what services the student should be provided.*

(Note: A "change of placement" occurs when the student is excluded from his/her current placement for more than 10 consecutive school days in a school year or upon the 11th school day that a child is excluded from his current placement when there is evidence of a pattern of a "series of removals.")

- *If the disciplinary action results in an exclusion from school that is a change of placement, the student's IEP team must meet to determine the exact educational services needed while the student is assigned to the interim alternative education setting.*
- *Within 10 days from the beginning of a disciplinary action that results in an exclusion that exceeds 10 school days, the school district, the parents, and relevant members of the student's IEP team must meet to determine if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability.*

The team must also determine if the conduct was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP, including a behavior intervention plan. If the group decides that the student's behavior was a direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP, the school must take immediate steps to remedy the deficiencies and return the student to his/her original placement.

A Series of Short Removals Can Constitute a "Pattern" and a "Change of Placement"

When frequent disciplinary actions add up to more than 10 school days in a school year, such removals may constitute a "pattern." A pattern is indicated when the student's behavior and the length of removal is the same or similar to previous incidents, and the incidents are in close proximity to one another. A pattern of removals of 10 days or less, once they total more than 10 school days, carries the same requirements as a removal of more than 10 days and is considered a change of placement for the student. While the school has the responsibility for making a determination about whether a pattern constitutes a change of placement on a case-by-case basis, parents should be alert to a possible pattern developing when their child's misconduct is resulting in a series of disciplinary actions.

"Manifestation Determination" – How Is Behavior Related to Disability?

IDEA 2004 has made some significant changes to the manner in which a determination is made about the relationship between the student's behavior that leads to the disciplinary action, and the student's disability. These changes will make it more difficult than was previously the case to establish a connection between disability and behavior, and to reach a conclusion that the behavior resulted from the disability. The decision reached in the manifestation determination is important because it will influence what can happen to the student's continued services and placement.

In making the manifestation determination, the team (comprised of school personnel, the student's parents, and other relevant members of the student's IEP team) will review:

- *The student's IEP*
- *The student's behavior intervention plan*
- *Any teacher observations*
- *Any relevant information provided by the parents*

Under IDEA 2004, the presumption of a connection between behavior and disability no longer exists. Now, the team is required to answer these questions:

1. *Considering the behavior subject to discipline, review the student's behavior to determine if it was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability. For example, a student's low self-esteem, while possibly a by-product of a learning disability, is not alone sufficient to be considered a basis for finding a direct relationship between the student's disability and behavior.*
2. *Did the school fail to follow a portion of the IEP including a behavior intervention plan in a manner that directly caused the misconduct?*

Finding of Manifestation

If the behavior is found to be directly related to the student's disability, the IEP team must plan for a functional behavioral assessment and the development of a behavior intervention plan based on the results of that assessment. If the student already had a behavior intervention plan in place, the IEP team must review if the plan was being followed and revise it as needed to address the problem behavior that led to this disciplinary action.

If the team finds that the student's behavior was related to the disability or an improperly implemented IEP, the student is returned to the original education setting unless the parents agree to a new placement as part of the behavior intervention plan.

Finding of No Manifestation

For students whose behavior was not directly related to the disability, the same disciplinary actions can be imposed as those imposed on a non-disabled student. Such action could include expulsion. However, if the student is expelled from school, the student must continue to receive educational services that allow him or her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress toward meeting the goals set out in the IEP.

For students whose behavior is not determined to be directly associated with their disability, the IEP team should nonetheless consider the need for a functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plan.

Be on the Alert for the "Special Circumstances"

Certain offenses can lead to a student being moved to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days even if the conduct is determined to be related to the student's disability. Removing a student for these offenses does not require parent permission or agreement, nor does it require any involvement by a hearing officer or other impartial third party. These offenses are:

- *Weapons*

If a student carries or possesses a weapon:

- *On the way to or at school*
- *On school premises*
- *At a school function*
- *Drugs*

If the student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of illegal drugs:

- *While at school*
- *At a school function*
- *Serious bodily injury*

If a student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person:

- *While at school*
- *On school premises*
- *At a school function*

An additional provision allows a school to seek to remove a student for up to 45 school days if the school believes that returning the student to the same educational placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or other students. The school must do this by making a request to a hearing officer, who, among other requirements, is not employed by the state education agency or local school district involved in educating the child; has specialized knowledge and skills related to IDEA; and has no interests that conflict with his objectivity in the hearing process.

Parent Right to Appeal

Parents have the right to challenge any decisions made regarding the interim alternative educational setting or the determination regarding the “manifestation determination” by asking for a due process hearing. Schools can also request a hearing if school personnel feel that returning a student to the original educational setting is highly likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

In either case, the hearing must be “expedited” by:

- *holding the hearing within 20 school days of the date requested; and*
- *issuing a decision by the hearing officer within 10 school days after the hearing.*

IDEA 2004 made an important change to the placement of students during this appeal process. Before, a student was to remain in his or her current educational placement during the appeal process – often referred to as “stay put.” Now, under IDEA 2004, the student remains in the interim alternative educational setting, unless the parent and the state agree otherwise or the time period for the infraction (e.g., 45 school days for special circumstances or duration applied to non-disabled students) has expired.

Students Not Yet Eligible for IDEA

Under certain circumstances, the protections available to a student with a disability who is already eligible for special education services may also be available to a student who does not have an IEP in effect. These circumstances may apply to any student:

- If the child's parent had expressed concern in writing to school personnel, including the teacher, that their child may be in need of special education prior to the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action*
- If the child's parent had requested an evaluation, preferably in writing, as provided for by IDEA*
- If the child's teacher or other school personnel had expressed concerns about a pattern of behavior that might call for a referral for evaluation, such concerns would need to have been made directly to supervisory personnel at the school building or school district level. For example, a teacher expressing his or her concerns to a parent would not be considered an adequate basis of knowledge.*

Certain exceptions apply to the above circumstances. They include:

- If the child's parent had not allowed an evaluation of the child or had refused special education services that had been offered as required by IDEA*
- If the child had been evaluated as required by IDEA and was not found eligible for special education*

If a request is made to evaluate a student during the time period of the disciplinary action, the school must complete the evaluation as quickly as possible. During the evaluation, the student remains in the interim alternative educational setting.

Special Note:

Provisions in IDEA 2004 allow schools to provide early intervening services to students who are considered "at risk." At-risk students are those who show a need for additional academic or behavioral support to succeed in general education, but who are not identified as needing special education. In addition, IDEA 2004 allows schools to use a "response-to-intervention" (RTI) process as part of its procedures for identifying students as having specific learning disabilities and needing special education. A child in either the "at risk" or "RTI" circumstances may not be considered to possibly need special education services unless at least one of the first three bulleted conditions in the section above has been met.

IDEA's provisions regarding the discipline of students with disabilities are complex and often confusing. If your child becomes the focus of a disciplinary action, you should seek information and guidance from expert resources such as your state's Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC).

<http://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/idea-2004-close-up-disciplining-students-with-disabilities/>

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to resolve the root problems children face that cause disciplinary problems. When a student is causing a problem the Teacher or Educational Aides will attempt to redirect the student's behavior. If the staff member is unsuccessful, they will notify the Social Worker who will work with the student to redirect the student's behavior. The Social Worker

will notify the Assistant Principal or Principal when a student continues to be a disciplinary problem that is unable to be resolved by the social worker.

Our social workers will work with our students and their families to improve student behaviors. They will conduct counseling sessions, refer students to other agencies, provide classes on parenting and behavior to both students and families.

Students who misbehave will attend a class where they learn the classroom rules and learn character. Academic Opportunities Academy considers behavior as a skill to be learned and will provide instruction on conduct rather than using detention and other traditional means of attempting to correct behavior.

The curriculum for this class will be developed by the social workers and our Community Advisory Groups and will be modified until we develop an effective program. This curriculum will be developed by January 1, 2016.

There is significant law on student behavior and Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all federal and New Mexico law and regulations. An overview of these laws is provided in the following document.

<http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/discipline-compendium/New%20Mexico%20School%20Discipline%20Laws%20and%20Regulations.pdf>

Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with and develop our code of conduct and all disciplinary actions to comply with 6.11.2 NMAC TITLE 6 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

CHAPTER 11 PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION - STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PART 2 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

<http://164.64.110.239/nmac/parts/title06/06.011.0002.htm>

Parental involvement in the student's discipline may be necessary.

Rewards and incentives will be given for good behavior.

Corporal punishment is prohibited.

We consider this to be another area where Academic Opportunities Academy is creative, innovative and unique.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(1) Student Discipline Policy	The school provides clear, comprehensive, and cohesive Student Discipline Policies that comply with the Student Rights and Responsibilities as set forth in the Public Education Department rules. The school provides a detailed explanation of how it will take into account the rights of students with disabilities.	The school provides a clear Student Discipline Policies that comply with the Student Rights and Responsibilities as set forth in the Public Education Department rules. The school provides an explanation of how it will take into account the rights of students with disabilities.	The school provides limited Student Discipline Policies that partially comply with the Student Rights and Responsibilities as set forth in the Public Education Department rules.	The school provides incomplete or inadequate Student Discipline Policies set forth in the Public Education Department rules. --OR-- The application does not address student discipline policies.
Comments:				

G.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan for addressing alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long-term suspended or expelled. Ensure that the plan is consistent with the Students' Rights and Responsibilities rules.

Alternative Placements

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

As described in other parts of this application, when a student is misbehaving they will be referred to our social workers for their action to work on improving the behaviors of the student. The social worker will work with the student and their family to improve the student's conduct. If needed the student may be referred to a separate class where the school rules, proper conduct and character development will be taught. Students will make up all lost time performing the required remediation during our after school program.

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to avoid having students placed in an alternative educational setting unless our other students are at risk of harm or injury. If a student needs to be placed in a separate classroom away from all other students we will do this in accordance with all due process in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations including the New Mexico Students' Rights and Responsibilities Rules.

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to avoid having students suspended or expelled unless our other students are at risk of harm or injury. If a student needs to be suspended or expelled we will do this in accordance with all due process in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations including the New Mexico Students' Rights and Responsibilities Rules.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
G.(2)Alternative Placements	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan for addressing alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long-term suspended or expelled. The plan is consistent with the Students' Rights and Responsibilities rules.	The school provides a clear plan for addressing alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long-term suspended or expelled. The plan is consistent with the Students' Rights and Responsibilities rules.	The school provides a limited plan for addressing alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long-term suspended or expelled. The plan is somewhat consistent with the Students' Rights and Responsibilities rules.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete plan for addressing alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long-term suspended or expelled. --OR-- The application does not address alternative placement of students.
Comments:				

H. Student Recruitment and Enrollment.

H.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** outreach and recruitment plan that ensures equal access to the school and is likely to be effective in attracting students from the targeted population. The recruitment /enrollment timelines presented are **reasonable**. Ensure that the outreach/ marketing plan is supported by the budget.

Student Recruitment

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will actively seek to enroll students in our charter school through advertising not using New Mexico funds. We will seek donations, grants and perform fundraisers to obtain the funds for our advertising. We have advertised in the Deming and Las Cruces area and have received excellent interest in our charter school. We will conduct open houses on most Saturdays at our school campus to provide tours and present our charter school model to the community and enroll students until we reach our enrollment capacities. We will encourage our staff to seek out potential students. We will encourage our students and their families to seek out potential students to attend our campus. We will use our web site and blog to get the word out regarding our campus. We anticipate we will reach our annual and overall capacity fairly quickly based on current interest in our charter school from the Deming community. There are a few individuals in the Deming community who have told us that they will aggressively recruit students for our charter school. We do not anticipate that we would need a large marketing budget to obtain our annual enrollment projections based on current interest in Deming. We have found a few families who are sending their children to Las Cruces and one family is sending their children to Alamogordo to avoid Deming Public Schools. The family who sends their children to Alamogordo has a parent who works at White Sands Missile Range. These families want to enroll their children in our charter school. Parents strongly wish for an option besides Deming Public Schools.

I have been told our annual enrollment projections are annual caps. I thought that they were projections. If these annual enrollment projections are annual caps, then we will request periodic increases in our annual enrollment projections/annual caps to the New Mexico Public Education Commission as needed in line with our capacity to meet the needs of our students. We will not be requesting an increase in our overall capacity. We believe that our annual enrollment projections are very reasonable based on community interest in our charter school.

Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to accept all students who desire to attend our charter school. We are open to all students including all students which may be at-risk, special education, 504, ELL or any other group. When we meet our capacity we will conduct our lottery in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
H.(1) Student Recruitment	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive outreach and recruitment plan that ensures equal access to the school and is likely to be effective in attracting students from the targeted population. The recruitment /enrollment timelines presented are reasonable . The outreach/ marketing plan is completely supported by the budget.	The school provides a clear outreach and recruitment plan that ensures equal access to the school. Adequate recruitment /enrollment timelines are presented. The outreach/ marketing plan appears to be supported by the budget.	The school provides a limited recruitment plan for ensuring equal access to the school. General recruitment /enrollment timelines presented. The outreach/ marketing plan is partially supported by the budget.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete outreach and recruitment plan. Or the plan/timelines are not reasonable or are not likely to be effective or ensure equal access to the school. The outreach / marketing plan does not appear to be supported by the budget. --OR-- The school does not address student recruitment.
Comments:				

H.(2) Provide a **complete, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of your lottery process and procedures that comply with state statutes, and **support equal access** to the school (include how you will maintain a wait list). Please provide tentative timeframes or dates.

Lottery Process

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Students will be enrolled on a first come first served basis. A lottery will be conducted if the number of applicants exceeds our maximum enrollment prior to July 1 of each year.

Each student will be assigned a number, and the numbers will be selected at random from the lottery. The students will be listed as admitted in the order they are drawn until all slots have been filled. Additional names will be placed on a waiting list in the order they are drawn from the lottery. All students who apply after the lottery will be placed at the end of our waiting list.

The charter will exempt from the lottery all siblings of current employees of Academic Opportunities Academy.

Academic Opportunities Academy will exempt from the lottery all children in foster care and all homeless children.

*The founders have no school aged children to enroll.
In our second through fifth year our enrollment process will include the following requirements:*

Academic Opportunities Academy will give priority to its current students and siblings or other children living with current Academic Opportunities Academy students including all foster and homeless children.

If a student applies to the school outside of the designated application period, the student will be placed on a waiting list in the order of the date in which the application is received.

Parents and guardians will be asked to register for the next school year no later than the end of each academic year so that the student will ensure his/her enrollment with AOA for the next academic year.

The lottery will be held on July 1 of each year. If the lottery is on a Sunday then the lottery will be held on July 2 of that year.

After all students have been selected by lottery for the given school year, the lottery will continue with each name being placed on a waiting list in the order the remaining names are drawn. When an opening for enrollment of a new student occurs, the parents/guardians will be notified in the order they are listed that an opening exist to enroll their children. Parents/guardians must register their children by completing and bringing the appropriate registration documents within ten (10) days of being notified. If a parent or guardian fails to bring the documents within ten (10) school days they will be placed back on the end of the waiting list and the next parent/guardian will be contacted to enroll their children.

Academic Opportunities Academy does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, academic ability, athletic ability or artistic ability or the district where the child resides age, ancestry, or national, ethnic origin in its operations of admissions policies. We do give employment preference to honorably discharged veterans of any branch of service on the United States of America.

AOA will not specialize in the performing arts and therefore will not require applicants to demonstrate artistic ability for admission to the school.

AOA will serve all students, particularly those who have not been successful or have been significantly challenged in a traditional public or private school settings. This includes students with documented histories of misconduct.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
H.(2) Lottery Process	The school provides a complete, comprehensive, and cohesive description of its lottery procedures that comply with state statutes, and support equal access to the school. Tentative dates are provided.	The school provides a clear description of its lottery procedures that comply with state statutes. Tentative dates are provided for the most part.	The school provides a general description of lottery procedures that comply with state statutes. Some tentative dates are provided.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete description of its lottery procedures or what is provided does not comply with state statutes. --OR-- The school does not address the lottery process.
Comments:				

Enrollment Process

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy has collected names and contact information from parents who are interested in attending our charter school. We plan to accept applications until our capacity of 400 students is reached. If our capacity is reached prior to July 1, 2015, a lottery will be conducted in accordance with federal law to admit students through a random selection process. If the number of

applications does not exceed the maximum number of our student capacity then a lottery is not required.

All students who meet the eligibility requirements for attending a public school are welcome to apply for admission to AOA.

AOA will comply with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding student admissions. Since we offer a self-paced individualized program we will not have any limits on any class size or grade level that we serve.

Please refer to our section on the Lottery included in this application.

I. Legal Compliance.

I.(1) Provide a **current, clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** Conflict of Interest Policy that demonstrates an understanding of, **and capacity** to, meet the requirements of the law (NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5.2(2011)). Provide a sample disclosure statement of any real or potential conflict of interest.

Conflict Of Interest

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

A complete Policy is appended. In general AOA defines Conflicts of Interest in the following manner along with the Policy parameters:

A Conflict of Interest refers to a situation in which an individual's financial, professional, or other personal considerations may directly or indirectly affect, or have the appearance of affecting, an individual's professional judgment in exercising any Charter School duty or responsibility. Typically, a Conflict of Interest may arise when an individual has the opportunity or appears to have the opportunity to influence the School's business, administrative, academic, or other decisions in ways that could lead to financial, professional, or personal gain or advantage of any kind, whether or not the value is readily ascertainable.

All individual members of the AOA community are expected to:

- a. abide by the Conflict of Interest Policy and standards set forth in this Policy,*
- b. fully and continually disclose professional and relevant personal activities and relationships that create a Conflict of Interest or have the appearance of creating a Conflict of Interest as required by AOA,*
- c. remedy Conflicts of Interest or comply with any management or monitoring plan that helps to understand and implement this policy.*

Conflict of interest is addressed in other parts of this application and is included in our bylaws.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
I.(1) Conflict of Interest	The school provides a current, clear, comprehensive, and cohesive Conflict of Interest Policy that demonstrates an understanding of, and capacity to meet the requirements of the law. The school provides a sample disclosure statement of any real or potential conflict of interest.	The school provides a clear Conflict of Interest Policy that meets demonstrates an understanding of the requirements of the law.	The school provides a limited Conflict of Interest Policy. However, the school's response may raise questions or concerns about understanding or capacity regarding the requirements of the law.	The school provides a Conflict of Interest Policy that is inadequate or incomplete or does not meet the requirements of the law. --OR-- The application does not address a Conflict of Interest Policy.
Comments:				

I.(2) Provide a **comprehensive and clear** explanation that demonstrates a **complete understanding of, and capacity to** comply with the Open Meetings Act in its several parts (agendas posted in advance, quorums, executive or closed session procedures, minutes, etc. NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1 to 4), and Inspection of Public Records Act in its several parts (meeting minutes, accessibility to public records, etc. NMSA 1978 14-2-1 to 12) that meets the requirements of the laws. For further information please see the following link: <http://www.nmag.gov/consumer/publications/openmeetingsactcomplianceguide>.

Transparency

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

AOA plans to make available all information to the public that is not restricted by student or employee privacy requirements through board meetings, our web site, public meetings, open houses, Campus Improvement Team, Community Advisory Groups or a request for information.

Public Meetings

Under the Open Meetings Act, a meeting occurs whenever a quorum of a public body:

- (a) formulates public policy,*
- (b) discusses public business, or*
- (c) takes action.*

Whenever a public meeting occurs we will comply with the Open Meetings Act and all its provisions.

Agendas

Academic Opportunities Academy will make its meeting agenda available to the public 72 hours prior to a meeting and post the agenda to our website.

This bill amends the Open Meetings Act with respect to agendas for public meetings. Under the bill, a public body (for example, the Water Quality Control Commission or the Game Commission) would have to make its meeting agenda available to the public 72 hours prior to a meeting and post the agenda to the body's website. Current law requires agendas to be made available only 24 hours in advance of a meeting, a potential obstacle to public participation.

The bill creates one exception to the 72-hour rule. If the public body regularly meets more often than once per week, the body must make a draft agenda available 72 in advance of a meeting and a final agenda available 36 hours before.

Academic Opportunities Academy will within 10 days of conducting an emergency meeting will report it and the circumstances creating the emergency to the Attorney General's Office.

Current law also makes an exception for emergency meetings. However, the bill adds a new requirement for action on emergency matters by requiring that within 10 days of taking such action, the public body must report it and the circumstances creating the emergency to the Attorney General's office.

One potential benefit of this bill might be that it would increase the transparency and public accessibility of meetings.

Outcome: HB 21 passed the House (59-0) and Senate (31-0), and was signed into law on March 27th, 2013.

<http://protectnewmexico.org/bills/public-meeting-agendas-72-hours-in-advance-2/>

Quorums

A quorum is half the members plus one.

Minutes

Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare minutes according to the following requirements.

Minutes must include, at a minimum, the date, time and place of the meeting, the names of members in attendance and those absent, the substance of the proposals considered and a record of any decisions and votes taken that show how each member voted.

All minutes, including draft minutes, are open to public inspection. Draft minutes must be prepared within 10 working days after the meeting, and approved, amended or disapproved at the next meeting where a quorum is present.

<http://nmfog.org/law-requires/>

Inspection and Accessibility of Public Records

New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA)

"Citizens in a democracy have a fundamental right to have access to public records. This right is recognized by the New Mexico Legislature through the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act, NMSA 1978, §§ 14-2-1 et seq. ("IPRA"), and by the New Mexico Supreme Court, which stated in 1977 that a citizen's right to know is the rule and secrecy is the exception..."

http://www.governor.state.nm.us/New_Mexico_Inspection_of_Public_Records.aspx

6.20.2.24 C. NMAC Records retention/disposition; The management of school district records shall be in accordance with the Public Records Act, Section 14-3-1 et seq. NMSA 1978. 1.15.5.3 NMAC.

Statutory Authority:

Pursuant to Section 14-3-6-NMSA 1978.

Administrator duties:

The principal shall establish a records management program for the application of efficient and economical management methods to the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation and disposal of official records. The principal shall establish records disposal schedules for the orderly retirement of records and adopt regulations necessary for the carrying out of the public records act. Records disposal schedules shall be filed with the librarian of the Supreme Court library, and shall not become effective until thirty days after filing date.

- *Records management includes the systematic control of all records from creation or receipt through processing, distribution, maintenance and retrieval, to their ultimate disposition.*
- *The retention period is that period of time during which records must be maintained by an organization because they are needed for operational, legal, fiscal, historical or other purposes.*

The New Mexico Open Meetings Act ensures that the public receives the greatest possible information regarding the affairs of government and the official acts of those officers and employees who represent them. Secret meetings and democracy don't mix.

If a particular meeting is subject to the Open Meetings Act, here are the requirements for holding an open public meeting:

Give reasonable notice to the public.

Every public body establishes its own procedures for notifying the public, which is spelled out in an annual Open Meetings Act Resolution. The Attorney General's Office recommends the following notice for best practices: 10 days for a regular meeting, 3 days for a special meeting and 24 hours for an emergency meeting.

Meeting notices must be sent to broadcast stations and newspapers that have requested it.

Make a final agenda available to the public 72 hours in advance (Note, this is a change in the law that became effective in 2013.)

The agenda must list specific items of business to be discussed or transacted. Except in cases of emergency, the public body can only take action on items which appeared on the final agenda. New action items cannot be added during the meeting, unless there is a true emergency.

Allow the public to attend and listen.

Reasonable efforts must be made to accommodate the use of audio and video recording devices.

The Open Meetings Act does not guarantee citizens the right to speak at public meetings. However, most public bodies in New Mexico do include time for public comment. When a forum is made available for public speech, citizens have a First Amendment right to speak freely. Public bodies risk running afoul of the First Amendment if they attempt to regulate citizens' speech based on its content or the identity of the speaker.

Close the meeting only for certain topics.

