

2010 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

School Name: Achieve Academy
Total Projected Enrollment: 100

Proposed Grades: 10-12
Review Date: 8/10/2010

I. TABLE OF CONTENTS – Not to be analyzed

II. APPLICATION COVER SHEET/NOTICE OF INTENT/ ABSTRACT – Not to be analyzed

III. STATEMENTS OF ASSURANCES/ASSURANCE THAT ALL GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS HAVE READ THE COMPLETED APPLICATION – Not to be analyzed

IV. CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION AND STATEMENT OF NEED

The Charter School Mission Statement should communicate the essence of the school to stakeholders and to the public and should provide the focal point to which all other sections of the school's plans align. In addition, the proposed charter school and its mission must be in the best interest of the students and community that it proposes to serve.

A Charter School Mission and Statement of Need section will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

- A **Mission Statement** that is clear and compelling and includes the following components:
 - Who the school seeks to serve;
 - What the school seeks to accomplish;
 - What methods the school will use.

- An explanation of **how the school will know if it is achieving its mission** that includes school level or organizational goals that are:
 - Measurable;
 - Directly support the Mission Statement;
 - Stated using the SMART Goal format.

(NOTE: Specific measurable student performance expectations [student goals] should be addressed in section IV, Educational Plan.)

- An **explanation of need** that describes how the proposed charter school is in the best interest of the students and community that it proposes to serve. This will include a demographic description of the student and community population within which the school will be located.

ANALYSIS: CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION AND STATEMENT OF NEED

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Mission Statement</u> The mission is stated in broad terms, especially in regards to the methods the school will use ,i.e., the application does not define language contained in the mission such as “<i>empower and career education.</i>”</p> <p><u>Achievement of Mission/Goals</u> Applicants do not discuss how the school will know if it is achieving its mission. The applicants do not explain how enrolling the first year’s projected number of students or providing 100% of students with core and elective curriculum establishes an ambitious outcome for this school.</p> <p>Goal 3 is not specific as to which assessments will be used. A rationale for how the Student Information Database will measure this goal is not provided.</p> <p>Goal 4 is a process goal that will not directly relate to how the school will know if it is achieving its mission. The applicants do not explain how the Student information database will provide evidence of accomplishment.</p> <p>Goal 6 is not specific as regards to what is meant by “<i>integrated classroom.</i>” The application used the terms “integrate” and “inclusion” interchangeably.</p> <p>Assuming goals 4 and 5 will be assessed on a yearly basis, the following goals are not time-specific: 2, 3 and 6.</p> <p><u>Explanation of Need</u> The application describes the need for at-risk students with disabilities to receive career education in a work environment as an alternative to dropping out, however, it fails to describe what about the traditional school environment leads to drop-outs, unsuccessful transitions and how the proposed school specifically addresses these needs.</p>	<p>P 11</p> <p>Mission goals 1 and 2, P 11</p> <p>P 11</p> <p>P 11</p> <p>P 11</p> <p>P 11</p> <p>Pp. 12-14</p>

CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION AND STATEMENT OF NEED SUMMARY

Please summarize your analysis of the Mission and Statement of Need section of the school's application. Your summary should reflect your overall impression of the section as presented and discuss the most significant weaknesses of the section.

Summary Analysis

Achieve Academy's mission statement is concise. It proposes to provide a vocational learning environment that empowers students of all abilities (particularly special needs students in grades 10-12) to experience successful transition into the workforce through career education.

The application does not discuss how the school will know if it has accomplished its mission, though it presents six school-based goals. The goals align with the school educational plan but lack elements of SMART criteria.

The application describes the need for at-risk students with disabilities to receive career education in a work environment as an alternative to dropping out, however, it fails to describe what about the traditional school environment leads to this result and how the proposed school specifically addresses these needs.

V. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

The educational plan should describe who the school expects to serve; what the students will achieve; how they will achieve it; and how the school will evaluate performance. It should provide a clear picture of what a student who attends the school will experience in terms of educational climate, structure, materials, schedule, assessment and outcomes.

A. CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks and Performance Standards provide the content requirements and expectations for students in all public schools. The description of the curriculum should provide a sense not only of what the school will teach but also of how and why. (*NOTE: Refer to the Glossary of Terms Used in the Application, last two pages of this document, to assist in the analysis of this section.*)

A description of the Curriculum Framework will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

1. Philosophy and Approach to Instruction:

- A description of the educational philosophy and curricular approach of the proposed school.
- A description of why the particular educational philosophy and/or approach were selected.
- Documentation, research, and/or a rationale that supports the educational philosophy and curricular approach.
- An explanation of why the educational philosophy and/or approach is/are likely to result in improved educational performance of students.
- A description of how the educational philosophy and/or approach aligns with the school's mission and student needs.

2. Description of the Curriculum

- **If the curriculum has already been selected/developed:** A detailed description of the curriculum that includes a scope and sequence.
- **If the curriculum has yet to be developed:** A description of the proposed curriculum and a specific plan for its development that will include a scope and sequence. The development plan should include a description of the process, a timeline, and resources (including staffing) to be utilized.

3. Alignment with NM Standards

- A copy of the alignment document if it was completed, **OR**
- If the alignment has not been completed, a description of the process and a specific timeline to be used for aligning the curriculum with the New Mexico Standards.

