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HANNA SKANDERA  
SECRETARY-DESIGNATE OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
Governor

August 31, 2015

Dear Public Education Commissioners:

Enclosed is the Final 2015 Charter School Application Final Analysis and Recommendation for The STEAM Academy applying for a state charter in Eastern Cibola County, NM in the Grants Cibola County Schools school district to serve grades 9-12 and represented by founders, Dr. Lee Francis IV, Gilbert Sanchez, and Shannon Douma. The staff at the Charter Schools Division (CSD) along with a team of independent reviewers gave full consideration to the information gathered in this process.

The CSD has provided evidence and rationale gathered in the team analyses and interviews in this evaluation to fully support the recommendation.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to ensure that New Mexico's Charter Schools provide innovative, quality education to New Mexico's students.

Sincerely,

Katie Poulos  
Director of Options for Parents

## I. Recommendation

APPROVE

Overall the application is complete and adequate; and during their Capacity Interview, the applicant(s) demonstrated a clear capacity to implement the academic, organizational and financial management plans as described in the application. Nothing was identified that would indicate the applicant(s) do not have the experience, knowledge, and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school.

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

Overall the application is complete and adequate; and during their Capacity Interview, the applicant(s) demonstrated a general capacity to implement the academic, organizational and financial management plans as described in the application. However, the CSD has identified some specific concerns that would need to be addressed during the planning year. The CSD has listed the noted concerns and conditions to address the concerns below. If the PEC determines that there are any additional conditions that need to be addressed, those should be noted during the public hearing and all approved conditions negotiated in the final contract.

### PROPOSED CONDITIONS

The Applicant will negotiate a contract with the Public Education Commission pursuant to 22-8B-9.1:

1. Obtain standing as an approved Board of Finance
2. Secure a facility that meets PSFA Approval
3. Complete the planning-year checklist

DENY

Overall the application is either incomplete or inadequate; or during their Capacity Interview, the applicant(s) did not sufficiently demonstrate the experience, knowledge, and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school.

The Charter Schools Act, in paragraph 1 of Subsection L of Section 22-8B-6 NMSA 1978, states that a chartering authority may approve, approve with conditions or deny an application. A chartering authority may deny an application if:

- (1) the application is incomplete or inadequate;
- (2) the application does not propose to offer an educational program consistent with the requirements and purposes of the Charter Schools Act;
- (3) the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was involved with another charter school whose charter was denied or revoked for fiscal management or the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was discharged from a public school for fiscal mismanagement;

- (4) for a proposed state-chartered charter school, it does not request to have the governing body of the charter school designated as a board of finance or the governing body does not qualify as a board of finance; or
- (5) the application is otherwise contrary to the best interests of the charter school's projected students, the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the charter school applies to operate.

**CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Katie Poulos, Director of Options for Parents

## I. Overall Score Sheet

Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
<b>Application Overall Score</b>	<i>165</i>	<i>335</i>
• Education Plan/Academic Framework	52	100
• Organizational Plan and Governance/Organizational Framework	69	155
• Business Plan/ Financial Framework	25	52
• Evidence of Support	17	24
• Required Appendices	4	4

## II. Explanation Regarding Use of the Score Sheet

In the Recommendation and Final Analysis the CSD has considered the overall score in the written application, information obtained during the Capacity Interview and Community Input Hearing, and information obtained from the letters of support or opposition received after the Community Input Hearing.

Also please note two additional considerations:

- First, the CSD does not score the community input hearing or capacity interviews, but may reference these in the Recommendation and Final Analysis and if pertinent information was offered that contradicts or affirms what was found in the application.
- Second, if the applicant school did not answer any prompt because that prompt did not apply to the applicant school (e.g., the applicant school will be an elementary school and so did not provide responses to graduation-related prompts), then the CSD adjusted the total possible points in the application section where the non-applicable item(s) is found as well as in the final score. For this reason, you may see varying possible total points from application to application.

