

**New Mexico Public
Commission**

**2021 New Charter
Part C. Written**



Education

**School Application Kit
Responses & Rubric**



School Information:

Name of Proposed Charter School: Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts

School Address (if known): [Click here to enter text.](#)

School Location (City/Town): Albuquerque

School District within which the proposed school will be located: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Grades to be served: K-12

Requested Enrollment Cap: 1144

Contact Information:

Primary Contact Person: Jordan Franco

Address: 10901 Broeas Dr. NW

City: Albuquerque State: New Mexico Zip: 87114

Daytime Tel: 5056813536 Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: jordanfranco1990@gmail.com

Secondary Contact Person: Michele Platis

Address: 9705 Vivaldi Trl NW

City: Albuquerque. State: NM Zip: 87114

Daytime Tel: 505-274-4915 Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: micheleplatist@gmail.com

Founder (if different from above): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

City: [Click here to enter text.](#) State: [Click here to enter text.](#) Zip: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Daytime Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Founder (if different from above): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

City: [Click here to enter text.](#) State: [Click here to enter text.](#) Zip: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Daytime Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: [Click here to enter text.](#)

I. Academic Framework	7
C. Curriculum, Educational Program, Student Performance Standards.	27
D. Bilingual Multicultural Education, Indian Education and Hispanic Education	52
E. Graduation Requirements.	62
F. Instruction.	68
II. Organizational Framework	154
A. Governing Body Creation/Capacity.	154
B. Governing Body Training and Evaluation.	176
C. Leadership and Management.	185
D. Organizational Structure of the Proposed School.	207
E. Employees.	240
F. Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance.	249
G. Student Recruitment and Enrollment.	258
H. Legal Compliance.	268
I. Evidence of Partnership/Contractor relationship. (If Applicable.)	270
J. Waivers.	272
K. Transportation and Food.	274
L. Facilities/ School Environment.	284
III. Financial Framework	290
A. School size.	290
B. Budgets.	291
C. Financial Policies, Oversight, Compliance, and Sustainability	305
IV. Evidence of Support	315
A. Outreach Activities.	315
B. Community Support.	335
C. Community Relationships	344
V. Applicant Remarks	349
Additional Remarks	349
Appendices and Attachments	351

Directions: Please answer each and every prompt, if applicable (e.g., if you are an elementary school, you will not answer questions about graduation), where indicated. **Use the rubrics following each of the prompts to guide your responses.**

Rating: Along with each prompt, the application identifies the elements that must be present for a response to be evaluated as “Meets the Criteria.” The rubrics on this page govern **general rating practices**.

Please be sure that each response completely addresses the bulleted points in the rubrics for each individual prompt as well.

Meets the Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All required elements present • Sufficient detail present, enabling the proposal to be implemented without requiring further proposal development • The proposal is reasonable and realistic • Fully consistent with other sections, including budget and mission • Fully consistent with all requirements of law • Coherent and easily understood
Approaches the Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not clearly meet all criteria identified above to be rated “Meets the Criteria” • The majority of required elements are present, but not all • Insufficient detail; further proposal development will be required before the applicant can begin to implement the concept • Minor inconsistencies with other sections • May raise questions about legal compliance, but does not demonstrate non-compliance • May raise questions about reasonableness or viability of the proposal
Dose not meet the criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None or less than a majority of the required elements are present • Contradicts other sections, or substantially inconsistent with other sections • Insufficient detail to understand the proposal, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copying responses from a prior applicant’s application ○ Copying statutory, regulatory, or policy/guidance language ○ Plagiarizing information from other publicly available material • Includes statements that violate or conflict with the requirements of law • Incoherent or cannot be understood • The proposal is patently unreasonable or unrealistic • Does not clearly meet criteria identified above to be rated “Approaches the Criteria”

I. Academic Framework

A. Mission and Vision.

Note: The proposed school shall report each year on implementation of its mission as set forth in the Performance Framework.

A. (1) MISSION

State the mission that the proposed school intends to achieve. The mission should answer what is innovative and unique about the proposed school. The best mission statements are clear, concise, innovative, and measurable.

The mission of RioGAFA is to educate students through an arts-integration curriculum that promotes problem solving and creativity and supports all K-12 students to achieve grade-level standards.

arts-integration as defined by the Kennedy Arts Center *"is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in the creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both."*

Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RioGAFA) will achieve our mission by using the arts as a vehicle to learn in all content areas. We define the arts as creative writing, dance, drama, media, music, and visual arts.

We will achieve our mission using the following assessment measures to ensure that our mission is being implemented with fidelity:

- Dramatic academic achievement gains to be measured by summative and formative assessments. Assessments include statewide and curriculum interim assessments, and rubrics based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the New Mexico Core Arts Standards (NMCAS). The NMCAS are the National Core Arts Standards with specific reference to New Mexico arts, culture, and history.
- Demonstration of increased problem-solving and creative thinking measured by exploratory assessments through the arts. Portfolios will document student work and rubrics created in-house will be grounded in the NM Core Arts Standards.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how the proposed school will achieve its mission. • Be clear, concise, innovative, and measurable
RioGAFA's mission meets criteria. Their mission is clear, concise, and innovative and explains the two forms of assessment they will use to achieve their mission.	

A. (2) VISION STATEMENT

State the vision, or the driving force, that guides this school proposal. The vision should answer questions such as: 1) why your team is committed to providing a public education platform for your proposed community; 2) how your team intends to interact with your proposed community in order to provide their children with better academic outcomes; and 3) what about your proposed program serves the proposed community in unique and innovative ways?

The vision of Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RioGAFA) is to develop an environment that will encourage and engage creative minds through a rigorous, arts-integrated, and arts-enhanced curriculum that will inspire and empower students to become independent, creative, and problem-solving thinkers. Learning will be provided in both the arts and through the arts. RioGAFA is the first school of its kind that will be academically rigorous while students will be learning and demonstrating their skill acquisition through multiple art forms.

1. The Why: We all process information differently. Research supports Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences which broadens the definitions of intelligence. Gardner theorizes that there are many intelligence types, including linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.¹ Key ideas that support Gardner's research include²:

- Everyone possesses some degree of each type of intelligence.
- Almost everyone can develop competency in each type of Intelligence.
- The intelligence types are intertwined in complex ways.
- There are multiple ways to demonstrate each type of intelligence.

RioGAFA believes there is no one-size-fits-all to learning, and we want to reach all students. The theory of multiple intelligences resonates with us due to our own experiences as educators and the research regarding the theory. Multiple intelligences are not learning styles; instead, they represent different learning abilities. Using the idea of multiple intelligences, we believe arts-integrated curriculum and assessment provides ways for information to be provided to utilize students' strengths and demonstrate knowledge in many different ways. arts-integration allows us to meet the learning needs of all students, including students with disabilities, gifted, and English language learners. And additionally, multiple studies show that students that engage in authentic arts-integration curriculum retain information over more extended periods of time.

Arts education is severely underrepresented in New Mexico. Only those who can afford to enroll their students in extracurricular opportunities to enrich their experience with the fine arts do so. There are no options for families who have students who want a holistic approach to education that combines academics and fine arts. RioGAFA intends to address this need, particularly within the zip codes of 87114, 87120, 87121, and 87124. Students with limited access to the fine arts and economic challenges send their students to schools that do not show a core commitment to providing strong academic and artistic programs. Within our targeted zip codes, visual arts and/or music are provided

¹Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York.

²Armstrong, T., & Classroom, I. T. (n.d.). 4th ed., Alexandria, Virginia, USA, ASCD, 2017.

New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

for limited times throughout the day. Drama and dance are not an option for elementary; however, drama is offered at Tony Hillerman and James Monroe Middle Schools and Cibola and Volcano Vista High Schools. Neither middle nor high school offers dance. Secondary students are asked to choose elective classes that may or may not include fine arts curricula. Once selected, many of these fine arts courses end in a single credit without the possibility of moving forward in the subject area. This trend can be seen across New Mexico and the nation. While ESSA has included the arts as necessary to a "well-rounded education," the arts continue to be treated as soft subjects and not core content defined by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Closing the opportunity gap includes giving all students an arts rich education. Research supports the numerous benefits of an arts education. Benefits include lower absenteeism and higher graduation rates among low socioeconomic students because the arts³:

- reach students who might otherwise slip through the cracks.
- reach students with different learning styles.
- create a feeling of connection and cooperation between students.
- create schools that are exciting places for learning and discovery.

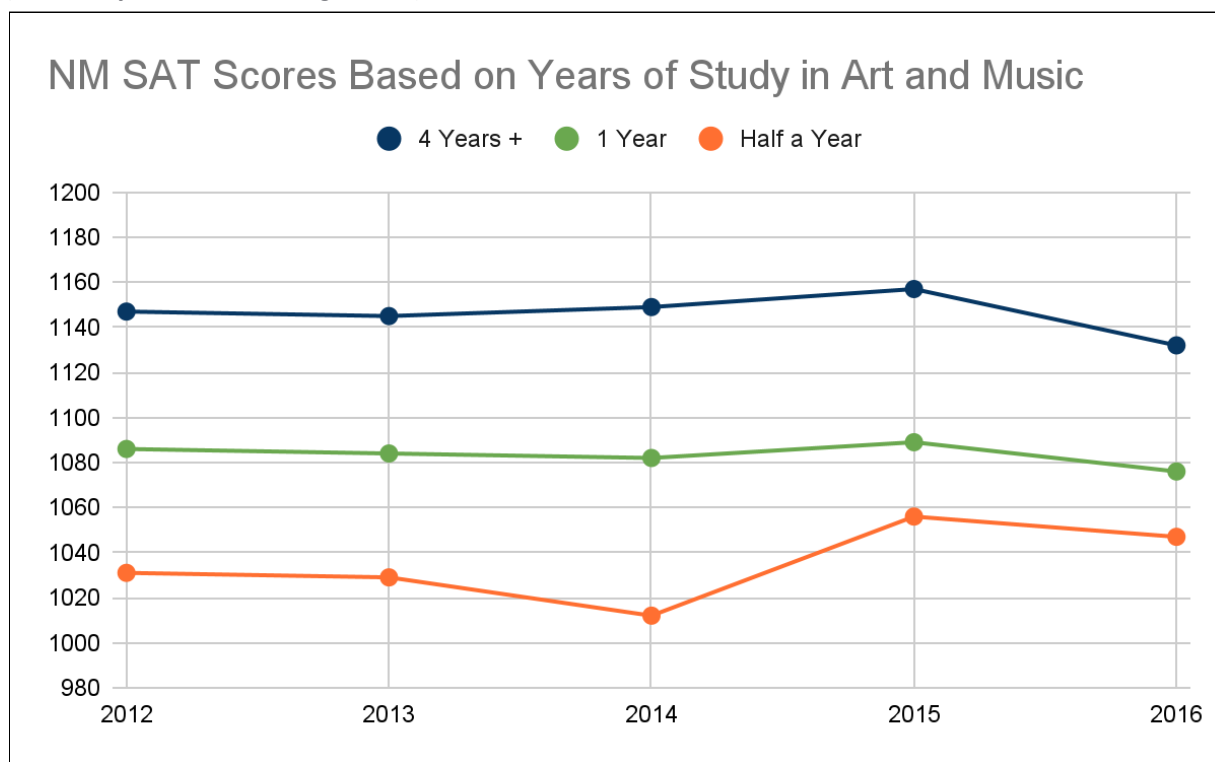
The report *Critical Links*⁴ contains 62 academic research studies that, taken together, demonstrate that arts education helps close the achievement gap, improves academic skills essential for reading and language development, and advances students' motivation to learn.

In New Mexico, test scores continue to be low within the state, with few exceptions. New Mexico continues to rank at the bottom in education nationally. Data also shows that many students are often unprepared for college or a career, which impacts New Mexico's college graduate rate, among the lowest in the nation. Research supports that an arts education plays a crucial role in learning and school culture. **Figure 1.** Reveals the connection between arts exposure and academic success through SAT scores for New Mexican students.

³ Catterall, J. S., Dumais, S.A, & Hampden-Thompson, G. (2012). The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth : Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies. Prepared for the National Endowment for the Arts Office of Research & Analysis, research report #55.

⁴ Deasy, R. (ed.) (2002). Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development. Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership

Figure 1. NM SAT Scores Based on Years Students Studied Art and Music⁵
 (Data only available through 2016)



Data reveals that New Mexico students who receive four or more years of art and music performed an average of 111 points or more on the SAT. According to an Americans for the Arts (AFTA) report, a student involved in the arts is four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement (AFTA, 2013). The same AFTA reports that low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are more than twice as likely to graduate college as their peers with no arts education.

Arts education has played and continues to play a significant role in the founders' lives and the lives of their students. Founder Michele Platis was always drawing as a child, and when her family life began to unravel, she learned to cope with paper and colored pencils. She took art classes in elementary and junior high, but it was not until after she took Studio Art in high school that she realized art was not just a way for her to cope; art could and would be her career path. Michele spent all her extra time in the art studios. It was the place where she fit and it was a no-judgment zone. Later, as a general education teacher, Michele integrated the arts in her classroom daily. She learned she loved science, while planning and teaching students how much science and art connected. A fact none of her teachers ever pointed out. As an art teacher, Michele made sure her classroom was a safe haven for her students. Creating a culture of respect; the conversations that developed between students were deep and meaningful as students felt comfortable to discuss their beliefs, family and their dreams.

⁵ (n.d.). 2018, research.collegeboard.org/programs/sat/data/archived. Retrieved April 17, 2021, New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

Middle School students often came to her classroom after eating lunch to finish art pieces. The art room was their no judgement zone.

Founder Jordan Franco always felt like the traditional, systematic path of school did not fit him. While in his Junior year of High School, he was asked to join a dance class. He reluctantly agreed, but the class set the stage for his future. Jordan had found his niche and completely turned his life around. As an educator, Jordan was asked to coach a dance team at John Adams Middle School located on Albuquerque's Westside. Eighty girls and one boy tried out. He kept them all. Jordan witnessed students join the team with failing grades and leave with proficient and advanced scores. Students that generally were truant began to achieve perfect attendance because they could not participate in dance practice if they were absent from their classes. However, the most important thing that he saw dance give these students was hope. A hope that there was something else out there for them and a different way to get there - a hope that there was a group of peers that understood them and would support them, and hope that they could become whomever they wanted to be.

Founder Michelle Sanchez-St. Andre has been an artist all her life. Her artistic talent and skill were set and seen early in elementary by her "pull-out" gifted teacher. From that point, art has always been a critical element in Michelle's life, from education to career. After working as a graphic artist, Michelle decided to become a high school art teacher. Due to budget cuts to the fine arts and general education teacher's misconceptions about what it means to be an art teacher, she felt she had chosen a disrespected career. Michelle decided to change that. She became and continues to be an arts education advocate. She has taught students that being an artist does not mean one has to be a "starving artist" and that being a creative and imaginative person with problem-solving skills made them a better asset for an employer than any other candidate. As a seasoned art educator, Michelle has seen the positive difference that art can make when present in anyone's life.

The arts provided the founders and their students with a more colorful future, which RioGAFA will also provide through the arts. We will provide a different approach in providing stellar academics with arts-integration and enhancement to provide a safe place for students to become whomever they want to through the arts. We will provide hope.

2. How our school will interact with our community to provide our students with better academic outcomes: Partnerships with the arts community are fundamental to RioGAFA student learning and helping New Mexico students receive authentic experiences and quality learning opportunities and enhance student identities aligned with their cultural base – all which will increase student outcomes. We believe that our community includes the neighborhood in which RioGAFA will be located, Albuquerque's Westside, and extends to include the state. New Mexico is rich in the arts and culture, being a hub, for centuries, of a variety of arts and culture(s). Accessing the abundant resources both the local community and the state have to offer, RioGAFA will graduate students with the option to pursue further studies in either the arts or academics at higher learning institutions and prepare them for New Mexico's workforce. Experiences gained at RioGAFA will launch our students into community

relationships that will benefit their college application, post-secondary training, and future careers in the New Mexico workforce.

Our community partnerships include the Albuquerque's Westside Business Associate, the New Mexico Art Education Association, New Mexico Music Education Association, and the National Dance Institute. These artists and organizations will collaborate with classroom teachers to create arts-integrated lessons and provide instruction that will cater to individual student needs and help students in all areas of student performance.

Throughout the planning year and Year 1, RioGAFA will form an Advisory Council with a group of community stakeholders in the arts, community, education, and business sectors who recognize that Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts uniquely prepares students to be successful in life and to be creative contributors to their communities. Meetings will be scheduled every other month to review topics regarding art-integrated curriculum and to ensure community-involved mentorships and collaborations to provide a sense of shared leadership within our community.

Figure 2. Proposed Community Meetings

2021	2022	2023
August 18, 2021	February 16	February 15
October 20	April 20	April 19
December 15	June 15	June 14
	August 17	
	October 19	
	December 14	

3. What about your proposed program serves the proposed community in unique and innovative ways:

Through our unique approach, teachers, school leaders, local artists, and local arts businesses can ensure that students learn to meet their own cultural, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. Students will receive rigorous, culturally responsive content based on grade-level CCSS while integrating the NM Core Arts Standards (NMCAS) to allow students to reach goals while investigating their talents. Teachers will receive extensive training and coaching to ensure instructional delivery driven by the mission and vision of RioGAFA.

All children deserve an education that inspires them to discover, engage deeply, think creatively, seek their passion, and develop and apply their skills. Often, factors like race and socioeconomic status can determine their access to even the most basic educational opportunities and resources, including the arts. As mentioned above, within our targeted zip codes, visual arts and/or music are provided for

limited times throughout the day. Due to the socio-economic status of many of the students within these areas (61% are eligible for free and reduced lunches) and a lack of school and community options, these students have limited options to access supplemental resources that could enhance their educational experience and positively impact their overall school success. While families in more affluent communities may send their students to the local public schools, they often send their students to classes in the arts outside of school hours. Families from low socioeconomic homes who want to give their students the same opportunities cannot afford to pay for arts-related activities outside of school. If we are going to talk about educational equity, the arts must be a part of that conversation.

Our arts-integrated curriculum, in conjunction with the non-traditional instructional practices of the curriculum, supports both unique and innovative approaches to learning and assessment for traditionally underserved students. And, as you see in subsequent sections, we will demonstrate that students in our targeted communities underperform in many measures. The research we present will align our curriculum and instructional practices with improvements in all areas of student performance explained in **Section F. (3)**.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Complete	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the team's reasoning and purpose <p><i>This narrative will be rated for completion, not content</i></p>

RioGFA meets the criteria for appropriate charter school vision statement. They explain the "how" and "why" behind their choice to provide an integrative-arts education. They use NM-SAT assessment data to show the correlation between test scores and students who receive an arts-based education, they explain how their school will utilize and interact with the community, and specifies that it is their school's unique blend of arts-integrative classes for core subjects that will work to serve their community in unique and innovative ways.

A. (3) UNIQUENESS AND INNOVATION

Provide **clear evidence** demonstrating the **uniqueness, innovation**, and significant contribution of your educational program to public education in the geographic area in which you plan to serve. Ensure that the evidence establishes a compelling demand for the proposed school's educational program and that it is based on reliable research, effective practices, or demonstrated success in schools with diverse characteristics.

Uniqueness, innovation, and significant contribution of your educational program to the local NM public education environment:

Our program is unique and innovative because it is the only K-12 school in New Mexico that integrates the arts with the diverse culture of our community to achieve high outcomes for students, as you will see throughout this application.

We believe that the arts connect us to our cultural heritage. Through our arts-integrated and enhanced program and curriculum, students will experience their culture and cultures from around the world. Through these experiences, students will develop a deep understanding and connection to their culture and appreciate others' cultures within our immediate and global community. The arts promote student understanding and respect for cultural differences and diversity. New Mexico is richly diverse. RioGAFA believes in the power of the arts and culture to inspire. We believe we will strengthen Albuquerque's diverse community customs, traditions, and heritage through our curriculum while creating connections to other global communities.

Through our unique approach, teachers, school leaders, local artists, and local arts businesses can ensure that students learn to meet their own cultural, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. Students will receive rigorous culturally responsive content based on grade-level CCSS while integrating the NM Core Arts Standards (NMCAS) to allow students to reach goals while investigating their talents. Teachers will receive extensive training and coaching to ensure instructional delivery driven by the mission and vision of RioGAFA.

Furthermore, many of New Mexico's talented and best-educated young people leave the state for better work opportunities. RioGAFA will propose to cultivate a community where institutions can work together through our planned partnerships and mentorships, creating networks that feed off one another to hold onto our young New Mexico graduates. While we do not dispute the idea that STEM education will create jobs for the future, we believe in investing in the arts and culture industry. "In 2007, the arts and cultural industries generated \$1.2 billion in revenues, \$413 million in wages, and 19,500 jobs, totaling 6% of all employment in Bernalillo County. Half of this activity is funded by dollars from outside the region, generating economic growth and opportunity."

