

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION

2012 INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS, APPLICATION, AND EVALUATION RUBRIC



PART A. –INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The New Mexico Charter Schools Act makes the following policy statement:

The Charter Schools Act ... is enacted to enable individual schools to structure their educational curriculum to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods that are based on reliable research and effective practices or have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics; to allow the development of different and innovative forms of measuring student learning and achievement; to address the needs of all students, including those determined to be at risk; to create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site; to improve student achievement; to provide parents and students with an educational alternative to create new, innovative and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system; to encourage parental and community involvement in the public school system; to develop and use site-based budgeting; and to hold charter schools accountable for meeting the department's educational standards and fiscal requirements.

NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-1, et seq. Consequently, starting a new charter school in New Mexico requires proposals from applicants who are committed to and have the capacity to achieve strong educational outcomes. Through charter schools, the New Mexico Public Education Department ("NMPED") seeks to provide families with effective, quality educational opportunities. This mission is embedded in the New Mexico Charter Schools Act regardless of whether you seek authority to operate a charter school from a local district or from the New Mexico Public Education Commission ("Commission").

Completing this application requires dedication to an ambitious project, but most importantly, to the students who will attend the proposed charter school.

The 2012 Application Packet ("Packet") contains three parts; the Introduction and Instructions ("A"), the Application ("B") and an Evaluation Rubric ("C"). The Packet differs substantially from prior years' applications in format and expectations. Please be sure that you use the most current form. The Packet is intended to guide the applicant through the steps of developing a charter school proposal.

The new Packet is a result of the recently implemented "SB446"¹ that requires charter schools' performance to be measured according to a framework of specific criteria. New Mexico authorizers are expected to follow this framework when deciding whether or not to approve a charter school application, including charter renewals.

The Introduction and Instructions for completing the Application provides information to the applicant about the expectations of the authorizer, timelines, contact information, a glossary of terms and other logistical information. Although you are not scored based on this section, the overall ability to create a sound and easily understandable application depends in large part on following the instructions in this guide.

The Application is presented through a series of requests for information that should be responded to as completely as the applicant deems appropriate. It is important not to compartmentalize your responses, but rather to use the prompts to assist in presenting a comprehensive educational plan for a public charter school. The evaluators will be looking for a consistent message of substance that presents evidence of a thorough and thoughtful plan that is deserving of entrustment of public funds and children's futures. Your mission and vision must be evident

¹ SB446 – is codified in the Charter Schools Act primarily in NMSA 1978 Sections § 22-8B-8 through 9.1.

throughout the Application; including all programs and your proposed budget and resource allocations. Note: simply following the prompts, does not guarantee approval by your selected authorizer.

The Charter Application Evaluation Rubric ("Evaluation Rubric") Part "C", is the third document provided to applicants. Although you are not required to complete the Evaluation Rubric, you are strongly encouraged to use the document as guidance for understanding the authorizer's expectations and the objective benchmarks that will be applied when assessing whether to approve your Application. NOTE: This year's Application will be evaluated and scored using the Evaluation Rubric. This score will form the basis for the Charter Schools Division's ("CSD") recommendations about your Application. The CSD will announce the scoring process after March 31, 2012.

Experience has shown that successful charter schools tend to have a number of common characteristics:

- A clear, focused, results-oriented vision and mission statement that aligns all parts of the proposal;
- Demonstrated understanding of the population that the school is likely to serve;
- An educational program that is likely to be effective for the targeted population;
- Strong and diverse leadership and governance; and,
- Strong financial planning and management.

Authorizers want thoughtful, well-developed applications from capable school developers who are committed to bridging the educational disadvantages of New Mexico's students and families.

Please note that as of July 1, 2012, the applicant and the authorizer shall enter into a contract with the governing body of the applicant school within 30 calendar days from the date the charter is approved. The charter contract is the final authorization for the school to commence planning and implementation activities and together with the application shall be the agreement between the school and the authorizer. Unlike in years past, it is the final execution of the contract, not a vote by the authorizing body to approve the application, which will result in authorization for your proposed school to exist. NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-9 (2011).

A Model Charter School Contract will be available for your review prior to final submission of your application and to begin the process of negotiating the terms of that agreement in expectation of final action by the authorizer. You are not required to complete any portion of the Model Charter School Contract as part of the Application.

INSTRUCTIONS

(The following dates are for applicants who intend to submit an application to the Commission. However, the deadline for submitting all applications is July 2, 2012, unless the applicant receives an extension from the authorizer to whom the application will be submitted.)

Form & Point of Contact	All submissions should be prepared utilizing the <u>2012 NMPED/CSD Application "Application"</u> . The application and all appendices must be complete when submitted. Any questions regarding the application and the review process must be directed to Kelly Callahan, Review Coordinator, or her designee at Kelly.Callahan2@state.nm.us or (505) 827-6532. During this process, applicants are asked to first consult with Ms. Callahan about contacting other CSD or NMPED staff members for assistance and information.
Notice	Be sure that CSD has the most current e-mail address and phone number for you at all times. Due to the limited number of CSD staff and heavy work load, the CSD will NOT send any notices or other information by hard copy unless required to do so by

	law.
Deadlines	<p>Charter Applications may be submitted between June 1, 2012 and July 2, 2012. The deadline for receipt of all materials by the NMPED/CSD, however, is <u>Monday, July 2, 2012, by no later than close of business (5:00 p.m. Mountain Time)</u>. Applications will also be considered timely if they are postmarked four (4) calendar days prior to July 2, 2012 regardless of the date on which they are received. Faxed copies are not accepted.</p> <p>Note: Submission prior to July 2, 2012 will not commence the deadlines for review. The start of the 60-day deadline for Authorizer review will not begin until July 3, 2012.</p>
Manner of Submission	<p><u>Hard Copy/Hand Delivery:</u> Applications will be date stamped by Charter Schools Division staff on the day/time of receipt. If you submit a hard copy of your application, you must also submit a copy of the application on a CDROM or flash drive. <u>The electronic version of your documents must be submitted in pdf format. Please be sure that the page numbers of the pdf document are consistent with the hard-copy page numbers.</u> Submit Hard Copy or Hand -Delivered Applications to the Charter Schools Division, New Mexico Public Education Department, 300 Don Gaspar Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87501 (505-827-6909).</p> <p><u>Electronic Copy/By Email:</u> Applications may be emailed to Kelly.Callahan2@state.nm.us by no later than close of business on the date stated above. <u>All electronically submitted documents must be submitted in pdf format. Please be sure to convert your document and then save it, before attaching it to an email.</u> You are strongly encouraged to create a receipt when sending your email document.</p> <p>CSD is not responsible for advising you on how to properly convert your documents.</p>
Technical Assistance Workshops (Dates to be determined. Notices will be sent by email.)	<p>Two (2) Technical Assistance Workshops will be provided by the CSD. Information provided will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Instructions, Application, and Evaluation Rubric • Relevant materials and supports that may be of use in developing and completing the charter school application process • Charter Performance Contract and Framework; Authorizer expectations • Budget requirements and Federal Grant information* <p>The NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT/CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION: 2012 INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS, APPLICATION, AND EVALUATION RUBRIC will available online at: http://www.ped.state.nm.us/ ; go to A-Z, Charter Schools, Application.</p> <p>In addition, the New Mexico Coalition for Charter Schools will provide instruction in developing a quality charter school application. Trainings will be announced by email as soon as they are available.</p>
Review Period (July 1-August 31)	A review team will be convened to read and analyze the applications.
Capacity Interviews	The Capacity Interview will be held prior to the Commission's Community Input

(July 23-July 31)**	Hearings, which are held in the geographic location of the community the prospective school intends to serve. <u>The Capacity Interview is a critical process and the founders' key spokesperson must be available.</u> This interview will be designed to demonstrate the founding group's capacity to implement the school as planned in the Application.
Public Hearing to Obtain Community Input (August 20-August 24)**	As provided by the New Mexico Charter Schools Act, the Public Education Commission will hold Community Input Hearings to allow the local community, including the local school district, the opportunity to provide comments on the application. In addition, the Commission will use this opportunity to obtain information from the applicants that will inform the members prior to taking an actual vote.
CSD Recommendation (August 31)	The Charter Schools Division will send its recommendations to the Commission and the applicant by close of business on August 31, 2012. The recommendation will be sent by email. This recommendation will be made to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the Application.
Commission Decision Making Meeting (September 12-September 13)	The Commission will hold a public decision-making meeting to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the Applications. At this meeting, the applicants will have an additional opportunity, prior to the decision, to address the Commission and to answer questions from the Commission members.*
Contract Negotiation Period (September 14 – October 15)	Charter negotiation period and final authorization by the Public Education Commission.
Final Authorization Meeting of Commission (Date to be determined)	Meeting of Commission to vote on the charter contract.

*At the time of publishing this application, the CSD has not been awarded a United States Department of Education Charter Schools Grant ("federal stimulus grant"). The grant will not be announced until February 24, 2012 and until then, the CSD will have no information about the due date of the grant, eligible amounts, and the award announcement dates. In short, there is no guarantee that there will be federal or state stimulus monies available for start-up charter schools in New Mexico in 2012.

**These dates are subject to change based on conflicts beyond the control of CSD and the Commission; the number of charter applications submitted to the Commission for consideration may influence these dates as well.

+The Commission will request that every applicant agree to an extension of the 60-day statutory deadline for the final decision on the charter applications due to time constraints experienced in meeting this deadline in the past. This extension is requested to ensure that every application is given full consideration before a vote by the Commission.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE APPLICATION

Mission: The mission of the school states the purpose of the school and the goal of the school, and clearly translates into measurable and achievable goals, the selected curriculum, operations and all aspects of the school.

Vision: The vision is what the school hopes to look like in the future.

Goals: The stated goals must be specific, focused and detailed, measurable (based on identified indicators and expected performance levels that can be measured by a reliable instrument). In addition, the goals should be ambitious, but attainable, as well as aligned to the school's mission and vision. All goals must reference a time frame by which achievement can be accomplished.

Curriculum in Charter Schools: The content of a charter school curriculum must ultimately align with the New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks and Performance Standards; however, charter schools may develop alternative and innovative ways of structuring and delivering their educational curriculum to meet the NM Standards. The choice of an alternative curricular approach requires that a scope and sequence be included in the Charter School application to demonstrate what will be taught at what grade levels, grade spans, age levels, or the sequence based on the alternative curriculum format. Examples of alternative curricular approaches include, but are not limited to: Expeditionary Learning; Montessori; International Baccalaureate; project-based; STEM; Waldorf; and computer-based curriculum. The curriculum should clearly align with the mission and vision.

Scope and Sequence: A scope and sequence should include the following components:

- Grade levels, grade spans, age spans and/or other sequence;
- The knowledge, content areas and/or organizing themes within the grades levels, grade spans, age spans and/or other sequence.

New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards: The State of New Mexico has established the Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards to be used by all public schools, including charter schools, and state supported educational institutions to develop, deliver, and assess curriculum. The NM Standards may be accessed at <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/nmStandards.html>.

NM Standards: Refers to New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards.

Alignment of Curriculum: The curriculum of all public schools must be aligned with the New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks and Performance Standards. An alignment document — by subject and grade level — lists each of the performance standards, cross-referenced with the instructional materials, and a timeline for when they are addressed.

Instructional Hours: Hours in which regular students are in school-directed instructional programs, exclusive of lunch.

Assessment: A valid and reliable method(s), tool(s) or system(s) to evaluate and demonstrate progress toward – or mastery of – the academic and non-academic performance goals stated in the application.

Corrective Action: Corrective action, for purposes of this application, refers to adjustments a school will make if it falls short of achieving student academic achievements expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk students AND school-wide levels.)

Remediation for students not achieving standards: Remediation, for purposes of this application, refers to a process, procedure, plan or a variety of instructional support opportunities to assist individual students who are not achieving proficiency in the NM standards or other student performance expectations.

Special Populations: Special populations may include students who have been identified with special needs that require an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 plan, English Language Learners (ELL) Instruction, or who require access to ancillary services including, but not limited to, health, speech/language services, social work services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.

Partnership: A partner organization is essential to the existence of the charter school and without which the school's mission and vision cannot be accomplished. A "partnership" contemplates a formal relationship, rather than an informal or tangential agreement to provide ancillary support to particular school programs. A partner organization will be an entity that is committing funds and/or other resources to support the school's operation and long term existence. If the school's plan contemplates reliance on a partner, the applicant should provide evidence (draft contract, memorandum of understanding or other document that evidences the commitment) that the proposed partner is willing to commit to that relationship on the condition the charter school is approved. A partner is not a major curriculum provider or other vendor who may be key, but replaceable through a substitute entity.

Policy: A policy, for purposes of this application, is a guiding statement that reflects the principles, rules, and/or guidelines to be adopted by the school's governing body once the charter contract is formally executed.

Procedure: A procedure, for purposes of this application, is a statement of the specific methods to be used or course of action that will be taken to implement a policy in the day-to-day operation of the school.

PART B: CHARTER APPLICATION

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section should reflect the proposed school as identified in the Notice of Intent (NOI); however, it is expected that the statements in this Application may differ from the original NOI.

This section should be two to three pages long and address in a narrative form the following points:

The proposed school's name and a description of the targeted student population including key demographic data (academic performance, home languages, ELL and special education populations) and targeted geographical area of the proposed school.

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.

Evidence that there is a community need for a school of this nature in the location proposed. Note: NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-6(L)(5) provides, “[a] chartering authority may approve, approve with conditions or deny an application. A chartering authority may deny an application if... the application is otherwise contrary to the best interests of the charter school’s projected students, the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the charter school applies to operate.” Evidence of community need is required. Specific data and evidence is required in Section V., therefore, specific statistical information does not need to be provided here.

The key innovative, unique and/or programmatic features the school will implement to accomplish its vision and mission (non-traditional school year, longer school day, partner organizations, etc.)

How you project that the school will be more effective than the schools currently serving the targeted student population, and/or the founder(s)’ plans to improve student achievement and exceed the academic performance of these existing public schools in the targeted service area, and provide a brief summary of any data you have to support this assumption.

TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM, CLICK ON THE RED PROMPT AND BEGIN TO TYPE.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Academic Opportunities Academy - Las Cruces is committed to continuous improvement of our educational model to obtain outstanding educational success for all our students. We seek to be the world wide leader in excellent education that never stops improving. We seek all like minded partnerships with government agencies, businesses, communities, parents, students, volunteers, individuals, non-profits, and our staff to find the creative, effective, real world solutions to our worlds educational problems.

During the first 4 years of serving New Mexico school aged students, Academic Opportunities Academy will open up to five Grade 1-12 campuses. Our schools will be located in the areas served by the Gadsden Independent Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, Alamogordo Public Schools, Deming Public Schools, and Carlsbad Municipal Schools. The students in the target area are 73% Hispanic, 25% ELL's, 32% live below the poverty line, and 79 out the 100 schools in this area are rated as SI-1, SI-2, CA, R-1 or R-2 levels of AYP. The students who will attend our schools currently attend schools in the three districts mentioned above, two charter schools in Las Cruces and one district charter school in Anthony. The parents of these students will choose our schools based on a desire to find a better education for their children.

In a March 2008 presentation, The State of K-12 Education in New Mexico, 2008, Dr. Veronica C. García stated that New Mexico was ranked 4th nationally for standards, assessments, and accountability, (Education Week, “Quality Counts 2007”) and was recognized in June 2007 by the US Dept. of Education for having high academic standards aligned to the NAEP. However, as evidenced in the previous question, 79% of the schools in our target area are not capable of meeting those standards.

A Public Education Survey conducted by Research & Polling, Inc. in 2009 indicated that 88% of the citizens were concerned about public education in the state and rejected plans to reduce funding to schools and teachers.

We are trying to create an educational model which is connected to the community, university programs, trade and adult education programs, industry, the media, local businesses, mentors, skilled artisans, musicians, tutors, teachers, students, and parents.

We are also building our curriculum around languages, science, math, technology, and computer sciences, engineering, health care, law, business, and entrepreneurship. Employment will be in these areas. We want our students to be prepared for better paying jobs than their peers attending other schools.

Our model is a self-paced, individualized, multi-grade educational program which offers all students choices to better fit their desires, strengths, learning styles, interests, and educational needs. Our model uses a very detailed curriculum mapping database that provides real time data to everyone involved in each child's education. This database has algorithms we designed to offer several instructional activity options to each student based on their current educational needs. This database provides real time reports with unique metrics we have developed to measure student success more effectively. Students, parents, teachers, tutors and administration have real time data on their performance. This data will be used to improve every aspect of our educational model. Teachers, tutors and administration will have real time data to know which students have immediate needs to address and what those needs are on a real time basis. Parents and guardians will also have access to their child's data on a real time basis. We are working on a "dash board of sorts" to present data in an easy to understand format for our parents and students.

Our instructional design is an application of "Tiered Instruction" that allows students to choose learning activities from a list of possibilities using the concept of "Mastery Teaching" for assessment that moves kids along at an appropriate pace while guaranteeing that they really learn the content and skills of the state standards. Everything is tied together by mapping their progress to specific standards using a curriculum mapping database.

In order to meet the needs of students with a wide variety of educational needs, Academic Opportunities Academy will employ an instructional system characterized by clear learning prescriptions written for each student, student choice, self-paced mastery learning with tutoring, and engaging and creative activities. All of the elements of the curriculum will be derived directly from the TEKS and the CCRS, whose content and organization will form the outline for the development of specific lessons. Our instruction is designed to be an integrated program defined by the following elements:

- A. Two-way Immersion Dual Language Instruction
- B. Tiered Instruction Based on UDL Principles
- C. Cutting Edge Technology Usage
- D. Cross Curricular Integration
- E. Practical, Experimental and Career oriented experiences

By using benchmark exams and continual assessment of student progress we will be able to regularly diagnose educational gaps throughout the school year and provide appropriate learning activities and tutoring to ensure that 100% of the students achieve the highest level of proficiency on the state exams. We will have several teams of members from our learning community working on our continuous improvement program to be the world's best educational model. Our teams that include parents and students will have a ratio of one staff member to seven or more parents or students to insure they know they have a voice that is welcomed and valued. Teams will work on every aspect of our educational model. We will study and consider all aspects to learning, many of which are often overlooked, such as

the best architecture, smells, background sounds, furniture, etc... . Our teams will develop and continuously improve all routines, procedures, policies, dress codes, discipline plans, etc.

II. EDUCATION PLAN

This section should not exceed 35 pages.

A. School size. State the projected enrollment, grade levels to be served and student/teacher ratio.

Academic Year	Number of Students	Grade Levels	Student/Teacher Ratio
Year 1	300	1-12	30/1
Year 2	300	1-12	30/1
Year 3	300	1-12	30/1
Year 4	300	1-12	30/1
Year 5	300	1-12	30/1
At Capacity (Enrollment Cap)	400	1-12	30/1

B. Vision. State the vision for the proposed school.

II B. VISION

Academic Opportunities Academy plans to create a small-school, non-regimented, multi-grade educational experience for students that employs a dual-language curriculum, integrates technology in all levels of instruction, meets the educational needs of all classes of students and prepares our graduates for college and the work place.

C. Mission. State the mission of the proposed school.

II C. MISSION

Academic Opportunities Academy will serve all students, even those who have not been successful or have been significantly challenged in a traditional public or private school settings. This includes students from low-income families, students from Spanish speaking homes, recent immigrants, children in the foster care system, children residing in homeless shelters and children with disabilities. We will take these students from where they are and lead them through the educational experiences necessary to complete each school year at the appropriate achievement level and then graduate from high school ready for post-secondary educations and the modern job market. Our school will lead all New Mexico schools in the recognized measures of quality and efficiency by providing exceptionally dedicated, motivated and relentless service through continuous incremental improvement of the educational program and the administrative backbone of the organization. Integrity, teamwork, and innovation will result in success for all our students.

D. Student Performance Goals. State the student performance goals that specifically relate to the mission of the school. Goals must be specific, measurable (based on identified indicators and expected performance levels that can be measured by a reliable instrument). In addition, the goals should be ambitious, but attainable, as well as aligned to the school's mission. All goals must reference a time frame by which achievement can be accomplished.

Student performance goals that address the following are required:

- (1) student academic performance;
- (2) student academic growth;
- (3) achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between student subgroups;
- (4) attendance;

- (5) recurrent enrollment;
- (6) high school-college readiness (if appropriate);
- (7) graduation rate (if appropriate); and,
- (8) growth of the lowest scoring twenty-fifth percentile of students in the public school in reading and mathematics.

II D.(1) STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Student academic performance, as measured by the SBA, will be based on the cut scores for four categories of student performance. Depending on the performance mix of our students at the beginning of any school year, our performance goals will be broken down into the following two-year improvement cycle. Under this set of goals, all students who have been in our school for two full years will be performing at no less than the lower cut score for Proficient.

Individual Student SBA Goals Based Previous Performance on the SBA

Previous Year's Performance	Year 1 Performance	Year 2 Performance
Beginning Step	Upper half of Nearing Proficiency	Lower half of Proficient
Lower half of Nearing Proficiency	Upper half of Nearing Proficiency	Lower half of Proficient
Upper half of Nearing Proficiency	Lower half of Proficient	Upper half of Proficient
Lower half of Proficient	Upper half of Proficient	Advanced Cut
Upper half of Proficient	Advanced Cut	Advanced Cut
Advanced Cut	Advanced Cut	Advanced Cut

Note: The exact cut scores are included in a NMPED document in the Appendices.

Assuming a 90% year-to-year re-enrollment rate and a normal distribution of newly enrolling students in the six categories above, the passing rate for the SBA at the end of year 2 should be 96% and continue at this level or higher for all subsequent years.

II D.(2) STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH

Our ongoing assessment model will begin with an initial diagnostic assessment that will determine the actual performance level of each student along with apparent gaps in his/her skills and knowledge. Then a learning prescription will be generated for each student based on these diagnostics and an ambitious growth model. Then we will retest throughout the year, in small doses, using a combination of campus developed assessments, DIBELS and the MAP, in order to continually measure the rate of student growth.

Lexile and grade level reading scores, as measured by DIBELS in the lower grades and the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test for all grade levels, will be used to set individualized reading goals for each student. These goals will be related to both the grade-level reading measurement and to the Lexile scoring system.

Lexile Goals will be set based on initial testing at the beginning of the year or the date when a student transfers in from another school.

Grade	Typical Beginning of the Year Range	Typical End of the Year Range	Minimum Expected Growth per Student
1	0L to 300L	150L to 500L	+150L
2	140L to 500L	350L to 700L	+210L
3	330L to 700L	455L to 810L	+125L
4	445L to 810L	575L to 910L	+130L
5	565L to 910L	675L to 1000L	+110L
6	665L to 1000L	745L to 1065L	+80L

7	735L to 1065L	815L to 110L	+80L
8	805L to 110L	865L to 1165L	+60L
9	855L to 1165L	915L to 1195L	+60L
10	905L to 1195L	965L to 1210L	+60L
11	945L to 1210L	1005L to 1260L	+60L
12	995L to 1260L	1055L to 1295L	+60L

The Gates MacGinitie Reading Test also provides a grade equivalent scale for each student. The goals for grade level reading skills will be based on the discrepancy between the measured level and the actual grade level of the student. The relevant function for this growth is $y = 2.4(1.1^x)$, where x is the initial discrepancy and y is the expected annual growth.

