



2010 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION & EVALUATION

Name: J. Paul Taylor Academy	Projected Grades: K-8
Projected Enrollment: 200	Proposed location: Las Cruces
Founders: Bea Jenkins and Lynne Happe	
Recommendation: I recommend that the Public Education Commission Approve the application with conditions.	

J. Paul Taylor Academy has presented a strong and well articulated application. The founders are to be recognized for setting forth a coherent plan to meet the unique needs of the community that has been identified. The application provides a mission that is connected with the educational plan for the school. Overall the application, provides a sense of confidence that the founders and governing council will have the foundations for a viable and successful charter school.

The reasons for recommending **approval** of this application are based on the evaluation of each of the sections of the application:

The mission of the J. Paul Taylor Academy (JPTA) targets a historically underserved population in the traditional setting and the dual-language approach offers a sound language-acquisition program in an area that the applicants recognize as containing a high-percentage of second language learners and PHLOTE* students.

Overall, the educational plan presents a coherent set of strategies and curricula for meeting the needs of students in the Las Cruces community. The application presents a research-based model of project-based, hands-on learning for dual-language learners. The description of the educational approach is well-aligned to the mission of the school. The student performance expectations and the assessment plan provide a clear structure for academic accountability.

The financial plan and budget demonstrate a high regard for the responsibilities necessary to safeguard public funds and provide a clear alignment necessary to support the overall implementation of the charter.

The governance of the school has been created from a broad-base of citizens in the community all of whom have particular areas of expertise on which to rely to create a structure and processes which will ensure compliance and focus on school results.

The founders have researched the availability of suitable facilities and have provided viable plans for securing an appropriate campus.

*Primary Home Language Other Than English

Dr. Don Duran, Assistant Secretary of Education
CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION

Date: September 2, 2010

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

I am recommending the charter be approved subject to the following conditions:

FINANCIAL PLAN

The governing body of the charter school must submit an application to the commission and obtain approval from the commission that the governing body be designated as a board of finance. The charter school shall agree that all accounting records shall be audited annually by a public accounting firm engaged by the Public Education Department.

FACILITIES

The charter school cannot occupy a facility with students until the Charter Schools Division receives a determination from the Public School Capital Outlay Council that the facilities of the charter school meet the educational occupancy standards pursuant to the requirements of Section 22-8B-4.2.A NMSA 1978.

LEGAL LIABILITY

The charter school shall agree that, to the fullest extent permitted by law, the charter school shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Public Education Department and the Public Education Commission, their members, officers, employees, agents, affiliates and representatives from and against any and all liabilities.

INSURANCE

The charter school shall participate in and obtain insurance from the Public School Insurance Authority and comply with all applicable rules of that authority.

PLANNING-YEAR CHECKLIST

Prior to the end of the planning year, and before the commission shall issue the authorization to commence full operation, the charter school must substantially comply with the requirements of the planning-year checklist developed by the Charter Schools Division.

MONITORING

The governing body of the charter school shall agree that in order to permit the Public Education Department to fulfill its oversight function under the Charter School Act and ensure that the school is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and the terms and conditions of its charter, the staff of the Public Education Department, Charter Schools Division, has the right to request any data and records from the school and the school shall comply with any such request within fifteen days. The charter school shall provide documents upon reasonable written notice and consistent with its obligations, authority and rights under applicable laws and regulations governing student and employee confidentiality, and privileges

applicable to charter schools and their governing bodies.

After the completion of each academic year of its charter, the charter school shall submit an annual report to the Charter Schools Division. The annual report shall be submitted by the deadline determined by the Division and shall provide data in the format specified by the Charter Schools Division.

The charter school shall comply with all the requirements of the monitoring process developed by the Charter Schools Division.

CONTRACT

The Charter shall be effective upon the signing of a Charter Contract between the Public Education Commission and the charter school.

CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION AND STATEMENT OF NEED EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This school would be the first elementary charter school to be opened in Las Cruces, thus offering a new school choice that would offer a dual-language program and an educational model specifically focused on meeting the unique cultural and academic needs identified in this community. The Las Cruces Public School District reported no negative commentary or opposition to this proposed charter school at the public community meeting.

This proposed project-based, dual-language educational program fosters involvement opportunities for parents and the community to take greater responsibility and advocacy for the academic success of their children. The research provided supports the benefits of smaller class sizes and the academic, social, and problem-solving skills benefits proposed to be offered in this educational model. The school identifies organizational/administrative goals that are well-aligned to its mission.

EDUCATIONAL PLAN EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

JPTA's educational plan adequately describes who the school expects to serve, what the students will achieve, how they will achieve it, and provides the varied types of formative and summative assessments to be used. A picture of what a JPTA student will experience in terms of educational climate, structure, materials, schedule, assessment, and outcomes is adequately presented. The school is deliberate in its plans to develop its curricula, professional development, and relevant assessments, and demonstrates its capacity to implement these plans. The project-based, dual-language approach is cited to strengthen collaboration between the school, its families, and community. The overall curricular plans cite the importance and describe the implementation of literacy activities across all subject areas to positively impact student achievement.

The school has set high expectations for parental involvement, and health and wellness are indicated as priorities toward the school's goal of educating and serving the "whole" child and his/her family and the community. Through this school's plan, that will educate children within mixed grades, multi-aged classrooms, and "fluid" groups based on the individual needs of each child, a solid, research-based model is to be implemented. This application provides a feasible school choice for elementary and middle school students that is targeted to meet the unique needs of their community's low income students who need a different opportunity to improve their academic achievement in a safe, small, familial, and familiar environment.

FINANCIAL PLAN EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

JPTA's Financial Plan presents a clear picture of the school's SEG financial viability, and the school's budget aligns with and supports implementation of the mission, educational plan, and organizational chart/staffing positions.

Major start-up expenses and spending priorities, including staffing and benefits, special education services, facility costs, materials and services, professional development, growth plan, and contract services, are well aligned and supportive of the school's mission and proposed educational, governance, and management plans. A thorough understanding of compliant fiscal management requirements is evident.

GOVERNANCE / MANAGEMENT PLAN EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This section of the application adequately outlines how decisions are made at the school site and provides a description of the school leadership's capacity to successfully operate the school. This section reflects a clear understanding of governing body policies and procedures and is completed with specific, comprehensive, and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and presents a clear, realistic picture of how the governing body will operate. A matrix to identify the governing body members and their qualifications and diversity reflects wide-ranging areas of expertise. Brief descriptions of the qualifications of the governing body members cite expertise in organizational management, financial management, fundraising experience, facilities planning, PR, leadership and human resources development, volunteer development, and technology – such knowledge and skills are desirable and should serve the school well in its developmental and implementation stages.

Expectations for teachers are high – an extended calendar and 8-hour workdays, plus evening activities and weekend events to support parent and community engagement, are described along with relevant professional and staff development to adequately implement their proposed goals and strategies. A clear focus and understanding of the head administrator and staff evaluation processes are presented.

The facilities preparations and floor plans as presented demonstrate initiative and reflect careful planning and a clear understanding of the school's needs to address not only classroom and lab spaces but also office, library, kitchen/cafeteria, and nurse/janitorial spaces. Planning and research to help the school best accommodate student transportation and food services needs for their unique populations are also evident; a demonstrated focus on supporting health and

wellness practices and improving the health and wellness of students and parents is also evident. Plans to employ a full-time Student Health Coordinator with student counseling experience reflects the school's commitment to educating the whole child.

REQUIREMENTS EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The application adequately addresses all of the required components in this section.