NM Public Education Department

Options for Parents: Charter Schools Division

State Charter Renewal Application *Final* Analysis For the New Mexico Public Education Commission

Roots and Wings Community School	Nov 2015

Head Administrator: Nancy Gonzalez

NM PED Charter School Division - Renewal Snapshot Report

Roots & Wings Community School

Contract Type: Charter Start: End: 6/30/2016 Term in Years: 5

General Information

Mailing Address: HC 81 Box 22, Questa, NM 87556
Physical Address: 35 La Lama Rd, Questa, NM 87556
Phone: (575) 586-2076 Ext: Fax: (575) 586-2087 Website: www.rwcs.org
Opened: 2001 State Appvd: Renewal: 2016
School District: Questa County: Taos

Nancy González, Director Email: director@rwcs.org
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Mission: Roots and Wings Community school is an Expeditionary Learning School that serves the diverse students of the Upper Rio Grande Valle. Set in a farm and mountain environment, Roots and Wings uses the natural surroundings, active pedagogy and personalized atmosphere to make learning an adventure. The results are students that are engaged, self-reflective, and active citizens. The school promotes academic excellence, the fostering of character and service, and students connected to the unique agricultural, cultural and linguistic heritage of Northern New Mexico.

Grade Levels Offered/Enrollment/Cap:

Year	Grades	Grades to phase in	CAP	Total (40 day)	Teacher	Teacher/Student Ratio:
2014-15	K-8		50	42	5	8.4

Academics

School Report Card	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1. Final Grade	A	B	B		
2. 3 Year Avg Grade		B	A		
3. Current Standing	B	A	A		
4. School Growth	A	A	C		
5. Highest Performing Students	A	A	B		
6. Lowest Performing Students	A	F	B		
7. Opportunity to Learn	B	B	A		
8. Graduation					
9. Career and College					
10. Reading Proficiency	63.3	72.2	70.6		
11. Math Proficiency	43.3	61.1	58.8		
12. SAMS	N	N	N		
13. SAMS Graduation %					
14. Bonus Points	0.3	1.8	0.58		

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Enrollment	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
1. Total Enrollment	35	43	50	43	42

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
2. % Male	74.3%	76.7%	70.0%	62.8%	57.1%
3. % Female	25.7%	23.3%	30.0%	37.2%	42.9%
4. % Caucasian	37.1%	44.2%	50.0%	55.8%	54.8%
5. % Hispanic	51.4%	39.5%	38.0%	39.5%	35.7%
6. % African American	5.7%	2.3%	6.0%	2.3%	4.8%
7. % Asian	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
8. % Native American	2.9%	14.0%	6.0%	2.3%	4.8%
9. % Economically Disadvantaged	42.9%	58.1%	80.0%	58.1%	73.8%
10. % Title 1 TS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11. % Title 1 T	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12. %Title 1 S	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
13. % K-3 Plus	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
14. % Disabled	25.7%	25.6%	12.0%	14.0%	28.6%
15. % ELL	0.0%	30.2%	0.0%	4.7%	2.4%

School Overview

- **Charter History/Academic Performance**

Roots and Wings Charter School opened in 2001 as a district authorized charter school with the Questa School District. The school began and remains focused on Expeditionary Learning though at this point they are inspired by Outward Bound rather than full members of the official program. The school has maintained an above average state report card grade over the past years despite high turnover and a rural location.

School Report Data - Roots and Wings Community Charter School				
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
3 Year Average	N/A	N/A	B 72.1	A 76.6
Final Grade	B 60.9	A 81.3	B 71.86	B 73.91
Current Standing	C 23.7	B 26.7	A 31.13	A 31.18
School Growth	C 5.3	A 9.3	A 9.77	C 6.26
Student Growth of Highest Performing Students	D 3.6	A 17.3	A 15.14	B 11.16
Student Growth of Lowest Performing Students	B 18.6	A 19.3	F 7.14	C 16.17
Opportunity to Learn	A 9.7	B 8.7	B 8.68	A 9.14

Because the school has such a small population, PARCC data was not publicly available for analysis.