There are 10 topics that a public body may discuss behind closed doors. To close an open meeting that's already in progress, a public body must take these three steps:

- 1. Approve the closure by a roll-call vote of all the members.*
- 2. Announce the authority for the closure (i.e., which section of the Open Meetings Act allows a closed discussion) and the subject that will be discussed, "with reasonable specificity."*
- 3. After the closed session, state for the record that the closed-door discussion was limited only to those topics specified in the motion for closure.*

The 10 topics that a public body may discuss behind closed doors are:

- (1) Meetings pertaining to issuance, suspension, renewal or revocation of a license except that a hearing at which evidence is offered or rebutted shall be open. All final actions on the issuance, suspension, renewal or revocation of a license shall be taken at an open meeting;*
- (2) limited personnel matters; provided that for purposes of the Open Meetings Act, "limited personnel matters" means the discussion of hiring, promotion, demotion, dismissal, assignment or resignation of or the investigation or consideration of complaints or charges against any individual public employee; provided further that this Subsection is not to be construed as to exempt final actions on personnel from being taken at open public meetings; nor does it preclude an aggrieved public employee from demanding a public hearing. Judicial candidates interviewed by any commission shall have the right to demand an open interview;*
- (3) deliberations by a public body in connection with an administrative adjudicatory proceeding. For purposes of this paragraph, an "administrative adjudicatory proceeding" means a proceeding brought by or against a person before a public body in which individual legal rights, duties or privileges are required by law to be determined by the public body after an opportunity for a trial-type hearing. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the actual administrative adjudicatory proceeding at which evidence is offered or rebutted and any final action taken as a result of the proceeding shall occur in an open meeting;*
- (4) the discussion of personally identifiable information about any individual student, unless the student, his parent or guardian requests otherwise;*
- (5) meetings for the discussion of bargaining strategy preliminary to collective bargaining negotiations between the policy-making body and a bargaining unit representing the employees of that policymaking body and collective bargaining sessions at which the policymaking body and the representatives of the collective bargaining unit are present;*
- (6) that portion of meetings at which a decision concerning purchases in an amount exceeding two thousand hundred dollars (\$2,500) that can be made only from once source and that portion of meetings at which the contents of competitive sealed proposals solicited pursuant to the Procurement Code are discussed during the contract negotiation process. The actual approval of purchase of the item or final action regarding the selection of a contractor shall be made in an open meeting;*
- (7) meetings subject to the attorney-client privilege pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may become a participant;*
- (8) meetings for the discussion of the purchase, acquisition or disposal of real property or water rights by the public body;*
- (9) those portions of meetings of committees or boards of public hospitals where strategic and long-range business plans or trade secrets are discussed; and*
- (10) that portion of a meeting of the gaming control board dealing with information made confidential pursuant to the provisions of the Gaming Control Act.*

A public body can hold a meeting that's entirely closed if advance notice is provided to the members and the public. The notice states the authority for the closure and the topic to be discussed, again with "reasonable specificity."

Keep minutes.

a. Minutes must include, at a minimum, the date, time and place of the meeting, the names of members in attendance and those absent, the substance of the proposals considered and a record of any decisions and votes taken that show how each member voted.

b. All minutes, including draft minutes, are open to public inspection. Draft minutes must be prepared within 10 working days after the meeting, and approved, amended or disapproved at the next meeting where a quorum is present.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
I(2) Transparency	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a comprehensive and clear explanation that demonstrates a complete understanding of, and capacity to comply with the Open Meetings Act in its several parts (agendas posted 24 hours in advance, quorums, executive or closed session procedures, minutes, etc.), and Inspection of Public Records Act in its several parts (meeting minutes, accessibility to public records, etc.) that meets the requirements of the laws.	The school provides a clear explanation that demonstrates an adequate understanding of and capacity to how it will comply with the Open Meetings Act and most of its parts (agendas posted 24 hours in advance, quorums, executive- or closed-session procedures, minutes, etc.), and Inspection of Public Records Act in its several parts (meeting minutes, accessibility to public records, etc.) that meets the requirements of the laws.	The school provides a general explanation of how it plans to comply with the Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act. However, the school's response may raise questions or concerns about understanding or capacity regarding all components and requirements of the law.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate explanation of how it plans to comply with the Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act. --OR-- The school does not address how it plans to comply with the Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act.
Comments:				

J. Evidence of Partnership/Contractor relationship. (If Applicable.)

J.(1) If there is /are third party relation-ship(s) (partner organization or a contractor etc.) that is essential to the existence of your charter school, governance, key instructional staff, or management functions, identify them (entity, person, contact information etc.). Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of all of those third-party relationships that are considered integral to accomplishing the mission of the school. In your description, please demonstrate that you have a **complete understanding** of the legal implication of the relationship to the school.

Third Party Relationships

Academic Opportunities Academy has no third party relationships.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet-1	

J.(1). Third Party Relationships	<p><i>If Applicable</i> The school indicates that there is /are third party relationship(s), and the school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of all third-party relationships that are considered integral to accomplishing the mission of the school. The school demonstrates a complete understanding of the legal implication of the relationship to the school.</p>	<p><i>If Applicable</i> The school indicates that there is /are third party relationship(s), and the school provides a clear description of all third-party relationships that are considered integral to accomplishing the mission of the school. The school demonstrates knowledge of the legal implication of the relationship to the school.</p>	<p><i>If Applicable</i> The school indicates that there is /are third party relationship(s), and the school provides some information about the relationships and how it/they will support the school. The school may or may not indicate a limited knowledge of the legal implication of the relationship to the school.</p>	<p><i>If Applicable</i> The school's response is inadequate or incomplete. --OR-- The school indicates that there is /are third party relationship(s), but the application does not address the relationship.</p>
Comments:				

J.(2) If applicable, provide and attach as Appendix H, a proposed, **signed, clear, formal** agreement between the school and each third party relationship **OR** memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the school and each prospective third-party, delineating the appropriate responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.

Academic Opportunities Academy has no third party relationship or any memorandum of understanding (MOU) with any other entity.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
J.(2) Proposed Agreement	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet-1
	<i>If Applicable</i> The school indicates that there is /are third party relationship(s), and it provides a proposed, signed, clear, formal agreement between the school and each third party relationship OR memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the school and each prospective third-party, delineating the appropriate responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.	<i>If Applicable</i> The school indicates that there is /are third party relationship(s), and it provides a proposed, signed formal agreement or MOU between the school for most prospective third-parties, delineating major roles and responsibilities OR the school provides some formal agreements or MOUs and some signed letters of intent with strong evidence that the third party will enter into an agreement should the charter be granted.	<i>If Applicable</i> The school offer and limited proposal of third party relationship(s), and it provides a proposed, signed formal agreement(s)/ (MOU s) OR signed letter(s) of intent between the school and prospective third-parties. Roles and responsibilities provided may be general .	<i>If Applicable</i> The school provides an inadequate or incomplete response --OR-- Does not address the prompt.
Comments:				

K. Waivers.

K.(1) Provide a list of statutes or state rules for which a waiver is requested, including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested. Ensure that the rationale clearly demonstrates how requested waivers align with the school's proposed autonomy, its mission, and the educational program and curriculum . For further information please see the following link: http://ped.state.nm.us/admin.personnel/waiver_requests.html .			
NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) Waiver	Requested?		Description of how waiver will support school's plan.
	yes	no	
Individual class load	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Teaching load	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Length of school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Staffing pattern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Subject areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Purchase of instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Evaluation standards for school personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
School principal duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert
Drivers education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert

K.(2) *Only for schools seeking local district authorization.*

Provide a list of Authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested (see NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) or elsewhere in the Public School Code), including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested. Ensure that the **rationale clearly demonstrates how requested waivers align with the school's proposed autonomy, mission and educational program/curriculum.** (If you require additional space, attach as an Appendix.)

Discretionary Waiver(s) Sought.	Description of how waiver will support school's plan.
Insert	Insert
Insert	Insert
Insert	Insert
Insert	Insert

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—3	Meets—2	Partially Meets—1	Does Not Meet—0
K.(1)(2) Waivers	The school provides a list of statutes or state rules for which a waiver is requested, including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested. The rationale clearly demonstrates how requested waivers align with the school's proposed autonomy, its mission, and the educational program and curriculum.	The school provides a list of statutes or state rules for which a waiver is requested, including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested.	The school provides a limited list of statutes or state rules for which a waiver is requested.	The application suggests that waivers from statutes or state rules will be used, but the school fails to identify the waivers in III.K.(1) and (2). Or, the application does not address waivers.
	Exceeds—3	Meets—2	Partially Meets—1	Does Not Meet—0 <input type="checkbox"/>

	<p><i>Only for schools seeking local district authorization.</i></p> <p>The school provides a list of Authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested, including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested. The rationale clearly demonstrates how requested waivers align with the school's proposed autonomy, mission and educational program/curriculum.</p>	<p><i>Only for schools seeking local district authorization.</i></p> <p>The school provides a list of Authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested, including a general statement is provided for why the waiver is being requested.</p>	<p><i>Only for schools seeking local district authorization.</i></p> <p>The school provides a list of Authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested.</p>	<p><i>Only for schools seeking local district authorization.</i></p> <p>The school provides and inadequate or incomplete list. The school does not provide a list of Authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested.</p>
Comments:				

L. Transportation and Food.

L.(1) *If Applicable*, state how your school plans to offer transportation to its students. Provides a **clear description** of how student transportation needs will be met that is supported by the proposed budget. For further information please see the following link: <http://ped.state.nm.us/div/fin/trans/index.html>.

Transportation

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Student transportation will be provided by Corre Caminos Bus Services which operates in Southern New Mexico including Deming. In our conversations with Corre Caminos Bus Services they have informed us that they have provided transportation to Deming Public Schools and that they comply with having their drivers comply with all applicable background checks, all requirements of Deming Public Schools and the State of New Mexico.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
L.(1)Transportation	<p><i>If Applicable</i></p> <p>The school states that it plans to offer transportation to its students. The school provides a clear description of how student transportation needs will be met that is supported by the proposed budget.</p>	<p><i>If Applicable</i></p> <p>The school states that it plans to offer transportation to its students. The school provides an adequate description of how student transportation needs will be met that appears to be supported by the budget.</p>	<p><i>If Applicable</i></p> <p>The school states that it plans to offer transportation to its students. Only a limited description of how student transportation needs will be met is provided OR the school has not fully addressed transportation in the budget.</p>	<p><i>If Applicable</i></p> <p>The school states that it plans to offer transportation to its students. The school provides an inadequate or incomplete description of how student transportation needs will be met.</p> <p>--OR--</p> <p>The school does not state whether or not it plans to offer transportation to its students.</p>
Comments:				

L.(2) *If Applicable* Provide a plan to offer food services to students (i.e, contracting with approved/appropriate food services vendors, providing Free and Reduced Lunch). Provide a **clear description** of how food services will be provided that is supported by the proposed budget.

Food Services

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will contract with a food service management company to provide meals on site for our students. The program will generate sufficient funding through the USDA Food Service Fund to operate. The plan is to offer breakfast and lunch to our regular day high school program and an evening snack for our extended day students. All meals will comply with USDA nutritional standards and will be eligible for reimbursements by the National School Lunch Program, USDA. All expenditures would consist of contract services to the food service management company or Deming Public Schools. School staff would be responsible for serving meals and program compliance/logistics. Management of food service operations would fall under the direction of the Office Manager.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
L.(2) Food Services	<i>If Applicable</i>	<i>If Applicable</i>	<i>If Applicable</i>	<i>If Applicable</i>
	The school plans to offer food services to its students. The school provides a clear description of how food services will be provided that is supported by the proposed budget.	The school plans to offer food services to its students. The school provides an adequate description of how food services will be provided that appears to be supported by the proposed budget.	The school plans to offer food services to its students. Only a limited description of how food services will be provided is included OR the school has not fully addressed food services in the budget.	The school plans to offer food services to its students. The school provides an inadequate or incomplete response of how food services will be provided. --OR-- The school plans to offer food services to its students but provides no other information.
Comments:				

M. Facilities/ School Environment.

Applicants must complete the required Facilities Master Plan Ed. Spec. Checklist form, referenced below as III M.(1), and submit it to the Public Schools Facilities Authority **no later than Friday, April 24th, 2015**. The Facilities Master Plan/Ed. Spec. Checklist form can be accessed on the PSFA website at: http://www.nmpsfa.org/pdf/MasterPlan/Applicant_Charter_School_EdSpec_FMP_Review_Checklist_3_8_2012.pdf.

M.(1) Describe in detail the charter school's projected facility needs and the desired school environment. **Complete, submit, and attach as Appendix I**, the Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist to the Public Schools Facilities Authority (PSFA) for review and approval, and attach the **approved form** as Appendix "J."

Projected Facility Needs

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Please refer to our approved Facilities Plan in Appendix J.

