New Mexico Public Education Commission
2020 New Charter School Application Kit
Part D. Capacity Interview Questions

Scoring – All responses will be scored using the following rubric:

Meets the Criteria **(M)**	• The applicant's response completely addresses the question posed • The applicant's response aligns with and enhances the related information presented in the written application • The applicant understands the information in the written application and the work that will be necessary to successfully implement the proposal • The applicant demonstrates the ability to appropriately respond to contingencies and challenges that will be faced when implementing the proposal • The applicant demonstrates a strong capacity to successfully operate a high-quality, effective school by implementing the proposal in the written application
Approaches the Criteria **(A)**	• The applicant's response does not meet all of the criteria required to be evaluated "Meets the Criteria" • The applicant's response addresses the question posed, but may not do so fully • The applicant's response mostly aligns with the related information presented in the written application • The applicant partially understands the work that will be necessary to successfully implement the proposal in the written application • The applicant demonstrates limited capacity to appropriately respond to contingencies and challenges that will be faced when implementing the proposal • The applicant demonstrates some capacity to operate a functional school by implementing the proposal in the written application
Falls Far Below the Criteria **(F)**	• The applicant's response does not meet all of the criteria required to be evaluated "Approaches the Criteria" • The applicant's response does not address the question posed • The applicant's response does not align with the related information presented in the written application • The applicant does not understand the work that will be necessary to successfully implement the proposal in the written application • The applicant demonstrates no capacity to respond to contingencies and challenges that will be faced when implementing the proposal • The applicant does not demonstrate the capacity to operate a functional school by implementing the proposal in the written application

	Capacity Interview Questions
Educational Plan: Mission	1. How is the mission, as described in the application, essential to the success of the proposed school?

Score			Review Team Comments:
X	**A** ☐	**0** ☐	**AIAI/Aspire includes a focus on contribution, including: extended access to teachers via online platform, an arts-enriched environment, support services by ELCTs (data/weekly reports), Edmentum curriculum that is flexible, customizable, and Aspire's community artist contributors. Students select a focus area upon enrollment. Passion, skills and knowledge into integrated into creative community.**

Educational Plan: Innovation	2. What is the most important contribution your proposed school will bring to public education in the community in which you propose to operate? How will this contribution be essential to the success of the proposed school?

Score			Review Team Comments:
X	**A** ☐	**0** ☐	**"The most important and innovative contribution Aspire would offer to public education in our community would be to cultivate intellectual curiosity through engagement in our learning community and our arts education platform." Vulnerability and sense of safety in the school setting; arts integration and inspiration.**

Educational Plan: Mission Implementation	3. How will you evaluate whether your mission and implementation of it are working?

Score			Review Team Comments:
M ☐	**X**	**0** ☐	**Reports from our SPED teachers, ELCTs, and CACs will be entered into a comprehensive matrix to evaluate the school's overall mission success.** **Many theories, rubrics, and frameworks are given here, more than seems manageable for a small school. Also, no specific benchmarks or measures of success are given. Needed to know what they will do or how they will adjust if the mission is not being met.**

Leadership & Governance	4. What role does a governing body play in the success of a charter school? Describe your strategic process for identifying and selecting members. How will this process support the success of your proposed school?

Score			Review Team Comments:

Score			
M ☐	X	0 ☐	• **The Governing Body hires, supervises, evaluates, compensates, and if necessary, terminates the Head Administrator. The Head Administrator evaluations are a significant component of a board's responsibilities. Evaluations help clarify expectations and set goals for the future.** • **Have a 8 step process for Board Recruitment.** • **Didn't seeing addressing of 3rd part of this question** • **The narrative here does not quite square with the interview conducted (which was an issue on the application as well). The board MUST be the entity in charge of ultimately hiring, firing and holding the Head Admin accountable; this may not be under the purview of GES.**
Leadership & Governance			5. What role does the school leader play in the success of a charter school? Describe your strategic process for identifying and selecting her/him. How will this process support the success of your proposed school?
Score			Review Team Comments:
M ☐	X	0 ☐	**Not sure this process is going to work. However, I don't know if there's a school that has tried this. It is the school leader's responsibility to direct adequate resources to where they are needed to ensure student success, without unduly detracting from the resources necessary to achieve the student's success in the arts. There is delineation between the Head Admin CCO role here that was lacking in the application; however, the roles seem potentially at odds and there is not clarity over who is the ultimate school leader. Our conversation seemed to acknowledge that the Head Admin, as the person holding the administrative license that allows for school operation is the person who will, at the end of the day, bear responsibility for the school's failure or success.**
Leadership & Governance			6. How does a high quality process to evaluate the effectiveness of the governing body and the school contribute to the success of a charter school? Describe your strategic process for conducting these evaluations. How will these processes support the success of your proposed school?
Score			Review Team Comments:
M ☐	X	0 ☐	**The application team and first Governing Board will follow a model similar to nonprofit organizations where there is a clear distinction between the work of the Board and that of the school administration. Evaluations would be conducted by a cross-section of the school community and Board committees, as both self- and peer-evaluations. However, it is unclear how these processes positively effect this school and in what ways? Again, we are lacking clear numbers, goals and specificity. It makes sense that this section would be incomplete because the mission was never aligned with clear, quantitative indicators of success.**
Leadership & Governance			7. Please explain the delineated roles and responsibilities of, and the relationships between, the founders, the governing body, and the proposed school's administration during the transitional period between the planning/implementation year and the first year of operations. Describe how those relationships evolve to ensure the success of the charter school.
Score			Review Team Comments:

M ☐	X	0 ☐	The team is aware of and identifies conflicts of interests and seems to have a plan for reallocation of roles, which is helpful. Some members of the applicant team will be part of the initial board. Others will not due to conflicts of interest or time commitments, but will continue to be involved as part of an advisory committee or in other non-governing roles. The response leans HEAVILY on the shoulders of the online curriculum provider/EMO, which is problematic.
Leadership & Governance			8. Explain the importance of by-laws and policies to the success of a charter school. Describe the strategic processes the proposed school will use to establishing and implementing them and how these will contribute to the success of the proposed school.
Score			**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐	X	0 ☐	The team presents the bylaws and explains their importance in 11 steps. "The Bylaws of a charter school are the legally binding rules that the organization is governed by. They create the structure of and guide the governing body in the conduct of running the charter school. In essence, Bylaws are the operating manual for the governing board… Having bylaws in place will give guidance, help eliminate confusion, and encourage consistency while being able to hold the governing board accountable as a group and as individuals in order to ensure success to the charter school." Also, don't the bylaws need to be renewed every year? The best practice is yearly, but this is not a requirement. How these will contribute to the success of the proposed school?
Leadership & Governance			9. How will the proposed school ensure that policies and procedures are not only compliant, but also well implemented, current, and effective? How will the proposed school determine when they are in need of change and how will it react?
Score			**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐	X	0 ☐	● **Board will utilize both quantitative and qualitative data to focus on specific Board concerns in order to resolve immediate crises and strengthen the educational outcomes of students.** ● **They don't address the final part of the question.** ● **While multiple strategies are outlined for gathering feedback and data, there is no indication of measures of success or detriment that indicate to the board that change was needed.**
Facility			10. Describe your plan for acquiring a facility and ensuring that the facility meets educational occupancy standards required by applicable New Mexico construction codes and the weighted New Mexico Condition Index. Whose responsibility will it be to carry out this major piece of opening a charter school? Please include details about locating, securing, and funding the facility.
Score			**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐	X	F ☐	"AIAI Applicant Team decided 4311 Sara Road SE in Rio Rancho was the right and appropriate choice. It is a building, which will allow the school to grow, since it is over 27,000 sq. ft. AIAI will only need to occupy the second level for the first

			few years before they would need to expand into the first level. The building was formerly occupied by ASK Academy and is therefore already zoned for education." Although the school has found a viable e-occupancy zoned property, two members of the applicant team are affiliated with Garner Arts LLC which owns the property in question. One is the proposed CCO; the other is a member of the applicant team whose future role was not discussed. These relationships raise conflict of interest issues.
Facility			11. If you cannot find a building that meets the need of the plan described in the PSFA (Public School Facilities Authority) approval, what is your next steps plan?
Score			**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐	**X**	**F** ☐	Identified facility meets requirements, but has serious conflicts of interest - there is no back-up plan for facility given.
Finance			12. How are you going to open your proposed school without federal start-up funds? Does the proposed school have a plan to supplement its budget in some way? Does the proposed school have a plan to acquire funding necessary to accomplish planning/implementation year requirements (setting up a bank account, acquiring furniture, having software systems in place to interface with PED's OBMS system, etc.)?
Score			**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐	**X**	**F** ☐	● **Applicant makes the assumption that they will receive Federal Start Up Funds; should have assumed that is denied and answered accordingly.** ● "AIAI Board Members will work with the Lease holder regarding access to the facility and the Educational Management Organization for academic work until Year One 40-day funds are deposited." ● "AIAI Board Members have discussed the need for fundraisers during Implementation Year and, if necessary, these funds could be designated to cover the first 40-days of school." ● "AIAI Board Members have identified a local bank and sources of student and cafeteria furniture." ● "The Educational Management Organization will provide the software systems for academic and business operations and work directly with the PED to ensure those systems are compatible."
Finance			13. In detail describe how you will make enrollment projections to establish and submit your first budget to PED? How will you ensure these enrollment projections are reasonable and align closely to your actual 40 day count?
Score			**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐	**X**	**F** ☐	In this section, there is not a clear plan for adjusting programming or budget based on actual enrollment. Planning for 50-70% of targeted enrollment is a good general rule of thumb. "The enrollment projections used to establish and submit the budget for the first school year will be based on level of interest (letters of intent, family inquiries, etc.) in the January timeframe, and actual enrollments in the March and April timeframe as the budget begins to be finalized." There is a lot of enrollment mobility over the summer as well.

