



**STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
300 DON GASPAR
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786
Telephone (505) 827-5800
www.ped.state.nm.us**

HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY-DESIGNATE OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
Governor

September 5, 2012

Dear Public Education Commissioners:

Enclosed is the Final 2012 Charter School Application Final Recommendation and Evaluation for Indigo Hill Charter School applying for a charter in the district to serve grades K-6 and represented by founders, Kaylock Sellers, Stephan Slota, Sarah Livingston, Ph.D, Orlando Lucero, Dr. Joe McCarty, Joseph Yar and Rob Crandall. Please know that the staff at the Charter Schools Division and four teams of independent reviewers gave full consideration to the information gathered in this process.

The review teams at the Charter Schools Division (CSD) have provided evidence and rationale gathered in the team analyses and in this evaluation to fully understand the recommendation.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to ensure that New Mexico's Charter Schools represent the best of alternative and innovative options for parents and students.

Sincerely,

Kelly Callahan
Interim Director
Options for Parents: Charter Schools Division

I. Recommendation

Approve:

Overall the application is complete and adequate; and during their Capacity Interview and Public Input Hearing, the applicant(s) demonstrated the capacity to implement the education and governance/management plans as described in the application. Nothing was identified that would indicate the applicant(s) do not have the experience, knowledge and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school.

Approve with Conditions:

Overall the application is complete and adequate; and during their Capacity Interview and Public Input Hearing, the applicant(s) demonstrated the capacity to implement the education and governance/management plans as described in the application. Nothing was identified that would indicate the applicant(s) do not have the experience, knowledge and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school; however, the conditions listed below are required by law and must be addressed. If the PEC determines that there are any other conditions that need to be addressed, then those should be negotiated in a preliminary contract.

PROPOSED CONDITIONS

The Applicant will negotiate a preliminary contract with the Public Education Commission pursuant to 22-8B-9.1:

1. Obtain standing as an approved Board of Finance
2. Secure a facility that meets PSFA Approval
3. Complete the planning-year checklist

Deny: **X**

Overall the application is either incomplete or inadequate; and during their Capacity Interview and Public Input Hearing, the applicant(s) did not sufficiently demonstrate the experience, knowledge and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school.

The Charter Schools Act, in paragraph 1 of Subsection L of Section 22-8B-6 NMSA 1978, states that a chartering authority may approve, approve with conditions or deny an application. A chartering authority may deny an application if:

- (1) the application is incomplete or inadequate;
- (2) the application does not propose to offer an educational program consistent with the requirements and purposes of the Charter Schools Act;
- (3) the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was involved with another charter school whose charter was denied or revoked for fiscal

- management or the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was discharged from a public school for fiscal mismanagement;
- (4) for a proposed state-chartered charter school, it does not request to have the governing body of the charter school designated as a board of finance or the governing body does not qualify as a board of finance; or
 - (5) 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.

OPTIONS FOR PARENTS – CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION



By: _____

Interim Director of Options for Parents, or Designee

I. Overall Score Sheet

Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Application		
• Executive Summary	4	4
• Education Plan/Academic Framework	38	88
• Organizational Plan and Governance/Organizational Framework	44.5	76
• Business Plan/ Financial Framework	14	18
• Evidence of Support	3	10
• Required Appendices	1	2
Capacity Interview	15	30
Overall Score	119.5	228

Please Note: First, the public hearing may also be taken into consideration in the final recommendation, although the review team provided no public hearing score. Second, if the applicant school's proposal did not answer any prompt as a result of applicability (e.g., the applicant school will be an elementary school and so did not provide responses to graduation-related prompts) then the review team will adjust the total possible points in the application section where the non-applicable item(s) is found as well as in the final score.

II. Explanation Regarding Score Sheet

In the final recommendation and analysis the review team and the CSD considers the overall score as well as the score in each individual section. For example, while the total possible points in the Business Plan only equals 18 points, it is essential that an applicant school score high in this section and have a sound financial plan. If an applicant school receives a low score in this section then the review team carefully considers that in their final analysis. Also please note that while the review team did not score the community input hearing, the review team and the CSD may reference it in the final recommendation and evaluation if pertinent information was offered that contradicts or affirms what was found in the application or the capacity interview. Second, if the applicant school's proposal did not answer any prompt as a result of applicability (e.g., the applicant school will be an elementary school and so did not provide responses to graduation-related prompts) then the review team and CSD will adjust the total possible points in the application section where the non-applicable item(s) is found as well as in the final score.

