

1. General Information

- Name of Proposed School

Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School

- Grade levels to be offered and enrollment projections

Grade Levels to be offered	Projected Total Enrollment
K-5	265

- Primary Point of Contact

Name	Lucia V. Carmona				
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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

Names	Role on Team	Qualifications: Education, Employment, and Experience
Lucia V. Carmona	Project Coordinator and Co-founder	Lucia is a NACA Inspired School Network Fellow. She holds a B.A. in Sociology from NMSU, is a W.K. Kellogg Foundation Fellow Expert in Community Engagement, and has extensive employment experience in nonprofit work using her expertise in rural community development, leadership development and parent engagement.
Silvia Sierra	Co-founder and Board Member	Sylvia is a retired Director of Doña Ana County Health & Human Services Dept. She holds an M.A. in the Health Sciences from NMSU and a certificate from the US/Mexico Border Health Commission Leadership Training Program. She has extensive experience working in the nonprofit sector as an administrator of early childhood and family support programs with such organizations as AVANCE Inc., United Way, and La Clinica de Familia, Inc.
Wanda Bugler-Tamez	Co-founder and Curriculum Team Member	Wanda has over twenty years of experience as an educator. She holds a B.S in Elementary Education, an M.A. in Educational Administration from NMSU, a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from NMSU and National Board Teacher Certification in Early Adolescence Mathematics. As Project Director and Principal Investigator for the Mathematically Connected Communities Project at NMSU, she provides professional learning for K-12 teachers, principals, and administrators in 20 school districts across New Mexico.
Irene Oliver-Lewis	Co-founder and Board Member	Irene is a retired educator and artist who has 40 years of experience as an arts producer, teaching artist/scholar, and administrator and holds an M.A. from NMSU. Her expertise is in Latino/multicultural, arts, education, and humanities projects. In 1996 she became the Executive Artistic Producer for the non-profit Court Youth Center and founded an award-winning arts-based charter high school, Alma d' Arte in Las Cruces.
Olga Pedroza	Co-founder and Board Member	Olga is a retired teacher and lawyer and holds a B.A. in Sociology with Minors in Elementary Education and Theology, an M.A. in Education, and a Doctorate in Law from University of New Mexico. She has taught at the high school level in the U.S. and adult English classes in Mexico. She has also worked as a case worker for the Cook County Depart. of Public Aid and as a community organizer.
Nicholas Natividad	Co-founder and Board Member	Nicholas is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at NMSU. He holds a Ph.D. in Justice Studies from Arizona State University with a concentration on issues of social justice in crime and law. His research and teaching interests include: borderland studies, race and identity studies, indigenous jurisprudence and immigration. He has expertise in working with first-generation college students, educators, students, and family members to establish a college-bound culture in the community.

Amanda Walden	Co-founder Curriculum Team Member	Amanda is a special education teacher at an elementary school in Las Cruces. She holds a B.A. in global studies and Spanish from the University of Minnesota and an M.A. in Spanish and Latin American Studies from Florida State University. She has worked with immigrant families in Florida and spent time with people in Ecuador and Peru learning about their way of life and education systems. In her current work in special education she focuses on highly engaging alternative ways for children to learn and construct knowledge.
Jane Asche	Co-founder Application Editor	Jane is a retired educator and community development specialist. She holds a B.S. in Chemistry and Mathematics from Ball State University, an M. A. in Elementary Education from Northern Arizona University and an Ed.D. in Adult Education from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. She has been a national trainer and author for creating community-business-school education partnerships. Her focus in education has been on engaging the most at-risk students on a path to academic success.
Laura Flores	Co-founder Curriculum Team Member	Laura is Vice Principal at an elementary school in Las Cruces. She holds a B.S. in Science Education from NMSU with a specialization in Special Education, an M.A. in Elementary Mathematics, and an M.A. in Educational Administration. She has National Board Certification in Literacy: Reading-Language Arts (Early and Middle Childhood); level three K-8 NM Teaching License with endorsements in TESOL and Bilingual Education; level three PK-12 Special Education License; and a level 3 Pk-12 Administrative License.
Monika Tellez	Co-founder and Board Member	Monika has served as president of the Parent Teacher Organization for three years at the La Academia Dolores Huerta Charter School in Las Cruces. As PTO president, she was able to participate in several parent engagement workshops and learned how to become a parent advocate for her children as well as engage other parents in advocacy work.
Ray Reich	Co-founder and Board Member	Ray has been a resident of the New Mexico, Texas, and the Mexico border region for over 30 years. He is an artist and retired entrepreneur with 50 years' experience in business, manufacturing and international trade. He holds a B.S. in Science in Psychiatric Social Work and has 30 years of experience mentoring, consulting and counseling individuals and families in matters from employment to drug abuse.
Carlos Aceves	Co-founder and Author of the Xinachtli Indigenous Curriculum	Carlos is a retired certified elementary bilingual educator with 23 years' teaching experience and is the author of a Mesoamerican-based Curriculum. He developed the use of Mesoamerican myth, metaphors, and mathematics under the name of the <i>Xinachtli</i> (Sheen-ahchtlee) Project beginning in 1990 with the collaboration of three elementary school teachers. From 1995 to 2008 the project was an adjunct process in the bilingual program at Canutillo Elementary School. The success of the <i>Xinachtli</i> curriculum became known through presentations at conferences of organizations such as the National Association for Bilingual Education and publications in journals and textbook chapters. (http://www.indigenoustcultures.org/documents/one_is_sun.pdf)