4. Strategies and Methods:

- A description of the strategies and methods to be used in delivering the curriculum.
- An explanation of how the curriculum will address students' needs and assist students in reaching the NM Standards. (*NOTE: Students with special needs, including students who require bilingual education, special education or are limited English proficient, should be addressed in Subsection D: Special Populations*)
- A descriptive example of the curricular strategies and methods in action in the classroom.
- A description of professional development that may be necessary for implementation of the strategies and methods to be used in delivering the curriculum.

ANALYSIS: EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH TO INSTRUCTION

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Philosophy and Approach to Instruction</u></p> <p>The applicants summarize research to support the Outcomes Based Educational (OBE) approach, but fall short in providing a proper citing of the studies thus making the references incomplete. ??</p> <p>Throughout the application, the terms “<i>inclusion</i>” and “<i>integrated</i>” are used interchangeably but are not defined. There is no description of what the integrated classroom looks like and how the integrated classroom will address individual needs. The application fails to make a connection between the needs identified in the IEP and the support that will be provided in the integrated classroom. It <u>may</u> be possible for all of the students needs to be met in this type of setting. However, it is not possible to determine if the setting is appropriate since the applicant failed to describe this setting or the vocational setting and the manner in which the needs will be met.</p> <p>The application makes the assumption that all special education students learn best in an inclusion setting. Predetermining the Least Restrictive Environment—rather than leaving that decision to the IEP team—puts the school at risk of not providing the appropriate education to the very students they hope to attract.</p> <p>Applicants fail to explain how the school’s approach to instruction of the core curriculum solely through the use of an online courseware (E2020) is likely to result in improved educational performance of students when many of the students are likely to need curriculum at a lower level or may not be able to work independently. No other core curriculum was identified.</p> <p><u>Description of the Curriculum</u></p> <p>Applicants do not provide a detailed description of the E2020 curriculum with a scope and sequence.</p> <p>The application states that “<i>the full curriculum is provided in the appendices of this proposal</i>” however it was not.</p> <p>How the Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) curriculum will be utilized is not clear. On page 23, the application suggests that LCCE <u>is</u> the Career Education curriculum, then on page 24 it states that LCCE “<i>will be used as a reference for teaching various competencies.</i>”</p> <p>A detailed description and scope and sequence of the Career Education Curriculum (or a specific plan for developing it) are not articulated.</p> <p>Application states that “<i>the family may contribute to every competency in the LCCE curriculum</i>” but does not describe what that means or how that will occur. Provisions for supporting the parents in that role are not</p>	<p>see Bibliography in Appendix E and P. 19</p> <p>throughout the application</p> <p>Pp. 15-16</p> <p>Pp. 16-18</p> <p>P 30</p> <p>Pp. 23-24</p> <p>P 26</p>

<p>evident.</p> <p>Other curricular approaches stated on page 27 include “<i>character counts, yoga, dance, music, art...and Center for Self-Advocacy training modules</i>” however the application does not expand on how these represent a different approach to instruction, how they fit in, nor how the actual curriculum would be written, implemented, and/or assessed with regards to alignment to the standards.</p>	<p>P 27</p>
<p><u>Alignment with NM Standards</u></p> <p>This section does not describe an alignment document of the selected curriculum or a process that will be used to align the proposed/developed curriculum with New Mexico Content Standards and Benchmarks and Performance Standards.</p> <p><u>Strategies and Methods</u></p> <p>The application fails to provide an explanation of how the core curriculum (E2020) will meet the needs of all students, particularly since the school plans to purchase the curriculum at the 6th grade level. The applicant failed to present a core curriculum for students whose skills fall below the 6th grade level.</p>	<p>P 28</p>
<p>Though applicants anticipate students graduating from AA via the Ability Program of Study (p 28) it does not provide specific detail about the strategies and methods for developing or implementing the functional curriculum coursework. The applicant does not explain how the 24 hours of course credit will be obtained by the students whose graduation is dependent on the functional coursework.</p>	<p>P 28</p>
<p>The application correctly states that students graduating via the Career Readiness Program of Study need to achieve competency in <u>all areas</u> of the Employability and Career Development Standards and Benchmarks (p28), however, the explanation of the school’s career readiness curriculum addresses only two of the ten required standards (p 36-37). There is no rationalization of why only two are addressed or how the other eight will be dealt with.</p>	<p>P 28 Pp. 36-37</p>
<p>The discussion of professional development makes the assumption that “AA staff would come with a plethora of information around teaching and learning with a variety of instructional strategies and methods for the school” (P 39), and does not elaborate on how the school would support teachers with professional development to implement the online courseware within a special education setting.</p>	<p>P 39</p>
<p>There is no explanation of which organizations the following statement is referring to: “<i>The sharing of disciplines and prior experiences will assist staff from both organizations in implementing the functional outcomes based curriculum that AA is endorsing.</i>” [Emphasis added]</p>	<p>P 39</p>
<p>The application states that staff orientation “<i>may include... an overview</i></p>	<p>P 40</p>

of LCCE curriculum” but does not explain how an overview is sufficient information for staff to utilize the curriculum.	
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B. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational program should support the school’s educational plan. A description of the educational program will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

1. Length of School Day and School Year:

- The proposed length of the school day, including the number of instructional hours;
- The proposed length of the school year, including number of days and total number of instructional hours;
- A description of how the proposed length of the school day and school year support the Educational Plan.