Our proposed site is located on the vacant property of 8th and Florida in Deming, New Mexico.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
M.(1) Projected Facility Needs	The school has clearly and comprehensively described its projected facility needs and desired school environment. The school completed and submitted the Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist to PSFA for review and approval, and attached the approved form as Appendix "J."	The school has described its projected facility needs and desired school environment. The school provides evidence from PSFA that it has completed and submitted the Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist to PSFA for review and approval, and though the review process has not been completed, the plan has received PSFA's tentative approval.	The school has provided a limited description of its projected facility needs and desired school environment. The school has completed and submitted the Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist to PSFA for review and approval, but the review and approval process has not been completed.	The school has completed and attached the Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist but has not yet submitted it to PSFA for review and approval. --OR-- The school does not address the Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec checklist, i.e. has not attached the completed and approved Facilities master Plan Ed/Spec Checklist form as Appendix J.
Comments:				

M.(2) Provide evidence that you have researched potential facilities/properties and **identified at least one appropriate, viable facility/ property in the targeted geographic location.** Include evidence of a **clear plan** to prepare the facility/property in time for the school's opening.

Facility Plan

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Please refer to our approved Facilities Plan in Appendix J.

Our proposed site is located on the vacant property of 8th and Florida in Deming, New Mexico.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
M.(2) Facility Plan	The school provides evidence that it has researched potential facilities/properties and identified at least one appropriate, viable facility/property in the targeted geographic location. The evidence includes a clear plan to prepare the facility/property in time for the school's opening.	The school provides evidence that it has researched potential facilities/properties and made significant efforts to identify appropriate, viable facility/property in the targeted geographic location.	The school provides evidence that it has done some research on potential facilities/properties in the desired geographic location.	The school does not provide evidence that it has researched or begun a search for an appropriate facility/property. --OR-- The application does not address the school's facility needs.
Comments:				

M.(3) Provide a **description** of the school's potential capital outlay needs, including projected requests for capital outlay assistance that are reasonable and sufficient to support the school program. Recognizing that facility needs may change in the future provide a **reasonable projection** for facility maintenance, repair, and equipment needs.

Projected Facility Costs

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Academic Opportunities Academy has discussed acquiring the site on 8th and Florida in Deming, New Mexico. The proposed construction will be a pre-engineered metal building to provide a high quality facility at the lowest cost possible. It will incorporate translucent panels to let in sufficient natural lighting to reduce energy demand. These translucent panels also have insulating properties to reduce heating and cooling costs. We intend to insulate this facility sufficiently to reduce energy demands. Spectrum Engineering has done several facilities for government agencies in New Mexico and is familiar with the cost constraints that they will have to abide by. Academic Opportunities Academy believes that our facility will cost close to the amount we would receive for lease reimbursement. Our goal is to be just under our lease reimbursement amount. Since our annual projected enrollment may be also a cap, we have discussed building two phases; one phase for our enrollment up to 200 students and the second phase for our enrollment up to 400 students.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
M.(3) Projected Facility Costs	The school provided a thorough description of the school's potential capital outlay needs, including potential requests for capital outlay assistance that are reasonable and sufficient to support the school program. The school provided a reasonable projection for facility maintenance, repair, and equipment needs.	The school provided a description of the school's potential capital outlay needs, including potential requests for capital outlay assistance that are reasonable and sufficient to support the school program. The school provided adequate estimates for facility maintenance, repair, and equipment needs.	The school provided a limited description of the school's potential capital outlay needs, including potential requests for capital outlay assistance that are sufficient to support the school program.	The school provides only an incomplete or inadequate description of the potential capital outlay needs. --OR-- The application does not address the school's capital outlay needs and potential costs.
Comments:				

Finance

A. Budgets.

Please note that the PEC will ask the applicants to respond to questions on the budget during the Community Input Hearing. The applicants may have the personnel with the technical expertise with them at the table (and *should* have these people with them if these people were primarily responsible for drafting a section). However, the applicants themselves should demonstrate knowledge and understanding in all areas of the budget.

A.(1) Provide, and attach as Appendix J, a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet using appropriate values and computations for each year of the 5-year budget plan (use current unit value and for Special Education, please budget the state average of 15%). Ensure that your worksheet clearly demonstrates your understanding of, and your capacity to implement New Mexico public school funding.

Budget Narrative

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Budget Narrative is provided in Appendix K.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
A(1)910B5 Worksheet	The school provides a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet using appropriate values and computations for each year of the 5-year budget plan. The worksheet clearly demonstrates understanding of and capacity to implement New Mexico public school funding.	The school provides a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet using appropriate values and computations for each year of the 5-year budget plan. The worksheet may contain some minor errors, but demonstrates an adequate understanding of, and capacity to, implement New Mexico public school funding.	The school provides a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet for each year of the 5-year budget plan. The worksheet contains some errors that may raise questions about understanding of and capacity to implement New Mexico public school funding.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Worksheet for each of the 5-year budget plan. --OR-- The application does not include a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet for each year of the 5-year budget plan.
Comments:				

A.(2) Provide, and attach as Appendix K, a proposed five-year budget plan based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet, that clearly supports the school's mission and aligns with the school's five-year growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, and services. Ensure that your draft budget clearly demonstrates the financial capacity and long-term sustainability of the school (consider your growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, mission etc.).

Budget Narrative

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Budget Narrative is provided in Appendix K.

Ranking				
← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →		
	Exceeds—12	Meets—9	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
A(2) 5-Year Budget Plan	The school provides a five-year budget that clearly supports the school's mission and aligns with the school's five-year growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, and services. The draft budget clearly demonstrates the financial capacity and long-term sustainability of the school.	The school provides a five-year budget that appears to support the school's mission and the school's five-year growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program and services. The draft budget adequately demonstrates the financial capacity and long-term sustainability of the school.	The school provides a five-year budget that generally supports the school's five-year growth plan. However, the draft budget may raise some questions about the financial capacity or the long-term sustainability of the school.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete five-year budget. --OR-- The application does not include a 5-year budget.
Comments:				

A.(3) Provide a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable budget narrative that explains basic assumptions, how those were determined based on reliable sources, and identifies all priorities that are consistent with the school's mission, educational program, staffing, and facility. The budget narrative demonstrates the school's thorough understanding of the budget and of budgeting.

Budget Narrative

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laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Budget Narrative is provided in Appendix K.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
A(3) Budget Narrative	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable budget narrative that explains basic assumptions, how those were determined based on reliable sources, and identifies all priorities that are consistent with the school's mission, educational program, staffing, and facility. The budget narrative demonstrates the school's thorough understanding of the budget and of budgeting.	The school provides a clear budget narrative with some meaningful detail that explains basic assumptions, how those were determined based on reliable sources, and identifies most of the priorities that are consistent with the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility. The budget narrative demonstrates the school's general understanding of the budget and of budgeting.	The school provides a limited budget narrative that explains some basic assumptions, how those were determined, and identifies some priorities. The budget narrative may raise some questions about the school's understanding of the budget and of budgeting.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate budget narrative. --OR-- The application does not provide a budget narrative.
Comments:				

A.(4) Provide a **clear and meaningful** description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges. Ensure that your explanations provide **clear evidence** that the adjustments are viable and realistic. The suggested budget control strategies demonstrate **capacity** to manage the budget successfully.

Provide a narrative description of how your school will modify the budget when there are students with special education needs currently attending the school, but under the funding formula the school will only receive additional funding during the next school year.

Provide a narrative description of how your school will address the budget in the event that the school has budgeted for more students, based on early enrollment, than actually enroll in the school at the beginning of the school year.

Strategies for Budget Control

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Board Responsibilities – The following details the responsibilities and requirements of the board.

The Board will elect or appoint a Finance Committee to oversee help oversee the financial aspects of all financial operations. There should be at least two members appointed to the committee. One member should be from the public.

Annually the board will approve the fiscal budget, which should include both expected revenues and approved broad spending categories. During our first year of operations the budget will be reviewed on a monthly basis and possible more often than that.

The board will review and approve the monthly financial statements that are presented by the committee and the principal.

The board will review the recommendations of the Finance Committee and Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity.

The board will review and approve of the recommendation of the Finance Committee and Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity for the investment policies of any held funds.

The board will approve the initial fiscal policies and any future revisions of these policies. All revisions make to the fiscal policies will be reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee.

The board will review and approve of the recommendations of the Finance Committee for the choice of the annual Auditors.

Finance Committee Responsibilities

The Finance Committee will consist of two members of the board and the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity. The duties of this committee will be to perform the detailed interaction with the principal and oversight of the financial policies and procedures. The responsibilities of the Finance Committee will be for the following:

The Finance Committee will on an ongoing basis to review the Fiscal Policies and Procedures to insure that safeguards and controls are adequate and effective. Where improvement or changes are appropriate the Committee will propose and recommend such changes to the Board.

During the first years of operation, the annual budget will need to be reviewed for reasonability. Adjustments will be made to the board for approval. It will be the Finance Committee to insure that the principal is following the budget. The Finance Committee will notify the board if any variations in the budget are occurring.

The Finance Committee will review the monthly report from the Principal and the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity. The review will include all concerns regarding the budget.

The Finance Committee will review the bank reconciliations and any other areas they consider relevant to helping oversee fiscal responsibility and reporting accuracy.

The Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity will submit to the Finance Committee the following information for review and approval on a monthly basis;

the monthly bank reconciliation, bank statements and cancelled checks,

all cancelled checks will be audited to insure that all proper signatures and required authorizations are being complied with,

all disbursements will be reviewed including all supporting documentation to insure that proper authorization and approvals are being obtained,

all cash receipts and disbursements statement and comparison to budget will be reviewed,

the monthly accrual income statement and balance sheet and comparison to the budget will be reviewed,

all investment statements and investment results will be reviewed monthly,

the Finance Committee will approve the monthly package to be submitted to the board monthly.

The Finance Committee will also serve as the Audit Committee of the board. The Finance Committee will conduct a search for the audit firm and make their recommendation of the audit firm the board for approval.

The Finance Committee will work with the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity to see that annual IRS statements are prepared and filed completely and correctly in a timely manner.

The Finance Committee will determine if any proposed hiring decisions are feasible within our current budget limitations.

Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to best practices.

Our CPA will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to the best practices as well.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied ←		Not Satisfied →	
A(4) Strategies for Budget Control	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear and meaningful description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges. The explanations provide clear evidence that the adjustments are viable and realistic. The suggested budget control strategies demonstrate capacity to manage the budget successfully.	The school provides a description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges. The explanations provide some evidence that the adjustments may be viable and realistic. The suggested budget control strategies demonstrate a general capacity to manage the budget successfully.	The school provides a limited description of what budget adjustments could be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges. The explanations about the adjustments are too general to determine if they are viable or realistic.	The school provides an inadequate or incomplete description of budget adjustments. --OR-- The application does not address strategies for budgeting control.
Comments:				

A.(5) Provide, and attach as Appendix L, a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** proposed salary schedule for all staff, including teachers, administrators, and other salaried / hourly staff that complies with state requirements.

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
A(5) Salary Schedule (Appendix)	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive proposed salary schedule for all key staff , including teachers, administrators, and other salaried / hourly staff that complies with state requirements.	The school provides a clear proposed salary schedule for most key staff , including teachers and administrators, that complies with state requirements.	The school provides a limited salary schedule for some key staff, including teachers and administrators, that complies with state requirements.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate proposed salary schedule for key staff. --OR-- The application does not provide a proposed salary schedule for key staff.
Comments:				

B. Financial Policies, Oversight, Compliance, and Sustainability

B.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** set of financial policies and internal controls that are sufficient and comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies and controls **demonstrate capacity** to appropriately manage public funds.

Financial Policies

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

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Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Our CPA will provide a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive set of financial policies and internal controls that are sufficient and comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies and controls demonstrate capacity to appropriately manage public funds.

The Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity will set up the routines and procedures provided by our CPA to implement our clear, comprehensive, and cohesive set of financial policies and internal controls that are sufficient and comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies and controls demonstrate capacity to appropriately manage public funds.

Our CPA, Finance Committee and principal will provide oversight to ensure the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity is setting up the routines and procedures provided by our CPA to implement our clear, comprehensive, and cohesive set of financial policies and internal controls that are sufficient and comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies and controls demonstrate capacity to appropriately manage public funds.