### III. Final Analysis

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
<b>EDUCATION PLAN/ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK</b>	52	100
<p><b>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section:</b></p> <p>The CSD found this section to be complete, but inadequate.</p> <p>The following areas of the applicant's response were found to meet the application requirements, for the reasons described.</p> <p><b>Mission</b></p> <p>The applicant's initial response in the application does not provide a clear mission statement. However, during the capacity interview and the community input hearing, the applicant provided additional clarity around the mission as written and the phrases in the mission. Based on the entirety of the information available, CSD believes the applicant has provided sufficient information to meet the application requirements.</p> <p><b>Graduation Requirements</b></p> <p>The applicant clearly articulates high school graduation requirements that meet state requirements and the applicant clearly explains variances from the state minimum requirements.</p> <p>The following areas of the applicant's response were found to be incomplete or inadequate, for the reasons described.</p> <p><b>Indicators/Goals</b></p> <p>The applicant provides goals that contain a limited amount of the key elements. While the applicant does provide measures and metrics for all of its proposed goals, it does not provide goals that are all in the SMART format. Specifically, the applicant provides some goals that are not specific and are not time bound. Additionally, the applicant does not provide sufficient information to understand if the goals are rigorous or attainable.</p> <p>The applicant's rationale for the proposed goals is general and unclear. Specifically with regards to the goals that are set as averages, CSD feels the applicant's rationale is not clear and reasonable. The applicant stated in its letter of support after the community input hearing that the rationale for this is the focus on community achievement. CSD does not find this to be a reasonable rationale as averages can hide poor performance of some students.</p> <p>The applicant provides limited plans and methods for assessing each of the proposed goals. The methods lack clear actions, timelines, or pieces of data to be collected.</p>		

### **Curriculum, Instructional Program, Student Performance Standards**

The applicant's responses do not demonstrate the capacity to implement a curriculum and instructional program aligned with the state performance standards. While the applicant does provide a clear, comprehensive, and reasonable timeline and plan for the development of the curriculum that includes the identification of responsible staff, deadlines, and assurances, and the applicant provides a clear description of how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs with at least one specific example; the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

In the application, the applicant provides a limited overview of the instructional strategies and methods to be implemented that lacks meaningful details to understand how the curriculum will be implemented in its entirety. The applicant also does not provide a clear explanation of how the methods and strategies will be effective with the target student population.

### **Special Populations**

The applicant does not adequately respond to the prompts regarding how the applicant will address the needs of all special population students. While the applicant does provide a clear explanation and description of how the school will identify, serve, and monitor the progress of students with IEPs, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

Specifically, in relation to ancillary staffing, the applicant provides a very limited plan stating that they will contract with agencies that can supply ancillary service providers. No meaningful detail is provided.

In relation to serving students with 504 plans, the applicant similarly identifies some of the legal requirements, but does not provide a plan or description for how the proposed school would meet the legal requirements.

In relation to ELLs, the applicant provides limited processes for identifying, serving, and monitoring ELLs. Specifically, the applicant provides a limited process that does not address scores that will qualify students for ELL status, does not identify how students who do not identify on the home language service might otherwise be identified as needing ELL services, and does not address how screening will be completed for students who enter after the beginning of the year.

The applicant's response in the application provides limited information about how the school will provide services/supports to ELLs. Specifically, the applicant identifies several structures including a Language Support Team with a TESOL-endorsed ELL teacher, and instructional and professional development from the TESOL teacher. Limited detail is provided about how these structures will function. The applicant does not address how instruction will be differentiated based on identified ELL needs or sheltered. Instead, the applicant discusses the natural differentiation found in the PBL model.

The applicant also provides an inadequate plan to evaluate and monitor the progress of ELLs. Specifically, the applicant states the Language Support Team will monitor ELL progress throughout the year. Meaningful detail is missing to understand how this monitoring will be implemented.

In relation to staffing to meet the needs of ELLs, the applicant provides a limited description of how it

will staff and budget to meet the student needs. Specifically, the applicant states it intends to have a TESOL-endorsed teacher to serve as an ELL coordinator in its first year and will hire more, as appropriate. The applicant also generally notes the budget allows for digital, online, and instructional supports for ELLs. Meaningful detail is missing to understand how this budgeting and staffing will be sufficient.

### **Assessment and Accountability**

The applicant does not adequately respond to the prompts regarding an assessment plan and how the applicant will use assessment data to inform instruction and for accountability purposes. While the applicant does provide a clear explanation and description of what assessments will be administered at which grade levels and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction, and provides a clear plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents and the school's Governing Body, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

The applicant also provides an inadequate limited response regarding what corrective actions will be taken if the school falls short of achieving student academic achievement at the student and school-wide level. Instead, the applicant states that the administrator and staff will evaluate performance quarterly and determine if corrective actions are necessary. The applicant's response also mentions professional development, teacher observations and evaluations, teacher improvement plans and a school wide improvement plan. Meaningful detail is missing to understand these structures or how they will be implemented.

