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January 11, 2016  
VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Public Education Commission  
c/o New Mexico Public Education Department  
Attn: Options for Parents/Charter Schools Division  
[Charter.Schools@state.nm.us](mailto:Charter.Schools@state.nm.us)  
300 Don Gaspar, Room 301  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

RE: 2016 Notice of Intent to Submit Charter Application for Hozho Academy

Dear Public Education Commission,

Our firm represents the applicant team for Hozho Academy ("the Academy"). Please find attached the 2016 Notice of Intent to Submit Charter Application the Academy.

Let me know if you have any questions or require any additional materials.

Sincerely,  
Mason & Isaacson, P.A.

By:   
Patrick T. Mason

CC: Frank Chiapetti, Superintendent, Gallup-McKinley County Schools,  
[fchiapet@gmcs.k12.nm.us](mailto:fchiapet@gmcs.k12.nm.us), P.O. Box 1318, Gallup, NM 87305. *Via Hand Delivery and Electronic Mail.*

Received: 

Date: 01-11-16



STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
300 DON GASPAR  
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786  
Telephone (505) 827-5800  
[www.ped.state.nm.us](http://www.ped.state.nm.us)

HANNA SKANDERA  
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
Governor

OPTION FOR PARENTS  
CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION

**2016 NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT CHARTER APPLICATION**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

According to NMSA § 22-8B-6(B) the Notice of Intent to Submit a Charter Application (“NOI”) must be filed by the organizers of a proposed charter school to the Public Education Commission at the address below **AND** to the superintendent of the school district in which the charter school is proposed to be located. *Failure to notify may result in your application being rejected.*

The NOI must be submitted by 5:00 PM Mountain Time on January 12, 2016, **the second Tuesday of January.** Notices of Intent that are not received by the Public Education Commission and the superintendent of the local school district by the deadline may result in the application being rejected. When you send the NOI to the superintendent of the school district in which your charter is to be located, you are strongly encouraged to send it by certified mail return receipt requested, or request a signed receipt when you deliver the NOI. Contact the local district regarding electronic filing.

Notice to the Public Education Commission should be delivered by one of the following methods:

- Electronically to: [Charter.Schools@state.nm.us](mailto:Charter.Schools@state.nm.us)
- By mail or personal delivery: PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
c/o New Mexico Public Education Department  
Attn: Options for Parents/Charter Schools Division  
300 Don Gaspar, Room 301  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

The NOI is intended to provide the Public Education Commission with the primary point of contact among the charter developers, and preliminary information about the charter proposal, such as the school’s mission statement, the school’s focus, the representative student population in the intended location, enrollment projections, key innovations, etc. (not to exceed 5 pages).

1. General Information

- Name of Proposed School

Hozho Academy

- Grade levels to be offered and enrollment projections

Grade Levels to be Offered	Projected Total Enrollment
K-5	120

- Primary Point of Contact

Name	Rachel Mason				
Mailing Address	104 E. Aztec Ave.				
City	Gallup	State	NM	Zip	87301
Phone	214-280-6978				
Email	rachel.simpson88@gmail.com				

2. Names, roles, and current employment of all persons on the applicant team, and qualifications of the team members to establish a high-quality charter school

Name	Role on Team	Qualifications: Education, Employment, Experience
Rachel Mason	Executive Director	M.S. in Elem. Ed. (May 2016); extensive ed. exp. with target pop.
Patrick Mason	President	J.D.; Lawyer; board member/director of multiple non-profits
Michael Byrne	VP	Political Consultant, executive director and non-profit experience
Arita Yazzie	Cultural Advisor	Navajo Nation DOJ Lawyer, involvement in Navajo schools
Alison O'brien	CRT Advisor	M.S. in Education, Teacher, Taught in Zuni Pueblo

3. Model or focus of the proposed school (e.g., performing arts, dual language, college prep, STEM, Montessori, IB):

Classical Liberal Arts; Culturally Responsive - Curriculum will feature a broad-based classical liberal arts education grounded in culturally responsive practices that take into account the needs and backgrounds of the primarily Native American target population.

