

Randy Earwood



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PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

**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:

By mail or personal delivery:

KellyCallahan2@state.nm.us

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.

1. General Information:

Name of Proposed School:	Tres Piedras Charter School	
Primary Contact Person	Amanda Allalunis	
Mailing Address:	PO Box 73	
City: Tres Piedras	State: New Mexico	Zip: 87577
Phone: (575) 613-6631	Email: amandaallalunis@tpce.org	

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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
Amanda Allalunis	Community Support	Taos Chiropractic	M.S. in Nonprofit Bus. Management
Lisa Joseph	Applicant Team	Educator	National Board Certified Teacher

3. Model or focus of the proposed school (e.g. performing arts, dual language, college prep, STEM):

The focus of the proposed Tres Piedras Charter School is to provide students with the opportunity to reach their maximum potential through creating and utilizing a standards-based, multicultural, thematic, and arts-integrated curriculum.

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.

Not applicable

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

The Tres Piedras Charter School will provide students the opportunity to reach their maximum potential through utilizing a standards-based, multicultural, thematic, and arts-integrated curriculum. The goal is to encourage students to embrace a multicultural worldview, and to become creative, compassionate, and self-confident life-long learners who will make thoughtful contributions to their communities.

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.

The target student body for the Tres Piedras Charter School will consist of children in grades K-6 who live in the Mesa Vista Consolidated School District (MVCSD). This includes students in living in Tres Piedras, NM, Carson, NM, Cerros de Los Taos, NM, the "Greater World Community," and other surrounding rural areas. Because of the location of the MVCSD, and because of the extremely rural locations and severe poverty of many families in the target community, transportation to Mesa Vista public schools presents a serious obstacle. Some families in the Tres Piedras area, for instance, report that their children must spend approximately 3.5 hours per day on the school bus in order to attend public school in the MVCSD. In addition to burdening young students with undue hardship, this extreme commute is also unsafe and impractical for many families. Mesa Vista public schools are approximately 30-40 miles away from most of the rural communities in our target population, making the creation of a more localized school a paramount option for much of the area. Many of the students we propose to serve are presently being home schooled, and as suggested by our informal survey, would very much like to send their children to a more accessible school alternative.

We expect that the target students for the Tres Piedras Charter School will choose the proposed charter for their future educational needs for several reasons. First and foremost, the creation of a more accessible school (in terms of distance and public access) is of paramount concern for the families in the target region. Secondly, the constant failure of the Mesa Vista Consolidated School District to meet their AYP targets indicates a need for a new, more successful academic program such as the one proposed for the Tres Piedras Charter School. Third, the thematic,

arts-integrative approaches proposed by the Tres Piedras Charter School have been researched and proven to successfully improve educational engagement and performance, which will encourage families in the target population to utilize the Tres Piedras Charter School.

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.

An informal community outreach survey conducted throughout the target community has clearly indicated a great community need for an alternative to available public school options in the MVCSD. As the target community is indeed very rural, the informal survey yielded fewer responses than were anticipated. However, later conversations with many interested individuals indicated that they had not had the opportunity to submit the informal survey. By simply including the numbers of those who expressed interest but did not submit the survey, the Tres Piedras Charter School would already reach its maximum of 10% of the total MVCSD total enrollment. Therefore, an additional survey as well as community meetings will be conducted in the coming months to provide more accurate information and family outreach.

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.)

The Tres Piedras Charter School (TPCC) will offer several unique and innovative features that will allow us to successfully accomplish our vision and mission. First, the use of a thematic, arts-integrated approach, such as the one we propose, has been demonstrated in numerous studies to enhance student academic performance, increase engagement in the classroom, and promote a favorable and academically challenging learning environment. A thematic, arts-integrated approach will help to close the achievement gap for the economically disadvantaged students of MVCSD, and provide our target students with educational opportunities not available elsewhere. Secondly, TPCC will promote a culture of high expectations and accountability for all students to include:

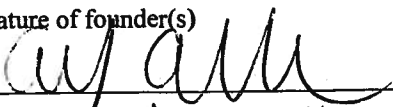
- ▲ commitment to core academic subjects and standards;
- ▲ individualized support for struggling students;
- ▲ parent and student contracts, targeted assessments;
- ▲ intensive use of data to guide instruction;
- ▲ active engagement of teachers in school leadership and decision-making; and
- ▲ adequate time for teachers to collaboratively plan and for professional development.

