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HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

December 5, 2014

Dear Public Education Commissioners:

Enclosed is the Final Recommendation for the Taos Integrated School for the Arts 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 Taos Integrated School of the Arts be approved without conditions for a term of 5 years. The school has demonstrated average progress on current results on the State Grade report Card with a three year average of a C. Financial matters seem in good order and the school has not violated any provision of law. The school has analyzed its progress and proposed future goals for academics and integrated arts.

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

Taos Integrated School of the Arts (TISA) was authorized in 2009 and serves students grades k-8. The mission of the school is "Taos Integrated School of the Arts will provide its students with an exceptional education that meets or exceeds all New Mexico State Standards. The course of study will be based on an Arts-integrated curriculum that is multicultural and meets all Common Core State Standards. School and student performance will be measured by New Mexico's Public Education annual assessments, nationally recognized short-cycle assessments, student portfolios, and student performances in the Arts domain. TISA will cultivate academic skills and knowledge to help all students achieve their highest potential as artistically-minded lifelong learners."

The Charter School Division recommends that Taos Integrated School of the Arts be approved without conditions for a term of 5 years. The school has demonstrated average progress on current results on the State Grade report Card with a three year average of a C. Financial matters seem in good order and the school has not violated any provision of law. The school has analyzed its progress and proposed future goals for academics and integrated arts.

The School Grade Report Card indicates that the school's 3-Year average grade is a C with 58.7 points. School growth has dropped from a B in both 2013 and 2012 to a current grade of an F. Proficiency in both reading and math have improved, but student growth of lowest performing students was not sufficient and also scored a grade of an F. TISA has earned a grade of an F for student growth of lowest performing students for the last two years. TISA has earned a grade of a C for student growth of highest performing students for the last two years. Compared to other area schools, TISA's proficiency rates are much higher than most schools in the Taos community, in some cases doubling the rates of the number of proficient students. TISA's math proficiency is 48.1% compared to Enos Garcia Elementary math proficiency of 17.8%. TISA's reading proficiency is 70.4% compared to Enos Garcia Elementary score of 27.6%.

TISA provided limited data addressing the four Student and Organizational Performance Goals. TISA met only one goal during their charter term. The goals that were proposed in Section "C" are in SMART format and will serve as an adequate foundation for Contract Negotiations with the PEC should the school be approved for renewal.

TISA demonstrates compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to financial management and oversight expectations as evidenced by an audit devoid of significant findings and conditions, material weaknesses, or significant internal control weaknesses. Their audit does not include ongoing concerns disclosed in the notes or an explanatory paragraph within the audit report. TISA also demonstrates complete and timely compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to sound financial principles and financial reporting requirements. . The school's FY2013 cash balance is \$91,739.03 which is 0.98% of the operational budget.

The current administrator has been in place since the fall of 2013. The Governing Council has seven community members and been stable with minimal changes in membership. The school has no material violations and it appears that the school operates efficiently in terms of Governance procedures, its reporting duties, and organizational stability. TISA has not violated any provision of the law and CSD finds that the school's leadership and governance are sound.

The Charter School Division recommends that Taos Integrated School of the Arts be approved without

conditions for a term of 5 years. TISA has demonstrated that they are performing comparable to the state average in academics and implementing its mission with fidelity. TISA has demonstrated that they have no material violations, have no fiscal management improprieties, and have no violation of any provisions of law.