The applicant indicates that annually the whole staff will engage in a reflection process to identify trends and underlying causes, and then will take corrective actions based on specific challenges and shortcomings. The applicant does not provide meaningful detail to understand how corrective actions would be implemented, what would trigger the corrective actions, who would implement, and how their effectiveness will be assessed. On the individual student/classroom level, the applicant states a general process including reflection, peer critique, student remediation, teacher observations, and teacher coaching. The applicant does not provide meaningful detail to understand how corrective actions would be implemented, what would trigger the corrective actions, who would implement, and how their effectiveness will be assessed.

Because 62 percent of the applicant's responses were evaluated as "partially meets" or "does not meet" for the reasons described above this section of the application is inadequate.

Additionally, as noted above, the application does not propose to offer an educational program consistent with the requirements and the purposes of the Charter School Act because the application has not demonstrated the proposed school will 1) address the needs of all students, including those determined to be at risk; 2) improve student achievement; or 3) meet the department's educational standards.

Finally, also for the reasons stated above, the application is contrary to the best interests of the charter school's projected students, the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the charter school applies to operate.



Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND GOVERNANCE / ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK</b>	69	155

**Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section:**

The CSD found this section to be complete but inadequate.

The following areas of the applicant's response were found to be incomplete or inadequate, for the reasons described.

**Governing Body Creation/Capacity**

The applicant does not provide adequate responses to demonstrate the capacity to create a governing body that will oversee the initiation and operation of a public school. While the applicant incorporates all the key components of their governance structure, adequately outlining the roles and responsibilities of the members, and provides adequate bylaws, and provides a list of members that reflects the diverse skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the school, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

Specifically, the applicant provides a limited process for selecting new members that is not clearly focused on identified skills necessary to govern the proposed school, and the applicant does not adequately enumerate qualifications that demonstrate how the school's governance will be qualified to operate a public school. The applicant provides a general statement of how positions will be filled, but provides no meaningful detail to understand how the process would be implemented. The applicant lists mindsets and traits that would act as indications of dedication, but only briefly identifies relevant areas of expertise with no meaningful description of desired qualifications.

**Governing Body Training and Evaluation**

The applicant does not provide an adequate plan for governing body training or evaluation. Specifically, it is unclear whether the applicant understands current legal requirements for training, which state that training must be provided by the NMCCS or NMSBA. The applicant's response does not address NMCCS/NMSBA trainings. Otherwise, the applicant provides a limited plan for training that does not contain meaningful detail needed to understand how the plan will be implemented.

The applicant provides a limited plan for annual self-evaluation. The applicant makes an assurance that it will conduct an annual evaluation, which will include individual member evaluations and an evaluation of the entire body. The applicant does not provide any meaningful detail about the evaluation and instead, states the tool for evaluation will be developed before the school is opened.

**Leadership and Management**

The applicant does not provide adequate responses to demonstrate the capacity to establish leadership and management of a public school. While the applicant provides a clear description of the desired administrator's leadership characteristics and qualifications and provides evidence of a plan to hire and evaluate a head administrator and to delineate the roles and responsibilities, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

Specifically, the applicant does not provide a clear plan for how the governing body will monitor school outcomes. While the applicant states that on a monthly basis the board and relevant committees will be responsible for monitoring operational, financial, and academic outcomes, the applicant provides limited meaningful detail on how the monitoring will be implemented.

### **Organizational Structure of the School**

The applicant does not provide adequate responses that demonstrate the capacity to develop an organizational structure for a public school. While the applicant does provide a calendar and schedule that comply with state requirements and some detail to understand how the calendar support high outcomes for the target population, and provides adequate job descriptions that align with the organizational chart; the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

The applicant provides a limited organizational chart that does not identify all relationships and external agencies that are essential to the school. Specifically, the applicant's organizational chart does not address the governing council committees, NISN, PED, or the PEC.