2. Grade Levels, Class Size and Projected Enrollment:

- The grade levels the charter school proposes to serve;
- If a phase-in of grade levels is proposed, a plan for the phase-in by year and grade levels and a rationale for the phase-in plan;
- The total projected student enrollment (at full enrollment for the school).
- Projected class size.

3. Graduation Requirements (if applicable):

- The school’s proposed credits and requirements for graduation.
- A description of how any proposed requirements that differ from the New Mexico Graduation Requirements [22-13-1.1.] support the school’s educational plan.

ANALYSIS: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Length of School Day and School Year</u> Applicants provide contradictory information about the number of instructional hours students will receive. Though six hours are stated, the proposed schedule (8-3) is actually 7 hours. No explanation for the discrepancy is provided.</p>	P 41
<p><u>Grade Levels, Class Size and Projected Enrollment</u> Applicants fail to provide a rationale for phasing-in the full enrollment and for having only thirty students in the first year of school.</p>	P 42
<p><u>Graduation Requirements (if applicable)</u> Applicants provide a chart with the total number of graduation credits</p>	P 43

(for the standard graduation pathway) that is miscalculated. The totals on page 43 should be twenty-four rather than thirteen.	
The application does not explain the graduation requirements for students graduating via the career readiness or ability program of study.	

C. STUDENT PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Student academic performance is central to a school’s existence. Student performance expectations must be aligned with the mission and the educational plan.

The Student Performance Expectations subsection will be complete if it has provided the following:

- Student-centered goals that are SMART:
 - Specific;
 - Measurable;
 - Ambitious and Attainable
 - Reflective of the school’s mission;
 - Time-Specific with Target Dates

- Student-centered goals that are aligned with the school’s mission and the educational plan

ANALYSIS: STUDENT PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Student-centered SMART Goals</u></p> <p>The student performance expectations are not written as SMART goals and are lacking specificity, especially with regard to measures and timeline for achievement.</p>	Pp. 44-45
<p>Student Performance Goal #2 is the same as Organizational Goal #3. It is non-specific and lacks clearly defined quantitative student performance expectations.</p>	P 45
<p>Goals 2 and 3 are not student-centered; the percentage of students that have a career assessment or an Individual Career Plan (ICP) completed is dependent upon the school staff whose responsibilities are to ensure they are in place. The application also states that the student information system will be used to measure student achievement of these goals, but it does not explain how that is possible.</p>	P 45
<p>Applicants do not provide information about, or a definition of, the “Exit Plan” referenced in Goal 3.</p>	P 45
<p><u>Alignment</u></p>	

The applicant failed to explain how Goal 1 aligns to the school’s mission and is not just a statement of following federal requirements.	P 44
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D. PLAN FOR EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

A Plan for Evaluating Student Performance will be complete if it addresses the following components:

- the types of assessments that will be used to measure student progress toward achievement of the NM Standards and the school’s student performance expectations;
- the timeline for achievement of the NM Standards and/or the school’s student performance expectations;
- the procedures for taking corrective action in the event that student performance falls below the NM Standards and/or the school’s student performance expectations;
- remediation for students not achieving standards, including a timeline for implementation of the remediation plan;
- assessments that might be considered in addition to the statewide-mandated testing;
- documentation and reporting of student data to students and parents.

ANALYSIS: PLAN FOR EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Types of Assessments</u> Applicants present the New Mexico-required assessments but apparently are unaware of changes to the New Mexico High School Competency Exam format and the grades tested through the NMSBA.</p> <p>Although the applicants describe that NWEA-MAPS will be administered 3-4 times per year, the plan for using this assessment lacks meaningful detail. The application does not discuss which populations would be administered the short-cycle assessments or how the data will be used.</p> <p>The applicant fails to discuss a plan for how the school will use alternate assessments for some populations. Though other means of tracking student progress in the career education program is introduced in another part of the application (e.g., the Vocational Training and Performance Profile is briefly mentioned on P 31) significant detail about the use of this and other alternate assessments is missing.</p>	<p>Pp. 45-46</p> <p>P 47</p>
<p><u>Timeline for Achievement</u> Applicants intend for students to be tested with the short cycle assessment only in grades 9 and 11 while the state requires students to be tested in tenth grade as well. 22-2C-4.1 NMSA 1978 6.19.7.8</p>	<p>P 47</p>

<p>NMAC</p> <p><u>Corrective Action</u> The response to this prompt suggests the school would have both a <i>leadership team</i> and an <i>analytical team</i> as part of the procedures for collecting, analyzing, and communicating school and student data to school staff and conducting and presenting the results of a needs assessment, however, nowhere in the application is the definition or composition of these teams discussed.</p> <p><u>Remediation</u> The remediation response describes the development of an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) for students not meeting standards. It is not clear in the description, however, how this remediation plan will be utilized with both general education and special education students. As it is stated, there is the potential for special education students to maintain an IEP, an ICP and an AIP.</p> <p><u>Additional Assessments</u> The response does not differentiate assessments for students in the Career Readiness and Ability Pathways. The application makes no mention of the required Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessments requirements in alignment with 22-2C-4.1B NMSA 1978.</p> <p><u>Documentation and Reporting</u> The application does not elaborate on how the parent teacher conferences will be structured and/or scheduled.</p>	<p>P 48</p> <p>Pp. 48-49</p> <p>P 49</p> <p>P 49</p>
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E. SPECIAL POPULATIONS

A Special Populations subsection will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

- Suggested modifications to the proposed educational program to meet individual student needs, such as bilingual, limited English proficient, and special education;
- An outline of a special education plan (*the final plan of which must be completed and submitted to the charter authorizer by the end of the planning year*) that demonstrates understanding of state and federal special education requirements including the fundamental obligation to provide a free, appropriate education to students identified with disabilities;
- How the charter school will provide access to ancillary services for these special populations, when necessary.