Measured Discrepancy at Beginning of Year (x)	Expected Growth for the Year (y)
-5.0	+1.4
-4.0	+1.6
-3.0	+1.8
-2.5	+1.9
-2.0	+2.0
-1.5	+2.1
-1.0	+2.2
-0.5	+2.3
0	+2.4
+0.5	+2.5
+1.0	+2.6
+2.0	+2.9
+3.0	+3.1

The Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) measures student progress using an RIT score that usually ranges from 100 to 300. The same range applies to all grade levels and indicates, within that range, the level at which a student is performing. Cut scores have been developed that predict performance on the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment. This assessment will be used as part of the on-going assessment program.

The MAP cut scores are set up to indicate four categories of performance: Beginning Step, Nearing Proficiency, Proficient, and Advanced (the same categories used in the SBS). At the beginning of the year each student will be assessed to determine their RIT scores in reading, mathematics and science. Other subject areas are not currently available for the MAP. The tables below show the goal in RIT score improvement for a student who begins the year in the Beginning Step which ranges from 155 at Grade 2 to 200 at Grade 11. This improvement should bring these students up to the proficient level on the MAP, providing a 53% to 60% probability that they will master the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment.

Reading

Score Gains	9th Week	18th Week	27th Week	End of Year
Grade 2	+4	+8	+12	+16
Grade 3	+6	+12	+18	+24
Grade 4	+7	+14	+21	+28
Grade 5	+8	+16	+24	+32
Grade 6	+8	+16	+24	+32
Grade 7	+9	+18	+27	+36
Grade 8	+8	+16	+24	+32
Grade 9	+5	+10	+15	+20

Grade 10	+7	+14	+21	+28
Grade 11	+7	+14	+21	+28

Mathematics

Score Gains	9th Week	18th Week	27th Week	End of Year
Grade 2	+6	+12	+18	+24
Grade 3	+7	+14	+21	+28
Grade 4	+8	+16	+24	+32
Grade 5	+7	+14	+21	+28
Grade 6	+7	+14	+21	+28
Grade 7	+7	+14	+21	+28
Grade 8	+8	+16	+24	+32
Grade 9	+10	+20	+30	+40
Grade 10	+8	+16	+24	+32
Grade 11	+8	+16	+24	+32

Students who begin the year at higher levels (Nearing Proficiency, Proficient, and Advanced) will be expected to show similar levels of growth. If such growth is attained, students who started out the year in the Nearing Proficiency range will have a 60% to 80% probability of mastering the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment. Students who started out the year in the Proficient range will have a 80% to 99% probability and students who started out the year in the Advanced range will have a 99% to 100% probability.

II D.(3) ACHIEVEMENT GAPS IN BOTH PROFICIENCY AND GROWTH BETWEEN STUDENT SUBGROUPS

Achievement Gaps will be addressed through a diagnostic testing, learning prescription and targeted instruction cycle. The diagnostic testing (the MAP and other assessments) will identify all standards, including those from previous grade levels, that a student needs to master during the current school year.

A learning prescription is then developed based on this diagnostic testing and adjusted based on progress made during the school year. The learning prescription is used to create lists of appropriate learning activities that a student is assigned or allowed to choose from. As students master the standards on the learning prescriptions they will be moved up to the next step in the process and provided with more choices of learning activities at the higher level. This process is designed to identify and fill in the gaps in a student's learning.

The learning prescription for a student will spell out all of the lessons that a student needs to participate in as they are related to the specific statements in the New Mexico Content Standards, the school's additional instructional objectives, the College Board Standards for College Success, the ACT's College Readiness Standards and the Performance Continua for the Equipped for the Future Work Readiness Profile Skills developed by the National Work Readiness Council. Since there are numerous overlapping goals and objectives in these lists of standards, we will create a functional alignment of these knowledge and skills statements and create learning activities for all of them.

A critical emphasis of this process will be on all the objectives tested on the NMSBA to be taken by the student towards the end of each school year. These skills will be prioritized and re-taught at length in cross-curricular learning activities throughout the school year.

It is expected that some students will demonstrate advanced levels of achievement and some may demonstrate both gaps and advanced levels of achievement, depending on the subject matter. Once a diagnosis is made for each student, he or she will be placed at the appropriate level within the continuum of lessons for each of the five core subject areas. Those showing severe gaps will be provided with a series of accelerated activities designed to bring them up to grade level by the end of the first school year. Those showing previous mastery of subject matter related to their current grade level will

be accelerated towards higher level lessons. If significant problems seem to indicate a previously unidentified need for special education services, a full diagnostic process will take place immediately.

II D.(4) ATTENDANCE;

Our attendance goal is 99.5% attendance rate across the board for every grade level. Previous experience has shown that this is attainable through a “tough-love” policy with very strict policies and the hiring of adequate personnel for follow-up and communication. Under this policy all absences due to illness are verified three times using phone calls, written notes and home visits. Too many students and their parents, especially those in the upper grades, claim to be ill at times when no illness actually exists. By calling back, talking to the parents and visiting in their homes we will encourage these students to show up every day and not use illness as an excuse to sleep in when they just don’t feel like coming to school.

A charter school is significantly different from a local public school because parents choose to register their kids there. Our parents will be thoroughly informed about the attendance policies, during preregistration conferences, and will be asked to sign an attendance contract guaranteeing 100% attendance. They will be told that unexcused absences will lead to being asked to remove their children from the charter school and returning them to the public schools.

On the other side of the equation, our staff will do everything in our power to assist families with the typical problems that cause absenteeism, such as the need for infant care, transportation issues, and long-term serious illnesses. These and many other such problems are all resolvable given the will to find and implement the solutions.

II D.(5) RECURRENT ENROLLMENT;

Recurrent enrollment is to be defined as the percentage of students who still reside in the same geographical area that enrolled with Academic Opportunities Academy for two consecutive academic school years.

Year 1	90%
Year 2	92.5%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	97.5%
Year 5	99.5%

II D.(6) HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE READINESS (IF APPROPRIATE)

As mentioned earlier, we will use both the College Board Standards for College Success and the ACT’s College Readiness Standards when we develop learning activities for the students. Our functional alignment of these knowledge and skills statements with the other sets of standards mentioned above will be used to track the level of mastery being demonstrated by our students for these two sets of standards. Our curriculum mapping database will provide regular reports on students’ progress towards mastery of these standards.

100% of our graduating 8th graders will be ready for high school beginning in year 1 and beyond. This is an important issue in regards to college readiness, since unprepared high school students have a lower chance of catching up and being ready for college.

College Readiness is defined by the percentage of our high school seniors who are academically prepared to enter any community college, college, or university without the need to take any remedial coursework or be under any academic probation. Our goals are:

Year 1	75%
Year 2	90%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	97.5%
Year 5	99.5%

II D.(7) GRADUATION RATE (IF APPROPRIATE);

The New Mexico four year graduation rate for all students in the 2011 cohort was only 63%.

Our graduation rate goals are based upon the structure and implementation of our program, which allows students to demonstrate mastery of their learning goals at a faster pace, if they are capable of doing so. The initial results of diagnostic testing and the number of years they study at our school will affect the graduation rate, as well. Students with disabilities who have been placed in the Special Education program are not included in these goals. For this group the goal is to graduate them according to the terms of the IEP.

Student Group	Rate at 13 Years of K-12 Schooling (Age 17-18)	Rate at 12 Years of K-12 Schooling (Age 16-17)	Rate at 11 Years of K-12 Schooling (Age 15-16)
Students who enter our school on grade level (± 1.0 yrs) with no less than 4 years in our school	95%	10%	5%
Students who enter our school on grade level (± 1.0 yrs) with no less than 2 years in our school	90%	5%	0%
Students who enter our school below grade level (-3.0 to -1.1 yrs) with no less than 4 years in our school	90%	5%	0%
Students who enter our school below grade level (-3.0 to -1.1 yrs) with no less than 2 years in our school	85%	0%	0%
Students who enter our school below grade level (-3.0 to -1.1 yrs) with less than 2 years in our school	80%	0%	0%
Students who enter our school above grade level ($+1.1$ or more yrs) with no less than 4 years in our school	100%	50%	25%
Students who enter our school above grade level ($+1.1$ or more yrs) with no less than 2 years in our school	100%	40%	5%

NOTE: The students in the second and third columns are included in the first column.

II D.(8) ACHIEVEMENT GROWTH OF LOWEST SCORING 25%.

The lowest 25% of students in New Mexico schools is not a group that is representative of the entire student population. The largest two overlapping groups, Hispanics (29,602 students) and Economically Disadvantaged (38,112 students) account for almost all of the lowest 25% of all students (69% and 89% respectively). This fact provides relevant data for intervention planning. Based on the NMSBA Scaled Score Report for the 2010 – 2011 school year the following percentages of each population mentioned below fall within the lowest 25% of all students tested state-wide.

Group	Language Arts	Math
Caucasian	14%	14%

African American	30%	33%
Hispanic	29%	29%
Asian American	14%	11%
American Indian	32%	34%
Students with Disabilities	38%	43%
English Language Learners	47%	43%
Economically Disadvantaged	32%	31%

The goals in II. D (1) and II. D (2), as seen above include the lowest 25% of the student population.

The section on Lexile growth has a minimum growth that is the target for this group of students.

This group will probably score at –3.0 to –5.0 years below grade level on the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test. The first year goal is to reduce this to a range of –1.2 to –3.6 years below grade level. The second year goal would be a range of +1.0 to –1.8. By the end of the third year even the lowest in this group should be reading at-or-above grade level.

The section on the MAP scores indicates a goal to move all student in the Beginning Step range of scores, which is correlated to the NMSBA scoring system, to at least the lower part of the Proficient range of scores within 2 years.

Our goals for NMSBA scores are identical to the MAP goals above.

In summary, our goal is to bring all of the Lowest 25% up to the proficient level within 2 full years of instruction or meet the goals of their Special Education IEP's if these are set at a lower level.

E. Organizational Goals. (Optional) State the school's organizational goals that specifically relate to the mission of the school. Goals must be specific, measurable (based on identified indicators and expected performance levels that can be measured by a reliable instrument). In addition, the goals should be ambitious, but attainable, as well as aligned to the school's mission. All goals must reference a time frame by which achievement can be accomplished.

II E. ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS (Optional)

No goals stated.

F. Curriculum.

II F.(1) Describe your school's philosophical framework or particular pedagogical approach that supports the school's mission and guides instructional and curricular decisions.

Philosophical Ideals:

Since no single traditional educational philosophy is adequate for the development of a comprehensive methodology that meets the needs of all students, we have learned from and are applying the ideas of the best thinkers in several traditions. The major schools of thought that have influenced our educational philosophy are:

Mastery Learning: Learning for mastery or mastery learning, are terms coined by Benjamin Bloom in 1968 and 1971 respectively. As refined by Block and Guskey mastery learning has little to do with specific content, but rather is a description of the process of mastering particular learning objectives.

The material that will be taught to mastery is broken down into small discrete lessons that follow a logical progression. In order to demonstrate mastery over each lesson, students must be able to overtly show evidence of understanding of the material before moving to the next lesson.

Constructivism: John Dewey and Maria Montessori are examples of this school of thought. Dewey emphasized an active intellectual learning environment and Montessori emphasized the freedom in such an environment that was prepared with materials designed for their self-directed learning activity. In both cases the learner is self-directed, creative, and innovative. Two quotes from Martin Dougiamas's website (see reference below) sum up the essence of Constructivism: "Knowledge is actively constructed by the learner, not passively received from the environment." "Coming to know is a process of dynamic adaptation towards viable interpretations of experience."

Progressive Education: the belief that education must be based on the principle that humans are social animals who learn best in real-life activities with other people. Jean Piaget and Jerome Bruner are examples of this school of thought. Piaget's four development stages are: a.) the Sensorimotor stage: from birth to age 2, b.) the Preoperational stage: from ages 2 to 7, c.) the Concrete operational stage: from ages 7 to 11, and d.) the Formal operational stage: from age 11-16 and onwards Bruner argued that any subject can be taught in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. This notion was an underpinning for his concept of the spiral curriculum which posited the idea that a curriculum should revisit basic ideas, building on them until the student had grasped the full formal concept. Some elements common in progressive education programs that we will use are: hands-on projects and experiential learning, integrated curriculum units or thematic units, problem solving and critical thinking, cooperative learning projects, community service and service learning projects, the use of varied learning resources, and an emphasis on life-long learning and social skills

Philosophical Applications:

Academic Opportunities Academy plans to apply a continuous improvement model to Grades 1-12 education, based on The Six Sigma business management strategy and the older Total Quality Management philosophy. This philosophy posits that any organization will grow more efficiently by employing a self-awareness model of regulation and administration, rather than a top-down method of control. Our intent is to teach our students to become life-long learners who are in control of their personal educational journeys and thus become more successful in school and later life. Our educational application of these philosophies will begin with diagnostic assessment and the development of a personalized learning prescription for each student. Lessons and learning activities will be assigned that directly address the goals included in the prescription, and mastery of these goals will be measured using an ongoing assessment program that will be used to determine when to move a student on to the next objective within a subject being studied.

Although in most schools instruction is usually planned and implemented at the macro level, based on entire classes, grade levels, campuses or even districts; learning is essentially an individual experience; students actually learn at varying speeds and learn most efficiently by using a variety of different instructional modalities. In other words, one size does not fit all students when it comes to education. This implies the need for a rich, varied and individualized instructional model that allows students to choose appropriate learning activities and encourages them to progress through those activities at an efficient and individualized progress rate.

Curriculum Framework:

A curriculum framework is typically defined as a set of standards that defines the content the student should know and the skills he should be able to perform. We have begun a process to combine the following frameworks, so that all of our students will meet all of the goals of the following:

- The Common Core Standards
- The New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards
- The College Board Standards for College Success
- The ACT's College Readiness Standards
- The Performance Continua for Equipped for the Future Work Readiness Profile Skills
- The International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards for Students (ISTE.NETS•S)

We also plan some additional goals or standards that amplify or add on to the ones mentioned above: Spanish Language Arts standards will be developed that parallel the English Language Arts standards for reading and writing at all grade levels, 1-12. This will be a core element of the Dual-Language program. All students will participate in a complete fine arts program beginning at the lowest grades and continuing through high school. They will learn to play at least two musical instruments, learn to sing, create traditional 2-D and 3-D artworks, create digital artwork, multimedia presentations and movies, and participate in dramas.

During Grades 1 - 8 all students will be introduced to the cultures and languages of countries such as, China, the Arabic speaking Middle East, and Brazil.

During high school all students will be encouraged to earn four full credits in a foreign language other than Spanish.

All students will use their tablet computers on a daily basis in order to participate in educational activities.

All students will be introduced to yoga, the martial arts, a variety of dance styles, zumba, typical fitness gym activities, aerobic exercise and other appropriate physical activities and develop a personal fitness, health and weight control program.

All high school students will participate in at least one career or technology course of study that will provide a specific job skill that will result in a job certification certificate (if applicable).

All students will participate in a number of tests that will help them personally recognize and use their thinking skills, learning styles and academic strengths.

We will develop a coordinated system of learning standards that meets all the criteria mentioned in this section and coordinates our instruction so that students will be led to an appropriate level of mastery in all of these areas. We recognize that these sets of standards overlap each other in many areas, but there are unique elements in each of them that must be addressed.

All of our learning activities will be purposely written to align to the standards within this framework.

Our curriculum mapping database will provide a measurement of progress towards mastery on a continual basis for all of these standards and provide for individualization of the learning experience for every student.

II F.(2) Provide research and/or data that substantiate how this philosophy/approach will help the school achieve high outcomes for students.

Related to Mastery Learning:

Bloom, B. S. (ed). (1985). *Developing Talent in Young People*. New York: Ballentine Books.

Block, Schools, Society and Mastery Learning. ISBN 978-0-03-088407-8

Guskey, T. R., & Gates, S. (1986). Synthesis of research on the effects of mastery learning in elementary and secondary classrooms. *Educational Leadership*, 43, 73-80.

Guskey, T.R. (2007). Closing Achievement Gaps: Revisiting Benjamin S. Bloom's "Learning for Mastery." *Journal of Advanced Academics*. 19, 8-31.

Guskey, Thomas R.; Gates, Sally L., Synthesis of Research on the Effects of Mastery Learning in Elementary and Secondary Classrooms. *Educational Leadership*, v43 n8 p73-80 May 1986
Related to Constructivism

John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (1916)

John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (1938)

Maria Montessori, *The Advanced Montessori Method—Spontaneous Activity in Education* (1920)

Martin Dougiamas, *A Journey into Constructivism*,

<http://dougiamas.com/writing/constructivism.html#first>

Related to Progressive Education:

Bruner, Jerome. *The Relevance of Education*. New York: Norton, 1971.

II F.(3) Provide a general description/design of the curriculum to be used that supports and is aligned with the school's vision, mission, and stated goals.

Academic Opportunities Academy plans to follow the state curriculum, as outlined in and the New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards, with additions, as noted in this section. In all curricular areas Pre-AP, AP and dual-credit courses will be available for qualified students.

English Language Arts and Spanish Language Arts: The two language arts subject areas will both be taught with the same rigor that is indicated in the Common Core Standards and the New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards. This will be accomplished by creating a mirror image of all units of study and learning activities in the two courses. This approach will provide appropriate services to our English Language Learners (ELL).

In the elementary grades, the dual-language program will start out as a 50/50 program. As these students move up through middle school and high school they will experience this same program all the way through high school graduation. As we begin our program at the middle school and high school levels and as we receive new students at these levels a variable model of 90/10 to 50/50 will be implemented for students who have not attended our elementary program. Over time, students at the 90/10 level will be moved up towards the 50/50 level as much as possible. This will be our dual-language college prep program.

Fine Arts: Music education will begin in the earliest grades taught at our school, rather than waiting for the middle school years. Our goal is for each child to learn to play three musical instruments and to learn how to sing. Similarly, theater arts will be introduced to all students, rather than reserving it for a few at the upper grades. Visual arts of all styles and media, along with computer graphic design will be introduced and mastered throughout all the grade levels in our school. Throughout this process students will be introduced to local visiting artists, receive short-term tutoring from artists and musicians, and experience a variety of arts-related activities in the community.

World Languages: In addition to the language studies that are part of the Dual-Language Program, beginning in the elementary grades all students will be introduced to at least three other modern languages and the cultures of the nations where they are spoken. In some of our communities we have already found resources to support studies in Mandarin, Arabic and Brazilian Portuguese. All students will participate in these initial language studies and then focus on one world language (other than English or Spanish) during high school, with the option of earning the equivalent of four years of credit in at least one such language. A general linguistics course will also be studied in middle school or high school.

Social Studies and Science: The typical topics in social studies, political education, civics, economics, geography, and history will be augmented with units of study in sociology, anthropology and psychology. The usual high school sciences (biology, chemistry and physics) will be augmented with units of study in geology, meteorology, oceanography and environmental science.

Mathematics: In addition to the required topics in the state standards covered at specific grade levels both math skills for commonly used in the health sciences and computer programming languages will be integrated into the mathematics instruction beginning in the elementary grades.

Physical Education: The physical education design is one of variety and interest development. All students will be introduced to activities such as the martial arts, a variety of dance styles, aerobic exercise and other typical fitness gym style activities. Since these are common fitness activities in adult society they are good candidates for basic instruction at this grade level. For high school credits, it is expected that students will focus on at least one of these, in order to attain a degree of mastery.

Health Sciences and Computer Technology Courses: The curriculum will include a high percentage of learning activities that guide the students through real-world experiences directly related to two career fields, health sciences careers and computer technology careers. Beginning at the earliest grades the content, skills and vocabulary of these two fields will be integrated into their other studies. In middle school specific courses will be implemented to allow students to begin to differentiate between the two fields and settle on a career choice for high school courses. In ninth grade every student will begin to take the academic courses in their field of choice in order to eventually earn at least one certification or license in either the health sciences field or the computer technology field. Some of this course work will take place as dual-credit work at the local community college and some required internships and licensing testing may take place after they turn 18 years old, as required by state regulations.

II F.(4) Provide evidence that the proposed curriculum is research-based and has been or will be effective with the student population the school plans to serve.

Two-way Immersion Dual Language Instruction

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2001). *Dual Language Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.

Garcia, E.E., (2005) *Teaching and Learning in Two Languages: Multicultural Education Series*. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press.

Thomas, W. & Collier, V. (2001). *A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-term Academic Achievement*. Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education Diversity & Excellence Found free to download at the CREDE.

"The bilingual brain. Proficiency and age of acquisition of the second language," *Brain, A Journal of Neurology*, Volume 121, Issue 10, pp. 1841-1852,
<http://brain.oxfordjournals.org/content/121/10/1841.abstract>

According to two recent studies language learning is beneficial to both monolingual English and English language learners in bilingual and two-way immersion programs.

<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageID=4525#immersion>

Cohen, A. D. (1974). The Culver City Spanish immersion program: The first two years. *The Modern Language Journal*, 58(3), 95-103. from Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts database.

Pagan, C. R. (2005). English learners' academic achievement in a two-way versus a structured English immersion program [Abstract]. *Dissertation Abstracts International, A: The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 66 (5), 1603-A-1604-A.

Fine Arts

James S. Catterall, Susan A. Dumais, and Gillian Hampden-Thompson, *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*, National Endowment for the Arts, 2012

Catterall, et. al., reported that a longitudinal study of databases maintained by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor indicate a very strong correlation between fine arts studies in Grades 1-12 and college attendance. Specifically, the bottom quartile of students on an SES scale with a very strong fine arts background in school attended college at a 71% rate while those with a very weak fine arts program attended college at a 48% rate. Other measures in the study showed similar differences, as well.

World Languages

"Bilingualism delays onset of dementia," *New Scientist*, 12 January 2007,
<http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn10954-bilingualism-delays-onset-of-dementia.html>

According to at least three recent studies, language learning correlates with higher academic achievement on standardized test measures. <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageID=4525>

Armstrong, P. W., & Rogers, J. D. (1997). Basic skills revisited: The effects of foreign language instruction on reading, math, and language arts. *Learning Languages*, 2(3), 20-31.

Cade, J. M. (1997). The foreign language immersion program in the Kansas City, Missouri Public Schools, 1986-1996 [Abstract]. *Dissertation Abstracts International* -A 58(10), 3838.

Carr, C.G. (1994). The effect of middle school foreign language study on verbal achievement as measured by three subtests of the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills [Abstract]. *Dissertation Abstracts International* -A 55(07), 1856.

Social Studies Mathematics and Science (Constructivism)

Literature on the constructivist approach to learning is ample enough to show that many educators believe that it is an effective approach.

Bruner, Jerome. *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1986.

Cobb, Paul. "The Tension between Theories of Learning and Instruction in Mathematics Education." *Educational Psychologist* 23 (1988):87-103.