In the application, the applicant provides a limited staffing plan that does not provide sufficient detail to understand how it will support timely implementation of the academic program. However, in the letter of support CSD received after the community input hearing, the applicant provides a timeline for implementing the staffing plan including recruitment, interviews, hiring, and initial training. Based on the entirety of the information available, CSD believes the applicant has provided sufficient information to meet the application requirements for this prompt.

The applicant provides a limited professional development plan. The applicant identifies the following professional development foci, without providing meaningful detail to understand the structures with which they would be implemented: project- based learning, STEAM, community engagement, special education, differentiation, cultural revitalization, college and career preparation, assessment, evaluation, and common core standards. The applicant generally identifies some of the PD will be provided in team meetings and through teachers' individualized learning plans. Meaningful detail is missing to understand how this professional development will be implemented.

### **Employees**

The applicant's response, while identifying that it will address employee's representatives by negotiating a collective bargaining agreement, does not clearly describe the employer/ employee relationship and does not provide the terms of employment for all classes of employees. Instead, the applicant generally identifies the classes of employees and some legal requirements for each of the classes. Meaningful detail is not provided to understand the terms of employment.

The applicant provides a limited plan that states generally how and when personnel policies will be

developed and how they will comply with state and federal statutes and regulations. In the letter of support sent to CSD, the applicant reiterates that policies have not yet been developed and indicates policies will be developed in alignment with the planning year timelines.

The applicant does not provide a clear staff discipline process. The applicant's response focuses primarily on termination, and provides only limited information on discipline. Specifically, the applicant states that the head administrator may use a number of discipline tools and lists four potential tools. The applicant's response also states that progressive discipline may be used. The process described provides for substantial discretion in its application, without clear criteria to guide the use of that discretion. As result, it is unclear whether the process ensures due process.

The applicant provides a limited grievance policy. Specifically, the policy is available only to salaried full time employees. It is unclear if any of the schools will be hourly or part time, and why the policy is limited to salaried full time employees. The policy also does not provide for an appeals process and states the governing council's decision is final.

### **Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance**

The applicant does not adequately describe school structures that provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement. The applicant's response provides information on the parent advisory committee, core-circle, and the impact survey. The applicant provides some detail to understand how the parent advisory committee and core-circle structures would be a venue for parental participation, but this venue would be limited to providing suggestions and feedback. It is unclear from the information provided how meaningful this structure would be. The other structures do not address meaningful participation in governance or operations. The applicant did not address professional educator or community participation.

The applicant also provides a limited grievance process for receiving or processing complaints from the community and parents. The applicant's response contains general guidelines, but not a process that would assure a timely and meaningful response.

### **Student Policies**

While the applicant provides clear student discipline policies that comply with the student rights and responsibilities as set forth in the PED rules, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

The applicant does not provide a plan for addressing alternative educational settings for eligible students. While the applicant does acknowledge some of the legal requirements for expelling a student with disabilities and briefly identifies interim alternative educational settings, the applicant does not provide a plan for making or addressing such placements.

The applicant also states that students without IEPs who are expelled will be referred to another school; this statement demonstrates a lack of understanding concerning charter law, which provides that if a student is expelled from a charter school they are also expelled from the district in which the charter resides.

### **Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

In the application, the applicant provided a limited outreach and recruitment plan that did not appear to be supported by the budget. However, as part of the capacity interview, community input hearing, and letter of support submitted after the community input hearing, the applicant clarified the information provided in the application. The applicant identified the recruitment activities that will be implemented and identified that these activities will be funded that as part of the NISN fellowship for the school's founder. Based on the entirety of the information available, CSD believes the applicant has provided sufficient information to meet the application requirements for this prompt.

The applicant provides a limited description of the enrollment and lottery procedures. Meaningful detail of how pre-lottery activities will be conducted and how the lottery itself will be conducted is not provided.

### **Legal Compliance**

The applicant does not demonstrate a capacity to comply with legal requirements. While the applicant provides a clear conflict of interest policy that demonstrates an understanding of the requirements of the law and demonstrates an adequate understanding of and capacity to comply with the open meetings act, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this section of the application.

Specifically, the applicant does not demonstrate an adequate understanding of and capacity to comply with the inspection of public records act. The applicant's response very generally identifies the IPRA, but does not provide meaningful detail to understand how the proposed school would comply with the requirements of the act.

### **Waivers**

The applicant identifies waivers it will request and provides some limited information about how the waivers might be used or why they may be requested, but the applicant does not provide a clear rationale for the waivers.

