



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
 PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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HANNA SKANDERA
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**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: KellyCallahan2@state.nm.us
 By mail or personal delivery:

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.

I. General Information:

Name of Proposed School:	Rio Grande International Academy	
Primary Contact Person	Sean D. Joyce Ph.D.	
Mailing Address:	11 C Placitas Trails Rd	
City: Placitas	State: New Mexico	Zip: 87043
Phone: 505.263.4535	Email: swojoy@gmail.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
Sean D. Joyce, Ph.D.	Founder	Head of School, TIS	Educator, Curriculum/Instruction, public charter school administrator
Rita Martinez	Founder	Deputy Head of School, TIS	Educator, Business Management, public charter school administrator
Robin Hanish	Founder	IB PYP Coordinator, TIS	Educator, IB educator, gifted education
Heidi Sanders	Founder	Faculty, UNM. Occupational Therapist	Educator, Special Education, university professor, parent of charter school student

3. Model or focus of the proposed school (e.g. performing arts, dual language, college prep, STEM):
International Baccalaureate (IB) and Outdoor Education.

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: .

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

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.

This proposal reflects a **partial** replication of an existing school, as several of the founders are currently employed by a NM charter school (The International School at Mesa del Sol), and were instrumental in the founding of the school as it initially developed after its charter authorization in 2008. This proposal also reflects an expansion on the current TIS school, in that TIS is a K-8 IB school, and RGIA is proposed as a Pre-Kindergarten -12 IB and Outdoor Education school. Against difficult odds, TIS has become a successful school within the Albuquerque metropolitan area, where there is no residential development within 5 miles of the school, drawing its student population from all zip codes in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Los Lunas, Belen, Cedar Crest and Edgewood communities. With parents transporting their children from this wide area, TIS has met its AYP goals in its first two years and has recently earned a final grade of *A* on the PED School Grading Report for 2010-2011.

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

The primary mission of the Rio Grande International Academy is to accomplish the *lifelong* success of *every* student and to meet successfully any opportunity they choose to face throughout their lifetime. Our focus is to develop highly skilled learning activists who, through a broad knowledge base, can analyze, synthesize and evaluate new information and apply it to novel situations to solve problems and address unique concerns.

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.

At Rio Grande International Academy (RGIA) we will provide a free educational choice to students of all ability levels and backgrounds, including those with special needs and home languages other than English, from pre-school (age three) and grades kindergarten through twelve. As RGIA embraces diversity in its student population it seeks students from the greater Albuquerque metropolitan area who are interested in a smaller learning community that offers the rigor of the International Baccalaureate curriculum and the experiential learning of outdoor education, while addressing the student as a whole: academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Currently the students who will attend RGIA are in attendance at both charter and public school district schools in the greater Albuquerque area, including: Rio Rancho, Los Lunas, Cedar Crest, etc. International Baccalaureate charter schools in the Albuquerque metro area are both growing in number and demand, with the number currently at five (in various grade configurations) in five years. All of these schools have waiting lists of students seeking enrollment. As of this writing, only two of them are authorized IB schools by the International Baccalaureate

Organization, and only one offers the coveted IB Diploma programme. For example, The International School at Mesa del Sol (an IB Candidate School, with an anticipated IB authorization by fall of 2012) is a K-8 school. Those students who promote from TIS after 8th grade, who desire the opportunity to earn an IB Diploma have little or no chance to do so, as Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School is the only IB Diploma school in the Albuquerque area, and its enrollment is filled by existing and returning students in their 6th – 10th grade program.

The experiential learning opportunity provided through outdoor education enhances and supports, and is fully supported by, the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Combining the best pedagogical approaches of two exceptional learning environments (IB and outdoor education) RGIA students access superior research-based curriculum and instructional delivery systems that are currently in short supply in the greater Albuquerque metro area.

In a learning environment with a 20:1 student to teacher ratio (15:1 in kindergarten, and 5:1 in pre-school), the maximum student enrollment possible will total 810.

Grade Level	Student to Teacher Ratio	Maximum # of Classes	Maximum # of Students
Pre-K	5:1	4	20
Kindergarten	15:1	2	30
1 st – 5 th	20:1	10	200
6 th – 12 th	20:1	28	560
			810 Total

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.