4. Does the school expect to contract with another entity for either management, or substantial oversight or direction in the school's operation? Yes:  No:

If YES, describe the entity and the role it will have in the school's operational plan.

5. Does the applicant team or any members of the team currently operate any other schools? Yes:  No:

6. Vision/Mission statement. (2-3 sentences)

Hozho Academy is committed to the tradition of classical liberal arts education and the development of the whole person. We are committed to a rigorous educational program that will prepare students to learn, to lead, and to serve; and a classical environment that will inspire students to recognize the true, the good, and the beautiful in themselves and the world.

7. Student population and geographical setting of the school

- Define the targeted geographical area of the proposed school from which you expect to draw a significant number of your students.

The targeted geographical area will be Gallup, McKinley County, and the Navajo Nation.

- Describe the student population including key demographic data (academic performance, home languages, ELL, and special education populations in the location in which the school intends to locate.

The student population is approximately 82% Native American, 12% Hispanic, 5% Caucasian, and 1% Asian. A large majority, 88%, qualify for free and reduced lunch. 29% of the population is ELL, with many students coming from families speaking a combination of English and Navajo. Academic performance is low, with less than 25% of Gallup-Mckinley County 4th graders performing at or above grade level reading and math (according to 2013-2014 NMSBA performance data). Many schools with the targeted demographic have NMSBA passage rates of less than 10%.

- Identify where these students are most likely being educated currently and why they are expected to choose the proposed charter school for their future educational needs.

Students are currently attending BIE or GMCS schools, which are not providing adequate education for Native American students, and show a lack of cultural responsiveness in their curriculum and environment. Hozho Academy will fill the educational and cultural gap through the implementation of a classical liberal arts curriculum (encompassing a complete regimen of the sciences, arts, and humanities). The Academy will achieve measurable academic achievement, and become a top choice for those looking for a better alternative for their children.

8. Provide evidence that the applicant team has assessed community need for a school of the nature that will be proposed in the application (e.g., objective surveys or other measures of local demand for the proposed educational program).

The educational data as reported by Gallup-McKinley County Schools speaks to the great need facing our student population. See attached. The academic shortcomings and the need for better academic options have also been addressed in a recent study commissioned by the Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation. See excerpt attached. Local leaders at all levels (city, state and county) and many community groups (including the Gallup-McKinley County Chamber of Commerce), have expressed strong support of Hozho Academy and its efforts to improve the overall educational environment in the area.

9. Identify significant innovative features that the school will implement in order to help it realize its vision / mission (e.g., non-traditional school year, longer school day, partner organizations, etc.).

The school will provide students with a broad based classical liberal arts curriculum with an intensive literacy element. The school calendar and school day will be responsive to cultural needs in the area as well as the realities of working parents with an extended school day aligned to normal working hours. Students will participate in homework study halls, a customized literacy program, or extra-curricular activities during the extended school day. The school will also feature cross-grade collaboration and school wide projects to build community.

10. Describe how the school will be more effective than the schools currently serving the targeted student population, and/or plans to improve student achievement and exceed the academic performance of existing public schools in the targeted service area and any data you have to support this assumption.

As illustrated above, the schools in the targeted area are ineffectual in providing for the educational needs of the student population.

The Academy will adopt a classical liberal arts curriculum using existing resources that have been proven effective in raising the academic achievement of under-served and impoverished student populations. See *Core Knowledge Curriculum and School Performance: A National Study* (Wedman and Waigandt, 2004); *It Takes More than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success* (Association of American Colleges and Universities and Hart Research Associates, 2013).

This method has been successfully adopted by schools in New Mexico and other states. See e.g. Estancia Valley Classical Academy; Hobbs Municipal School District.