Note: The key innovative features of the school will be further analyzed and developed in order to meet the needs of the community of learners as identified through additional information as gathered from future surveys and community meetings. Once this input is collected, additional research-based instructional methods will be included in our charter application in order to create an environment of active, engaged learning for our future students.

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 Tres Piedras Charter School (TPCC) will be more effective than current elementary school options because of community accessibility, and the school's innovative, research-based methodologies. As of this writing, the students of Ojo Caliente Elementary School (within MVCSD), the elementary school our target population is assigned to attend, has not yet met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the eight years AYP has been in effect. The inability of the MVCSD and Ojo Caliente Elementary School to meet AYP targets demonstrates a unique opportunity for the Tres Piedras Community Charter School to improve the quality of education in the area by providing alternative educational methodologies to the local community.

Signature of founder(s)


Amanda Allalena
[PRINT NAME]

Date: 1/7/12

December 16, 2011

Dear Former Governance Council Members,

I am writing to you at the end of Fall Semester 2011 on behalf of the staff of Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School. Our director, Nancy Romero, thought you would like an update on our progress, and who better to give you that update than the one person who has been here since the very beginning! I am delighted to have the opportunity to share our developments with you.

When Gil Sena, Tom Crespin, Tina Patel and Anna Zamora interviewed me in the spring of 2004 for a position as Language Arts teacher at Creative Education Preparatory Institute 2, they did not even have a building secured for the school... but it came, as so many other things did. That first year was a struggle, as we had so few procedures in place, much less systems. We had four teachers using the "one-room schoolhouse" model: each of us was responsible for helping "our" group of students with all their core subjects (through NovaNet computer-aided instruction), in addition to teaching a project class and Smart Lab. One special education teacher and a case manager completed student services. During the first three years, Anna Zamora was our dedicated director, while Mary Louise Sena was our associate director for one year and consultant for two. For the last three years we have been fortunate to have had Mary Louise on our governance council, where she now serves as president.

Much of the focus of CEPI2 was credit-recovery: we concentrated our efforts on an under-served population of struggling students. When Anna retired, she wanted to leave the school in the hands of a director who could take us to the next level; Nancy Romero was that person. As our charter renewal approached, we knew we needed to do more to survive in these competitive times: we needed to raise the bar for our students. We had long since abandoned the one-room schoolhouse model, as all teachers had to be highly qualified in the areas they taught. We had hired more special education teachers and a technology teacher, as well as a guidance counselor and a social worker. Our focus began to shift towards more career readiness and college preparatory courses. We moved away from nearly 100% computer-aided instruction to a blend of direct instruction and CAI, away from NovaNet and toward the PLATO Learning System. Over the last two years we have moved on from PLATO to a variety of web/book-based curricula which are accessed by the students through the on-line Blackboard Management System. Students have benefited from using this unified system for core subjects.

Much of our development can be attributed to our work with Continuous Improvement over the last four years. Our former CI coach is now part of our staff, which has helped all of us integrate CI more fully. Continuous Improvement was a large part of the original mission of the school, and we are happy that we can continue to honor Gil Sena's dream for this school, whose name we changed to his at the time of our charter renewal.

As part of our shift toward career readiness, we have begun offering (with CNM) dual-credit enrollment courses taught by Sena High teachers here on campus. This fall ten students earned college credit for a Microsoft Word course, twelve students earned credit for an Information Technology course, and twenty-eight students have enrolled for our spring semester courses, including College Success and Microsoft EXCEL. Thus, we have the potential for approximately sixty students to earn college credit this academic year. What a change from Year One! Our expectations continue to be high, and our students continue to rise to the challenge. We look forward to the future as we continue our path toward post-secondary readiness for all our students.

Thank you so much for all the work you did for our school. We would not be where we are now without your faith and effort on our behalf. We look forward to giving you a yearly update from now on, and invite you to visit us at any time to see our school in action.

Sincerely,

Karin Bradberry, on behalf of Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School

December 16, 2011

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