



**STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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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 MASTERS Program 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

CSD recommends a 5-year renewal term for The MASTERS Program due to the following factors: This school has no record of material violations; the school's 3-year grade average is A; 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 for community service and dual credit enrollment 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 MASTERS Program was chartered by the state in 2009. Their first year of operation commenced in 2010. The school's mission is: "The MASTERS Program is committed to the development of engaged, compassionate students who value academic excellence and education beyond high school, service to others and creating a conscious community."

CSD recommends a 5-year renewal term for The MASTERS Program due to the following factors: This school has no record of material violations; the school's 3-year grade average is A; 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 for community service and dual credit enrollment in SMART format to assure continued growth for next charter term.

The MASTERS Program 3-year report card average is an A with upward growth in scores from B (2012) to A (2013) then the 2014 grade of A; a 3-year school growth of highest performing students progressed from C (2012) to A (2013) then to A (2014); the school outscored or equaled their two neighborhood schools, (Santa Fe High School and Capital High School) in all areas for 2014 from final school grade, current standing, school growth, growth of highest performing students, the growth of lowest performing students, Opportunity to Learn and College and Career Readiness. The school has maintained a high state grade for a period of 3 years and shows consistently high levels of student achievement.

The school has reflected upon and created two SMART format goals for the new charter term. Goal 1 requires 60 hours of community service per student per year fulfilled in their Friday projects. CSD recommends TMP includes a metric to ensure the students are being accountable and tracked for completion of this goal. Goal 2 requires grade 12 students who began with The MASTERS Program in grade 10 graduate with grade average of 2.0 or above and an average of 50 college credit hours. CSD recommends TMP includes a metric to ensure the students are being accountable and tracked for completion of this goal.

The MASTERS Program demonstrates compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to financial management. Oversight expectations were evidenced by an audit devoid of significant findings and conditions, material weaknesses, or significant internal control weaknesses. TMP also demonstrates complete and timely compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to sound financial principles and financial reporting requirements. The school's cash balance at the end of fiscal year 2013 is 22% of the operational budget.

The MASTERS Program has a stable administration. The current administrator has been in place since the school's beginning. 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. The MASTERS Program has not violated any provision of the law.

The school complied with submitting affidavits, policies checklist and a by-law amendment as requested during the 4-year site visit. All personnel files are up-to-date. The school has a full 8-member Governing Board which evaluates the administrator on an annual basis using a survey administered to the students, parents, staff and Governing Board. The Governing Board members evaluate themselves with a charter school coalition model survey.

The Charter Schools Division recommends approval of a full 5-year charter term without conditions for

The MASTERS Program. They have complied with charter laws and show stability in governance and operations. The parents, students, staff and administration indicate they are pleased with the direction the school is going as there has been sustainable progress through the years. The goals are adequate for negotiations if the school is renewed.