Mathematical Sciences Education Board (MSEB) and National Research Council. *Everybody Counts: A Report to the Nation on the Future of Mathematics Education*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1989.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Commission on Standards for School Mathematics. *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics*. Reston, Va.: The Council, 1989.

Steffe, Leslie, and Paul Cobb. *Construction of Arithmetical Meanings and Strategies*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1988.

Physical Education

"The 2010 Shape of the Nation Report: Status of Physical Education in the USA provides a current picture of physical education (PE) in the American education system. Incremental improvements have been made in the last few years in the number of states that now require PE (17% increase) and student assessment in PE (26% increase). However, the Report shows that more states now allow waivers and exemptions from PE classes (77% increase) and no progress has been made in providing daily physical education in all grades K-12." <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/Shapeofthenation.cfm>

Career Studies

"Career academies, after more than four decades of development and three decades of evaluation, have been found by a conclusive random assignment study to be effective in improving outcomes for students during and after high school." *Career Academies: A Proven Strategy to Prepare High School*

Students for College and Careers, by David Stern, Charles Dayton, and Marilyn Raby, February 25, 2010, http://casn.berkeley.edu/resource_files/Proven_Strategy_2-25-1010-03-12-04-27-01.pdf

II F.(5) Provide an overview of the planned curriculum including a course scope and sequence by subject for each grade level the school plans to serve. Insert Course Scope and Sequence as Appendix "A".

As outlined in Section II. F (4) above, the school will use the state curriculum (the New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards) with additions to deepen and improve this curriculum. The intent is to provide all the necessary instructional activities necessary for the success of all students on all appropriate assessments and measures of success. The Scope and Sequence is provided in Appendix A.

II F.(6) If the curriculum is not fully developed (beyond the scope and sequence and/or courses), provide a timeline outlining the curriculum development process during the school's planning year.

Wesley P. Clarkson will coordinate all work on the curriculum development:

July 2012: Review the Scope and Sequence, especially the elementary grades, in order to integrate topics of study that are not included in the state standards.

August 2012: Refine the design for learning activity protocols and move all currently available activities into this format

September 2012: Define and select all science materials to be developed as learning activities

October 2012: Define and select all social studies materials to be developed as learning activities

November 2012: Purchase copies of all outstanding Junior Great Books materials for ELA learning activities development

December 2012: Identify all SLA materials similar to the Junior Great Books materials

January 2013: Develop learning activities for core subjects

February 2013: Develop learning activities for core subjects

March 2013: Develop learning activities for core subjects

April 2013: Identify all Career and Technology resources needed for Year 1

May 2013: Develop learning activities for core subjects and CATE courses

June 2013: Begin training teachers and tutors who have applied for employment

July 2013: Put teachers to work writing learning activities

August 2013: Implement Year 1 of the curriculum

II F.(7) What will the school do between the charter approval and the school's opening to develop the instructional program, and who will do it?

Wesley P. Clarkson will coordinate all work on the instructional plan.

Typical curriculum usage includes the idea of a course, such as 8th Grade Math or High School World History. These courses are typically defined by a group of standards that are not always mutually exclusive, since one standard statement can be seen in the list of standards for multiple courses. For our usage a lesson is defined by a specific standard, a combination of standards within a subject area, or a cross-curricular combination of standards from multiple core curriculum areas that complement each other.

A lesson is a multidimensional collection of learning activities (see below) and assessment items. In some sense a lesson could be equated with the terms: unit of study, topic, theme, subject matter, etc. However, we want to specifically define a lesson as a description of a specific and measureable set of skills and knowledge that is tied directly to one or more standards.

A learning activity is an activity, large or small, that results in a student product that can be assessed for the degree of mastery as it relates to one or more standard. Learning activities are directly tied to lessons and standards. Included among learning activities are reading selections, lectures, media

presentations, online learning activities, cooperative learning activities, projects, and other styles of activities.

A lesson selection group is defined as all of the learning activities available for use that are related to a specific lesson. This is a list of tiered assignments based on UDL principles that use a variety of learning modalities, levels of complexity and teaching styles. This wide variety of differentiated activities is designed to challenge all students at an appropriate level of complexity and help them master all the standards.

A learning prescription is a listing of all standards, including those from previous grade levels, that a student needs to master during the current school year. A learning prescription is developed based on diagnostic testing and progress during the school year. This is used to create lists of appropriate learning activities for a student. As students master the standards on the learning prescriptions they will be moved up to the next step in the process and provided with more choices of learning activities at the higher level. This process is design to identify and fill in the gaps in a student's learning.

Our development plan is to begin the first year with enough lessons and learning activities in our database to meet the needs of our student for the first four months of the first school year. The as the year progresses our teachers will be assigned to create additional learning activities to cover all of the needs for that year. In the summer between years one and two, these same teachers will write additional learning activities to provide more depth to our curriculum and work on courses that were not taught during the first year of operation. The database of learning activities will never be complete, since we will be constantly adding and adapting learning activities to the needs of our student.

II F.(8) Provide a timeline for alignment of the curriculum with NM State Standards, if alignment has not been completed at the time the application is submitted.

All learning activities will be developed starting from the basis of a specific standard at a specific grade level. This will avoid the necessity of having to align a learning activity to a standard after the activity has been created. Since we will not be slavishly following a specific textbook from lesson to lesson or chapter to chapter, we will be able to use a variety of reading materials to glean the content necessary to meet the educational goals of each lesson. Another way to say this is that alignment will be an ongoing process that occurs as required learning activities are created and stored in our database.

G. Graduation Requirements.

II G.(1) Identify the school's proposed requirements for graduation, if applicable, and explain any additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirements.

High school exit standards for Academic Opportunities Academy include academic course work, career field coursework and certification, mandated state testing, and a solid grounding in at least two languages through the Dual-Language Program and the world language courses. All coursework is credited when the student demonstrates a 90% mastery rate and the length of time needed to complete any course is based on demonstrated competencies, not seat time. Depending on the appropriate committee decisions, Special Education students, §504 students with disabilities, and ELL students may graduate on a modified plan that provides a level of education that meets the state minimum graduation plan or other state regulations for these students.

Language Arts: The Dual-Language Program requires an equal academic emphasis for both English and Spanish. All students are required to complete the four basic courses in English and Spanish. Dual credit courses may substitute for the level IV courses. PreAP and AP courses, as approved by the College Board, will be available in place of the regular courses.

Mathematics: Each graduate must complete four math courses. Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II are mandatory for all students. The fourth and subsequent courses may be taught as Pre-AP, AP, or dual-credit. These include: Precalculus, Database Fundamentals, Calculus, or another math elective.

Sciences: Each student is required to complete Biology I, Chemistry I, Physics I and Health and Wellness. Two additional courses are required electives. They may be one of these courses: Environmental Science, Meteorology, Astronomy, Anatomy and Physiology, Pathophysiology, Medical Microbiology, Advanced Biotechnology, Electronics, Advanced Electronics, Biology II, Chemistry II, Physics II, or any Dual Credit Science Course.

Social Studies: Required courses include U.S. History, U.S. Government, Economics, World History, and World Geography.

World Languages: Each student will be encouraged to complete four high school level courses in one of the languages offered by the school and the General Linguistics course. These may include: Mandarin, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic and others, as developed by the faculty.

Fine Arts: In grades 1-8 each student was provided with multiple opportunities to participate in a wide variety of fine arts activities. A variety of individualized and small group courses in the following areas will be offered to all students. Each student will be required to complete at least six fine arts courses during high school. Course offered include at least four levels of the following topics: Graphic Arts, Plastic Arts, Computer Graphics, Solo Vocal Music, Ensemble Vocal Music, Solo Instrumental Music, Ensemble Instrumental Work, Music Composition, Theater Arts, Video Production and Dance.

Career-Technical: Each student will complete at least six courses in one of the career fields offered. Other career fields may be facilitated at institutions off-campus, if available. These courses will support the initiative to help each student earn at least one professional certification in the chosen field. Some dual-credit classes may be necessary to accomplish this end.

Health Sciences career field courses include the following general courses and other courses leading to a specific certification such as EMT, CAN or Pharmacy Tech. The general courses are: Health Science Career Portals, Principles of Health Science, Health Science Medical Terminology, Anatomy and Physiology, Pathophysiology, Medical Microbiology, Advanced Biotechnology, Practicum in Health Science, and World Health Research

Computer Sciences career field course offerings include several general courses and then courses in three specific fields of study.

General Courses: Career Preparation I, Career Preparation II, Entrepreneurship, Scientific Research and Design

IT Administrator Courses: Principles of Information Technology, Web Technologies, Telecommunications and Networking, Internetworking Technologies

Hardware Technician Courses: Electronics, Computer Maintenance, Computer Technician, Computer Maintenance Electronics, Advanced Electronics

Database Specialist Courses: Database Fundamentals, Database Programming

Physical Education: In grades 1-8 each student was provided with multiple opportunities to participate in a wide variety of physical education activities. Continued participation in at least one of these activities

will be required for the high school years. These may include Tai Chi, Yoga, Martial Arts, Aerobics, Individual Sports, Team Sports and Dance.

Plan requirements above the New Mexico graduation plan: Spanish Language Arts (4 credits) is part of the dual-language program designed to meet the needs of ELL students. The additional science electives are designed to meet the needs of each student's choice of career field. Four years of participation in physical education is designed to prepare all students for a healthy life. The world languages, fine arts and career and technology requirements exceed the electives in the state plan. They are designed to meet the needs of college-bound students and career oriented students within the framework of a small high school setting. By requiring more rigorous classes and career and technology classes that involve dual-credit classes, our program will attract students from all segments of the community and promote a higher level of involvement and learning.

II G.(2) If you are seeking a waiver from mandated minimum graduation requirements, state what the waiver is and why you are seeking it. Explain how the graduation requirements will support the school's mission, and ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities. BE SURE TO INDICATE ANY WAIVER SOUGHT IN SECTION III K. BELOW, BY REFERRING TO THIS SECTION.

No graduation waiver will be requested. Our program includes all the elements of the state plan.

H. Instruction.

II H.(1) Provide an overview of the instructional strategies and methods the school will implement that support and are aligned with the school's mission, vision and educational plan, and are directly relevant and/or necessary to successfully implement the curriculum.

Two-way Immersion Dual Language Instruction (90-10 to 50-50)

Two-way Immersion emphasizes the need to have language models of both the Minority and Majority Languages, learning side-by-side in the classroom for the majority of the day. All students will be integrated in all activities all the time. In the elementary grades, the dual-language program will start out as a 50/50 program. As these students move up through middle school and high school they will experience this same program all the way through high school graduation with parallel ELA and SLA courses. As we begin our program at the middle school and high school levels and as we receive new students at these levels a variable model of 90/10 to 50/50 will be implemented for students who have not attended our elementary program. Over time, students at the 90/10 level will be moved up towards the 50/50 level. This will be our dual-language college prep program.

Experimental and Career Oriented Experiences

The instructional design for social studies and the sciences will include a high percentage of learning activities that guide the students through a process of discovery that leads to a gradual building-up of intellectual ideas and skills that are firmly cemented to a foundation of real-world experiences. Cross-curricular projects will be utilized much of the time combining the topics being investigated with skills learned in ELA, SLA, computer technology and graphic arts classes. In the science classes these activities will be used to expand on the typical laboratory experiences. This is a Grade 1-12 plan, with appropriate topics being introduced at all grade levels. Physiology and Anatomy will be taught at multiple grade levels in order to prepare students for the health sciences coursework in high school. Virtual and real-life visits to places of historical significance or museums will enrich these studies.

Physical Education

Our school will have a specific amount of small gym space or practice rooms for these activities. Time will be allocated every day for these activities. An integral part of this program is the development of a

personal fitness and weight control program. Students will learn how to create such a personal plan and carry it out in facilities that are commonly available in the community. They will also study diet and medical maintenance topics that are necessary for healthy persons in our society.

Student Choice

Student choice refers to the process of allowing student to choose learning activities from a lesson selection group when appropriate. The learning activities within a lesson selection group will provide for a variety of teacher led, cooperative learning and individual practice activities that vary in depth, complexity and learning styles. All students will be required to participate in a minimum number of each type of activity and then will choose a required number of additional activities based on their own desires and learning style. In this manner we can promote a well-rounded learning experience that also addresses the preferences and strengths of each student. Additionally, modified assignments to meet IEP needs, simplified English lessons to meet the needs of ESOL students and challenging assignments to meet the need of GT students will be offered, as appropriate.

Self-paced Mastery Learning with Tutoring Support

Academic Opportunities Academy plans to work with students in a self-paced program that promotes students from one lesson to another based on a 90% mastery of the knowledge and skills related directly to that lesson. Multiple activities organized as a lesson selection group will be available for each lesson that a student has to learn. Many students will be able to complete three or four learning activities participate in an on-going assessment and then move on. For those who need additional study, tutoring will be made available followed by more learning activities and then assessment. The purpose of this looping is to make sure that every student has ample opportunity to master the material for every lesson in the curriculum.

The corollary to self-paced mastery learning is the dissolution of the typical grade level classroom. If individual needs are to be met, then large group classroom instruction that aims mainly at the the students in the middle of the pack needs to be avoided.

An organizational and architectural expression of this need would be the use of an open-classroom, multi-graded organization. Our architectural plan calls for a large central space for students to work in with smaller conference rooms that open onto it. Teachers would provide small group lessons in these smaller rooms, and as some students achieved an acceptable level of understanding, they would be sent out into the larger room to work on follow-up learning activities. This would allow the teacher to concentrate more time on those students who need more help to achieve the same level of understanding.

A small school, such as the one we are planning, does not have the luxury of employing a large number of specialized teachers. Our plan does include a large number of tutors, teaching assistants, dual-certified teachers and part-time teachers in order to reduce the adult to student ratio and to provide more depth in our expertise. Depending on budgetary concerns, our plan is to employ approximately two tutors for every teacher employed. These individuals will assist the teachers by carrying out instructional duties under the guidance of the teachers and the Principal Lead Teacher. We believe that having more adults present all the time will better motivate all the students to excel and will also provide the lower performing students with the individual attention that they need.

In the same manner, we will recruit as many volunteers as possible from among the parents and grandparents. These individuals will receive the same training and direction as the tutors, hopefully amplifying the work of the teachers to a considerable degree.

Tiered Instruction Based on UDL Principles

This is also called differentiation. If any single element could be singled out as the most significant feature of our plan that clearly distinguishes it from other methods of instruction, it is tiered instruction. Our instructional design is an application of this method that has roots back in special education and gifted education theory. It allows students to choose learning activities to which we have added the concept of measuring mastery after engaging in these activities. This will allow students to move along at an appropriate pace while guaranteeing that they really learn the content and skills. This self-pacing within the tiered instructional model is easier to administer now with the use of robust student data analysis software that was not available when tiered instruction was first designed.

Cutting Edge Technology Usage

From a student's perspective our goal is to use the most advanced technology available, better technology than they may have available at home. Current plans are to use tablet computers with typical applications that they would encounter in the work world. These will allow the student to create products and respond to instruction.

In this sense, the tablet computer is a work tool that will allow students to interact with each other, with their teachers and with the curriculum content in a manner that resembles such interactions in the everyday world. We will adopt a service similar to Edmodo, a social networking spinoff that is designed to be used by schools. It provides a virtual expression of the learning experience with networking and communication services.

Other technology elements, as they become available, will be used for video conferencing, webpage development, social media participation, web-based learning and a number of other applications that have not been imagined yet. The philosophy is that our students will learn to use tomorrow's technology today rather than yesterday's technology tomorrow.

The Curriculum Mapping Database

We are developing a curriculum mapping database will allow for real-time monitoring of student progress at a granular level. As students succeed or run into barriers the teachers will be able to respond appropriately.

The curriculum database is predicated on providing an individual learning plan including learning goals, activities and assessments regardless of grade level. Key components include a Standards Table detailing the state, curriculum area, and the standard number. Course instruction and completion is predicated on the student meeting any number of standards as mandated by the state, the common core standards, the Academic Opportunities Academy's own standards, as well as any applicable college readiness standards

Because these standards require a student be assessed as to his or her mastery of the standard, one or more assessments are given for one or more lessons covering the individual standard. The lessons provided to the student are comprised of one or more learning activities. Therefore the student is provided a learning prescription detailing the learning activities for a given standard. Benchmark activities (assessments) are completed at the end of each learning activity. Students should be provided a 'tracking mechanism' (table) that allows the individual to monitor and review his or her progress for a given activity. The tracking mechanism can be either private to the individual, or publically shared with peers, mentors, and or administrators.

It should be noted here however, that while the curriculum portion of the database is at the heart of the entire project, the more mundane aspects of school administration should also be accessible to the appropriate individuals and constituents. State registrar and counseling functions should also be included so that student progress and histories can be maintained. Other items such as inventories, facilities, staff, learning aids, and attendance etc. should be addressed.

The database is designed so that many associated applications may be addressed so that the entire system is dynamic and modular in nature. This implies that multiple application platforms can be addressed.

Please keep in mind that all reporting functions are merely “displaying” the data stored in the database. Depending upon the application, these data are summed, sorted, listed, arranged, and calculated per the report application.

II H.(2) Provide an explanation of how these methods/strategies are effective with your target population.

Dual Language

Our target population in Southern New Mexico is predominantly hispanic. Dual language programs have a good track record of providing for the learning needs of these students and also providing a distinct academic supplement for students from English speaking homes.

Experimental and Career Oriented Experiences

Our career tracks, health sciences and computer technology, hold out the promise of significant numbers of jobs in the future. They are also career tracks that will prepare our students for success at the college level.

Physical Education

Everyone has heard the reports about obesity and lack of physical activity by today’s young adults. Our approach to physical education and health will equip our students to lead healthier lives.

Student Choice

Most students who are at-risk for failure have developed a very passive attitude towards education. We want to challenge them to take control of their studies and become active learners, self-controlled learners and life-long learners. Choosing learning activities is the first step in this process.

Self-paced Mastery Learning with Tutoring Support

Gaps in learning lead to failure at the higher levels. A mastery learning system forces the instructional staff to recognize and remediate these gaps to the point that they no longer exist. This cannot be done without a lot of individualization and a lot of attention to each student.

Tiered Instruction Based on UDL Principals

Tiered instruction, UDL and differentiation are proven techniques for meeting the needs of students with all sorts of interests, abilities and needs. The design here is to provide enough variety that every student can learn in ways that meet his/her needs and preferences.

Cutting Edge Technology Usage

Too much learning in the 21st Century is being carried out with materials that were developed in the 19th Century. If our educational practice more closely resembles the experiences that our students have at home on their myriad digital devices, then they will respond better to that practice.

The Curriculum Mapping Database

This is the lynchpin of the entire plan. Everything mentioned in our curriculum and instruction plans has been developed and tested over time, but they have never been brought together into a single plan because of the difficulty of all the massive record keeping. The database will track everything, assignments and assessments, in a manner that allows for robust reporting that will lead to intelligent decision making on behalf of every single student.

II H.(3) Describe how the instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs. Provide specific examples.

As explained above in on Instructional Strategies, we plan to implement a differentiation strategy called Tiered Instruction. Every student will be diagnosed for learning gaps, provided with a learning prescription and then offered a series of learning activities that both meet his/her needs and challenge him/her to excel. For each lesson we will create a series of learning activities for every level of ability and current achievement. Over time these learning activities will be modified in multipl ways to provide a significany curricular depth in our database of such activities.

I. Special Populations. Describe the school's overall plan to serve students with special needs, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), students with Section 504 plans, and English Language Learners.

(1) Special Education:

II I.(1)(a) Explain the practices and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, and ensure students' access to the general education curriculum.

Each eligible student with a disability between the ages of 3 and 22 enrolled in Academic Opportunities Academy will be provided with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Such students have been evaluated and determined eligible for special education and related services by an IEP team. Referrals for interventions and testing may be generated by parents or staff members. The comprehensive initial diagnostic testing administered to all students when they enter the school may trigger such a referral. This process will follow the steps outlined in The Technical Assistance Manual: Developing Quality IEPs, published by New Mexico Public Education Department Special Education Bureau (see page 4).

Special education is specially designed instruction provided to eligible students at no cost to the parent(s) and in accordance with the student's IEP. Related services, such as occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), an educational interpreter, transportation, etc., are provided as deemed necessary by the IEP team to allow the student to benefit from his/her special education.

The IEP team is a group of individuals, including parent(s) and school personnel, that determines if the student is eligible for special education and, if so, determines the special education and related services to be provided to the student. A student may be found eligible for special education and related services in one or more of the thirteen (13) disability categories recognized in state regulations. The IEP team must meet at least annually.

Special education services will be provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means that a student with a disability is educated with students without disabilities to the maximum extent possible for each individual student.

Our instructional model will utilize the Universal Design for Learning model to develop appropriately modified learning activities that are based on the tiered instruction learning activities used with all students.

II I.(1)(b) Describe how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure the attainment of each student's goals set forth in their IEPs.

The curriculum monitoring database will be used by the special education and other teachers to continuously monitor the progress of special education students, in the same manner that they will monitor all students. Tutoring and additional learning activities will be employed to meet the needs of these students as they work towards the level of mastery of the material set in the IEP.

II I.(1)(c) If applicable, describe the school's plan for graduating students with special education needs.

The IEP team may design an alternate graduation plan for special needs students in cases where it is determined to be necessary. In most cases this plan will still meet the minimum graduation requirements for New Mexico.

II I.(1)(d) Describe the school's plan for budgeting and staffing for meeting the identified needs and educational plans for students needing special education support/services. Include how the school plans to provide ancillary staff support.

A special education teacher and special education tutor(s) will work with this group of students on the campus. The number of teachers and tutors will be determined based on the number of qualified students.

We have contacted Cenpatico's Division of School-Based Services (7400 N. Oracle Rd., Ste. #143, Tucson, AZ 85704) to provide properly qualified contractors who can provide the following services, as needed: Special Education Administrative Consulting; Professional Development; Compliance Services; Psycho-Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting; Counseling and Behavioral Services; Speech Therapy; Occupational Therapy and Direct Instruction/Case Management.

(2) Students with Section 504 Plans.

II I.(2) Describe how the school will serve, evaluate, and monitor the progress and success of students with Section 504 Plans.

Based on Section 504 Guidelines for Educators and Administrators for Implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973—Subpart D, published by the New Mexico Public Education Department the school will identify students who are qualified for appropriate support and accommodations. Progress will be monitored using the curriculum mapping database and needed accommodations will be built in to the learning activities assigned to the student.

(3) English Language Learner (ELL) Students.

II I.(3)(a) Explain how the school will identify English Language Learners.

At registration parents will self-identify their households in regards to the language spoken using a home language survey. A PHLOTE survey consisting of the two parts: Teacher Language Observation and the Student Language Survey may be used, as well. Both the NMELPT and the SLAS will be used to diagnose ELL needs. These may be in addition to our other diagnostic tests given to all students.

II I.(3)(b) Explain how the school will provide services/supports to identified students.

As discussed above, all students will participate in the Dual-Language program. This is will be our ELL services program.

II I.(3)(c) Describe how the instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs. Provide specific examples.