- **Site Visit Summary**

CSD was aware going in to the visit that data was missing to support statements of progress for the state report card grades over the past 3 years. The same problem affected the charter goals included in the application. CSD discovered the charter goals presented by the school were only a sample of the 21 separate academic or mission related goals which were included in the school's charter with Questa School District and not tracked by the school to determine success. These same 21 goals were not included in the school's original application for renewal with the state for authorization by the PEC. As

such, the application did not completely and accurately represent the full extent of information that needed to be verified during the renewal site visit.

The school is supported by teachers, students, parents and governing body members. All stakeholders interviewed spoke at length about the positive impact the school has on its community and students.

Application Part B. Self-Report—Looking Back

Academic Performance/Educational Plan

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school… failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of the department's minimum educational standards or student performance standards identified in the charter contract at Paragraph 2 of Subsection K of 22-8B-12 NMSA 1978.

CSD Analysis – School Grade Report For The Last 3 Years

The school has maintained an above average grade in all remaining areas of the report card over the past 3 years.

The validity of the school's assessment data is unclear, as a 2015 assessment audit uncovered numerous violations of regulations, statutory requirements, and standard protocols for assessment administration. The 2015 assessment audit uncovered a failure to provide annual assessment training to staff, failure to abide by material security requirements, failure to document testing processes or irregularities, failure to document student testing accommodations, student test taker interactions during testing, and student test taker and staff interactions during testing.

Roots and Wings Charter School was only required to submit a statement of progress for the 2013 state report card in the area of Q1 performance. CSD creates its analysis of the statements of progress in accordance with the rubric provided to schools during the final renewal training given by CSD.

Roots and Wings did not provide a statement of progress for the area of Q1 performance for 2013, rather the school indicates that their scores fell without presenting any information about systematic and data related actions the school took as a result of the low grade. Roots and Wings did increase its Q1 score the following year, moving from an F to a C for the 2014 school year. Roots and Wings did not indicate in their statement of progress how they accomplished that score increase.

In the school response section of the preliminary analysis the school included evidence of a student self-assessment following required testing. The inclusion of this evidence did not speak to a specific area of the rubric.			
Meets ☐	**Does Not Meet** ☒	**Falls Far Below** ☐	**Not Applicable** ☐

CSD Analysis – School Charter Goals For The Last 3 Years			
Roots and Wings Charter School failed to include the entirety of their charter goals in the renewal application. As such, CSD could not analyze the meeting of the goals from the school's previous charter. Roots and Wings school was not able to produce data to validate the goals included in the application, citing that the previous administrator took the data with him. As such CSD was not able to assess the charter goal success in accordance with the established rubric presented in the renewal application training.			
Meets ☐	**Does Not Meet** ☒	**Falls Far Below** ☐	**Not Applicable** ☐

B. Financial Performance

The Charter School Act provides as follows:
A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school…failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management at Paragraph 3 of Subsection K of 22-8B-12 NMSA 1978.

Financial Performance and Financial Statement
The school reports that it meets financial reporting and compliance requirements and submits all documentation related to the use of public funds including annual budgets, revised budgets, if any, and periodic financial reports as required. CSD obtained a monitoring report from Questa Independent School district and has included this documentation in the renewal application portfolio. The monitoring report indicates a number of potential concerns with finances. The school has indicated in its response to the district findings plans to

rectify concerns. Concerns are as follows:

- Inadequate checks and balances regarding receipts, cash/check balances and deposits
- The school requested a budget extension from the district

Meets ☐	Does Not Meet ☒	Falls Far Below ☐	Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☐

Audit Findings
The school reports that it follows Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Questa Independent School District provided CSD with a monitoring report which indicated Inadequate checks and balances regarding receipts, cash/check balances and deposits. The school responded in the preliminary report to the renewal application that two individuals involved in processing moneys.

Meets ☐	Does Not Meet ☒	Falls Far Below ☐	Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☐

C. Organizational Performance

The Charter School Act provides as follows:
A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school…committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter…*and/or*…violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted at Paragraph 4 of Subsection K of 22-8B-12 NMSA 1978.

