

Abstract of Proposed Charter School:

Provide an abstract (summary) in narrative form that succinctly describes the proposed charter school. Include in the narrative, the school's proposed location, grade levels, enrollment, mission, and educational philosophy and approach. This abstract is to be limited to one page.

To learn... To think... To reflect

Mission—Through high expectations, a vigorous and engaging curriculum, and a supportive environment, the Center for Inquiry Southwest Community facilitates the development of students to think critically and inquire about the world in which they live.

Inquiry is a learning process in which children, through their natural curiosity about the world around them, are provided opportunities to pose and seek answers to problems about their world. Through this process students learn to recognize that their answers are not an end product, but a stepping-stone to further inquiry.

Short and Burke write that children live in a constant state of curiosity and learning. For them, inquiry comes from exploring and being interested in the world. Through their active explorations of their world, tensions arise which lead them to ask questions about aspects of the world that puzzle them. They systematically investigate those questions, thereby creating new understandings, new questions and new issues (1991).

At the Center for Inquiry Southwest, a K–5 elementary school with a maximum enrollment of 440 students located within the Albuquerque Public School District, we have a core curriculum that assists students in mastering the New Mexico education standards. Using those standards, teachers create a learning environment that taps into the inherent inquisitiveness of children.

Through the use of quality literature, posing real-life problems and nurturing student interests, our single-sex classrooms are a place in which the joy of learning is not only present but also expected. Students come to recognize they are accomplished mathematicians, best selling authors, Nobel Prize-winning scientists, world-class orators, and creative artists. They come to this realization not through superficial praise but through positive hands-on practice and involvement in their own learning.

We have as high expectations of our students as they have of themselves and their teachers.

At the Center for Inquiry Southwest, we believe accountability and assessment are vital components of any learning environment.

We believe students are active participants in their continuous learning journey.

This is accomplished with their teacher through student-led conferences, research projects, self-reflection, observation, posing and solving real life issues, and through other authentic assessments and processes.