



**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](http://www.ped.state.nm.us)**

HANNA SKANDERA  
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
GOVERNOR

December 5, 2014

Dear Public Education Commissioners:

Enclosed is the Final Recommendation for the Monte del Sol charter School 2014 renewal application. Charter Schools Division (CSD) staff at the Public Education Department analyzed the renewal applications, reviewed past performance of the school, conducted site visits and gave full consideration to the information gathered in this process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Pahl".

Matthew Pahl  
Interim Director  
Charter Schools Division

## I. Recommendation

APPROVE

The Charter School Division recommends that Monte del Sol be approved without conditions for a term of 5 years due to the following factors: This school has no record of material violations; the school's 3-year grade average is B; financial matters seem in good order and the school has not violated any provision of law. The school has analyzed its progress and shortcomings and proposed future goals in SMART format to assure continued growth for next charter term.

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

### PROPOSED CONDITIONS

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

1. A shortened contract term of two or three years
2. Completion of an improvement plan specific to the school
3. Two annual monitoring visits by CSD

DENY

Overall the application is either incomplete or inadequate; or during their Capacity Interview, 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.

**CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION**

By: 

Matthew Pahl, Interim Director of Charter Schools Division, or Designee

### CSD Summary and Final Recommendation

The school was initially chartered in 1991 by Santa Fe Community School District. It is one of the oldest non-conversion charter schools in NM. The school innovated many programs over the years including a mentorship program and community garden. “The mission of Monte del Sol Charter School is to:

- challenge each member of its community, youth and adult, to be a life-long learner and responsible community member or leader; and
- support the education necessary for each individual to realize his or her potential.”

The Charter School Division recommends that Monte del Sol be approved without conditions for a term of 5 years due to the following factors: This school has no record of material violations; the school’s 3-year grade average is B; financial matters seem in good order and the school has not violated any provision of law. The school has analyzed its progress and shortcomings and proposed future goals in SMART format to assure continued growth for next charter term.

Monte del Sol has maintained a final grade of B on the State Grade Report Card for three consecutive years. The Reading Proficiency of all students in 2012 was 61.2% proficient and advanced. In 2013 the score was 58.6% proficient and advanced. In 2014, the score was 58.6% proficient and advanced. Math Proficiency for all students in 2012 was 45.6% proficient and advanced. In 2013 the score was 41.6% proficient and advanced. In 2014 the score was 42.6% proficient and advanced. Growth of highest performing students (Q3) was a “B” in 2012, an A in 2013, and an A in 2014. For lowest performing students (Q1) the school received a B in 2012, a B in 2013, and a C in 2014. As a result of the drop, the school has conducted a thorough analysis and taken corrective action. The school’s graduation rating in 2012 was C, in 2013 it was an F, and 2014 the grade was D. In response to the low graduation grade, the school has formed a graduation team to directly address the issue. Monte del Sol ranks favorably when compared to Capitol High School, which has a three year average of C, a reading score of 31.5% proficient and advanced and a math score of 19% proficient and advanced.

Regarding goals, the school has provided a detailed and comprehensive analysis. Of the 10 goals listed, the school has met 7. The school did not meet its reading or math goals but it is noted that Monte del Sol students far outperformed Santa Fe schools in both reading and math scores. In the looking forward section (Part C) the school has articulated a plan to continue high academic performance, and shore up areas of deficiency. The goals presented are in SMART format, include metrics, and provide adequate groundwork for negotiations if the school is renewed.

The school’s financial stability is sound. In 2013 there were a number of findings which included: a) Credit card used by school. b) Overdraft of Bank Accounts. c) Cash disbursements. d) Bank Reconciliation. e) PED Cash Reports. f) Late Submission of Audit Report. g) Internal Control Structure. h) Deficiencies in Internal Control Structure Design, Operation, and Oversight. All these issues have been addressed by the school and should not be repeated. The ending cash percentage of operational budget for FY 2013 is 2.18%.

Organizationally, CSD finds the school stable. The newly appointed Director/Head Learner has been with the school for a number of years as an instructor. An experienced assistant administrator has been hired and an experienced special education coordinator has been brought on board to round out the administrative team. The Governing Council is comprised of community members who provide needed professional expertise and parents of students. Membership on the Governing Council is stable with

only a few new members added in recent years. GC members interviewed were well aware of their oversight responsibilities. They have yet to adopt a self-evaluation tool but intend to during this school year. Students interviewed during the CSD site visit all agreed that MdS is a safe and nurturing environment where students feel cared for and encouraged to grow academically. The majority of faculty members interviewed have been with the school for 10 or more years. They feel empowered by the administration to have a voice in running the school and take pride in knowing their students personally. One issue the teachers are working toward is how to welcome new faculty and staff into the school and empower them as well. Parents interviewed were very supportive of the school. Several have had older children graduate and continue their educations at out-of-state universities.

The Charter School Division recommends that Monte del Sol should be approved without conditions for a term of 5 years due to the following factors: This school has no record of material violations; the school's 3-year grade average is C; financial matters seem in good order and the school has not violated any provision of law; the school has analyzed its progress and shortcomings and proposed future goals in SMART format to assure continued growth for next charter term.

The Charter School Division recommends that Monte del Sol should be approved without conditions for a term of 5 years due to the following factors: This school has no record of material violations; the school's 3-year grade average is C; financial matters seem in good order and the school has not violated any provision of law; the school has analyzed its progress and shortcomings and proposed future goals in SMART format to assure continued growth for next charter term.