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

Dual Language Two-way Immersion Model: To achieve our goal of biliteracy we adopt an 80:20 dual language two-way immersion model for K-5. This model provides a gradual learning process of the second language for any given student while utilizing the student's first language (whether English or Spanish) to develop proficiency in other subjects such as Math, Science and Social Studies. Students in 4th and 5th grade are exposed to the 50:50 model allowing the students to become biliterate by the time they finish 5th grade. The Las Cruces Public Schools elementary student population is 76.4% Hispanic and of that group of students 15.9% are English Language Learners (ELL). The need for bilingual education is clear. There are currently no other 80:20 models being used in any elementary school of the three Doña Ana County school districts; yet, dual language immersion programs have been shown to be successful in student acquisition of the ability to speak, read, and write in more than one language through a rigorous and long-term process that not only enriches linguistic abilities but qualitatively enhances academic performance and mental function. Since biliteracy is our goal, we will assess the language proficiency of each student in both languages.

Mesoamerican Indigenous Ways of Knowledge: An essential component of the curriculum are the concepts of the Xinachtli (Sheen-ach-tlee) pedagogy which facilitate and enrich academic learning. Indigenous pedagogy has been used in

a variety of educational settings in the United States. The following are examples of indigenous pedagogy applications: the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program in the Tucson, Arizona, public schools; the Semillas Community Charter School in Los Angeles, California; and the Canutillo Elementary School in El Paso County, Texas, with all schools reporting positive results. During the academic year 2017-2018 Xinachtli is part of the Bill Childress Elementary School's "Friday Enrichment" program for all grade levels in the Canutillo Independent School District. The usage of Mesoamerican mathematics is currently part of the University of Texas (San Antonio Campus) teacher education program.

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.

NA

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)

Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School implements a rigorous, developmentally appropriate academic program where knowledge construction across the curriculum is participatory, biliterate, child-centered, and culturally responsive. Raíces creates an environment where students, as well as parents, feel valued as participants in the construction of knowledge and the formation of a learning community. Our students learn Spanish and English, achieving academic proficiency in all subjects in both languages and develop critical and creative thinking skills through an interdisciplinary and experiential curriculum. Xinachtli, a Mesoamerican (indigenous) pedagogy, is integrated into the curriculum to enrich and strengthen students' learning, identity formation, and the reclaiming of their cultural heritage.

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 school will be located in Las Cruces, NM, one of the five municipalities of Doña Ana County, with a population of more than 100,000 residents and the third largest city in New Mexico. The population of Las Cruces is 56.8% Hispanic or Latino, 80% of which is of Mexican origin according to the most recent U.S. Census Data (<http://www.census.gov/>).

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

The targeted student population will be the Las Cruces Metropolitan Area located in the center of Doña Ana County, 45 miles from the Mexican border. The Las Cruces Public School District is the second largest school district in the state of New Mexico and serves a majority population of 75.1% Hispanic students according to the Las Cruces Public Schools Website (<http://lcps.k12.nm.us/>). The home languages of the students are English (50.5%) Spanish (29.5%). According to the NMPED [2016-17 Report Card](#) Las Cruces Public Schools earned an overall grade of "C". Student achievement results on the PARCC show proficiency levels in ELA and math are quite low for students in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. The tables below provide specific numbers and illustrate the need for academic improvement.

