

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
 PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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**OPTION FOR PARENTS
 CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION**

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT CHARTER APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS

According to NMSA § 22-8B-6(B) this Notice of Intent to Submit Charter Application (“NOI”) must be filed by the organizers of a proposed charter school to the Public Education Commission at the address below and to the superintendent of the school district in which the charter school is proposed to be located. *Failure to notify may result in your application being rejected.*

This year the NOI is due by close of business, January 10, 2012. Notice by mail will be timely if it is postmarked on or by January 6, 2012.

Notice to the Public Education Commission should be delivered one of the following methods:
 Electronically to: By mail or personal delivery:

KellyCallahan2@state.nm.us

PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION
 c/o New Mexico Public Education Department
 Attn: Ms. Kelly Callahan, General Manager
 Options for Parents/Charter Schools Division
 300 Don Gaspar, Room 301C
 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

The NOI is to provide information for the primary point of contact, enrollment projections and a concise proposal overview (not to exceed 5 pages).

You are strongly encouraged to send notice to the Superintendent of your local district by certified mail return receipt requested, or request a signed receipt when you deliver the NOI. Contact your local district regarding electronic filing.

1. General Information:

Name of Proposed School:	Academic Opportunities Academy		
Primary Contact Person	Mark Casavantes		
Mailing Address:	817 E. Missouri, Suite B		
City: El Paso	State: Texas	Zip: 79902	
Phone: 915-471-7104	Email: aotexas@gmail.com		

2. Names, roles, and current employment of all persons on the applicant team, and qualifications of the team members to establish a high-quality charter school:

Name	Role	Employment	Qualifications
Mark Casavantes	Superintendent	Academic Opportunities Academy	Certified and experienced School Administrator
Wesley Clarkson	Assoc. Superintendent	Academic Opportunities Academy	Certified and experienced School Administrator

3. Model or focus of the proposed school (e.g. performing arts, dual language, college prep, STEM): Technology-based, tutor assisted mastery instructional self-pacing, K-12 dual language program, college prep, employment skills program.

4. Does the school expect to contract with another entity for either management, or substantial oversight or direction in the school's operation?

Yes: Describe the entity and role it will have in the school's operational plan. No: .

5. Does the applicant team or any members of the team currently operate any other schools? Yes: No: .

6. If the proposal is a replication, identify the school(s) you are replicating and what data that you have to support this model should be replicated.

Not a replication

7. Vision/Mission statement. (2-3 sentences)

Academic Opportunities Academy will serve students who have not been successful or have been significantly challenged in a traditional public or private school setting. We will take these students from where they are and lead them through the educational experiences necessary to graduate ready for post-secondary educations and the modern job market.

8. Student body to be served, including key demographic data and targeted geographical area of the proposed school. Describe the targeted student population including key demographic data (academic performance, home languages, ELL and special education populations). Identify where these students are most likely being educated currently and why they are expected to choose the proposed charter school for their future educational needs.

During the first 4 years of serving New Mexico school aged students, Academic Opportunities Academy will open up to six K-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.

9. Evidence and assessment of a community need for a school of this nature: Detail any objective surveys or other measures of local demand for the proposed educational program.

In a March 2008 presentation, *The State of K-12 Education in New Mexico, 2008*, Dr. Veronica C. Garcia 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.

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

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.

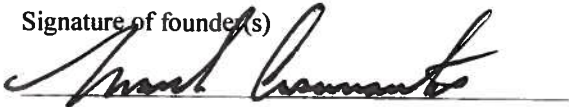
In order to meet the needs of students with a wide variety of educational needs, Academic Opportunities Academy will employ an instructional system characterized by clear learning prescriptions written for each student, student choice, self-paced mastery learning with tutoring, and engaging and creative 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

11. How the school will be more effective than the schools currently serving the targeted student population, and/or plans to improve student achievement and exceed the academic performance of existing public schools in the targeted service area and any data you have to support this assumption.

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.

Signature of founder(s)



Date: 12/13/2011

Mark Casavantes

[PRINT NAME]


Wesley P. Clarkson

12/14/2011