



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 OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
Governor

OPTION FOR PARENTS CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT CHARTER APPLICATION

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1. General Information

- Name of Proposed School

Gallup Intertribal Community School

- Grade levels to be offered and enrollment projections

Grade Levels to be Offered	Projected Total Enrollment
6-12	300

- Primary Point of Contact

Name	Lane Towery				
Mailing Address	203 E Pine Ave				
City	Gallup	State	NM	Zip	87301
Phone	505-263-9737				
Email	lane@nacainspireschoolsnetwork.org				

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 on Team	Qualifications: Education, Employment, Experience
Ben Soce	Member	Ben Soce is an Experiential and Outdoor Educator for the National Indian Youth Leadership Project. He received his Bachelor's in Liberal Arts from the University of New Mexico in 2013 and has been with NIYLP since 2000. Throughout his NIYLP career, Ben has been Lead Facilitator and Coordinator for various positive youth development programs. He has worked with Elementary, Middle, & High School students. More recently, he expanded his proficiency with working with high risk youth in residential treatment centers and juvenile justice systems. His main area of expertise is incorporating and infusing culture and holistic health into his work with area young people.
Masika Sweetwyne	Member	Enrolled member of the Zuni Tribe; bilingual in Zuni and English. Currently teaching at Gallup High School; 6 years teaching experience in parochial and public schools on and off reservation. Licensed teacher in NM in Secondary and Middle Education with endorsements in English and Visual Arts. Bachelors in English and Bachelors in Visual Art from Fort Lewis College. Masters in Teaching English from Teachers College at Columbia University. Founder of IndiGenius Exchange
Lane Towery	Member	BA Political Science, Duke University; M.A. Elementary Education expected May 2015, UNM; Level 1 NM Teaching Licensure (3 years experience); instructional coach (2 years); Rural School Leadership Academy fellowship, 2013; NACA-Inspired Schools Network Fellow.

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3. Model or focus of the proposed school (e.g., performing arts, dual language, college prep, STEM, Montessori, IB):

Gallup Intertribal Community School will be a middle and high school committed to Indigenous education in a multi-tribal/multi-racial border town setting. The school's curriculum will combine a modern STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) model with traditional knowledge, values, and languages along with aspects of an experiential pedagogy. The school will be rooted in contributing to strong Native communities both within Gallup and in tribal areas by bridging the gap between indigeneity and rigorous education. The program of the school will focus in equal parts on academic rigor, identity growth and security for students of all backgrounds, and holistic health and wellness.

4. Does the school expect to contract with another entity for either management, or substantial oversight or direction in the school's operation? Yes: No:

If YES, describe the entity and the role it will have in the school's operational plan.

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

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

N/A

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

Mission: To nurture a diverse group of students to find strength in their identity, be holistically healthy and prepared to succeed in higher education in order to grow as compassionate, strong, critically conscious community leaders.
Vision: A school in Gallup that contributes to the social, economic, and cultural wellness of self-determined Native communities in and around Gallup, supports an inclusive Gallup for all residents, and stands as an exemplar of what can be possible in Indigenous education.

8. Student population and geographical setting of the school

- Define the targeted geographical area of the proposed school from which you expect to draw a significant number of your students.

Gallup is a racially, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse town adjacent to the Navajo Nation, which surrounds the city on all sides, and near the Zuni Pueblo. Gallup is bolstered by being on Route 66, Interstate 40, and the BNSF Railway. Gallup is the hub for McKinley County, which has a population of about 71,000 people. Gallup's population, according to census data, was 21,678 in 2010. In addition to the city of Gallup, at least nine surrounding Navajo Nation chapters contribute students to Gallup schools. Those students have the option to ride a bus into and attend middle and high school in Gallup, whose schools compete with Bureau of Indian Education and private parochial schools for those students. Churchrock, Pinedale, and Mariano Lake Chapters all sit to the north and east of Gallup. To the south are Red Rock, Bread Springs/Baahaali, and ChiChil'Tah Chapters. Manuelito and Tsayatoh Chapters surround Gallup's west side. And to the north sits Rock Springs Chapter. An additional 11,025 people reported living in those nine chapters in 2010. We intend for our school to be located in Gallup, and to be accessible by students from the surrounding tribal communities.

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- Describe the targeted student population including key demographic data (academic performance, home languages, ELL, and special education populations).