Finance	14. Suppose your actual enrollment on the first day is 50% below your pre-opening "enrollments" and 70% below your projections used to submit your budget. What are the implications for your budget/business plan and what are your next steps? Describe in detail what actions you would take and when you would take them to address this situation.

Score	Review Team Comments:
M ☐ X F ☐	**If the number of students enrolled do not allow for the school to operate the first year with a balanced budget, then the AIAI Board will have to postpone the opening of AIAI until School Year 2022-2023.** **Did not specifically address the question of "your actual enrollment on the first day is 50% below your pre-opening "enrollments" and 70% below your projections used to submit your budget"** **What happens to enrolled students who gave us their spot elsewhere?**

Planning Year	15. Describe the organizational steps the proposed school will take during the planning year to be ready for opening?

Score	Review Team Comments:
M ☐ X F ☐	**The plan as stated is not comprehensive, including recruitment and hiring of ELCTs and community art contributors, as well as schedule design, student onboarding plan, and new family training. There are some serious gaps here before they are ready to open the doors.** .

Review Team's Individualized Questions	16. ACADEMIC - What specific and measurable student outcomes will be used to measure mission success?

Score	Review Team Comments:
M ☐ X F ☐	**Core academics on online platforms - gives visual representation of progress/mastery. Art electives will use rubrics and performance criteria; will be meeting standards. Measure of success is primarily whether students are able to incorporate arts into their career plans. Followup: Contribution measured through staff perspective (ex: PD and peer learning).**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	17. ACADEMIC - Can the school application team clearly articulate: 1) Why the Edmentum curriculum and GES school model should be considered rigorous or highly effective? 2) How the online and face-to-face components merge to make a fully "blended" student experience?

Score	Review Team Comments:
M ☐ X F ☐	**GES has used Edmentum for 3-4 years; consistently reviews the market. Good relationship with Edmentum team. No actual numbers given for how or where Edmentum has been highly effective.** **ELCT (not actually licensed teachers) are the bridge between the online and onsite worlds of the blended learning model proposed here. For a student perspective, 7 hour day with 3 hours of art classes and 4 hours of working online under guidance of ELCT.**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	18. ACADEMIC - It seems reasonable that there would be minimum credits or pathways developed for each of the art focus areas as a graduation requirement of an arts-integrated high school. Is there a plan in place to develop these pathways of study?

Score			Review Team Comments:
X	A ☐	F ☐	**Yes, there will be pathways developed but these are not tied explicitly to graduation as yet. There is not a clear art "requirement." At some point, internships and connection with NM Workforce Solutions is planned. More of a "survey" approach.**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	19. ACADEMIC - How does the proposed daily schedule and calendar work from a student perspective? From a teacher one? How is this optimal for your proposed model?

Score			Review Team Comments:
X	A ☐	F ☐	**We have a better understanding of this after question #17. Allows students to engage both mind and body during a school day; draws on past experience and alignment of the annual calendar to other districts supports families with students in different schools.**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	20. ACADEMIC - How will the school work with truant students? And how will attendance/progress/engagement be tracked?

Score			Review Team Comments:
X	A ☐	F ☐	**Schools will monitor attendance (physical) and academic progress. The ECLT is the primary person tracking this. There is a weekly report generated for ELCTs. Tier I is a meeting, Tier II is a family/team meeting, etc. No specific numbers given.**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	21. ACADEMIC - Who will be monitoring student progress and performance and what criterion will the school be using? Are students monitored on a weekly basis? What teacher is tasked with intervention when a student falls behind or does not demonstrate mastery?