Our board will elect a Finance Committee with at least two members. One member should be from the community.

Our board will approve the annual fiscal budget. This budget will include both expected revenues and approved spending categories.

Our board will review and approve the monthly financial statements that are presented by the Finance Committee and the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity.

Our board will review and approve of the recommendation of the Finance Committee and the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity for the investment policies of any held funds. Additionally, review and approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee and Principal for the hiring and retention of financial advisors to oversee the investment of held funds.

Our board will approve the initial and any future revisions of the fiscal policies and procedures. Revisions will be reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee, the principal and our CPA.

Our board will review and approve of the recommendations of the Finance Committee for the choice of the annual auditors.

Our board will review and approve with the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity any proposed hiring decisions of the principal to insure that such decisions are within the budgetary requirements.

Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to best practices.

Our CPA will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to the best practices as well.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet-1
B(1)(2) Financial Policies and Internal Controls	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive set of financial policies and internal controls that are sufficient and comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies and controls demonstrate capacity to appropriately manage public funds.	The school provides a set of clear financial policies and internal controls that comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies and controls appear to demonstrate capacity to appropriately manage public funds.	The school provides a limited description of financial policies and internal controls that comply with requirements. The policies and controls suggest some capacity to manage public funds.	The school provides incomplete or inadequate financial policies and internal controls. --OR-- The application does not address financial policies and internal controls.
Comments:				

B.(2) Provide a description of the internal control procedures your school will utilize to safeguard assets, segregate its payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency and insure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to your school's procedures.

Internal Control

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Salary Schedule and Salary Increases

The Community Advisory Groups will review the budget and develop a proposed salary schedules for each position that Academic Opportunities Academy employees and present it to the Campus Improvement Team for review. The Campus Improvement Team will present their proposed salary schedule to the principal, the Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity. The proposed salary schedule will be forwarded to the board for their review and approval. If any individual or group recommends changes to what is proposed they will meet to establish a consensus. If no consensus can be achieved the recommended salary schedule and the areas of concern will be forwarded to the next group to or individual for their recommendations. The board will make the final determination.

All positions will have a salary schedule that is approved by the board. A copy of the salary schedules will be included in the faculty handbook. All salaries will comply with the minimum salary requirements established by the Legislature of the State of New Mexico.

Purchasing

Purchases over \$50 will require an approved purchase order prior to making the purchase.

The Office Manager or the Vigil Group or other related entity will actively seek the best price for all goods and services. Prior to making any purchase they will obtain at least three quotes to obtain the best obtainable price.

Academic Opportunities Academy will advertise bids over \$5,000 in the local newspaper and on our website and require a formal bid from suppliers of these services. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity may propose adjustments of this policy if the result will be a cost savings to Academic Opportunities Academy to the principal and the board. The Campus Improvement Team and the Community Advisory Groups may also propose changes to this policy if the result will be a cost savings to Academic Opportunities Academy to the principal and the board.

All purchases will be made by the Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity. All employees except the principal will need to consult with their Community Advisory Group for all purchases. The Community Advisory Group will forward the purchase request to the Campus Improvement Team for approval. The Campus Improvement Team will forward all purchase requests to the principal for approval. The principal will forward all approved requests to the Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity for purchase. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will determine if the purchase can be made with available funds from our budget, verify the quotes obtained are valid and are the best price available and that the purchase complies with all other requirements.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish the requirements of how purchase requests need to be presented to them, the requirements of submitting obtained quotes with all required documentation and other requirements to insure that Academic Opportunities Academy is obtaining the best reasonable price for all goods and services.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will receive all deliveries and store all items. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will maintain inventories; check out equipment and supplies to employees and other related procedures to insure against theft and waste.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish all routines and procedures for making purchases, paying invoices and all other financial transactions conducted for Academic Opportunities Academy. These procedures will be reviewed by our CPA and forwarded to the board for review to insure all safeguards and best accounting practices are being followed.

The Campus Improvement Teams will establish a reimbursement rate for travel expenses on a daily basis and per mile basis. A reasonable rate will be established for Albuquerque and Santa Fe for all anticipated expenses such as travel, food and housing. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity can identify the best rates for housing costs for employees that will be traveling. This will eliminate the need for presenting receipts. Employees who desire more expensive motels may do so if they pay the additional amount. Academic Opportunities Academy does not anticipate a significant budget for travel. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish all routines and procedures for reimbursing travel expenses.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish all routines and procedures for collecting money and providing receipts. All money must be turned in to the Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity by the end of the day, no matter how small the amount of money.

A procedure for checking in and out of tablet computers will be established. We have looked into having devices installed that would set off an alarm if they were attempted to be taken out of the building and to have the ability to locate any tablet computer if they were removed from the building as well.

Inventories of all equipment and supplies will be conducted periodically and maintained in an equipment log and supply inventory. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish all routines and procedures for checking out and in any equipment and supplies.

Petty Cash Fund

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish all routines, procedures for a petty cash fund, under what circumstances it can be used and establishing internal control procedures to insure proper use and safeguards for these funds.

Lost/Broken Items

If an item has been broken rather than worn out the student or staff member will be responsible for replacing or paying for that item. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish the routines and procedures for documenting that the student or employee is responsible for the replacement of the item or paying for the replacement cost. The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish the replacement cost for any lost or broken item.

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity, the Finance Committee and our CPA will prepare all the internal control procedures to ensure the safeguard of assets, safeguard payroll, safeguard check

disbursements, to ensure that reliable financial information is prepared, to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the school's procedures.

General Controls

- Involve as many people as possible.
- Use only pre-numbered checks.
- Use accounting software to print checks if at all possible.
- Keep all unused checks in a locked cabinet or closet.
- Limit the number of people with access to the checks.
- Limit check signers to trustees and management.
- Pay only from invoices. Do not process statements from vendors.
- NEVER pay a vendor without a valid invoice or contract.
- Mark invoices "paid" to avoid duplicate payments.
- Follow the same procedures for wire transfers as for checks.
- Someone other than the person writing the check should review the documentation and sign the check.
- Require two signatures for amounts above a set threshold. When setting the amount consider:
 - A set dollar amount.
 - Whether certain checks can be excluded from the requirement. For example, a set amount is paid for rent each month based upon a signed lease. As long as the rent is for the amount noted in the lease, a second signature is not required.
- Consider the "positive pay" program now being offered by most banks. The organization submits a list of checks written on any particular day to the bank. The bank will then take responsibility for ensuring duplicate check numbers with different payees are not processed. It should be noted that this service can be relatively expensive, so it may not be appropriate for all organizations.
- Someone other than the person writing and mailing the checks should receive the unopened bank statement and review the contents before it is reconciled.

Writing Checks

The more people involved in processing transactions, the less likely it is that a problem will occur. For small organizations with limited staffing, this issue is particularly troublesome. In some cases, the best answer lies in having members of the board of directors serve as check signers. This option is usually most viable if there are several board members living in the area of the organization's office.

At a minimum an organization should have two people involved in this process. The process can be broken into several parts with only two people involved:

- The mail is opened by administrator.
- The invoice is checked for accuracy by the administrator.
 - Does it add?
 - Does it match the packing information if the items were delivered?
 - Does the price match the contract?

- The invoice should be coded by type of account and department/program/grant by the person who ordered the service and/or has responsibility for the budget being charged.
 - For example, an invoice for supplies for the conference should have a notation to that effect on the invoice.
- The person who authorized the purchase or service should approve the invoice in writing, preferably on the invoice.
- The check should be written by the administrator.
 - If a computerized system is used, the check writing should be automated.
 - If a manual check is written, an entry should be made into the accounting system (general ledger).
- The unsigned check and the supporting documentation should be given to the check signer (manager).
 - The signer should be someone other than the person writing the checks.
- The checks should then be mailed.
- A copy of the check should be attached to the invoice and filed by the administrator.
 - As an alternative, the check number can be written on the invoice.
 - In this case, the invoice should be marked as paid.

Depositing Checks

If possible, have an individual outside of the accounting department open the mail. This individual should make a list of the checks received prior to forwarding the checks to the accounting department.

If a large amount of cash (as opposed to checks) is received, two people should always open the mail. In cases where an event is held, two people should always be present at each site where cash is collected.

The organization should have a “For deposit only” stamp. The stamp should also include the organization’s name. Every check received should be stamped prior to deposit.

A deposit slip should be prepared listing all checks.

Copies of the checks deposited are often kept as support for the deposit. If any correspondence has been received with the check, it should also be kept.

When recording the deposits in the general ledger, care should be given to the type of revenue received. All like items should be coded to the same account.

Management of the organization should receive regular notification of the amount of the deposits made.

If a donor has restricted the usage of the contribution to a particular program, it will be necessary to record the amount as temporarily restricted. All allowable expenses incurred in connection with the grant and program will need to be tracked separately.

If you are on the accrual basis and the donor has agreed in writing to give a multi-year contribution, the full amount should be booked as income in the year the pledge is received.

Other Cash

While writing checks and making deposits fall under the category of “cash,” there are other activities involving cash.

The bank statements are received each month and must be reconciled to the general ledger (ie, QuickBooks).

Further, depending on need, a petty cash fund may be started to cover incidental office expenses. This fund should be for a minimal amount and should be used sparingly.

Payroll

There are many payroll services that will process the regular payroll, make direct deposits, prepare quarterly and annual tax filings and remit taxes due for a very reasonable fee. This is generally the most efficient and cost-effective manner for processing payroll and ensuring all tax requirements are met. Further, the payroll service is responsible for keeping current with changes to tax and benefit laws in all jurisdictions. And because an outside party is involved in the process, the controls surrounding payroll are enhanced and the risk of errors and/or misappropriation of funds are reduced immeasurably. With few exceptions, the use of a payroll service by a small organization is preferable to processing the transactions in-house.

It is important to obtain references when selecting a payroll service. Verify that the company is well established, has a reputation for accuracy in the reports it produces and remits taxes and returns in a timely fashion. Further, ask about the ease with which errors are corrected and the responsibility the payroll service assumes when payroll taxes are not calculated and reported properly. As the vendors include these services in their fees, the not-for-profit organization should not be held responsible for any penalties or interest resulting from the service’s mistakes.

Once a payroll service has been selected, it is prudent to check with the Internal Revenue Service periodically to verify all taxes owed by the organization are paid currently and in full. This step will serve as a check in the event the payroll service does not remit all taxes when due, no matter what the reason.

All withdrawals from employees paychecks should be approved in writing by the employees. The following are common withdrawals that require signed forms:

- Federal income tax
- State income tax
- Pension withholdings
- Parking/metro
- Health insurance premiums

In addition, any raises received by the employee should be documented in writing and signed by the executive director or president of the board of directors.

The person who is in charge of payroll should notify the payroll service of any changes for the particular payroll.

The payroll summary issued by the payroll service prior to the payment of the payroll should be reviewed by both the payroll processor and a member of management or the board.

Sufficient cash should be available for automatic withdrawal by the payroll service for both the net salary and all taxes due.

Payroll is either recorded through the check register (QuickBooks) or by journal entry.

Support in the form of timesheets should be available to support the allocation of the salaries to the various functions (programs, grants, departments, general and administrative and fundraising). All-time records should be saved.

Furniture and Equipment Assets

Depending on the size of the organization, most of the furniture and equipment purchased are considered assets and not expenses. Once an asset is recorded, its useful life is determined. A portion of the asset's cost is then expensed each year over the predetermined useful life using what is called a "contra" account. In the case of furniture and equipment, the contra account is called "accumulated depreciation."

Over time, the asset account and the corresponding accumulated depreciation account are netted together to determine the "book value" of the assets. The book value is used to determine the gain or loss when the asset is sold or abandoned.

The organization should establish a "capitalization policy." All items above an amount set by the organization are treated as assets, while items with a cost below the threshold are expensed when purchased. The threshold is not the same for every organization, and it should be based upon the size of the organization. For small organizations a limit of \$300 to \$500 might be appropriate.

Many organizations also need to maintain these records for filing personal property returns each year.

Periodic reviews of the fixed assets should be made to verify the list matches the actual items owned and used.