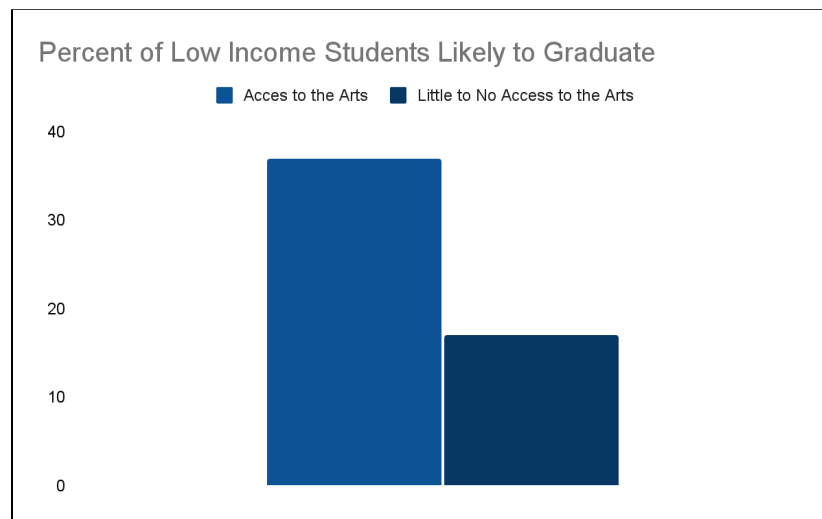
The impact on an arts-integrated education is significant. Students involved in arts-integrated and enhanced education in school are (Americans for the Arts, 2013):

- Four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement.
- Four times more likely to participate in a math and science fair.

- Three times more likely to be elected to class office.
- Three times more likely to win an award for school attendance.

Also significant, research shows that low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are more than twice as likely to graduate college as their peers with no arts education.

Figure 3. Low-Income Students Likely to Graduate Based on Access to the Arts



Specific academic benefits of an arts-integrated, and enhanced education include:

- Links between music and reading fluency and visual arts and phonological awareness.
- Increase their written language ability for students who participate in drama activities.
- English language learners' reading and writing abilities increase when the arts are integrated into their instruction.

Positive links between the practice of music and skills in geometrical representation.

The Americans for the Arts report that 72% of business leaders say that creativity is the number one skill they are seeking when hiring. However, 85% of employers say they cannot find the creative applicants they seek. RioGAFA will provide our students with skills to prepare them for the workforce through arts-integration and arts enhancement and make them more appealing candidates for jobs. In a comparison of high and low arts involvement among low socioeconomic status students extending to college and career opportunities, data shows the following:

- 50% of students with high arts involvement vs. 40% of students with low arts were able to obtain gainful employment.
- 44% of students with high arts involvement vs. 27% students with low arts involvement earned an associate degree.
- 37% of students with high arts involvement vs. 17% students with low arts involvement earned a bachelor's degree.

- 37% of students with high arts involvement vs. 20% students with low arts involvement volunteered.

Additionally, for school-age students, an arts education helps close the opportunity gap and gives all students access to all core content. In our model, the arts are core content, just as defined by ESSA. Through the arts, academic content will be assessed giving students a well-rounded education that every student deserves.

Closing the achievement gap and improving overall achievements and graduation rates, is a high priority. Research supports the numerous benefits of an arts-integrated education. In addition to the impact stated above, benefits also include lower absenteeism and higher graduation rates among low socioeconomic students. Additionally, through our innovative approach to instruction, we will be able to achieve the following:

- reach students who might otherwise slip through the cracks;
- reach students with different learning styles.;
- create a feeling of connection and cooperation between students;
- create schools that are exciting places for learning and discovery.

The report, Critical Links, contains 62 academic research studies that, taken together, demonstrate that arts education helps close the achievement gap, improves academic skills essential for reading and language development, and advances students' motivation to learn.

In New Mexico, test scores continue to be low within the state, with few exceptions. New Mexico continues to rank at the bottom in education nationally. Students are often unprepared for college or a career. Research supports that an arts education plays a crucial role in learning and school culture.

Figure 1. reveals the connection between arts exposure and academic success through SAT scores for New Mexican students.

Due to the significant impact, an arts-integrated educational program has in so many areas of education, an arts-integrated program is not only unique and innovative, but as research demonstrates, students who attend our school will be well-positioned to remain in New Mexico, be prepared for post-secondary education and will be able to contribute to the local and state economies.

The needs of the community we intend to serve:

As mentioned previously, the geographic communities we are targeting include the zip codes of 87114, 87120, 87121, and 87124. Families with limited access to the fine arts and economic challenges send their students to schools that do not show a core commitment to providing strong academic and artistic programs. Within our targeted zip codes, visual arts and/or music are provided for limited times throughout the day. Drama and dance are not an option for elementary; however, drama is offered at Tony Hillerman and James Monroe Middle Schools and Cibola and Volcano Vista High Schools. Neither middle nor high school offers dance classes. Secondary students are asked to

choose elective classes that may or may not include fine art curricula. Once selected, many of these fine arts courses end in a single credit without the possibility of moving forward in the subject area.

We believe the traditional programs, with traditional curricula and instructional practices, are not achieving the best results for the students.

The data shows the following for our targeted areas:

- 3rd Graders in zip codes 87114, 87120, 87121, 87124
 - All students in our targeted zip code show 22% proficiency in reading and 30% proficiency in math.
 - Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 17% proficiency in reading and 25% proficiency in math.
- 8th graders in zip codes 87114, 87120, 87121, 87124
 - All students in our targeted zip code show 24% proficiency in reading and 17% proficiency in math.
 - Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 19% proficiency in reading and 14% proficiency in math.
- 11th graders in zip codes 87114, 87120, 87121, 87124
 - All students in our targeted zip code show 33% proficiency in reading and 10% proficiency in math.
 - Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 29% proficiency in reading and 9% proficiency in math.

RioGAFA recognizes the need for arts education in not only our state, but in our specific targeted area in order to support the academic achievement, culture, and traditions of our families, and create equitable education for these identified communities.

Evidence of compelling demand for RioGAFA's educational program in our targeted area:

To determine how we know there is a compelling demand for our proposed educational program in our targeted area, we conducted a social media survey sent out to the community. An overwhelmingly positive response of 97% agreed that a fine arts charter would be beneficial to Albuquerque's Westside. In addition, 88% of these people followed up by saying that they would send their student to this school if it were approved to open. Those that answered yes to this question have students that range from Kindergarten to twelfth grade. We then created a second survey in which we have well over 130 digital signatures in favor of a K-12 fine arts school in Albuquerque.

The RioGAFA Founding Team believes deeply that the community plays a significant role in the education of our students. We have reached out to businesses and residents on Albuquerque's Westside. Currently, we have received multiple letters of support from residents and businesses within Albuquerque's Westside community; the zip codes in closest proximity to RioGAFA, 87114, 87120, and 87121. We have asked for testimonials from these supporters. The letters are provided in

the **Attachment D. Figure 4** lists some of the community's quotes. Additional community testimonial can be found in Section IV.

Figure 4. Sample Quotes from the Community

Individual, Title, Business	Quote
Augustine C. Baca	<i>"A charter school for the fine arts certainly fits what I know to be a great need in our community only made greater with New Mexico's emergence as a top film making destination in the Nation."</i>
Neil Swapp, Director, New Mexico Music Arts Education Association	<i>"Research shows that an arts-integrated approach to learning is highly effective for all students. Through such an approach, students can connect the creative process with critical thinking resulting in higher retention and deeper understanding. Ultimately the objective is to inspire students to enjoy the process of learning and an arts-integrated approach is one of the best paths to reach this goal."</i>
Melissa Sanchez, Executive Director of Albuquerque's Westside Business Association	<i>"We believe in giving our youth an opportunity to think creatively through arts-integration."</i>
Isidro Sergio Herrera, Case Manager Los Puentes Charter School	<i>"Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will make a positive impact in the lives of children who live in the surrounding area of Albuquerque, New Mexico. As someone who views the arts as incredible instruments to developing cognitive functioning and behavioral skills, Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts' mission statement demonstrates a concrete and valid point of using creativity to establish key components of development."</i>
Jessie DuBois, Albuquerque Outreach Artistic Director National Dance Institute of New Mexico (NDI-NM)	<i>"Being able to tap into both academics and the arts on a weekly basis builds self-esteem and allows the brain to develop in ways that simply cannot happen without a creative outlet. Albuquerque's westside is in desperate need of this type of school as there are an abundance of artistic children living on the westside who I know would benefit from its mission."</i>

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the uniqueness, innovation, and significant contribution of your educational program to the local NM public education environment; • Describe the needs of the community you intend to serve; and • Demonstrate how the applicant team knows there is a compelling demand for the proposed school's educational program in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate.
<p>RioGAFA meets the criteria for adequate uniqueness and innovation. They will be the first fine arts academy to serve K-12 students and they consistently touch upon how their school's arts-integrative framework will use CLR practices to enrich their curriculum and ensure equity within their diverse community. However, it would be advantageous for RioGAFA to provide a stronger explanation of the specific needs of the community they intend to serve, as well as provide compelling evidence (i.e. data) for the demand for the proposed school's educational program in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate.</p>	

B. Goals Related to the Proposed School's Mission.

The Amended Charter School Act **requires schools to identify at least two mission-specific goals in the application** that set targets for the implementation of the proposed school mission. Mission-specific goals **MUST BE** provided within the application. If the application is approved, these goals will be used as the initial draft during the negotiations with the Authorizer.

For the purposes of this application, the goals will show the capacity of the applicant to identify appropriate goals aligned with the mission of the proposed school. During the later contracting process after approval, the goals may be negotiated and put into the Performance Framework to allow an approved school to demonstrate its achievements related to an approved mission. The Performance Framework is assessed on an annual basis.

Mission-specific goals put into the application should

- (1) demonstrate the proposed school's ability to implement the proposed school's mission goals; and
- (2) ensure elements of a SMART goal format are addressed in describing the goals that illustrate your proposed school's uniqueness and innovation.

For instance, if a school's mission focuses on language acquisition, then a school may choose a mission-specific goal that measures student progress and performance in this special area.

Again, please note that **these goals are subject to change through the negotiation process as an approved school works with their Authorizer in the contract negotiation process during the planning/implementation year.**

Please note: The criteria for the SMART format is as follows:

- **Specific.** A well-defined goal must be specific, clearly and concisely stated, and easily understood. Educational goals should be tied to learning standards or outcomes that specify what students should know and be able to do, for each subject or content area and for each grade, age, or other grouping level.
- **Measurable.** A goal should be tied to measurable results to be achieved. Measurement is then simply an assessment of success or failure in achieving the goal.
- **Attainable.** A goal should be attainable and realistic. The applicant should identify why the goal is attainable.
- **Rigorous.** A goal should present the challenge of rigor. The applicant should identify why the goal is rigorous.
- **Time-Bound with Target Dates.** A well-conceived goal should specify a timeframe or target date for achievement.

B. Mission-Specific goals

Identify and provide two mission-specific goals in the following section. Include the following key elements:

- First, ensure that the annual goals provided shows the implementation of the proposed school's mission.
- Second, your goals should be clear, comprehensive, and cohesive and guided by the SMART format.

Goal 1 related to School's Mission:

Goal 1a: Through our mission to facilitate learning through the arts, 80% of students that have been with us two or more years will show measurable academic growth at the end of each school year in Mathematics as measured by the school and New Mexico state assessments. Students will meet or exceed their personal targeted goals set after their beginning of school year baseline assessments.

Specific: Our mission-specific goal is clear and concise; 80% of students that have been with us two or more years will show measurable academic growth at the end of each school year in Mathematics. We will use Istation Math to assess progress for students K-8 and the NM-iMSSA and NM-MSSA (3-8). For High School, RioGAFA will create personalized program assessments through the CollegeBoard for baseline assessment and also take the PSAT, Accuplacer, and SAT. Our goal is rooted in learning standards that specify what students should be able to do each school year and in each grade. Each student's academic growth will be based on their score at the beginning of the school year and each student will be given a growth target to measure.

Measurable: Our mission-specific goal is measurable by assessing students using state and school interim assessments and New Mexico state assessments. *Growth* is defined as academic progress made over a period of time measured by a beginning of year and end-of-year assessment. Progress will be measured by creating a baseline score using iStation Reading and Math, Reading Inventory, CollegeBoard, and NM-MSSA. Students will be reassessed during the NMPED testing windows, at the beginning of the year, and at the end of each of our quarters in October, December, March, and May. Students will take the NM- MSSA (New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement) during the Spring's NM PED's testing window. All assessments are rigorous and standards-aligned. Leadership and teachers will be able to compare baseline scores to midyear and end-of-year scores. Data will be tracked for every student through a data dashboard. Students that show measurable growth will have succeeded.

Attainable: Our goal is attainable. To create a baseline for each student, we will pre-assess all students using:

- IStation Math (K-8)
- CollegeBoard personalized program assessments
- PSAT, Accuplacer, and SAT

Students will also take the iMSSA in October, December in order to track student's learning trajectories. All assessments give immediate and reliable data, allowing teachers and leaders to make informed teaching and intervention decisions.

Rigorous: Our goal for 80% of RioGAFA students showing measurable academic growth progress is rigorous but attainable. We will provide all students with a rigorous arts-integrated and enhanced education and have high expectations for all students to show academic growth. Using reliable state-mandated and chosen standards-based assessments, students will demonstrate their learning and mastery of the standards. RioGAFA will utilize active monitoring and internal formative assessments developed by leaders and teachers as well as curriculum and state interim assessments to monitor growth.

Time-Bound: Targeted assessment dates are set for the beginning of the year and at the end of each quarter, October, December, March, and May. Students' progress towards growth will be added to our data dashboard analyzed after each assessment within 48 hours. Instruction decisions will be made to ensure the goal is met by the end of each school year.

Figure 5. Rating Category for Goal #1a (Mathematics)

Year 2 Plus	
Rating	Percentage Measurement
Exceeds Standards	86%-100% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Meets Standards	70%-85% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Does Not Meet Standards	51%-69% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 50% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Year 1 (and students starting with us first year)	
Rating	Percentage Measurement
Exceeds Standards	76%-100% of students will make expected academic growth target
Meets Standards	60%-75% of students will make expected academic growth target
Does Not Meet Standards	41%-59% of students will make expected academic growth target
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 40% of students will make expected academic growth target

Goal 1b: Through our mission to facilitate learning through the arts, 80% of students that have been with us two or more years will show measurable academic growth at the end of each school year in English Language Arts as measured by the school and New Mexico state assessments. Students will meet or exceed their personal targeted goals set after their beginning of school year baseline assessments.

Specific: Our mission-specific goal is clear and concise; 80% of students that have been with us two or more years will show measurable academic growth at the end of each school year in Mathematics. We will use Istation Early (K-3) and Advance (4-8) Reading and the NM-iMSSA and NM-MSSA (3-8). For High School, RioGAFA will create personalized program assessments through the CollegeBoard for baseline assessment and also take Reading Inventory, the PSAT, Accuplacer, and SAT. Our goal is rooted in learning standards that specify what students should be able to do each school year and in each grade. Each student's academic growth will be based on their score at the beginning of the school year and each student will be given a growth target to measure.

Measurable: Our mission-specific goal is measurable by assessing students using state and school interim assessments and New Mexico state assessments. *Growth* is defined as academic progress made over a period of time measured by a beginning of the year and end-of-year assessment. Progress will be measured by creating a baseline score using iStation Reading and Math, Reading Inventory, CollegeBoard, and NM-MSSA. Students will be reassessed during the NMPED testing windows, at the beginning of the year, and at the end of each of our quarters in October, December, March, and May. Students will take the NM- MSSA (New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement) during the Spring's NM PED's testing window. All assessments are rigorous and standards aligned. Leadership and teachers will be able to compare baseline scores to midyear and end-of-year scores. Data will be tracked for every student through a data dashboard. Students that show measurable growth will have succeeded.

Attainable: Our goal is attainable. To create a baseline for each student, we will pre-assess all students using:

- Istation Math (K-8)
- CollegeBoard personalized program assessments
- PSAT, Accuplacer, and SAT

Students will also take the iMSSA in October, December in order to track student's learning trajectories. All assessments give immediate and reliable data, allowing teachers and leaders to make informed teaching and intervention decisions.

Rigorous: Our goal for 80% of RioGAFA students showing measurable academic growth progress is rigorous but attainable. We will provide all students with a rigorous arts-integrated and enhanced education and have high expectations for all students to show academic growth. Using reliable state-mandated and chosen standards-based assessments, students will demonstrate their learning and mastery of the standards. RioGAFA will utilize active monitoring and internal formative

assessments developed by leaders and teachers as well as curriculum and state interim assessments to monitor growth.

Time-Bound: Targeted assessment dates are set for the beginning of the year and at the end of each quarter, October, December, March, and May. Students' progress towards growth will be added to our data dashboard analyzed after each assessment within 48 hours. Instruction decisions will be made to ensure the goal is met by the end of each school year.

Figure 6. Rating Category for Goal #1b (English Language Arts)

Year 2 Plus	
Rating	Percentage Measurement
Exceeds Standards	86%-100% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Meets Standards	70%-85% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Does Not Meet Standards	51%-69% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 50% of students with us two or more years will make expected academic growth target
Year 1 (and students starting with us first year)	
Rating	Percentage Measurement
Exceeds Standards	76%-100% of students will make expected academic growth target
Meets Standards	60%-75% of students will make expected academic growth target
Does Not Meet Standards	41%-59% of students will make expected academic growth target
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 40% of students will make expected academic growth target

Goal 2 related to School's Mission:

Goal 2: Through our mission to facilitate learning through the arts, 90% of students will demonstrate increased problem-solving and creative thinking as measured by exploratory assessments and rubrics by the end of the year.

Measurable: Our mission-specific goal is measurable in that students will be assessed using rubrics created by the Director(s) that define and articulate the continuum of growth in problem-solving and creative thinking. As a guide, we will use *Assessing 21st Century Skills* by Laura Greenstein to create

reliable rubrics. The rubric and the student's documented work that is scored will be part of a student's portfolio. Students that show a trajectory or growth in problem-solving and creative thinking will have succeeded.

The rubrics will be used to define problem-solving and creative thinking and as a formative assessment tool. To create our rubrics, we first must define problem-solving and creative thinking. RioGAFA defines problem-solving as the cycle of defining a problem, generating new ideas and solutions, evaluating, and choosing a solution, and implementing and evaluating the chosen solution. Creative thinking means thinking outside the box. It involves the ability to look at things from many perspectives and come up with new solutions.

During the planning year, the Director(s) will define each problem-solving and creating thinking's core components to measure each effectively. Beyond defining the components, the rubric will get granular to score a student's development of cognitive skills that we are targeting. By breaking down specific descriptors of where a student is on a continuum of growth in each component of their cognitive skills, teachers can direct instruction to meet a student best where they are and push them to improve their thinking.

Norming sessions will take place regularly with teachers and leadership, ensuring consistency and accuracy in scoring. Norming sessions allow teachers to agree on how standards (in the form of rubrics) are applied to student work. It is also a great way to score student work for assessment data because calibrating and having multiple raters, during the norming session, for each piece of student work ensures the assessment data's reliability.

Attainable: While our goal is lofty, it is attainable. Through the time spent on creating a comprehensive rubric to measure problem-solving and creative thinking, the leadership will carefully consider the components that best fit and that can be measured. The norming and calibrating process will ensure that students will be scored accurately to show growth over time.

Students will be assessed and scored on their first project/activity to establish a baseline for each student's problem-solving and creativity. Each student's scores will be documented each time students are assessed using the problem-solving and creative thinking rubrics. Through quarterly assessment, teachers and leaders will be able to address student gaps and adjust lesson and teacher moves to help students develop the critical skills they need to show growth over time.

Rigorous: Our focus on an arts education demands we measure problem-solving and creativity. This goal is rigorous in that problem-solving and creative thinking are vital skills students will need in life and are often not assessed due to the complexity of defining the constructs of problem-solving and creative thinking. We will develop explicit lessons, rubrics, and assessment tools for teaching and assessing these constructs. The Director of Academics and the Fine Arts Director will work and strive to define the core components that we will assess.

Time-Bound: Students will be assessed at the beginning of the year to create a baseline score. Students will continue to be assessed at the end of each unit on problem-solving and creative thinking at each unit's end. Data will be added to each student's data dashboard. Progress towards growth will be analyzed after each assessment with adjustments made to instruction as necessary, ensuring students the goal is met by the end of each school year.

Figure 7. Rating Category for Goal #2

Rating	Percentage Measurement
Exceeds Standards	95%-100% of students demonstrate increased problem solving and creative thinking as defined by RioGAFA created rubrics.
Meets Standards	90% - 94% of students demonstrate increased problem solving and creative thinking as defined by RioGAFA created rubrics.
Does Not Meet Standards	89% - 75% of students demonstrate increased problem solving and creative thinking as defined by RioGAFA created rubrics.
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 75% of students demonstrate increased problem solving and creative thinking as defined by RioGAFA created rubrics.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include two mission-specific goals; • Align to the student outcomes identified in the mission response (A.1.); • Be guided by the elements of the SMART format: • Include measures and metrics.

This section meets the criteria. RGFA provides two mission driven goals that are outlined via SMART format. Assessment is reasonable. My one concern is that they do not provide specific examples for how arts based education will be used to achieve their goal of achievement growth in 80% of students. It would be helpful to use an asterisk as in indicator/to provide clarification on the programs used for measurement (i.e. Istation math program).

C. , Educational Program, Student Performance Standards.

C. Provide a description of the proposed school's curriculum. The proposed curriculum must be research-based, reasonable, and clearly align with New Mexico Common Core State Standards and the proposed school's mission.