ANALYSIS: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Modifications to meet Individual Student Needs</u> The application does not specify the types of modifications to the proposed educational program that the school might use to meet individual student’s needs.</p>	P 50
<p>The application states that ELL students will receive services by contracting “with a partner charter high school,” but does not mention who the partner school is or how this arrangement will work.</p>	P 50
<p><u>Outline of Special Education Plan</u> The application mentions the possibility of placing a student in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) as required by law, however, it does describe how this would be structured.</p>	P 56
<p>Applicants describe the school’s Least Restrictive Environment as an integrated classroom setting—rather than leaving that decision to the IEP team as required by law. Applicants do not make provisions for implementing an IEP of a student entering the school whose setting is defined as segregated or separate. This omission demonstrates a lack of understanding of a school’s obligation to serve individuals with disabilities within a public school environment.</p>	P 57
<p><u>Access to Ancillary Services</u> While the application states that the school anticipates the need to provide ancillary services, it does not elaborate on how they will be provided.</p>	P 61

EDUCATIONAL PLAN SUMMARY

Please summarize your analysis of the Educational Plan section of the school’s application. Your summary should reflect your overall impression of the section as presented and discuss the most significant weaknesses of the section.

Summary Analysis
<p>Achieve Academy is seeking to serve students with disabilities and to provide a range of instructional environments and curricula to graduate students—mostly with disabilities—via the standard, career and ability pathways. Though the applicant understands the need to create the continuum of services, it fails to describe how that will be accomplished across the various components of the educational plan. The application does not articulate a clear, concise definition of the career readiness program of study that is proposed. Subsequently, it fails to explain the differences that students would experience between the career readiness program and either the standard program of study or the ability program of study in all aspects of the educational plan.</p> <p>How the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) philosophy will be operationalized is confusing and not aligned. Applicants propose to use an online core curriculum, but do not provide a meaningful justification for choosing the grades 6-12 courseware, when many of the students are likely to need</p>

curriculum at a lower level or will lack the skills necessary to be able to work independently. No other core curriculum was identified. The description for how the career education curriculum will be implemented is inadequate. The application describes the Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) curriculum, but implies that it may be used as a reference only, or that it may just be the Electives curriculum. The scope and sequence of both curricula are not included. Other “*curricular approaches*” mentioned are dance, yoga, etc., but the application does not explain how the actual curriculum will be written, implemented, and assessed in alignment to the standards. A clear plan for the development of the course curriculum for students in the career and ability pathways is significantly lacking in detail.

The Achieve Academy superficially describes the types of strategies and methods it would use to implement the curriculum. However, the plan for implementing the example provided lacks significant detail and coherence. Professional development for staff is underdeveloped, a plan for involving parents is mentioned, but not explained, and a partnership with Adelante is alluded to, but not clearly defined.

The application presents three student-centered goals, however, they lack elements of being SMART.

The plan for evaluating student performance, the proposed remediation plan, and the types of assessments to be utilized do not clearly articulate implementation steps and strategies for the population it seeks to serve and in many places are not consistent with state requirements.

The application presents an inadequate and incomplete description of how it will meet the needs of English Language Learners, merely indicating that it will follow the guidelines in law and “will ensure that all English Language Learners (ELL) will have access to instruction that supports English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Development (ELD), and bilingual multicultural education programs” through contracts with partner charter schools that employ appropriately certified instructors.

While the application correctly details the requirements for addressing special education students, it inadequately describes how these requirements will be operationalized at the school.

VI. FINANCIAL PLAN

The Financial Plan should provide a description of how the school leadership intends to manage the school’s finances, including assurances that public funds will be used appropriately and in compliance with all applicable federal and state requirements and laws. It should present a clear picture of the school’s financial viability including the soundness of revenue projections; expenditure requirements; and how well the school’s budget aligns with and supports implementation of the mission and educational plan.

A. BUDGET

A Budget subsection will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

- A completed revenue projection form 910B5 (included in the application appendices).

- A proposed operating budget covering each year of the charter term based on current unit value using the **5-Year Budget Plan** (included in the application appendices).
- A detailed narrative description of the revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the operating budget is based. The budget narrative should provide sufficient information to fully understand how budgetary figures were determined. The following should be addressed:
 - major start-up expenses, including staffing and benefits; special education services; facility costs; materials and services; and contracted services; and
 - spending priorities that align with the school’s mission, educational program, management structure, professional development needs, and growth plan.
- A detailed narrative description, including the projected amounts, of all revenue sources other than SEG funding, to include any federal, state, or private funds and/or grants.
- A detailed narrative description of the expenditure assumptions for these other revenue sources.