Inventory Assets

Many not-for-profit organizations maintain an inventory of publications or other items held for sale over a long period of time. In these cases, the cost of the inventory item is capitalized as an asset and not taken immediately as an expense. Once the total development costs of the item are accumulated, the number of items owned is determined. A unit cost is then developed by taking the total cost over the number of items produced. Each time an item is sold, the unit cost of that item is expensed:

DR CR

Cost of goods sold	\$xx	
Inventory		\$xx

Over time the inventory balance should be reduced to zero.

If the item continues to sell, a second printing (if the item is a publication) might take place. It may be easiest to use the first-in, first-out method for determining unit cost. First, reduce the original inventory balance to zero, then use the unit cost for the second printing when reducing the inventory account.

If the item becomes obsolete over time, it is advisable to determine if the full value of the inventory is valid. If it is not, an allowance for obsolete inventory should be developed. The entry for recording the amount not being reduced due to sales would be:

Expense	\$xx
Allowance for obsolete inventory	\$xx

It is important to periodically count the remaining inventory and compare the total to the accounting records to verify the amounts agree. If there are missing items, the cause should be investigated. The accounts should be adjusted to reflect the new balance if necessary.

Expenses

Not-for-profit organizations are required to track expenses by natural category and by function.

Natural categories include salaries, payroll taxes, rent, professional fees and office supplies.

Functional categories include program, general and administrative and fundraising expenses. Most organizations have more than one program and each of these should be tracked separately.

Generally, the internal interim statements are shown by natural category, with a separate statement of activities presented for each function. An overall statement then combines all the functional statements for the organization.

If an audit has been conducted, the audited statements will contain expenses on a functional level.

The Internal Revenue Service Form 990 requires both natural and functional expenses be reported.

All invoices should note the account coding on the invoice. The coding should be approved when the check is signed.

Recording Other Transactions

The general ledger is the journal where all transactions are posted throughout the year and balances are maintained. To create a comprehensive and easily used general ledger, a chart of accounts is developed. The account numbers noted in the chart of accounts are the basis for sorting the information in the general ledger. Journal entries are the means for recording all activity in the general ledger.

<http://www.nonprofitaccountingbasics.org/>

Our board will approve the initial and any future revisions of the fiscal policies and procedures. Revisions will be reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee, the principal and our CPA.

Our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to best practices.

Our CPA will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to the best practices as well.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will establish our initial fiscal policies and procedures for review by our principal, board, Finance Committee and our CPA.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet-1
B.(2) Financial Policies and Internal Controls	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of the internal control procedures that will be utilized to safeguard assets, segregate payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency and insure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the school's procedures.	The school provides a clear description of the internal control procedures that will be utilized to safeguard assets, segregate payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency and insure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the school's procedures.	The school provides a limited description of the internal control procedures that will be utilized to safeguard assets, segregate payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency and insure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the school's procedures.	The school provides incomplete or inadequate financial policies and internal controls. --OR-- The application does not address financial policies and internal controls.
Comments:				

B.(3) Identify the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks, and ensure that the staff positions are **completely supported** in the organizational structure/chart and in the budget. Clearly provide the qualifications and responsibilities for those positions.

Financial Personnel

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

The Academic Opportunities Academy interim board will work to create a new board with highly qualified people to provide the skills and experience to place our charter school on the path to success and sustainability.

The board, the principal and the Vigil Group or other related entity will establish our Finance Committee in accordance with all the requirements of the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division.

We have discussed with Compass Bank about having our checks require three signatures. Our checks will have signatures from the Principal, the Office Manager, the Vigil Group or other entity, and our board President.

The board, principal, the Vigil Group or other related entity, our Finance Committee and CPA will work to establish all our financial procedures to ensure all best accounting practices are followed to ensure proper use of all our financial and other resources.

The Vigil Group and our CPA will establish and ensure that there is an adequate number of staff to ensure the necessary segregation of duties with regard to payroll, cash receipts, cash disbursements, purchasing, banking and other financial reporting requirements.

The board will work with the principal to hire the Vigil Group or other related entity which is a licensed business official to perform all the work related to finance for our charter school. To assure proper and appropriate financial controls over public funds, the Principal will hire a licensed business official in accordance with 6.63.12 NMAC. We believe this is the best way to ensure that everything gets set up properly and if full compliance with all requirements.

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity will be responsible for reviewing and submitting monthly accounting package to the Finance Committee for their review and submission to the board.

This accounting package will contain all the required reports, statements, investment activity, investment statements, bank statements, bank reconciliation, cancelled checks, payroll registers and associated reports, deposits, statement of income and expenses for the month, and any other requirements established by the Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity, the Finance Committee, our board, our CPA or the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division.

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity will ensure that all procurement laws and regulations are adhered to in accordance with NMSA, NMAC, GSA, and EDGAR. The financial audit will be conducted through the Finance Committee of the Board

The independent audit firm will be selected by the PED or recommended by the Finance Committee and hired by the board.

The Principal and Finance Committee will be present for the audit conference before the audit is signed by the school.

The audit firm will have direct access to board members

The Finance Committee will report to the Governing Board with recommendations and results

The Principal is then tasked with implementing any changes recommended in the independent audit.

Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity are to carry out the functions of the business office, ensure that Academic Opportunities Academy complies with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations, accounting standards and principals.

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible to the principal and has the following specific responsibilities:

Purchasing & Accounts/Payable

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for receiving purchase requisitions and preparing purchase orders for approval, administering regulations regarding small purchases receiving invoices from vendors and entering them into the Accounts Payable system and documenting the receipt deliveries and service/maintenance calls.

Banking and Cash Receipts

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for performing monthly bank reconciliations and preparing reconciliation reports for approval, preparing cash receipts for approval and making bank deposits as needed.

Food Service Administration

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for monthly reconciliation of student lunch accounts, preparation of invoices for student unpaid balances and preparation of monthly USDA reimbursement reports for approval.

Budget

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for entering approved Budget Adjustment Requests (BARs) into the school's budget system, Preparing BARs for executive and governance council approval.

Internal Controls

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for maintaining adequate segregation of duties for cash handling, purchasing, payments, banking, and payroll, design and implement a support of control system that manages the schools assets, including equipment, inventory and supplies and preparing and maintaining asset depreciation schedules, inventory lists and property disposition schedules.

Payroll

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for preparing payroll registers for approval, entering payroll deductions and employee leave in the school's payroll system, preparing payroll vouchers for staff and payroll vendors including NMPSIA, ERB, NMRHCA, IRS, NM Taxation and Revenue, NM Dept. of Workforce Solutions and participate in the school's budget preparations, to include: Revenue projections - State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) and other operating budget analysis and forecasting, Federal Education Grant budget, Private donations and grant budget, and Capital Projects budget.

Cash Receipts

The Office Manager, Vigil Group or other entity is directly responsible for collecting cash from students and parents and submit cash, cash collection ticket and pre-numbered receipt to the Finance Director.

Our CPA will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to the best practices as well.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
B.(3) Financial Personnel	The school identifies the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks, and the staff positions are completely supported in the organizational structure/chart and in the budget. Qualifications and responsibilities for those positions are clearly provided .	The school identifies the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks, and the staff positions are adequately supported in the organizational structure/chart and in the budget. The school provides some qualifications and responsibilities for those positions.	The school generally identifies the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks.	The school's provides an inadequate or incomplete description of staff necessary and appropriate to perform financial tasks. --OR-- The application does not address identification of appropriate financial personnel for the school.
Comments:				

B.(4) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description**: of how the Governing Body will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight, of the state-required audit and finance committees, and explain how these committees will operate in the schools overall governance and management. Clearly stated financial controls demonstrate a **sound** understanding of the required GB oversight and financial reporting.

Financial Oversight

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description: of how the GB will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight, of the state-required audit and finance committees, and of how these committees will operate in the schools overall governance and management. Clearly stated financial controls demonstrate a sound understanding of the required GB oversight and financial reporting.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek a very diverse, talented and quality board with at least one member knowledgeable in the field of accounting and one member knowledgeable in business operations. The board will obtain approval as a Board of Finance from the New Mexico Public Education Department and New Mexico Public Education Commission.

Our CPA will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to the best practices as well. This CPA will be not be a member or our board or Board of Finance.

Our CPA will oversee the services of the Vigil Group or other entity and eventually our own Office Manager to insure all operations are in full compliance with best accounting practices.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek the services of the Vigil Group or other entity to be involved in setting up all our initial routines and procedures and to operate our financial operations at least for the first two years. We know the Vigil group is well known to the New Mexico Public Education Commission and the New Mexico Public Education Department and that they are knowledgeable and have the capacity to perform all of the financial operations of our charter school in accordance with all legal and financial requirements. We believe this is the best course of action to take insure all aspects of our operation are in full compliance with all state and federal requirements.

We eventually plan to hire our own Office Manager who will take over an established set of routines and procedures.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will provide a financial package to the board and principal each month for their review.

The board will create a Finance Committee which will be chaired by a financial expert. The Financial Committee will also be the members of the Audit Committee. The Finance Committee cares for the fiscal health of the school and its long-term viability of the financial policies, audit findings, systems, structures, separation of duties and other requirements.

The Finance Committee will meet monthly and the committee chair will set a standing agenda that includes the following:

All monthly and quarterly reports required by the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division <http://www.nmsba.org/PEDReqTrain211.pdf>.

All Federal Reimbursement Requests

All Food Reimbursement Requests

All Federal Transportation Reimbursement Requests

All grants, donations and fundraising reports.

Instructional Materials

Other requirements required by our CPA, the Vigil Group or other entity, our Office Manager, the board, the Finance Committee, Campus Improvement Team and/or our Community Advisory Groups will be included in our monthly financial reports to the principal and the board.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
B.(4) Financial Oversight	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description : of how the GB will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight, of the state-required audit and finance committees, and of how these committees will operate in the schools overall governance and management. Clearly stated financial controls demonstrate a sound understanding of the required GB oversight and financial reporting.	The school provides a clear description of how the GB will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight, and of the state-required audit and finance committees. Clearly stated financial controls demonstrate an adequate understanding of the required GB oversight and financial reporting.	The school provides a limited description of how the GB will provide legal and fiscal oversight and of the state-required audit and finance committees. The limited description may lack clear details of how the committees will operate in the context of the school's overall governance & management. Stated financial controls demonstrate some understanding of the required GB oversight and financial reporting.	The school provides an incomplete or inadequate description of how the GB will provide fiscal oversight and of the state-required audit and finance committees. --OR-- The application does not provide a clear plan for financial oversight.
Comments:				

B.(5) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description** of long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity in areas such as governance, finance/budget, facilities, community relationships, student enrollment, charter compliance, 501(c)3, mission and performance objectives. Please ensure that you consider the sustainability of the school in your description.

School Sustainability

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Academic Opportunities Academy will have an informal group of founders who will work as our initial board until a new formal board can be developed.

The new formal board will develop policies, raise money and oversee the charter school's financial and educational performance, student enrollment, mission, goals, performance objectives, legal compliance, community relations,

Startup Year

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to find outstanding candidates to form our new formal board as soon as possible. We will begin to train and involve our new board in their new responsibilities as soon as possible until it is able to function as our board.

As soon as our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups can be developed they will begin to do the work of solving our charter school's problems, researching best practices, and doing the work often assigned to committees to evolve us into an outstanding charter school. Our Campus Improvement Teams will work on obtaining grants, donations and fundraising.

Academic Opportunities Academy will actively seek grants, donations and perform fundraisers during our startup year to provide for the financial needs of our charter school until our first year of school operations begin and other sources of income will be available.

Academic Opportunities Academy will perform all startup requirements of the New Mexico Public Education Commission and the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division.

Academic Opportunities Academy will prepare our building to be open, furnished and equipped in order to be ready to begin our first school year.

Academic Opportunities Academy will hire and train our staff to begin the school year for our new campus.

Academic Opportunities Academy will actively seek to enroll students for our first year school year.

Academic Opportunities Academy will develop our curriculum in coordination with the New Mexico State University Computer Science Department and produce our complete curriculum to the New Mexico Public Education Department – Charter School Division by January 1, 2016.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out and develop relationships with businesses, community leaders, Deming Public Schools, parents, students and individuals on an ongoing basis.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek out and develop a team of advisors to guide us during our startup operations including our legal counsel and our CPA.

First Year

Academic Opportunities Academy will actively seek grants, donations and perform fundraisers on an ongoing basis to add to the capacity of our charter school on an ongoing basis.