Material Terms
Roots and Wings Charter School is a district authorized school with the Questa School District. At this time the school seeks renewal with the state and authorization with the PEC. The school has accumulated a number of findings related to material terms in their charter as is discussed in the school's most recent monitoring visit conducted by Questa School District contractors. See excerpt from the district's report in the section entitled Final Site Visit Report 2014/2015 at the end of this analysis. The school indicated in the renewal application response that it is pursuing authorization with the PEC in part for accurate monitoring and technical assistance.

Meets ☐	**Does Not Meet ☐**	**Falls Far Below ☐**	**Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☒**

Employees
The school has made assurances that it is meeting organizational performance requirements related to employees including: The school meets teacher and other staff credentialing requirements The school demonstrates compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to employment. Including adhering to legally compliant personnel policies and an employee handbook that outline disciplinary and grievance procedures. The school demonstrates compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to background checks of all individuals associated with the school, including staff and members of the community, where required. During the renewal site visit CSD found the following discrepancies in separate personnel files: • Fingerprint receipt but no FBI report • EA contract but no license • PreK-12 Level 1 license but no FBI report • Custodian with no FBI report • FBI report not released • No FBI report, no contract • FBI check is from Taos public schools not Roots and Wings

Meets ☐	**Does Not Meet ☒**	**Falls Far Below ☐**	**Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☐**

School Environment
The school has made assurances that it is meeting organizational performance requirements related to school environment including: The school maintained an Educational Occupancy (E-Occupancy) certificate for its facilities over the past four years. The school keeps records of fire inspections and other safety requirements. The school meets transportation and nutrition requirements, if applicable. The school complies with health and safety requirements. The building, grounds, and facilities provide a safe and orderly environment.

CSD could not confirm all items in this area. Missing items include:

- Records of fire inspections and other safety requirements
- The school complies with health and safety requirements

Meets ☐	Does Not Meet ☐	Falls Far Below ☐	Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☒

Appropriate Handling of Information
The school has made assurances that it is meeting organizational performance requirements related to appropriate handling of information including: The school maintains required information in STARS and submits in a timely manner. The school maintains the security of and provides access to student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable authorities. The school keeps all records safe from fire and theft and stored in a retrievable manner. All student records are retained and disposed of pursuant to state requirements. The school properly and securely maintains testing materials. CSD is unable to verify whether the school meets the organizational performance requirements related to appropriate handling of information due to a lack of information related to monitoring the terms of the school's previous charter and because the authorizer has not established clear criteria for performance in relation to educational requirements.

Meets ☐	Does Not Meet ☐	Falls Far Below ☐	Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☒

Governance
The school has made assurances that it complies with governance requirements including: All required School Policies The Open Meetings Act Inspection of Public Records Act Conflict of Interest Policy Anti-Nepotism Policy Governing Body Organization and Membership Rules (i.e., Bylaws) Required Committees (Finance and Audit) and submission of appropriate documentation Governing Body Mandated Trainings Governing Body Evaluates Itself Is the school holding management accountable The governing body receives regular written reports from the school leadership in regards to key indicators of the school's progress. The governing body provides a written annual evaluation of the head of school that holds the head of school accountable for performance expectations.

CSD is unable to verify whether the school meets the organizational performance requirements related to appropriate handling of information due to a lack of information related to monitoring the terms of the school's previous charter and because the authorizer has not established clear criteria for performance in relation to educational requirements.			
Meets ☐	**Does Not Meet ☐**	**Falls Far Below ☐**	**Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☒**

Part C. Looking Forward

CSD Analysis – Proposed Charter Goals			
Roots and Wings Charter School included two goals in the renewal application. One goal is an academic goal based on an increase in PARCC assessment scores, The second goal is related to civic action and is mission related. Both goals are written in SMART format and offer a sufficient starting point for negotiations with the PEC should the school be granted renewal.			
Meets ☒	**Does Not Meet ☐**	**Falls Far Below ☐**	**Not Applicable or Unable to Determine ☐**