IB schools are both growing in size and enrollment (demand) in the Albuquerque area and in the number of additional charter authorizations over the past four years. One single detriment to families in this community is the serious lack of IB schools that offer an IB Diploma Programme (a single charter school in ABQ area, Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School). This is a serious concern for families that have committed their children to an IB school for their education, but are prevented from earning an IB Diploma upon graduation from high school as the single school (CCPS) does not meet the demand, as represented in the number of students in ABQ area that currently attend an IB school in grades K-10.

Our association with The International School at Mesa del Sol, has provided us with evidence through this school's Quality of Education survey, which strongly supports this community's desire for an IB education for their children and their desire for their children to access an IB Diploma programme. This is illustrated in the table below:

New Mexico "Quality of Education" Survey		2010 – 2011		
		# = No. of Returns	% = SA/A	% = SD/D
<i>R = Returns</i>				
<i>SA = Strongly Agree</i>				
<i>A = Agree</i>				
<i>SD = Strongly Disagree</i>				
<i>D = Disagree</i>				
1. Child is safe at school		36	100	0
2. Quality & Sufficiency of School Buildings		36	75	17
3. School holds high academic expectations		36	100	0
4. School encourages parents to participate in child's education		36	100	0
5. School offers adequate access to up-to-date computers & technology		36	81	5
6. Teachers maintain consistent discipline conducive to learning.		36	92	8
7. Adequate choice of school extra-curricular activities.		36	42	53
8. Teachers provide sufficient & appropriate information about child's academic progress.		36	92	5
9. Teachers employ variety of instructional strategies to meet child's need.		36	83	3
10. My child takes responsibility for his/her own learning.		36	89	11
11. ** I believe the charter school environment has been beneficial for my student.		34	100	0
12. My child benefits from the second language curriculum offered at The International School @ Mesa del Sol		34	88	12
13. I recommend The International School @ Mesa del Sol to other parents.		34	97	0
14. I believe the school website provides helpful and timely information to the school community.		34	97	3
15. The before and after school programs available on site provide appropriate support throughout the school year for my family.		33	76	3
16. The instructional staff is skilled and prepared to effectively teach my child.		34	100	0
17. The Head of School provides a safe and effective learning environment for all children.		34	100	0

18. I understand and am informed about the International Baccalaureate program being used at school.	34	94	0	
19. I plan to continue my child's enrollment at TIS for the coming school year.	34	97	0	
20. I believe the personnel, rather than the IB program is the more important reason for my child's continued enrollment at TIS.	34	62	18	

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.)

At a minimum, the Rio Grande International Academy will deploy the International Baccalaureate Programmes (Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, and Diploma Programme), Outdoor Education, non-traditional school year (200 day school calendar), longer school day (8:30-4:00), highly trained instructional staff (15-27 paid professional learning days per year), and a full pre-K-12 academic program.

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 Rio Grande International Academy (RGIA) will offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary, Middle Years, and Diploma Programmes (PYP, MYP, and DP). These programs are based on the most current educational research, promote the most appropriate pedagogical strategies, draw together the best classroom practices from around the world, and offer internationally recognized standards, benchmarks, and criterion-referenced assessments. A value-added benefit of participating in the IB program is the immediate connection our children and teachers will have with over 2,500 other classrooms from around the world that will share similar explorations, issues and themes of global significance. The IB programmes (PYP, MYP, DP) offer curricular features and structures that engage, motivate, challenge, and support student learning. Paired with external scaffolds, the International Baccalaureate curricular systems will allow students to attain high achievement and develop the skills, values, and qualities that we expect to achieve at RGIA.

As this charter application is a partial replication of an existing school, and this RGIA application is developed by founders who are directly involved with, in leadership roles, we use the evidence of The International School at Mesa del Sol's success as support for the development of the Rio Grande International Academy. TIS has met its AYP goals in its first two years and has recently earned a final grade of A on the PED School Grading Report for 2010-2011.

Signature of founder(s)

Sean D. Pike
Sean D. Pike
 [PRINT NAME]

Date: January 5, 2012

Rita Martinez
RITA MARTINEZ
 [PRINT NAME]

Date: 01.05.12

Robin M. Hanish
Robin M. Hanish
 [PRINT NAME]

Date: 1-5-2012

Heidi M Sanders
Heidi M Sanders
 [PRINT NAME]

Date: 1-5-2012