



Raquel Reedy
Superintendent

Office of Innovation and School Choice

APS Authorized Charter Schools

Deborah Elder
Executive Director

Joseph D. Escobedo, Ed.D.
Senior Director

2019 NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT CHARTER APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS

According to NMSA § 22-8B-6(B) the Notice of Intent to Submit a 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.*

The NOI must be submitted by 5:00 PM Mountain Time on January 8, 2019, **the second Tuesday of January.** Notices of Intent that are not received by the Public Education Commission and the superintendent of the local school district by the deadline may result in the application being rejected.

Notice to the Public Education Commission should be delivered by one of the following methods:

- Electronically to: charter.schools@state.nm.us
- By mail or personal delivery: PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION
c/o New Mexico Public Education Department
Attn: Options for Parents and Families/Charter Schools Division
300 Don Gaspar, Room 301
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Notice to the Superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools should be delivered electronically to the APS Office of Innovation and School Choice through the Senior Director, Dr. Joseph Escobedo at Escobedo_j@aps.edu

The NOI is intended to provide the Public Education Commission and the APS Office of Innovation and School Choice with the primary point of contact among the charter developers and preliminary information about the charter proposal, such as the school’s mission statement, the school’s focus, the representative student population in the intended location, enrollment projections, key innovations, etc. (not to exceed 7 pages).

1. General Information

- Name of Proposed School
- Grade levels to be offered and enrollment projections
 - The school will include grade level configurations that include grades 6-8. Yes No

Grade Levels to be offered	Projected Total Enrollment
4 th through 8 th	270

- The school, if approved, anticipates opening August, 2021. Yes No
 - If yes, provide a timeline that includes benchmarks demonstrating 18-24 months of application development.

August, 2020

- Primary Point of Contact

Name	Rodolfo Isaac Rivas-Savell		
Mailing Address	1910 Moneda Dr. NW		
City	Albuquerque	State	NM
		Zip	87120
Phone	575-605-3527		
Email	irivassavell@buildingexcellentschools.org		

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

Names	Role on Team	Qualifications: Education, Employment, and Experience
Isaac Rivas-Savell	Lead Founder; Proposed Head of School	<p>Education: Bachelor of Science - Elementary Education; Master's of Education - Administration & Supervision</p> <p>Current Employment: Fellow with Building Excellent Schools – Nationally renowned charter school incubator and leadership development program studying high-performing charter schools</p> <p>Experience: 11+ years of teaching and school leadership experience - middle and elementary grades; Expertise in instructional design and delivery, teacher development, and family engagement</p>
Amanda Aragon	Founding Board Member	<p>Education: Bachelor of Business Administration - International Business, and Spanish</p> <p>Current Employment: Executive Director of NewMexicoKidsCAN</p> <p>Experience: Education policy advocacy; Deep knowledge of Albuquerque, community relationships, and partnerships</p>
Bruce Bradford	Founding Board Member	<p>Education: Bachelor of Science – Business Administration Master of Business Administration</p> <p>Current Employment: Senior Vice President Business Banker – Bank of Albuquerque</p> <p>Experience: 30+ years of experience in financial services experience; 6 years as CEO of the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce</p>
Justin Edwards	Founding Board Member	<p>Education: Bachelor of Science - Computer Science</p> <p>Current Employment: Founder/CEO of Iterative Consulting, LLC</p> <p>Experience: Experience with working with small businesses; Assists in the development of their internal software to help propel the business's mission and vision forward</p>