*Please Note: Should your charter be awarded, the founding governing body could undergo a background check to determine if it qualifies to be a board of public finance in the state of New Mexico.*

Signature of founder(s)



Rachel E. Mason; Patrick T. Mason

[PRINT NAME]

Date: 01/11/2016



**GALLUP-MCKINLEY COUNTY SCHOOLS**  
Gallup, New Mexico  
Consolidated 1858

**2014-2015**

**DISTRICT FACTS**



**SCHOOLS**

Elementary.....19  
Middle.....7  
High.....9

**COMMUNITIES SERVED**

CHURCHROCK CROWNPOINT  
GALLUP GAMERCO  
NAVAJO PUJEBLO PINTADO  
RAMAH THOREAU  
TOHATCHI TWIN LAKES  
VANDERWAGON YAH-TA-HEY

SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE... OVER 5000  
SQUARE MILES

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Mr. Joe Meniri.....President  
Mrs. Mavis V. Price.....Vice President  
Mr. Titus J. Nez.....Secretary  
Dr. Bruce Tempest.....Member  
Mr. Kevin Mitchell.....Member

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> MONDAYS OF THE MONTH AT 6:00 P.M., or unless otherwise noted.

**FRANK CHIAPETTI**  
Superintendent

**ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENTS**

**MS. PAULETTA WHITE**  
Student/Support Services

**MR. MIKE HYATT**  
Business/Personnel Services

Gallup-McKinley County Schools

PO Box 1318  
640 Boardman  
Gallup, New Mexico 87305

Phone: 505-721-1000  
Fax: 505-721-1199

website: [www.gmcs.k12.nm.us](http://www.gmcs.k12.nm.us)

*Note: Some figures based on previous school year data*

**BUSSING INFORMATION**

**BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Number of Buses.....105  
Longest Route (One Way).....118 miles  
Miles Driven Daily.....12,073  
Total Miles.....2,173,140  
Number of Pupils Transported.....7,935  
Total Transportation Cost.....\$5,168,917  
Activity Trips.....2,445

**BUDGET**

**OPERATIONAL BUDGET INFORMATION**

(Total Operational Dollars)  
14-15.....\$92,833,747  
13-14.....\$90,447,440

**PAYROLL**

Salaries	Benefits	% of Budget
14-15 \$56,034,430	\$20,869,398	82.84%
13-14 \$54,015,786	\$20,069,324	81.91%

**TEACHER SALARY**

Tier I Licensure.....\$32,000  
Tier II Licensure.....\$40,000  
Tier III Licensure.....\$50,000

**PERSONNEL**

(Excludes Federally Funded Positions)

**INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

Preschool Teachers.....22  
Kindergarten Teachers.....46  
Grade 1— Adult Teachers.....638  
Special Education Teachers.....93  
Parent Educators.....7  
Librarians.....14  
Library Assistants.....24  
Teacher Assistants.....98

**ADMINISTRATORS/SUPPORT STAFF**

Assistant Superintendents.....2  
Shepherds.....2  
Principals & Assistant Principals.....44  
Directors.....17  
Specialists/Coordinators.....47  
School Counselors.....47  
School Nurses.....6  
Health Assistants.....33  
Special Education Support.....83  
School Liaison.....22  
Clerical and Technical Support.....116  
Cooks and Student Nutrition.....105  
Custodian.....128  
Maintenance/Warehouse.....38  
Bus Drivers.....82  
TOTAL.....1,714

**Growing Students to be Productive Citizens in a Multicultural Society**

## Enrollment Characteristics

### ENROLLMENT

Elementary (Grade Prek-5): 5,680  
 Secondary (Grade 6-Adult): 6,558  
 Total Enrollment (as of 9/18): 12,238

### ETHNICITY

Native American.....10,020 (81.88%)  
 Hispanic.....1,420 (11.60%)  
 Caucasian.....624 (5.10%)  
 Asian.....117 (.96%)  
 Other.....9 (.08%)

Free & Reduced (10,791).....88%  
 ELL (3,549).....29%

### PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO

2013-2014.....1:14.4

### DROP OUT TREND

2012-2013.....7.4%

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Exploratory Programs.....7  
 Skill Building Programs.....16

### GRADUATION RATE

2013-2014.....71.3%

### MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum graduation requirements for Gallup-McKinley County Schools Class of 2015:

English.....4 credits  
 Mathematics.....4 credits  
 Science.....3 credits  
 Social Science.....3.5 credits  
 Physical Education.....1 credits  
 Career Cluster.....1 credit  
 Electives.....7.5 credits  
 Total.....24 credits

One of the above units must be honors, Advanced Placement, dual credit, or distance learning.

