



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
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CHRISTOPHER N. RUSZKOWSKI
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

June 7, 2018

Superintendent Raquel Reedy
PO Box 25704
Albuquerque, NM 87125

Dear Superintendent Reedy:

Thank you for submitting a Champion & Provide Choice application as requested by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and as envisioned by New Mexico's State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). All schools identified for More Rigorous Intervention (MRI) must have a state-approved plan on file with NMPED.

Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) has submitted a plan for the students and families of Hawthorne Elementary School ("Hawthorne") that provides an initial outline of how the district would begin to provide resources for families to access higher-performing schools. However, the plan is underdeveloped in many of the substantive operational details that will be necessary to facilitate the execution of the plan for your students in earnest. Thus, the Hawthorne plan as submitted is hereby granted conditional approval, with the following six overarching conditions:

- 1) Any and all financial resources made available pursuant to an approved MRI plan must serve only current Hawthorne students and/or students who transfer to a different school pursuant to the approved plan—thus the provisioning of such funds will be as needed (e.g. buses).
- 2) It must be made clear in all APS materials that current/former Hawthorne students receive highest-priority/first preference for their schools of choice, and Hawthorne students must be guaranteed a seat in a higher-performing school if they are seeking one. Further, APS must ensure that transportation is not a barrier to enrollment for any student exercising the choice to enroll in a different school—and may request additional funding to ensure transportation equity.
- 3) Prior to distribution, NMPED must review and approve all communications materials provided to students and families, including all transfer/choice paperwork which must be updated per NMPED input.
- 4) APS must provide NMPED with quarterly school enrollment updates as part of this plan.

- 5) Designated NMPED staff must be present for, and/or co-host, each school choice expo.
- 6) NMPED may provide additional materials to Hawthorne parents and families, either via direct distribution or district distribution. APS must facilitate such distribution.

Each of these conditions must be more fully developed and integrated into the plan in order for Hawthorne's Champion & Provide Choice application to be considered for full state approval. However, the district should move forward in implementing the early stages of the plan, effective immediately. NMPED will schedule a meeting to discuss and reconcile the conditions above, after which funding could be authorized. Until such time as the conditions are finalized, the conditions appearing in this letter shall be enforceable as written.

As part of this conditional approval, APS agrees that Hawthorne will close at the end of the 2020-2021 school year unless the school earns a "C" grade or better in the 2017-2018, 2018-19, and 2019-20 school years. As a reminder, the opportunity to remain open is contingent upon clear evidence that APS has met all requirements of a state-approved Champion & Provide Choice district plan, which must include clear and substantial data that student enrollment has grown at other higher-performing schools. Further, APS agrees that if the school earns a 7th consecutive "F" at the end of the 2017-18 school year or earns an "F" at the end of the 2018-19 school year, an updated School Closure plan must be submitted within one month of earning that grade, and the school shall close at the end of the subsequent academic year. Given this reality, APS must move forward in championing choice for its students and families with urgency.

By our signatures below, we affirm the above conditional approval, and the conditions herein.



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

Date: 6/7/18

Raquel Reedy
Superintendent, Albuquerque Public Schools (APS)

Date: _____