NM Public Education Department

Options for Parents: Charter Schools Division

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

The GREAT Academy	Nov 2015

Head Administrator: Jasper Mathews

NM PED Charter School Division - School Snapshot Report

The GREAT Academy

Contract Type: Charter Start: 7/1/2011 End: 6/30/2016 Term in Years: 5

General Information

Mailing Address: 6001-A San Mateo Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109
Physical Address: 6001-A San Mateo Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109
Phone: (505) 792-0306 Ext: Fax: (505) 792-0225 Website: www.thegreatacademy.org
Opened: 2011 State Appvd: Sep-10 Renewal: 2016
School District: Albuquerque County: Bernalillo

Administration:

Staff	Year Began	Phone	Email
Jasper Matthews, Executive Director jmatthews@thegreatacademy.org		(505) 792-0306	(505) 980-8545
Chenyu Liu, Business Mgr cliu@thegreatacademy.org		(505) 792-0306	(505) 410-7400
Keisha Matthews, Director of Academics kmatthews@thegreatacademy.org			(505) 385-5321
Keisha Matthews, STARS Coord kmatthews@thegreatacademy.org		(505) 792-0306	(505) 385-5321

Governing Board:

Member:		Affadavit:	Begin:	End:	Training Year and Hrs:
Dr. Penny Edwards	President	7/16/2013			
Mirna Kabbara	Board	7/16/2013			
Michael Pitts	Vice President	7/16/2013			
Jade Rogers	Board	7/16/2013			
Ronald Shorter	Board				

Other:	Email	Notes
Melissa Sanchez, Budget Analyst	melissa.sanchez@state.nm.us	Monthly Reports

Mission: The GREAT Academy mission is to ensure that all students Gain Real-world Experience through Active Transition.

Grade Levels Offered/Enrollment/Cap:

Year	Grades	Grades to phase in	CAP	Total (40 day)	Teacher	Teacher/Student Ratio:
2014-15	6 & 9-12		360	179	5	35.8

Academics

School Report Card	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1. Final Grade	D	B	C		
2. 3 Year Avg Grade		B	B		
3. Current Standing	F	B	F		
4. School Growth		B	C		
5. Highest Performing Students	F	A	A		
6. Lowest Performing Students	B	B	A		
7. Opportunity to Learn	C	C	C		

8. Graduation			
9. Career and College			
10. Reading Proficiency	29.8	33.3	30.2
11. Math Proficiency	15.9	23.1	20.9
12. SAMS	N	Y	N

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13. SAMS Graduation %			
14. Bonus Points	1	3.5	3.8

Enrollment	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
1. Total Enrollment		177	227	144	179

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
2. % Male		36.7%	39.6%	51.4%	53.1%
3. % Female		63.3%	60.4%	48.6%	46.9%
4. % Caucasian		16.9%	14.5%	31.3%	26.3%
5. % Hispanic		61.6%	61.7%	52.8%	60.3%
6. % African American		11.9%	11.0%	9.0%	7.3%
7. % Asian		0.6%	1.3%	1.4%	0.0%
8. % Native American		9.0%	11.5%	5.6%	6.1%
9. % Economically Disadvantaged		1.1%	68.7%	46.5%	38.5%
10. % Title 1 TS		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
11. % Title 1 T		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12. %Title 1 S		0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
13. % K-3 Plus		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
14. % Disabled		2.8%	3.1%	5.6%	7.3%
15. % ELL		0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%

School Overview

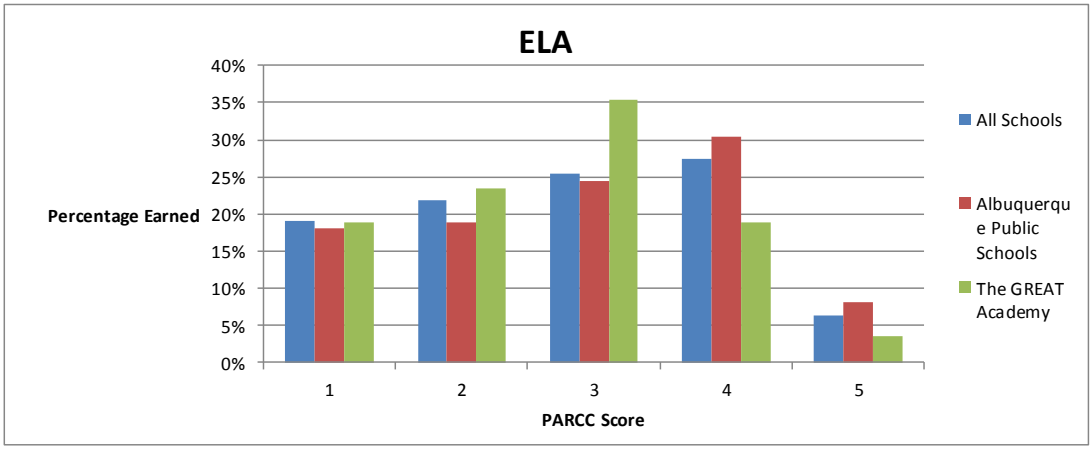
- **Charter History/ Academic Performance**