ANALYSIS: BUDGET

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Revenue Projection Form 910B5</u></p> <p><u>5-Year Budget Plan</u> NOTE: though the operating budget spreadsheet shows a red “NO” under the question “Is the Budget Balanced” for years 4 and 5, they actually are balanced. The revenue and expenditures for those years are the same, and this appears to be a glitch in the form.</p> <p><u>Revenue and Expenditure Assumptions</u> Applicants enter projections for special education students in the completed 910B5 (for year 1) but do not provide an explanation for how the number of C and D level students was determined.</p> <p>Applicants fail to describe the assumptions (the numbers of C & D level special education students) that went into SEG revenue calculations for years two through five.</p> <p>The narrative for revenue expenditure assumptions does not sufficiently explain how the figures were determined.</p> <p>The start-up costs outlined on page 63 are inadequate and incomplete as they provide minimal detail and do not identify major categories of spending for opening a new school, such as equipment purchases, instructional supplies and materials. The information on Salaries and Benefits lacks detail with regard to the breakdown of personnel, merely indicating that “A large part of this [\$337,000] is due to Administrative Salaries...”</p> <p>It is unclear, given the number of staff identified, how the school will meet all subject-area, highly-qualified status and endorsement</p>	<p>Pp. 118-119</p> <p>Appendix, 910B5</p> <p>Appendix C: Pages 115-116</p> <p>P 62</p> <p>P 63</p> <p>Appendix D, P 118</p>

<p>requirements.</p> <p>Spending priorities do not support the educational plan. Only budgeting for two teachers with 27 special education and 3 regular education students may not be sufficient to meet the requirements for class load limits for the varying degrees of special education services.</p> <p>The fact that the school’s core curriculum is computer-based implies that the school will be heavily dependent on computers to deliver this curriculum. However, the narrative explains: “Although we do not have a lot of money in the budget to purchase computers in Y1 we will seek donations of used computers...” which raises significant questions about how the school intends to be able to deliver on its plan as well as why the applicants chose not to identify computer hardware as a priority.</p> <p><u>Revenue Sources Other Than SEG Funds</u> The applicant is uncertain about the sources of funds it might be eligible to receive. The response to this prompt seems to demonstrate a lack of preparation and limited understanding of all available resources for a start-up charter school.</p> <p><u>Expenditure Assumptions for Other Than SEG Funds</u> Applicant did not respond to this prompt.</p>	<p>Appendix C (P 115) for Special education projections Appendix D for Expenditures (Pp. 118-119)</p> <p>See NOTE on page 63.</p> <p>Pp. 63-64</p> <p>P 64</p>
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B. FISCAL MANAGEMENT

A plan for fiscal management subsection will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

- A detailed plan indicating how the charter school will manage its fiscal responsibilities.
- A description of the school’s internal control procedures that it will utilize to safeguard assets, segregate its payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency, and ensure compliance with all applicable federal statutes and regulations and state statutes and rules relative to fiscal procedures.
- A description of the manner in which the annual audit of the financial operations of the charter school is to be conducted.

ANALYSIS: FISCAL MANAGMENT

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Fiscal Management Plan</u> The plan for fiscal management is significantly lacking and does not provide a clear picture of how the school will manage its fiscal responsibilities.</p>	<p>P 65</p>

<p><u>Internal Control Procedures</u> The description for internal control procedures is inadequate and incomplete, lacking significant detail as to how these controls will be implemented at the school.</p>	Pp. 65-66
<p><u>Annual Audit of Financial Operations</u> Applicants provide an assurance of compliance with annual audit requirements, but do not provide enough information to demonstrate understanding of the process for state-chartered schools.</p>	P 66

FINANCIAL PLAN SUMMARY

Please summarize your analysis of the Financial Plan section of the school’s application. Your summary should reflect your overall impression of the section as presented and discuss the most significant weaknesses of the section.

<p>Summary Analysis</p> <p>The application contains a 910B5 and a balanced 5-year operational budget.</p> <p>The school’s budget does not support the educational plan. The school has only budgeted for two teachers with 27 special education and 3 regular education students in a start-up year in which most of the curriculum may need to be generated by staff. That the school’s core curriculum is computer-based and the narrative explains that the school <i>will not have enough funds to purchase computers</i> [Emphasis added] is disconcerting. The narrative of revenue and expenditure assumptions does not sufficiently explain how figures were determined, start-up costs are inadequate, and the applicants are uncertain about other sources of funds it would be eligible to receive.</p> <p>The fiscal management plan articulates that a Finance Committee of the Governance Council will work with a licensed business manager to ensure fiscal responsibility and lists a few of the fiscal operations. However, the fiscal management plan lacks significant detail and demonstrates a lack of understanding as to how the school will ensure the appropriate safeguarding of public funds. The applicant does not provide a comprehensive description of the school’s internal control procedures.</p> <p>Given the significant lack of detail in all areas of the narrative in this section, this application fails to demonstrate that the school would be able to implement its educational plan which raises questions about the fiscal viability of the school.</p>
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VII. GOVERNANCE /MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Governance/Management Plan should provide an understanding of how the school will be governed and managed. It should present a clear picture of the school’s governance and management practices, what roles and responsibilities various groups and individuals will have, and how those groups will relate to one another. The Plan should outline how decisions are made at the school site, and provide a convincing picture of the school leadership’s capacity to successfully operate the school. In addition, the governing body of a charter school is, first and foremost, publicly accountable for student academic performance and the expenditure of public funds.