Demographic data according to the Las Cruces Public School District (based on data certified with the NM Public Education Department for the [December 2017 reporting period](#)).

LCPS 2016-2017 enrollment	Hispanic	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Special Education
Total elementary enrollment	76.4%	87%	15.9%	16.4%
Total enrollment (all grades)	75.1%	77%	11.8%	15.7%

NMPED Accountability Data: iStation ELA Results All Las Cruces Public Schools 2017

Grade Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Kindergarten	17%	22%	61%
Grade 1	18%	24%	59%
Grade 2	15%	19%	66%

NMPED Accountability Data: PARCC ELA and Math Results Las Cruces Public Schools 2016-2017

Grade Level	LCPS % ELA proficient Level 4	LCPS % Math proficient Level 4
Grade 3	26%	23%
Grade 4	24%	24%
Grade 5	27%	22%

- 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.

In Las Cruces there are 24 LCPS elementary schools, two parochial schools, and one charter school that serves elementary students. The elementary charter school, J. Paul Taylor Academy, provides Spanish language acquisition, serves approximately 200 students, and has a waiting list of over 250 students. Clearly, there is a strong demand for elementary school options in the community. Currently in Las Cruces, no school offers ongoing indigenous heritage learning. In fact, Raíces' pedagogy will be one of a kind in New Mexico. Raíces will appeal to families that want access to bilingual language learning and opportunities to explore their indigenous heritage. During the Raíces' Team Outreach sessions, parents from the Las Cruces area have described the desire for bilingual learning opportunities, more engagement with the school, and development of their knowledge and skills in supporting their children in achieving academic success; and they are drawn to a school that welcomes them as partners in the educational process. Most of our students will come from pre-K and early childhood development programs throughout the LCPS and surrounding areas. Raíces expects to start the first year with K-1 students. The Raíces' Team is preparing an outreach plan to establish a relationship with parents through workshops, circles of dialogue, and public gatherings where families will have the opportunity to experience concepts, curriculum content, and core principles of our proposed school. Based on outreach that has already been carried out, we expect Raíces to have a much larger English Language Learner population of students than the traditional public schools. Parents have expressed a great desire for their child to be in a setting that is very welcoming to Spanish speakers while at the same time nurturing their language development in English. Parents also believe that they will be able to participate more effectively in their children's education with this kind of bilingual school setting, benefitting both the child and the parent.

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).

Data from Head Start Programs and community workshop sessions document the strong need that parents see for alternative options to the traditional school setting. The Raíces' Team has engaged in a significant number of conversations with parents, potential partners, interested organizations, and community leaders in the development of the projected school, including local indigenous communities (Piro-Manzo, Tortugas and Raramuris), where participants were exposed to examples of the Mesoamerican components of the curriculum and expressed an enthusiastic response. For example, NMSU is looking to develop an Ethnic Studies Bachelor's and Master's degree program offering in the College of Education that would foster a critical, historical, and locally-relevant practice and approach to community engagement. The NMSU College of Education sees our proposed school as an opportunity to contribute to their process for restructuring how teachers are educated to draw on indigenous pedagogy to improve educational outcomes for children. The Raíces' Team has held discussions with NMSU about a partnership with them for implementing a community schools approach and are continuing discussions with the Dean's office in the College of Education. Over the past 8 months the Raíces Lead Coordinator has

organized 5 parent gatherings with a total of 45 participants and 10 workshops and focus group sessions from different areas of the community to introduce the content of this future school and explore the level of interest. The Coordinator has conducted many individual interviews with stakeholders and members of other community sectors and institutions including: the Las Cruces City Council, the Doña Ana County Commission, NM State Legislators, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Green Chamber of Commerce, educators, executive team of the local chapter of NEA, members of LCPS School Board, faith based community organizations, Early Childhood Las Cruces Head Start Program Team and Policy Council, La Clinica de Familia Healthy Start Program Director, Healthy Kids Las Cruces Coalition of the NM Department of Health, Las Semillas Food Center, and representatives of the arts and culture sector for a total of 120 key community leaders.