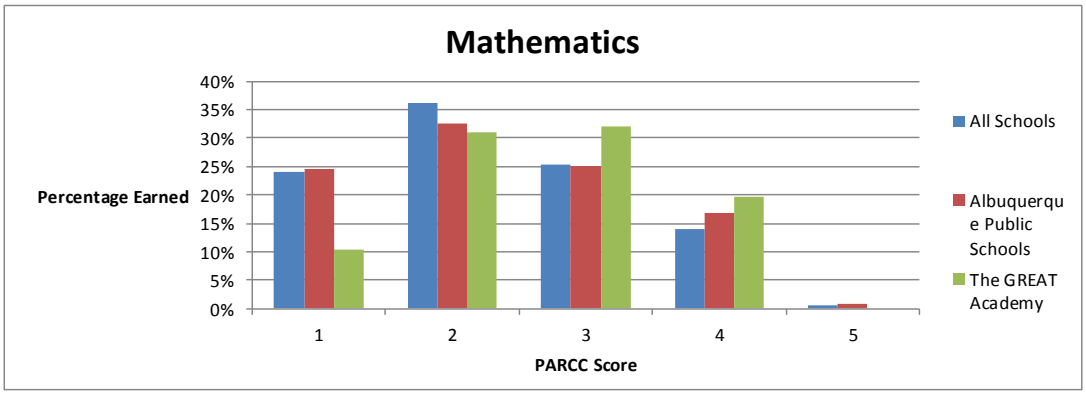
The GREAT Academy was approved and authorized by the PEC in 2010. The school has been in operation since 2011. This is their first renewal. The school has seen a drop in points earned in all areas of the report card from 2013 to 2014 with the exception of Q1 performance and Opportunity to Learn.

The school's 3 year average is a B. The school has maintained a C or above on the state report card with the exception of a significant fluctuation in the area of Current Standing.

School Report Data - The Great Academy Charter School			
	2012	**2013**	**2014**
3 Year Average	N/A	B 66.3	B 65.5
Final Grade	D 25.2	B 47.16	C 39.72
Current Standing	F 6.6	B 14.32	F 8.05
School Growth	N/A	B 7.89	C 6.39
Student Growth of Highest Performing Students	F 2.7	A 10	A 9.36
Student Growth of Lowest Performing Students	B 9.9	B 8.79	A 9.72
Opportunity to Learn	C 6	C 6.16	C 6.2

CSD compiled the following 2014/2015 PARCC data for all grades tested at The GREAT Academy in both Mathematics and English Language Arts. The tables below represent comparisons between the state at large, Albuquerque Public Schools and the school for the same tested grades. In FY14-15, The GREAT Academy had a higher percentage of students scoring in the non-proficient range for reading than did APS or the state at large, but had a higher percentage of students scoring in the proficient range for math than did APS or the state at large.





- **Site Visit Summary**

  A statement of progress was required for the Current Standing, Final Grade, and Student Growth of Highest Performing Students areas of the report card.

  The GREAT Academy administration states it believes the school is an exemplar school for the Edgenuity curriculum company due to their successful implementation of the program. Face-to-face instruction was not engaging ; classroom arrangement at group desks led to off topic discussions and fewer students engaged in these classes than in the computer labs.

  Parents interviewed spoke highly of the school. Both parents had two children at the school and one with an IEP. Both parents expressed satisfaction with the education the children receive at

the school. Parents felt the school's strengths included the small environment and the use of relevant technology.