As soon as our Campus Improvement Team and Community Advisory Groups can be developed they will begin to do the work of solving our charter school's problems, researching best practices, and doing the work often assigned to committees to evolve us into an outstanding charter school. The Campus Improvement Team will also continue their grant writing, seeking of donations and fundraising to assist our charter school with our operations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will seek to find outstanding candidates to form our new formal board as soon as possible. We will begin to train and involve our new board in their new responsibilities as soon as possible until it is able to function as our board.

Our campus will be ready to open with our approved occupancy and all other requirements in order to open and operate our school on time.

We will have hired our initial staff and had them trained in order to begin our school year.

We will have enrolled at least our first year projections when the campus opens.

We will have conducted a lottery if it was necessary and developed a waiting list.

If our annual projections are considered annual enrollment caps, we will seek increases in our annual enrollment caps in accordance with our capacity to be able provide for these additional students until we reach our maximum capacity of 400 students.

Academic Opportunities Academy will continue to seek out and develop relationships with businesses, community leaders, Deming Public Schools, parents, students and individuals on an ongoing basis.

Academic Opportunities Academy will continue to seek out and develop a team of advisors to guide us during our startup operations including our legal counsel and our CPA.

We anticipate a lot of learning, problem solving, adjusting, and improving everything we do during our first year. We will involve our Campus Improvement Team, Community Advisory Groups in all aspects of our problem solving activities to achieve our mission, develop an outstanding charter school, comply with all the requirements of our charter, meet or exceed all of our goals, to be financially stable, to develop and improve all our routines and procedures, and all other requirements of our charter school in an outstanding manner.

Our CPA will study and make recommendations to the principal and the board on a periodic basis to insure our financial procedures, policies and safeguards are according to the best practices as well.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will be monitoring the financial status of Academic Opportunities Academy and developing a strategic vision to create a gradual growth plan that allows the school to increase revenues and expenditures at a rate that can be understood and planned for.

The Office Manager or Vigil Group or other related entity will plan for reduced enrollment and other scenarios in order to develop well thought out responses for all reasonably expected contingencies.

Academic Opportunities Academy will develop relationships with other charter schools to seek out advice and guidance on a wide variety of issues, best practices, and all items which could assist us to be a financially strong and academically outstanding charter school.

Year 2 and Beyond

Academic Opportunities Academy believes in continuous improvement and will diligently work toward improving every aspect of our operations.

Academic Opportunities Academy is currently a 501(c)3. The New Mexico charter school will become its own separate entity with informal ties to the 501(c)3. Both organizations will share ideas, information and best practices but will be separate entities.

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
B.(5) School Sustainability	The school provides a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity in areas such as governance, finance/budget, facilities, community relationships, student enrollment, charter compliance, 501(c)3, mission and performance objectives. The description demonstrates the school's thoughtful consideration of school sustainability.	The school provides a clear description of long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity most of the essential areas such as governance, finance/budget, facilities, community relationships, student enrollment, charter compliance, 501(c)3, mission and performance objectives. The description demonstrates the school's adequate consideration of school sustainability.	The school provides a general description of long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity some of the essential areas such as governance, finance/budget, facilities, community relationships, student enrollment, charter compliance, 501(c)3, mission and performance objectives. The description demonstrates that the school has a limited understanding of long-range planning and school sustainability.	The school provided an inadequate or incomplete description of long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity and ensure the school's sustainability. --OR-- The application provides no information regarding the long-term sustainability of the school.
Comments:				

Evidence of Support

A. Outreach Activities.

A. Provide **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** evidence that you have developed an effective and thoughtful outreach program. Provide **sound** evidence that you have addressed a broad audience to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to enroll. Provide clear descriptions of outreach activities demonstrating that the school is attempting to reach a broad audience and to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to enroll.

Outreach Activities

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Parent and Community Involvement

Curriculum Mapping and Database Software

One of the purposes of our curriculum mapping and database software is to keep our parents/guardians as completely informed as to their children's academic progress. Since some parents may not understand all the data this report may contain, the data will be color coded so that items in the darkest green color is best, yellow represents the mid-range of the data, and the darkest red represents the lowest performing data. Parents who do not have computer and internet resources will be able to view the data on a school computer.

Parent Nights

Our school calendar has included several days for parent nights. AOA intends to showcase our students' successes, to encourage dialog regarding their children to all our staff members, to inform our parents/guardians as to any news, information, and other items so that our parents and guardians are fully informed regarding their child's education.

Community Advisory Groups

AOA will require all of our staff to participate in our community advisory groups. AOA strongly encourages all parents/guardians, students, community members, businesses, nonprofits, and all others who wish to participate in our continuous improvement program to do so. AOA seeks to be the most outstanding charter school and we intend to continuously seek our new and innovative ideas to make these continuous incremental improvements. Every aspect of AOA operations will be reviewed periodically by our community advisory groups. Our community advisory groups will brainstorm, research, test, evaluate, refine and improve every aspect of our charter school operations. These groups will report their work to the AOA board for approvals.

Academic Opportunities Academy has met with two different Community Advisory Groups to discuss and develop our charter school plan over the last few years in Deming.

Volunteers

AOA will encourage all our parent guardians to volunteer in the areas where they can contribute to our campus and our students. All volunteers will be required to have all required background checks before being in contact with our students. All volunteers will need to receive training so that they can be the most effective as possible and also to insure they are fully aware of all the laws, regulations, policy, and rules they need to comply with.

Open Houses

We intend to have open houses every Saturday until we meet our enrollment capacity. We plan to market and advertise these open houses on billboards, radio, newspapers, fliers, and with business cards in both English and Spanish.

Board Meetings

AOA will conduct regular and emergency board meetings after school hours at our school campus to facilitate the attendance of all students, parents, and community members who wish to attend.

Coordination and Cooperation with Deming Public Schools

Academic Opportunities Academy has met with Dr. Dan Lere on several occasions and communicated with several staff members to coordinate activities with them. We seek an outstanding relationship with Deming Public Schools and are willing to cooperate in any way we can to improve teaching and learning in Deming, New Mexico.

Public Meetings

Academic Opportunities Academy has conducted several public meetings in Deming and is willing to meet with any group to have a conversation regarding our charter school.

Advertising

Academic Opportunities Academy has passed out fliers, met with individuals, advertised on both radio and newspaper to reach out to the Deming community. It appears that many individuals are aware of our charter school and are very interested in our opening in Deming.

Letters of Support

Academic Opportunities Academy has received a significant number of letters of support for our charter school which are included as an attachment.

	Ranking			
	← Satisfied		Not Satisfied →	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
A. Outreach Activities	The school provides clear, comprehensive, and cohesive evidence that it has developed an effective and thoughtful outreach program. There is sound evidence that the school has addressed a broad audience to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to enroll. Clear descriptions of outreach activities demonstrate that the school is attempting to reach a broad audience and to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to enroll.	The school provides clear evidence that it has developed an adequate outreach program. There is adequate evidence that the school has addressed a broad audience to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to enroll.	The school provides general evidence that it has developed an outreach program. There is some evidence that the school has addressed a broad audience to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to enroll.	The school provides inadequate or incomplete evidence that it has developed an outreach program. --OR-- The application does not provide a description of outreach activities, or evidence that the school developers have conducted any exploratory community outreach.
Comments:				

B. Community Support.

B. Provide **sufficient measurable**, quantifiable and **qualitative** data-based evidence of abundant, broad-based support for the school among residents in the targeted community or student population (For instance, provide the total number of students interested in the charter by grade level. **DO NOT provide names or specific letters of interest from families or students.** If appropriate to demonstrate that the interested students meet the demographics of the students you are hoping to serve by the proposed school, disaggregate the number of prospective students by zip code, school of attendance (current), gender or type of current school (home, private, public), or other pertinent data.)

Evidence of Support

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities

that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

AOA has had conversations with approximately 75 students regarding our charter school. We have been meeting with about a dozen students who have dropped out or are still enrolled in Deming High School. These students are passing out our fliers in the Deming community and communicating by word of mouth to their friends and family.

We have twenty five parents who desire to enroll their children in our charter school as of this application who have contacted us by phone or e-mail. Most of this interest has developed since we began advertising in the Deming area. If we continue our advertising, I believe we will develop a significant enrollment by the Fall of 2016.

We met with all the charter schools in the Deming, Las Cruces and Anthony, New Mexico seeking their support for our community meetings and to network and collaborate with each other.

We have been running radio ads and newspaper ads in the Deming Headlight.

- Sun Country Realtors in Deming, New Mexico is helping to establish the location at 8th and Florida. AOA is working with Mesilla Capital Investors from Las Cruces, New Mexico who will build to suit on this site. They have worked with the federal government and New Mexico state agencies on various projects.*
- AOA has met with Columbus Community School team to collaborate and support both of our charter school application efforts. AOA has communicated with Cien Aguas and our interest in developing a two-way dual language program based on their model.*
- Mark Casavantes has toured the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum and spoken to the staff regarding student field trips to their museum on several occasions. The staff has been very supportive of our charter school.*

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
B. Evidence of Support	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides sufficient measurable , quantifiable and qualitative data-based evidence of abundant, broad-based support for the school among residents in the targeted community or student population.	The school provides adequate quantifiable data-based evidence of broad-based support for the school among residents in the targeted community or student population.	The school provides limited measurable evidence of support for the school among residents in the targeted community or student population.	The school provides inadequate or incomplete evidence of community or student support for the proposed school. --OR-- The application does not provide evidence that there is community and student support for the proposed school.
Comments:				

C. Community Relationships

C. Clearly demonstrate that you have developed **meaningful and strategic** networking relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. (This differs from the formal partnership agreements that are integral to the school's operations, as described in Section III.J(1) of this application.)
Letters or other documentation of support are provided.

Community Relationships

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

AOA's Mark Casavantes has been visiting community leaders, schools, parents and businesses over the last 4 years in an effort to engage, assess, and plan for the needs of this community and have found strong community support for an AOA charter school.

He met with all the charter schools in the Deming, Las Cruces and Anthony, New Mexico seeking their support for our community meetings and to network and collaborate with each other. I have met with a few other charter schools in Albuquerque and Cottonwood Valley Charter School in Socorro, New Mexico.

- Sun Country Realtors in Deming, New Mexico is helping to establish the location at 8th and Florida. AOA is working with Mesilla Capital Investors from Las Cruces, New Mexico who will build to suit on this site. They have worked with the federal government and New Mexico state agencies on various projects. Design and construction for this project will be done by Spectrum Engineering of El Paso. Site and floor plans for this project have been completed and will continue once we have a charter. They have informed us that we should have our completed school ready for occupancy in late April or early May of 2016.*

- AOA has met with Columbus Community School team to collaborate and support both of our charter school application efforts. AOA has communicated with Cien Aguas and our interest in developing a two-way dual language program based on their model. We have postponed implementing a two-way dual-language program, but intend to revisit this idea in the future.*

- Mark Casavantes has toured the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum and spoken to the staff regarding student field trips to their museum on several occasions. The staff has been very supportive of our charter school.*

Academic Opportunities Academy will work closely with the New Mexico State University Computer Science Department on developing a computer programming curriculum that is outstanding and that aligns with their degree plans. Also they welcome the development of new students and the possibility of an increase in enrollment from our students in the future. We also intend to be involved with all summer camps and other activities that New Mexico State University develops now and in the future.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
C. Community Relationships Optional evidence of support.	The school clearly demonstrates that it has developed meaningful, strategic networking relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. (This differs from the formal partnership agreements that are integral to the school's operations, as described in Section III.J(1) of this application.) Robust letters or other documentation of support are provided.	The school demonstrates that it has developed adequate networking relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. Letters or other documentation of support are provided.	The school provides limited descriptions of networking relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. Letters or other documentation of support are not provided.	The school provides inadequate or incomplete evidence that it has developed meaningful working relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. --OR-- The application does not address the school's networking relationships or other agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals.
Comments:				

D. Uniqueness and Innovation.

D. Provide **clear evidence** demonstrating the **uniqueness, innovation** and significant contribution of your educational program to public education through meaningful comparisons and contrasts with the educational programs of other public schools that serve the same grade levels in the geographic area in which you plan to locate. Ensure that the evidence establishes a compelling need for the proposed school's educational program.

Uniqueness of Proposed School

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

There is no other school has the ideas that we have. Ideas that we have gotten from other schools have been modified to improve on their concept.