III. Final Analysis

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Education Plan/Academic Framework	38	88
<p>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section</p> <p>The vision statement expresses the ideal, long-term impact and scope of the school. The mission statement is unclear and lacks focus and directions, however, and does not clearly translate into clear educational goals. In the absence of a strong mission statement, it is difficult to understand all aspects of the school.</p> <p>The goals are general and are not written with all required elements. As presented, most of the goals are inadequate and/or incomplete and do not present a well-articulated picture of what the expectations are of all students, and how academic progress will be required. One goal was written with another school's name attached, which lends itself to the lack of personalization for this school and student population.</p> <p>The school's use of a clearly defined, researched-based curriculum with the potential to raise the achievement of the targeted student population is not clearly demonstrated. While several researched-based programs are identified, the applicant is unable to illustrate how the programs will be integrated to provide a concise and cohesive curricular framework for the school. A plan to further develop the instructional program is lacking in detail as is a plan to align the school's programs with the New Mexico Standards.</p> <p>The application identifies instructional strategies that address the targeted population. The effectiveness of these strategies on the targeted population, however, is not demonstrated. A plan for how instruction will be differentiated to meet student needs is also not fully demonstrated.</p> <p>The school's plans to meet the legal requirements and individual needs of those determined to be special needs students are partially incomplete and inadequate. Evidence that the applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of the legal requirements regarding identifying and providing services to special education students is not provided. In addition, the staffing plan and budget support for special education and ELL students is inadequate. There is concern that the applicants lack the capacity to implement the requirements pertaining to students with special needs.</p> <p>Appropriate assessments in place to evaluate student needs, the effectiveness of the educational program and progress toward school goals is not addressed by the applicant. In addition, how the school will use data to affect teaching and learning to improve student achievement, both on an individual student level and on a school-wide level, is not addressed. There is concern that the applicants lack the capacity to implement the requirements in place to address remediation/at-risk students and school-wide practices.</p>		

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Organizational Plan and Governance/Organizational Framework	44.5	76
<p>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section</p> <p>The Founding Body's capacity to form a Governing Body that has 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), is partially demonstrated. Some sections are incomplete and/or inadequate.</p> <p>The composition of the Founding Body reflects a wide range of expertise and knowledge, and there is a clear description of the separation between the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body and the administrator. Details about how new governing body members based upon expertise and skills is lacking.</p> <p>Plans for governance training and evaluation are complete and adequate. Plans for monitoring the operational, financial and academic performance of the school are not fully demonstrated. Details of how the school will comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy, the Open Meetings Act and the Inspection of Public Records Act are missing. The school's organizational chart does not provide a clear relationship between those identified on the chart, nor is a narrative provided to help clarify the roles of the school staff, the Governing Body and the administration. Neither a staffing plan nor a plan for teacher evaluations is provided. The school calendar is not clearly defined.</p> <p>Personnel and student policies are adequate and complete and align with applicable state laws and regulations. A process for including the community, parents and employees in the governance of the school and a stated process for receiving and responding to concerns is provided.</p> <p>Outreach activities to increase awareness of the school to families is evident. Lottery and enrollment policies are partially complete as two of the prompts were not addressed. Transportation will be provided, if applicable, however, the no funding was set aside for transportation. No waivers are being sought. There are no concerns with the Facility section.</p>		

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Business Plan/ Financial Framework	14	18
<p>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section</p> <p>This section is partially complete and adequate. The applicants included information that should not have been included (C and D calculations for the first year budget) and projected a five-year budget in absence of a staffing plan. The narrative required more information to make it fully complete. The</p>		

financial policies identified reflect generally accepted accounting practices, including compliance, adequate oversight and reporting.

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Executive Summary, Evidence of Support, Required Appendices	8	16
<p>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section</p> <p>The focus of the proposed school and the targeted population is clearly stated. The programmatic features of the school are unique. Community support for the school through community partnerships, business relationships, and resource agreements is not demonstrated. The school has not described outreach activities designed to reach a broad audience, and at this time, has three letters of support. Aggregate data for prospective students who are interested in this school is not provided.</p> <p>Completion of the required appendices is difficult to ascertain as the general format of the application was not consistently followed, and some of the information required in the appendices is imbedded within the application itself.</p>		

Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Capacity Interview	15	30
<p>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section</p> <p>The applicants were only partially able to provide a clear picture of what a typical day would look like including parent involvement, staffing and materials. Response to Intervention (RTI) was mentioned as a "main part of the day," however, how RTI fit into the day was not described, and raises concerns about the applicants' capacity to use the RTI model as required.</p> <p>The response pertaining to roles and responsibilities of, and the relationships between the founders, the governing body and the school's administration during the transitional period the remaining term of the charter was inadequate and incomplete, and raises concerns about the applicant's understanding of</p>		

statutory requirements and best practices necessary to meet the oversight responsibilities of the school. There also appears to be confusion concerning the role of policies, what triggers the need for a policy and how policies should be developed.

The applicants did offer several scenarios to attempt to find other funding sources in lieu of federal support funding. A specific plan for addressing funding issues during the first year if enrollment projections are not met was not described.

Responses given to questions pertaining to staffing, assessment and accountability, and goals were complete and inadequate, and raised concerns about the applicant's understanding of the key issues to be addressed and their ability to meet the requirements in place.