



STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
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CHRISTOPHER N. RUSZKOWSKI  
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
GOVERNOR

June 7, 2018

Superintendent Pamela Montoya  
P.O. Box 547  
Dulce, NM 87528

Dear Superintendent Montoya:

Thank you for your correspondence on May 30, 2018.

The conditional approval correspondence provided on May 23, 2018 for the district plan for Dulce Elementary School ("Dulce") is now pending full acceptance by Dulce Independent School District (DISD). Please consider the May 23, 2018 correspondence to be final.

Your most recent letter dated May 30, 2018 requested particular modifications to that conditional approval. The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) will not entertain any modifications from DISD at this time given the dire status of your district's and your students' futures. NMPED may determine, at its sole discretion, which of the additional input provided by your district warrants further consideration. For example, certain elements of items #1, #3, and #4 are consistent with NMPED's conditional approval, while other parts of those same items are not. Therefore, the conditional approval provided on May 23, 2018 outlines the complete and final conditions for plan approval—they will not be altered at this time and must be accepted by DISD in-full to be considered for full state-approval and access \$2 million in additional support.

Dulce Elementary School has earned five consecutive "F" grades. Hundreds of families have entrusted the school with their children's future, and the school has not delivered. Our site visit to Dulce caused greater concern—there is a culture of low expectations throughout most of the school. We have now learned that over one hundred students and families travel extraordinary distances each day to escape being trapped in low-performing schools. Additional safeguards must be put into place so that another generation of students is not underserved by your district. NMPED reserves the right to consider all potential school turnaround options to ensure that this cycle of low-performance does not continue—our students deserve better.

Districts that underserve students for more than five years straight certainly require further conditions, oversight, and consequences. This is common sense. Any reasonable person would conclude that more than a half-decade of failure of our children is unacceptable, that the district responsible for that failure should have conditions imposed upon it, that it should be closely monitored in its delivery of a state-approved plan, that it should have clear performance-based criteria to meet, and that there must ultimately be a final determination made on whether the school be allowed to continue to operate.

By the signature of the Superintendent of DISD below, your district hereby agrees to all terms of the conditional approval letter provided on May 23, 2018. Correspondence provided by NMPED shall be affixed to the final plan submission and thus be considered incorporated into the plan in-full. DISD specifically acknowledges and agrees to school performance criteria provided by NMPED in the state's correspondence, which outlines the pattern of school performance that will lead to successful exit from MRI status, or school closure: If Dulce earns two more consecutive "F" grades in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years, then the federal grant allocation for 2019-20 and 2020-21 will be withheld and repurposed to implement School Closure during the 2019-20 school year. If the school earns a combination of "D" and "F" ratings over the next three academic years, the school shall close at the end of the 2021-22 school year. Dulce must earn at least three "C" grades or better during the next four school grading periods, which may include 2017-2018, in order to successfully exit MRI status.

If any state-approved strategy, element and/or activity outlined in the Dulce plan is not implemented with fidelity, quality, and on-schedule, NMPED reserves the right, as determined within its sole discretion, to suspend some or all of the allocated funding, and also reserves the right to select another MRI school turnaround option for Dulce, or to exercise other options, as outlined herein and correspondence from NMPED that is hereby incorporated into your plan.

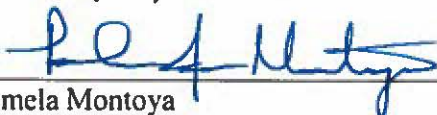
We ask DISD to provide signature below no later than Monday, June 11, 2018 accepting the terms and conditions in full so that NMPED may review and potentially approve the district's plan under the district-selected option of Significantly Restructure & Redesign. NMPED is aware that changes to federal or state policy, or duly entered decisions by the judiciary, may result in amendments or modifications to the district plan for the school, which would need to be submitted by DISD and reviewed by NMPED for consideration.

The parties, as acknowledged by their signatures appearing below, agree to the above in-full on behalf of their respective educational agencies, without reservation.



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Christopher N. Ruszkowski  
Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED)

Date: 6/7/18



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Pamela Montoya  
Superintendent, Dulce Independent School District (DISD)

Date: 6/11/18