Score			Review Team Comments:
M ☐	**X**	F ☐	**ELCTs are monitoring the student progress and performance. Criterion are still not specified. Monitoring occurs weekly and follow-up is on the ELCT, who works with both the online teacher and the art instructors.** **Questions:** - **How many NM certified teachers will be on staff?** - **Will all online teachers be NM certified?** - **Is it accurate that none of the on-campus staff need to be certified?** - **Will Edmentum develop NM specific curriculum (NM History, STEM Ready Science?)**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	22. ORGANIZATIONAL - How will the board be supported in areas of need for continuous improvement?

Score			Review Team Comments: There is a Board Development and Recruitment Committee that will always be in place. Recruitment group will be year-round and will be supporting the board with continuous professional development in addition to state mandated trainings.
X	A ☐	F ☐	

Review Team's Individualized Questions	23. ORGANIZATIONAL – The application indicated that "The school Head Administrator and Chief Creative Officer will be selected and evaluated jointly by the governing Board and GES. It is still undetermined and will be negotiated as part of the contract negotiations, whether those two positions will be hired by the school or GES, but it makes little difference in terms of their authority and responsibilities." Has any decision been made regarding this? Have the Head Administrator and CCO already been chosen by the founding board?

Score			Review Team Comments:
M ☐	X	F ☐	So far, not discussed. Definitely no Head Administrator; Stephen will apply to be the CCO. Feels it is important for the EMO and Governing Board to both agree on both of these roles due to the high degree of communication and collaboration envisioned to be needed between these two roles. Head Admin, in general, will be responsible for reporting to the state and will have the administrative license. In general, the organizational chart needs to be revised to indicate that the Board will hire the Head Admin and that the Head Admin will in turn hire the CCO.

Review Team's Individualized Questions	24. ORGANIZATIONAL - How would the school address grievances and how would it be measured?

Score			Review Team Comments:
M ☐	X	F ☐	Still not specific as to timelines, although the process is spelled out more clearly (see written answers). A special meeting and written documentation with dates and times will support accountability and speediness of resolution. Board to be accessible to the public.

Review Team's Individualized Questions	25. ORGANIZATIONAL - Who is responsible for managing applications, letter of intent, carrying out the lottery, notification of families, and developing waitlists?

Score			Review Team Comments:
X	A ☐	F ☐	This is the head administrator, working with the EMO for guidance and support, using GES system. Recommendation that the Administrative Assistant/Front Office supports this step.

Review Team's Individualized Questions	26. ORGANIZATIONAL - This section meets criteria, but it is worth noting that the ratios here are much lower than the student/teacher ratio at Immersion School (also run by GES), where it is 83/1. Has there been a discussion on this aspect of the school with the management partners?
Score	**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐ X F ☐	**With Edmentum, while it is hard to nail down a specific number for a student/teacher ratio, their contract with Edmentum requires that students are served adequately. The community artist contributors or ELCTs are also not counted in this (but also may not be licensed teachers). Will also involve community volunteers.**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	27. FINANCIAL - What additional student supports could be offered to ensure academic growth and student learning is on track in addition to the arts focus of the school?
Score	**Review Team Comments:**
M ☐ X F ☐	**Officially, this falls on the online teachers with extended hours to access their expertise; this is supplemented by an unofficial support by the ELCTs who can also fill an academic tutoring role. Other options include peer tutoring groups.** - **How can an ELCT help a student with academics if they are uncertified in the area? The team was mainly concerned with higher-level subjects (like Chemistry, advanced ELA, and/or Alg II and higher).** - **Who is monitoring Next Step Plans? These are incerdibly important at the HS level.**

Review Team's Individualized Questions	28. THIRD PARTY RELATIONSHIP – The company, GES or GlobalEd Solutions, is a for profit, public benefit corporation (PBC) based in Colorado. Please summarize which aspects of the school operations will not be handled by GES.
Score	**Review Team Comments:**
X A ☐ F ☐	**Back office, HR, finance, data reporting will all be done by GES, through the head administrator. The creative arts side of the school will be handled by Aspire. Hiring of Head Administrator will be a joint endeavor; Aspire does not have an HR department, so hires would go through GES. There is some concern about GES' ability to learn and navigate NM public ed and charter school requirements. Edmentum is not yet an approved curriculum in the state of New Mexico. Other comments:** ● **All back-office functions will be done by Global Ed.** ● **Main functions not done by GES are the Creative Arts Side, which is handled by Chief Creative Officer.** ● **Both GES and the Board will oversee hiring Head Administrator.** ● **Would try to seek out a New Mexican to be Head Administrator to be well versed with NM laws.**