### **Transportation and Food**

The applicant indicates it plans to offer transportation to its students, but provides an inadequate description of how student transportation needs will be met. The applicant states it will follow statutes and regulations and will work with the local district to secure services. Limited detail is provided to understand how the applicant will meet student transportation needs.

The applicant indicates it plans to offer food services to its students, but provides a very limited description of how food services will be provided. The applicant identifies that it will contract for food services and utilize USDA funding. The applicant further makes the assurance that all meals will comply with USDA requirements. The applicant proposes several alternatives that they may use for food services. Substantial details are missing from the applicant's response, which makes the response limited.

**Facilities/School Environment**

The applicant’s responses do not adequately demonstrate a capacity to address all school facility needs. While the applicant does describe its projected facilities needs and desired school environment and provide evidence that the PSFA has provided approval to the facilities plan and does provide evidence that it has researched potential facilities and made significant efforts to identify a viable facility, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

Specifically, the applicant provided a limited description of the school’s potential capital outlay needs and did not provide adequate estimates for facility maintenance, repair, and equipment needs.

Because 75 percent of the applicant’s responses were evaluated as “partially meets” or “does not meet” for the reasons described above, this section of the application is inadequate.

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School’s Possible Points
<b>BUSINESS PLAN/ FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK</b>	26	52

**Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section:**

The CSD found this section to be incomplete but inadequate.

The following areas of the applicant’s response were found to be incomplete or inadequate, for the reasons described.

**Budgets**

The applicant does not demonstrate the capacity to implement New Mexico School funding and budget for long-term sustainability. While the applicant provides a 910B5 that demonstrates an adequate understanding of New Mexico Public School funding and provides a clear salary schedule for initial key staff including a head administrator and teachers that complies with state requirements, the applicant does not meet the other requirements of this area of the application.

In the application, the applicant’s initial 5 year budget raised concerns about the financial capacity or the long-term sustainability of the school. However, in the letter of support that CSD received after the community input hearing, the applicant provided additional information to explain the amounts budgeted and the challenges with the changed budget template that caused items to be placed in the wrong lines and items or to be repeated. Based on the entirety of the information available, CSD believes the applicant adequately demonstrates the financial capacity and long-term sustainability of the school.

The applicant’s budget narrative is limited, as it does not explain how basic assumptions in the narrative were determined using reliable sources. The applicant provided a second budget narrative in the letter

of support that CSD received after the community input hearing, the budget narrative again does not clarify how basic assumptions in the narrative were determined using reliable sources.

The applicant provides a limited description of what budget adjustments could be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges. The applicant makes general statements about budget adjustments with no meaningful detail to understand if they are viable or realistic.

**Financial Policies Oversight, Compliance, and Sustainability**

The applicant does not provide financial policies and internal controls. Instead, the applicant states that financial and control policies will be developed, and provides some general principles that will guide the policies and then describes the responsibilities of the governing council and the finance committee. In the letter of support sent to CSD, the applicant reiterates that policies have not yet been developed and indicates financial policies will be developed in alignment with the planning year timelines.

The applicant does not provide financial policies and internal controls. Instead, the applicant states that financial and control policies will be developed, provides some general principles that will guide the policies and then describes the responsibilities of the governing council and the finance committee. In the letter of support send to CSD, the applicant indicates financial policies will be approved in December.

The applicant generally identifies the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks. The applicant identifies the duties of the head administrator and the business manager. The applicant does not, however, identify staff to act as a certified procurement officer. The applicant also does not identify the qualifications of those positions.

The applicant also does not provide an adequate description of how the governing body will provide fiscal oversight and oversight of the audit and finance committees. Instead, the applicant identifies the importance of the financial and audit committees in the areas of fiscal health and legal compliance, but there is no detail on how these committees will operate in the context of the school’s overall governance and management.

Finally, the applicant does not provide adequate long range goals and strategies to build the school’s capacity to ensure the school’s sustainability. Instead, the applicant states some goals but does not identify strategies for achieving them, and identifies some strategies but no goals to accompany them.

Because 70 percent of the applicant’s responses were evaluated as “partially meets” or “does not meet” for the reasons described above, this section of the application is inadequate.

Additionally, as noted above, the application does not propose to offer an educational program consistent with the requirements and the purposes of the Charter School Act because the application has not demonstrated the proposed school will meet the department's fiscal requirements.

