

**2010 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION & EVALUATION**

<b>Name: Trinity High School</b>	<b>Projected Grades: 9-12</b>
<b>Projected Enrollment: 160</b>	<b>Proposed location: Española</b>
<b>Founders: Catherine De Oreo and Dr. Juanita Cata</b>	
<b>Recommendation:</b> I recommend that the Public Education Commission <b>Deny</b> the application because it is incomplete and inadequate.	

The Trinity High School application is so ambiguous and contradictory that it is difficult to see a cohesive mission and educational plan. The application is missing so much significant information that it is difficult if not impossible to garner a sense of focus for the proposed school. The application is significantly deficient in all sections. The founders would need to rewrite the entire document in order for it to overcome the incompleteness and inadequacies that are so evident throughout the application.

The reasons for recommending denial of this application are based on the evaluation of each of the sections of the application:

The applicant has failed to provide clear and measurable organizational/school goals written in the SMART format with qualified and quantified expectations for which the school would be held accountable. The statement of need is lacking specific demographic data for the Española community.

The educational plan fails to provide some basic curricular information. The applicant proposes a work experience for students, but does not connect the work experience to academic skills or standards, performance expectations, or an opportunity for students to earn HS credits or a wage. The curriculum development information and anticipated timeline expectations for core academic, elective courses, dual credit, and the work experience program are not provided. The student performance goals provided are ambiguous and do not provide metrics for accountability.

The applicant's five-year budget failed to provide necessary information to connect the resources requested to the plan presented. The application's revenue and expenditure assumptions narratives do not give details regarding how many of the anticipated purchases would be budgeted for, and failed to provide significant information regarding what expenditures and revenues a start-up charter school should anticipate. The superficial description of internal controls provided insufficient information about how the organization would manage its funds.

The applicant's governance plan does not adequately describe the staffing plan that would implement the course requirements necessary for students to meet graduation requirements. Additionally, the application fails to provide a clear description of how the work experience program for all students will be managed and how the students will be held accountable.

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Dr. Don Duran, Assistant Secretary of Education  
**CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION**

**Date: September 2, 2010**

## CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION AND STATEMENT OF NEED EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The lack of a strong, concise mission statement provides incomplete communication about the essence of the school and fails to provide a comprehensive focal point to which all other sections of the proposed school’s plan align. Research-based data is missing that would support the claims of the "proven success" of the proposed Cristo Rey model and the applicant’s statement that, “There are no schools in northern New Mexico that offer both a comprehensive academic and career skills development program ...”

It is not clear how the school will know it is achieving its mission because it has failed to provide clear and measurable organizational/school goals written as SMART goals with qualified and quantified expectations for which they will be held accountable.

Additionally, missing from this application is Española student/community demographic information and student achievement data, as well as, higher education and workforce data that would support the feasibility of implementing the proposed work-training experience.

## EDUCATIONAL PLAN EVALUATION

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds
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The Educational Plan section fails to completely explain what the students will achieve, how they will achieve it, and how the school will evaluate their performance. A clear picture of what a student who attends the school will experience in terms of assessment and outcomes is missing, and this educational plan is found to be incomplete and inadequate in its alignment and support of the proposed mission for the school. This section is missing clear metrics that are distinctly stated for measurement of expectations for all goals. There is no measurement stated for the length of time that it will take for a student to achieve success in standardized examinations. There are no specific time parameters for completion of assessments or for reviewing assessment data.

While citing varied publications and quotes from public figures, there is no substantial evidence or data that supports the Cristo Rey model's capability to increase graduation rates among lower socio-economic communities, such as that of the Española Valley. The curriculum framework lacks complete development information and anticipated timeline expectations for core academic, elective courses, dual credit, and the work experience program. The applicant fails to clearly identify the basis, sources, and curricular foundation to be used to teach morals within the proposed educational plan.

Because numerous sections are missing required information and/or criteria is not sufficiently addressed, there are substantial concerns about the applicant’s overall understanding of

concepts related directly to education, academics, graduation expectations of students, and the ability of this school to meet the requirements for operating a public school in practice. Further, a clear focus on student academic achievement is missing in this application; instead, this school has designated its primary focus to be work experience, philosophy, ethics, and morals. The work experience requirement is not correlated to academic skills or performance expectations or an opportunity for students to earn HS credits or a salary; and significant detail and important additional information focused on and supporting the School’s claim of meeting the goal of students becoming “college ready” are missing.

