ROOTS AND WINGS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

RESPONSES TO INSTRUCTONAL AUDIT

July 1, 2015

RWCS (Roots and Wings Community School responses are bolded and in this font)

Focus Area	Finding	Recommendation
Budget/Finance/Audit	Charter has requested a Budget extension, District has provided technical assistance in preparation of the Budget, Budget appears to be adequate for future sustainability of Charter.	In conversation, with Charter Staff, they are considering submission of a State Charter for 2015-2016 **RWCS Governance Council, Director, Staff and Parent Advisory Council/School Leadership Team have shared discussions about submitting an application for a State Charter.**
	Audit revealed some concerns relative to finances: staff is improving on cash checks/balances; however, only one staff counts, receipts, deposits cash in money bag and Principal deposits to Bank.	Staff needs to include other staff, parents to ensure checks/ balances. Harshwal will continue the audit. **RWCS with the support and guidance of the Business Manager will have the following process in place: Two individuals will accept, count the money, one will prepare the receipt, both will sign it. One will prepare the deposit form, both will initial. Checks**

		received will be copied and attached to receipt. The director will assure that funds are taken the same day and if after business hours deposited in the drop box. **Bank receipts will be attached to school receipts.** **Fundraising funds will be handled the same way.**
	3 Possible Conflicts of Interest: 1. Landlord is Teacher's Husband – School is looking at possible purchase of property 2. Water is delivered by Principal's Husband – Charter Board is aware 3. Localogy Contractor is Teacher's significant other	Questa Independent School District needs to have a conversation with an attorney as to possible Conflicts of Interest. Charter needs to formally disclose during a public meeting. **RWCS Governance Council asked for legal advice from the attorney.** **RWCS Director disclosed in a public meeting early in the school year. Water will no longer be delivered. Plans are to connect to the LLMDWA.** **Teacher is no longer employed at RWCS.**
Special Education	District staff conducted an on-site review of SpEd files/process & Contractor	District needs to conduct frequent reviews to ensure compliance or Charter needs

	concurs with findings: Files not complete (i.e. Vision statements, written invitations to parents, students, Signatures missing) On-line ancillary support is a plus. Continuity in staffing	to contact or contract for technical assistance. **RWCS Special Education teacher worked with QISD Special Education Director to update all files. Sp. Ed. Teacher will organize all files applying constructive criticism provided.**
Personnel	Eight personnel files were not complete (i.e. Letters of Interest, Applications, I-9, W-4, copies of License, Background checks, Transcripts, Evaluations)	Principal is aware of Audit finding and is working towards reviewing every file to ensure completeness **RWCS Director reviewed all files and requested documentation from affected individuals. All files will be in compliance by September 1, 2015.** Principal has started the recruitment process.
	Instructional Staff are very professional and knowledgeable in the curriculum; however, turnover appears to be a problem this year – loss of Business Mgr, 2 teachers.	**RWCS received the NM Reads to Lead Grant for the first time this year. It was a challenge to find an educational assistant with the school's educational philosophy and one expressed she needed more hours and possibly more pay. RWCS' present educational assistant will be**

		returning next year. **RWCS' Business Manager agreed to support us for one year during the transition period from the former business manager. She has been very instrumental in setting up with financial systems.** **RWCS teachers departing this year: the middle school teacher had indicated early in the year that she wanted to pursue another career interest. She had been associated with the school since the beginning, the other teacher left to concentrate on complete her education certification.**
Instructional Program	Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS) has not been updated for 3 Years	Major PED non-compliance – needs to be addressed immediately **RWCS has formed a committee to review documents and data to update EPSS. The first date scheduled to meet is Friday, July 10, 2015** R&W needs to develop some research/ development and share with NM Coalition of Charter Schools.
	Excellent EL curriculum,	**RWCS staff have presented**

evidence that it is being followed. Staff and students are able to speak competently with vertical & horizontal articulation.	**at the National Mid-School Math Conference for two years. One teacher and a former teacher will be presenting at the 2016 National Mid-School Math Conference. A good suggestion to share with NM Coalition for Charter Schools. Director will follow up.**
Possible PARCC irregularities. PED is investigating	PED needs to disclose findings to the District. **RWCS Director and Staff met with NMPED on April 22, 2015: Ms. Joslyn Overby and Mr. Gabriel Martinez. Also in attendance were QISD Superintendent, Ms. Valerie Trujillo, and Curriculum Director, Ms. Martha Sanchez. Discussion centered on: testing accommodations for special education students, minor irregularities with sign posting and para-professionals supervising special needs students, formal training of staff – although presented at a regular staff meeting. The Director reports that a report would be provided to RWCS by NMPED (not yet**