Provide and describe a detailed, clear, comprehensive, and reasonable timeline and plan for the development of the entire proposed curriculum, including identification of reasonable staff, action steps, and deadlines that will ensure alignment with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the proposed school's mission. If approved, the PEC requires one semester's curriculum to be fully completed by the charter school during the planning year before commencement of operations is approved.

Authentic Arts-Integration for All Students: Using authentic arts integrated curricula, students will develop their interpersonal skills, showcase their knowledge, and immerse themselves in many different cultures. RioGAFA will address the New Mexico Core Arts standards in the five arts disciplines: dance, media, music, theater, and visual arts. Learning will assure two goals: (1) the mastery of skills and knowledge and (2) creating in an art form. In keeping with these goals, students are involved in hands-on, project-oriented, and exploratory experiences. A component of this approach is that students act as an integral part of the assessment of learning through self-assessment of their skills, knowledge, process, and products.

RioGAFA will practice an art integrated and arts-enhanced curriculum that will use various resources, including in-house created lessons. We will adopt and utilize a blend of internal, open-source, and commercial resources aligned with state and national standards in all academic content areas. Using authentic arts integrated curricula, students will develop their interpersonal skills, showcase their knowledge, and immerse themselves in many different cultures. RioGAFA will address the New Mexico Core Arts standards in the five arts disciplines: dance, media, music, theater, and visual arts. Students are involved in hands-on, project-oriented, and exploratory experiences. A component of this approach is that students act as an integral part of the assessment of learning through self-assessment of their skills, knowledge, process, and products.

We will ensure that our curriculum is accessible to all students and reasonable for teachers to support students' grade-level mastery.

For the adoption process of curriculum materials, the Director(s) will utilize multiple sources that review and rate curriculum during the implementation year. We have three sources to use: the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) Instructional Materials Bureau, EdReport, and Evidence for ESSA. RioGAFA will establish a strong academic and arts foundation for all students. Curricula will meet three criteria: (1) culturally and linguistically responsive, (2) differentiated instruction, and (3) integrated with the arts.

(1) Culturally and Linguistically Responsive: Being culturally responsive means our curriculum will respond to and include culture, and our teachers will be trained to become culturally responsive teachers. Students thrive when they believe they matter. Culturally linguistically responsive teaching respects diversity, creates a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment, derives teaching practices from across disciplines and cultures, and promotes equitable learning. We will use cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and performance styles of our students to engage students in rigorous learning that will be meaningful to them. Cultural and linguistic differences will be viewed as strengths, valued and celebrated. Curriculum development will be influenced by our

families and our community, as will our instructional practices. Becoming aware of racial and cultural stereotypes, prejudices, and other forms of injustice and intolerance will support our students to become agents for social injustice and academic equity within both the school and larger community.

Researchers have found that culturally responsive classrooms motivate students to learn. "The essentials of this motivational framework are that it 1), respect diversity; 2) engages the motivation of a broad range of students; 3) create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment; 4) derives teaching practices from across disciplines and cultures; and 5) promotes equitable learning."⁶

(2) Culturally and Community Centered: Albuquerque is wonderfully diverse, and we expect that our student population will reflect that diversity. We depend on the arts to connect us to culture, and students will connect to their culture, those in our community, and the world. Prioritizing all RioGAFA students' cultural heritage, teachers will have ongoing training in culturally responsive teaching and New Mexican cultural history. RioGAFA will partner with local organizations such as the National Hispanic Cultural Center and the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture to lead continuous professional development on Hispanic and Native American arts and language. Culture will be explored at every grade-level and threaded throughout all subjects across the curriculum.

(3) Universal Design for Learning (UDL)⁷: Meeting the needs of each of our students is a priority. Our curriculum naturally allows for differentiated instruction in which learning is accessible and challenging. By providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression our students will be able to achieve and grow at their natural level allowing for increased student success. To differentiate, teachers must understand where each of their students is academically and how they best learn. Through active daily monitoring during independent work, teachers gather real-time data to support students with feedback and instruction, including arts integrated instruction. Arts integration and differentiated instruction are symbiotic, allowing flexibility for students and giving them opportunities to grow⁸.

Through the UDL Framework, teachers meet each student's needs ensuring an inclusion model, whether scaffolding for struggling students or challenging their advanced students. The arts allow students multiple paths to learning and naturally comprise multiple modalities to show what they know. Through arts integration within other content instruction, teachers can effectively differentiate to ensure that all learners reach chosen learning goals.⁹

(3) Arts integration: The curriculum will focus on grade-level research-based practices that will integrate the arts and support RioGAFA's mission and academic goals, and commitment to providing

⁶Wlodkowski, Raymond J., and Ginsberg, Margery B. *Diversity and Motivation : Culturally Responsive Teaching*. 1st ed. Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995.

⁷ About Universal Design for Learning. (2021, April 20). Retrieved May 8, 2021, from <https://www.cast.org/impact/universal-design-for-learning-udl>

⁸ Hammond, Z. L. (2015). *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*. Canada: Corwin Press.

⁹ Donovan, L., & Pascale, L. (2013). *Integrating the arts across the Content Areas*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.

instruction that is culturally and linguistically responsive. Arts integration is transformational and is being used in schools across the nation with great success. The A+ schools in North Carolina are the largest growing network of arts integration schools in the nation and the Chicago Public Schools have a growing number of arts integrated and arts-focused schools. These schools support the current research regarding the benefits of fostering creativity, collaboration, and meaningful problem-solving skills, all pointing to the need to provide in-depth, interdisciplinary, sensory-rich learning experiences provided by a curriculum that includes the arts. Arts integration provides:

- improved ability to assess learning,
- greater intrinsic motivation,
- encourages learning for understanding,
- turns perceived barriers into problem-solving opportunities, and
- higher student engagement¹⁰.

Further findings show that arts integration positively affects student academic achievement in math, increased reading scores across multiple age levels, and improved language acquisition among English language learners¹¹.

High-quality arts integration is not an isolated effort. For arts integration to occur, educators must take the time to find a fit between the content and an art form and then teach and assess standards in both. To guarantee that arts integration flourishes, the Founding Team will develop RioGAFA's curriculum during the planning year, with the Director of Academics taking the lead. Using multiple resources such as the Kennedy Center, the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS, adopted by NM with an additional NM culture component, NMCAS), and artsintegration.com, the team will start with a broad scope and sequence for Kindergarten through 12th grade and detailed scope and sequence for Kindergarten, first, and sixth grade. During the implementation and succeeding years, the scope and sequence will continue to be developed by the Directors while adding additional voices through instructional coaches, teachers and others with professional experience. This planning approach will allow RioGAFA to create a strong vertically aligned curriculum that ensures all students are prepared for each sequential year while simultaneously addressing achievement gaps.

Aligning the standards, Common Core State Standards, NMCAS, NextGen, and State Standards, will be crucial to the success of our program. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) developed the Core Arts Standards with the structure and language of the CCSS in mind. This common language will allow our leaders and teachers to create thoughtful connections between subjects under our mission and vision for all levels of student learning. Standards support teachers and school leaders alike by providing a clear and consistent path for student learning expectations.

¹⁰ Ruppert, S. S. (n.d.). Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement [Pdf]. 2008: Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement.

¹¹ Ingram, D., & Reidel, E. (2003). Arts for Academic Achievement: What does arts integration do for students [Pdf]. Minneapolis: Minneapolis: University of Minnesota: Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, College of Education and Human Development.

RioGAFA will leverage the talent within our community through the RioGAFA Learning Collaborative. We consider our community to be Albuquerque's Westside, Albuquerque, Bernalillo, and New Mexico. Local artists will be invited to collaborate and teach our students, and student learning will overflow into the community through mentorships, internships, and service projects. By joining forces with the community and local artists to serve our RioGAFA students, we will ensure our equitable learning opportunities and resources.

Extended Learning with Artistry Block: The amount of time in a school day is critical to building knowledge, foster learning, and drive student outcomes. An extended day supports our mission's goals to close the achievement gap. Students will begin their school day at 8:30 am and end at 4:45 pm. RioGAFA elementary students will receive 435 minutes and secondary students will receive 444 minutes of instruction daily. Supporting the mission of RioGAFA to educate students through arts-integration and enhancement, we will offer arts-focused learning called the Artistry Block at the end of the day to all students.

Elementary Artistry Blocks: Students will begin their first Artistry Block 1 at 3:00pm. The first block will be 45 minutes and students will participate in a rotation of dance, media, music, theater, and visual arts. Using the state and national arts standards RioGAFA students will be provided with an arts curriculum that provides sequential instruction. Students will obtain knowledge and understanding of the art's historical and cultural contexts through the arts curriculum.

During Artistry Block 2, elementary students will have an opportunity to choose and explore a new arts elective each quarter. We will offer 60 minutes of a variety of electives in various art forms. Electives could include ukulele, sewing, culinary, hip hop, recycled fashion, or mini plays. Classes will comprise multiple grade levels and abilities, allowing them to explore different art forms and collaborate and learn with students who have similar interests. Benefits of a multiage classroom include (University of Wyoming, n.d.):

- Students can learn at their own rate.
- Students become a family of learners who support and care for each other.
- Older children have the opportunity to serve as mentors and to take leadership roles.
- Students are more likely to cooperate than compete.
- Older students model more sophisticated approaches to problem-solving, and younger.
- The dynamic of younger students learning from their older peers increases the older and younger students' independence and competence.

Secondary Artistry Block: The Artistry Block for secondary students will be more concentrated with students ending their regular scheduled day at 1:45 to attend two 88-minute artistry blocks. Secondary students will participate in arts instruction to achieve student mastery in dance, drama, media music, and visual arts. Sixth graders will continue to explore art forms, while seventh and eighth-grade students will begin to narrow their art focus, and High School students will choose an art path with multiple arts pathways options. Each arts class will be taught by an expert in the field and rooted in the New Mexico Core Arts Standards to provide a foundation for further study or a gateway into the arts profession.

Students that need interventions will attend one arts block and one arts integrated intervention class that will be arts integrated. While we want students to get the extra support they need, we passionately believe that we cannot fully take the arts out of their learning. First and foremost, we do not want students to feel as though they are being punished for having lower assessment scores. Secondly, research does support that arts integrated interventions have a positive impact on student success.

Our extended day will support our mission by:

1. Ensuring students an arts-rich education. Students with an education rich in the arts have historically earned higher grade point averages and scored higher on the SAT than students without arts education. These gains hold regardless of socioeconomic status, which means that when at-risk students receive an arts education, it helps close the achievement gap.
2. Assuring no content area is sacrificed, and students have sufficient time to meet both the NM Common Core State Standards and NM Core Arts Standards.
3. Allowing teachers collaboration time while contracted local professional artists teach students. This time will include professional development to develop an arts-focused lens, develop and calibrate rubrics for assessment, and look at student work and data to make informed instructional decisions.

Additionally, this time will support our family's work schedules that often extend beyond the traditional dismissal of 2:30 pm.

Learning will also include field study days, where students go out into the community to either take part in community service, explore career options, or take a field trip. Partnerships with local arts organizations, local artists, and teaching artists will enhance student learning. High School students will be required to complete community service projects involving city beautification through the arts once a year with a minimum requirement of 12 hours per year's project. The service project's primary objective is to connect our students with community members interested in creating a difference through the arts to benefit Albuquerque. After completing projects, we hope students will be inspired to continue their work to benefit New Mexico beyond their time at RioGAFA.

We will actively recruit and equip local artists to collaborate with classroom teachers on arts-integrated projects for all grade levels. A strategic plan for mentorships and internships with artists and arts-focused institutions will be developed by December 2024 to be ready for the addition of High School in Year 4.

With our community in mind, RioGAFA is committed to creating equity for our students and families by removing financial barriers. Albuquerque's Westside (87114, 87120, and 87121) has 61% of students that qualify for school lunch. Arts resources and materials are costly, and we are committed to providing an arts-centered education to all families attending RioGAFA that is free of financial stress. RioGAFA's foundation will be established during the planning year to fund arts-integration, arts

activities, and our Artistry Block. Families will not be obligated to provide any funds or resources for the school.

Aligning the standards, Common Core State Standards, NMCAS, NextGen, and State Standards, will be crucial to the success of our program. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) developed the Core Arts Standards with the structure and language of the CCSS in mind. This common language will allow our leaders and teachers to create thoughtful connections between subjects under our mission and vision for all levels of student learning. Standards support teachers and school leaders alike by providing a clear and consistent path for student learning expectations.

Arts Integrated Framework:

Dance: Integrating dance and movement into the classroom provides students opportunities to be physically active and creatively interpret their learning. Physically, students have a creative outlet while improving motor skills. Socially, a student learns how to problem-solve and collaborate with their peers. Emotionally, a student can express their passion, excitement, and frustration into dance. Culturally, students learn both historical and cultural values. Examples of integrating dance into the curriculum would be:

1. Literacy: Students create a movement based on the cadence of a poem.
2. Math: Students demonstrate an understanding of 2-digit addition and how numbers are divided into ones, tens, and hundreds, by creating representative shapes and movement.¹²
3. Science: Students create a dance demonstrating their understanding of the digestive system.
4. Social Studies: Students create a dance inspired by a historical event and understand the culture.

Media Arts: Media arts, *“The study of human communication through film, photography, video, audio, computers, and interactive media.”*¹³ Through media arts students study and learn to communicate through images and sound. Media arts cultivates literacy and naturally lends itself to arts integration. Some examples of media arts integration could be:

1. Literacy: Students create a movie poster for a book they have just read.
2. Math: Students create unique rotations of shapes and then use and review angles in different ways¹⁴.
3. Science: Students demonstrate their understanding of the connection of an animal’s physical features and their habitat by designing a new animal when given the elements of a habitat.
4. Social Studies: Students create a campaign for a local non-profit that is important to them or on national parks¹⁵.

¹² Cravath, E. (n.d.). Creative Dance Integration Lesson Plans
https://education.byu.edu/sites/default/files/ARTS/documents/educational_movement.pdf

¹³ Media Arts. <https://mn.gov/mnddc/asd-employment/pdf/09-MAC-DASP.pdf>.

¹⁴ “Media Arts and Math. Amazing! | The Institute for Arts Integration .”. *institute for arts integration and steam*, Oct. 2018, <https://artsintegration.com/2018/10/01/media-arts-and-math/>. Accessed 23 Mar. 2021.

¹⁵ Kennedy Center (n.d.). “Lessons and Activities from the Kennedy Center.”. the kennedy center, <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/lessons-and-activities>
 New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

Music: Integrating music in the classroom engages a student both cognitively and physically. Music can change brain wave states, improve memory, and focus concentration. Music integration includes singing, playing, and making musical instruments, and creating songs. Examples of integrating music into the curriculum would be:

1. Literacy: Students will analyze a song for literary elements such as tone, mood, and theme.
2. Math: Students will demonstrate AB patterns playing musical instruments.
3. Science: Students will identify brass instruments and create a trombone.¹⁶
4. Social Studies: To demonstrate an understanding of African American spirituals and their use of a secret language to share information, students will write an original song to convey a secret message.¹⁷

Theater: Integrating drama into the curriculum gets students up and moving around and interacting with each other. It engages a student physically, emotionally, and linguistically. It is particularly appealing to kinesthetic learners. It also contextualizes language, taking what is on a page and making it real and three-dimensional. Drama includes Reader's Theater, acting, playmaking, and pantomime. Examples of integrating drama into the curriculum would be:

1. Literacy: Students will demonstrate character development by creating puppets and mini skits.
2. Math: Students will create and act out a fable for a math problem¹⁸.
3. Science: Students will classify animals' characteristics using movement, storytelling, and silent acting to create relationships between the students and animals studied.¹⁹
4. Social Studies: Students will work together to create skits that deeply reflect the motivation and actions that bring immigrants to the United States. Students will draw on acting principles to gain an insightful and empathetic understanding of why their families may have come and how that has shaped the culture, landscape, economics of this country.

Visual Arts: Adding visual arts elements into other content areas fosters individual success and global community by the way it is centered in the students' lives. It makes real-world connections by allowing students to tell us about their life perspectives as independent critical thinkers. From painting to photography to filmmaking, visual arts can capture and evaluate the environment and culture and create a universe of imagination. It can improve the understanding of another content area by having the student translate what they have learned into a visual medium. Examples of integrating visual arts into the curriculum would be:

- Literacy: Students will create an adjective monster using paper sculpture techniques

¹⁶ Kennedy Center (n.d.). "Lessons and Activities from the Kennedy Center.". the kennedy center, <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/lessons-and-activities>

¹⁷ Kennedy Center (n.d.). "Lessons and Activities from the Kennedy Center.". the kennedy center, <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/lessons-and-activities>

¹⁸ Kennedy Center (n.d.). "Lessons and Activities from the Kennedy Center.". the kennedy center, <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/lessons-and-activities>

¹⁹ Kennedy Center (n.d.). "Lessons and Activities from the Kennedy Center.". the kennedy center, <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/lessons-and-activities>

- Math: Students construct line and shape patterns demonstrating their understanding of AB patterns.
- Science: Students will create mobiles that balance and experiment with balancing levers.
- Social Studies: Students will compare and contrast Halloween and Day of the Dead and create sugar skulls.

Arts as Curriculum:

The arts will be taught for art's sake. The curriculum will align with the state and national arts standards of creating, performing/presenting, responding, and connecting. RioGAFA students will be provided with a curriculum that provides a sequential instruction program in fine arts - performing and visual for all students beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through high school. Students will obtain knowledge and understanding of the art's historical and cultural contexts through the arts curriculum. Arts instruction will occur during our Artistry Block.

Figure 8. National Core Arts Standards Artistic Process and Anchor Standards²⁰

National Core Arts Standards Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards			
Artistic Processes			
Creating Definition: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.	Performing/Presenting/ Producing Definitions: Performing: Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation. Presenting: Interpreting and sharing artistic work. Producing: Realizing and presenting artistic ideas and work.	Responding Definition: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.	Connecting Definition: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.
Anchor Standards			
Students will: 1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. 2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.	Students will: 4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. 5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.	Students will: 7. Perceive and analyze artistic work. 8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.	Students will: 10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. 11. Relate artistic ideas and works with

²⁰ Creating. (2014). Retrieved 2014, from <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>
 New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

3. Refine and complete artistic work.		9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.	societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.
---------------------------------------	--	--	---

It is essential to teach students in various methods, including teaching through movement, role-playing, visuals, technology, games, and manipulatives. Our students will also be engaged in rigorous thinking and writing in our arts classrooms. Kindergarten through 6th-grade students will explore a daily rotation of dance, drama, music, and visual arts classes for the first 45 minutes of the Artistry Block. The final hour for Kindergarten through 6th grade will be electives that students can choose from to explore the arts of their choice. Grades 7-12 will narrow their focus and choose a fine arts pathway with two 88-minute art blocks.

Figure 9. Broad Sample Overview Curriculum of K-6 Specials

Grade	Dance	Drama	Computers/ Media Arts	Music	Visual Arts
K-6	Elements of Dance Movement Body, Space & Time Awareness History & Culture	Creative Play Storytelling and Development Character Development History & Culture Improvisation	Coding Stop Motion Video Video Production Photography	Music Elements & Notations Listening Singing Instruments History & Culture	Elements of Art History & Culture Drawing Painting Clay

Figure 10. Possible Artistry Block Curriculum for the Arts 7-12

(Students will attend classes in sequential order from beginning to advanced)

Dance	Drama/Theater	Music	Media	Visual Arts
Dance	Theater Acting	Singing/Choir	Graphic Arts	Drawing
Yoga/Pilates	Skits/Impromptu	Guitar	Animation	Painting
Ballet	Script Writing	Orchestra	Video/Broadcast	Pottery
Jazz	Voice/Speech	Symphonic Band	Digital Photo	Ceramics
Tap	Acting for the Camera	Jazz	Film	Recycled Art
Flamenco	Costume	Piano	Yearbook	Textiles/Fashion
Modern	Directing	Mariachi		Jewelry
Choreography	Acting Company	Music Appreciation		Art Appreciation

Dance: Students will have opportunities to gain significant knowledge of dance elements and concepts. They will learn and refine dance skills and techniques in class and study the historical and cultural significance of dance. Students will efficiently convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings through dance. Dance will replace Physical Education.

Media Arts/Computer: Media Arts/Computer: Making digital citizenship a priority, students will learn foundational skills in keyboarding, using technology effectively, and creating documents and slides presentations. Building on the basics, students will begin to move into media arts curriculum, allowing them to learn to exercise their creative skills and create digital works of art. An incredibly important for today's classrooms, students will develop skills essential in today's workforce.

Music: Students will be provided comprehensive instruction in musical skills (beat, rhythm, tempo, and timbre) to create and perform, evaluate, and make connections through their personal experiences. We will foster an understanding and love of music through providing aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration and leading to creative expression.

Theater: Theatre is an all-encompassing discipline that allows the student to investigate, experience, and strengthen their self-knowledge in many ways. Through theater, students will strengthen collaboration skills and sharpen problem-solving abilities while instilling discipline and improving communication skills.

Visual Arts: Students will be exposed to various art techniques, media, methods, and tools to create many artworks. Students will participate in explorations in aesthetic, cultural, and historical aspects of visual art. The majority of the classwork is hands-on art production, but some art research assignments and projects will be required as well as writing artists' statements. Students will be supported in expressing their thoughts, ideas, personal feelings, and opinions about art visually and verbally.

