



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
300 DON GASPAR
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786
Telephone (505) 827-5800
www.ped.state.nm.us

CHRISTOPHER N. RUSZKOWSKI
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

2019 CSD Preliminary Analysis of Renewal Application and Site Visit

School Name: New Mexico School for the Arts
School Address: 275 E. Alameda Street, Santa Fe NM 87501
Head Administrator: Eric Crites
Business Manager: Elizabeth Romero
Authorized Grade Levels: 9-12
Authorized Enrollment: 300
Contract Term: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019
Mission: “NMSA provides access to a rigorous mastery arts and academic high school education for youth with passion and aptitude in the arts, leading to post-secondary learning, careers in the arts, and lives that contribute to society.” (Contract, p. 35)

Part B (Progress Report) Evaluation *based on the rubric contained in the application*

Chart 1, below, summarizes CSD’s ratings of the school’s renewal application and site visit:

Chart 1. Renewal Application Ratings by Indicator		
Section	Indicator	Final Rating
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE		
1.a	Department’s Standards of Excellence— A-F School Letter Grades	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
1.b	Specific Charter Goals	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE		
2.a	Audit	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
2.b	Board of Finance	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
CONTRACTUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND GOVERNANCE		
3.a	Material Terms	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
3.b	Organizational Performance Framework	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
3.c	Governance Responsibilities	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>

CSD Review of Part B (Progress Report) and Renewal Site Visit in October

The PED team reviewed the Part B (Progress Report) submitted by the school and conducted a renewal site visit on October 18, 2018. The following sections provide additional analyses supporting the ratings summarized in Chart 1, above.

Academic Performance

1a) Schools that maintain a C or better letter grade over the term of the contract and have not received a D or F in any indicator of the letter grade are rated as “**meets the standard**”. New Mexico School for the Arts (NMSA) has maintained a letter grade of “A” in each year of the term of the contract. The school did not receive any grade below a C in any indicator of the letter grade in the past two years.

1b) Schools that meet or exceed their specific charter school goals each year of the contract term are rated as “meets standard”. New Mexico School for the Arts did “exceed the standard” in the goals for ELA proficiency and proficiency in an art form. However, the school did not meet the goal for math proficiency in any year of the current contract term. The CSD Team has rated this indicator as “**demonstrates substantial progress**” because the school provided a list of intervention courses created to improve math performance: double-block pre-algebra class, ninth-grade academy, applied math course, and academic seminar, along with additional actions taken by teachers. (See details in Part B.)

Financial Compliance

2a) Schools that have received no material weakness, significant deficiency, or repeat audit findings in each of the annual audits are rated as “**meets standard**”. New Mexico School for the Arts has not received any material weakness, significant deficiency, or repeat audit findings in any annual audit during the term of the contract.

2b) The CSD team has rated this indicator as “**meets the standard**” because the school has maintained all Board of Finance authority during the entire term of the contract.

Contractual, Organizational, and Governance

3a) The CSD team has rated this indicator as “**meets the standard**” because the school has implemented the Material Terms of the Charter including the operational structure, the mission of the school, and the educational program of the school (including student-focused terms, teacher-focused terms, and parent-focused terms).

3b) The CSD team has rated this indicator as “**demonstrates substantial progress**” because the school received four (4) “working to meet” ratings in 2017 and one (1) “working to meet” standard in 2018. The one “working to meet” rating was a repeat from the prior year on the indicator for Business Management related to an audit finding. The school has implemented procedures to avoid another occurrence which was observed during the site visit.

3c) The CSD team has rated this indicator as “**demonstrates substantial progress**” due to the fact that four (4) out of five (5) Governing Board members did not complete the required training in 2017-2018. Though each member completed the correct number of hours for returning/continuing members (when factoring in the academic and fiscal exemptions), the required topics were not covered as outlined in NMAC 6.80.5.9. The School and Governing Board have implemented a more detailed tracking system to

support Governing Board members in taking the correct total number of hours in the correct categories. The tracking spreadsheet was observed and reviewed for accuracy at the site visit.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were conducted on October 18, 2018 at New Mexico School for the Arts. The participants included ten (10) students, five (5) parents, two (2) Governing Board members, and eight (8) staff members.

The students have been attending the school for one-and-a-half (1.5) to three (3) years and all were interested in the school due to their passion for an art form (singing, theater, band, and visual art). The students also listed *“supportive environment”*, *“supportive community”*, and small school size as things that they like about the school. One of the students stated that she receives special education services and that *“the school is really good about making sure I get what I need”*. One student mentioned that he *“was a jock”* at his old school and *“it is tough not being in sports”*, but that he is very glad to be at this school focusing on music. The students described the academic study hall, tutoring hours, and Saturday school that students can attend to get help.

The parents mentioned that they are thankful for a school that focuses on the arts and the opportunity it provides for their children in this area, while still focusing on academics. A parent stated that her son *“has been challenged here more so than my other kids [were] in college”*. One parent commented that *“The teachers support them emotionally and socially”* as well. The competitive audition process was described by parents, with one parent citing that only one in eight students gets accepted into the theater program. One of the parents stated that their child is on an IEP for anxiety and depression, that the small school size is a benefit, and that the school has *“done a lot to help with his IEP”*.

The staff members included a secretary, special education director, director of operations, support person for special needs, and several teachers. The main theme of the comments was that the school is a supportive environment, both of the students and among the staff. The teachers also described the weekly meetings where teachers identify students who are struggling and, as a staff, discuss interventions.

The two board members who were interviewed are also on the Finance Committee. One has been involved in charter school work since its inception in New Mexico, has an arts background, and this is his second year on the board. He stated *“This is a successful school and I really want to see them expand and grow.”* The other member has accounting experience and was invited to serve on the board seven years ago. The response to the school academic performance, the board members told us that *“The head of the school shares with us the report card. We get a chance to ask about the report card and the academic program. We go through all the sub categories.”* In response to a question about the training requirement concerns, *“At the board meeting last week the Head Administrator presented to us the four hours we need to take in specific areas. The tracking of hours will be done by the Head Administrator and the Business Manager.”*

[Please see sections of the renewal application package for additional details, as follows:](#)

Part A: Data Report and Current Charter Contract Performance

SECTION 1. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES

SECTION 2. FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE

SECTION 3. CONTRACTUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Part B: Progress Report

Part C: Financial Statement

Part D: Petitions of Support

Part E: Description of Charter School Facilities and Assurances

Part F: Amendments and Amendment Requests

Appendices of additional documentation from the school, if any