		received) In the year 2015-2016, the Director will assure that there are no irregularities.
Operational Program	No evidence of a Maintenance Prevention Plan	Requires PED compliance. **RWCS Director will research files for evidence of a Maintenance Prevention Plan. If not available, the Director will establish a team to review a sample from the QISD to be requested from Ms. Valerie Trujillo, QISD Superintendent.**
	No evidence of a complete Safety Plan	Requires PED compliance. **RWCS sent a CD to NMPED Mr. Dean Hopper with updated Safety Plan**
	Minimal evidence of complete Fire Drill Reports or Safety procedures compliance.	Requires Fire Marshall review. Requires PED compliance. **RWCS will schedule Fire Drills – four the first month of school and once a month thereafter. The student council members will be involved. The Director has requested a form from the QISD Superintendent where teachers and staff can complete following the fire drill.** **RWCS Director will contact**

	the Lama Fire Department to request assessment of the fire extinguishers, alarm system, evacuation and request suggestions for effective and efficient fire drills.
	RWCS will include in the Professional Development Plan procedures for a lockdown which will be held during the first month of school.
No evidence of use of School Dude software	**RWCS does not have the School Dude Software nor the funds, nor the personnel. The custodian/maintenance person receives a computer generated note to request items/tasks to be completed. The Director will contact PSFA for options.**
Parents provide transportation. RTD provides transportation - Students are escorted from RTD bus stop to school on a wilderness trail or dirt road.	**RWCS students coming from San Cristobal and south (Taos) ride the RTD bus. Two of RWCS teachers live in Taos and take turns riding the bus to and from school. The teachers walk the students up a trail. When conditions are severe for example a lot of snow and/or mud, the students and the teachers walk on the county dirt**

	road. Requires PED review.
Parents prepare lunches, except during Wed. Frito-pie Fundraiser.	Recommend PED review to provide technical assistance with “healthy foods/ snacks” program. **RWCS encourages parents/guardians to pack healthy, nutritious snacks and lunches for students. Director will follow up with “healthy foods/ snacks” program at NMPED.**
Students walk around barefoot/socks in the building	**RWCS Director will request that all students wear appropriate footwear in the classroom and outdoors. Students will be required to keep a pair of appropriate footwear at school in the event of inclement weather: lots of snow and/or mud.** Requires Dept of Health review.
No evidence of Technology Plan	**RWCS Director will review and research Technology Plan from previous administration. If not available, Director will select a team to develop and/or possibly upgrade the Technology Plan. This will be included in the PD schedule. Technology Plan**

		will be submitted to NMPED. Requires PED compliance
Facilities	POMS Audit	Contractor supports all POMS findings
	Facility appears adequate for 38 students currently enrolled, however, capacity is 50	An increase in enrollment to capacity of 50 would require a PED/PSFA review to determine sq. ft. per student. **RWCS Director will contact PSFA to review allowable square footage per student. In the request for expansion 50 students was the enrollment submitted as included in "Special Use Permit."**
Federal Programs	Opportunity for Charter to request Federal Funding. Staff have not submitted for funding.	If the Charter becomes a state charter, they will be afforded the same programs as a public school. **RWCS Governance Council, the Director, Staff and Parent Advisory Council/School Leadership Team have met and discussed applying for a State Charter and will be pursued.**

Management/Governance	Charter Board = 3 members	**RWCS Governance Council is actively recruiting two new members. By the August 2015 RWCS Governance Council meeting, one new member will be selected and another by the September meeting**
	Inconsistency with Administration, staffing	Consistent administration and staffing is key to continuity in program. **RWCS Director is committed to supporting the school, addressing all issues of non-compliance, work on systems for student safety and student academics as priorities. The Director will also work on staff retention with the support of the RWCS Governance Council.**
	2015-2016 Calendar indicates a “modified 4-day”	Requires PED compliance for Time Required **RWCS Director worked with the school’s budget analyst on the calendar. The outdoor adventures taken in the fall and the spring and sometimes in the winter add time to each grade cohort: for example the K-2 cohort spends three full days outdoors with two nights spent outdoors twice**

a year, the 3-5 cohort spends five full days outdoors and four nights spent outdoors twice a year, the 6-8 cohort spends eight full days outdoors and seven nights spent outdoors twice a year, the 6-8 cohort are usually the ones that spend at least four full days and three nights outdoors during the winter, sometimes it can be an urban adventure. The teachers along with the support of trained guides from Localogy attend with the students.