A. GOVERNANCE /MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Governance Structure subsection will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

- A description of the over-all school governance and site-based management structure.
- An organizational chart for the school that:
 - o illustrates the proposed school site-based personnel reporting structure to the governing body and the relationship of the governing body to the school’s leader and administration;
 - o Includes on the chart all proposed administrative/staff positions, parent councils, advisory committees and community groups (if any).
- A narrative description of the chart.

ANALYSIS: GOVERNANCE /MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Governance and site-based management structure</u> The application contains an insufficient description of the relationship between the governing body and the school’s administration.</p>	P 67
<p>The limited description of the governance structure is centered on the governing board of Adelante, its partner organization. The explanation of the over-all school governance and site-based management structure is inadequate and incomplete.</p>	P 67
<p><u>Organizational chart and narrative description</u> The partner organization has an equal relationship with the school’s Governing Council and with the Administrator and states that these entities “will communicate and receive varied levels of support from Adelante Development Center, Inc.” The nature of this support is not described, nor is the impact that this relationship will have on the over-all management of the school explained.</p>	P 67

<p>The organizational chart does not include the committees and the school advisory council (which are mentioned in the following section) nor does it illustrate where contract service providers fit into the organizational structure.</p>	<p>P 67</p>
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B. DESCRIPTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body subsection will be complete if it has addressed the following components:

- Policies and procedures by which the governing body will operate in compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations, including the Open Meetings Act, and that address:
 - board powers and duties as a whole, individual members, and officers of the governing body;
 - governing body member recruitment and selection, including the orientation process for new members and ongoing professional development;
 - the criteria and the process that will be used to select the school’s head administrator;
 - budgeting and operation of the school; and
 - how decisions will be made.
- A list of each of the members of the school’s governing body;
- A brief description of the qualifications of each governing body member.
- An explanation of the nature and extent of staff, families, and the community involvement in the governance of the school, and how they will be notified of the opportunity to participate in the school governance.

ANALYSIS: DESCRIPTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Governing Body policies and procedures</u> The number of members that can sit on the AA Governing Council is not specified. The powers and duties of GC officer positions are not described. The application makes no mention of professional development of the board and does not describe the criteria and process for selecting a head administrator.</p> <p>Applicants suggest that the school may borrow and incur indebtedness—which is contrary to state law.</p> <p><u>List of governing body members and qualifications</u> Members of the governing body include staff and members of the board of Adelante Development Center, Inc. Plans are also for the school to contract with Adelante (see page 78). This appears to create a real (or at a minimum perceived) conflict of interest, and raises a concern for a potential violation of procurement code.</p>	<p>Pp. 68-69</p> <p>P 69</p> <p>P 74-76</p>

<u>Staff, families, and community involvement in governance</u>	
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C. PARTNERSHIPS: *This section is optional and should be completed if the school has identified a partner organization that is essential to the existence of the charter school, its governance, key instructional, and/or management functions.*

The Partnership subsection will be complete if the following components are included:

- Name of the partner organization.
- Name of the contact person at the partner organization and that person’s full contact information.
- A description of the nature and purpose of the school’s partnership with the organization.
- If applicable, an explanation of how the partner organization will be involved in the governance of the school.
- Evidence (in the form of a letter of support or intent to partner) that the school has a formal partnership agreement with the partner organization.

ANALYSIS: PARTNERSHIPS

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Partner organization and contact information</u></p>	
<p><u>Nature and purpose of partnership</u> There appears to be a real (or at a minimum perceived) conflict of interest that would exist if AA contracts with Adelante for services while board and staff of Adelante also serve on AA’s Governing Council.</p>	P 78
<p><u>Partner organization involvement with school governance</u> Incomplete and Inadequate: The applicant fails to address this prompt however it appears that at least two of the five members of the AA board include a current Adelante staff and board member.</p>	Pp. 74-76
<p><u>Evidence of formal partnership agreement</u></p>	

D. SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A School Organizational Structure subsection will be complete if the following components are included:

- Based on the organizational chart provided under subsection A. *GOVERNANCE/MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE* above, job descriptions that identify key

roles, responsibilities and accountability for each staff position listed on the organizational chart.

- A staffing plan for each year of the first charter term, including the proposed pupil-teacher ratio to support the educational plan.

ANALYSIS: SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Job descriptions for all organizational chart positions</u></p> <p>The organizational chart reflect that the administrator and governing board have direct relationships with the partner organization, however this relationship is not articulated in any amount of detail as to make it understandable; the administrative authority of the principal needs more definition.</p> <p>The business manager’s job description is inadequate. It goes significantly beyond serving in the capacity of a manager of accounting and/or bookkeeping as mentioned in 6.63.12.8 NMAC, responsible for the preparation and presentation of all financial documentation and budget maintenance and makes little mention of the competency requirements enumerated in 6.63.12.9 NMAC, with the only budget related functions being procurement and account reconciliation. Additional duties described in the application include administering first aid and prescription medications, coordinating substitutes, and responding to inquiries from parents.</p> <p>The teacher job description is not aligned to the educational plan. It states that teachers must “<i>ensure their classroom is reflective of the school-wide theme and incorporate the theme as appropriate</i>” however nowhere in the educational plan does the application make mention of school-wide themes. Additionally, the description makes no mention of responsibilities related to the facilitation of an online curriculum.</p> <p>The responsibilities for tracking high school credits, creating and updating transcripts, and reporting to STARS—all of which are significant operational functions—are not contained in any of the job descriptions. There is also no mention of technology-related responsibilities in a school heavily dependent on a technology-based curriculum.</p> <p><u>Years 1-5 staffing plan with pupil-teacher ratio supporting educational plan</u></p> <p>The projected pupil teacher ratio is made with the maximum caseload for each teacher, leaving little room for adequate student/staff caseloads to appropriately address student needs identified in the IEPs as required by NMAC 6.29.1.9 H.</p>	<p>P 67</p> <p>Pp. 81-82</p> <p>P 82</p> <p>P 84</p>

E. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

An Employee Relations subsection will be complete if the following components are addressed:

- A description of the school’s personnel policies and procedures that comply with all applicable federal statutes and regulations, including the School Personnel Act.
- The proposed salary schedules that comply with the minimum salary requirements as identified in the School Personnel Act for all employees.
- A description of the evaluation process for staff that will include evaluation of teachers by a licensed school administrator.
- An explanation of the school’s staff discipline process that provides for due process.

ANALYSIS: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>School’s personnel policies and procedures</u> The draft <i>Employee Guidelines</i> (found in Appendix A) make reference to the “<i>Executive Director</i>” (page 100) and “<i>Board of Governors</i>” (page 105). These positions have not previously been referenced and are not included in the organizational chart.</p>	Pp. 100 & 105
<p><u>Proposed salary schedules for all employees</u> The application does not provide schedules—rather it provides the initial salaries for staff. How licensure levels, levels of education, and years of experience will be factored in is not evident.</p>	P 85
<p><u>Evaluation process for staff</u> Description does not make it evident that applicants understand the requirements of the NM School Personnel Act and the licensure competencies. It makes no mention of the competencies or criteria that will be considered in the evaluation of staff, the processes necessary for licensure advancement, and misidentifies the PDP as a “personal development portfolio.”</p>	Pp. 85-87 and Appendix A pp. 101-102
<p><u>Staff discipline process</u> Though it makes an assurance to conform with state requirements, the application does not describe the school’s staff discipline process.</p>	P 87

F. STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

A student enrollment procedures and discipline policy section will be complete if the following components are addressed:

- A description of the school’s admissions policies and procedures, including an explanation of the timeline for admission.
- A description of the school’s lottery process that is in accordance with applicable law.
- A brief description of the proposed student discipline policy that complies with the Student Rights and Responsibilities set forth in the Public Education Department rules and regulations [6.11.2 NMAC] (Note: proposed student discipline procedures are to be included in the Appendices.)

ANALYSIS: STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>School enrollment policies and procedures</u> The “<i>applications for enrollment</i>” referenced in this section to be eligible for the lottery and enrollment is not defined, however it states that “<i>lottery applicants will be eligible for consideration for only one grade based on a transcript evaluation.</i>” This practice is out of compliance with state and federal guidance which recommends that applicants not be required to submit transcripts in order to be enrolled in the lottery.</p> <p><u>Description of lottery process</u> The description provided lacks an explanation of the timeline for admission. The only reference to a timeline comes on page 87 which mentions open enrollment will begin in “late Fall or in the first year – early Spring.”</p> <p><u>Description of proposed student discipline policy</u> A statement is made that AA’s student discipline policies will comply with applicable laws, however these policies and procedures are not described.</p> <p><u>Proposed student discipline procedures (appendix)</u> The application does not provide procedures that must be followed with student that have IEPs.</p> <p>The student handbook in Appendix B has a communication policy that states, “...<i>all students, staff and visitors are asked to make an attempt to use sign language when communicating.</i>” This policy seems out of place as there is no previous mention of the use of sign language in the application.</p> <p>The proposed discipline procedures state that the school will consistently address students’ misbehavior and inform parents. However, the main form of communication with parents and means of addressing behavior problems is the use of “Behavior Slips.” The application provides no other method of consistently informing parents of student misbehavior.</p>	<p>P 88</p> <p>Pp. 87-89</p> <p>P 89</p> <p>P 109</p> <p>P 109</p>

G. FACILITIES:

The facilities plan should demonstrate that the applicant group has carefully considered the school’s facilities needs and understands its options for meeting those needs.

Has the applicant group selected or secured a facility? Yes **XX No**

NOTE: Based upon “YES” or “NO”, complete the appropriate analysis below.

If “NO” a Facilities section will be complete if the following components are addressed:

- An explanation of the needs of a facility that will support the implementation of the school’s educational plan, including desired location, size, and layout of space.
- A description of a reasonable plan to identify and secure an adequate facility.
- The proposed capital outlay needs for the facility, including projected requests for capital outlay assistance for the school.