Shawn Fisher	Founding Board Member	Education: Bachelor of Science - Business Administration, Computer Information Systems Current Employment: Information Technology Director at REDW Experience: Currently manages a staff of 15 and all REDW technological infrastructure
Celestina Garcia	Founding Board Member	Education: Bachelor of Science - Child Development; Master's of Education Current Employment: Ontological Coach and Trainer for Coaching Solutions Experience: Ontological coach and entrepreneur who is native to New Mexico with a passion for envisioning and collaborating with others to build the legacy of achievement in communities
Jack Mitchell	Founding Board Member	Education: Bachelor of Arts - Business Administration, Management; Master of Business Administration - Public Policy; Doctor of Law (J.D.) Current Employment: Appellate Counsel; Counsel Press Inc. Experience: Specialization in assisting attorneys with appellate rules and procedures and honorably served over 15 years in the United States Marine Corps, the United States Army and the Army Reserve
Debbie Rael	Founding Board Member	Education: Bachelor of Science – Education; Master's in Education Current Employment: Chief Academic Strategist for Santa Fe Public Schools Experience: Building and district school leadership experience; in-depth knowledge in education policy, school improvement, and turnaround
Arslan Umarov	Founding Board Member	Education: Bachelor of Business Administration - International Business; Doctor of Law (J.D.) Current Employment: Attorney, Butt, Thornton, & Baehr PC Experience: Assisting all clients negotiate sound settlements and find resolutions to serious challenges
Rosemary Ybarra-Hernandez	Founding Board Member	Education: Bachelor of Science - Political Science; Master's of Public Administration – Public Policy Current Employment: CEO/President/Founder at Aguila Youth Leadership Institute Experience: Worked to develop pipelines with educational institutions across the country specifically for Latino/Latina youth who desired to obtain a college degree

3. Describe the non-traditional or innovative model of promise of the proposed school:

6

Voz Collegiate Preparatory Charter School (“Voz Collegiate Prep”) is a middle school with a focus on college preparation. Voz Collegiate Prep is a proposed middle school with an extended grade span (grades 4-8). Innovative components of design include oral language development, computer science skills, and extended time dedicated to literacy and mathematics instruction.

Voz Collegiate Prep is informed by its five core beliefs:

1. Structured and rigorous academics promote student academic success.
2. Positive professional habits build strong character for school and life.
3. Developing students’ voices honors their identity, heritage, and ambition.
4. Data drives all decisions and drives student academic achievement.
5. 21st Century academic skills open doors of opportunity.

4. Does the school expect to contract with another entity for either management, or substantial oversight or direction in the school’s operation? Yes No
 If YES, describe the entity and the role it will have in the school’s operational plan.

N/A

5. Does the applicant team or any members of the team currently operate any other schools? Yes No
 6. Vision/Mission statement (2-3 sentences)

Mission: Voz Collegiate Preparatory Charter School equips all students in grades 4 through 8 with the 21st Century academic skills, professional habits, and personal voice to succeed within and graduate from the colleges of their choice.
Vision: Voz Collegiate Preparatory Charter School holds the unwavering belief that all students have the ability and intrinsic desire to achieve academically regardless of race, gender, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, or other identification. We maximize each instructional minute to deliver robust, highly supportive, grade-level academics prioritizing literacy and mathematics. In doing so, we ensure that we deliver on our promise to fully equip each student with the tools, attitude, and mindset to succeed, excel, and graduate from high schools and colleges of their choice.

7. Student population and geographical setting of the school

- Define the targeted geographical area of the proposed school from which you expect to draw a significant number of your students and describe why this setting is being proposed.

The targeted geographical area where we are proposing Voz Collegiate Prep is the 87109 zip code of Albuquerque. We will focus our recruitment efforts in this zip code and the surrounding neighborhoods. Voz Collegiate Prep is a proposed public charter school with open enrollment. The median income in the 87109 zip code is \$38,370, below the city’s average of \$39,997. The unemployment rate in this area is 4.9%, above the city’s average (ZipAtlas 2018). Approximately 7% of families in this zip code are living below the poverty level. Hispanics make up 27.69% of the zip code’s population. 23.67% of the resident population in 87109 have graduated high school and 35.97% have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. These demographics are listed in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: 87109 Demographics

Demographics	87109 ¹	Albuquerque ²
Median Income	\$38,370	\$39,997
Unemployment Rate	4.91%	3.6%
Poverty Rate	6.9%	10.3%
Hispanic %	27.7%	42.9%
HS Graduation rate	23.7%	24.9%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	36%	30.3%

It is our belief that strong middle school preparation is necessary to prepare students for the demands of high school. Our academic program with a college preparatory focus will ensure that all of our students are placed on the path to college beginning at 4th grade. Attending and graduating from a four-year college or other post-secondary degree program increases a student’s social capital and earning potential, and positively impacts the economic landscape of this zip code. We believe college degrees can change the life trajectories of children and families.

- Describe the student population including key demographic data (academic performance, home languages, English Learners (ELs), and special education populations) in the location in which the school intends to locate.