Academic Content:

Academics and the arts are equally valued as essential to student learning. The academic curricula will prepare students for a diverse community, college, and career opportunities. **Figure 9** provides an overview of our proposed core academic curriculum. Following the chart is a description of each discipline and content area. The curricular resources that we are researching will support teachers in achieving objective-driven lessons grounded in state and national standards. Curricular resources and arts integration will create a framework for teachers' lessons around objectives. The Founding Team with the Director of Academics taking on the primary responsibility for creating the curriculum map, scope and sequence, and units for each grade level's core academic and arts coursework during the planning year and Year 1.

We will utilize the New Mexico Common Core State Standards (NMCCSS), the New Mexico Standards, the NM Core Arts Standards (NMCAS), and the New Generation Science Standards to develop the scope and sequence framework for each content area. Curriculum maps will include all foundational skills and knowledge and appropriate grade-level content and skills. The team will plan backward to create each content curriculum. Our starting point will be creating objectives and goals and ensuring that our created assessments ensure student outcomes are directly aligned to the content standards. Interim assessments that are a part of the curriculum we adopt will be reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted for rigor. Rubrics for arts integration, problem-solving, and creativity will be part of the assessment development process.

Our Founding Team will help teachers develop a clear vision of each objective and training around active monitoring, scaffolding, and differentiating throughout a lesson to assure mastery. The

curricula we are exploring are high-quality instructional materials that are culturally linguistically responsive. The curricula we are currently reviewing include:

- Amplify (Foundational Skills)
- Great Minds: Wit and Wisdom (reading, background content knowledge)
- Achievement First (math and literature)
- HMH into Math (math)
- HMH (social studies)
- Amplify Science (Science)
- STEMScopes (Science)

EdReports.org has given Amplify, Great Minds: Wit and Wisdom, HMH into Math their highest rating, Meets Expectations on ELA K-8 curriculum. Achievement First Math only partially met expectations on EdReports.org. We are following Achievement First as they have committed to fixing their gaps and will make our decision based on their adjustments in the coming year. One of the draws with Achievement First is their commitment to creating a culturally responsive curriculum. All final decisions will ensure that students have a high-quality, researched-based curriculum that will naturally integrate the arts. If needed we will apply for a waiver for curriculum not listed on the New Mexico approved list.

Figure 11. Proposed Academic Curriculum

Grades	ELA (Humanities)	Math	Science	Social Studies	SEL
K-3	Structured Literacy: Amplify Education Wit and Wisdom Composition: The Writing Revolution Internally created Arts integration	Math: Achievement First Internally created Arts integration	Life, Physical, Earth Science: Amplify	History (Integrated in Literacy): NM, US, and World Culture (Integrated in Literacy and the Arts): Local community, NM and US Geography: Maps and Globes Citizenship	Choose Love
3-4	Reading: Wit and Wisdom Read Aloud: In house Composition: Achievement First and The Writing Revolution Internally created Arts integration	Math: Achievement First Internally created Arts integration	Life, Physical, Earth Science: Amplify	History (Integrated in Literacy): NM, US, and World Culture (Integrated in Literacy and the Arts): Local community, NM and US Geography: Maps and Globes Citizenship	Choose Love
5	Literature: Achievement First Composition: Achievement First and The Writing Revolution Internally created Arts integration	Math: Achievement First Internally created Arts integration	Life, Physical, Earth Science: Amplify	History (Integrated in Literacy): NM, US, and World Culture (Integrated in Literacy and the Arts): Local community, NM and US Geography: Maps and Globes Citizenship	Choose Love
6-8	Literature: Achievement	Math: Achievement First	Life, Physical, Earth	World, NM and US	Choose Love

	First Composition: Achievement First and The Writing Revolution Internally created Arts integration	Math Intervention for Algebra readiness: HMH Internally created Arts integration	Science: Amplify & Accelerated Learning, STEMScopes	History: HMH	
6-12	Language and Culture: combination of adopted and Internally developed				
9th	Creative writing Literature: Achievement First and the Writing Revolution	Algebra 1: Achievement First Internally created Arts integration	Physical Science: Achievement First	Human Geography, Sociology, World Geography, NM History: HMH	Choose Love
10th	English Literature: Achievement First combined with the Writing Revolution	Geometry/Algebra 2: Achievement First	Biology/Chemistry: Achievement First	World History: HMH	Choose Love
11th	English Literature: Achievement First combined with the Writing Revolution	Algebra 2/Trigonometry: Achievement First	Chemistry/Physics: Achievement First	US History: HMH	Choose Love
12th	English Literature: Achievement First combined with the Writing Revolution	Calculus/Financial Algebra: Achievement First	Forensics, Anatomy & Physiology, Psychology: Achievement First	Economics, Government: HMH	Choose Love

Academic Framework: Below is an overview of RioGAFA's proposed curriculum. All content will include arts integration (see above) as well as cross content integration such as Social Studies and ELA or Science and Math.

Literacy: Literacy is foundational to all learning. At the elementary level, RioGAFA will foster student literacy development to produce independent readers, writers, and communicators through a structured literacy program integrated with the arts. The secondary literacy curriculum will focus on reading and analyzing text, rich discussions around big ideas, and clear writing ideas. Composition will be integrated throughout all content areas, including the arts. The ELA curriculum will be fully aligned with the CCSS.

- Early Elementary Structured Literacy: 120 minutes of daily
- Upper Elementary Literacy Block: 120 minutes daily with 60 minutes of direct reading instruction through small groups
- Secondary Literacy Block: 120 minutes in which literacy is integrated with Social Studies and 45 minutes will be dedicated to direct reading instruction.

Structured Literacy (K-3): Successful reading requires a foundation of excellent decoding skills. We will be strategic in teaching all the core components of literacy, including phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and comprehension. Daily instruction will be explicit, systematic, and diagnostic²¹.

²¹ International Dyslexia Association. (2019). Structured Literacy™: An introductory guide. Baltimore, MD: Author.
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

- Explicit: deliberate teaching in which the *teacher explains and models vital skills*.
- Systematic: organization of material is sequenced and will build upon each concept.
- Diagnostic: ongoing assessment of student progress to quickly identify students who need extra support.

Read Aloud (K-4): Teachers choose engaging books to build students' critical thinking skills and love for Reading. These books will often be more challenging than what students can currently read on their own. Books will be selected for their writing quality and the complexity and resonance of their ideas, themes, and arguments. The teacher reads and guides students to unpack the meaning of the text and discuss and debate the book's ideas. The goal is for the teacher to model the habits of great readers.

Independent Reading (3-12): When students know how to read and develop a love for reading, they become lifelong, independent learners. Students will read at least 30 minutes daily during DEAR (Drop Everything And Read).²² Classrooms will be stocked with a library of books selected for their rich language, storylines, and beautiful illustrations. Students choose books that interest them and are "just right" for their level of reading fluency. By choosing books that interest them and are in their Lexile range, students will apply great readers' habits. Research supports the idea that students should read at least 30 minutes a day within the student's Lexile range which is 50 above and 100 below their Lexile level.

Direct Reading Instruction (4-5): Students will receive daily, focused reading instruction on the essential elements of reading with an emphasis on advanced phonics skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students will begin to work in all core content area texts.

Direct Reading Instruction (6-8): Students will continue to receive daily instruction based on their individual needs. Students will also receive reading instruction across all content areas, and that will focus on content-specific vocabulary and comprehension.

Literature (5-12): Students will immerse themselves in fiction, poetry, and literary non-fiction that represent diverse voices and perspectives. The curriculum will prioritize analysis and interpretation of the meaning of texts. Students read the assigned text for the first time to establish meaning first and then participate in a close read to understand and analyze a complex text, build their stamina, skill, and confidence as independent readers/learners. The lessons will leverage mostly independent reading, annotation, discussion, and writing to deepen student thinking. Units will launch with short, connected texts providing context, background knowledge, and relevance to the book's core themes.

Composition (K-12): Composition sets students up to become proficient, passionate writers who communicate their ideas with clarity and purpose by using craft and structure moves associated with each genre and develop an appreciation for each genre's purpose and potential. While composition can be an independent block of time, research supports that reading creates better writers, and writers create better readers. All teachers will be trained using The Writing Revolution (TWR) methodology and writing taught across content. Students will have explicit instruction in writing through their Reading and Literature classes.

²² LightSail. (2016). Why 30 Minutes.

http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/741810/Downloads/Why-30-Minutes_White-Paper.pdf.

New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

Math: Through hands-on learning, visualization, and pictorial representations for each skill, students will develop number sense and operations, operations and algebraic thinking, measurement and data, and geometry through carefully scaffolded lessons as outlined in the CCSS. Students will understand mathematical concepts through contextualized applications, building an understanding based on reasoning, not just calculation.

- Elementary Math Block: 80 minutes daily
- Additional 45 minutes of interventions as needed.
- Secondary Math Block: 60 minutes daily

Math (K-4): Students will engage with a math lesson, math talks, hands-on practice, and math games in order for students to achieve procedural fluency and conceptual understanding required to provide a strong foundation in math. The curriculum will significantly narrow the content scope and deepen the time spent in math. Students begin to build a conceptual understanding of core content and build on it. Each standard is not new but an extension of previous learning.

Math (5-8): In order for students to thrive, they must make sense of the world through a mathematical lens. Learning math requires more than learning facts and procedures. Students will develop their conceptual understanding, increase their procedural fluency, build adaptive reasoning, and practice problem-solving.

Math (9-12): Students will be introduced to a specific concept or skill with deliberate questioning and carefully selected problems to enable scholars to make connections, draw conclusions, identify key points/big ideas and develop a deep conceptual understanding which leads to application and fluency. Lessons will develop students' interpretations of important mathematical ideas and how they connect to their other knowledge, allowing them to pose and pursue rich questions, develop their approaches to solve these problems, and continuously make sense of their learning ideas. Each mathematics course at the high school level will be carefully sequenced.

Science: The Science program will be comprehensive and ensure that students build cumulative knowledge and develop scientific practices that encourage scientific inquiry and connect learning across disciplines such as math and literacy. Students will engage in inquiry, dialogue, creative thinking using Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM).

- Elementary Science Block: 70 minutes daily
- Secondary Science Block: 60 minutes daily

Science (K-8): With our Science curriculum, students will drive into hands-on inquiry-based discovery grounded in Next Gen Science Standards (NGSS). The lessons will create a broad view of what science and engineering are and where students investigate and design solutions to problems. Through the five Es of the 5E Learning Cycle: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate, students will act as scientists conducting experiments and discussing observations, data, and results. We will include the three main disciplines of science, life, physical, and Earth into each year's curriculum, as well as engineering and computer science.

Science (9-12): The science program will help students investigate, think analytically, and challenge students to follow through with inquiry when faced with unfamiliar and complex problems. Through the five Es of the 5E Learning Cycle: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate, students

develop explanations using data and evidence to answer scientific questions (for science) and to design solutions using data and evidence to solve problems in our human world for engineering. We live in a world that requires scientific literacy to make informed everyday decisions and engage with today's significant issues. Our Science classes will ensure that the communities we serve are part of confronting and solving the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) related challenges of our time.

Social Studies: Social Studies, often combined with literacy and the arts, will immerse students into the world of New Mexican, American history, cultures, and geography and integrating topics in civics and the arts. Our program will build knowledge of diverse civilizations and cultures.

- Elementary Social Studies Block: Integrated with literacy blocks, 120 minutes daily.
- Secondary Social Studies Block: Integrated with literature blocks, 60 minutes daily.

Social Studies(K-5): Students will explore and experience their community and New Mexico's rich history of arts and culture. Investigations of key ideas, events, and cultural interactions that transformed New Mexican history and continue to resonate and shape our world. The curriculum will be integrated through our literacy and arts programs. We will build a strong foundation of citizenship where students connect with their community, state, and country. Students begin to understand what it means to be a contributing member of society.

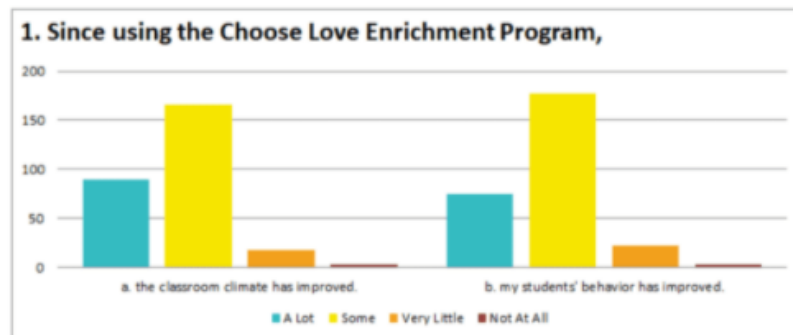
Social Studies (6-12): Our approach will emphasize inquiry, investigation, and analyzing primary sources and authentic artifacts. Students will strengthen their skills as readers, researchers, listeners, speakers, and writers while developing a foundation of historical knowledge to draw connections to the past and present. Students will develop a broad understanding of culture, historical change, and progression to equip all of our students with the academic and character skills they need to graduate and succeed in a competitive world. Students will be encouraged to be the next generation of leaders in our community through history, economics and sociology, and government.

Language and Culture (6-12): Communication is at the heart of the Spanish language, speaking, writing, or reading texts. Students learn and understand the many cultures where Spanish is spoken and make connections to other subjects. Through comparisons and contrasts with Spanish as spoken in various countries, students acquire greater insight into the many cultures that make up the Hispanic world. Together, these elements enable students to participate in communities at home and around the world in a variety of settings and in culturally appropriate ways.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Arts education and social-emotional learning is a "synergistic pairing." Arts education often addresses various SEL characteristics through individual or multiple competencies, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. While arts education profoundly impacts social-emotional health, we will also adopt and spend 20 minutes weekly in the Choose Love SEL curriculum. Choose Love is a cost-free curriculum that was inspired by the bravery of Scarlett Lewis's six-year-old son, Jesse Lewis, in the Sandy Hook shooting. Choose Love is aligned with the new Character and Social-Emotional Development Standards (CSED), including Character.org and Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (casel.org) standards. **Figure 10.** shows the success of the Choose Love curriculum.

Figure 12. Results from schools participating in the Choose Love movement

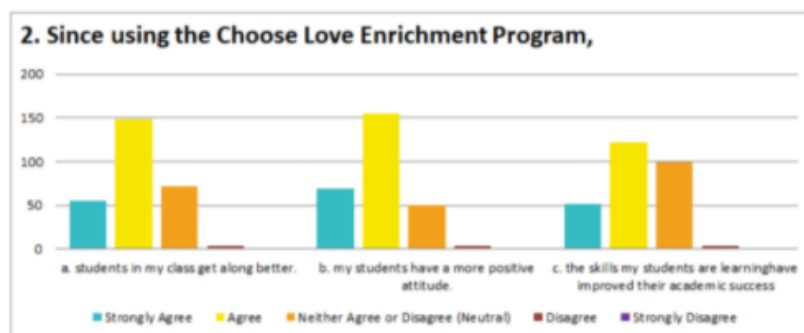
99% said that they have seen an improvement in classroom climate and in the students' overall behavior



73% said that their students get along better

81% said their students have a more positive attitude

62% have seen an increase in academic performance in their students



RioGAFA's Director of Academics and our Curriculum Advisor will develop unit plans for the first semester for all content during the planning year. During June of 2022 and starting off Year One, the Director of Academics will begin work on second semester's unit plans. During the second semester we will request input from teachers. Moving into Year Two, we will include grade level leads for unit plan development and revisions. In Year Three, when we add Instructional Coach(es) to our leadership team, they participate in the development of the curriculum. The timeline for curriculum development is below in **Figure 13**.

Beginning with the end in mind the Instructional Leads will backwards plan starting with our objectives and state and national standards for each content, then develop and plan for assessments aligned to the learning goals and finally plan out units and instruction. Throughout the process we will ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and keep our vision for arts integration at the forefront. The Equity Council will be consulted on curriculum adoption, development, and revision. At the end of each school year, the Equity Council will be asked to review the curriculum with the Director of Academics to ensure that it continues to align with our Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Framework.

Figure 13. Curriculum Development Timeline

Planning Year 21-22			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Review Curriculum & Curriculum Interim Assessments	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review proposed and recommended curriculum and interim assessments for alignment to state and national standards 	August 2021 - October 2021
Adopt Curriculum	Director of Academics and Curriculum Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalize curriculum decisions 	October 2021
Broad Scope and Sequence (All content areas with integrate	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council (Advisor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a broad vertically and horizontally aligned Scope and Sequence (SAS) 	October 2021-November 2021
Curriculum Maps Create: K-2 6-7	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council (Advisor)	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify goals ● Set objectives/enduring understandings ● Identify instructional materials ● Identify assessments 	November 2021-January 2022
Scope and Sequence Create: K-2 6-7	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council (Advisor)	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify units/themes ● Identify concepts for each theme ● Determine the sequential order of concepts ● Determine calendar for concepts and objects ● Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	January 2022 - February 2022
Y1S 1: Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: K-1, 6	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council (Advisor)	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather and prepare instructional materials ● Outline arts integrated activities aligned to objectives ● Outline non-arts activities aligned to objectives ● Create rubrics ● Review and create interim assessments 	February 2022 - May 2022 Due to state by June 1, 2022
Year 1 (K, 1, 6) SY 22-23			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Purchase of Materials (K,1, 6)	Director(s) and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purchases curriculum and instructional materials 	July 2022
Lesson Plans	Director(s) and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Know objectives ○ Create exemplars ○ Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate ○ Create/determine Exit 	Ongoing throughout the 2022 - 2023 SY

		Tickets	
Y1S2: Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: K-1, 6	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council (Advisor)	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and prepare instructional materials • Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives • Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives • Create rubrics • Create interim assessments 	June 2022 - November 2022
Curriculum Maps Create: 2, 7	Director of Academics and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify goals • Set objectives/enduring understandings • Identify instructional materials • Identify assessments 	October 2022 - December 2022
Scope and Sequence Create: 2, 7	Director of Academics and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify units/themes • Identify concepts for each theme • Determine the sequential order of concepts • Determine calendar for concepts and objects • Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	December 2022 - January 2023
Y2S1: Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: K-2, 6-7 Revise (As Needed) K-1, 6	Director of Academics, Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and prepare instructional materials • Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives • Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives • Create rubrics • Create interim assessments 	December 2022 - May 2023
Revise Curriculum Maps K-1, 6 (As Needed)	Director of Academics and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in order to meet student needs and gaps 	Ongoing throughout 2022-2023 SY
Revise Scope and Sequence K-1, 6 (As Needed)	Director of Academics and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2023 - July 2023
Year 2 (K-2, 6-7) SY 23-24			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Purchase Materials	Director(s) and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchases instructional materials 	July 2023

Y2S2 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 2, 7	Director of Academics and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and prepare instructional materials • Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives • Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives • Create rubrics • Create interim assessments 	June 2023 - September 2023
Lesson Plans	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Know objectives ○ Create exemplars ○ Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate ○ Create/determine Exit Tickets 	Ongoing throughout the 2023 - 2024 SY
Curriculum Maps Create: 3, 8	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify goals • Set objectives/enduring understandings • Identify instructional materials • Identify assessments 	October 2023 - December 2023
Scope and Sequence Create: 3, 8	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify units/themes • Identify concepts for each theme • Determine the sequential order of concepts • Determine calendar for concepts and objects • Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	December 2023 - January 2024
Y3S1 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 3, 8 Revise (As Needed) K-1, 6-7	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and prepare instructional materials • Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives • Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives • Create rubrics • Create interim assessments 	January 2024 - April 2024
Revise Curriculum Maps K-2, 6-7 (As Needed)	Director of Academics and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in order to meet student needs and gaps 	Ongoing throughout 2023-2024 SY
Revise Scope and Sequence K-2, 6-7 (As Needed)	Director of Academics and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2024 - July 2024
Year 3 (K-3, 6-8) SY 24-25			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline

Purchase Materials	Director of Academics and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchases instructional materials 	July 2024
Y3S2 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 3, 8	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	June 2024 - September 2024
Lesson Plans	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know objectives Create exemplars Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate Create/determine Exit Tickets 	Ongoing throughout the 2024 - 2025 SY
Curriculum Maps Create: 4, 9	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify goals Set objectives/enduring understandings Identify instructional materials Identify assessments 	October 2024 - December 2024
Scope and Sequence Create: 4, 9	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify units/themes Identify concepts for each theme Determine the sequential order of concepts Determine calendar for concepts and objects Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	December 2024 - January 2025
Y4 1 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 4, 9 Revise (As Needed) K-2, 6-8	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	January 2025 - April 2025
Revise Curriculum Maps K-2, 6-7 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in order to meet student needs and gaps 	Ongoing throughout 2024-2025 SY
Revise Scope and Sequence K-2, 6-7 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach, and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2025 - July 2025
Year 4 (K-4, 6-9) SY 25-26			

Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Purchase Materials	Director(s) and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchases instructional materials 	July 2025
Y4S1 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 4, 9	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	June 2025 - September 2025
Lesson Plans	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know objectives Create exemplars Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate Create/determine Exit Tickets 	Ongoing throughout the 2025 - 2026 SY
Curriculum Maps Create: 5, 10	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify goals Set objectives/enduring understandings Identify instructional materials Identify assessments 	October 2025 - December 2025
Scope and Sequence Create: 5, 10	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify units/themes Identify concepts for each theme Determine the sequential order of concepts Determine calendar for concepts and objects Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	December 2025 - January 2026
L5S1 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 5, 10 Revise (As Needed) K-3, 6-9	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	January 2026 - April 2026
Revise Curriculum Maps K-3, 6-8 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in order to meet student needs and gaps 	Ongoing throughout 2025-2026 SY
Revise Scope and Sequence K-3, 6-8 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2026 - July 2026

Year 5 (K-10) SY 26-27			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Purchase Materials	Director of Academics and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchases instructional materials 	July 2026
Y5S2 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 5, 10	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	June 2026 - September 2026
Lesson Plans and Revisions to Plans	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know objectives Create exemplars Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate Create/determine Exit Tickets 	Ongoing throughout the 2026 - 2027 SY
Curriculum Maps Create: 11	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify goals Set objectives/enduring understandings Identify instructional materials Identify assessments 	October 2026 - December 2026
Scope and Sequence Create: 11	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify units/themes Identify concepts for each theme Determine the sequential order of concepts Determine calendar for concepts and objects Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	December 2026 - January 2027
Y6S1 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 11 Revise (As Needed) K-10	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	January 2027 - April 2027
Revise Curriculum Maps K-10 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in order to meet student needs and gaps 	Ongoing throughout 2026-2027 SY

Revise Scope and Sequence K-10 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2027 - July 2027
Year 6 (K-11) SY 27-28			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Purchase Materials	Director(s) and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchases instructional materials 	July 2027
Y6S2 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 11	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	June 2027 - September 2027
Lesson Plans and Revisions to Plans	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know objectives Create exemplars Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate Create/determine Exit Tickets 	Ongoing throughout the 2027 - 2028 SY
Curriculum Maps Create: 12	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify goals Set objectives/enduring understandings Identify instructional materials Identify assessments 	October 2027 - December 2027
Scope and Sequence Create: 12	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify units/themes Identify concepts for each theme Determine the sequential order of concepts Determine calendar for concepts and objects Ensure vertically and horizontal alignment 	December 2027 - January 2028
Y7S1 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 12 Revise (As Needed) K-11	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Grade Level Leads	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	January 2028 - April 2028
Revise Curriculum Maps K-11	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in 	Ongoing throughout 2027-2028 SY

(As Needed)	and Teachers	order to meet student needs and gaps	
Revise Scope and Sequence K-11 (As Needed)	Director(s), Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2028 - July 2028
Year 7 (K-12) SY 28-29			
Resource	Responsible Parties	Action Steps	Timeline
Purchase Materials	Director of Academics and Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchases instructional materials 	July 2028
Y7S2 Unit Plans: Lessons, Proposed Integrated Arts, and Assessments Create: 12	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es) and Grade Levels	For each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and prepare instructional materials Develop arts integrated activities aligned to objectives Develop non-arts activities aligned to objectives Create rubrics Create interim assessments 	June 2028 - September 2028
Lesson Plans	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalize lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know objectives Create exemplars Develop arts and non-arts activities to integrate Create/determine Exit Tickets 	Ongoing throughout the 2028 - 2029 SY
Revise Curriculum Maps K-11 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum maps are fluid and will be updated along with lesson plans in order to meet student needs and gaps 	Ongoing throughout 2028-2029 SY
Revise Scope and Sequence K-11 (As Needed)	Director of Academics, Instructional Coach(es), and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make adjustments to SAS based on curriculum map revisions 	June 2029 - July 2029

Rating	Expectations
---------------	---------------------

<p>✓ Approaches</p>	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the proposed school's curriculum; ● Identify information that demonstrates the curriculum is research-based; ● Describe a curriculum that is reasonable, based on the professional judgment of experienced educators; ● Identify information that demonstrates how the curriculum will align with the New Mexico Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and New Mexico Content Standards; ● Identify information that demonstrates how the curriculum will align with the proposed school's mission; and ● Include a reasonable (as based on the professional judgment of experienced educators) timeline and plan for the development of the entire proposed curriculum—including scope and sequence, unit plans, daily lesson plans, project plans and rubrics, and unit and course assessments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The timeline must identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ responsible staff ▪ action steps ▪ deadlines ○ The timeline must include specific action steps that will ensure alignment with the CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the proposed school's mission. ○ The timeline must demonstrate that the scope and sequence and unit plans for one semester's curriculum will be fully completed before June 1st of the planning year—the deadline for having the commencement of operations approved. ○ If the applicant is proposing to adopt a fully developed or standardized curriculum, the timeline must include specific action steps to adapt the curriculum to the needs of the local community and the State of New Mexico.
---------------------	---

While RioGAFA has proposed a robust integrative-arts curriculum, it is currently unclear as to how this framework will align in creating a rigorous learning experience for core curriculum. It is also unclear, in terms of instructional time, the hours allocated for students to develop and refine their skills in core subject areas. Furthermore, RioGAFA needs to clarify how they will measure (i.e. formative assessment) and assess student growth and achievement in core subject areas beyond state standardized assessment.

D. Bilingual Multicultural Education, Indian Education and Hispanic Education

D. Bilingual Multicultural Indian Education and Hispanic Education

Provide a description of how the proposed school's curriculum will ensure equal education opportunities for students in New Mexico through cognitive and affective development of the students by:

- (a) using the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in a bilingual multicultural education program;
- (b) providing students with opportunities to expand their conceptual and linguistic abilities and potentials in a successful and positive manner;
- (c) teaching students to appreciate the value and beauty of different languages and cultures; and
- (d) discussing how the Equity Council will assist in the development and support of a culturally and linguistically relevant curriculum.

Provide and describe a detailed, clear, comprehensive, and reasonable timeline and plan for the development of the entire proposed curriculum, including identification of responsible staff, action steps, and deadlines that will ensure alignment with the Bilingual Multicultural Education, Indian Education, and Hispanic Education Acts.

The Founding Team has reviewed the findings of the Yazzie Martinez case and its mandate that students of color from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students with disabilities receive an education that is culturally and linguistically relevant and prepares them for college and careers. The evidence for addressing low achievement for some subgroups of students lies in the disaggregated data made accessible each year by the New Mexico Public Education Department. The RioGAFA Founding Team believes what we have is an opportunity gap that creates an achievement gap that begins early and widens through high school, translating to increased socioeconomic inequalities. *"Opportunity gap refers to the fact that the arbitrary circumstances in which people are born—such as their race, ethnicity, ZIP code, and socioeconomic status—determine their opportunities in life, rather than all people having the chance to achieve to the best of their potential."*²³ In **Figures 49-54**, in **Section I.H.1**, we present from the 2019 Transition Assessment in Math and English Language Arts (TAMELA) assessments in charts that demonstrate the gaps in students of color, low socioeconomic backgrounds, and identified with disabilities. The data shows²⁴:

- 3rd Graders in zip codes 87114, 87120, 87121, 87124
 - All students in our targeted zip code show 22% proficiency in reading and 30% proficiency in math.
 - Caucasian students outperformed Hispanic students by 18% higher in reading and 20% higher in math.
 - Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 17% proficiency in reading and 25% proficiency in math.
 - ELL students showed only 17% proficiency in reading and 25% proficiency in math.
- 8th graders in zip codes 87114, 87120, 87121, 87124
 - All students in our targeted zip code show 24% proficiency in reading and 17% proficiency in math.
 - Caucasian students outperformed Hispanic students by 20% higher in reading and 18% higher in math.

²³ Mooney, T. K. (2021, February 24). Why We Say "Opportunity Gap" Instead of "Achievement Gap." Teach For America. <https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/why-we-say-opportunity-gap-instead-of-achievement-gap>.

²⁴ Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*

- Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 19% proficiency in reading and 14% proficiency in math.
 - ELL students showed only 13% proficiency in reading and 14% proficiency in math.
- 11th graders in zip codes 87114, 87120, 87121, 87124
 - All students in our targeted zip code show 33% proficiency in reading and 10% proficiency in math.
 - Caucasian students outperformed Hispanic students by 20% higher in reading and 10% higher in math.
 - Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 29% proficiency in reading and 9% proficiency in math.
 - ELL students showed only 14% proficiency in reading and 11% proficiency in math.

Meeting the Goals of the Bilingual Multicultural/Indian/Hispanic Education Acts

Culturally and linguistically responsive instruction is a priority for the RioGAFA team. Our mission to educate students through the arts demands that it be our responsibility to ensure that all cultural backgrounds are represented in instruction and address the goals of the Indian Education Act (NMSA 22-23A-1) and the purpose of the Hispanic Education Act (NMSA 22-23B-2). The Founding Team is committed to providing the curriculum, instruction, professional development, and resources necessary for our students to achieve at or above grade level. Through RioGAFA's mission to facilitate rigorous learning through the arts, we will ensure that instruction is culturally and linguistically responsive. Our proposed arts-integrated educational program creates a learning environment where all students - no matter race, ethnicity, or economic status, have the opportunity to excel and succeed.

Additionally, fine arts classes will intentionally teach culturally diverse artists, including American Indian and Hispanic artists. When possible, we will invite local artists to collaborate and teach our students, and student learning will overflow into the community through mentorships, internships, and service projects. By joining forces with organizations in the community, such as the National Hispanic Cultural Center and the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, and local artists to serve our RioGAFA students, we will ensure our equitable learning opportunities and resources.

Appreciation of Different Cultures

The RioGAFA team is committed to providing students with different art forms that stem from a wide variety of cultures. By providing this extensive cultural responsiveness and intentionally diverse instruction, students will learn to gain a deeper connection and sense of pride for their culture and traditions. RioGAFA believes in the celebration of each culture represented by our students and introducing students to other cultures within our community and throughout the world. By providing them with these opportunities, students will learn to be accepting and open to the traditions and methods of other cultures different than their own, which will develop within the students of RioGAFA a sense of appreciation and acceptance for a multitude of different cultures.

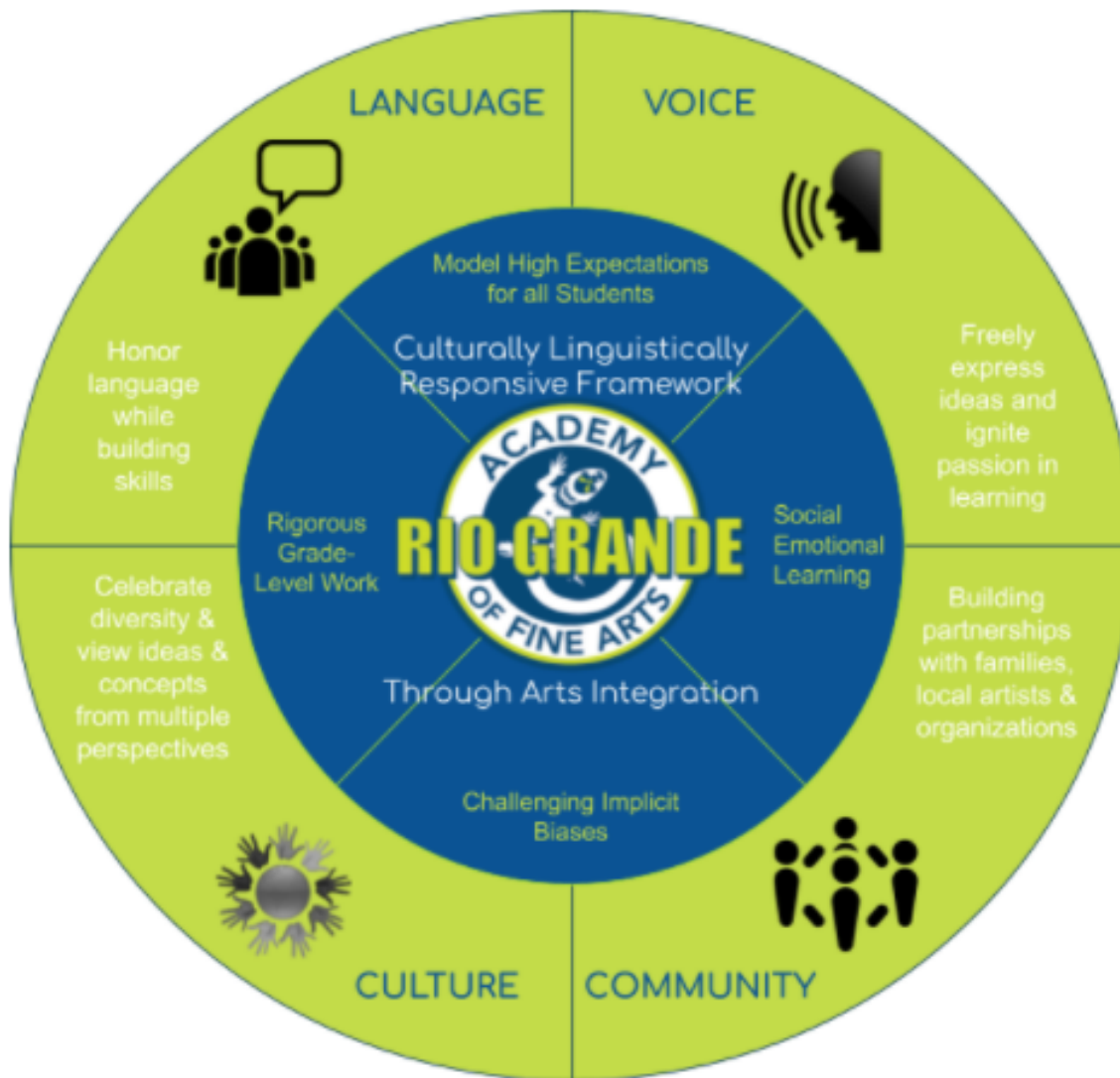
Furthermore, the adopted and created academic curriculum will reflect the community and students the RioGAFA will serve. The goal is to design a curriculum aligned to the required standards and benchmarks and integrate students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Our curriculum allows students to expand on their conceptual and linguistic abilities within the broader curriculum's scope. Through rigorous standards-based arts instruction, teachers have many opportunities to integrate the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of other areas, regions, states, and countries, expanding and enriching RioGAFA students' schema.

Part of our offerings will also be bilingual education to offer Spanish courses starting in the 6th grade. These courses will teach the linguistics of the Spanish language while also connecting the arts' history for Hispanic and American Indian artists. This connection between this art history focus and linguistic instruction will provide the opportunity for the RioGAFA team to work with local American Indian and Hispanic artists to connect with our students. The RioGAFA team will require all 6th grade and 9th-grade students to partake in one of these courses and provide the opportunity for students who wish to continue this study as they progress in their education by providing additional classes.

Zaretta Hammond states in, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* (2015) that it is not race that matters in culturally responsive teaching. Teachers need to be aware of implicit bias that gets in the way of healthy student-teacher relationships and narrow interpretations of learning that ignore the cultural tools students bring to class. In Sharroky Hollie's book, *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning* (2017), he states that the essence of Culturally Responsive Teaching is viewing students with home languages (other than Standard English) as assets that they bring to the classroom rather than deficits. Our teachers will receive professional development that ensures all students receive rigorous academic, arts-integrated instruction that is culturally responsive. Multicultural professional development will be ongoing to reduce negative profiling, misconceptions, prejudices, and discrimination and close the achievement gap. Topics for staff training beyond our arts-integration curriculum will include but are not limited to instructing students to be critical thinkers using Bloom's Taxonomy framework²⁵, Equality vs. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and exploring their own beliefs, biases, and misconceptions. We will kick off our summer professional development with the mission and vision of RioGAFA. This will include sharing the vision of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and ensuring that all staff is aligned with the vision.

²⁵ Bloom's Taxonomy : Resource for Educators. (2010). Bloomstaxonomy.Net. <https://www.bloomstaxonomy.net/>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

Figure 14. RioGAFA's Culturally Linguistically Responsive Framework



Opportunities to Expand Conceptual and Linguistic Abilities and Valuing Native Languages

RioGAFA's arts-integrated curriculum levels the playing field for students. Research supports that the arts are essential to children from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Studies have shown that bilingual students benefit from a curriculum with visual images, creative movement, interpersonal interactions, rhythm, and patterns that arts-integration can provide. Enhancing instruction with arts-centered tasks can cement critical concepts and reinforce reading and English Language Arts skills. Other benefits for bilingual students involved in an arts-integrated program:

- The arts give students a voice - no matter what language they speak. It is a universal language (Oh, 2017).²⁶
- The arts allow students a venue to express and celebrate their cultural diversity (Oh, 2017).
- Arts-integrated provides student-to-student and teacher-to-student interactions through students demonstrating their understanding of content/standards through an art form.
- Arts-integration naturally allows for differentiated instruction.²⁷
- Arts-integration allows teachers to assess ELL students more accurately on what they know.
- Arts integration builds community through collaboration with peers, teachers, staff, and local artists.
- The arts increase school engagement, enhance social-emotional learning skills and ultimately increase graduation rates among all demographics of students.²⁸
- The arts increase attendance and retention rates²⁹.

Research tells us that a student's social and emotional wellbeing is directly related to their success. Each of the above gives students a feeling of self-worth and accomplishment. Students do not have to feel ashamed or embarrassed for not speaking English, but instead, celebrated for being able to demonstrate learning in a way that makes sense. Arts-integration paves the way to all student success, including our English language learners.

Encouraging Parental Involvement

RioGAFA will encourage open communication with all families. The expectation is to have constant contact with families. The RioGAFA Director(s) will create a culture of inclusion for all families, with personalized communication strategies being implemented throughout the year to build long-lasting and trust-based relationships with families. Families will be communicated weekly, quarterly, bi-annually, and annually to maintain consistent communication for student achievement. Communication will be available in many formats and translated into the family's native language. Families will be encouraged to participate in student-led conferences, and we will invite a translator to assist when necessary. Other opportunities for engaging students and families include performances and art shows that embrace RioGAFA's students' cultures, math and literacy night, and our annual open house. Finally, RioGAFA will have weekly assemblies/huddles that will include celebration culture, academic and artistic success, and attendance.

Equity Council

²⁶ Oh, E. W. (2019, December 20). 3 Reasons Why Your ELLs Need Arts Integration. Retrieved March 8, 2021, from [https://www.common sense.org/education/articles/3-reasons-why-your-ells-need-arts-integration#:~:text=A fantastic way to support their shells and get talking.](https://www.common sense.org/education/articles/3-reasons-why-your-ells-need-arts-integration#:~:text=A%20fantastic%20way%20to%20support%20their%20shells%20and%20get%20talking.)

²⁷ Arts Integration and Differentiated Instruction. (n.d.). Retrieved March 8, 2021, from [https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collective-arts-integration-resources/arts-integration-and-differentiated-instruction/#:~:text=Differentiated instruction draws support from,and constructivist beliefs about learning.&text=Arts integration involves students in, construct and demonstrate their understandings.](https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collective-arts-integration-resources/arts-integration-and-differentiated-instruction/#:~:text=Differentiated%20instruction%20draws%20support%20from,and%20constructivist%20beliefs%20about%20learning.&text=Arts%20integration%20involves%20students%20in,%20construct%20and%20demonstrate%20their%20understandings.)

²⁸ (n.d.). 2018, research.collegeboard.org/programs/sat/data/archived. Retrieved April 17, 2021

²⁹ Brown, K., PhD. (2017). The Arts and Dropout Prevention [Pdf]. Clemson: National Dropout Prevention Network.

Our Equity Council (discussed throughout **Section II**) will meet quarterly to strategize and review progress towards our equity objectives. In the initial stages of our planning year, the Equity Council will be consulted on adopting our culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum. The Equity Council must be brought into these discussions to allow the RioGAFA leadership team to gain as many diverse perspectives as possible.