ANALYSIS: FACILITIES – IF “NO”

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Explanation of needs of a facility that will support educational plan</u> Applicant does not explain how the needed space for the entire school was estimated to be 10,000 square feet.</p>	<p>P 92</p>
<p><u>Reasonable plan to identify and secure an adequate facility</u> The applicant has not stated that all facility acquisition will be in accordance with competitive procurement procedures. Therefore, a plan to utilize the expertise of Adelante in facility acquisition raises concern for a potential conflict of interest.</p>	<p>Pp. 91-92</p>
<p><u>Proposed capital outlay needs</u> It is unclear how applicants determined that the anticipated initial capital outlay needs for the school facility will be \$1.2 million.</p>	<p>P 92</p>

H. OTHER STUDENT SERVICES

This section will be complete if the following components are addressed:

- A description of the school’s plans for meeting the transportation needs of its students and plans for contracting services for transportation, if applicable.
- A description of the school’s plans for meeting the food services needs of its students and plans for contracting services for food services, if applicable.

- A description of the school’s plans for providing student access to other services, including but not limited to counseling and health services and plans for contracting services, if applicable.

ANALYSIS: Other Student Services

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p>Applicant does not address how transportation to and from work sites for students will be accomplished.</p> <p><u>Food Services</u></p> <p><u>Student access to other services</u></p> <p>The description does not provide a list for which types of ancillary services the school will contract nor does it provide a plan for how it will secure contracts. Although it states some services may be conducted off-site, it provides no explanation as to why.</p>	<p>P 92</p> <p>P 93</p>

GOVERNANCE / MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY

Please summarize your analysis of the Governance/Management section of the school’s application. Your summary should reflect your overall impression of the section as presented and discuss the most significant weaknesses of the section.

Summary Analysis
<p>The application provides the GC powers and duties, describes recruitment, orientation, and decision making process. The duties of the executive committee and qualifications for candidates for position on the GC are delineated. Nowhere in the application does it specify the number of members that can sit on the GC, on-going professional development for the GC, or the process for selecting the head administrator.</p> <p>The application contains the names and bios of five members on the AA board. Because at least two members of the board have a strong connection to Adelante—one is a staff member and one is a board member of Adelante—and because the application also presents a plan for contracting with Adelante, it presents at minimum a perceived conflict of interest if not an actual conflict of interest. Members of the governing body of AA should not be in a position to recommend contracts be awarded to Adelante. It is recommended that members of a governing body not have any relationship with other entities if the schools intends to enter into a contract with the entity that has an affiliation with the governing body member.</p> <p>The on-site management plan presents a simple organizational structure with few staff. Job descriptions are provided for each staff on the chart but raise concerns for the actual alignment</p>

of the descriptions to the educational plan and do not seem to address all the duties and responsibilities that would be necessary to operate the proposed school. Details are missing from the school’s personnel policies and procedures, proposed salary schedules, evaluation process, and staff discipline process. Though the application makes assurances of compliance with rules and regulations, it does not consistently demonstrate how that would actually occur at AA.

The school’s enrollment policies, procedures, and lottery process also make assurances but do not clearly illustrate compliance. The student discipline policy and procedures are incomplete and inadequate in not describing provisions that align with the student rights and responsibilities act.

The application’s description of the school facility needs provides some detail, though key assumptions are not explained.

The school’s plans for providing other student services are only partially addressed.

VIII. REQUIREMENTS

The Requirements section of the application addresses the necessary arrangements that school leaders must make to define the respective legal liability and responsibility of the governing body and the Public Education Department. These requirements include, but are not limited to, securing appropriate insurance coverage and identifying waivers that will be sought by the school from the Public Education Department.

A. LEGAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE COVERAGE:

The legal liability and insurance coverage section will be complete if contains:

- A statement that the charter school will participate in coverage by the public school insurance authority and will comply with all applicable rules of that authority.

ANALYSIS: LEGAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE COVERAGE

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<u>Statement of public school insurance authority coverage participation</u>	

B. WAIVERS

The waivers section will be complete if the following components are addressed:

- A list of the specific waivers that will be requested from the department’s requirements, rules, and provisions of the Public School Code pertaining to individual class load, teaching load, length of the school day, staffing patterns, subject areas, purchase of instructional material, evaluation standards for school personnel, school principal duties, driver education and graduation requirements.
- If any waivers will be requested that are not pertaining to those listed above, the applicable statute and/or state rule that the school will request to be waived is cited.

ANALYSIS: WAIVERS

Criteria Not Sufficiently Addressed, Concerns & Additional Questions	Reference
<p><u>List of waivers that will be requested from PED</u> Applicants state they “<i>are not aware of any PEC policies or requirements, but if there are any PEC policies in place at this time, the applicants request a waiver from all of them</i>” [emphasis added]. This response demonstrates a significant lack of understanding of the waiver concept and the alignment of potential waivers and the educational plan proposed.</p>	<p>P 94</p>
<p><u>Other waivers not pertaining to PED waivers that will be requested from PED; must include applicable statute and/or state rule to be waived</u> Applicants provide the same statement as above, demonstrating a lack of awareness of the statute and rules by which it must comply.</p>	<p>P 94</p>

REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

Please summarize your analysis of the Requirements section of the school’s application. Your summary should reflect your overall impression of the section as presented and discuss the most significant weaknesses of the section.

Summary Analysis
<p>Applicants state they “<i>are not aware of any PEC policies or requirements, but if there are any PEC policies in place at this time, the applicants request a waiver from all of them</i>” [emphasis added]. This response demonstrates the applicant’s lack of understanding of the waiver concept and the ability to carefully consider the need for a waiver. This statement demonstrates a critical misunderstanding about the need for a particular waiver and its relationship to the proposed educational plan.</p>