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2017 Charter School Renewal Recommendation – Horizon Academy West (HAW)

PED RECOMMENDATION

The PED recommends a **2-year renewal** term for HAW with the following conditions, the school must:

- Implement an NMDASH continuous improvement plan that results in raising and maintaining performance at or above an overall grade of C in each year of its renewal contract term.
- Correct all noncompliance related to organizational performance framework indicators (i.e., rights of English learners, instructional hours, recurrent enrollment, management accountability, special education, and governance) prior to the school's 2018-2019 site visit.
- Implement corrective action so as to earn no repeat findings, material weakness findings, or significant deficiencies on the 2017-2018 annual audit.

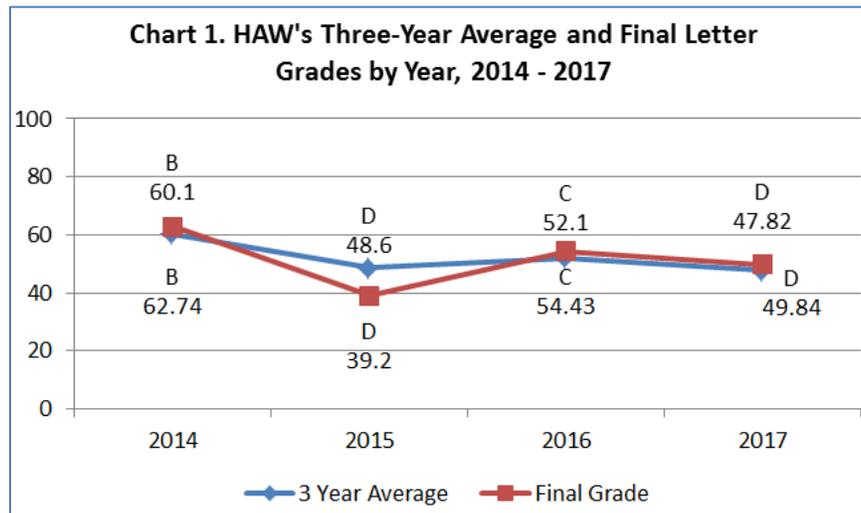
The school has failed to meet, and has not demonstrated, substantial progress toward the department's minimum educational standards; however the school has earned a B and a C in two of the last four years and has achieved above average performance in academic indicators in the A-F School Grading System when compared to area schools. Further, the school has met its charter specific goals, is approaching progress on the school letter grade.

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Section	Indicator	Rating
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE		
1.a	Department's Standards of Excellence—A-F Letter Grades	<i>Approaching Progress</i>
1.b	Specific Charter Goals	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE		
2.a	Audit	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
2.b	Financial Performance Framework	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
2.c	Board of Finance	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
CONTRACTUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND GOVERNANCE		
3.a	Material Terms	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
3.b	Organizational Performance Framework	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
3.c	Governance Responsibilities	<i>Approaching Standard</i>

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

On the 2014–2017 School Grading Report Cards, HAW has failed to meet the department's standards of excellence and the student performance standards identified in the charter contract. Chart 1, below, illustrates HAW’s three-year average grade and its overall school grade from 2014 through 2017. Overall, the school has earned two Ds and a C in the last three years (red line) with a grade of B in 2014. In its most recent three-year average grade (blue line) results show that the school has not sustained substantial improvement over time. See Chart 1, below. Over the last three years, the school has implemented improvement efforts that were verified during the site visits, but the school demonstrated measurable successes that were “inconsistent and not maintained over time” (charter renewal rubric p.15), which results in the school being evaluated as approaching progress. However, comparison of HAW to area schools in Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) shows above average performance during most years of its contract.



The cluster of schools to which HAW was compared in 2017 totaled 134 schools.¹ Among similar schools to which it was compared, HAW ranked below the 50th percentile (in the bottom half on all indicators). See Table 1 below.

	Current Standing	School Growth	Highest-Performing	Lowest-Performing	OTL
Percentile Rank	40 th	33 rd	30 th	34 th	21 st
Rank Order <i>(Out of 134 schools)</i>	79th	86th	94th	86th	97 th

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE

Audit. HAW described audit findings it received in FY14-FY16 and improvement actions it had taken to avoid repeat findings. Findings included: (a) lack of background checks for employees; (b) untimely deposits; (c) purchase orders not created and approved prior to purchases/expenditures; (d) travel request form not signed, (e) exclusion of budget adjustment request discussion/approval from council

¹ Similar schools are determined based on the demographics of the schools. The analysis uses the percentage of students that are mobile, English learners, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, African Americans, Hispanic, and Native Americans. School clusters also include only school that serve the same grades. SAM schools are also evaluated separately.

minutes; (f) violation of anti-donation clause (school disagrees); (g) failure to follow rule/procedure for disposition of property; (h) actual expenditures exceeding budgetary authority; (i) violation of procurement code; and (j) under-collateralized bank account fund. During the October 11, 2017 PED renewal site visit, the school presented evidence of specific adult (teachers, leaders, board) actions taken to improve performance and outcomes and the narrative identified specific evidence the PED team were able to substantiate.

Financial Performance Framework. During the 2015-2016 school year the school received a *Does Not Meet* rating when it did not submit a completed financial performance questionnaire due to a “misunderstanding” according to the school (Renewal Application, p. 55), The questionnaire for the following year 2016-2017, however, was completed and submitted into WebEPSS resulting in a rating of *Meets Standard*.

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Education Plan. During the 2016-2017 school year, HAW received ratings below *Meets Standard* in 4 areas (rights of English learners, instructional hours, recurrent enrollment, and financial compliance/reporting that was related to an audit finding in FY16 mentioned in the previous section). In 2015-2016, the school was rated below *Meets Standard* in two areas: (a) special education (i.e., overdue IEPs) and (b) management accountability (i.e., lack of evidence of head administrator evaluation).

Governance Responsibilities. The PED received documentation that four of the current five governing body members completed their required training for FY17. All other board members completed the required training hours in FY16 and FY15. The PED does not have training documentation for Carlos Tenorio, who has been on the board since 2015.

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to **approve the renewal application** presented by Horizon Academy West for a **term of 2 years** with conditions because, although the school has failed to meet, and has not demonstrated, substantial progress toward the department’s minimum educational standards, the school has earned a B and a C in two of the last for years, which demonstrates the school has the capacity to meet the performance standards, and the school has achieved above average performance in academic indicators in the A-F School Grading System when compared to area schools. As a condition of this renewal, the school must:

- Implement an NMDASH continuous improvement plan, which will be monitored twice annually by the CSD, that results in raising and maintaining performance at or above an overall grade of C in each year of its renewal contract term.
- Correct all noncompliance related to organizational performance framework indicators (i.e., rights of English learners, instructional hours, recurrent enrollment, management accountability, special education, and governance) prior to the school’s 2018-2019 site visit from CSD.
- Implement corrective action so as to earn no repeat findings, material weakness findings, or significant deficiencies on the 2017-2018 annual audit.