As discussed above, all learning activities will be provided in both an English version and a Spanish version in order to meet the needs of the 50/50 Dual-Language program. Differentiation will also be provided for Special Education students and gifted students in both languages.

II I.(3)(d) Describe how the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of English Language Learners?

Our curriculum mapping database will record success-level data on the exact learning activities completed by each student. Each learning activity will be tagged for language used and for difficulty level as compared to the grade level of the student. Appropriate reports will be generated on all ELL students on a regular basis in order to assess progress towards graduation and probability of success on the state exams.

II I.(3)(e) Describe how the school plans to budget and staff itself to meet the needs of ELL students.

ESL certified teachers will be hired for the campus, sufficient for the number of students identified. Additionally, all other teacher will be trained in ESL instructional strategies and most of the teachers will be bilingual individuals (English/Spanish).

J. Assessment and Accountability.

II J.(1) Optional (Answer only if you listed organizational goals under II.E.) Explain how the school will measure and evaluate progress in organizational goals throughout the year. Explain how the school will measure progress towards achieving its organizational goals and how that aligns with the school's mission.

MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

II J.(2) In addition to the state-mandated Standards Based Assessment, identify any valid and reliable formative and/or summative assessments, universal screening tools and progress monitoring tools the school will use to determine whether students are meeting academic goals. Identify the grade levels at which the assessment(s) will be used with an anticipated schedule or frequency of assessing.

The assessment program will include four important elements and a powerful database to integrate the results of those elements. A custom-built database, sometimes called curriculum mapping software, will record all of the results of each student's assessments and learning activities. These scores will be disaggregated and correlated to all a standards adopted for the school. The purpose is to provide a real-time image of each student's progress that can be quantitatively compared to his/her learning prescription.

The first element, a series of placement tests, will occur during the first week that a student attends the school. The assessment used will be the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), IDEL (Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura) or other comparable placement assessments. The purpose of this testing is to discover any serious gaps in a student's prior learning that will need to be addressed in order to ensure success during the current school year.

The second element will be the creation of a learning prescription for each individual student. This learning prescription will include all the serious gaps in a student's prior learning and all the grade level standards for the current year of instruction.

The third element will include a careful mapping of the outcome or products of each student's learning activities. These learning activities will have been created based on Indiana's Academic Standards and additional school standards.

The fourth element will be the ongoing assessment activities used at the end of each learning cycle to determine the level of mastery attained by the student after completing his/her assigned learning activities. These assessments will be developed by the instructional staff and/or purchased from a vendor such as Riverside Publishing (Asses2Know testbank).

II J.(3) Describe how the school will use multiple valid and reliable assessments to evaluate student progress and proficiency, and how the results will be used to improve teaching and learning.

The results of these four elements of the assessment system will be the production of regular reports on the progress of each student, specific student cohorts, and the campus as a whole. These reports will be used to make school-wide decisions as well as individual student decisions regarding the next steps to take in this adaptive curriculum. Since the majority of grading will be taking in real-time, all staff members will see these daily summaries on their campus dashboard so that they are kept informed on

the school's progress. These reports will also be used to provide positive feedback to students during the daily opening assembly.

A progress towards mastery metric will be created for each standard. This metric will attempt to quantify how well a student has learned the information and/or mastered the skills represented in a specific standard. An algorithm that calculates current performance and performance over time should provide us with the information necessary for making instructional decisions.

II J.(4) Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of achieving student academic achievement expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk students) AND school-wide levels. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the school will assess their effectiveness.

One important assumption that needs to be discussed is that a student will generally lose some knowledge over days and weeks as time passes from the moment of the original instruction. The implication of this is that skills and understandings must be reviewed and reconnected at appropriate times during the year. Ongoing assessments will not only test what has just been studied but will also reach back into previous lessons studied and ask the student to demonstrate his/her ability to remember things previously studied. This retesting will control the amount of re-teaching necessary for each student as he progresses through the instructional year.

Many assessment plans also use the term benchmarking to refer to a series of practice tests taken during the year to prepare for the state exams at the end of the year. Benchmarking in this system will refer to the process of using a filter in the curriculum mapping database and preparing reports directly related to the instructional standards that are actually tested at the end of the year. We expect students to demonstrate a 90% mastery level in all their studies, and especially in these specific standards.

II J.(5) Describe how the school will report student achievement results to parents, the school's Governing Body, the school's authorizer and the broader community.

Progress towards mastery and standards already mastered will be reported out on each student on a daily or weekly basis, as needed. The system of using ongoing assessments will provide parents, teachers and the students themselves with progress reports that do not have to wait for report card time; they will be available at any time and shared with stakeholders on a regular basis as summary reports and individual reports.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND GOVERNANCE

A. Governing Body Creation/Capacity.

III A.(1) Summarize the key components of your governance structure, including without limitation, the roles and responsibilities of the governing body, number of members, length of terms, offices to be created, committees, grounds for removal from office, and relationship with the school's administration. Explain how and when the governing body will develop its governing documents or "bylaws" if not submitted with application. If complete, attach governing documents as Appendix "B".

Three components will define the governance structure: the Board of Directors, The Community Advisory Group and the Administrative and Instructional Staff. However, they will not necessarily be created in this order, which is a functional order.

The Community Advisory Group (CAG)

Charter schools should be one expression of self-awareness of the community. If we carefully examine the manner in which most schools are run, we have to admit that very few have an open and engaging relationship with the community. The entire professional educational culture of today is characterized by control from the top. At the school level this control is expressed in the person of the principal, whose decisions are made based on directives that filter down through a political structure made up of central office administrators, school boards, state and federal agencies, state a federal legislatures and myriads of court decisions.

We believe that the parents, grandparents and other members of a community should not be excluded from a meaningful level of participation in the decisions necessary for the success of a charter school. Academic Opportunities Academy has begun and will continue to hold a series of public discussions at appropriate venues in the target areas for our campuses. We will ask the people present at these meetings to volunteer to participate in the CAG, an essential decision making group for each school. Although our educational plan and business model are already well developed, there are many issues that the community needs to consider. These include but are not limited to: possible use of uniforms or a dress code, student discipline plan, the functions of volunteers on the campuses, the school calendar and holidays, extra-curricular activities, school safety, locations of future campuses and other concerns communicated by CAG members. The CAG will develop policies regarding these issues and submit them to the Board of Directors.

It is our intention to create schools that are completely transparent and open in regards to all decision making. Everyone in the community needs to feel welcome on our campuses and all parents need to feel as if their ideas and suggestions are valued and acted upon. This process will be facilitated by sharing all of our improvement data and potential plans with the community and asking them to study it along with the members of the staff in order to make the best possible decisions for the school.

The CAG will have members from the business community, parents, grandparents, guardians, family, and other community stakeholders. The CAG will recruit members of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors

The Academic Opportunities Academy Board of Directors will consist of five (5) members . As the school's public agents, the Board have final responsibility for the academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to the terms of the charter, hire and evaluate the Principal Lead Teacher.

The Community Advisory Group Members will recruit the initial Board Members from the CAG Members who have demonstrated teamwork skills, good work ethics, problem solving skills, leadership, character, ethics, and moral conduct. Then over time as replacements are needed the current Board will select replacement members. Term limits for Board members will be two years with overlapping expiration dates so that two are elected one year and three the succeeding year. The governing documents and bylaws will be adopted by the Board of Directors at their first meeting, based on recommendations from the CAG. These documents will describe reasons that a Board member may be removed from office.

The Board will seek out and develop community partnerships, community involvement, fundraising, and other similar projects.

Subject to Section 22-8-38 NMSA 78. "Boards of finance; designation": As soon as the Academic Opportunities Academy application is approved by the Public Education Commission the Governing

Board will apply to the Public Education Department to qualify for designation as a board of finance for public school funds.

The Board of Directors will be composed of individuals who support the school's mission, believe in it, and seek to promote the charter's goals. The offices of the Board will include at least a President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. The responsibilities of these offices shall be those ordinarily incumbent thereon and spelled out in the bylaws. The Board's bylaws will address conduct of its members. Members will be required to sign conflict of interest disclosure statements, be familiar with their responsibilities as a member in the context of Open Meetings Act and clearly understand their ethical and fiduciary obligations to the school. Board members will participate in NMPED training requirements and understand the importance of self-education in order to effectively participate on a charter school governing body.

The Board is responsible for enactment of the policies of the charter school, which may have been arrived at by the deliberation of the Community Advisory Group, for overseeing the overall governance of the school, including the budget and auditing processes. Any CAG suggested policy which the Board may question as to its conformity to the charter, state and federal statutes and codes or its appropriateness for the well being of the students, school, or the community must be returned to the CAG for further deliberation. Once the question is resolved and meets statutory and policy requirements then the Board will act upon it.

Although the Board will seek to arrive at decisions through deliberation and consensus, all decisions will be decided by majority vote during the presence of a quorum. In the event of a tie vote the issue will be tabled and an ad-hock committee will be established to further research and deliberate the issue before returning to the Board for a decision.

A majority of the members will form a quorum at any meeting. The Board will meet at least monthly. No member of the Board is a spokesperson for the Board nor will the Board be held responsible for unauthorized actions of any member.

The Board is responsible for hiring the head administrator (Principal Lead Teacher). The Board of Directors will have the ultimate responsibility of evaluating the Principal Lead Teacher. The Board will develop an evaluation process for the Principal Lead Teacher. The Principal Lead Teacher evaluation criteria will be based on the campus goals and objectives in this charter, job performance, professionalism, and establishing the positive learning environment of the school.

Policies and procedures of the Community Advisory Groups, the New Mexico Board, and the School will be developed during the planning phase of the School. All policies and procedures, including personnel policies, will comply with all applicable federal and state statutes and regulations, including, Sections 22-10-1 et seq., NMSA 1978, and Sections 22-8B-1 et seq. NMSA 1978 and all other applicable federal and state labor laws, regulations and rules implementing them.

Meetings of the Board of Directors, the Community Advisory Group, and all standing and ad-hoc committees are open to the public at all times, except as otherwise provided in the constitution of New Mexico or the Open Meetings Act and will conform to the Open Meetings Act.

The Administrative and Instructional Staff

The administration of the school will consist of the Principal Lead Teacher and other staff so designated by the board as the school grows. The administration of the school will be the supervisor of all other staff members and volunteers. The Principal Lead Teacher will oversee, coordinate, and support the work of the school's Office Manager and the Office Manager's Staff. The Principal Lead Teacher or his/her designated substitute will attend meetings of the Board of Directors and the CAG and plan the agendas for those meetings with their respective presidents.

III A.(2) Describe the expertise of the founding member(s) and his/her/their qualifications and/or experience that is relevant to developing a charter school plan and implementing a charter school's operations.

Founding member (1 of 2): Mark Casavantes M.Ed.

Naval Officer in the Civil Engineer Corps

As a Civil Engineer Corps Officer I was an Assistant Officer in Charge of Construction at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard. During the second year of my tour no contract was completed late or over budget. Contracts ranged in budget from about \$100,000 to 1.5 million and I had about 8 to 12 contracts at any given time.

My second assignment was as Production Control Officer and Public Works Shops Engineer. I was in charge of 110 Seabees and 70 civilian employees who maintained the base and provided transportation and heavy equipment including two railroad locomotives. Using dBase III I was better able to monitor assignments of our employees and production increased 300%. When I was first assigned, I found that some employees performed no service calls in 90 days. When I completed my tour employees were 70-80 % productive. I learned how powerful data can be in obtaining improved results. I prepared for and recovered from seven hurricanes along the Gulf Coast during my assignment to NCBC Gulfport, Mississippi.

General Contractor

I learned a lot as a General Contractor. The first few years were difficult. I learned how to bid and win work. I then had to supervise ongoing projects. I bid lots of diverse types on industrial and commercial contracts. I bid as a subcontractor to other general contractors and contractors. I was a sub-sub contractor on the Los Angeles Metro Rail. I had a few clients such as Standard Oil in El Segundo, California, Bob Cox Die Casting, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, City of Long Beach, City of Rosemead, City of El Monte, City of South El Monte. J.L. Etheridge General Contractors, Roberson Structural Steel, Alco Electric, Custom Pacific Electric, and Hundai Construction. As a contractor, I learned to comply with plans and specifications and satisfy customers.

Math Teacher

When I first started teaching, I worked at Guillen Middle School teaching 8th grade Algebra. Guillen was a reconstituted low performing school. I discovered that there were lots of things I did not learn during my training to becoming a teacher. I reached back to my architecture training to discover what I needed to do to become successful as a teacher. My training in Architecture taught me to be creative, to think outside the box, to try new things, to test my ideas until I found success. I did a lot of experimentation. I did a lot of design and creating.

There are a few keys to getting students to succeed. They must believe in you. You must build this relationship. Getting students to be successful and then building on that success is important. The time it takes to obtain success is not set by a bell schedule or a lesson plan. You must monitor your class like a quarterback, you must evaluate every students success. You must find out what each student needs to

be successful. You must have a dialog with your students. You must ask lots of questions to see what they know and do not yet know. When students really learn, they have an enthusiasm and energy that is so rewarding to experience as a teacher.

Similar to coaching football or any other sport requires mastering the fundamentals. Students must master the fundamentals of each subject they study. Once you have a strong foundation you can build the rest of the knowledge you are teaching. When I first was teaching, I found that my students scored lowest on problem solving. I searched for what I needed to do to obtain success for my students in this area. I experimented and found some puzzles that worked wonders in teaching my students to think. Problem solving became a strength. Lots of student weaknesses were corrected when I introduced puzzles into my teaching. Simon Says puzzles corrected many problems students face. Many students do not follow directions, they are not careful, they do not read carefully. Logic puzzles taught my students to read carefully. Cross Sums, Number Logic, and Sudoku also helped students with problem solving. What ever the state standards were, I could get my students to be successful.

Did anyone ask what I was doing to obtain student success? No, no other teacher, administrator, or central office administrator ever asked what I was doing. Ever. I was so surprised. This has led me to the strong desire to improve education. I know it can be improved. I so much want to demonstrate a model that creates student success. This is why I want to start a charter school. I want to provide an example that demonstrates that education can improve, students can be successful. I hope that New Mexico provides me the opportunity to improve the education of our students I know I can achieve.

Assistant Principal

I have enjoyed working as an assistant principal, but as an assistant principal I have never had the opportunity to lead a school as I would like. I liked talking to the children who were sent to the office for misbehaviors. I spent time with these children. I tried to find out what was the root of the problem. Most children will tell you if you will listen to them. Some teachers would say I was weak on discipline, but comparing the referrals I would get per week to other assistant principals from other schools. I had good discipline. I might have three or four referrals a week, and most were really minor infractions. As an assistant principal, I thought of ways I could help my students succeed. I developed lists of questions for each subject and each grade level based on the standards. I would ask students I would meet in the hallway, the cafeteria, the crosswalk questions. Many students would ask their teachers for the answers. Many of my students started carrying note cards with answers to my questions. Students would seek me out and ask me what kind of questions would I be asking in the cafeteria. They would also ask me to teach them. I found I could influence the educational climate of the school.

I worked on the start up of Premier High School in El Paso for Responsive Education Solutions so I have experience in starting up a charter school. I was involved in the site selection, getting permits, selecting the architect, selecting the contractor, overseeing the renovations, selecting the staff, setting up the furniture, setting up the computers, recruiting the students, preparing various reports for food service, attendance, grades, credits, bookkeeping, ordering and maintaining supplies, conducting special education and 504 meetings, conducting evaluations of staff, conducting various parent meetings, conducting meetings each morning, meeting with parents and students, solving various issues of the day.

I have gotten some ideas from Premier High Schools's model. I do not like the computer as teacher model where students spend endless hours being taught by computers. Many of the alternative charter schools find a company that supplies a computer as teacher curriculum. This is one of the things I did not like from their model. If the teachers had to endure the same experiences our students endure, they would understand our drop out problem better.

I think that many of the reasons students drop out of school is they no longer believe the education is helpful to them in life. The best a high school graduate can do is working for the fast food industry or

other minimum wage job. Many are not prepared for college as our colleges and junior colleges are full of high school graduates. I think a student should be able to graduate from high school with a well paying skill. My father and uncle graduated from high school as machinists. This kind of opportunity seldom exists if at all in today's world. When I was a math teacher at Cibola High School in Albuquerque I heard the principal tell us how proud she was for destroying the machinist program they had. She told us how she was installing walls to break up the space so the program would never come back. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. We need real job skills for our students. Not everyone goes to college. Our current education model believes everyone should go to college. That is why our charter school will prepare all our students for college as well as provide real career skills they can use to live a productive life. I hope you provide us this opportunity for our children of New Mexico.

Founding Member (2 of 2) Wesley P. Clarkson, M.Div.

Educational Expertise: Public and Private School Teacher

During the 1988 to 1990 school years I was a math teacher at Fabens High School in Fabens, Texas, a rural community just east of El Paso, Texas. I taught Algebra 1 & 2, Geometry and Consumer Math. Then for the 1990-1991 school year I taught ESOL and ESOL math at Henderson Middle School, El Paso ISD in El Paso, Texas. During the 1991-1993 School years I taught ESOL math and ESOL social studies at Terrace Hills Middle School, El Paso ISD. In the middle of the 1992-1993 school year I was promoted to Assistant Principal (see below).

In the 2005 - 2006 school year I returned to teaching, working as a math teacher at Ross Middle School, El Paso ISD. During the 2006 - 2008 school years I taught mathematics at Mountain View High School, Clint ISD, which is located in a rural area just outside of El Paso, Texas. During the 2008 - 2010 School years I taught math at Socorro High School, Socorro ISD in El Paso. During these four years I taught all high school math courses except for Calculus.

In June 2010 I retired from public education in Texas and I have worked as a tutor and recently (just in 2012) I have been teaching at New Horizons Home School Academy, a private school in El Paso.

Educational Expertise: Campus Administrator

In the middle of the 1992-1993 school year I was promoted to Assistant Principal at Morehead Middle School, El Paso ISD. I was transferred to Wiggs Middle School for the 1993 - 1994 school year and then promoted to a position at the central office in the middle of that school year.

Later I came back to campus administration when I worked as the Director of Paso del Norte Academy, a charter high school in El Paso. I worked in this position during the 2003 - 2005 school years. This position was more-or-less equivalent to a principal's job at a regular public school, but also included responsibilities for preparing budgets, as well as administering and reporting on all entitlements.

Educational Expertise: Central Office Administrator

At the end of November 1994 I was promoted from my assistant principal position to be the Staff Development Specialist in charge of Administrator Training for El Paso, ISD. I worked in this position from November 1994 until July 1998. The work consisted of developing, planning and coordinating all training activities for the administrative employees for a district with 75 campuses.

In the summer of 1998 the school district was reorganized and my new assignment was Team Leader for the Jefferson High School feeder pattern, which consisted of a regular high school, an independent health magnet high school, a middle school and four elementary schools. During my time at this position I was also the founding principal of Delta Academy, a school that served the incarcerated youth in the county facility. Delta academy also included teachers working at the El Paso Psychiatric Hospital and teachers working at two psychiatric transition classrooms located on campuses in my feeder pattern. I

also served as the mathematics and the social studies curriculum coordinator for the three feeder patterns grouped together under the associate superintendent for whom I worked.

In 2001 the district was reorganized again and I was assigned to a centralized curriculum department where I worked as the Facilitator in charge of the Gifted and Talented Program. I worked at this job until June 2003 when I left to be the director of Paso del Norte Academy (see above under Campus Administrator).

Educational Expertise: Independent Contractor for Curriculum Development and Textbooks

During my early teaching years, specifically 1990 onwards, I began to experiment with the idea of using a mastery teaching approach that combined work on computers, classroom instruction, and repetitious review and quizzing of basic math skills that students were weak in. Over time, since most of my classrooms lacked computers for students to use, I have developed a series of quizzes, puzzles, cooperative learning activities and several styles of worksheets that can be used to force students to review and practice specific skills necessary for success in mathematics.

During my years as an ESOL teacher I began developing lessons that integrated a lot of reading into the mathematics lessons for the lowest levels of ELLs. These lessons I turned into a book, Mathematics for New Speakers of English, which is still marketed by Saddleback Educational, a publisher of ESOL and Bilingual materials.

In 2005 I was contracted to write a series of bilingual interactive tutoring lessons which included parallel language scripts, video production, and multimedia display that is presented through an internet interface. The subject matter was middle school mathematics and science. The lessons were produced for Families First: IMaGine Learning, Global Information Gateway, Inc.

Educational Expertise: Independent Contractor for Assessment Development and Alignment

Beginning in 2001 I worked for a variety of companies as an independent contractor in the field of assessment. My duties have included writing items, editing items and tests, aligning items to a wide variety of state standards and coordinating the development of assessments. The following list includes these contracts and experiences.

2001: Contracted to write test items for the state exam in New Hampshire by Tri-Lin Integrated Services, 6326 Sovereign St, San Antonio, TX 78229

2003: Contracted to write test items for practice TAKS tests in mathematics at grades 3, 4, and 5 by Tri-Lin Integrated Services, 6326 Sovereign St, San Antonio, TX 78229

2006 - 2007: Contracted to write test items for TEXES tests in mathematics for middle school and high school levels by Oak Hill Technology, Inc. 12505-A Trail Driver Austin, TX 78737 Dr. Dave Williams, Project Manager, 512-288-0008

2007: Contracted to write 450 test items for the Texas Mathematics Diagnostic System by Oak Hill Technology, Inc. 12505-A Trail Driver Austin, TX 78737. This is a Texas Education Agency project. My assignment included 8th grade math, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.

2008: Contracted by Tri-Lin Integrated Services to write approximately 800 test items for the PPAA, the new state test for Puerto Rico that was field tested in the 2008 – 2009 school year. Items were written in Spanish and covered 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 11th grade mathematics. Vicente Jaime, the project coordinator was my contact at Tri-Lin Integrated Services, 6326 Sovereign St, San Antonio, TX 78229

2008: Contracted to write 50 test items for practice tests for the Mississippi state assessment by Oak Hill Technologies, Inc. (see below for contact information.)

2009: Contracted to write 3rd and 4th grade tutoring curriculum to be used in Puerto Rico schools. (See contact information below for Tri-Lin Integrated Services.)

2009: Contracted to write an additional 250 test items for the PPAA

2010 – Present: Test Development Specialist (contract work) for Riverside Publishing. Work involves editing and checking test items for accuracy.

2010: Contracted to write an set of 11th grade practice tests to be used in Puerto Rico schools.

2011: Contracted to write and edit assessment items for Revolution Prep, a California provider of online assessment materials.

Other Experience: Southern Baptist Pastor and Foreign Missionary

Following my graduation from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, I served as the pastor of a church in Belen and later in Las Cruces. After this I worked in Spain as a missionary church planter. I returned the the states in 1988 and began my career in teaching.

III A.(3) Provide a list of your proposed initial governing body members and describe the expertise represented on this governing body that demonstrates capacity to initiate the opening of the charter school.

It is our plan that prospective five Board members will be selected from our Community Advisory Group during our start-up year. Individuals who demonstrate the leadership and decision making skills will be selected to become members of the initial Board.