Responsive Education Solutions, a major charter school system in Texas, has pull-out classes and a main academic space to facilitate their self-paced educational model. This helps solve a major problem in our current educational models where traditional classes have students with a huge range of abilities. Differentiation has been presented as the solution. This is an inefficient model. No matter what the teacher is doing, there is a segment of the class that is not being served. The students who have mastered the material must endure listening to things they already know. Students who are having lots of difficulty often are listening to instruction they do not comprehend. Those in the middle, often must endure instruction that is too difficult or too easy for them. Basically this is an inefficient system.

Pull-out classrooms only have students in the classroom that are in need of the instruction to be presented. This is far more efficient model. The range of student abilities is less so the range of differentiation required is less. All other students work individually or in small cooperative groups on appropriate computer based instruction with the support and supervision of educational aides in the Main Academic Space.

Too much of education in most classrooms do not involve the students in active learning. At our school we tutor a wide variety of students from kindergarten students to adults. We prepare students to pass the ASVAB exam, help students in need of grade level recovery, pass the G.E.D. or help them pass math classes at El Paso Community College or UTEP. Most students are not involved in active learning where they do most of the work. Our students who are active learners make significant progress. Students who were at risk of being retained have moved to the top of their class. One of our past students will be entering medical school. A few students have progressed to El Paso Community College. We got a young lady to enter the Navy as a deep sea diver. She scored an 82 on her ASVAB exam and she had previously obtained a 27. We have ten students preparing for their ASVAB exams as of this writing. We have two adult ladies who are obtaining their associates degree with our help. Both of these ladies would not have gotten their degrees due to their significant problems with mathematics. The first semester we got her to just pass her class. The second semester she got a low A. This semester she got a 100% in pre-calculus. She is transferring to UTEP to become a social worker. The other lady graduated with a degree in business and she is now working on beginning her own business. We provide G.E.D. classes for a major automobile dealership. One of their employees obtained his G.E.D. with our help and instruction in Microsoft Excel and is now working in their accounting department. Another one of their employees obtained his G.E.D. and is now attending El Paso Community College as a welding student. We have helped him also with blueprint reading, metal furniture design and Microsoft Power Point presentations. By eliminating wasted time only teaching what students do not know and have the students be involved in active learning is much more effective than traditional classrooms. Our estimate is that it is at least about one third more effective than the traditional classroom model. In our observations of a few charter schools in New Mexico we only observed traditional classroom models. Our model is truly unique and effective.

Our education is self-paced. From an initial assessment, we find out where the student needs to begin learning based on their current skills and abilities. They only work on the objectives they need to learn

through a variety of computer based teaching and assessment programs provided by Edmentum. We believe this product is the best product of its kind available at this time. No student slows any other student down and no other student slows down any other student. This does not happen in traditional educational models. Our model is much more efficient.

The concept of being an efficient educational model is very important to us in a world that many students are three or more grade levels behind and moving even further behind. We seek to solve that problem in a few ways. We seek to eliminate all busy work and work that does not contribute to a student's success. We offer an extended school day to assist in recovering every student back to their grade level and beyond. We will graduate every student immediately as soon as they have completed all requirements of their current grade level. When we get a student who has been retained a grade level we will not put them back to the beginning of their grade level. We will assess where that student progressed within that grade level and start them there. This is a huge improvement over the traditional education model. We believe these ideas and concepts are unique. Maybe they are not unique in that these ideas are available, but it is unique in that these ideas are not widely being implemented. Academic Opportunities Academy seeks to be the pioneer in educational improvement. We will continuously seek to improve our current model. We will continuously seek to innovate and discover new ideas to improve education. We will brainstorm, study, research, work and develop new ideas.

Eliminating wasted effort is a concept that we do not see anyone else seeking to do to improve education. As an elementary school administrator I found students colored the same pictures over and over again. I know we have more presidents than just George Washington and Abraham Lincoln but many teachers do not give their students other presidents to color. At some point this exercise is wasted effort with limited educational benefit for the student. All eliminated wasted effort will improve education for our students. Along those lines is developing the best lessons packed with content, information and ideas for students. We seek to develop these ideas. We seek to have all lesson plans, lessons, lesson materials available for all our teachers either in a file cabinet or electronically or both. Eliminating wasted effort by our teachers is also important.

Our extended day seeks to perform three major objectives. One is to recover our students who are several grade levels behind. Summer school will no longer catch students up to their grade level, particularly when a student is three or more grade levels behind. Even our extended day of two hours per day of additional instruction will take three years to catch up a student one grade level. Second, we believe that K-12 education should prepare all students to earn a self-sustaining living upon graduation. This would help reduce the devastating effects of poverty which is a significant problem in the United States. A self-sustaining income has been defined by some states as two times the federal poverty rate based on the size of a given family. We will offer computer programming instruction. Even though we do not offer high school, we are preparing our students for a needed and important skill which could earn them an income. Being able to earn an income upon graduation would facilitate higher education. We are working with New Mexico State University to align our computer programming with their program. We will consult with Dr. Son Tran and his staff to create and improve our computer programming instruction. In the future, when we have a high school program we plan to offer dual credit classes leading to a degree in computer science. Third, many problems our students face in life when they are not supervised can lead to devastating outcomes from bullying, gangs, crime, drugs, rape, sexual harassment, sex, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, and other related bad choices. Our extended day permits our working parents to work a full day and then pick up their children in order to maintain adequate supervision. This concept is unique in our schools

today and our children, families and society pay a heavy price for our not providing sufficient supervision.

The concept of graduating a student to the next grade level immediately upon their completion of all required acquiring of knowledge and skills based on the grade level requirements of New Mexico is unique. I know of no other school that does this. Some have been against moving students to the next grade level because the student would lose their friends. This is not the case with Academic Opportunities Academy as we are a multi-graded school. We have heard that moving students up to the next grade would hurt our testing scores as a student who moves up to the next grade level would not be prepared to pass their new grade level. Our opinion is we believe we can accept lower tests scores and can explain why we obtained lower scores. We had students test in a grade level one year above where they normally would have been tested. We believe that our ideas are unique and innovative.

Our grading system will contain only two letter grades, an A or an I (In progress). Often we hear stories about do you want your surgeon to have gotten 70% on their surgery classes or your airplane pilot to have gotten a 70% on how to land an airplane? I would extend this concept to include all other career fields. Would you want a cook at your restaurant to earn a 70% on hand washing or cooking? Would you want your auto mechanic to have gotten a 70% on their auto mechanic classes?

When a student begins with Academic Opportunities Academy, they will begin with having a 70% being the minimal accepted passing grade. Over 90 school days or so (the number of days to reach the standard of 90% can be extended if necessary to meet the needs and abilities of our students) the minimum accepted passing grade will increase gradually so in few days a student will need to obtain at least a 71% then 72% etc... until the 90% standard is reached. We believe this will improve our student's capacity to succeed immensely. It will prepare them for the rigors of college and higher education. We know this idea is unique. We also believe that this idea is innovative.

Our concept of developing our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software to create a real time progress report, report card, monitor performance progress through our "Learning per Second" metric, providing heat maps and graphs of every New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards and Common Core Standards, and to develop pull-out classes based on our teacher based criteria in an automated manner that is designed to optimize instruction based on our campus needs. We believe this is another unique innovation not offered in other schools.

Everyone in our learning community will be able to obtain in real time their appropriate reports. Our community can obtain reports on our overall school performance free from any personally identifiable information.

Our parents, guardians and students can obtain real time appropriate reports which clearly show the student's current mastery and improvement in all New Mexico Standards. They also will be able to see their current "Learning per Second" metric which measures if a student is progressing toward completing one year's worth of knowledge and skills in close to real time. A score of 1000 will indicate the student is on target to obtain one year's worth of knowledge and skills within one school year.

Our teachers, educational aides, social workers will be able to see appropriate reports which clearly shows all the student's information as well as the individual employee's performance contribution to the campus. This feedback will facilitate reflection and improved practice of our staff.

Our administrators and board will be able to see all our available data.

Our teachers will be able to see their upcoming assigned classes based on our campus needs. The classes will be assigned by scope and sequence and campus performance criteria developed by our teachers. Classes will be limited to a maximum of 20 students. Teachers can override or modify the class selection criteria. Teachers will teach all students on our campus. Once a teacher is assigned an objective they will be empowered to take the time necessary to prepare a quality lesson. When the teacher is ready, they will send a text to all students their class will begin and in which classroom. The teacher will be empowered to take as long as necessary up to 90 minutes for a class period. The teacher is empowered to provide several class periods of instruction as the teacher professionally deems is in the best interest of their students. Teachers will be able to see the impact of their teaching by seeing the improvement of their students after obtaining instruction. Our educational aides will also see the improvement of their students after obtaining assistance.

Academic Opportunities Academy is involved in our never ending quest for improvement in education for all our students. We will go seek out new strategies and ideas; we will go boldly where no other school has gone before in our quest for truth, justice and the American way. The ideas presented in this application are just our starting point. We plan to continuously innovate and create the best charter school model we can with all the new and innovative ideas we can. We are confident we are the pioneer. We are confident we are the leader in developing unique and creative ideas to improve education for all our students. We strongly exceed in this category. We hope that all that review our application also recognize our uniqueness and the capacity for these ideas to greatly improve the education for all our students. Education in New Mexico will improve. We will gladly share all our ideas with every school in New Mexico to improve education. We look forward to serving you and all our students in New Mexico.

The students in New Mexico are in need of improvement in the education they are being provided. Deming is one of the lowest performing school districts in New Mexico indicating that the students in Deming are in significant need of better educational opportunities the Academic Opportunities Academy has a strong desire to provide.

	Ranking			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
D. Uniqueness of Proposed School	Exceeds—8	Meets—6	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
	The school provides clear evidence of the uniqueness, innovation and significant contribution of its educational program to public education through meaningful comparisons and contrasts with the educational programs of other public schools that serve the same grade levels in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate. The evidence establishes a compelling need for the proposed school's educational program.	The school provides adequate evidence of the significant contribution of its educational program to public education through meaningful comparisons and contrasts with the educational programs of other public schools that serve the same grade levels in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate. The evidence establishes a compelling need for the proposed school's educational program.	The school provides unclear or general descriptions of the uniqueness, innovation, or significant contribution of its educational program. The evidence provided is limited or weak .	The school provides inadequate or incomplete evidence of the uniqueness, innovation, or significant contribution of its educational program to public education. --OR-- The application does not address the uniqueness or innovation of the proposed school's educational program.
Comments:				

E. Letters of Support.

E. **Optional.** Provide letters of support from community leaders, business people or elected officials. (If additional space is needed, submit a separate document as a supplement to the Appendices.)

Letters of Support

Academic Opportunities Academy would like our reviewers to consider information presented in other sections of this application as part of our instruction without having to duplicate this information in this section.

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 computer programming enrichment.

Academic Opportunities Academy must comply with all federal and state legislation and federal regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy is also responsible to comply with all New Mexico state laws and regulations. Academic Opportunities Academy will also comply with the New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Public Education Commission and all other government entities that have jurisdiction over Academic Opportunities Academy. Academic Opportunities Academy will comply with all special education laws and regulations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will work toward the success of all students and to meet the needs of all of our students. All of our students include all our special populations including special education, 504, gifted and talented and English Language Learners (ELL).

Appendices and Attachments

Appendix Number	Appendix Description (* indicates optional appendix)	Attached (Check if Yes)
A	Course Scope and Sequence	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	*Governing Documents	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	Head Administrator job description	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	Job Descriptions (of licensed and certified staff)	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	*Governing Body Personnel Policies	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	Student Discipline Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	Conflict of Interest Policy/Disclosure Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>
H	*Proposed contract or agreement with partner or contractor (Required if you have one)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I	PSFA-approved projected facility plan documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>
J	910B5 SEG Computation Revenue Estimate	<input type="checkbox"/>
K	5-year budget plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
L	Proposed salary schedule for licensed staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waivers	*Other Waivers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Founders	*Names and descriptions of qualifications/experience	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Ranking			
	Exceeds—4	Meets—3	Partially Meets - 2	Does Not Meet—1
Appendices	The school provides all of the required appendices.		The school provides most of the significant appendices	The school does not provide the most significant appendices. --OR-- The application does not include all of the required appendices.