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School’s Possible Points
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EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT	17	24
<p><b>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section:</b></p> <p>The CSD found this section to be complete but inadequate.</p> <p>The following areas of the applicant’s response were found to meet the application requirements, for the reasons described.</p> <p><b>Outreach Activities</b></p> <p>The applicant provides clear evidence that it has developed a comprehensive and cohesive outreach program that has reached a broad audience. This was also evidenced by the turn out at the community input hearing.</p> <p><b>Community Relationships</b></p> <p>The applicant demonstrates evidence that it has developed meaningful working relationships or resource agreements with local community groups or individuals. Specifically, the applicant has provided evidence of networking relationships and resource agreements with the Laguna Behavioral Health Program, University of California – Berkeley NOVAS STEAM program, and the NACA Inspired Schools Network (NISN). In particular the NISN relationship will provide substantial support including a salary for the executive director for the planning year of the school and ongoing support including professional development, curriculum development support, and business and governing council development services.</p> <p><b>Uniqueness and Innovation</b></p> <p>The applicant provides adequate evidence of the uniqueness, innovation, or significant contribution of its educational program. Specifically, the applicant addresses the STEAM educational model, which is not available in the local area schools. The applicant specifically contrasts this to the programs implemented in local schools.</p> <p>The following areas of the applicant’s response were found to be incomplete or inadequate, for the reasons described.</p> <p><b>Community Support</b></p> <p>The applicant does not provide sufficient measurable, quantifiable and qualitative data-based evidence of broad-based support for the school among residents in the targeted community. The applicant has clearly qualitative support in the community, which was also evidenced by the turn out at the community input hearing. The applicant has not, however quantified that support.</p> <p>Because 25 percent of the applicant’s responses were evaluated as “partially meets” for the reasons described above, this section of the application is inadequate.</p>		

### Other Pertinent Information

Twelve people signed in on the sign-in sheet at the community input hearing, however there were more than twelve people present. All but one of the attendees who signed indicated support for the applicant.

During the Community Input Hearing the superintendent of the local school district expressed opposition to the application. The superintendent expressed concerns that the applicant had not maintained open lines of communication with the local school district, indicated that there was not unanimous support for the application among local tribal governments, indicated the school was not needed, and expressed concern that he was not aware of the community input until that day.

The applicant had approximately seven supporters present who made remarks in support of the applicant. Many of the supporters identified themselves as parents of potential students, community members who supported the school, or potential collaborators with the school.

Since the community input hearing, CSD has received one letter of opposition to the application. The letter from a Pueblo of Laguna tribal member and community member indicates that in a June 12, 2015 village meeting of the six villages that comprise the Laguna Pueblo 0 individuals indicated support for the school and 20 were opposed. The letter also criticizes the application for using outdated information about Laguna Acoma High School and failing to recognize recent progress in the school district as a result of participation in the he UVA turnaround program.

Since the community input hearing, CSD has received four letters of support for the application. As described in other sections of this recommendation, one letter was a letter of support from the applicant. In the letter the applicant provided additional information in response to CSD's initial evaluation and concerns expressed during the capacity interview about technology infrastructure, facilities, and teacher recruitment. Notably, the applicant's letter also addresses the apparent lack of support from the Laguna Pueblo addressed in the letter of opposition. The applicant identifies that there are several pueblo council members who independently support the school and the pueblo is not officially supporting the school because it does not want to appear hostile to the local school district. A second letter from another founding team member provides a brief history of the charter school efforts in this area. One letter from a Pueblo of Laguna tribal member and community member contradicted the letter of opposition stating that the tribal council would have designated a spokesperson if it had wanted to express opposition. The last letter from a parent of former students in this area criticizes the local education options and indicates that the government of the Pueblo of Laguna is split on the charter school application.

CSD believes the applicant's relationship with the NACA Inspired Schools Network (NISN) is very notable and, if the application is approved will be a great asset to the school. NISN will provide the school founders with high quality professional development and training, mentoring and coaching, early stage supports to help launch a successful school, and access to established community partnerships with a vast array of highly effective organizations throughout the nation and Native American communities. NISN has a highly experienced and professional staff that will support the school founders in all aspects of school start up including: facilities, governance, operations, staffing, and curriculum development.