Contradictory information is presented throughout the educational plan. The applicant’s demonstrated lack of preparation and understanding about: curriculum development and implementation, assessments and data-driven systems, student performance and achievement, alignment of course content with NM content standards, instructional strategies and methods, structuring/scheduling and planning for the school day and year, graduation requirements, SMART goals, procedures for corrective action and remediation, and serving special populations have resulted in an incomplete, incoherent plan that reflects an inadequately substantiated conceptual approach to instruction through practices that fail to establish a climate of high academic expectations and rigor. Instead, this plan reflects an ambiguous and often inconsistent focus on work experience that assigns importance to the level of student on-the-job time away from the school elicited rather than to the level of student achievement attained.

Further, the student-centered goals that are presented do not adequately and completely articulate measurable outcomes for which the school will hold itself accountable relative to student achievement for all grades 9-12. The metrics are not clear and the assessments that will provide data are not described.

Overall, the educational plan is underdeveloped and lacks adequate and complete follow-through in responding to the required explanations, descriptions, criteria, and information needed to demonstrate that the school has an effective plan to feasibly implement the varied strategies/methods, standards, and curricula proposed.

**FINANCIAL PLAN EVALUATION**

<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>
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A clear picture of the school’s financial capability including the soundness of its 5-year operating budget and other-than SEG revenue and expenditures is incompletely presented. This section lacks significant detail and important additional information to be reasonably comprehensive and raises substantial concern about the applicant's understanding of developing a realistic operating budget to support implementation of all components proposed in the educational plan. This section does not describe the resources necessary to support the school's educational plan, facility, professional development, services, and work training experience program for students. Revenue and expenditure assumptions are lacking in detail and critical

positions have not been budgeted for (e.g., the business manager and school counselor).

Substantial concern is raised that the applicant indicates that they will try to obtain computers from the Los Alamos Foundation and further state that . . ."laptops are not strictly required for our students." While a requirement to provide laptops or any type of computer for students does not exist, it is unclear how the school will meet its plans to offer online services and to adequately prepare their students for the workforce and leadership roles without computers. This is contradictory to already-stated educational plans to be implemented as part of the school's curricula and professional workforce training and job selection opportunities.

The fiscal management plan relies on the work of a contracted business manager, and does not provide school-specific procedures for internal controls such as the segregation of duties and receipt of purchases.

**GOVERNANCE / MANAGEMENT PLAN EVALUATION**

<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>
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Substantial concern is raised about the applicant's understanding of Governing Board requirements and their ability to be compliant with NM statute in practice. An Interim Board is not allowed per NM statute. All proposed administrative/staff positions, parent councils, advisory committees, and community groups are not shown in the organizational chart for Trinity High School. The reporting structure for the Business Manager is confusing as depicted in the organizational chart.

The applicant's lack of knowledge and understanding about the requirement to implement evaluations for all professional staff raises concern for the applicant's capacity to implement sound and supportive systems that will help ensure that quality instruction is delivered in all classrooms and programs.

Significant detail and additional important information is missing about the layout of space and how this facility will support the implementation of the school's educational plan. Also noted to be a concern is the applicant's plan to purchase portables. The budget, as submitted, would not support such expenditures thus bringing into question the applicant's capacity to adequately and completely implement its facilities plans.

Significant detail and important additional information is needed to clarify how two teachers will adequately staff the proposed educational plan that includes the four core academic content areas plus PE, Health, work experience, and the required electives that all students must take in philosophy, foreign language, and business to achieve the required 25 graduation credits required by Trinity. Substantial concern is raised that the projected staffing to eight teachers for these four HS grades will be inadequate to meet the proposed graduation requirements in this plan and still maintain the 20:1 student/teacher ratios in all classes.

The application does not describe how the proposed work experience partnership program is

feasible given the number of jobs that will be needed (for 120 students) and the few letters of support offered within the plan. It is noted that during the public community meeting, the applicant stated that Cristo Rey finds the feasibility of locating in Española and their ability to adequately implement the work experience program to not be viable because there are not enough jobs to be found in the community.

Substantial concern is raised for the applicant's demonstrated lack of preparation and understanding of transporting students and their ability to meet requirements in practice. Comprehensive, feasible, allowable, legal, and safe means to transport students in order to fully implement the school's planned work experience component have not been completely addressed within this application. Further, a description for how the proposed school will adequately fund and efficiently transport 120 students to work sites in Santa Fe, Los Alamos, other neighboring communities, and within the Española Valley within a regular school day with the proposed staffing plan is not provided. The applicant fails to adequately and completely address all transportation, safety, and legal aspects needed to implement the work site experience program.

**REQUIREMENTS EVALUATION**

<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>
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The applicant lacks an understanding of waivers pertaining to state-chartered charter schools as evidenced by waivers of district policies and numerous unnecessary requests.