The governing board is happy with the growth of the school and the education they offer students. Each board member stated the high level at which the budget and finances are monitored. There is less clarity regarding evaluations of the administrators and the board itself.

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 GREAT Academy did not show evidence of improving performance in all areas on the state report card in which it was required to report statements of progress. Current Standing points dropped from 14 in 2013 to 8 in 2014. Final Grade points increased from 25 in 2012 to 39.72 in 2014.

The GREAT Academy did provide a statement of progress, supported by artifacts that describes evidence of data the school systematically collects and utilizes to understand student performance in this area. The school uses reports from the web based Edgenuity program as a part of their blended learning model to understand student performance. CSD confirmed the reports.

The GREAT Academy did provide evidence of how the school systematically analyzes this data to understand the root causes of areas needing improvement in relation to student performance in this area. The school indicates the use of weekly student check ins using data from DEA short cycle assessments and the Edgenuity online learning program. Students are placed on an academic improvement plan when they fall behind and are continuously monitored in three week cycles until reaching their individual target goal. When students reach a target goal they are placed on a maintenance plan. The academic improvement plans also feed into the RTI and SAT processes the school uses. It is apparent that though not clearly articulated in the application, the school has an intervention process in place to support students who fall behind. CSD confirmed these academic improvement plans during the renewal site visit.

The GREAT Academy did provide evidence of systematic actions the school takes to respond to the data. See previous response.

The GREAT Academy did not provide evidence of improving performance in this area as demonstrated by internal school data in the most recent year. CSD did not confirm the results of the interventions from a longitudinal perspective. The school will need to track this data to meet this area of the rubric.

Meets ☐	**Does Not Meet ☒**	**Falls Far Below ☐**	**Not Applicable ☐**

CSD Analysis – School Charter Goals For The Last 3 Years

The GREAT Academy has 5 goals listed as a part of the current charter with the PEC. CSD confirmed the school met 3 of those goals.

The GEAT Academy did not show evidence of improving performance in this indicator/goal.
The school indicates it will graduate 29/32 enrolled seniors as part of the 2015-16 cohort. This calculates to 93%, well above the state average. CSD cannot confirm this data until the end of the current school year. CSD confirmed the school did not meet the AYP equivalent goal as PARCC data indicates the school Scored lower than Albuquerque Public School and the state at large for the same grades tested in English language arts.

The GREAT Academy did not show evidence of data the school systematically collects and utilizes to understand student performance in this area supported by artifacts. The school indicated in response to CSD's preliminary analysis that students retake classes which are failed and count toward graduation. In order the meet requirements in this area of the rubric the school would need data to support timely completion of retaken courses to indicate students are on track to graduate with their cohort. CSD did not confirm this data.

The GREAT Academy did not show evidence of how the school systematically analyzes this data to understand the root causes of areas needing improvement in relation to student performance in this area. See CSD comments above.

The GREAT Academy did not show evidence of systematic actions the school takes to respond to the data.			
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.			
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. The GREAT Academy began with 12 audits in its planning year and reduced that number to 1 for the 2012-13 FY. The most recent finding was a non-compliance finding related to contract signatures. The school indicates this was rectified in the following term.			
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

For the 2014-2015 monitoring site visit, The GREAT Academy was rated as meeting all material terms of their current charter; however based on observations during the renewal site visit CSD would like further confirmation regarding services provided to both Special Education and ELL students.

The school responded to questions regarding Special Education and ELL services in the following manner: The GREAT Academy (TGA) has a number of documents that verify that its students are receiving services. The first is an Annual Determination letter from the Secretary of Education Skandera dated October 2, 2015 for the 2014-2015 school year that indicated that the school was assigned an annual determination of Meets Requirements in all Local Education Agency (LEA) Determination areas. The next document is the Annual Determination letter from the 2013-2014 school year that indicated Needs Improvement in the area of Indicator 13. The school participated in the necessary interventions and as noted in the letter for the following year, improved and met in all areas. In addition, for the 2012 and 2013 school years, TGA has received a rating of *Meets* for the Special Education Bureau's Maintenance of Effort requirements. (These documents can be submitted upon request.)
Along with ensuring that all Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are current, TGA special education teacher uses a case management process called SEAMS (Special Education Accountability & Management system), which is a level 3 Response to Instruction (RtI) system used by the Special Education Teacher to monitor all special education students. Regular Education Teachers receive IEP Information Sheets, which includes the student's goals ad objectives, modifications and accommodations. Teachers use these in their planning to ensure that all needs are being met in TGA's inclusive setting. Before school starts and throughout the year, teachers are trained on topics specific to meeting the needs of special education students and general best practices in the inclusive classroom. The following are a list of the related training topics and dates:

- Special Education – Inclusive Setting – August 11, 2011
- Special Education – Strategies for Supporting Students - August 3, 2012
- Special Education Students and Edgenuity – August 6, 2012
- Special Education – Strategies for Supporting Students – August 7, 2013
- Special Education – Strategies for Supporting Students – August 8, 2014
- The Use of Consensograms/Response Structures – January 9, 2015
- Special Education – Strategies for Supporting Students – July 27, 2015
- Providing Support in Edgenuity – July 20, 2015
- Autism Spectrum Disorder Training – September 18, 2015

In addition, special education and general education students have access to a smaller lab (the intervention lab) where they are able to go for an even smaller classroom environment to get small group or one-on-one assistance/accommodations.
The GREAT Academy hired Mr. Kristoffer Smith (license #293844) for the 2015-2016 school year. On September 24, 2015, TGA received a resignation letter stating, "my wife and 3 children with special needs were in a near fatal auto collision on their way to school. The effects have been long lasting and she is still recovering, we have recently been confronted with the fact that she has not made the progress as anticipated." Later in the letter, he states, "I need to resign from my position immediately." (This letter can be provided upon request.)
At that time, The GREAT Academy advertised for a special education teacher to replace Mr. Smith. We received one resume. The candidate was interviewed on Monday, October 26th and offered the

position. She stated needing some time to consider the offer and responded by email on November 3rd stating that she felt that, "by leaving in December, I do not feel I would have done my duty as a teacher to these students." She declined the position, but asked to be considered if the position was still open at the beginning of next school year.
Currently, Mr. Matthews serves as a part time, contracted, special education teacher until the school can hire a special education teacher.
All students that indicate that they speak a language other than English on the Home Language Survey (taken at the time of enrollment) are assessed with the WAP-T. If their score indicates they are an ELL student, they receive the appropriate services. Edgenuity is the curriculum used for all core courses. In other words, the direct instruction is provided by the Edgenuity curriculum, which uses the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) as a methodology for addressing the needs of English Language Learners (Edgenuity Issue Brief on Supporting English Language Learners can be submitted upon request). Teachers are trained each year on specific strategies to use with both Special Education and English Language Learners when facilitating the Edgenuity courses. Teachers are also trained on SIOP and best practices for both core and face-to-face courses. These trainings are provided by both Keisha Matthews (TESOL certified) and through a contract (beginning in the 2015-2016 school year) with American Teachers Academy. Dr. Gregg, the Director of Academic Programs provides TGA with trainings and classroom coaching and modeling of strategies for English Language Learners and strategies for students eligible for special education. Her licenses include Level 3 general education, special education, administration, TESOL, and TEFL.

- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to Support ELLs – K. Matthews - August 6, 2015
- SIOP Strategies to Support ELLs – American Teachers Academy – January 8, 2016

In the 2014-2015 school year, the ACCESS for ELLs was administered to one student. This school year, the 9 students that qualify as ELL will take the test in the spring. The WAP-T and ACCESS for ELLs tests are administered by Keisha Matthews.
CSD has requested the indicated documentation for its records.

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. CSD verified compliance during the 2014-15 annual site visit.			
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 verified compliance during the 2014-15 annual site visit.			
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 verified compliance during the 2014-15 annual site visit.			
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 verified compliance during the 2014-15 annual site visit.

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

Part C. Looking Forward

CSD Analysis – Proposed Charter Goals
The GREAT Academy presented two proposed goals in their renewal application. Both goals relate to career and college readiness and are directly related to their mission of active transition. Each of the goals is written in SMART format and includes the appropriate measures for Exceeds through Fall Far Below. The second goal as presented in the application is unclear with relation to the measurement of the Accuplacer test. It is unclear if the goal includes the student earning the stated scores on all areas of the test or for students to hit just one of the area target scores. CSD is also concerned that the goals included in the application are solely for upper classman. There is no achievement goal presented for the students in lower grades.

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