The Founding Members, listed in the section previous to this one, will act on behalf of Academic Opportunities Academy until a functioning Community Advisory Group is in place. They will facilitate the recruitment, creation, and initial training to bring the initial Community Advisory Group to be an independent and functioning entity as soon as practical. Then the Founding Members and the CAG will work together on behalf of Academic Opportunities Academy until a functioning Board of Directors has been formed.

Neither CAG members nor Board members have been identified at this time. Given the nature of the career skills to be taught a good faith effort will be made to recruit at least one health care professional and one Computer or IT professional for the Board of Directors. Other potential candiates are parents, grandparents, business owners, military personnel and other community members. Minimum requirements regarding age, education levels, and criminal backgrounds will be suggeted by the CAG and codified in the bylaws, when they are adopted.

III A.(4) Describe how future governing body members will be selected as vacancies arise. Enumerate the qualifications desired for members that will assure the school's governance is competent to operate a public school.

As Board member vacancies arise, the Board will elect new members based on nominations from Board members themselves, nominations from the CAG, and/or nominations from a committee of the Board created for that purpose. All nominees will be asked to submit a resume and agree to a criminal records check before the final election in an open Board meeting. Those whom the Board judges to be competent to stand for election, based on the Bylaws and other regulations, will be eligible for election at a succeeding Board meeting after their original nomination.

B. Governing Body Training and Evaluation.

III B.(1) Describe your plan for ensuring the governing body receives the required training and how the school will include these costs in the budget. How will you ensure that the training provided is relevant to the school's governance and oversight requirements?

Training for Board members and for members of the CAG will take place at the school. The content of this training will focus on the job tasks of employees, the curriculum and instructional plan, the nature

and needs of the students, and the physical plant of the school. They will develop a knowledge of the by-laws, policy manual, and charter of Academic Opportunities Academy.

In order to ensure that training is relevant to the school's governance and oversight requirements, the Board will, at the beginning of each year, identify a set of goals for training linked to the goals of the Educational Plan of the school's charter, and create an annual calendar of board study and training sessions designed to attain those goals.

Additionally, Board members at the elected officers of the CAG will be invited and encouraged to attend any and all NMPED sponsored training sessions and New Mexico Charter School Coalition sponsored training and convention sessions. The governing body members will be expected to attend five hours of training annually on topics that include department rules, policies and procedures, statutory powers and duties of governing boards, legal concepts pertaining to public schools, finance and budget and other relevant matters to satisfy SB148 requirements. The New Mexico Board will be trained in the Open Meetings Act, charter law, roles and responsibilities, ethics, conflicts of interest and financial procedures.

III B.(2) Provide a plan for an annual self-evaluation of the governing body that reflects an evaluation of its overall effectiveness.

Since the Board will, at the beginning of each year, identify a set of goals for training linked to the goals of the Educational Plan of the school's charter, and create an annual calendar of board study and training sessions designed to attain those goals, then this will provide them with an outline that they will use for their annual self-evaluation. This evaluation will ask whether or not they have accomplished the tasks they set for themselves and what new tasks they foresee for the future.

C. Leadership and Management.

III C.(1) Describe how the governing body will monitor operational, financial and academic outcomes on an ongoing basis to ensure that the school is meeting its mission and vision.

Meetings of the New Mexico Board will be held monthly with special meetings called as needed. Meetings will be advertised in the school office and through the school newsletter and website, and will be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Each meeting will dedicate a portion of the time to public comment and another period of time for reports from the CAG. One of the most important goals of Academic Opportunities Academy is to involve parents, students, various staff and other community members as partners in the learning process.

The Principal Lead Teacher will review and insure the following data is collected and presented to the Board each month for their review. The Board may identify other metrics that they consider valid in the evaluation of Academic Opportunities Academy.

Metrics to be Monitored:

- Student Enrollment
- Student Attendance
- Students who failed to be promoted to the next grade level
- Students who failed to graduate
- Students who dropped out
- Students who left Academic Opportunities Academy or failed to return
- Student Academic Progress
- Current Financial Statements and Documents
- Liquidity = (Current Assets - Current Liabilities) / Total Expenses

Sustainability = Total Unrestricted Net Assets / Average Monthly Expenses
 Occupancy Expense = Total Occupancy Costs / Total Revenues
 Measurable improvement in the school's academic and operating performance over time
 Ratio of Enrollment Demand to Capacity
 Regulatory and Reporting Compliance - Percentage of all required filings that are complete

III C.(2) Identify the qualifications and leadership characteristics the governing body will seek when employing the head administrator. Describe the job search process and timelines for this process. If the proposed head administrator is a founder or already identified, provide a summary of his/her background and qualifications for this position.

The New Mexico Board will recruit and hire a principal lead teacher as soon as practical after the charter has been awarded to Academic Opportunities Academy and the Board of Directors has been formed. The Board will advertise the position in appropriate venues. The New Mexico Board will interview and make all final decisions regarding the hiring of the principal lead teacher.

Criteria for selecting the school principal lead teacher include:

- Masters Degree in Educational Leadership, Curriculum or other comparable area
- Certified as a School Administrator in New Mexico
- Reference and Employment Checks
- Criminal Background Checks
- Alignment with the Academic Opportunities Academy vision and mission
- Experience in charter school operations is a plus
- A proven leader in areas of curriculum design, and assessment practices
- Knowledgeable in English Language Acquisition methodology
- Knowledgeable in differentiated instructional practices
- Exemplary oral and written communications skills
- Sensitive to the needs of at risk students
- Knowledge of TQM and/or 6-Sigma
- Additional requirements identified by the Community Advisory Groups
- Knowledge in Computer Programming or Nursing is a plus

NOTE: A full job description can be found in Appendix C.

One of the two founding members will initially serve as Principal Lead Teacher. Their qualifications are discussed in Section III. A(2) above.

III C.(3) Describe how the governing body will convey to and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school's head administrator and how will he/she be evaluated and held accountable for the operations for the school's success. Provide a proposed job description for the head administrator including responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders. Attach the job description as Appendix "C".

The Principal Lead Teacher will be evaluated by the elements found in the Job Descriptions (Appendix C), as well as other criteria communicated to him/her by the Board of Directors no less than 12 months before the date of the evaluation. The CAG will be asked for input on this evaluation, as well. They will meet with the Principal Lead Teacher to present their evaluation.

D. Organizational Structure of the School.

III D.(1) Describe the organizational structure of the school and provide an organization chart that clearly delineates the relationships between all parties including the administering of the day-to-day activities of the school.

The Community Advisory Group, described in Section III A (1) above, will be a volunteer group of individuals who support the school with their time, interests and personal efforts. This group will provide advice, creative ideas and support to both the Board of Directors and the staff of the school.

The Board of Directors will be the legal decision making body whose job is to oversee the functioning of the school and to supervise the Principal Lead Teacher.

Overall daily management of Academic Opportunities Academy will be the primary role of the Principal Lead Teacher. The Office Manager and clerks will support the Principal Lead Teacher in the administrative tasks and non-instructional duties. The teachers, tutors and volunteers will provide all instructional and extra-curricular activities under the direction of the Principal Lead Teacher.

The organizational chart is part of the Personnel Policies (see Attachment E)

III D.(2) Include proposed job descriptions of certified and licensed staff. In addition, if your organization structure included non-traditional roles or positions, explain why these roles are important in implementing the school's mission and educational program. Attach staff job descriptions as Appendix "D".

The job descriptions Appendix E, can be subdivided into two categories of employees: Leadership and Instructional employees.

The leadership of the school will reside in the Principal Lead Teacher and the Office Manager. We recognize that many administrative tasks that typical principals and central office staff are called on to perform are not directly related to the main task of providing quality instruction. In order to provide the Principal Lead Teacher with the time to perform this important task, we propose a substantially enhanced role for the Office Manager. This individual will not be just another secretary, but will rather take on a number of tasks and a level of decision making unusual for a principal's secretary in other schools. This individual will be experienced and well educated, perhaps similar to an industry's chief operating officer (COO). The Principal Lead Teacher, as a result of this situation, will be very focused on the leadership of the teachers and the day-to-day operation of the instructional program.

III D.(3) Provide a description of a comprehensive evaluation process for educational staff, and how it will be tied to student performance and the school's mission and goals.

The evaluation process for staff will include an evaluation of teachers by a licensed administrator begins with the Principal Lead Teacher. The Principal Lead Teacher is ultimately responsible to accomplish the goals of the proposed charter school, The Principal Lead Teacher will be evaluated based according to the degree our goals are achieved.

III D.(4) Provide a staffing plan that demonstrates a sound understanding of staffing needs and that is viable and adequate for effectively implementing the educational program/curriculum

At full capacity (400 students in Grades 1-12) the teachers will include up to about 12 full-time regular education teachers and one special education teacher. Tutors in the instructional group will include up to about 24 with assignments for regular education and up to about 2 with assignments for special education depending on the actual student population that enrolls in Academic Opportunities Academy. The office clerical staff will include at least two positions. The campus will be lead by a Principal Lead Teacher and an Office Manager. Other needed services will be carried out by contractors.

The organizational chart is part of the Personnel Policies (see Attachment E) where additional information is also included.

III D.(5) State the length of the school day and school year (including a total number of days/hours of instruction). Describe in detail how this schedule supports the school's educational program and how the calendar is optimal for achieving high outcomes for your target student population.

Calendar

Rather than a traditional calendar, Academic opportunities Academy plans to follow a year-round academic calendar divided into three "Quarter Sessions" of approximately sixty schools days each. The two "Interession Vacations" will be approximately ten school days in length, however, these are vacations for the students only. Professional staff and most administrative staff will work on a 227 day calendar.

The year round calendar reduces the length of the summer vacation, which in turn reduces the amount of "down-time" when students are not involved in academic activities. It also provides for three short "summer schools" during the interession vacations that can be used to help lagging students catch up, if funding is identified for this purpose.

The year-round calendar for 2013 - 2014 is as follows:

First Quarter Session	
First Day of School	August 20, 2013
Holiday	September 2, 2013
Holiday	October 14, 2013
First Interession Vacation	October 28, 2013 - November 11, 2013
Second Quarter Session	
First day back	November 12, 2013
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 25, 2013 - November 29, 2013
Winter Holidays	December 23, 2013 - January 3, 2014
First day back	January 6, 2014
Holiday	January 20, 2014
Holiday	February 17, 2014
Second Interession Vacation	March 17, 2014 - March 28, 2014
Third Quarter Session	
First day back	March 31, 2014
Holiday	May 26, 2014 - May 30, 2014
First day back	June 2, 2014
Last Day of School	July 3, 2014

Total instructional days = 180

Daily Schedule

In order to integrate all of the necessary instruction, electives and extra-curriculars into the school day, and in order to provide sufficient time for needed tutoring, individual practice and preparation for academic competitions, Academic Opportunities Academy will employ an extended school day. The official school day will include nine mandatory hours on campus, which includes breaks and meal times. This will provide for a minimum on eight hours of academic and related extra-curricular activities for all students. Additionally, the campus will open early and close later, allowing an additional one-and-a-half hours for these activities as is deemed necessary by the staff and parents.

The extended day provides time for plenty of one-on-one tutoring for students who are struggling to master the objectives in a timely fashion. It also provides extra time for advanced students to work on special projects. It also allows for the scheduling of music lessons, a variety of physical education activities and other extra-curricular activities within the school day instead of after school. It is also assumed that the open-early/stay-open-late policy will better accommodate the work schedules of parents.

The extended day schedule is as follows:

Building opens: 7:30 a.m.

Official start of school: 8:00 a.m.

Official end of school: 5:00 p.m.

Building closes: 6:00 p.m.

III D.(6) Describe your professional development plan that supports the successful implementation of the educational plan, mission, and goals and that meets state requirements.
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Principles:

The National Staff Development Council's publication, NSDC Policy Points, Vol. 1, No. 2 April 2009, defines five points that need to be included in a definition of professional development. Academic Opportunities Academy will use these in the development of our program.

1. Professional development fosters collective responsibility.
 - Schools must strive to provide effective teaching school wide.
 - Professional development should foster collective responsibility for all students.
 - Professional development conducted in teams creates an environment of shared responsibility.
 - In the corporate world, team-based organizations are successful.
2. Professional development primarily occurs several times per week.
 - Continuous improvement of knowledge and practice must happen every day.
 - We need this type of workday learning, learning that takes place when teachers are at school and make time for learning and improving practice.
 - Our schools will have schedules and calendars to ensure this.
3. Professional development creates a continuous cycle of improvement.
 - American business knows the importance of continuous improvement.
 - The steps of a continuous improvement model will lead to results for students.
4. Professional development provides for job-embedded coaching.
 - While adults are exposed to new ideas and practices in workshop settings and team meetings, they also need on-the-job support to make the new ideas part of their daily routines.
 - Classroom-based coaches are more effective than other more costly and less effective innovations. Similarly, businesses have found success in building employee knowledge by having experienced employees who demonstrate "deep smarts" methodically and individually.
5. Professional development may be supported by external assistance.
 - Educators guided by data on their students and school are in the best position to identify the help they need to address their most important challenges.
 - On occasion, answers are not available inside the school and must be sought from experts outside.

Structure:

The structure of the Academic Opportunities Academy's professional development program is directly related to the structure and contents of the educational program. The elements of the structure of our program that are most closely related to the professional development program are as follows.

Open Architecture

Our schools are designed to be small campuses with large open commons areas and conference rooms that open out into these areas. There are no barriers that close off individual classrooms and separate the students and teachers into autonomous groupings with no interaction with others. Similarly any staff training that is provided will be open and shared by all. Cross training will be the norm for all school functions. There will be no secret groups or jobs, but rather everyone will have complete access to all the specialized training that is provided for anyone on the staff.

Collaboration

Although staff training may take on many forms, it will essentially be an integral part of the daily work, rather than a special occasion type of activity. All of the typical forms of external training that are typical in today's work place will be utilized. These include attending state and national conferences of educational organizations, workshops offered by local agencies, collaborative meetings sponsored by local networking groups, online professional development activities, and university level coursework. However, participation in these activities will not be limited to a special few staff members, and those who attend will share their experiences and new knowledge with the staff, as a whole.

The NSDC concept of daily training will be the standard method of executing the continuous improvement model. Special education practice has used a team approach to assessment and goal setting for their students, and we intend to do the same for all of our students. The Principal Teacher on each campus will take on the duty of reviewing the student progress metrics and scheduling weekly multi-disciplinary staff meetings to develop plans to help those students who are falling behind and/or students who need to be challenged to achieve even more than they are accomplishing.

Curriculum development is in the hands of the educational staff. This is also a training issue. Our learning activities will be developed as strands of similar-style activities. There will always be a need for editing current learning activities and developing additional ones. Within each knowledge domain, interested individuals will work together to develop these activities, as assigned. These groups will include employees from all the campuses and utilize Internet technologies to communicate with each other and to hold virtual meetings related to this work. Of course, as new learning activities are designed, these committees will provide training and mentoring for all educational staff in regards to the implementation of said activities.

Meeting individual needs

Our educational model is based on meeting the individual needs of each and every student. We plan to do this by using placement-style assessments to discover the knowledge and skills gaps exhibited by individual students. Then we will create a learning prescription for each student, designed to close these gaps and bring him/her up to grade level.

Similarly, we cannot assume that all of our employees begin work with exactly the same set of employment skills. Part of the ongoing process of professional development will be to determine an employee's current skill set, generate a reasonable goal for improvement and provide opportunities for

the individual to participate in activities designed to attain that goal. Luckily, our instructional model will utilize a curriculum mapping database to track student progress, and it will be a straightforward process to adapt that technology to the needs of our employees.

Multiple methods of instruction

Our instructional model will use many different methods of instruction, and so will our professional development program. Some professional development topics may lend themselves to a simple webpage style of presentation. These would include typical issues that are legally required and/or perennial in nature, such as, sexual harassment, the student discipline plan, campus safety plans, etc. Many of our learning activity styles, as developed by our curriculum teams, may be best taught by actually participating in the actual activities the students will experience. Also, our use of Shared Inquiry Discussions would lend itself to participating in these types of discussions using appropriate books and articles of a professional nature.

E. Employees.

III E.(1) Provide an explanation of the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees. This explanation should include a general description of the terms and conditions of employment for each class of employee (administration, professional staff and administrative staff) and how the school will address employees' recognized representatives.

The personnel policies of Academic Opportunities Academy are an essential part of the program of public education in our communities. The philosophy of Academic Opportunities Academy is reflected in these policies. The New Mexico Board of Directors wishes to establish salary schedules and working conditions that will attract and hold the highest qualified and diverse personnel who devote themselves to the education and welfare of our students.

All employees will be employed on an "at-will" basis. The Board of Directors will employ and direct the work of the Principal Lead Teacher. The Principal Lead Teacher will employ and direct the work of all other employees.

Academic Opportunities Academy will be a "non-union shop," however, the employees will be represented on the Community Advisory Group, commonly called the CAG, (see Section III F (1) below) that will be tasked with studying all issues related to the school's effectiveness, educational environment, student discipline process, etc. The CAG will be empowered to advise and make formal recommendations to both the Principal Lead Teacher and the Board of Directors.

III E.(2) Provide proposed governing body personnel policies that comply with all applicable federal and state statutes and regulations (attach as Appendix "E"); or state how and when employment policies and procedures will be developed and how you will ensure that they comply with applicable federal and state labor laws, regulations and rules.

Appendix E contains the proposed Personnel Policies. These will be amended and/or adopted as is by the Board of Directors at the time of their formation.

III E.(3) Describe a staff discipline process that provides for due process in accordance with state law.

The Personnel Policies (see Appendix E) include Code of Ethical Responsibility and Standards of Professional Conduct. These will be enforced by the Principal Lead Teacher who will make decisions regarding employees who do not adhere to these regulations or other policies that are eventually adopted by the Board of Directors.

III E.(4) Outline a proposed process for addressing employee grievances.

The Personnel Policies (see Appendix E) include a grievance policy consisting of three steps: an informal conference, a written grievance addressed to the Principal Lead Teacher and an Appeal to the Board of Directors. The Personnel Policies also address grievances related to Federal Law.

F. Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance.

III F.(1) Explain the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and the operation of the school and how their involvement will help to advance the school's mission and vision.

Charter schools should be one expression of self-awareness of the community. If we carefully examine the manner in which most schools are run, we have to admit that very few have an open and engaging relationship with the community. The entire professional educational culture of today is characterized by control from the top. At the school level this control is expressed in the person of the principal, whose decisions are made based on directives that filter down through a political structure made up of central office administrators, school boards, state and federal agencies, state and federal legislatures and myriads of court decisions. We believe that the parents, grandparents and other members of a community should not be excluded from a meaningful level of participation in the decisions necessary for the success of a charter school.

Academic Opportunities Academy has begun and will continue to hold a series of public discussions at appropriate venues with community members interested in forming a new charter school. In the near future we will ask the people present at these meetings to elect representatives willing to participate in the Community Advisory Group (CAG), an essential decision making group for the school. Although our educational plan and business model are already well developed, there are many issues that the community needs to consider. These include but are not limited to:

1. Possible use of uniforms or a dress code
2. Student discipline plan
3. The functions of volunteers on the campuses
4. The school calendar and holidays
5. Extra-curricular activities
6. School safety
7. Locations of campuses
8. Other concerns communicated by CAG members

It is our intention to create a school that is completely transparent and open in regards to all decision making. Everyone in the community needs to feel welcome on our campuses and all parents need to feel as if their ideas and suggestions are valued and acted upon. This process will be facilitated by sharing all of our improvement data and potential plans with the community and asking them to study it along with the members of the staff in order to make the best possible decisions for the school.

The CAG will be an open organization consisting of parents, grandparents, employees of the school, local business persons, and other community members. Its meetings and potential agenda items will be advertised in an accessible manner so that all interested parties will have plenty of notice in order to make plans to attend. All community members will be encouraged to share their concerns with the CAG. As needed, subcommittees may be formed to study specific topics and issues. Items discussed and recommendations will be shared with the Principal Lead Teacher, the entire staff of the school and with the Board of Directors.

III F.(2) How will you address complaints from the community, parent, or students about the school? Describe a clear resolution process for complaints.

Depending on the concerns of the complainant and the nature of the complaint, complaints may be addressed either to the CAG or to the Principal Lead Teacher or other staff member. All complainants will be allowed to officially document their concern(s) and a central file will be kept of all these complaints.

1. If the complaint is made publicly to the CAG, then the documentation will include any public discussion and any decision made by the CAG (i.e. to investigate further, to recommend action to the Principal Lead Teacher, to recommend action to the Board of Directors, etc.)
2. If the complaint is made in private to a staff member, then the documentation will include the staff members initial response. Then the Principal Lead Teacher will review the documentation, consult with appropriate individuals and respond to the complainant.
3. In either of the above cases, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response he/she may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors, who at a subsequent meeting will consider the matter and render a decision.

G. Student Policies.

III G.(1) Attach as Appendix "F" a proposed student discipline policy that complies with the Student Rights and Responsibilities set forth in the Public Education Department rules and regulations at 6.11.2 (NMAC).

The primary goal of the discipline policy of Academic Opportunities Academy is to provide clear expectations and limitations for students, parents and families in order to provide a safe, nurturing, affirmative, academically challenging environment that promotes learning and positive personal growth. The proposed student discipline policy that complies with student's rights and responsibilities set forth by the NMPED is of paramount importance to Academic Opportunities Academy which believes it is crucial that the school provides a safe learning environment which is conducive to learning and in which students can grow and develop both academically and socially.

Disciplinary measures will be aimed toward assisting each student in the development of self- control, social responsibility, and the acceptance of appropriate consequences for his or her actions. Therefore the school will maintain an environment which is free of harassment, bullying, violence, abuse, and discrimination. Establishing and maintaining school safety can be accomplished by shared sense of ownership by students, staff, parents, and the community partners. Behavioral expectations will be operationalized for the common areas, classrooms, outside areas and community. Staff, students, and their families will help to determine these expectations and the appropriate response to both appropriately and inappropriately following the agreed upon expectations. It is Academic Opportunities Academy belief, like any other subject taught, school staff must find opportunities to teach expected behaviors and re-teach if necessary.

Academic Opportunities Academy recognizes that self-discipline is both a learned behavior and a prerequisite for learning. Academic Opportunities Academy will strive to maintain a challenging, positive educational environment which is conducive to students achieving success and developing self-discipline. Academic Opportunities Academy's commitment to learning and the development of responsible and ethical citizens in our society requires the maintenance of a positive, stimulating, and safe school environment where mutual respect is the underlying principle and rules are publicized, explained, and enforced. Standards of student conduct derive from the goals of respect for self, for property, and for others. The enforcement of Academic Opportunities Academy rules and State laws will promote the development of student maturity and self-discipline essential for academic achievement, personal integrity, and responsible citizenship. These rules and regulations will be enforced fairly,

uniformly and consistently without regard to age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.

The school's code of conduct will emphasize respect for self and others. Student expectations and consequences for infractions are clearly explained in student handbook (see Appendix B). Student handbook will be distributed to each student at the beginning of the school year and students will be asked to return a signed copy of acknowledgement of receipt and understanding form.

