



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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RYAN STEWART, ED.L.D.
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

Preliminary Analysis of Renewal Application and Site Visit

School Name: North Valley Academy

School Address: 7939 4th Street, Los Ranchos, New Mexico 87114

Head Administrator: Dr. Susan McConnell, EdD

Business Manager: Sarah Pina

Authorized Grade Levels: Kindergarten – Grade 8

Authorized Enrollment: 534

Contract Term: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2021

Mission: *“North Valley Academy is committed to provide students with a rich and well-balanced education, through a rigorous focus on Mathematics, Language Arts, and an emphasis on Health and Wellness”.*

Summary of Performance

Academic. The school's academic performance has been evaluated under two different accountability systems throughout the term of its contract; A-F School Grading Report in school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 & the New Mexico System of School Support and Accountability in school years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020.

North Valley Academy (NVA) has maintained stable academic performance over the course of its contract term. Conversely, it has demonstrated a slight decline in its Reading proficiency from the 2016-17 to 2018-19 academic years, while demonstrating a slight growth in Math proficiency, when comparing the same academic years. In 2018-19, NVA evidenced a 30% Reading proficiency compared to the State's 34% overall Reading proficiency rate, while the school's Math proficiency rate was 26% compared to the State proficiency rate of 21%.

The school's Overall Academic Performance during the contract term was a **C letter grade, C letter grade, and Traditional Support School** designation, respectively. The school received a **designation of excellence** in math growth in 2018-2019.

Further, the school has performed well with its mission-specific goals two (2) out of the three (3) years of evaluation; earning an overall rating of *"Meets Standard"* during the 2016-17 and 2018-19 academic year(s). The school earned an overall rating of *"Does Not Meet Standard"* on its mission-specific goal indicator during the 2017-18 academic year.

Financial. Over the course of the contract, the school received three (3) audit findings derived from published audited financial statements from 2016-2017 through 2018-2019. The findings consist of no repeat findings, no material weaknesses, no significant deficiencies and three (3) noncompliance/other matter findings. In the most recent reporting year, 2018-2019, the school received two (2) audit findings classified as other matter, none of which were repeat findings. North Valley Academy is on a quarterly reporting schedule. The Business Manager is responsive to requests and reports are submitted in a timely manner. The school has not had major issues with achieving approved budget status and has not had a negative cash position.

NVA has shown slight downward membership trends and have budgeted accordingly, however their membership is showing resilience in the current reporting period counts. With the exception of the first year of the contract, the school has done an exceptional job of making good financial choices and operating well within operating revenue, resulting in an exuberant cash balance. The school has also shown a commitment to prioritizing classroom spending by staying consistently above the recommended 65% for schools of their size.

Currently, this LEA has no financial concerns.

Organizational. During the most recent year evaluated (2019-20), the school did not receive any *"Falls Far Below Standard"* indicator ratings. NVA received four (4) *"Working to Meet Standard"* indicator ratings; one of which was a repeated *"Working to Meet Standard"* rating for the Business Management and Oversight: meeting financial reporting and compliant requirements indicator, as a result of audit finding(s) on the its Audit Reports for FY18 and FY19. NVA has demonstrated consistent improvement in its organizational framework from the first year of its contract (2016-17) earning five (5) *"Falls Far Below Standard"* ratings and two (2) *"Working to Meet Standard"* ratings to the most recent year (2019-20) receiving four (4) *"Working to Meet Standard"* ratings with the remainder rated as *"Meets Standard"*.

PART A:	Data analysis provided by CSD Please see Part A - Summary Data Report based on accountability and reporting data from Current Charter Contract term
PART B:	Progress Report provided by the School Please see Part B for the school's self-report on the progress of meeting the academic performance, financial compliance and governance responsibilities of the charter school, including achieving the goals, objectives, student performance outcomes, state standards of excellence and other terms of the charter contract, including the accountability requirements set forth in the Assessment and Accountability Act during the Current Charter Term.

