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

January 8, 2012

To whom it may Concern,

Through this letter we wish to officially inform you of our intent to submit an application for a new charter school to be located within the bounds of the Taos Municipal School District in Taos, New Mexico.

We are hugely enthusiastic in seeking this charter, as we believe in the potential of our approaches and methodologies to positively impact student learning and promote overall improvement of the education system.

We have for the past year held public and group meetings increasing support, and the number of team members involved in our proposed charter, and plan to continue this process to incorporate the best ideas and practices of all who become involved in the actual charter school application by the time we submit it in July of this year.

We plan to name our school Red Willow Paideia Charter School and Francisco F. Romero shall serve as our primary contact person. He may be contacted at the above listed address, phone number, and email.

Our application team currently consists of the following members:

Mr. Francisco F. Romero, assisting us in overall coordination, writing, philosophy and curriculum development, currently working as a Second Grade Teacher for the Taos Municipal School District, and is a New Mexico licensed Master IIIA and IIIB Teacher and Administrator.

Ms. Nova Martinez Meyer, assisting us in document review, philosophy and curriculum development, is a retired educator and Library Specialist with 27 years experience and is a New Mexico IIIA licensed Master Teacher.

Ms. Lisa Joseph, assisting us with writing, philosophy and curriculum development is a retired Information and Learning/ Technology and Library Media Specialist with 28 years experience holding a National Board Teaching Certification.

Ms. Katie Woodall, assisting us with writing and philosophy and curriculum development is a working artist and private school educator with 17 years experience.

Mr. Ira Schwartz, assisting us with philosophy and curriculum development is a retired Vocational Technology Teacher and Administrator with 33 years experience.

And Mr. Marcos Herrera assisting us with writing and curriculum development, is working as the Head Teacher for Arroyos Del Norte Elementary for the Taos Municipal School, having 8 years experience and a New Mexico Level IIA Teaching License.

Our school will primarily utilize the Paideia educational philosophy as well as other established research based models to engage our students in acquiring content knowledge, critical thinking, collaborative nature, and twenty-first century skills.

We have no expectations of contracting with another entity for either management or substantial oversight or direction in the schools operation but do reserve the right to possibly collaborate in our final application with the founders of the Taos Community Preparatory School who have also submitted a letter of intent to open a charter school in the Taos area during this cycle.

No member of the application team is currently involved with the daily operations of any other school.

Our proposal is not a direct replication of any school, but is based on current educational research and the successes of many different schools.

The mission and vision for our school is to serve and support this current generation of learners, families and teachers through active, engaged, research proven practices providing opportunities for true academic and social growth.

Our plan is to create a middle school/ high school model serving 5th through 8th grade. We are seeking a total enrollment of 150 for the first year expanding to 200 by the end of five year charter. Taos, New Mexico is a beautiful high desert community with a long and rich history. Nestled against the majestic Taos Mountain in North Central New Mexico, Taos has long been recognized for its diversity and acceptance of many cultures. Taos County has a population of approximately 33,000 people, with an approximate student population of nearly 1000 students in middle school. The student demographics of Taos County are as follows:

- Hispanic – 76%**
- White – 17%**
- Native American – 6%**
- Asian – 1%**
- Black – 1%**

Taos students have traditionally had great academic success at the elementary level but begin to struggle greatly at the mid and high school levels. Home language is primarily English but there has been an increase of Spanish speakers and ELL students in the past ten years as many families from Mexico have made Taos their new home. We also have a high percentage of Special need, exceptional program students within the Taos Municipal School District of around 23%.

We believe the greatest evidence of community need for our school is the number of alternative education options that have arisen in our community. Our local authorized charter schools serving this population all have huge waiting lists of students applying for admission who are unable to be accommodated.

As a key programmatic feature, we do plan to implement a longer school day running four days a week.

Our school shall demonstrate an increased effectiveness through humanistic organization that empowers students and inspires personal ownership. This will be a progressive school based on using active learning and research proven methodologies with an emphasis in incorporating state of the art technology and media creation to teach and promote citizenship, environmental awareness education, and community and global service. It is our goal to give our students the knowledge, tools, and skill sets necessary to face and overcome the challenges to effectively and sustainably navigate and compete in our ever evolving global society.

In our efforts we will support creativity, innovation, collaboration and empowerment to build a school that works for our community, and families, and that really inspires our children to learn and take an active leadership role in finding real solutions for the positive future of our community, society, and humanity as a whole.

We thank you for your acceptance of this letter and for your support of our ideas and goals in the application and creation of our new charter School.

Sincerely,

Francisco F. Romero

Nova Martinez Meyer