¹ Zip Atlas (2018). *87109 Code Map and Detailed Zip Code Profile*. Retrieved from <http://zipatlas.com/us/nm/albuquerque/zip-87109.htm>

² Zip Atlas (2018). *Albuquerque, NM Zip Code Map and Detailed Profile*. Retrieved from http://zipatlas.com/us/nm/albuquerque.htm#education_level.

Figure 2 provides a detailed summary of the student demographics for both the Albuquerque Public Schools district and the middle schools in the 87109 zip code.

Figure 2: Albuquerque Public Schools and 87109 Middle Schools³

Demographics	APS	87109
Hispanic	65.8%	58%
Caucasian/White	22.9%	24.3%
American Indian	5.5%	12.3%
African American	3.2%	7%
Asian	2.3%	2.5%
Economically Disadvantaged	68.2%	91.8%
English Language Learners	16.6%	11.5%
Students with Disabilities	17.2%	21.5%

The data in **Figure 2** illustrates that a great portion of students identify as Hispanic and English Language Learners in the 87109 zip code. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities is significantly higher than that of APS. According to the 2018 Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) student achievement data, only 21% of middle school students in the 87109 zip code are proficient in math. The data also indicates that only 31% of middle school students are proficient in reading.⁴

- 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.

Voz Collegiate Prep proposes to enroll 81 students in 4th and 5th grade in the fall of 2020. We anticipate that the majority of students entering our inaugural class are currently second and third graders at schools displayed in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: 87109 School Grades

SCHOOL	17-18 GRADE
MIDDLE SCHOOLS	
Cleveland	B
Cottonwood Classical	A
Explore Academy	A
Garfield	F
Grant	C
The GREAT Academy	D
McKinley	D
Taft	D
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	
Arroyo del Oso	B
Bel Air	D
E.G. Ross	C
Governor Bent	F
Hodgin	D
Mission Avenue	D
Montezuma	F
Zuni	F

³ Albuquerque Public Schools (2018). *APS About Us*. Retrieved from <http://www.aps.edu/about-us>.

⁴ NM School Grades (2018). *School Overall Academic Performance*. Retrieved from https://nmschoolgrades.com/schools/1413#overall_performance.

Figure 3 shows a clear account of the limited access families have to a high-performing school. Most of the schools in this zip code have earned Ds and Fs. It is our belief that our unique grade span and focus on college preparation will attract families to enroll their children at Voz Collegiate Prep. While there are two schools, both charter, that earned an A, Voz Collegiate Prep offers computer science and speech and debate as core content, and our students will receive targeted instruction in each of these subjects. Students will receive extended literacy and math time daily. Our extended school year and day model will provide students with more instructional time to fill existing or identified gaps in academic skills and knowledge. Additionally, our 4-8 grade span gives us two additional years with students (compared to traditional middle schools) to ensure readiness for and a strong transition to high school. Our staffing model creates a 14:1 student to teacher ratio allowing for strong family communication and engagement.

8. Provide evidence that the applicant team has assessed community need for a school of the nature that will be proposed in the application (e.g., objective surveys or other measures of local demand for the proposed educational program).

The founding Voz Collegiate Prep team has engaged in 104 conversations with residents and 16 organizations within the 87109 zip code and the city of Albuquerque at large. Through these conversations, the Founding Team has heard from community members that families and their children are seeking a high-quality option that ensures academic readiness for Advanced Placement and other college-preparatory coursework in high school. Additionally, families and community members have expressed an interest in our computer science and speech and debate curriculum that will be offered to all students. We have held numerous meetings, tabling events, and information sessions at various local events and organizations to assess community need. Beyond placing students on the path to college, families have also expressed an emphatic desire to have a stronger middle school option with a unique 4-8 grade span.

In accordance with the 2018 New Mexico Public Education Department's School Grading System, **Figure 3** shows the current state of the schools in the area. As of the 2018-19 school year, families and children in the 87109 zip code lack sufficient access to a high-performing middle school positioned to fully equip each student with the tools, attitude, and mindsets to succeed, excel, and graduate from the high schools and colleges of their choice.

9. Identify significant innovative features that the school will implement in order to help it realize its vision/mission (e.g., non-traditional school year, longer school day, partner organizations, etc.).