Timeline

Our timeline and plan for developing our proposed curriculum will directly align with our school's mission and will be multicultural and culturally and linguistically responsive. The two should not be and are not separate. Culturally and Linguistically Responsive instruction will be interwoven within our teaching and curriculum. The complete timeline (Planning Year-Year 7) of our culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum implementation is located in **Section I.C.**

Figure 15. Planning Year Timeline (Complete Proposed Curriculum is located in **Section I.C.**)

Proposed Curriculum	Action Step	Responsible Staff	Deadline
Arts-Integration	- Develop culturally and linguistically lessons based on the adopted curriculum scope and sequence	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council	February 25, 2022 (K,1, 6) and ongoing based on student and classroom needed Due to NM PEC: June 1, 2022
English Language Arts/Humanities See Proposed Academic Curriculum Section I.C. & Figure 13. in Section 1.C.	1. Review proposed and recommended curriculum to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check for bias in curriculum and assessment - Analyze the quality of assignments against rigorous standards - Allows for mirrors and windows of our students - Accurate representations of the role of race in American history and governance - Diversity and sustainability - Align with CTE standards - Ensure access and differentiation for students with disabilities - Ensures natural integration with the arts 2. Adopt Curriculum (Decision) 3. Develop Curriculum Maps 4. Develop Scope and Sequence	Director of Academics, Curriculum Advisor, and Equity Council	1. October 29, 2021
Math See Proposed Academic Curriculum Section I.C. & Figure 13. in Section 1.C.			
Social Studies See Proposed Academic Curriculum Section I.C. & Figure 13. in Section 1.C.			
Science See Proposed Academic Curriculum Section I.C. & Figure 13. in Section 1.C.			
Fine Arts See Proposed Academic Curriculum Section I.C. & Figure 13. in Section 1.C.			2. October 29, 2021 3. January 28, 2022

Part C - Page 56 of 344

	2. Adopt Curriculum 3. Develop Curriculum Maps 4. Develop Scope and Sequence		2. October 29, 2021 3. January 28, 2022 4. February 29, 2022 Due to NM PEC: June 1, 2022
--	--	--	--

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Address the goals of the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act (NMSA §22-23-1) including:
 - Ensure equal education opportunities for students in New Mexico by:
 - providing students with opportunities to expand their conceptual and linguistic abilities and potentials in a successful and positive manner;
 - teaching students to appreciate the value and beauty of different languages and cultures; and
 - meeting state academic content standards and benchmarks in all subject areas.
- Address the goals of the Indian Education Act (NMSA §22-23A-1) including:
 - Ensuring equitable and culturally relevant learning environments and culturally relevant instructional materials for American Indian students
 - Providing for the study, development and implementation of educational systems that affect the educational success of American Indian students to close the achievement gap, increase graduation rates;
 - Encouraging and fostering parental involvement in the education of their children; and
 - Providing mechanisms to improve educational opportunities for Native American students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention, and completion.
- Address the purpose of the Hispanic Education Act (NMSA §22-23B-2), including:
 - Providing for the study, development and implementation of educational systems that affect the educational success of Hispanic students to close the achievement gap, increase graduation rates;
 - Encouraging and fostering parental involvement in the education of their children; and
 - Providing mechanisms to improve educational opportunities for Hispanic students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention, and completion.

While RioGAFA has developed a framework for establishing an equity council, it is unclear as to how they intend to reasonably work to close the achievement gap and measure progress, nor do we see anything about increasing graduation rates or increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention, and completion in diverse populations. RioGAFA's Implicit Bias education is robust but it is unclear as to how the school will ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning environments and culturally relevant instructional materials for these populations, including development and implementation of educational systems that affect the educational success of these populations. students. In addition, the application does not explain how the school will encourage and foster parental involvement in the education of their children.

E. Graduation Requirements.

E. Identify the proposed school's proposed requirements for graduation, if applicable, and explain any changes or additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirements. Provide high school graduation requirements that clearly articulate and meet state requirements. If you provide additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirements, ensure they are clearly explained.

If you are seeking any change from mandated minimum graduation requirements, identify the change and explain why you are seeking it. Clearly explain how the change supports the mission and ensures student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities.

Graduation Requirements

RioGAFA's mission and vision is to develop students that are proficient and strong in both core academics and fine arts instruction. In an effort to maintain high expectations for all students and to encourage students to take rigorous coursework, two differentiated diplomas are available to RioGAFA students: a Standard Diploma and a Diploma of Artistry. The Standard Diploma requires that students earn 26 credits, including additional arts credits beyond that of the State's 24 credit model, making it one of the most artistically rigorous in the state. These two options support readiness for post-secondary education and career pathways, and although aligned with the state minimum requirements, they exceed the current minimum requirements of the Public Education Department's High School Redesign initiative.

Figure 16. Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Standard Diploma– requires completion of 26 credits.

Content Area	Coursework Requirement	Course Work Options (STARS course code)
Fine Arts	4	See Figure 1.E.3
Reading and Writing	4	ELA 1 (1001)/ELA-ELD I (1064) ELA 2 (1002)/ELA-ELD II (1065) ELA 3 (1003)/ELA-ELD III (1066) ELA 4 (1004)/ELA-ELD IV (1067) SREB Literacy Ready (1037)
Mathematics	4	Algebra I (2031) Algebra II (2041) Algebra II/Trig (2044) Applied Math (2024) Financial Literacy (2097) Fractal Mathematics (2039) Geometry (2034) Integrated Pathway: Math I (2080) Integrated Pathway: Math II (2081) Integrated Pathway: Math III (2083)

		Mathematical Modeling (2078) Probability and Statistics (2029) Scientific Technologies (1783) Courses at a higher level than Algebra II
Science	3	Must include: Earth & Space/Conceptual Physics ([629]1701), two of the following: Chemistry, Biology, Physics, plus one additional science credit. Computer Science A (0327 or 0346)* Computer Science Principles (0345 or 0336)* Scientific Technologies (1783)* (2 credits must include a laboratory component)
Social Studies	4	US History and Geography (2729) World History and Geography (2706) 0.5 U.S. Government (2730) 0.5 Economics (2741) 0.5 N.M. History (2717) 0.5 Humanities/Sociology (2204)
Physical Education/Health	2	See Figure 1.E.3
Career Cluster, Workplace Readiness, World Languages	2	See Figure 1.E.3
Electives	3	See Figure 1.E.3. Student service learning, Pre-apprenticeship programs, Media literacy, Additional courses in core subjects
Technology embedded in all		

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Diploma of Artistry is an initiative that encourages students to take 28 credits including 2 additional challenging fine arts course credits. This rigorous sequence and course of study gives students the solid foundation needed to succeed at a university, technical school, community college, the military, or industry. In order to obtain a Diploma of Artistry, a RioGAFA student must complete the following courses with a C or better, and with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. All students must take one high school credit of distance learning, or dual enrollment college class.

Figure 17. Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Diploma of Artistry– requires completion of 28 credits.

Content Area	Coursework Requirement	Course Work Options (STARS course code)
--------------	------------------------	---

Fine Arts	6	See Figure 18
Reading and Writing	4	ELA 1 (1001)/ELA-ELD I (1064) ELA 2 (1002)/ELA-ELD II (1065) ELA 3 (1003)/ELA-ELD III (1066) ELA 4 (1004)/ELA-ELD IV (1067) SREB Literacy Ready (1037)
Mathematics	4	Algebra I (2031) Algebra II (2041) Algebra II/Trig (2044) Applied Math (2024) Financial Literacy (2097) Fractal Mathematics (2039)* Geometry (2034) Integrated Pathway: Math I (2080) Integrated Pathway: Math II (2081) Integrated Pathway: Math III (2083) Mathematical Modeling (2078)* Probability and Statistics (2029) Scientific Technologies (1783)* Courses at a higher level than Algebra II
Science	3	Must include: Earth & Space/Conceptual Physics ([629]1701), two of the following: Chemistry, Biology, Physics, plus one additional science credit. Computer Science A (0327 or 0346)* Computer Science Principles (0345 or 0336)* Scientific Technologies (1783)* (2 credits must include a laboratory component)
Social Studies	4	US History and Geography (2729) World History and Geography (2706) 0.5 U.S. Government (2730) 0.5 Economics (2741) 0.5 N.M. History (2717) 0.5 Humanities/Sociology (2204)
Physical Education/Health	2	Yoga/Pilates Dance Health (1401) as an elective unit See Figure 1.E.3
Career Cluster, Workplace Readiness, World	2	See Figure 18

Languages		
Electives	3	See Figure 18
Technology embedded in all		

Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA at the end of semester 7 (the fall semester of the senior year)

*An alternate 9th grade science course may be substituted for incoming transfer students.

SENIOR SHOWCASE

Senior Showcase provides an opportunity for seniors to highlight one chosen art form they have developed throughout high school. Students must complete the process and present or perform their artistry work if they plan to participate in the graduation ceremony. The preparation process starts with the Senior Showcase Guidelines presented at the beginning of the year. Each senior will be enrolled in a Senior Showcase course in the student's chosen art form counting for a 1.0 elective credit earning a pass or fail grade. The Senior Showcase course teacher will serve as Showcase Mentor who facilitates and evaluates the development of the student's Showcase.

Competency Options for Cohorts 2029:

- Industry-Recognized Credential or Certificate

The Founding Team of RioGAFA is fully aware of the importance in offering its students various competency options including a Career Technical Education pathway. We intend to work with NMPED to follow standards detailed in the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) and have a set of offerings by year 3 for the class of 2029 cohorts.

(CTE) provides students of all ages with the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. Funded by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), CTE prepares learners for the world of work by introducing them to workplace competencies, and makes academic content accessible to students by providing hands-on experiences in various industry sectors.

RioGAFA supports the opportunity for student participation in the high school dual credit program as a transition for success in college, for use with students who need accelerated core classes, to meet the individual interests of RioGAFA students, and/or to satisfy the Diploma of Artistry course requirement for graduation. We will maintain the expectation that all students partake in at least one dual-credit class during their time at RioGAFA, preferably on a college campus. By participating in a class taken on a college campus, we believe this will set up students for success in higher education by familiarizing them with all aspects of a college campus as well as providing them the experience of instruction and the responsibilities that come with enrolling in a college course.

Being that our focus will be fine arts, we will require that our high school students partake in a fine arts course each year of their high school education. Our hope is to have high school students find a pathway or passion within the fine arts, so these elective courses will be dependent on the focus that they choose. If possible, we will pursue the option of having one of the classes be taken within the college campus to provide our students with the opportunity to be introduced to the Fine Arts Department of local colleges within New Mexico.

Figure 18. RioGAFA Course Offerings for Fine Arts and Electives - with STARS Codes

Course #	Course Name	Course #	Course Name
1150	Introduction to Art	2305	Physical Education 9-12
1154	Drawing 1	1401	Health Education
1155	Drawing 2	1402	Health and Fitness
1156	Painting 1	1109	Dance
1156	Painting 2	1101	Dance Technique
1152	Art History	1102	Dance Repertory
0315	Computer Graphics 1	1103	Expressive Movement
0307	Computer Graphics 2	1111	Introduction to Theater
1313	Graphic Arts/Printing	1112	Drama Stagecraft
1323	Commercial Art	1113	Drama-Acting/Performance
0310	Intro to 3D Design and Animation	1115	Directing
1163	Creative Art - Sculpture	1116	Playwriting
1164	Ceramics/Pottery	1117	History/Literature of Theater
1165	Printmaking	1122	Concert Band
1168	Printmaking 2	1124	Orchestra
1902	Yearbook	1125	Contemporary Band
1171	Photography 1	1127	Piano
1173	Photography 2	1128	Guitar
1333	Commercial Photography	1130	Chorus
1931	Photojournalism	1131	Vocal Ensemble
1908	Broadcasting 1	1141	Music Theory
1909	Broadcasting 2	0507	Basic Applied Design
1906	Multimedia Productions 1	0511	Fashion Design

1907	Multimedia Productions 2	0522	Intro to Clothing Design
1911	Mass Media - Production	0536	Fashion Design/Merchandising 3
1921	Mass Media - Communications	1803	Marketing-Fashion
0504	Nutrition	0509	Professional Baking
0508	Culinary Arts	0512	Advanced Foods

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all of the proposed school's graduation requirements; • Provide proposed Alternative Demonstration of Competency policies, if any • Align to state graduation requirements OR explicitly identify all requirements that vary from state minimum requirements; and • If there are variances from state minimum requirements explain the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ why the proposed school believes the change is important ○ how the change supports the mission ○ how the change ensures student readiness for college, career, or other post-secondary opportunities.

RioGAFA meets the criteria for graduation requirements predominantly because they have until year 4 to clarify their graduation pathways. As a performance based school, it is unclear as to why RioGAFA has not identified alternative demonstrations of competencies that align with their mission/vision; a capstone project could work here to satisfy this requirement.

F. Instruction.

F. (1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** overview of the educational philosophy and instructional methods to be implemented that **clearly** supports and aligns with the proposed school's mission, and curriculum.

RioGAFA's Educational Philosophy

The Rio Grande Fine Arts Academy's educational philosophy is embedded within the Core Belief that all students deserve a well-rounded, equitable, balanced, culturally linguistic, multicultural, and

civic-minded education. We strive to create a balanced education in both arts and academics, providing both creativity and rigor to produce well-rounded and prepared students for the real world. Using arts-integrated instruction and incorporating Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, our educational approach to teaching develops and demonstrates understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process that connects an art form and another content and meets both learning objectives. The arts are a way of life for RioGAFA. We are dedicated to a teaching philosophy that fosters an environment that values creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking and provides students with concrete experiences to connect their understanding. Our mission-driven goals remain the core of our focus that, through our arts-integrated program, objectives are established and assessed in both the art form and the other content area. The student's understanding of the content progresses over time. The arts require us to deepen our understanding and mastery of content standards. The art integrated process allows students to test, refine, apply and naturally deepen their comprehension.

Core Belief #1: *The Arts are Key to a Balanced Well-Rounded and Equitable Education.*

Underserved and at-risk students lack access to the arts. These students and families depend on their schools to bring them access. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes the arts alongside math and language arts to define a "well-rounded education." In Secretary Arne Duncan's Remarks at the Arts Education Partnership National Forum in April 2010, he noted that the arts could no longer be considered a frill. He quoted former First Lady Michelle Obama saying, "the arts are not just a nice thing to have or do if there is free time or if one can afford it... Paintings and poetry, music and design... they all define who we are as a people."

Horace Mann, an American educational reformer in the early 1800s, said that education is the great equalizer; however, two hundred plus years later, we continue to see inequity across the country for students in low socioeconomic areas, usually students of color. We believe that focus on arts learning levels the playing field in education. Arts education is dramatically underrepresented in New Mexico and around the nation, especially in underserved communities. In a recent study through Houston's Arts Access Initiative, findings included a significant increase in arts educational experiences had exceptional impacts on students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes³⁰. Other examples around the country that have found similar outcomes include Boston's Arts Expansion Initiative³¹, Chicago's Creative Schools³² Initiative, and Seattle's Creative Advantage³³.

RioGAFA believes deeply that the arts are essential in creating equitable learning for all students regardless of mental or physical ability, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. The arts bring equal opportunity to the classroom because the arts are inclusive and allow

³⁰ Kisida, B., & Bowen, D. H. (2019, February 12). New evidence of the benefits of arts education. Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2019/02/12/new-evidence-of-the-benefits-of-arts-education/>

³¹ BPS Arts Expansion. (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.bpsarts.org/bps-arts-expansion.html>

³² The Creative Schools Initiative. (2020, December 21). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <http://www.cpsarts.org/creative-schools-initiative/>

³³ <https://www.bibme.org/bibliographies/271648766?new=true>

students to develop problem-solving and creative thinking skills needed throughout their education and beyond. *"Perhaps even more important than students' improved performance on tests, those who receive a well-rounded education are likely better prepared for college and careers because they develop a wider range of knowledge and skills necessary to succeed."* Laura Jimenez and Scott Sargrad, The Center for American Progress³⁴.

Benefits of an arts education include, but are not limited to:

- Create a balanced education
- Give students a voice
- Enhance social and emotional learning
- Increase School retention
- Develop skill-building and craftsmanship (cooperation, collaboration, persistence, patience)
- Establish stable peer relationships
- Provide Low-risk environments where all points of view are valued
- Celebrate diversity and culture
- Develop into essential arts-based careers

Students can—and should—have opportunities to construct and demonstrate their understandings in various ways³⁵. They will receive diversified instruction that is direct, differentiated, inquiry-based, experiential, and project-based. Students' visible demonstrations of learning serve as formative assessments to guide instruction and summative assessments to determine what students have learned.

Core Belief #2: Whole Child Teaching Creates Healthy and Culturally Minded Citizens

The whole-child movement is based on the proposition that education must move beyond preparing children to become "well-educated" citizens who are productive in the world. Education must inspire children's creativity, imagination, compassion, self-knowledge, social skills, and emotional health. In this way, they educate the whole person and help individuals live more intentionally and civically minded within their communities.

The arts naturally create a bridge with culture, and the arts and culture are essential to building community and globally minded citizens. Art is essential to culture, and through the arts, we will celebrate diversity and ensure inclusion and equity. Since the beginning of time, humans have expressed and defined life from their perspective. An arts education also allows students to develop new ways of thinking and widen their lens and viewpoint within their community and the world. Arts lessons that teach about this impact can help students realize the importance of art both in the classroom and everyday life. Teaching culture through the arts allows students to make lifelong connections to the world around us. Educators will help their students learn about and appreciate the

³⁴ Jimenez, L., & Sargrad, S. (2018, August 18). A Well-Rounded Education Rethinking What Is Expected of High Schools [Pdf]. Washington DC: Center for American Progress.

³⁵ What is arts-integration? (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collections/arts-integration-resources/what-is-arts-integration/>

similarities and differences in people, traditions, and regions worldwide through exposure and hands-on projects.

Additionally, teaching the arts cultivates a connection with Social Emotional Learning (SEL). When SEL is intentionally implemented, students can help students find their voice, gain tools for managing stress, and understand social and cultural differences. We will be using the New Mexico and National Core Arts Standards: create, perform/present, respond and connect in combination with SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making in combination with nationally recognized SEL "Plus" curriculum, Choose Love, that is aligned with new Character and Social-Emotional Development Standards (CSED). RioGAFA will foster a positive learning environment that encourages students to manage their emotions and become healthy, culturally minded citizens. The skills gained will also increase civic engagement, encourage greater social tolerance, and reduce destructive behaviors. For instance, one study reports that young children who participate in arts instruction, specifically music and dance, can better self-regulate their emotions than those who do not participate in arts programs³⁶.

Core Belief #3: *Students deserve data-driven instruction.*

Data-driven instruction, while a hot topic, is often misunderstood by most educators. The purpose of data-driven instruction is not to teach to the test but to look closely at student work and allow leaders, coaches, and teachers to adjust teaching practices based on student needs. The focus shifts from what the teacher has taught to what students have learned and improves their learning.

At RioGAFA, we will include weekly data meetings that will follow Paul Bambrick-Santoyo *Driven by Data 2.0* (2015) and Relay Graduate School of Education's format, "*See It Name It Do It*." Leadership and teachers will look closely at student work weekly to ensure student learning, identify student and teacher gaps, and develop effective re-teaching plans. The four building blocks for data-driven instruction are:

- *Assessment* - ensuring all assessments are rigorous and give us meaningful data.
- *Analysis* - examine the results of assessments to identify strengths and gaps.
- *Action* - action steps around teaching strategies to ensure teachers effectively teach what students must know.
- *Culture* - create an environment in which DDI is sustainable.

Instructional Methods:

RioGAFA's instruction will be experiential, collaborative, and fully active to deepen student knowledge and skills to succeed in college, career, and civic life. Our model will combine the Kennedy Center's arts-integration framework and an enhanced arts curriculum. arts-integration is the approach to teaching and learning through which content standards are taught and assessed equitably in and through the arts. We believe that our arts-integrated approach will inspire students to succeed

³⁶ Menzer, M., PhD. (2015, December). THE ARTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL BENEFITS OF ARTS PARTICIPATION [Pdf]. Washington DC: National Endowment for the Arts.
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

throughout their educational careers and beyond. The curriculum we will teach, outlined in section I.C, describes arts-integration as *what* we will teach, but it is also *how* we will teach.

Arts-integration: The American Institutes for Research (AIR) published a report in 2017, *Review of Evidence: arts-integration Research Through the Lens of the Every Student Succeeds Act*. The study provides evidence that practicing arts-integration positively affects students' outcomes in several academic areas and improves attendance, behavior, and social skills. According to the report, findings from 44 studies of arts-integration programs meet the stringent criteria that the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) uses to determine whether an intervention is "evidence-based."³⁷

Arts-integration is an innovative teaching methodology that fuses the arts curriculum—dance, music, theater, and visual arts—with standard curricula. Research shows that rich art experiences can increase academic, social, cultural, and practical skill development and knowledge. For all students, learning and skill development gained through the arts can play a vital role in their overall success. Beyond skill development, arts-integration is a powerful means to help engage all students.

Art-Integration is grounded in the belief that learning is experiential, active, and hands-on. It is ever evolving and collaborative. Students problem-solve, think creatively, engage in discussions, and reflect on their learning and the process. These beliefs are aligned with current research about the nature of learning and with the Constructivist learning theory where students create, which is the highest level of thinking according to Anderson and Krathwohl's revised Bloom's taxonomy (2001).

Through the arts-integration approach, students make sense of what they have learned in various art forms. Students go beyond the initial step of recalling learned information and challenge students to take the information and facts they have learned and build a more profound understanding³⁸.

Constructivist Practices: The constructivist theory is based on the idea that learners are active participants in their learning. Knowledge is constructed based on experiences. Learners develop schemas to organize knowledge³⁹. Constructivist practices that align with arts-integration practices include:

- Drawing on student's prior knowledge
- Providing active, hands-on learning with authentic problems for students to solve in divergent ways.
- Arranging opportunities for students to learn from each other to enrich their understandings.
- Engaging students in reflection about what they learned, how they learned it, and what it means to them.

³⁷ Ludwig, M. J., Boyle, A., & Lindsay, J. (2017, November 7). Review of Evidence: arts-integration Research Through the Lens of the Every Student Succeeds Act [Pdf]. Washington DC: American Institutes for Research.

³⁸ What is arts-integration? (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collections/arts-integration-resources/what-is-arts-integration/>

³⁹ Kurt, S. (2021, February 21). Constructivist Learning Theory. Retrieved April 5, 2021, from <https://educationaltechnology.net/constructivist-learning-theory/>

- Using student assessment of their own and peers' work as part of the learning experience
- Providing opportunities for students to revise and improve their work and share it with others.
- Building a positive classroom environment where students are encouraged and supported to take risks, explore possibilities and where a social, cooperative learning community is created and nurtured⁴⁰.