Gallup's population breaks down as 44% American Indian/Alaska Native, 35% Caucasian, and 31% Hispanic/Latino. Of note, the population of students in Gallup's schools is not representative of Gallup's population at large. According to disaggregated SBA data from last year, of the students who took a state test in Gallup proper, 69% identified as Native American, while only 5% identified as Caucasian. The population of the surrounding chapters is nearly 100% Navajo. Importantly, the population in Gallup identifying as Native American grew 28% between 2000 and 2010, from 7,404 to 9,498 people. As for youth, 3,394 young people between the ages of 10 to 19 lived in Gallup in 2010. The surrounding chapters reported an additional 2,217 students between 10 and 19, making 5,611 total middle- and high school-aged children who can potentially access school in Gallup. With a projected total enrollment of 300 students, we could access at most about 5% of the available student population, which does not represent a significantly disruptive number of students for the local schools in existence.

Facts describing the student population of Gallup-McKinley County Schools in total:

- 81.6% FRPL in 2012 (last year available on PED website)
- 11.5% Students with Disabilities under IDEA (civil rights data, 2011)
- 31.1% Limited English Proficiency (civil rights data, 2011)

Facts about Gallup and McKinley County:

- 33.6% of county lives below poverty line (2010 census)
- 20.9% of Gallup lives below poverty line (census)
- 56.5% of people speak a language other than English at home in the county.
- 34.9% of people speak a language other than English at home in Gallup

According to SBA data from 2014, in public schools in the city of Gallup last year 33% of students scored either proficient or advanced in reading while 29% scored the same in math. Those data, however, belie sharp inequities in academic outcomes in Gallup. For instance, last year 64% of Anglo students scored proficient or advanced on reading compared to 25% of Native American students. Similarly, according to the PED the class of 2013's 4-year graduation was 84% for white students and 69% for Native students. There are many factors affecting this inequity; Native students' ability and motivation are not among them.

A survey by Nick Brokeshoulder, an Academic Specialist in the Lobo Learning Center at UNM-Gallup, done in winter 2013 with 98 juniors and 113 seniors at Gallup High School showed that 85% of students planned on continuing their education after high school. As a comparison, Mr. Brokeshoulder kept data on students who enrolled at UNM-Gallup in the spring of 2012 and took the Compass placement exam. 65% of students placed into remedial English courses, 83% into remedial reading courses, and 72% into remedial math courses, all of which puts students at a statistical disadvantage for graduating. This demonstrates a local gap between students' aspirations for higher education and their preparation to succeed in higher education.

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- 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.

Students in Gallup have the following options to attend for middle school:

- Gallup Middle School (GMCS) - D grade in 2014
- JFK Middle School (GMCS) - D grade in 2014
- Chief Manuelito Middle School (GMCS) - D grade in 2014
- Uplift Community School (State Charter) - F grade in 2014
- Rehoboth Christian School (private)
- Gallup Catholic School (private)

Students in Gallup have the following options to attend for high school:

- Gallup High School (GMCS) - C grade in 2014
- Miyamura High School (GMCS) - C grade in 2014
- Gallup Central Alternative High School (GMCS) - C grade in 2014
- Middle College High School (district charter) - A grade in 2014
- Rehoboth Christian School (private)

Students who live in the surrounding chapters, depending on their location, have the option to attend the following middle schools:

- ChiChilTah/Jones Ranch Community School (BIE)
- Borrego Pass Community School (BIE)
- Wingate School (BIE)
- Thoreau Middle School (GMCS) - C grade in 2014

And in high school, students living in the chapters around Gallup can, depending on their location, choose to attend:

- Thoreau High School (GMCS) - C grade in 2014
- Wingate High School (BIE)

As mentioned previously, in 2010 there were 5,611 middle- and high school-aged children in Gallup and the surrounding chapters in 2010. School enrollment data shows that 4,248 students were enrolled in public middle and high schools in Gallup, demonstrating two things. First, this means 854 students must have come from reservation communities into Gallup to attend school, showing many families are willing to see their children travel into Gallup daily for school. Second, this data shows that 1,363 students chose not to attend GMCS public schools and instead to attend private or BIE schools, had dropped out or been expelled, or were in the juvenile justice system.

Besides deep inequities in academic performance and graduation rates in Gallup's schools, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights shows that Native students in our district disproportionately lack access to Gifted and Talented courses while also disproportionately bearing the burden of suspensions and expulsions.