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 innovative features of Raíces are laid out in the Four Core Principles of the school:

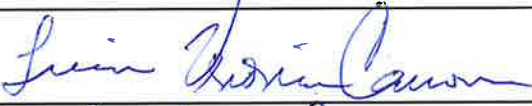


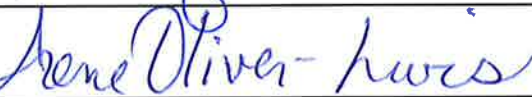
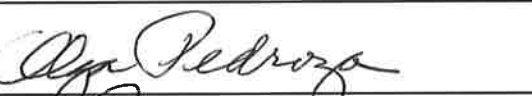


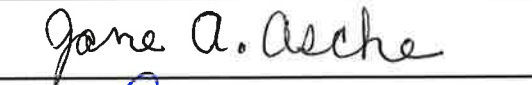


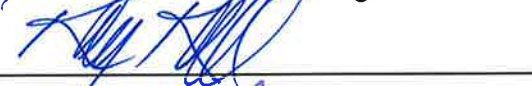

- 1) **Biliteracy through an 80/20 dual Language two-way immersion model** - This model will provide a gradual learning process of English and Spanish utilizing the students' first language to acquire a proficient level in other subjects such as Math, Science and Social Studies while they learn the second language. Gradually moving to the 50:50 model will allow the students to become biliterate by the end of 5th grade.
- 2) **Identity Formation** - This will be an integral part of the school through exploration, analysis, and dialogue about personal and circumstantial elements that create personal character. Students will be involved in a process through which they will discover and critically think about who they are in relation to parents, neighborhood, community, nationality, and ethnic group.
- 3) **Mesoamerican Indigenous Ways of Knowledge** - The Xinachtli (Sheen-ach-tee) concepts are essential to facilitate and enrich academic learning. Through the Xinachtli pedagogy students will discover the roots of ancestral Mesoamerican culture in the areas of mathematics, language, oral history, and community building that creates an engaging and natural learning environment.
- 4) **Community Led Model** - The Raíces' Team in collaboration with parents, students, administrators, and faculty will create an open school environment within a U.S.-Mexico Border cultural context. Raíces will create the space and opportunities for parents to be considered essential partners, exercise leadership, and grow in their advocacy skills for navigating the educational systems throughout their children's lives.

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.

Bilingualism and biliteracy are proven methods that lead to a valuable, enriching learning environment. A partnership of parents, community, faculty, administrators, and students will create a bilingual and biliterate atmosphere where both languages are used, cherished, and promoted campus wide. The Raíces curriculum will align with the New Mexico Standards with one hour of English language instruction per day for all students as mandated. Student biliteracy will be assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of the academic year with the goal of 80% of the population achieving literacy goals as set by the New Mexico Public Education Department bilingual standards. Learning in all subjects will be through activities that integrate exploration, dialogue, critical analysis, and practice rather than rely exclusively on direct instruction. To insure a child centered, student participatory pedagogy, Raíces will use a process of instruction that relies on small group cooperative learning centers or stations where whole class lessons are explored, extended, and reinforced. Student work and products at these learning centers are used as part of the ongoing assessment of academic performance and calculated as 50% of a student's grade.

The Raíces Team in collaboration with parents, students, administrators, and faculty will create an open school environment that embraces bilingual and biliteracy transformative life experiences that propel students toward a successful transition to any middle school in the United States. The extensive work of the Search Foundation documents that parents' ability to articulate their children's learning needs is a proven asset which increases the child's resiliency and capacity for academic achievement. The role of parents will be imbedded through the parent advisory council as a mechanism for parents to participate in designing the activities to implement the core principles of Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School.

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):

Printed Name	Signature	Date
Lucia V. Carmona		1-7-18
Silvia Sierra		1-8-18
Wanda Bugler-Tamez		1-8-18
Irene Oliver-Lewis		1-8-18
Olga Pedroza		1-8-18
Nicholas Natividad		1-7-18
Amanda Walden		1-8-18
Jane Asche		1-7-18
Laura Flores		1-8-18
Monika Tellez		01/08/18
Ray Reich		1-7-18
Carlos Aceves		1-7-18