



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

INSTRUCTIONS

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

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

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

KellyCallahan2@state.nm.us

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

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

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

1. General Information:

Name of Proposed School:	Indigo Hill School	
Primary Contact Person	Kaylock Sellers	
Mailing Address:	2442 Cerrillos Road # 402	
City: Santa Fe	State: New Mexico	Zip: 87505
Phone: (505) 603-5566	Email: kavlocksellers@hotmail.com	

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**Santa Fe Charter
 Schools Division**

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

Name	Role	Employment	Qualifications
Kaylock Sellers	Founder	Charter School	School Business Manager/Certified Math Teacher
Stephen Slota	Founder	Insurance Services	Personal Finance
Dr. Joseph McCarty	Founder	Developmental Disability Services	Educational Psychologist

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

Focus primarily on unique learning needs of neurodiverse students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including dual exceptionality and or Gifted within an inclusive multisensory learning setting; Reggio Emilia principles with art/music integration and Cambridge International Education framework.

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

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

N/A

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

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

N/A

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

Indigo Hill School fosters a safe, stimulating and student-centered, learning community where cultural diversity and neurodiversity are celebrated. We educate each student through individualized, challenging programs within an inclusive, dignified and least restricted environment that encourages respect and trust. Our school promotes administrative and educational effective practices and policies, grounded in strategic innovation and rigor to engage our students, families and staff in our collaborative process.

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

The targeted population consists of up to 175 Pre-K-8 students, including those with current classifications of Autism Spectrum Disorder, Dual Exceptionality, and Gifted. Students are likely attending public schools in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, or Bernalillo, or are being homeschooled. While there are some private institution placements available to children with ASD in Albuquerque and elsewhere in New Mexico, they may not be practical choices since the tuition rates may not be affordable for families and/or accessible because of the schools’ locations. Indigo Hill would provide a competitive option for K-8 students because it represents an education model where a concentration of comprehensive and specialized services is readily available for these students and their families. In addition, Indigo Hill is developing a Pre-K program of up to 30 students to utilize early identification and intervention services.

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

We believe a need exists in New Mexico for a unique public charter school that focuses specifically on the needs of children with ASD, and Gifted, as well as the Dual Exceptionality of both Gifted and ASD, since some of our students will be classified as both.

(The following discussion is based on the most recently updated report November 04, 2011 prepared by: Office of Communications and Public Liaison, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD 20892). According to the most recent data available from the U.S. Center for Disease Control, it is estimated that between 1 in 80 and 1 in 240 with an average of 1 in 110 children in the United States have an ASD. ASD is a neurobiological disorder that interferes with the development of communication and social interaction skills. It is a lifelong disorder that may result in impaired development of life skills. ASD includes the specific diagnosis of Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder- Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS). Diagnostic criteria for each of these are outlined in the current DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). In the forthcoming release of DSM-V, an updated description of these conditions will be classified exclusively under the umbrella term of Autism Spectrum Disorder, i.e. ASD.

ASD occurs in all racial, ethnic, and social groups equally, with individuals in one group no more or less likely to have ASD than those in other groups. Usually, ASD becomes apparent by 3 years of age. ASD is four times more prevalent in boys than girls and among families that have one child with ASD, and recurrence of ASD in another sibling is between 2 percent and 8 percent, a figure much higher than in the general population.

ASD can make learning difficult and may lead to challenging behaviors. Studies of children with ASD suggest that their problems with socialization and communication continue into adulthood. Some of these children develop additional psychiatric symptoms and disorders in adolescence and adulthood.

In April 2004, a report funded by Robert Wood Johnson for Health Care Systems and Persons with Autism in New Mexico, was released, "Collaborating for Effective Services for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Mexico, The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS)." The purpose of the project was to "bring together stakeholders to address the issue of how New Mexico . . . will meet the intensive service needs of children with ASD and their families and to develop a plan to do so." The report concluded there were substantial needs to be addressed in our state: "Based on the Autism Society of America's estimates of 2-6 persons with ASD per 1,000 live births and New Mexico's approximate population of 1.8 million people, New Mexico may expect somewhere between 3,600-10,800 New Mexicans to have ASD (Page 4)."

In addition, "The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) data on students who receive special educational services under an exceptionality of "Autism" severely underestimate the number of school age children with ASD in New Mexico because many children are not yet diagnosed or are receiving services under another exceptionality. (Page 3)." Children with clinical (medical) diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome and who have been identified by schools as "children with disability" are typically found by the IEP Team conducting the evaluation to have an impairment in such areas as Autism, Speech/Language, or Other Health Impaired.

In the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho area, there are a number of support groups that have formed for parents with children who have ASD, which reflects the growing trend, as well as need for clinical and educational information and support. Since August 2011, members of a new parent working group in the Rio Rancho/Sandoval area have been meeting regularly to explore options and generate ideas for serving New Mexico children with special needs on the Spectrum. They concluded that the establishment of a school in New Mexico for children with ASD would best serve children and families in this area.

Although all schools in New Mexico, both public and private, are required to serve children with special needs, not all schools have the capacity to address the particular requirements of children with ASD in all its facets.

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

Our goal at Indigo Hill School is to help neurodiverse children excel, using a developmentally appropriate, individualized and relationship-based approach. Key features are: cost-effective, special education systems approach and administration; evidence-based, brain-based instructional delivery for students in an inclusive and multisensory learning environment; integration of Reggio Emilia principles in curriculum; Cambridge International Education framework applied to Pre-K-8 curriculum design; comprehensive assessments prior to start of school for leveled placement per individualized student needs; clinical intervention provided through multi-specialty professional team; organizational development to establish a school culture based on respect for neurodiversity and differences; parent engagement and training; teacher development with access to specialized continuing education and incentives for sustainability; institutional partners.

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

The diagnosis of ASD is growing. The variety of symptoms makes it particularly challenging for parents to recognize the problem, and find resources they need, and it is just as challenging for schools to help these children learn. Typically, public school programs and services for ASD students are added onto the existing structure of special education services, and, therefore, may have limited capacity. The Indigo Hill founders believe our proposed charter will be more effective because the school's foundation is built upon evidence-based, centralized, cost-effective delivery of special education services and treatment in a unique instructional setting designed for that express purpose. From the outset, the school will have tools and supports in place to meet the specific needs of ASD and Gifted students, their families, and teachers, as well as to address the administrative and reporting requirements of state/federal agencies that focus on special education. Existing research and effective practices will be the foundation for a program we will continually monitor and improve.

Signature of founder(s)



Kaylock Sellers

[PRINT NAME]

Date:

1/2/2012


Stephan Slota

[PRINT NAME]

Date:

01/02/2012

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT A NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

January 5, 2012

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

Dear Ms. Callahan,

This letter is formal notification of our intention to submit a new charter school application by July 2012.

The proposed charter school will be located within the boundaries of one of three districts currently being considered, including Rio Rancho Public Schools, Bernalillo Public Schools and Albuquerque Public Schools. The final selection, contingent upon the availability of a prospective site(s), will be disclosed in the completed application. At this time, our proposed grade levels are K-8 with the intention to introduce a related preschool program, as well.

Sincerely,

Kaylock Sellers, Primary Contact
2442 Cerrillos Road #402
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Phone: (505) 603-5566
Email: kaylocksellers@hotmail.com

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Schools Division**

Attachment (4 pages)