We believe that a community of families and students will choose to attend Gallup Intertribal Community School for its combined commitment to affirming Native identities and ensuring academic rigor and equity for all students. Currently, no other public school has a mission similar to ours, so Gallup Intertribal Community School differentiates itself as an innovative option for parents who are dissatisfied with their current choices. Families may be attracted to any number of our proposed features: a commitment to affirming Indigenous identities and languages, a commitment to ensuring all students are prepared for higher education, a commitment to keeping students in school through a restorative justice program, a focus on holistic health and wellness, access to the National Indian Youth Leadership Project's outdoor experiential education programming, or a STEAM curriculum. We believe families and communities will also choose Gallup Intertribal Community School because of our planning team's commitment to a community-led design process that will give voice to community values and aspirations in our school while building trusting relationships early with families.

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9. Provide evidence that the applicant team has assessed community need for a school of the nature that will be proposed in the application (e.g., objective surveys or other measures of local demand for the proposed educational program).

The Planning Team has spent our fall listening to many community opinions about education. We consider that process incomplete at this point, but following is a description of the ways we have engaged community and the themes that have surfaced.

The planning team has done presentations and question/answer sessions at three chapter meetings so far--Churchrock, Pinedale, and Mariano Lake--which have informed our work. Out of those meetings, Mariano Lake passed a resolution expressing support for our proposed school and Notice of Intent without any dissenting votes on December 19th.

We have completed ~37 one-on-one meetings with the purpose of identifying the biggest perceived challenges students face while also asking folks about their personal hopes and dreams for their community and their children. These one-on-ones have been done with community members, parents, educators, chapter officials, Navajo Nation officials, local non-profit administrators, UNM-Gallup faculty, and school board members. The themes below were mostly generated from these meetings, and they have almost entirely indicated that there is broad agreement about the need for innovative educational models for Native youth in Gallup.

Organizationally, both the National Indian Youth Leadership Project and the University of New Mexico-Gallup branch campus have signed on to be mentor organizations because of each of their shared interest with our work.

Gallup McKinley County Schools Superintendent Frank Chiapetti expressed the opinion that our school could fill an unmet niche in Gallup and has invited us to present to the local Board of Education in January.

The planning team has done small-scale surveys with youth from the National Indian Youth Leadership Project and Thoreau Community Center about the students' experiences in their schools. The lowest average answers on a seven-point likert scale came on the questions "my teacher(s) know my family" and "the work I do in school is challenging." Also of note, every student surveyed so far has expressed knowing someone who has dropped out of school.

The planning team facilitated a talking circle with members of the Native American Student Association (NASA) at UNM-Gallup, from which trends emerged around academic preparation, school culture, and curriculum in students' school experiences. Some quotes:

"I took an AP class at Gallup High School and then I got here and took the entry test and I was put in lower-level math--bam! That sucked to go backwards. The public school system didn't benefit me in that case."

"I feel like growing up on the Rez, the only thing you look forward to is sports. No school takes pride in clubs or academics...In outer schools like Mariano Lake, ChiChilTah, and Wingate it feels like teachers just go there for the pay. Standards are really low."

"I went to the Window Rock immersion school in elementary, but now I'm forgetting the language and I don't want to forget. I wish it went passed 6th grade."

While we consider our community engagement and listening an ongoing process, there are coherent themes in the vision we hear people articulate for the education of Native youth in Gallup. The first is that people want strong, critical, and compassionate leaders for their communities in the future. A second theme about academic rigor has emerged, as folks have clearly articulated that they want the children of their communities to be able to access and excel in higher education if they so choose in order that they can compete in the job market and be effective local leaders. Third, many folks, in particular elders at chapter meetings, have brought up issues of health and wellness, asking that schools address issues of suicide rates, alcoholism, abuse, and other trauma. Finally, some tribal citizens have expressed a desire to see a school committed to pushing back against acculturation and loss of language.

We approach the work of opening a school in Indian Country with the belief that the history of Native American education in our country demands that we engage community deeply and respectfully in the design process. We will refine the school's mission and design the school's curriculum and core values by continuing to engage chapter houses, hosting community meetings and talking circles, and engaging parents and youth in the area we propose to serve.

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10. Identify significant innovative features that the school will implement in order to help it realize its vision / mission (e.g., non-traditional school year, longer school day, partner organizations, etc.).

*Gallup Intertribal Community School will implement best practices in the field of Indigenous Education like Dine' (and potentially Zuni) language instruction, Culturally Responsive Teaching methods, and a curriculum that takes into account local knowledge, geography, history, and values.