Discipline of students who qualify under IDEA will be addressed in accordance with applicable federal and state law and regulations. The discipline procedures for these students follow the requirements of 20 USC 1415 (k) (1) and (7), CFR 300.530, and 300.531 NMSA.

Developing the Discipline Plan

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) will be tasked with developing community acceptable rules and consequences. Before school opens each year, the current discipline policy will be provided to all parents and discussed during a CAG meeting, to which all parents are always invited. This discussion will be videotaped and provided to all parents through the school's website.

The following are suggestions for the CAG to consider.

School Wide Rules

- Treat everyone with respect
- Follow directions
- Respect school and personal property
- Keep all of your body and objects to yourself

Serious Offenses:

There are some instances which require a student be sent to the office immediately. These types of serious offenses are as follows:

- Fighting
- Acting Openly Defiant/Disrespectful
- Vulgarity (by mouth or gesture)
- Possession of Illegal Substances or Weapon

Consequences:

- After-school detention
- Additional community service duties
- In-school suspension.
- Out-of-school suspension

See Appendix F for the complete proposed policy that will be presented to the CAG for consideration. After their initial input and review by the Board of Directors, a final version will be adopted and presented to parents.

III G. (2) Describe how you will provide alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long-term suspended or expelled.

The school will have a segregated space that can be used for alternative educational placements. Students placed here will receive instruction and tutoring that is equal to services provided to all other students, but they will be restricted from the majority of their social interactions with the other students. A plan will be developed designed to teach these students how to behave appropriately in the regular setting and reward them for progress towards that end.

H. Student Recruitment and Enrollment

III H.(1) Explain the plan and specific strategies for student recruitment and marketing to attract students from the school's targeted population and that will provide for broad circulation of information about the new school. Include a proposed timeline for recruitment and enrollment.

Academic Opportunities Academy will admit all students who are eligible to apply, based on local and state regulations. Pre-admission activities will be limited to information sharing meetings, publications, emails, etc. Full disclosure regarding the program and school activities will be made at that time so that parents can decide if the school will be a good fit for their children. The parents of will be asked for the language spoken at home (see below).

This policy will be printed on all application materials:

Academic Opportunities Academy will not discriminate during the admission process to our schools based on gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic ability, athletic ability or artistic ability or the district where the child resides.

(Spanish Version) Academic Opportunities Academy no discriminará durante el proceso de admisión de estudiantes a nuestras escuelas por razones de sexo, país de origen, etnicidad, religión, el ser menos valido, destrezas académicos, habilidad atlético, habilidad artístico o el distrito escollar donde reside.

Academic Opportunities Academy will begin advertising its application season on or about the first business day of January of each year. An advertising banner will be placed on the school building, our social media accounts (FaceBook, Twitter, etc,) will announce this, and posters and brochures will be placed at local businesses, churches, recreation centers, etc. During the first enrollment period, due to lack of funding for advertising, the closing date of the lottery may be delayed.

III H.(2) Describe the lottery process to be used by the school to allocate seats including tentative timeframes and procedures for conducting the lottery and for maintaining and using a wait list.

The official start of the application process will be February 1st or the first business day after that date if it falls on a weekend and will end on the last business day of March. The lottery, if needed will be held on the first business day of April. Application will be available at our website as well as at the school. Our initial intention is to create campuses that number no more than 400 students. Depending on the size of the building(s) leased, we will have capacity for up to these levels in the grade bands indicated. These numbers are optimal guidelines, but will not be used to eliminate anyone who applies before the lottery deadline.

Grade Levels	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
1 – 2	50	75	100	100	100	100
3 – 5	50	75	100	100	100	100
6 – 8	50	75	100	100	100	100
9 - 12	50	75	100	100	100	100

Due to the program requirements for a 50/50 dual language program for grades 1 – 5, each grade level band will be further divided into two home language groups. The program requirement for dual-language instruction indicates better results if the language groups are balanced. To control for this requirement the verification process for the lottery will include dividing the grade level applications into two home-language groups for lottery purposes. These same requirements are not necessary at the secondary level and a simple middle school lottery and a high school lottery would be used.

All Intent to Enroll forms that are collected on paper will be scanned and collected into a single file folder on the school's computers. All digital Intent to Enroll forms, submitted over the Internet will similarly be stored in the same locations.

A waiting list of students who were not accepted during the admissions period will be created by continuing to draw numbers during the selection process until all applications have been assigned a place on the list.

Applications submitted outside the designated application period will be added to the end of the waiting list based on their date of submission. If no waiting list exists at that time, these will be processed and admitted until the maximum enrollment is reached. After the maximum enrollment is reached, further applications will then be placed on a waiting list in the order of their submission.

Student re-enrolling for subsequent years and siblings of current students are not subject to the lottery.

The parents of all students who withdraw from the school will be provided with complete academic records at the time of withdrawal and the same records will be sent to any school that requests transfer records.

III H.(3) Describe the enrollment process including withdrawals, dis-enrollments, re-enrollments, and transfers that comply with NMSA 1978 Section 22-8B-4.1, and Subsection D of 6.80.4.12 NMAC.

Enrollment

After the lottery has been held or at the end of the application period when no lottery is needed parents will be contacted and asked to provide the information and documents necessary to complete a future student's records. In the case of a homeless student, Federal guidelines will be followed so as not to exclude an eligible student whose documents are not available.

Transfer records and transcripts will be requested from their current campuses. In the case of special education students a copy of their current IEP will be requested and a meeting with the parents will be scheduled to begin the process of planning for their program during the coming school year.

Parent/student orientation sessions will be conveniently scheduled during the weeks leading up to the start of school in order to showcase the campus and explain the program.

Withdrawals

Information will be requested regarding the plans of withdrawing students so as to provide them with appropriate documents necessary for enrolling at another school. The office staff will follow up on these students to ensure that they have enrolled elsewhere and to provide the receiving school with necessary transcripts.

Dis-enrollments

The dis-enrollment of a student will occur only when it is determined that the student is not eligible to attend the school according to relevant state regulations. Expulsion or long-term suspension is not dis-enrollment.

Re-enrollments

Students who have withdrawn from the school and come back for enrollment in the middle of a school year may be enrolled if space is available.

Transfers

Information will be requested regarding the plans of transferring students so as to provide them with appropriate documents necessary for enrolling at another school. The office staff will follow up on these students to ensure that they have enrolled elsewhere and to provide the receiving school with necessary transcripts.

I. Legal Compliance

III I.(1) Describe how your governing body will ensure compliance with NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5.2(2011), which deals with conflicts of interest. Attach as Appendix "G" a copy of your proposed Conflict of Interest Policy and a sample disclosure statement of any real or potential conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest are governed by a process that includes a duty to disclose, determining whether a conflict of interest exists, procedures for addressing the conflict of interest and responses to violations of the conflicts of interest policy. See Appendix G for a complete explanation.

III I.(2) Describe what steps your governing body and school will take to ensure that the operations of the school and governing body are transparent and open to the public.

All meetings of the CAG and the Board of Directors will be appropriately advertised and open to the public. Regular reports, including but not limited to, financial statements, student achievement, AYP status, and staffing patterns will be made available to the public through the school's website. The campus will be accessible to visitors during all regular school hours.

J. Evidence of Partnership/Contractor relationship. (If Applicable.)

III J.(1) If the school has identified a partner organization or a contractor that is essential to the existence of the charter school, its governance, key instructional, or management functions, provide the following information: name of the entity or person; contact information; a description of the nature and purpose of the relationship with the charter school; and involvement in the school's governance. (If applicable.)

As indicated in the section on Special Education, we have identified Cenpatico as a potential contractor that will be able to provide services, as needed. Other contractors may be identified at a future date for necessary services, but none have been contracted at this time.

III J.(2) Attach a copy of the proposed contract or evidence of the terms of the proposed agreement with the partnership or contractor as Appendix "H".

K. Waivers.

III K.(1) Identify the waivers as provided for in NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) that you are requesting and describe how use of this waiver will support the school's plan.

NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) Waiver	Requested?		Description of how waiver will support school's plan.
	yes	no	
Individual class load	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Given the multi-grade classroom and the overall architectural design of the school, the individual class load of a specific teacher will actually be an unmeasurable metric. Our plan for this grades 1 – 12 school calls for an approximate ratio of one teacher for every thirty students and two tutors assigned to assist each teacher. This provides an adult to student ratio of one to ten.
Teaching load	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Given the multi-grade classroom and the overall architectural design of the school, the teaching load of a specific teacher will actually be an

			unmeasurable metric. Our plan for this grades 1 – 12 school calls for an approximate ratio of one teacher for every thirty students and two tutors assigned to assist each teacher. Teachers are not assigned a specific daily schedule of classes and students, since the structure and schedule will be much more organic in nature. Basically, every teacher will share all the students on campus with all the other teachers.
Length of school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	insert
Staffing pattern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The staffing pattern will require that every teacher will share all the students on campus with all the other teachers. We plan to build a competent staff of appropriately certified teachers, but the pattern may vary from accepted norms.
Subject areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	insert
Purchase of instructional materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some of the materials we will purchase are probably not included on the lists of adopted textbooks. Some are not actually books, in the traditional sense of the word because they are digital in nature. We would like to use these funds for other types of materials that meet the needs of the students.
Evaluation standards for school personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	insert
School principal duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	insert
Drivers education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If driver education is required, we would not be able to provide that service due to the small size of the school.

III K.(2) Identify any discretionary waivers as provided for in NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) or elsewhere in the Public School Code that you are requesting and describe how use of this waiver will support the school's plan. If this is an application to a local district, you must identify all waivers you are requesting from local board policies. (If you require additional space, attach as an Appendix.)

Discretionary Waiver(s) Sought.	Description of how waiver will support school's plan.
insert	Insert
insert	Insert
insert	Insert
insert	Insert

Additional Waivers

L. Transportation and Food.

III L.(1) Describe the school's plans for meeting the transportation needs of its students and plans for contracting services for transportation. (If applicable.)

Academic Opportunities Academy does not plan to provide transportation for its students. It will be the responsibility of parents to provide transportation to and from school for their children.

III L.(2) Describe the school's plan for meeting the food services needs of its students and any plans for contracting with approved/appropriate food services vendors. (If applicable.) What are the school's plans for providing food services to students who qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch program?

Plans for meeting food services needs of our students will include offering nutritious breakfasts, lunches and afternoon snack to via a contract arrangement with a food service provider. The school also intends to enter into USDA National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. All food services will meet or exceed state and national standards for health, nutrition, safety and food service.

All staff will be trained to provide basic first aid and/or become CPR certified.

M. Facilities.

III M.(1) Attach documentation that the school's detailed description of the charter school's projected facility needs, including projected request for capital outlay assistance, has been approved by the director of the New Mexico Public Facilities Authority at Appendix "I".

Our plans are to find a building with approximately 16,500 square feet of space to lease. This could vary some, depending on the location, but that would affect the total number of students we could accomodate.

See Appendix I for a complete description.

III M.(2) Describe the efforts you have taken to identify a facility for your proposed school. (It is not required that you disclose a specific facility that is under consideration.)

We have contracted with an expert broker who handles only facility needs for charter schools. He has identified multiple buildings for lease that could meet our needs. Most of these are either empty retail facilities or vacant warehouses. Their availability is not guaranteed, and others may come on the market after approval of our application.

III M.(3) What is the applicant's plan for funding the school's facility, including rent, maintenance, equipment and repairs?

Most of the buildings we have encountered are renting for \$5.00 to \$12.00 per square foot on a yearly basis. (\$6,857 to \$16,500 per month)

Our plans for funding this cost are included in the budget attached to this application (see Appendix K). We will ask the lessors for an abatement on the lease for at least three months to help with start-up costs. Needed renovations before budget is available will be done with volunteer help from the CAG and donations. After that, we will do work on weekends to upgrade the facility.

IV. BUSINESS PLAN

A. Budgets.

IV A.(1) Provide a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet for each year of the proposed 5-year charter term that will determine the amount of SEG funding the school will receive based on the current unit value, and which will be used to propose the 5-year budget plan. Attach as Appendix "J".

IV A.(2) Provide a proposed 5-year budget plan based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet completed based on the current unit value. The plan must align with the school's 5-year growth plan including staffing, facilities, educational program and mission. Attach as Appendix "K".

IV A.(3) Provide a detailed narrative description of the revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the proposed 5-year budget plan is based. Present budget priorities that are consistent with and support key parts of the plan including the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility. Present realistic evidenced-based revenue and expenditures assumptions.

Budget Narrative

We will accept students in any grade level up to our intended operating level of about 300 students. In our budget we indicated that we had 25 students per grade level, this may not be how our actual enrollment per grade level will turn out.

Our budget does not include income for special education or English language learners (ELL) in years 2-5. We intend to pursue these funds, federal grants, and other sources of funding. It is clear that our schools can operate with these funding levels.

AOA New Mexico Five Year Budget Plan

Line 5

We intend to hire seven (7) teachers with some of them certified in more than one content area.

One Physics Teacher
One Chemistry Teacher
One Math Teacher
One Social Studies Teacher
One English / Spanish / ELL Teacher
One Dance Teacher (Half FTE)
One Martial Arts Teacher (Half FTE)
One Fine Arts Teacher

Line 6
Special Education Teacher

Line 9
One Nursing Teacher
One Computer Science Teacher

Line 17
We plan to hire Masters and Doctors level students who have a student visa from the local universities and colleges. We plan to hire students in specific specialties so that each content area is well represented according to the specific needs of each campus.

Instructional Assistants will tutor students individually or in small groups. They will also be available to students to answer questions or provide academic assistance to students.

These Instructional Assistants will work 19 or less hours per week and will not receive benefits.

Physics
Chemistry
Math
Social Studies
Economics / Math
Law / Social Studies
Engineering / Math / Physics
Business / Math / Economics
One English / Spanish

Lines 23-34
Instructional Assistants will work 19 or less hours per week and will not receive benefits.

Line 49
Travel expenses for student educational field trips.

Line 52
Teacher in-service training. We envision that we may need more training than traditional programs since our program has many unique features.

Line 58
Our Curriculum Mapping Database and Software system and other testing software.

Line 59

Supplies for our students and teachers for instructional purposes at about \$97.39 per student per year.

Line 63

1 Server at about \$1000.00 each

325 Tablet Computers at about \$390.00 each

Office Furniture at about \$5000.00

110 Tables at \$75.00 each

360 Chairs at \$25.00 each

Line 70

One Social Worker

Lines 87-98, excluding Line 96

Benefits for the one Social Worker

Line 109

Estimated Diagnostician services on a contracted basis

Line 117

Estimated miscellaneous special education services on a contracted basis

Line 133

General office supplies for the Office Manager and Clerks

Line 137

Miscellaneous Supplies

We see that in this budget there are several locations to include supplies to operate Academic Opportunities Academy. We realize that we will have to prioritize our purchases to insure we can perform our mission. Our Community Advisory Group(s) will be involved in these decisions to insure our resources are most effectively utilized.

Copier/Fax/Scanner

Paper

File Folders

Binders

Clips

Envelopes

Stamps

Certificates

Student Incentives

Staplers

Shredders

Waste Baskets

Recycling Bins

Ceiling Mounted Projectors

White Boards

White Board Markers

Tack Strips for presenting student work
Projection Screens
Wide Screen Televisions for recognizing our best performers and to present educational information
Signs
Banners
Flags
Maps
Periodic Charts
Custodial Supplies
Restroom Supplies
Instruments
Art Supplies
Chemistry Lab Supplies and Equipment
Biology Lab Supplies and Equipment
Martial Art Equipment
Nursing/Medical Equipment and Supplies

Line 145
One Clerical Assistant (Clerk)

Lines 149-160, excluding Line 148
Benefits for one Clerical Assistant (Clerk)

Line 186
Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 217
A Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firm will provide audit services to Academic Opportunities Academy as an external authority that validates our financial information. Audits test financial information against Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), ensuring all applicable accounting standards are followed.

Line 219
A lawyer or law firm will provide us will advice and guidance to insure that all our operations are in full compliance with federal, New Mexico and local laws and regulations.

Line 220
Other professional service may include consultations with experts to insure our special education, bilingual education programs, and/or other programs are in full compliance with federal, New Mexico and local laws and regulations.

Line 224
Advertising for our open houses, employment opportunities, board meeting dates, times and locations, informing the public about school functions, and other permissible advertising in accordance with the New Mexico PED.

Line 225
Costs for board member travel, particularly if we are awarded a charter in more than one location.

Line 226

We think it is extremely important that our board is well trained so that they are able to provide the oversight and guidance to insure Academic Opportunities Academy is the best charter school.

Line 236

Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 240

Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 245

Salary for the Principal Lead Teacher (Principal)

Line 247

Salary for two Office Clerks (Secretaries)

Lines 251-262, excluding Line 260

Benefits for the Principal Lead Teacher (Principal), and two Office Clerks (Secretaries)

Line 282

Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 286

Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 293

Salary for one Office Manager (Business Manager)

Line 299-310, excluding Line 308

Benefits for the Principal Lead Teacher (Principal) and Office Manager (Secretary)

Line 323

Advertising for our open houses, employment opportunities, board meeting dates, times and locations, informing the public about school functions, and other permissible advertising in accordance with the New Mexico PED.

Line 330

Educational Software

Line 331

Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 335

Miscellaneous Supplies

Line 345

One half-time Custodian

Line 249-360, excluding Line 358
Benefits for one half-time Custodian

Line 381

We understand that we will probably not obtain a full service lease that includes utilities, but the amount budgeted is sufficient to provide for the lease and all included utilities and expenses.

Line 386

Property/Liability Insurance

Line 401

Miscellaneous Supplies

IV A.(4) Present viable strategies for meeting potential budget and cash-flow shortfalls, particularly for the first year of operation.

Personnel Budget Control

Since the largest part of the budget will be personnel costs we will take the following precautions:

1. Limit initial hiring to absolutely essential personnel
2. Hire some positions as long-term substitutes and then put them on as regular employees when the full budget is available
3. Hire tutors on a probationary status at a more modest wage for the first 60 days
4. Combine some positions by hiring individuals with more than one area of certification or expertise
5. Principal Lead Teacher will also serve as a teacher
6. Train parents and volunteers to serve as tutors and office clerks

Building and Furnishings Control

1. If the initial enrollment does not need the entire space utilization, renovations will be limited to the needed space
2. Purchase of less expensive furniture, such as folding tables and stacking chairs, until money is available for more furniture
3. Rental of part of a larger building with the option to take over more space at a later time
4. Renting under a contract where the first two or three months are at a lower rate
5. Negotiating a lower rate on utilities and Internet connections for the first six months
6. Use temporary signage on the building

Instructional Materials and Curriculum

1. Developing the less expensive parts of the curriculum materials first, those with free access to Internet services, etc.
2. Purchasing smaller numbers of technology equipment that is shared
3. Putting off purchases of specialized equipment until later in the first year
4. Asking parents to provide supplies needed by their children

IV A.(5) Attach a proposed salary schedule for licensed or certified staff as Appendix "L".

B. Financial Policies, Oversight, Compliance and Sustainability.

IV B.(1) Provide a detailed plan indicating how the charter school will manage its fiscal responsibilities that is

aligned with and supports the school's educational program, staffing plan and job descriptions, and that demonstrates an understanding of the school's financial management obligations.

Academic Opportunities Academy will adhere to the seven practices designed to accomplish sound fiscal management of an organization. These include: establishing internal controls (through policy); monitoring compliance with fiscal policies; developing financial reporting interpretation skills; developing accurate budgets; recognizing red flags; minimizing risk; and hiring an independent auditor.

IV B.(2) Provide a description of the internal control procedures the school will utilize to safeguard assets, segregate its payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency and insure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the school's procedures.

Budget Development

The Office Manager and the Principal Lead Teacher are responsible for developing the proposed budget which covers all funds.

1. A budget calendar will be developed to include all necessary steps in the process.
2. A meeting for input from the Community Advisory Group and other interested individuals from the community is held.
3. Staff members provide input.
4. The prior year budget will be reviewed, and a budget to actual report will be developed. This report will be given to the Board to review.
5. The Board of Directors will set the strategic direction of the budget for the upcoming year.
6. Based on these inputs, a tentative budget is developed and published.
7. The proposed budget is presented to the Board for approval in an open meeting where public comment is invited.
8. The Office Manager and the Principal Lead Teacher are responsible for preparing a proposal for all budget adjustments and budget modifications, as needed, during the year. These are submitted to Board for approval before expenditures are made related to any increases.
9. Budget adjustments, which do not alter the total amount of the budget, include the following: intra-budget transfers, which are transfers between expenditure codes within the same function, and inter-budget transfers, which are transfers between expenditure codes outside state functions.
10. Budget modifications, which do alter the total amount of the budget, include the following: budget increases, which increase the funds available for the current year, and budget decreases, which decrease the funds available for the current year.
11. There are no budget transfers allowed between funds.
12. Once all approvals are in place, the Office Manager makes the approved changes to the budget in the Budget Module in the APTA financial system, and the Office Manager will review the modified/adjusted budget.

Our policies and practices will conform 100% to those outlined in the Manual of Procedures: Public Schools Accounting and Budgeting, found at the following website:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/div/fin/school.budget/PSAB/index.html>

IV B.(3) Identify the plan for placing adequate personnel in place to perform financial tasks that is supported by the school's organizational structure and budget. Include job qualifications and responsibilities.

Academic Opportunities Academy is aware of the level of responsibility which accompanies its handling of public funds, and therefore expects to contract with New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools to

consult, coordinate, receive training for our New Mexico Board, Principal Lead Teacher, Office Manager, Office Clerks, and other key personnel, and set up our fiscal management operations.

Our Office Manager will hold a New Mexico School Business Official License issued from the New Mexico Public Education Department. Other employees will also receive this same training.

IV B.(4) Provide a description of how the governing body will provide the proper legal fiscal oversight to ensure compliance and financial stability. Demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the financial viability of the school.

Monthly Board of Director meetings will include a report from the Office Manager that provides budgetary information, cash flow analysis, payroll issues, accounts payable, attendance issues affecting income, and internal auditing of randomly selected expenditures. These reports will be provided with enough time before the meeting so that Board members have time to review them. The same reports will be available for CAG members, as well.

An external auditor will be contracted by the board and provide regular reports per the specifications of that contract.

IV B.(5) Describe the school's strategic vision (long-range planning) for the sustainability of the school. Discuss the plans for addressing enrollment that does not meet the projections stated in your application.

Two important issues affect sustainability: enrollment and attendance rate.

The initial budget, each school year, will be built on an 85% attendance rate for the number of students who have accepted enrollment 30 days before the budget is adopted. Personnel expenses are the largest part of the budget for most schools, and our personnel plan for the year will be developed based on the pre-enrollment budget. This will allow for year-to-year adjustments based on changing enrollments and the budget amendment process will allow for mid-year adjustments if enrollment increases.

The 85% attendance rate target may seem low, but it will allow for building up a fund balance that should equal no less than three-months of expenses. Our Attendance Manager will work with all families in order to attain our 99% attendance goal for the year.

V. EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

V A. Describe the type of outreach the applicant(s) conducted to make students and families aware of the proposed charter school and give evidence of the support you received in response.

We have e-mailed all the New Mexico elected political office holders that we were able to obtain their e-mail address. We have placed fliers at many of the businesses in each of the cities we intend to operate charter schools. We have e-mailed businesses that we have had relationships with as well. We have e-mailed non-profit organizations in the cities we intend to operate charter schools requesting their support. I have spoken individually to various people in each of the cities we intend to operate and have found a lot of support for our charter school idea. Below is a partial list of those we have contacted regarding our charter school.

Aaron Skinner <waskinner@gmail.com>,
"Ramon V. Aguilar - Option Program Hs" <raguil20@sisd.net>,
alan.garduna@lnfdist.com,
Alexander Cotoia <alex.cotoia@gmail.com>,
Brian Clement <brian.clement2@gmail.com>,

"David S. Barkley" <dbarkley@virtlab.com>,
 Bill Burt <bburt@bbiradio.net>,
 Casavantes Ellen <ellen.casavantes@yahoo.com>,
 Carrie Trussell <rctrussell@gmail.com>,
 corren young <crocodiledundaddy@yahoo.com>,
 courtney elliot <courtneyelli2007@yahoo.com>,
 FASTSIGNS 211 <FASTSIGNS.211@fastsigns.com>,
 Isy Flores Ramos <isyfloresomnilife_8@hotmail.com>,
 Georgina Gonzalez <gggeorginaaaa@hotmail.com>,
 Veronica K Guevara <vguevar2@cp.epcc.edu>,
 GilbertPinedaCPA@aol.com,
 HeOliveira@aol.com,
 "Harrell, David" <David.Harrell@nmlegis.gov>,
 Jeremiah Mustered <jeremiah.mustered@aceministries.com>,
 Joaquin Moreno <sunsetphoto1@yahoo.com>,
 Joe Sandoval <jmspepejr@yahoo.com>,
 j.m.s.pepe.jr@yahoo.com,
 Raquel Casavantes <mynameisraquel07@yahoo.com>,
 Mackenzie Webb <Mackenzie@nmccs.org>,
 Michelle T <michelle.tan71@gmail.com>,
 "Mr. Paco Wong" <pwong00@aol.com>,
 Thrifty Nickel <thriftnickelep@aol.com>,
 Stan Okies <stan@wfkaram.com>,
 Otero STEM <OteroSTEM@gmail.com>,
 Rita Casavantes <r-casavantes@raytheon.com>,
 "Versie, Xavier M SFC MIL USA TRADOC USAREC" <Xavier.Versie@usarec.army.mil>,
 Silvia X Ronquillo <ssias1@cp.epcc.edu>,
 yherrell@yahoo.com,
 susiegalea2012@gmail.com,
 Saul Soto <ssoto@bnhr.org>,
 rsomers@humana.com,
 rcantin@ci.alamogordo.nm.us,
 ggkern@valonet.com,
 leavell4@leaco.net,
 linda.lopez@nmlegis.gov,
 linda.lovejoy@nmlegis.gov,
 richard.martinez@nmlegis.gov,
 cisco.mcsorley@nmlegis.gov,
 radair@dfn.com,
 vernon@asbillforsenate.com,
 sue.beffort@nmlegis.gov,
 boitanom@aol.com,
 petecampos@newmexico.com,
 howiemorales@yahoo.com,
 munozgeo@gmail.com,
 nmsenate@msn.com,
 jortizyp@msn.com,
 cynthia.nava@nmlegis.gov,

marykay.papen@nmlegis.gov,
carlos.cisneros@nmlegis.gov,
lisa@curtislawfirm.org,
tim.eichenberg@nmlegis.gov,
dede.feldman@nmlegis.gov,
maryjane.garcia@nmlegis.gov,
william.payne@nmlegis.gov,
john.pinto@nmlegis.gov,
nancy.rodriquez@nmlegis.gov,
sanderrue@comcast.net,
johnchrisryan@yahoo.com,
senb26@yahoo.com,
eric.griego@nmlegis.gov,
senatorgriego@yahoo.com,
charden@theosogroup.com,
stuart.ingle@nmlegis.gov,
timothy.jennings@nmlegis.gov,
tk@timkellerfornewmexico.com,
senatormssanchez@aol.com,
jphn.sapien@nmlegis.gov,
bill@williamsharer.com,
john.smith@nmlegis.gov,
david.ulibarri@nmlegis.gov,
peter.wirth@nmlegis.gov,
john.sapien@nmlegis.gov,
donagale@zianet.com,
mary.quintana2@state.nm.us,
kenneth.ortiz@state.nm.us,
ellie.ortiz@state.nm.us,
trish.winter@state.nm.us,
bobbi.shearer@state.nm.us,
patricia.herrera@state.nm.us,
kari.fresquez@state.nm.us,
angel.espinoza@state.nm.us,
Joseph@cervanteslawnm.com,
jonig@zianet.com,
alujan@q.com,
docmcmillan@gmail.com,
annunez@zianet.com,
steve@stevefischmann.com,
maryhelen.garcia@nmlegis.gov,
RICKLITTLEFORREP@gmail.com,
c.brown.nm55@gmail.com,
ggkern@valornet.com,
bobwooley66@gmail.com,
wjgray@pvtnetworks.net,
noralee@cableone.net,
tavish38@gmail.com,

rudy_s_martinez@msn.com,
zachjcook@gmail.com,
askdennis@denniskintigh.com,
csecows@aol.com,
jrmadalena@fsipinc.org,
roberto.gonzales@nmlegis.gov,
debbie.rodella@yahoo.com,
cjelliott@bendbroadband.com,

Mark Casavantes passed out about 2000 fliers to individuals, and businesses in each of the communities we seek to open charter schools over a period of several months. Mark Casavantes has visited each city that we intend to operate charter schools almost every week. He has presented a 60 page or so slide show presentation to those who were interested. When presented with this information a large majority have been very much in favor of our charter school.

Four elected political representatives have either met with Mr. Casavantes, spoken with Mr. Casavantes by telephone, or corresponded by e-mail. Two have been privately supportive, one had questions, one elected political representative met with me, we had a long and candid conversation. These individuals gave advice, and said that they had to be very cautious who they support due to the political consequences that they may be subjected to.

Academic Opportunities Academy has contacted many of the colleges and universities in New Mexico in an attempt to establish a partnership for our dual credit program. We are not able to make any formal agreement until Academic Opportunities Academy has a charter with the state of New Mexico. A few individuals with New Mexico State University are interested in working with us on our dual credit program in Nursing and Computer Programming.

V B. Provide the total number of students interested in the charter by grade level. DO NOT provide names or specific letters of interest from families or students. If appropriate to demonstrate that the interested students meet the demographics of the students you are hoping to serve by the proposed school, disaggregate the number of prospective students by zip code, school of attendance (current), gender or type of current school (home, private, public), or other pertinent data.

We have presented our plans to individuals and small groups in the community and received an indication of support from most of them. However, since the charter has not been approved and since we cannot legally allow students to be enrolled, we do not have a definitive list yet.

In Las Cruces, to date, five families have indicated a strong interest in having their children attend our charter school.

V C. Explain the founder(s)' ties to and knowledge of the community the school is intended to serve.

Mark Casavantes has several family members who live in Albuquerque, Mesilla, and Roswell, New Mexico. He has taught at Cibola High School and Highland High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was also Assistant Principal at Highland High School during Summer School. He has been a math tutor for tutorial services that provided service to the Gadsden ISD. He has tutored students from Anthony, La Union, Mesquite, Vado, Sunland Park, and Chaparral, New Mexico. He has an affinity for New Mexico, and very much desires the children of New Mexico to succeed. He is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of New Mexico's children and very much wants the opportunity to accomplish this difference through Academic Opportunity Academies unique and promising charter schools.

Wes Clarkson is a former resident of Las Cruces where he was the pastor of a Baptist Church. He still has contacts with many individuals he knew during that time period and has shared the plans for the school with them. All have been supportive of the idea of such a school.

V D. Explain any partnerships, networking relationships, and/or any resources or agreements that are planned with these persons or entities.

Academic Opportunities Academy has been developing relationships with:

Salvation Army

Boys and Girls Clubs

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Small Business Administration

Better Business Bureau

The Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce

Wells Fargo Bank

Alexander J. Cotia

El Paso Rescue Mission

Gamwelltech

Columbus Community School

New Mexico State University

United Way of Southwest New Mexico

V E. If there are other public schools in the geographic area within which you are seeking to locate, describe why your proposed school is a needed option for the students served by the existing school(s).

The charter school movement has created its own history that seems to have led to a set idea about the uniqueness of charter schools. Some are unique because of a special interest area (the Academy of Trades and Technology or the Media Arts Collaborative Charter School, both in Albuquerque). These are akin to typical magnet programs. Others are unique for a specialized curriculum style such as Montessori or the many flavors of computer based curriculums. All of the styles of uniqueness lead to one end result: they appeal to a limited group of parents and students.

Academic Opportunities Academy is conceptualized in a different manner. We began our developmental process by answering one specific question: How can we design a school to meet the needs of all students in today's technological age and use the best elements that we have studied in the area of educational research?

Our program is unique because we began with the idea of improving student achievement, and every decision was made in relation to that ideal. We adopted a dual-language approach because there is credible research that says that teaching all students two languages will improve their learning across the board. We want to teach two career fields (health sciences and computer technology) because the research indicates that students who are learning these kinds of things are more involved and less bored in high school. Our uniqueness is the fact that we will implement a variety of well researched methods for teaching and learning in every subject area that our students study. One size does not fit all, and we will strive to meet the individual goals and needs of each and every student.

V F. Optional. Provide letters of support from community leaders, business people or elected officials. (If additional space is needed, submit a separate document as a supplement to the Appendices.)

See supplement, since these could not be pasted in this area.

VI. REQUIRED APPENDICES

Appendix Number	Appendix Description (* indicates required appendix)
A	*Course Scope and Sequence
B	Governing Documents
C	*Head Administrator job description
D	*Job Descriptions (of licensed and certified staff)
E	Governing Body Personnel Policies
F	*Student Discipline Policy
G	*Conflict of Interest Policy/Disclosure Statement
H	Proposed contract or agreement with partner or contractor (Required if you have one)
I	*PSFA-approved projected facility plan documentation
J	*910B5 SEG Computation Revenue Estimate
K	*5-year budget plan
L	*Proposed salary schedule for licensed staff

PART C: CHARTER APPLICATION EVALUATION RUBRIC

The Charter Application Evaluation Rubric ("Rubric") will be used to determine whether the Application meets, partially meets or does not meet the application requirements of law and the authorizer. It can also be used by the applicant to guide the writing of the Application. The reviewers must objectively review each indicator in order to provide an overall assessment of the Application components.

The Rubric will be used to determine whether the Application may be approved, approved with conditions, or denied for any one or combination of the following reasons:

- The application is deemed adequate or complete;
- The proposed charter school is in the best interest of the projected students, the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the proposed charter school applies to operate;
- Whether the applicant proposes to offer an educational program that is consistent with the requirements or purpose of the Charter Schools Act. NMSA 1978 §22-8B-6(K)(2011)

However, an application may be denied because:

- the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was involved in a charter that was revoked or not renewed for fiscal mismanagement; or these individuals were discharged from a public school for mismanagement; or
- a proposed state authorized charter school fails to request to be designated as a board of finance.

NMSA 1978 §22-8B-6(K)(2011).

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
Executive	The summary demonstrates a cohesive and comprehensive	The summary articulates a plan, but leaves out information that	The summary is confusing, incomplete and does not

	plan for the contemplated school and addresses all of the elements requested in the application.	would explain some of the required elements for the executive summary.	address most of the required elements for the executive summary.
	The model or focus of the proposed school is clearly stated.	The model or focus of the proposed school is not clearly stated.	A model or focus of the school is not provided.

II. EDUCATION PLAN

A. SCHOOL SIZE

B. VISION

C. MISSION

Evaluation Criteria. The vision and mission statements describe the purpose for the school and express the ideal, long-term impact, focus, scope and scale of the school.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
II.A. School Size	The applicant provides all of the required information.		The applicant does not provide all of the required information.
II. A and B. Vision and Mission	The mission statement clearly states the purpose for and goal of the school, and explains how the school will reach that goal. The mission statement clearly translates into measurable and achievable goals, the selected curriculum, operations, and all aspects of the school.		A mission statement is stated but does not clearly translate into measurable and achievable goals, the selected curriculum, operations and all aspects of the school.
	A coherent vision of what the school hopes to look like in the future is evident (long-term goals) and sustainable.		The vision is stated, but does not provide a clear picture of what the school will look like if it is achieving its goals.

D. GOALS

Evaluation Criteria. The school has clearly stated ambitious, but attainable educational goals that are aligned with the school's mission. The goals are specific, measurable (based on identified indicators and expected performance levels that can be measured by a reliable instrument).

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet

II.D.(1) Student Academic Performance	The school has appropriate and manageable student academic performance goals that are rigorous and reflect high expectations. Goals meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has goals that are measureable, but there may be too few or too many goals for the school to manage successfully or are insufficiently rigorous. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable academic performance goals; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the school's mission or vision.	The goals do not tie to the school's mission or vision.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.
II.D.(2) Student Academic Growth	The school has appropriate and manageable student academic growth goals that are rigorous and reflect high expectations. Goals meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has goals that are measureable, but there may be too few or too many goals for the school to manage successfully or are insufficiently rigorous and do not reflect high expectations. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable academic growth goals; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the school's mission or vision.	The goals do not tie to the school's mission or vision.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.
II.D.(3) Addressing Achievement Gaps	The school has appropriate and manageable goals that address how the school will address achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between student subgroups; and the goals meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has stated goals, that only partially describe how the school will address achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between student subgroups, or that are insufficiently rigorous. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable goals to address student achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between student subgroups; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the school's mission or vision.	The goals do not tie to the school's mission or vision.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.

II.D.(4) Attendance	The school has appropriate and manageable goals that address attendance and meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has goals that are measureable, but only partially address student attendance or are insufficiently rigorous. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable goals to address student attendance or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the school's mission or vision.	The goals do not tie to the school's mission or vision.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.
II.D.(5) Recurrent Enrollment	The school has appropriate and manageable goals that address recurrent enrollment that are rigorous and reflect high expectations. Goals meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has goals that are measureable, but only partially address recurrent enrollment or are insufficiently rigorous. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable goals to address recurrent enrollment issues; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the mission or vision of the school.	The goals do not tie to the mission or vision of the school.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.
II.D.(6) College Readiness	The school has appropriate and manageable goals that address college readiness that are rigorous and reflect high expectations. Goals meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has goals that are measureable, but only partially address college readiness or are insufficiently rigorous and do not reflect high expectations. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable goals to address college readiness; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the mission or vision of the school.	The goals do not tie to the mission or vision of the school.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.

II.D. (7) Graduation Rate	The school has appropriate and manageable goals that address graduation rates that are rigorous and reflect high expectations.	The school has goals that are measureable, but only partially address graduation rates or are insufficiently rigorous and do not reflect high expectations. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable goals to address graduation rates; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the mission or vision of the school.	The goals do not tie to the mission or vision of the school.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.
II.D.(8) Growth for Lowest 25%	The school has appropriate and manageable goals that address the growth of the lowest 25% of students in reading and math that are rigorous and reflect high expectations. Goals meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school has goals that are measureable, but only partially address the growth of the lowest 25% of students in reading and math, or are insufficiently rigorous and do not reflect high expectations. Goals meet most of the stated Evaluation Criteria.	The school does not have measurable goals that address the growth of the lowest 25% of students in reading and math; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The stated goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	The goals do not clearly tie to the mission or vision of the school.	The goals do not tie to the mission or vision of the school.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals are too broad or vague and do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.

E. ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

Evaluation Criteria. The school has clearly stated ambitious, but attainable organizational goals that are aligned with the school's mission. The goals are specific, measurable (based on identified indicators and expected performance levels that can be measured by a reliable instrument).

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
II.E Organizational Goals	The school has appropriate and manageable organizational goals that are rigorous and reflect high expectations.	The school has organizational goals that are measureable, but there may be too few or too many goals for the school to manage successfully or are insufficiently rigorous.	The school's organizational goals are not measurable; or the goals do not meet the stated Evaluation Criteria.
	The school's stated	The school's stated organizational	The school's stated

	organizational goals are clearly aligned to the vision and mission of the school.	goals do not clearly tie to the school's mission or vision.	organizational goals do not tie to the school's mission or vision.
	The goals are specific and measurable, attainable and time-bound.	The goals will not lead to a sufficient plan to monitor progress toward meeting them.	The goals do not lend themselves to monitoring progress.

F. CURRICULUM

G. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (If Applicable)

Evaluation Criteria: The school uses a clearly defined, research-based curriculum with the potential to raise the achievement of the intended student population and that is aligned with NM State Standards.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
II.F.(1) Philosophy	The philosophical approach and curriculum framework are clearly presented and clearly aligns with the school's stated mission and goals.	The philosophical approach and curriculum framework are partially defined and/or the alignment with the school's stated mission and goals is unclear.	The philosophical approach and curriculum framework are not clearly presented and do not align with the school's stated mission and goals.
II.F.(2) Research/Data	Research provided on the proposed instructional practices supports the use of this philosophy or approach to achieve high student outcomes.	Research provided on the proposed instructional practices is partially relevant, limited, unreliable or not valid.	Research on the proposed instructional practices is not provided.
II.F.(3) Curriculum Description	A description of the curriculum is provided and reflects an organized, cohesive curriculum for all grade levels, and aligns with the school's mission and educational philosophy.	A description of the curriculum is provided, but only partially aligns with the school's mission and educational philosophy.	The description of the curriculum does not align with the school's mission and educational philosophy; or a description of the curriculum is not provided.
II.F.(4) Curriculum Research	Clear research-based evidence of the success of the chosen curriculum when used with the target population is included.	Research-based evidence provided on the chosen curriculum is partially relevant, limited, unreliable, or not valid.	Research to support the chosen curriculum is not provided.
II.F.(5) Curriculum Overview	A Scope and Sequence and course offerings are provided. A timeline detailing curriculum development, including who will do that work, is provided.	Course offerings or Scope and Sequence are provided but do not sufficiently align with the school's mission and educational philosophy. A timeline describing curriculum development is provided but may provide insufficient detail.	The Scope and Sequence or course offerings are not provided; and/or a timeline outlining the curriculum development is not provided.

II.F.(6)(7) Development Timeline / Instructional Program	A clear plan is in place to develop the school's instructional program; responsible staff and deadlines are identified.	A limited plan is in place to develop the school's instructional program; responsible staff may be identified.	No plan is in place to develop the school instructional program; no responsible staff is identified.
II.F.(8) Alignment Timeline	There is sufficient evidence that the chosen curriculum is aligned with NM State Standards, or an adequate timeline for aligning the curriculum is provided.		There is no evidence that the chosen curriculum is aligned with NM State Standards, nor is a timeline for aligning the curriculum with NM State Standards provided.
II.G.(1) Graduation Requirements /Graduation Waiver	High school graduation requirements, if applicable, are clearly articulated, meet state requirements, support the mission of the school, and are rigorous and reflect high expectations.	High school graduation requirements are insufficiently described, or do not support the mission of the school, or are not rigorous and do not reflect high expectations.	High school graduation requirements are not provided; or they are provided but do not meet state requirements.
II.G.(1) (2) Graduation Requirements /Graduation Waiver	Waivers, if applicable, state what the waiver is and why school is seeking it.		Waivers, if applicable, are included but without explanation.

H. INSTRUCTION

Evaluation Criteria: The school identifies quality methods and strategies that have been demonstrated to be effective in meeting the needs of the targeted student population. For unique or innovative practices, the charter school applicant presents a compelling rationale for their effectiveness.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
II.H.(1) Instructional Strategies	The school's proposed instructional practices support and are aligned with the school's mission, vision and educational philosophy	The school's proposed instructional practices partially align with the school's mission, vision, and educational philosophy	The connection between the school's proposed instructional practices and the school's mission, vision, and educational philosophy has not been established.
II.H.(2) Effectiveness	Evidence of the effectiveness of the proposed methods/ strategies with the target student population is included.	Evidence of the effectiveness of the proposed methods/ strategies with the target student population is not clearly stated.	Evidence of the effectiveness of the proposed methods/ strategies with the target student population is not provided.

II.H.(3) Differentiated Instruction	The school describes how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs, and examples are provided.	The school describes how instruction will be differentiated to meet student needs, but there are no examples.	The school does not sufficiently describe how instruction will be differentiated to meet student needs, and there are no examples.
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I. SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Evaluation Criteria: The school has plans in place to meet the legal requirements and individual needs of those determined to be special needs students (including gifted students), English Language Learners, at-risk students, or those students performing below grade level.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.I.(1)(a) – (d) Special Education	The school demonstrates a clear understanding of and capacity to meet all legal requirements regarding identifying, providing an appropriate continuum of services, and monitoring students that are receiving special education services, including students who are gifted.	The school demonstrates a partial understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding students receiving special education services, including students who are gifted.	The response does not demonstrate an understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding students receiving special education services, including students who are gifted.
	The school has a plan in place to meet all legal requirements to regularly evaluate and monitor progress of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals.	The school has a partial plan in place to meet the needs of students with IEPs; but details are not provided.	The school has no stated process in place to monitor students with IEPs.
	The school provides a complete plan for graduating students with special education needs (if applicable) that is in compliance with Federal and State regulations.	There is an incomplete plan for graduating students with special education needs (if applicable).	The plan for graduating students with special education needs (if applicable) is not provided; or the plan provided is not in compliance with Federal and State regulations.
	The school has identified the appropriate staff and ancillary services to adequately meet the needs of special education and ELL students, and provides an explanation for how they will be adequately budgeted.	The school has identified some of the staff needed to meet the needs of special education and ELL students. An explanation is provided indicating how they will be adequately budgeted.	The school has not identified appropriate staffing to adequately address the needs of special populations; or the plan for how they will be budgeted is not provided; or the budget does not appear adequate.

III.(2) Students with 504 Plans	The school demonstrates understanding and capacity to meet all legal requirements regarding students with Section 504 Plans.		The school does not demonstrate understanding and capacity to meet all legal requirements regarding students with Section 504 Plans.
III.(3)(a)-(e) English Language Learners (ELL)	The school has a plan in place to identify and meet the needs of English Language Learners. Intervention strategies are fully described	The school has a partial plan in place to identify and meet the needs of English Language Learners. Intervention strategies are partially described.	The school has no plan in place to identify or meet the needs of English Language Learners.
	The school describes how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and examples are provided.	The school describes how instruction will be differentiated to meet student needs, but there are no examples.	The school does not sufficiently describe how instruction will be differentiated to meet student needs, and there are no examples.
	The school has a plan in place to meet all legal requirements to regularly evaluate and monitor the progress of English Language Learners.	The school has a partial plan in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners; but details are not provided.	The school has no process in place to monitor the progress of English Language Learners.
	The budget reflects allocation(s) for resources, staffing, and training to serve the needs of ELL students.	The budget reflects some of the costs involved in addressing ELL students; however, sufficient detail is not provided.	The budget does not reflect costs involved in addressing the needs of ELL students.

J. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Evaluation Criteria: The school has appropriate assessments in place to evaluate student needs, the effectiveness of the educational program, and progress toward school goals. The school will use the assessment data to affect teaching and learning to improve student achievement, or meet other goals of the school.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
II.J.(1) Measuring Organizational Goals (if applicable)	A comprehensive list of assessments that will specifically measure organizational goals that align with the mission of the school is provided.	A partial list of assessment tools to measure organizational goals is provided. The assessment tools only partially align with the mission of the school.	A list of assessment tools to measure organizational goals is not provided; or the assessment tools do not align with the mission of the school.

II.J.(2)Assessments to Measure Academic Goals	A comprehensive list of assessment tools that measure academic goals is provided and align with the mission of the school. Grade levels to be assessed and anticipated schedule or frequency of assessing is provided.	A list of assessments is provided; however, the list only partially aligns with the mission of the school. The grade levels to be assessed and anticipated schedule or frequency of assessing is not sufficiently addressed.	A list of assessments is not provided, or the list of assessments do not align with the mission of the school; or the grade levels to be assessed, anticipated schedule or frequency of assessing is not addressed.
II.J.(1)(3)(4) Use of Assessments / Self-Monitoring	Strategies to monitor all students and to take appropriate corrective actions are clearly defined, including interventions and a plan to close the achievement gap between student subgroups.	A plan for taking corrective action is only generally described.	There is no evidence of a plan for corrective action, or the plan does not address what adjustments the school will make based upon grade-level or school-wide data.
	Remediation/At-Risk Students The school demonstrates understanding and capacity to meet all legal requirements regarding identifying, providing an appropriate range of services, and monitoring students who are struggling. Student Assistance Teams and Response to Intervention strategies for the 3 tiers are fully described.	Remediation/At-Risk Students The school has a partial plan in place that complies with legal requirements to identify and meet the needs of students who are struggling and to identify students with special needs. Student Assistance Teams and RTI are mentioned but details are not provided.	Remediation/At-Risk Students The school does not provide a plan that complies with legal requirements; or the plan does not demonstrate the capacity to meet the needs of remedial or at-risk students.
	School-Wide Practices The school has provided a comprehensive plan to analyze data, identify school-wide practices that need to be changed, and implement the necessary adjustments in order to improve student outcomes.	School-Wide Practices The school has described a plan to analyze data and identify school-wide practices in need of change; however, the plan does not include effective structures or processes for implementation.	School-Wide Practices The school does not provide a plan.
II.J.(5)Reporting on Progress	The school provides a plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to parents, the school's Governing Council, the school's authorizer, and the broader community.	The school provides a plan, but it does not include communication of student assessment and progress to all identified parties.	There is no plan provided to communicate assessment results or student progress.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND GOVERNANCE

A. GOVERNING BODY CREATION/CAPACITY

Evaluation Criteria: The composition of the Governing Body ("GB") reflects a wide range of expertise, knowledge and experience, and demonstrates the capacity to oversee a successful school (i.e., assure student success, develop, implement, oversee the management of public funds, and oversee the school's compliance with legal obligations)

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.A.(1) Governance Description	The roles and responsibilities of the GB members are specifically outlined, and there is a clear description of the separation between the roles and responsibilities of the GB and the roles and responsibilities of the school's administrator.	There is a partial description of the roles and responsibilities of the GB and the roles and responsibilities of the school's administrator; or the description is either inappropriate or does not sufficiently address the distinction between roles.	There is no description provided of the roles and responsibilities of the GB and the roles and responsibilities of the school's administrator.
III.A.(2) Description of Founders' Expertise	The applicant's expertise demonstrates relevant qualifications and experience in areas that are important to implementing the proposed plan.	The applicant has some relevant experience in operating a public school or business, but does not demonstrate how that experience is relevant to implementing the plan for a charter school.	The applicant does not have experience in operating a public school or private business and has not otherwise demonstrated that the applicant has the capacity to implement the planned charter school.
II.J.(3) Description of Prospective Governance Expertise	GB members are listed with qualifications. Membership reflects (or will reflect) diverse experiences and skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the school.	GB membership reflects (or will reflect) some diversity of experience and skills.	GB membership reflects a lack of diverse experiences and skills, or no list is provided.
III.A.(4) GB Selection of Members	The process described for selecting new GB members is focused on selecting leaders who have the skills necessary to govern the proposed school.	The process described for selecting GB members attends to the method of selection, but only vaguely addresses the qualifications for membership.	A plan to recruit GB with identified skill sets is not provided; or no specific needs or qualifications for GB members are listed.

B. GOVERNING BODY TRAINING AND EVALUATION

Evaluation Criteria: There is an ongoing and comprehensive plan for Governing Body trainings, evaluations, and continuous improvement and complies with state requirements.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet

III.B.(1) Governance Training	There is a plan for GB training that complies with state requirements and is supported by the budget.		There is no plan for GB training, or the training does not comply with state requirements, or the plan is not supported by the budget.
III.B.(2) Governance Evaluation	There is a plan for an annual self-evaluation of the GB that reflects that body's effectiveness and focuses on continuous improvement.	There is an incomplete or partial plan for an annual self-evaluation of the GB; or the plan as described appears insufficient.	There is no plan for evaluating the GB.

C. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Evaluation Criteria: There is clear description about the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body vs. those of the school's administrator; administrator employment process; and structure of the board to provide rigorous oversight and support.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.C.(1) Monitoring	The provided plans describing the Governing Body demonstrate its capacity to monitor the operational, financial and academic success of the school, to ensure the school is meeting its mission and to sustain a quality school.		The provided plans describing the Governing Body do not demonstrate its capacity to monitor the operational, financial and academic success of the school, to ensure the school is meeting its mission and to sustain a quality school.
III.C.(2)(3) Head Administrator Selection/ Evaluation	The administrator's qualifications are clearly described. Evidence of a plan to hire and evaluate a highly qualified administrator is provided.	The administrator's qualifications are described; however, there is no description of a process for hiring and evaluating the administrator.	The administrator's qualifications are not described, and there is no description of a process for hiring and evaluating the administrator.

D. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL

Evaluation Criteria: The school's organizational chart and accompanying descriptions clearly delineate and justifies the roles and responsibilities and lines of authority and reporting within the school.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.D.(1) Organizational Structure	The school's organizational chart and narrative description clearly reflect the relationship between administrative, teaching, and support staff.	The organizational chart and narrative description identifies staff, but the relationships are not clear.	The organizational chart is not provided; or the chart or narrative does not demonstrate an understanding of appropriate relationships between staff.
III.D.(2)	Job descriptions are provided	Job descriptions are provided for	Job descriptions are not

	for all key staff.	most key staff.	provided.
III.D.(3) Staff Evaluation	A clear process is provided for evaluating teacher effectiveness that is tied to student performance and the school's mission and goals.	The process is provided for evaluating teachers; however, it is unclear how the teacher evaluation process is tied to student performance or the school's mission and goals.	No clear process is provided for evaluating teacher performance.
III.D.(4) Staffing Plan	The staffing plan demonstrates a sound understanding of staffing needs and appears viable and adequate for effectively implementing the educational program/curriculum.	The staffing plan is provided but does not demonstrate enough support to effectively implement the educational program/curriculum.	The staffing plan is not adequate to support effective implementation of the educational program/curriculum.
	The staffing plan is aligned with the budget and projected enrollment.	The staffing plan partially aligns with the budget and projected enrollment.	The staffing plan does not align with the budget and projected enrollment.
III.D.(5) School Day/Year	The school calendar and schedule demonstrates compliance with state requirements and are sufficient to ensure successful implementation of the educational program/curriculum.	The school calendar and schedule do not comply with state requirements, or are not sufficient to ensure successful implementation of the educational program/curriculum.	The school calendar and schedule are not provided.
III.D.(6) Professional Development Plan	A plan for Professional Development is provided that supports the implementation of the school's educational plan, mission, and goals, and meets state requirements.	A partial plan for Professional Development is provided that partially supports the implementation of the school's educational plan, mission, and goals; or the development plan does not meet state requirements.	No Professional Development Plan is provided.

E. EMPLOYEES

Evaluation Criteria: The school provides an explanation of the relationship between the school and the employees, establishes policies; including an employee discipline and grievance processes.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.E.(1) Employer/Employee Relationship	The school provides a clear description of the terms of employment for all classes of employees and how the school will address employees' recognized representatives.		The school does not provide a clear description of the terms of employment for all classes of employees and how the school will address employees' recognized representatives.

III.E.(2) Personnel Policies	Personnel policies and procedures are provided and there is a plan to ensure that the policies align with the mission of the school and comply with all applicable federal and state regulations; or there is a defined plan for developing these policies.		Personnel policies and procedures are not provided and there is no plan for ensuring policies will be developed and that they will align with the school's mission and comply with applicable federal and state regulations.
III.E.(3) Staff Discipline Process	A staff discipline process is provided that is clear and follows an appropriate route for due process.		There is no staff discipline process provided that is clear and follows an appropriate route for due process.
III.E.(4) Grievance Process	An employee grievance process is provided that is clear and follows appropriate legal guidelines.		An employee grievance process is not provided.

F. COMMUNITY/PARENT/EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE.

Evaluation Criteria: The applicant provides a clear process for including the community, parents and employees in the governance of the school and a stated process for receiving and responding to concerns.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.F.(1) Community involvement.	The plan clearly describes meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school and includes how their involvement will help to advance the school's mission and vision.	There is a partial plan to involve parental, professional educator, and community in the governance and operation of the school.	There is no description of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school.
III.F.(2) Complaint Resolution	The applicant provides a plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents that assures a timely and meaningful response from the school administration and/or the GB.	A plan to receive and process concerns is provided, but it does not address how the concerns will be resolved by the school administration and/or the GB.	No plan to address community and/or parent complaints is provided.

G. STUDENT POLICIES

Evaluation Criteria: The applicant understands the legal requirements for student discipline which is demonstrated by providing a student discipline policy that is in accordance with the Student Rights and Responsibilities rule of the NMPED.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet

III.G.(1) Student Discipline Policy	There is a description of the Student Discipline Policies that complies with the Student Rights and Responsibilities set forth in the Public Education Department rules and regulations. An explanation is provided of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities.	There is a partial description of Student Discipline Policies that complies with the Student Rights and Responsibilities set forth in the Public Education Department rules and regulations. A partial explanation is provided of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities.	There is no description of the Student Policies or the policies provided; or the description does not comply with the Public Education rules and regulations.
III.G.(2) Alternative Placements	The application and/or student discipline policy describes how the school will address alternative educational settings for eligible students who are long term suspended or expelled that is consistent with the Students' Rights and Responsibilities.	The application and/or student discipline policy describes how the school will address alternative educational settings for eligible students, but fails to demonstrate an understanding of the school's legal obligations.	The application does not address alternative educational settings for eligible students.

H. STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

Evaluation Criteria: Outreach activities to increase awareness of the school to families are in place. Lottery and Enrollment policies reflect compliance with state statutes, and are fair and equitable.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.H.(1) Student Recruitment	The school has a comprehensive outreach and recruitment plan that is likely to be effective in attracting students from the targeted population. The recruitment /enrollment timelines presented are reasonable.	The school has an outreach and recruitment plan, but it may not be effective in attracting students from the targeted population; or the timelines for recruiting/enrolling students do not appear reasonable.	The school does not provide an outreach and recruitment plan that markets to the targeted population.
III.H.(2) Lottery Process	The lottery procedures are clearly explained and comply with state statutes. Tentative dates are provided.	The lottery procedures are partially explained. Tentative dates may or may not be provided.	The lottery procedures are not explained or do not comply with state statutes. Tentative dates are not provided.
III.H.(3) Enrollment Process	The school has a clear description of the enrollment process that is in full compliance with state statutes.	The school has an enrollment process that is in partial compliance with statutes.	No description of the enrollment process is provided; or the enrollment process is not in compliance with statutes.
	The school has described conditions for dis-enrollment of students that comply with legal and state requirements.		Conditions identified for dis-enrollment of students are not stated or do not comply with legal and state requirements.

I. LEGAL COMPLIANCE.

Evaluation Criteria. Legal compliance with the Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act and conflicts of interest law are explained.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.I.(1) Conflict of Interest	The Conflict of Interest Policy is provided and demonstrates an understanding of the issue and requirements of the law.		The Conflict of Interest Policy is not provided or does not comply with requirements.
III.I.(2) Transparency	There is an explanation of how the school will comply with the Open Meetings Act (agendas posted 24 hours in advance, quorums, executive or closed session procedures, etc.) and Inspection of Public Records Act (meeting minutes, accessibility to public records, etc.)	There is a partial explanation of how the school plans to comply with the Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act.	There is no explanation of how the school plans to comply with the Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act.

J. EVIDENCE OF PARTNERSHIP/CONTRACTOR RELATIONSHIP (If Applicable).

Evaluation Criteria. The application describes any third party relationships that will have a legal impact on the school if entered after approval. A copy of any and all proposed agreements is attached.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.I.(1). Third Party Relationships	The application describes in sufficient detail all third-party relationships that are considered integral to accomplishing the mission and vision of the school and demonstrates an understanding of the legal implication of the relationship to the school.	The application partially describes third-party relationships, but does not tie the relationship to the school's mission and vision. The applicant does not does not sufficiently demonstrate the legal implications of the proposed relationship.	The application mentions important third-party relationships but does not describe how the relationship is tied to the mission and vision of the school or provide an explanation of the legal relationship of that third-party to the school.
III.I.(2) Proposed Agreement	A proposed formal agreement or memorandum of understanding between the school and the prospective third-party is provided.		No proposed agreement or memorandum of understanding between the school and the prospective third-party is provided.

K. WAIVERS.

Evaluation Criteria. Waiver requests are presented clearly and demonstrate alignment with the school's mission and educational plan.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.K.(1)(2) (3) Waivers	The school has provided a list of state laws or policies for which a waiver is requested, including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested.		The school has provided a list of state laws or rules for which a waiver is requested; however, the rationale for the waiver is not included.
	(This is to be completed only by schools seeking local district authorization.) The school has provided a list of authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested including a rationale for why the waiver is being requested.		(This is to be completed only by schools seeking local district authorization.) The school has provided a list of authorizer policies for which a waiver is requested; however, the rationale for the waiver is not included.
	The requested waivers align with the school's proposed autonomy and its mission, and that alignment is clearly described.	The waivers align with the school's proposed autonomy, but no clear alignment of the requested waivers with the school's mission is described.	The requested waivers do not align with the school's mission.

L. TRANSPORTATION AND FOOD

Evaluation Criteria: The school considers the transportation and food services for the students and develops adequate plans to address those needs.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.L.(1) Transportation	The school states whether or not it plans to offer transportation to its students. If yes, the school has provided a clear description of how transportation will be provided that is supported by the proposed budget.	The school has stated whether or not it plans to offer transportation to its students. If yes, the school has provided only a partial description of how student transportation will be provided. The plan is supported by the budget.	The school has not stated whether or not it plans to offer transportation to its students. Or, if stated, the school does not provide a description of how student transportation needs will be met; or the plan is not supported by the budget.
III.L.(2) Food Services	The school states whether or not it plans to offer food services to its students. If yes, the school has provided a clear description of how food services will be provided that is supported by the budget.	The school states whether or not it plans to offer food services to its students. If yes, The school has provided a partial description of how student food services will be provided. The plan is supported by the budget.	The school has not stated whether or not it plans to offer food services to its students. Or, if stated, the school does not provide a description of how the food services will be met; or the plan is not supported by the budget.

M. FACILITIES

Evaluation Criteria: The proposed description of the facility and plan for proposed capital outlay needs provides sufficient detail to demonstrate capacity for implementation and support of the school program.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
III.M.(1) Projected Facility Needs	The applicant has attached appropriate documentation from the Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) director that demonstrates the applicant's proposed capital outlay needs are in alignment with New Mexico public school facility requirements.		The applicant did not attach appropriate documentation from the PSFA director that demonstrates the applicant's proposed capital outlay needs are in alignment with New Mexico public school facility requirements.
III.M.(2) Facility Plan	The application provides evidence that efforts have been made to begin a search for an appropriate facility in the desired geographic location.	The application provides some evidence that school facility requirements must be met, but no efforts have begun to locate an appropriate facility in the desired geographic location.	The application does not provide evidence that the school has begun to consider it facility needs.
III.M.(3) Projected Facility Costs	A detailed description of the school's proposed capital outlay needs, including projected requests for capital outlay assistance, is provided, and is sufficient to support the school program. The school provides a realistic projection for facility maintenance, repair and equipment needs.	A detailed description of the school's proposed capital outlay needs, including projected requests for capital outlay assistance, is provided but may not be sufficient to support the school program. The school identifies facility maintenance, repair and equipment needs, but does not provide for these costs in the projected budget.	A description of the school's proposed capital outlay needs, including projected requests for capital outlay assistance, is not provided or is not sufficient to support the school program.

IV. BUSINESS PLAN

A. BUDGET

Evaluation Criteria: The school budget is based on realistic revenue and expenditure projections, valid assumptions, and supports the mission and educational program of the school.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
IVA(1)910B5 Worksheet	The applicant has provided a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet using appropriate values and computations for each year of the 5-year budget plan.	The applicant has provided a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet for each year of the 5-year budget plan; however, there are minor mistakes in the computations.	The applicant did not provide a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet for each year of the 5-year budget plan, or the worksheet provided contains substantial errors, demonstrating a lack of

			understanding about New Mexico public school funding.
IVA(2) 5-Year Budget Plan	A five-year budget that aligns with the school's 5- year growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program and mission of the school is provided, and demonstrates the financial capacity to support the school program.	A five-year budget is provided; however, it only partially aligns with the staffing, facilities, educational program or mission of the school.	The budget provided does not adequately address staffing, facilities, educational program or the school mission; or a budget is not provided.
IVA(3) Budget Narrative	The budget narrative is provided that explains basic assumptions, how those were determined based on reliable sources, and identifies priorities that are consistent with the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility.	A limited budget narrative explanation is provided. Budgetary assumptions are flawed, or there is minimal connection to the school's mission, educational program, staffing or facility.	Little or no detail is provided in the budget narrative, OR there is no connection to the school's mission, educational program, staffing or facility.
IVA(4) Strategies for Budget Control	The school provides a description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges. The adjustments are viable and realistic.	The school provides a description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges; however, the adjustments may not be viable or realistic.	The school does not provide a description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges, or the description of the adjustments is not viable or realistic.
IVA(5) Salary Schedule (Appendix)	A proposed salary schedule is provided for key staff, including teachers and administrators, that complies with state requirements.		A proposed salary schedule for key staff is provided; however, the salaries for teachers and administrators do not comply with state requirements.

B. FINANCIAL POLICIES AND OVERSIGHT, COMPLIANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Evaluation Criteria: Financial policies are in place that reflect generally accepted accounting practices, including compliance, adequate oversight and reporting.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
VB(1)(2) Financial Policies and Internal Controls	Financial policies and internal controls are included, are sufficient, and comply with requirements and financial best practices. The policies demonstrate the financial	The financial policies and internal controls are provided, but are deficient or do not comply with generally accepted accounting principles and financial best practices. The	The school does not describe or address the financial policies.

	capacity to support the school program.	information provided does not demonstrate that the applicant understands New Mexico public school finance laws.	
IV.B.(3) Financial Personnel	The school has identified the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks, and the staff positions are supported in the organizational structure and in the budget. Qualifications and responsibilities for those positions are provided.	The school has identified staff to perform financial task that is supported by the organizational structure and budget; however, qualifications and responsibilities are not provided.	The school's organizational structure or budget does not provide enough staff support to conduct business services.
IV.B.(4) Financial Oversight	A description of how the GB will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight is provided, including a description of required audit and finance committees. Clearly stated financial controls demonstrate an understanding of the required GB oversight and financial reporting.	A description of GB oversight is provided, however, the plan lacks important specifics and/or a clear recognition of the legal and financial obligations of a charter school.	There is no clear plan for financial oversight and/or the applicant demonstrates substantial weakness in understanding the fiscal oversight obligations of the GB.
IV.B.(5) School Sustainability	The school has provided clear evidence that it has considered the sustainability of the school by describing long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity in areas such as governance, finance/budget, facilities, community relationships, student enrollment, charter compliance, 501(c)3, mission and vision, and performance objectives.	The school has provided some evidence that it has considered the sustainability of the school by describing long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity in areas such as governance, finance/budget, facilities, community relationships, student enrollment, charter compliance, 501(c)3, mission and vision, and performance objectives.	The school has provided no evidence that it has considered the sustainability of the school by describing long-range goals and strategies that will help build the school's capacity; or the evidence provided calls into question the long-term sustainability of the school.

V. EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

Evaluation Criteria. The applicant demonstrates community support for the proposed school through community partnerships, business relationships, and resource agreements. The school clearly describes all community outreach activities designed to reach a broad audience. The application demonstrates not only a sufficient community interest in the school, but also a sufficient demand for the school's proposed program or model. Aggregate data for prospective students are provided.

Topic	Ranking		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet

V.A. Outreach Activities	The application describes all outreach activities and future outreach plans. Described outreach activities are designed to reach a broad audience and are sufficient to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for to enroll.	The application provides a description of outreach activities; however, the described outreach activities may not reach a broad audience and, thus, not provide all students with an equal opportunity to enroll.	The application provides no description of outreach activities, nor does it provide any evidence that the school developers have conducted any exploratory community outreach.
V.B. Evidence of Support	The applicant has provided sufficient evidence of community support for the school by providing data regarding interest demonstrated by the targeted population or other evidence of support (not just anecdotal).	The applicant has provided limited evidence of community support for the school or that there are, in fact, students and/or families interested in enrolling.	The school has not provided evidence that there is actual community and student support for the proposed school.
V.C. Community Ties	The application provides a description of ties to the community and evidence of an understanding of the community and student needs that the school intends to serve.		The application does not demonstrate ties to the local community and/or any evidence that it is familiar with the community and student needs that the school intends to serve.
V.D. and F. Community Relationships Optional evidence of support.	The applicant demonstrates that it has developed networking relationships and/or other resources or agreements with community persons or entities. (This differs from the formal partnership agreements that are integral to the school's operations, as described in Section III.J(1) of this application.) Letters or other documentation of support are provided.		
V.E. Uniqueness of Proposed School	The applicant provides evidence that if there are public schools that serve the same grade levels in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate, the school can demonstrate that its education plan is unique or substantially different and thus is able to provide a needed option for students and families.		The applicant identifies at least one other public school serving the same grade levels in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate; but is unable to demonstrate the uniqueness of its education plan or provide other evidence of need in the targeted community.

IV. REQUIRED APPENDICES

Topic	Ranking
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	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
VI. Appendices	The application contains all of the required appendices.	The application contains the most significant appendices, but omitted others.	The application omits the appendices; or the appendices it includes are not the most significant ones.