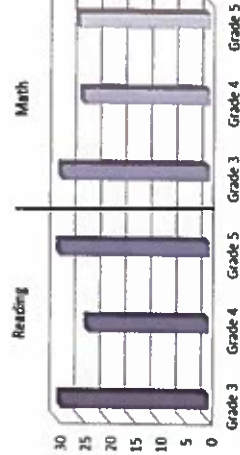
To graduate, a student must meet the cut score for high school graduation assessment.

### MISSION

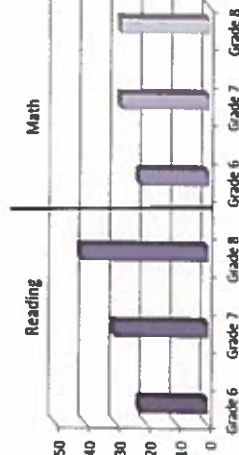
- GMCS will...
- empower students through partnerships with parents, schools, and communities
  - develop students who are self-directed life long learners
  - promote the essential skills and positive character traits
  - provide a safe and healthy environment

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

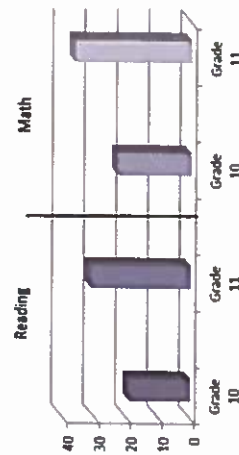
**2013-2014 NMSBA Grades 3, 4, 5**  
at or above grade level