The PED team reviewed the school's Part B (Progress Report) and conducted a virtual renewal site visit on October 28, 2020.
Ratings are based on the rubric provided in the application.

Section	Indicator	Final Rating
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE		
1.a	Department's Standards of Excellence— Overall NM School Grade 2016-2017: <i>C letter-grade</i> 2017-2018: <i>C letter-grade</i> NM System of School Support and Accountability 2018-2019: <i>Traditional Support School designation with a designation of excellence in math growth</i> 2019-2020: <i>No data available for schools</i>	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
1.b	Specific Charter Goals Schools that have met all of their school specific goals in each year of the contract term do NOT provide a narrative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading growth and proficiency grades K-5 • Math growth and proficiency grades K-5 • Reading growth and proficiency grades 6-8 • Math growth and proficiency grades 6-8 	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE		
2.a	Audit Schools that have received no material weakness, significant deficiency, or repeat audit findings in each of the annual audits during the term of the contract do NOT complete this Section. <i>[Organizational Performance Framework 2a and 2b]</i> <i>[Organizational Performance Framework 2a-2e]</i>	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
2.b	Board of Finance Schools that have maintained all Board of Finance authority during the entire term of the contract do NOT complete this Section. If required to complete this section, provide a narrative explaining the actions taken (improved practices and outcomes).	<i>Meets the Standard</i>

2c	Additional Financial Information																																																																																											
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3.a	<p>Material Terms</p> <p>All schools must provide a response for this section of the application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-Drive Instruction, including instruction guided by Formative Assessments. • PLC-Based Professional Development, including instructional Coaching. • School Focus is Health and Wellness. • AN INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH AND PHILOSOPHY using: Blended Technology including a blended use of computer-based learning in both classrooms and homework; Mastery Progression which is individual, functional mastery of each level, prior to moving to the next level. • After School Programs, such as art and music, Cheerleading, Basketball, and Soccer. 	<i>Meets the Standard</i>																																																																																										

3.b	Organizational Performance Framework Schools that do not have any repeated “working to meet” ratings or any “falls far below” ratings on the most recent organizational performance framework evaluation do NOT complete this Section. <i>[Organizational Performance Framework 1b-1g, 4a-4c, and 5a-5c]</i> <i>[Organizational Performance Framework 1b-1f, 4a-4e, and 5a-5d]</i>	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
	Any OCR complaints or formal special education complaints, identify those, provide all communication related to those, and describe the current status in an Appendix, referenced in narrative by name.	<i>None Known</i>
3.c	Governance Responsibilities All schools must provide a response for this section of the application. <i>[Organizational Performance Framework 3a and 3b]</i> <i>[Organizational Performance Framework 3a-3c]</i>	<i>Meets the Standard</i>

Parts C, D, and E were provided by the school as part of the renewal application.

PART C:	Financial Statement A financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that is understandable to the general public that allows comparison of costs to other schools or comparable organizations and that is in a format required by the department.
PART D	Petitions 1. A petition in support of the charter school renewing its charter status signed by not less than sixty-five percent of the employees in the charter school, with certified affidavit. Number: <u>44 out of 45</u> Percentage: <u>98%</u> 2. A petition in support of the charter school renewing its charter status signed by at least seventy-five percent of the households whose children are enrolled in the charter school, with certified affidavit. Number: <u>279</u> Percentage: <u>77%</u>
PART E:	Description of the Charter School Facilities and Assurances A description of the charter school facilities and assurances that the facilities are in compliance with the requirements of Section 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978. 1. A copy of the facility lease agreement as Appendix D 2. A narrative description of its facilities and attach the school’s Facility Master Plan, if available, as Appendix H 3. Attach a copy of the building E Occupancy certificate(s) Dated: <u>05 OCT 2018</u> Maximum Occupancy (if listed): <u>Not listed on Certificate</u> 4. Most recent facility NMCI Score <u>6.45%</u> indicating that the school meets the requirements of Subsection C of 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978 5. If the charter school is relocating or expanding, provide assurances that the facilities comply with the requirements of Section 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978 <u> </u> Public (Cert A) <u> </u> Private (Cert B) <u> </u> Foundation (Cert C)
PART F:	Amendment Requests PEC APPROVED Amendment Request: <i>“I move that the PEC approve the amendment request presented by North Valley Academy requesting to expand its enrollment cap from 510 to 534 to provide stability for their elementary school enrollment process, and with the condition that we receive signed approved copies of the governing board minutes.”</i>