Direct Instruction: We believe that students learn best when they do the heavy lifting. Teachers will spend 20% of the time in direct instruction. The other 80% of the day will focus on active and cooperative learning. Teachers will act as facilitators or delegators.

Instructional Taxonomies

Instructional consistency supports academic achievement and develops leadership in supporting teachers. We maintain a common language and shared routines and procedures for students to adjust to expectations within the environment quickly. Standard procedures and language will also create a school culture that is consistent and supportive. Standard structures include grading procedures, songs/rituals/chants, lesson plan and curriculum templates, assessment templates and procedures, and student academic expectations.

Techniques and Common Language: The instructional techniques teachers will be trained at RioGAFA will come from many of the techniques outlined in Doug Lemov's *Teach Like A Champion 2.0* (2015). The *Teach Like a Champion* structure holds that teaching is an art and excellent teaching can be learned. We believe teachers can have their unique style and use a common language throughout the school. *Teach Like a Champion 2.0* includes 62 specific, concrete, and actionable techniques to improve teaching practice and build educators' capacity to help their students become college- and career-ready. Teachers will receive professional development during Summer Institute and throughout the school year on the different techniques.

The Founding Team believes that the techniques we will focus on are good practices in any classroom. These techniques will enhance and strengthen all our classrooms.

Figure 19. Teach Like a Champion Taxonomies

Classroom Management Techniques	Student Engagement Techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Start • Threshold • Strong Voice • Radar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for Understanding • Culture of Error • Cold/Warm/Batch Call • Turn and Talk

⁴⁰ What is arts-integration? (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collections/arts-integration-resources/what-is-arts-integration/>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

- Warm Strict
- Positive Framing

- Habits of Discussion

Multiple Intelligences Theory: RioGAFA profoundly believes that all students have gifts and abilities. These gifts often go unnoticed or undeveloped in a traditional educational setting. Howard Gardner describes these gifts and abilities as "intelligences" (2006). Gardner's theory states that everyone has different ways of learning and different intelligences that they use daily. Each person possesses each intelligence to an extent, but there is always a dominant intelligence.

The theory proposes that *"we are all able to know the world through language, logical-mathematical analysis, spatial representation, musical thinking, the use of the body to solve problems or to make things, an understanding of other individuals and an understanding of ourselves. Where individuals differ is in the strength of these intelligences and the ways in which such intelligences are invoked and combined to carry out different tasks, solve diverse problems and progress in various domains..."*⁴¹.

Linda Darling-Hammond supports this theory, stating that students who are provided multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge and skills positively impact students. Students' engagement increases and teachers have a more accurate understanding of students' learning and skill set⁴².

Through arts-integration and arts enhancement, RioGAFA's educational program will allow for students to excel in their unique intelligences both in learning and in demonstrating understanding and skill mastery. Taking a comprehensive approach to providing instruction, resources, and support to students in ways that honor their "intelligences" will cause students to be more engaged and connected to their learning.

There are many natural connections with multiple intelligences and arts-integration. While some are obvious, musical, visual-spatial, and bodily-kinesthetic, others are less obvious, but there are still connections. Through the arts, we interact with nature - naturalistic. We develop interpersonal relationships through theater and dance - interpersonal. Through the arts, we express ourselves by sharing our feelings, views, and beliefs - intrapersonal. RioGAFA's arts program will allow students to demonstrate their many intelligences.

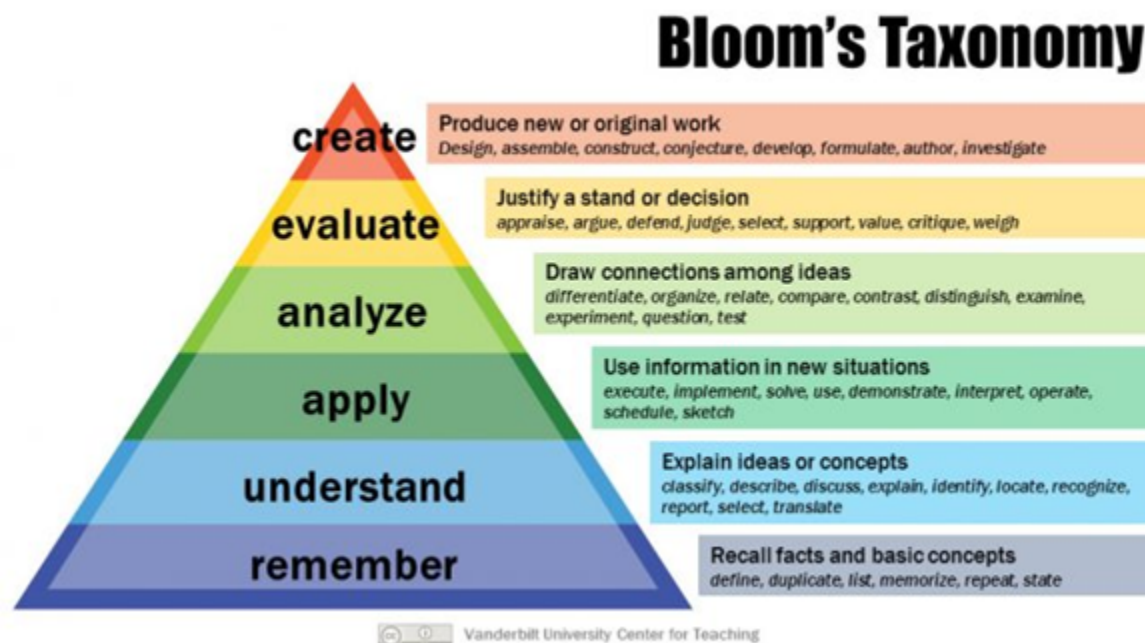
Bloom's Taxonomy: Developed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom in collaboration with Max Englehart, Edward Furst, Walter Hill, and David Krathwohl, Bloom's Taxonomy is used by teachers during instruction to stimulate and develop students' higher-order thinking capabilities. The framework has many practical applications that we intend to utilize as part of instructional strategies. RioGAFA's teachers will use Bloom's taxonomy as a resource to increase and evaluate the rigor of lessons and assessments.

⁴¹ Multiple Intelligences. (2021, April 5). Retrieved from <http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html>

⁴² Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Performance Counts: Assessment Systems that Support High-Quality Learning [Pdf]. Washington DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.

The depth of knowledge steps seen in **Figure 20** provides building blocks to increase students' level of thinking. At RioGAFA, creating is at the heart of arts-integration. Creating involves connecting components to form a coherent or functional whole. Creating includes organizing or developing elements into a new pattern or structure through planning. Creating is the highest and most advanced level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Figure 20. Bloom's Taxonomy Levels⁴³



⁴³ Mcdaniel, R. (1970, June 10). Bloom's Taxonomy. Retrieved March 29, 2021, from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/#:~:text=Familiarly known as Bloom's Taxonomy,Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation.>

Rating	Expectations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets	A complete response must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the educational philosophy of the proposed school; Identify primary instructional methods to be implemented that align to the educational philosophy; Identify information that demonstrates the instructional methods are research-based; and Describe how the educational philosophy and instructional methods support and align to the mission and curriculum.
<input type="checkbox"/> Approaches	
<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet	

While RioGAFA intends to use a student-centered model for classroom learning, it is unclear as to how this model will work in a k-6 section of the school.

F. (2) Provide a yearly calendar and daily schedule (length of school day, instructional blocks, and breaks) that **completely comply** with **all** state requirements and ensure **effective, successful** implementation of the academic program/curriculum. Describe in detail how this schedule supports the proposed school's educational program and how the calendar is optimal for achieving high outcomes for your anticipated student population.

If anticipating serving K-5 Students and or an extended day program, please describe and include in a Year 2 calendar.

RioGAFA's yearly calendar and daily schedule fully support our mission to educate and meet grade-level standards for all students through an arts-integration curriculum. To ensure students make significant academic gains and receive an arts focused education, we will have an extended day and school year.

Yearly Calendar:

Figure 21. RioGAFA 2022-2023 SY - Year 1

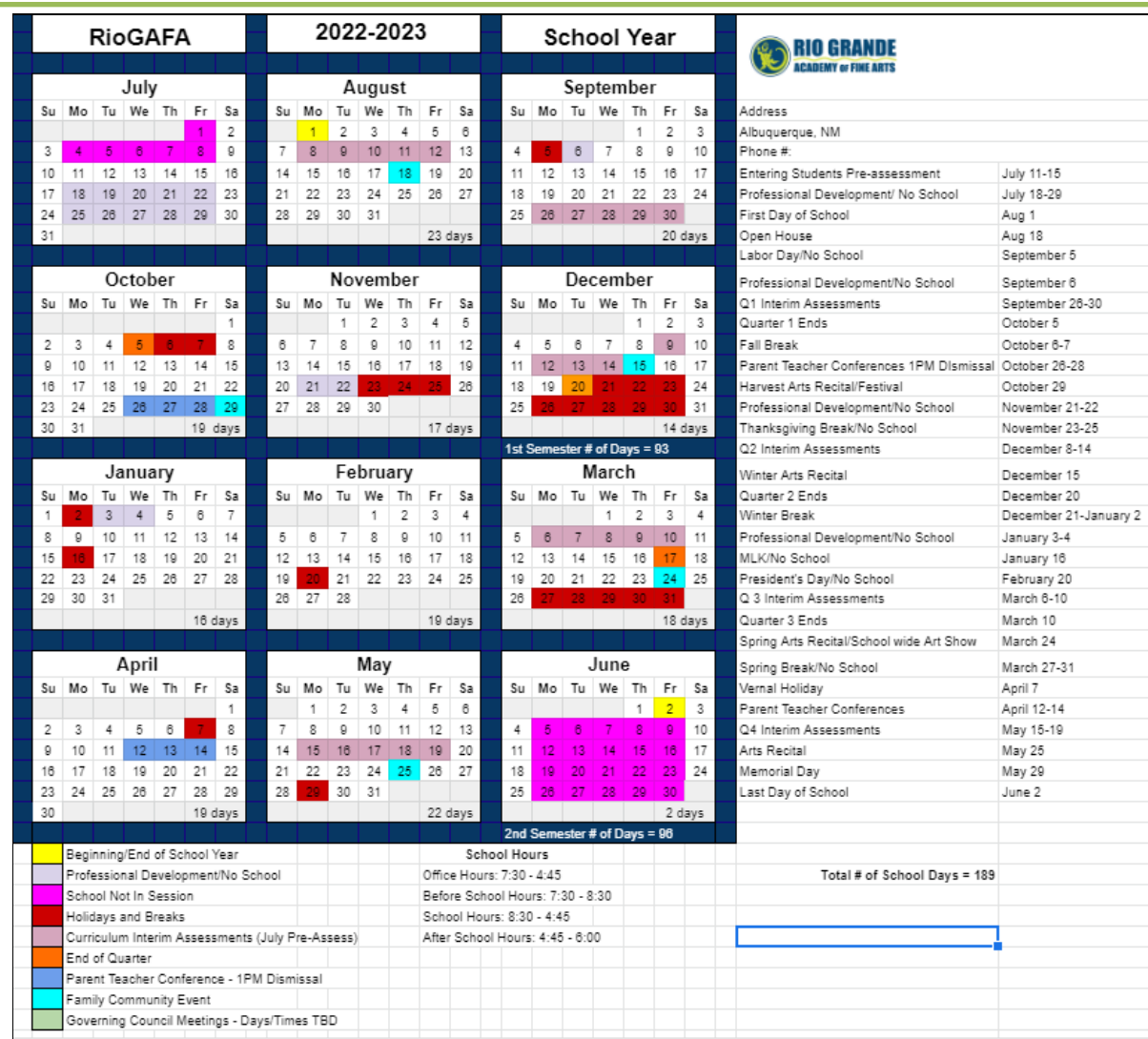


Figure 22. RioGAFA 2022-2023 SY - Year 2

RioGAFA							2023-2024							School Year										
July							August							September							Address			
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Albuquerque, NM			
						1														1	2			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31									
30	31					1 day							23 days											
1st Semester # of Days = 94																								
October							November							December							Professional Development/No School			
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	September 5			
																				1	2			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30									
29	30	31				20 days							17 days											
January							February							March							Q1 Interim Assessments			
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	September 25-29			
	1	2	3	4	5	6														1	2			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31														
16 days																							October 11	
April							May							June							Fall Break			
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	October 12-13			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30															
22 days																							October 28	
Beginning/End of School Year							School Hours							2nd Semester # of Days = 96							Professional Development/No School			
Professional Development/No School							Office Hours: 7:30 - 4:30							Total # of School Days = 190							September 25			
School Not In Session							Before School Hours: 7:30 - 8:30														Q2 Interim Assessments			
Holidays and Breaks							School Hours: 8:30 - 4:45														December 8-14			
Curriculum Interim Assessments (July Pre-Assess)							After School Hours: 4:45 - 6:00														Winter Arts Recital			
End of Quarter																					December 14			
Parent Teacher Conference - 1PM Dismissal																					Quarter 2 Ends			
Family Community Event																					December 20			
Governing Council Meetings - Days/Times TBD																					Winter Break			
																					December 21-January 4			

Annual Start and End Dates: For Year 1, RioGAFA will begin school on August 1, 2022, and conclude the school year on June 2, 2023. In Year 2, we will begin school on July 31, 2023, and our last will be May 31, 2024. Extending learning supports our mission to develop students' problem-solving skills and creative thinking through the arts. It also supports the professional development needed for our teachers.

Professional Development: Each year, our teachers will receive 15.5 days of professional development (PD), including ten days for summer PD days before the school year and five days during the school year. **Figure 21.** lists our Professional Development days. Teacher contracts will begin in Year 1 on July 1, 2022 and conclude on June 2, 2023. Year 2 Teacher contracts will begin on July 17, 2023 and conclude on May 31, 2024.

RioGAFA has high expectations for teachers. We will provide them with intentional, mission-driven professional development to support them in developing an arts-integration curriculum, instructional best practices, and culturally responsive teaching. The teacher contracted duty day will be from

8:15-3:45. Teachers will attend a staff meeting and four professional development days scheduled from 3:00-3:45. Monday afternoon will be our scheduled staff meeting. Tuesday and Wednesday will be grade-level PD, and Thursday and Friday will be our curriculum PD.

Figure 23. Professional Development Days Year 1 and 2

Professional Development Days	Date	Year
Summer Intensive	July 19-29, 2022	Year 1
Day After Labor Day	September 6, 2022	Year 1
Fall PD	November 21 & 22, 2022	Year 1
Winter PD	January 3 & 4, 2023	Year 1
End Year	June 2, 2023 - Half Day	Year 1
Summer Intensive	July 17-28, 2023	Year 2
Day After Labor Day	September 4, 2023	Year 2
Fall PD	November 20 & 21, 2023	Year 2
Winter PD	January 5 & 8, 2024	Year 2
End Year	May 31, 2024 - Half day	Year 2

Schoolwide Assessment: At the beginning of the school year and the week before the end of each quarter, students will engage in interim assessments. We have blocked off a week for interim assessments. While approximate dates have been noted about state-mandated assessments in **Section I.H.1**, we have not yet added them to our proposed calendar. The state-mandated assessments will be added to our yearly calendar as soon as we have the dates from the state. Interim Assessment dates were set to allow enough time to score and input grades for progress reports and report cards.

Figure 24. Interim Assessments

Interim Assessments	Date	Year
---------------------	------	------

Baseline Assessments	August 8-12, 2022	Year 1
End Quarter 1	September 26-30, 2022	Year 1
End Quarter 2	December 8-14, 2022	Year 1
End Quarter 3	February 28-March 3, 2023	Year 1
End Quarter 4	May 15-19, 2023	Year 1
Baseline Assessments	August 7-11, 2023	Year 2
End Quarter 1	September 25-29, 2023	Year 2
End Quarter 2	December 7-13, 2023	Year 2
End Quarter 3	March 4-8, 2024	Year 2
End Quarter 4	May 13-17, 2023	Year 2

School Days, Holidays, and Partial Days:

School Days: Students will attend school for 189 days in Year 1 and 190 days in Year 2. There will be 182 full days for Year 1 and 183 full days for year 2. Seven days of early release at 1 PM will be set for Student-led conferences. Year 1 will begin on August 1, 2022 and concludes on June 2, 2023. Year 2 will begin school on July 31, 2023 and conclude the school year on May 31, 2024.

Holidays: As advocates of school of choice we are aware that some families may have children that attend different schools. To support our families and ensure students attend schools while we are in session, we have aligned our calendar, including Holidays to the APS school calendar.

Figure 25. Holidays Off

Holiday	Date Off	Year
Labor Day	September 5, 2022	Year 1
Fall Break	October 6 & 7, 2022	Year 1
Thanksgiving	November 21-25, 2022 (students) November 23-25 (staff)	Year 1
Winter Break	December 21, 2022-January 4, 2023 (students) December 21, 2022-January 2, 2023 (staff)	Year 1

MLK	January 16, 2023	Year 1
President's Day	February 20, 2023	Year 1
Spring Break	March 27-31, 2023	Year 1
Vernal Holiday	April 7, 2023	Year 1
Memorial Day	May 29, 2023	Year 1
Labor Day	September 4, 2023	Year 2
Fall Break	October 12 & 13, 2023	Year 2
Thanksgiving	November 20-24, 2022 (students) November 22-24 (staff)	Year 2
Winter Break	December 21, 2022-January 8, 2024 (students) December 21, 2022-January 4, 2024 (staff)	Year 2
MLK	January 15, 2024	Year 2
President's Day	February 19, 2024	Year 2
Spring Break	March 25-29, 2024	Year 2
Memorial Day	May 27, 2024	Year 2

Student-Led (Parent-Teacher) Conferences: We believe that all students, including our youngest students, must take ownership of their learning and growth. One-way students can take ownership is through student-led conferences instead of parent-teacher conferences. We have scheduled fall and spring student-led conferences. Students will attend school from 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM on conference days. We have scheduled three partial days in the fall and three in the spring. Conferences will be held from 1:30 PM-6:00 PM. We will also accommodate families in need of earlier or later times as needed. Conference days are noted in our proposed school calendar in **Attachment H**.

Weekly Schedule: According to NMAC 6.10.5 and NMSA 22-2-8.1, New Mexico Public Education Department state rule for school calendar requirements states that students in kindergarten (full day) through sixth grade should be in school-directed activities, exclusive of lunch, for 5.5 hours per day for 180 instructional days. Students in grades seven through twelve should be in school-directed activities, exclusive of lunch, six hours per day for 180 instructional days. RioGAFA will have 189 (or 190) instructional days. Students will attend school for 183 full days of school from 8:30 am until 4:45 pm from Monday through Friday. We have only seven partial days of school in which students will attend school from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. The RioGAFA daily schedule is supported by our mission to

ensure that all students receive rigorous arts-integration learning to increase problem-solving and creative thinking skills.

Elementary (K-5): On a full day, elementary students will receive 120+ minutes of ELA instruction. Social studies will be integrated into the literacy block. Students will have 80 minutes of math and 70 minutes of science. Writing, also ELA, will be integrated into every content area, leading to at the very least another 30 minutes of ELA instruction (depending on the lesson). Our social-emotional learning will be integrated into our morning meeting. Students will receive 7.25 hours of instruction daily (3.7 hours for the seven partial days.). Our students will receive 5.5 hours of arts-integrated instruction, and at the end of the day, they will receive 1.75 hours of arts instruction daily.

** Note: Artistry Blocks (3:00-4:45) will be taught by teaching artists that are experts in their field and/or retired arts educators so that teachers can attend end of day PD daily. Teacher's duty day ends at 3:45. Teachers can choose to teach an elementary arts elective during Block 2 for a stipend. During Year 1 the Director(s) will teach Artistry Blocks to support the budget.*

Figure 26. Sample Overview Daily Schedule for Elementary (K-5)

Full Day

Times	Content
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-9:00 (30 min)	Morning Meeting/Choose Love (SEL)
9:00-11:00 (90 min) (K-2)	Literacy (Humanities) Structured Literacy
11:00-11:05 (5 min)	Transition to Lunch
11:05-11:50 (45 min)	Lunch and Recess (includes transition)
11:50-12:20 (30 min)	Literacy/Structured Literacy
12:20-1:30 (70 min)	Science
1:30-2:50	Math

Half Day - 7 Days

Times	Content
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-8:45 (15 min)	Morning Meeting/Choose Love (SEL)
8:45-10:30 (105 min) (K-2)	Literacy (Humanities) Structured Literacy
10:30-11:00 (30 min)	Math
11:00-11:05 (5 min)	Transaction to lunch
11:05-11:50 (45 min)	Lunch and Recess (includes transition)
11:50-12:20 (30 min)	Math
12:20-1:00	Science

(80 min)		(40 min)	
2:50-3:00 (10 min)	Snack & Passing	1:00	Dismissal
3:00-3:45 (45 min)	Artistry Block 1: Specials Rotation	1:00-6:00	Afterschool (Potential Artistry Blocks)
3:45-4:45 (60 min)	Artistry Block 2: Arts Elective		
4:45	Dismissal		
4:45-6:00 (75 min)	Afterschool		

6th Grade, Year 1: In order to support our budget, students will operate within a Humanities and Sci-Matics block schedule. Each block is 136 minutes long. Students will receive 7.45 hours of instruction daily (3.7 hours for the six partial days.). Our students will receive 4.5 hours of arts-integrated instruction, and at the end of the day, they will receive 3 hours of arts instruction. This supports our mission in ensuring that students receive rigorous instruction in both academics and the arts.