**2013-2014 NMSBA Grades 6, 7, 8**  
at or above grade level



**2013-2014 NMSBA Grades 10, 11**  
at or above grade level

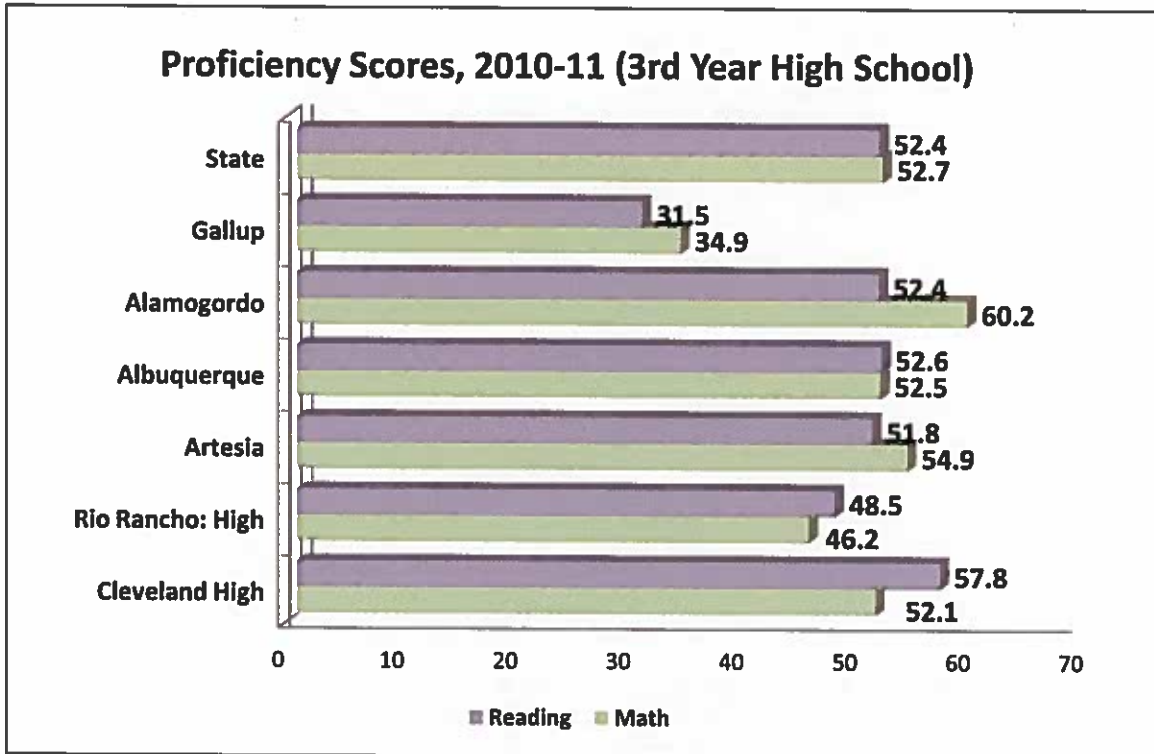


Elementary Schools	Reading					Math				
	3rd	4th	5th	4th	5th	3rd	4th	5th	4th	5th
Red Rock	67.9	52.5	62.9	71.4	61.7	55.6				
Jefferson	56.4	30.2	53.7	48.7	29.5	36.6				
Onate	42.0	27.3	29.5	44.4	21.8	25.0				
Indian Hills	41.0	20.4	42.0	25.6	25.9	30.0				
Roosevelt	41.0	39.0	29.0	30.8	36.6	16.7				
Tohatchi	32.3	34.5	30.0	29.0	17.2	30.0				
Twin Lakes	30.0	15.6	25.0	20.0	40.6	15.6				
Lincoln	28.6	31.0	51.6	26.2	26.8	56.3				
Thoreau	26.7	25.0	34.1	31.1	28.8	26.8				
Stagecoach	25.0	19.1	16.4	25.0	10.6	10.9				
Rocky View	24.6	34.9	16.3	23.0	25.6	9.3				
Chee Dodge	23.1	10.3	14.8	18.5	10.3	9.3				
Washington	21.2	37.8	32.4	9.1	29.7	20.6				
Ramah	19.4	20.0	32.3	11.1	8.0	38.7				
Turpen	18.0	22.4	12.3	16.0	34.7	24.6				
Church Rock	15.7	5.8	16.3	39.2	17.3	16.3				
Crownpoint	15.6	8.0	10.8	13.3	6.0	13.2				
David Skeet	9.7	7.9	24.4	29.0	10.5	12.2				
Navajo	8.3	5.4	29.0	22.9	10.8	29.0				

Middle Schools	Reading					Math				
	6th	7th	8th	6th	7th	8th				
Thoreau	42.4	28.9	65.2	13.5	30.9	35.9				
Gallup	26.8	54.9	41.1	28.7	44.4	29.5				
Kennedy	26.3	23.9	42.2	27.2	36.0	36.2				
Navajo	16.1	21.1	44.4	16.1	13.2	28.9				
Grief Memorial	15.8	22.5	40.1	19.1	20.8	31.3				
Tohatchi	14.0	13.5	35.8	11.6	19.2	13.4				
Crownpoint	13.5	16.7	20.0	0.0	16.7	11.1				
Ramah	13.0	31.4	41.4	13.0	14.3	13.8				

High Schools	Reading					Math				
	10th	11th	10th	11th	11th					
Middle Coil	68.8	50.0	62.5	22.2						
Miyamura	26.1	42.2	26.4	35.9						
Thoreau	20.3	23.5	20.3	30.6						
Gallup	15.7	37.3	25.1	52.8						
Ramah	13.3	35.0	33.3	20.0						
Crownpoint	9.9	23.5	17.1	66.2						
Navajo Pine	7.4	17.1	18.5							
Tse' Yr' Gal	7.4	20.0	14.8	20.0						
Tohatchi	12.5	15.6	11.3	9.1						
Central	0.0	8.3	9.5	8.3						

- **Scores at Gallup-McKinley schools are low across the board.** These include proficiency scores and ACT scores. Proficiency scores are 20 points less than the state average, and more than three points less than the larger cities in the state: Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Rio Rancho (see graph below).



- **Graduation rates are close to the state average but less than the major cities in the state.** Therefore, more than 30% of young adults are unprepared to enter the workforce and to enter post-secondary schools.
- **Gallup-McKinley does not have a program to “track” the graduating students from their high schools.** Therefore, it is difficult for prospect companies to analyze where their potential workforce might be.
- **The school district has very little in the way of vocational technical training.** There is very little ability for young people to get any training for future work in the community.
- **A common problem between the school district and the Native American population is the continual movement of young children in and out of the school districts,** or changing from public schools to Native American schools. This causes problems in the progress of the children in the two different learning environments.