*Gallup Intertribal Community School will show a commitment to health and wellness and identity development in its core mission, curriculum, and school culture. This includes designing a school program that takes into account social/community wellness, emotional and mental wellness, and physical wellness, in addition to intellectual wellness.

*Gallup Intertribal Community School will implement a STEAM-based curriculum aligned to Common Core standards, Dine' Content Standards, and cultural standards created in partnership with community members--making instruction interesting, relevant, and challenging for our youth.

*Gallup Intertribal Community School will work with the National Indian Youth Leadership Project to provide outdoor, experiential education and team-building experiences for our middle school students, and leadership opportunities for our high school students, which are aligned to indigenous values. This will bring joy, challenge, confidence, close relationships, and a connection to our local geography.

*Gallup Intertribal Community School intends to implement a Restorative Justice system, based on Indigenous principles, to respond to student behaviors positively and compassionately.

11. Describe 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.

We believe that, in response to chronically inequitable outcomes for Native students in both public and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, we will show success in a number of ways. First, by engaging parents, elders, and youth in the process of designing our curriculum and core values, we will realize a reconciliation process of sorts between communities and schools, and in that process build trusting relationships that sustain our school in the long run. Research is clear that parent, family, and community involvement in education fuels academic and school success.

Second, our STEAM-based curriculum will develop in students the sorts of creative and critical thinking skills they will need to be academically prepared for higher education in alignment with both common core standards and indigenous values.

Third, we believe in committing significant resources to recruiting, developing, and retaining staff. We think that combining a carefully designed professional development program based in the tenants of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Indigenous Education, opportunities for teacher inquiry and development of knowledge, teacher leadership pathways, and a core-values driven culture will create conditions that allow teachers to thrive in their classrooms and keep them coming back year after year. These are factors we know to be critical to effectively managing a school.

Fourth, we will commit ourselves to the other innovative features listed above: language instruction, outdoor experiential education, restorative justice, and practices and curriculum designed around holistic health and wellness. Furthermore, these will not only be practices, but will be representative of a school culture built around community core values that humanize and affirm all students.

Fifth, and most importantly, through our commitment to Indigenous Education, we will eschew the false dichotomy between culture and academics and instead treat student identity development as a key component of long-term academic and life outcomes. Indeed, there is a growing body of research to support this claim. In the last decade a growing body of research has shown that identity safety is critical to supporting an effective academic program while stereotype threat can undermine effective education, regardless of a student's racial identity. In terms of indigenous education specifically, Teresa McCarty and her colleagues, in a study of schools in Alaska, Hawaii, and the Navajo Nation, found "compelling empirical evidence that strong, additive, academically rigorous Native language and culture programs have salutary effects on both Native language and culture maintenance/ revitalization and student

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achievement, as measured by multiple types of assessments" (McCarty, 14). In a study of the experiences of Native high school students in New Mexico last year, Patricia Cerecer found that a dominant, deficit-based narrative about Indigenous students' participation in school forces a separation between Native students' cultural identity and academic identity, "negating their academic potential in school and hindering their persistence along the educational path" (Cerecer, 592). And in a meta-analysis of research on identity development earlier this decade, Chandler et al found a strong correlation between First Nations communities' efforts to preserve cultural heritage and decreased suicide rates, showing the value of a focus on cultural identity for long-term life outcomes.

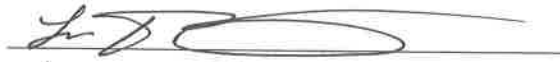
Cerecer, P. D. (2013). The policing of native bodies and minds: Perspectives on schooling from American Indian youth. *American Journal of Education*, 119 (4), 591-616.

Chandler, M. J., Lalonde, C. E., Sokol, B. W., Hallett, D., & Marcia, J. E. (2003). Personal persistence, identity development, and suicide: A study of native and non-native North American adolescents. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 1-138.

McCarty, T.L. (2011). The Role of Native Languages and Cultures in American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Student Achievement. (Prepared for the Promising Practices and Partnerships in Indian

Please Note: Should your charter be awarded, the founding governing body could undergo a background check to determine if it qualifies to be a board of public finance in the state of New Mexico.

Signature of founder(s)



Date: 1-7-15

Lane Towery
[PRINT NAME]



Date: 1/6/15

Masika Sweetmyre
[PRINT NAME]



Date: 1-7-15

Benjamin Soce
[PRINT NAME]