In congruence with our mission, Voz Collegiate Prep will be a public school option providing students and families a college preparatory middle school. Voz Collegiate Prep will equip all students to successfully matriculate and graduate from the high schools and colleges of their choice through an intensive academic program fully aligned to grade-level standards, preparing students to navigate the challenging curricula they will encounter in high school. Our grade span of fourth through eighth grade is an innovative component of the school. Fourth and fifth grades will follow an elementary, self-contained model, whereas grades six through eight will follow a teacher specialization model that is consistent with traditional middle schools. We place a strong emphasis on literacy and math to ensure our students are fully prepared for high school and college. Our calculated approach to focusing on speech and debate and computer science as core subject areas differentiates us from other surrounding charter schools. We will implement an extended school day and year to maximize instructional minutes with students. Teachers will receive an additional 20 days of professional development prior to the beginning of each school year. Ongoing support and coaching will be provided to our teachers to swiftly develop their skills to achieve strong results for their students.

10. Describe 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.

Lead Founder Mr. Rivas-Savell is currently completing a nationally renowned school design and leadership development Fellowship, allowing him the opportunity to closely study the instructional and operational details

of high poverty, high achieving charter schools in communities with demographics similar to 87109. Through this Fellowship, he has successfully completed extensive training in instructional leadership and design, school operations, school finance, and board governance. Mr. Rivas-Savell will begin residency at Emblaze Academy in the Bronx, NY for one month prior to full application submission. Emblaze Academy is a 5th through 8th grade middle school educating a student demographic that is very similar to that which Voz Collegiate Prep anticipates: 92% FRL eligibility, 70% Hispanic, 27% African American, 22% qualify for special education services, and 16% are English Language Learners. Under the leadership of Mr. Rivas-Savell, Voz Collegiate Prep will replicate the evidence-based practices of Emblaze Academy and other top performing charter schools with an established pattern of academic success. Our prioritization of literacy and mathematics with an additional period devoted to targeted interventions will allow us to provide individualized supports to address all students' needs. The rigorous academic model and extended school day and year at Voz Collegiate Prep will ensure students are better equipped to learn and excel in high school, college, and beyond. We recognize the importance of upholding high academic expectations for students and professional expectations for all adults. Voz Collegiate Prep will be deeply engaged with the surrounding community in which we propose to ensure we are hearing their needs, exceeding their expectations for academic excellence, and fulfilling the promises we make.

11. Describe how the school will be in alignment with the economic needs of Albuquerque.

It is our belief that the key to leading a successful life is academic excellence. Academic excellence, however, cannot be achieved if a child does not attend a high-quality school option that embodies this mission. The median income in our proposed zip code is \$38,370. The median income in Albuquerque is \$39,997. According to the US Census Bureau, the national median income is \$59,039. We anticipate that our student population will reflect that of the city, which is rich and diverse. We recognize the need for providing students with exposure to a diverse curriculum that will propel them forward both academically and professionally. Presently, there are close to 2,000 computing jobs that remain vacant across New Mexico. Each of these positions carries an average salary of \$80,195. Voz Collegiate Prep considers computer science a core subject area. Exposing our students to innovative and rigorous computer science programming, beginning at the 4th grade level, will equip our students with computing skills that will allow us to begin leveling the playing field. Our college prep focus allows for students to realize their full potential both academically and professionally. Our academic programming will engrain the belief in our students that they are fully capable to attend, excel, and graduate from the colleges of their choice. This will have significant impact on their lives, thus impacting the economic workforce in Albuquerque.

12. Describe how the school will support increasing access to choice in Albuquerque.

Our Founding Team has met with over 100 families and community members throughout Albuquerque. Through our conversations with each of these individuals, a common concern has surfaced: students and families residing in or near 87109 do not have access to a high-quality middle school option. This is concerning given the economic disparity experienced by the surrounding community. There is urgent and profound demand to provide students with a high performing charter school that models academic programming after the most high-achieving urban charter schools nationally. Voz Collegiate will increase choice of educational opportunities and access to quality within Albuquerque Public Schools.

Please Note: Should your charter be awarded, the founding governing body could undergo a background check to determine if it qualifies to be a board of public finance in the state of New Mexico.

Signature of Founder(s):



Date: 1/8/19

R. Isaac Rivas-Savell

[PRINT NAME]