North Valley Academy Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were conducted on October 22, 2020 via the Zoom Meeting platform. The participants included fifteen (15) parents, eighteen (18) students, one (1) governing council member, and five (5) staff members.

Throughout the interview, parents repeatedly mentioned the involvement of teachers, staff, and parents at North Valley Academy. Several parents noted how teachers know all of the students even if they have not taught them. One parent described the school as being very family-oriented, while another considers the school “like a family.” Parents named this sense of family, along with the ability to volunteer at the school, and the administration’s openness to listen to suggestions and address concerns, as reasons they like the school. “I will pick North Valley Academy any day,” one parent exclaimed while adding that she has referred the school to others. Parents believe the school is succeeding at its mission of providing a well-balanced education, through a rigorous focus on Mathematics, Language Arts, and an emphasis on Health and Wellness. “I never had a salad bar at school,” said one parent, “The school is putting their money where their mouth is.” When asked if the school communicates regularly, parents mentioned that Thursday Folders are given weekly and that they receive communication through text, emails, and phone calls when needed.

North Valley Academy students like that teachers know their names, even if they are in different classes. Students also appreciate their teachers’ personalities and that they will take time in the morning and after school to help students if they are struggling. Students who are failing are required to attend mandatory office hours. When asked if there were any changes that they would make to the school, students mentioned more sports, more trash bins around the track, and more afterschool programs. One student would like to see specific afterschool time for kids that have problems with dyslexia. The same student is concerned that students with dyslexia are not getting as much time as they need during remote learning. A couple of students expressed that they feel like the principal doesn’t always hear both sides of a story when students are sent to her office and that she automatically takes the side of the larger group. Most students believe that the overall environment and student behavior is good.

The governing board member interviewed has been part of the school for more than 10 years having originally been a parent of a student, prior to joining the board. She joined the board because she saw the importance of making North Valley Academy a better place for not just her child, but for all kids. The board views quarterly Istation data to determine what the head administrator needs to improve. When asked specifically about steps the Governing Board takes to ensure the head administrator is leading the school toward academic progress and growth, the board member stated that the board approves professional development requested by the head administrator. The head administrator is evaluated annually through a two board member committee. Fifth graders apparently lack interest in moving into the middle school portion of North Valley Academy, which leads to low enrollment in the middle school. The board member would like to see this change. The board member noted that she is concerned about complaints of bullying in the school. Regarding finances, the business manager meets with the finance committee monthly and then discusses financials with the whole board.

Staff emphasized work on the health and well-being portion of the school’s mission. Kids are expected to get outside and move when on campus and are required to do a few laps around the school’s track prior to playing during recess. One teacher explained how she does lessons about self-esteem and working with others during virtual learning. “We work really hard making sure they are healthy in body and spirit,” she added. Staff reported having already had a lot of professional development this year. One professional development training was on cultural and linguistic responsiveness. A couple of

teachers had the books they received from this training on hand during the interview, which were full of bookmarks. One teacher noted that compared to a lot of professional development he's received in the past, what he has received at North Valley Academy has been meaningful and relevant. A couple of staff members who have been with the school for several years explained how curriculum used to be "piece meal", which may have led to lower scores on the State Accountability System. The school has adopted curriculum and programs to address issues and the two staff members believe students are learning better. When asked about concerns, one staff member shared that there is a lack of representation amongst staff and that staff demographics do not reflect those of the students. Staff believe that student needs are being met, even during virtual learning. Of note, ELL students are only placed in the classrooms of TESOL certified teachers.