Figure 27. Sample Daily Schedules for 6th Grade (Year 1) Monday-Thursday

Full Day

Times	Content (Friday)
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-10:46 (136 min)	Humanities (Cohort 1) Sci-Matics (Cohort 2)
10:46-10:49 (3 min)	Passing
10:49-11:37 (47 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)
11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing

Half Day - 7 Days

Times	Content (Friday)
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-10:23 (113 min)	Humanities (Cohort 1) Sci-Matics (Cohort 2)
10:23-10:26 (3 min)	Passing
10:26-11:37 (66 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)
11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing

11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch	11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch
12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing	12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing
12:13-1:42 (89 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)	12:13-1:00 (47 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)
1:42-1:45 (3 min)	Passing	1:00	Dismissal
1:45-3:13 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 1	1:00-6:00	Afterschool (Potential Artistry Blocks)
3:13-3:17 (4 min)	Passing		
3:17-4:45 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 2		
4:45	Dismissal		
4:45-6:00 (75 min)	Afterschool		

Figure 28. Sample Daily Schedules for 6th Grade (Year 1) Friday

Times	Content (Friday)	Times	Content (Friday)
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast	7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-9:00 (30 min)	Choose Love (SEL) 1st Period Class	8:30-8:45 (15 min)	Choose Love (SEL) 1st Period Class
9:00-11:00 (120 min)	Humanities (Cohort 1) Sci-Matics (Cohort 2)	8:45-10:35 (110 min)	Humanities (Cohort 1) Sci-Matics (Cohort 2)
11:00-11:03 (3 min)	Passing	10:35-10:38 (3 min)	Passing
11:03-11:37 (32 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)	10:38-11:37 (59 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)

11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing	11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing
11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch	11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch
12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing	12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing
12:13-1:42 (89 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)	12:13-1:00 (47 min)	Sci-Matics (Cohort 1) Humanities (Cohort 2)
1:42-1:45 (3 min)	Passing	1:00	Dismissal
1:45-3:13 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 1	1:00-6:00	Afterschool (Potential Artistry Blocks)
3:13-3:17 (4 min)	Passing		
3:17-4:45 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 2		
4:45	Dismissal		

Secondary (6-12, Year 2+): Beginning in Year 2, secondary students will operate on an A/B block schedule that will run on a two-week rotation. Monday and Wednesdays are an A schedule, while Tuesdays and Thursdays are a B schedule. Monday-Thursdays students' classes are 90 minutes long. Fridays will rotate A/B and classes are 75 minutes to adjust for our social-emotional learning curriculum. On short days students will attend classes for 75 minutes on Monday-Thursday and 70 minutes on short Fridays. Students will receive 7.4 hours of instruction daily (3.7 hours for the seven partial days.). Our students will receive 4.5 hours of arts-integrated instruction, and at the end of the day, they will receive 3 hours of arts instruction. This supports our mission in ensuring that students receive rigorous instruction in both academics and the arts

** Note: Artistry Blocks (1:45-4:45) will be taught by teaching artists that are experts in their field and/or retired arts educators so that teachers can attend end of day PD daily. Teacher's duty day ends at 3:45. Teachers can choose to teach an elementary arts elective during Block 2 for a stipend. During Year 1 the Director(s) will teach Artistry Blocks to support the budget.*

Figure 29. Sample Daily Schedules for Secondary (Year 2+) Monday-Thursday

Full Day - 182 Days (Year 1), 183 (Year 2)

Half Day - 7 Days (Year 1 & 2)

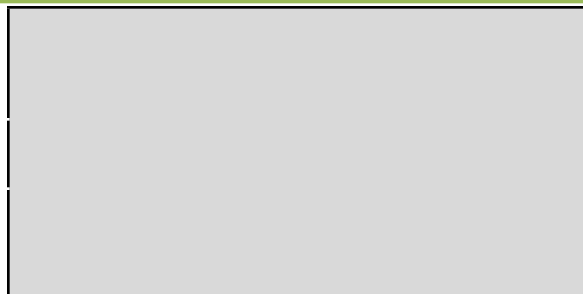
Times	Content (M-Th)	Times	Content (M-Th)
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast	7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-10:46 (136 min)	Period 1/Period 2 (i.e. Literature/Social Studies)	8:30-10:23 (113 min)	Period 1/Period 2 (i.e. Literature/Social Studies)
10:46-10:49 (3 min)	Passing	10:23-10:26 (3 min)	Passing
10:49-11:37 (47 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)	10:26-11:37 (66 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)
11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing	11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing
11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch	11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch
12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing	12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing
12:13-1:42 (89 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)	12:13-1:00 (47 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)
1:42-1:45 (3 min)	Passing	1:00	Dismissal
1:45-3:13 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 1	1:00-6:00	Afterschool (Potential Artistry Blocks)
3:13-3:17 (4 min)	Passing		
3:17-4:45 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 2		
4:45	Dismissal		
4:45-6:00 (75 min)	Afterschool		

Figure 30. Sample Daily Schedules for Secondary (Year 2+) Fridays**Full Day - 182 Days (Year 1), 183 (Year 2)****Half Day - 7 Days (Year 1 & 2)**

Fridays with Choose Love Curriculum

Times	Content (Friday)	Times	Content (Friday)
7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast	7:00-8:30 (90 min)	Morning Program/Breakfast
8:30-9:00 (30 min)	Choose Love (SEL) 1st Period Class	8:30-8:45 (15 min)	Choose Love (SEL) 1st Period Class
9:00-11:00 (120 min)	Period 1/Period 2 (i.e. Literature/Social Studies)	8:45-10:35 (110 min)	Period 1/Period 2 (i.e. Literature/Social Studies)
11:00-11:03 (3 min)	Passing	10:35-10:38 (3 min)	Passing
11:03-11:37 (32 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)	10:38-11:37 (59 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)
11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing	11:37-11:40 (3 min)	Passing
11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch	11:40-12:10 (30 min)	Lunch
12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing	12:10-12:13 (3 min)	Passing
12:13-1:42 (89 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)	12:13-1:00 (47 min)	Period 3/Period 4 (i.e. Math/Science)
1:42-1:45 (3 min)	Passing	1:00	Dismissal
1:45-3:13 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 1	1:00-6:00	Afterschool (Potential Artistry Blocks)
3:13-3:17 (4 min)	Passing		

3:17-4:45 (88 min)	Elective Artistry Block 2
4:45	Dismissal
4:45-6:00 (75 min)	Afterschool



RioGAFA students will attend an average of 115 more minutes of learning each day than the local public schools. This equates to an average of 58 more days of learning each school year. For a student that starts with us in Kindergarten, by the end of 5th grade, the student will have gained learning equal to 1.8 academic years. By the end of 8th grade, the student will have gained 2.76 academic years total. A student that attends RioGAFA from Kindergarten through graduation will have gained almost 4 academic years of learning than the average APS student.

Calendar and Schedule Support for the Educational Program

Our annual calendar and daily schedule align with our mission of assurance time for arts-integration, exploration of the arts, and closing the achievement gap. As a culturally and community-minded school, we have also purposefully aligned our start and end dates and Winter and Spring Break with the district to support families with students in other schools. RioGAFA believes deeply in school choice and wants to support our families with multiple children in different schools.

With our proposed extended day, elementary students will receive 7.25 hours, and secondary students will receive 7.4 hours of instruction daily. This is a total of 1352.65 hours for elementary and 452.65 hours more than required by NMAC 6.10.5 and NMSA 22-2-8.1. Secondary students will attend 1379.8 hours of instruction which is 299.8 hours more than required by state statute. Our extended day will support our mission by:

1. Ensuring students an arts-rich education. Students with an education rich in the arts have historically earned higher grade point averages and scored higher on the SAT than students without arts education. These gains hold regardless of socioeconomic status, which means that when at-risk students receive an arts education, it helps close the achievement gap.
2. Assuring no content area is sacrificed, and students have sufficient time to meet both the NM Common Core State Standards and NM Core Arts Standards.
3. Allowing teachers collaboration time while contracted local professional artists teach students. This time will include professional development to develop an arts-focused lens, develop and calibrate rubrics for assessment, and look at student work and data to make informed instructional decisions.

We believe that with our yearly and daily calendars, we will be able to provide equitable options and opportunities to our target population that they currently do not have.

Budget Support for the School Calendar

RioGAFA's yearly calendar and daily schedule are supported and exemplified in the budget through various line items described in the 5-Year Budget Plan. These line items include professional development for the Summer Intensive, designated PD days and weekly PD (Function:1000, Object:53330), Assessment (Function:1000, Object:53330), and daily Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner program (Function:1000, Object:53330).

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Include a yearly calendar that identifies the following:
 - Annual start date and end date
 - Teacher professional development days and times
 - School-wide assessment periods
 - School days, holidays, and partial days
 - Teacher parent conferences;
- Include a daily schedule that identifies the following:
 - Instructional times
 - Break times
 - Start and end times
 - Differences in the daily schedule for full and partial days;
- Meet all minimum hour (total instructional time) requirements laid out in NMSA 22-2-8.1;
- Describe how the calendar and schedule support the proposed school's educational program;
- Describe how the calendar and schedule are optimal for achieving high outcomes for the anticipated student population;
- Describe the extended learning time programs to improve academic success of students and professional learning of teachers;
- If this is an elementary school, and you are participating in k-5 plus or extended learning program, describe the k-5 plus program and extended learning program and provide your calendar for year 2; and
- Be supported by the proposed budget found in the Financial Framework section of the application.

While RioGAFA's calendar and schedule were well put together, they do not provide adequate explanation for the long periods proposed for younger elementary aged students. It would be helpful to see an example schedule for a class session to ensure student success. Students are not given many breaks, have short lunch periods, and are expected to sit through long periods of instructional time (i.e. 100 min class sessions), which does not appear to create an environment for optimal learning. The lack of balance between breaks and instructional time is also carried over into teacher schedules, which could produce "teacher burnout."

Furthermore, in years 1+2, the SCG has funding for the K-5 program and the ELTP program but these days are not reflected on the academic calendar. In addition, the amount of days proposed vs. the amount of days scheduled on the calendar do not match in these years as well.

F. (3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** explanation of how the educational philosophy, instructional methods, and yearly calendar and daily schedule will be effective with the anticipated student population.

Demographics of the Community:

RioGAFA's targeted community is Albuquerque's Westside (zip codes 87114, 87120, and 87121). However, as a charter school, we will be open to all students in Albuquerque and the surrounding area. All families wishing to send their child to RioGAFA will be encouraged to apply and have an equal opportunity through our lottery process. We are dedicated to serving the Albuquerque community with a high-quality, well-balanced curriculum of rigorous academics and the arts. For data purposes, we will focus on Albuquerque's Westside in the zip codes: 87114, 87120, and 87121 and nearby zip code 87124, Rio Rancho. We selected the Westside of Albuquerque due to the diverse and wide-ranged demographics across the area and believe that the Westside would benefit from the arts and cultural opportunities and rigorous academics that RioGAFA will offer.

As the RioGAFA Founding Team began considering Albuquerque's Westside, we researched the demographics of the area, the student population that the school would be serving, current attendance and truancy rates, and proficiency rates from the schools within our targeted zip codes. **Figure 30 and 31** compare Albuquerque's Westside to those of the City of Albuquerque as a whole and those of the 87124 zip code in Rio Rancho that is immediately north to the Westside. The demographic data in our target community zip codes are good indicators for the overall student population that we anticipate serving.

It is important to note that there are significant differences in median income, poverty levels, and Spanish-speaking families between NW Albuquerque and SW Albuquerque. In NW Albuquerque (87114), the median income is \$69,202, 10.2% of households live below poverty lines, and 19% are Spanish-speaking homes. However, in SW Albuquerque (87121), the median income is \$44,146. There are 20.3% of families living below the poverty line, and 59% are Spanish-speaking households.

Figure 31. Comparative Demographics⁴⁴

Demographics	Targeted Zip Codes (87114, 87120, 87121)	City of Albuquerque	Nearby 87124 (Rio Rancho)
Median Income	\$54,517	\$51,099	\$61,767
% of Families Below Poverty Level	16.1%	18.21%	9.50%
% of High School Diplomas or Higher for Adults 25+	88%	89.3%	91.30%
% of Bachelor's Degrees or Higher for Adults 25+	25.2%	33.2%	29%

⁴⁴ Profile. (2021, April 20). Retrieved from <https://censusreporter.org/>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

Unemployment Level	7.7%	7.7%	5.60%
Spanish Speaking Households	29%	22%	18%

Figure 32. Demographics by Race and Zip Code⁴⁵

Demographics	Targeted Zip Codes (87114, 87120, 87121)	City of Albuquerque	Nearby 87124 (Rio Rancho)
Hispanic	62%	50%	42%
White	29%	38%	49%
American Indian	3.3%	5%	2%
Black & African American	2.7%	3%	2%
Asian	1.3%	3%	2%
Other	1.7%	1%	3%

Albuquerque **Figure 33** displays the total enrollment of schools in our targeted zip codes, APS, and Rio Rancho districts by ethnicity and then the percentage of students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, and students identified as economically disadvantaged. We also looked at attendance and truancy rates.

Figure 33. Student Demographics by Zip Code

Demographics		APS* (87114, 87120, 87121)	Albuquerque Public Schools †	Rio Rancho Public Schools 87124**
Student Ethnicity	Hispanic	73.9%	66.7%	58.7%
	Caucasian/White	14.9%	19.%	30.2%
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	4.6%	5.2%	5.2%
	Black & African	2.3%	2.6%	2.7%

⁴⁵ Profile. (2021, April 20). Retrieved from <https://censusreporter.org/>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

	American			
	Asian	1.4%	2.2%	1.8%
	Two or More	2.9%	3.4%	1.3%
Economically Disadvantaged		68.79%	64.9%	Unknown
English Language Learners		16.8%	16.5%	5.1%
Students with Disabilities		18.3%	20%	14.5%
Attendance		94.68%	94.1%	Unknown
Chronic Absenteeism		22.3%	24%	Unknown

*https://public.tableau.com/views/EnrollmentandDemographicInformation/Overall?:showVizHome=no&:display_count=y&publish=yes&:origin=viz_share_link#3

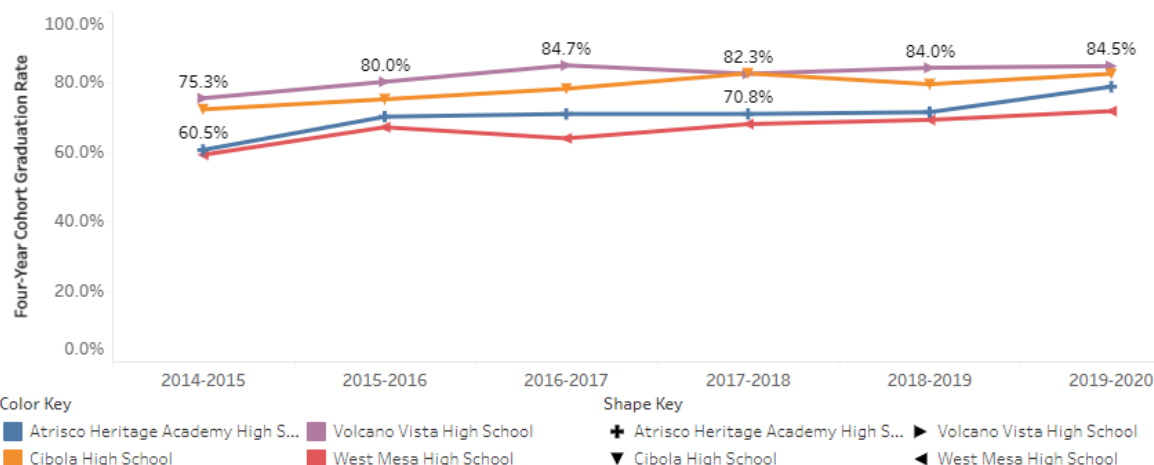
† <https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1Ve6R3W682bUmUs3KK4LcDyi9d459IVcdEr8PLAfldjs/edit>

**https://www.rpps.net/district/school_information/school_profiles

Analysis [Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, Attendance and Truancy Trends]: Based on the above data, RioGAFA anticipates a richly diverse student body composed of students from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. 68.8% of students on Albuquerque Westside qualify for free or reduced lunch. Schools on the Westside range from 39.6% qualifying to 100% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. On average, the Albuquerque Public School (APS) district serves a population of 16.5% of English Language Learners. This is slightly higher in our targeted area, with 16.8% of English Language Learners. Schools in the 87121-zip code are significantly higher, with 24% of students identifying as English Language Learners. We continue to see the trend of students in the 87121-zip code with disabilities. As a whole, the Westside of Albuquerque has fewer students identified with disabilities. However, when we pull the numbers for just 87121 schools, 22.4 % of students are identified with disabilities.

APS has an overall attendance rate of 94%, with 24% of students chronically absent. In our targeted zip codes, the average is pretty close to APS' rates; however, in the 87121, attendance rates dropped in Middle and High School to 93.25% and 92.9%, respectively. Chronic absenteeism rises in the 87121 area to 35.6% in middle school and 36.8% in high school.

Figure 34. Graduation Rates for 87114, 87120, 87121 High School 2014-2019*



https://public.tableau.com/views/EnrollmentandDemographicInformation/Overall?:showVizHome=no&:display_count=y&publish=yes&:origin=viz_share_link#3

Graduation Rates: Graduation rates have been steadily increasing within APS and at the four high schools in our targeted zip codes since 2014. We believe we can do better and have set a goal for a 100% graduation rate. Allowing students to create an individualized path in the arts will be their driving force.

Educational proficiency based upon enrollment at the school:

The most current data that we have to work off of is the 2019 TAMELA Proficiency Rates⁴⁶. The effects of school shutdowns and remote learning are still not fully known. During the planning year, the Director(s) will continue to research the effects. However, the founders of RioGAFA understand that while there will be gaps in learning from the pandemic, we acknowledge that there is an achievement gap regardless. We are committed to closing that gap through our arts-integrated, and arts enhanced educational program. **Figures 35-38.** displays the TAMELA proficiency scores for Albuquerque Public Schools and the schools in our targeted area, giving us an understanding of the achievement gaps, we expect to encounter.

Figure 35. 2019 District TAMELA Proficiency Rates

Districts	ELA	Math	Science	% Free and Reduced Lunch
Albuquerque	30%	20%	30%	66.4%
Rio Rancho	43%	31%		Unknown

* Due to the pandemic, Rio Rancho currently has listed that all schools are receiving free and reduced lunches.

⁴⁶ Achievement Data. (2021, January 19). Retrieved November 8, 2020, from <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/accountability/achievement-data/>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

Figure 36. 2019 Elementary TAMELA Proficiency Rates

Schools in 87114, 87120, 87121	ELA	Math	Science	% Free and Reduced Lunch
7 Bar Loop	27.30%	25.30%	9.60%	51.10%
Alamosa	34.40%	32.60%	10.50%	46.10%
Carlos Rey	14.80%	11.60%	3.40%	99.1%
Chamiza Elementary	28%	30.10%	23.30%	42.20%
Chaparral	24.30%	19.60%	4.60%	98.50%
Christine Duncan (APS Charter)	8.50%	7%	1.90%	100%
Edward Gonzales	11.40%	10.80%	7.70%	99.80%
George I Sanchez	17%	9.10%	3%	99.80%
Helen Cordero	34.40%	32.60%	10.50%	99.30%
Marie Hughes	21%	18.24%	8.09%	72.27%
Mary Ann Binford	16%	14.50%	2.10%	99.10%
Painted Sky	20.10%	18.30%	14.80%	54.90%
Petroglyph	40%	40.70%	5.80%	43.80%
Rudolfo Anaya	13.20%	12.60%	3.20%	96.70%
Sierra Vista	27.4%	29.70%	3.80%	57.20%
SR Marmon	13.80%	10.90%	3.40%	99.40%
Sunset View	37.50%	33%	8.50%	39.20%
Tierra Antigua	41.50%	47.20%	10%	26.70%
Tres Volcanes Community Collaborative	25%	21.60%	4.80%	59.80%
Ventana Ranch	40.60%	44.10%	14.30%	39.60%
TOTAL	24.67%	23.48%	7.66%	69.76%

Figure 37. 2019 Middle School TAMELA Proficiency Rates

Schools in 87114, 87120, 87121	ELA	Math	Science	% Free and Reduced Lunch
James Monroe	25.60%	20.80%	2%	49.80%

Jimmy Carter	9.70%	3.00%	0%	99.50%
LBJohnson	27.30%	20.15%	3.80%	51.10%
Tony Hillerman	34.40%	25.10%	7%	37.80%
Truman	12.70%	5.90%	1.10%	99.90%
Total	21.94%	14.99%	3%	67.62%

Figure 38. 2019 High School TAMELA Proficiency Rates

Schools in 87114, 87120, 87121`	ELA	Math	Science	% Free and Reduced Lunch
Atrisco Heritage	26.60%	4.70%	1.90%	100%
Cibola	50.80%	23.30%	8.20%	41.50%
Volcano Vista	42.10%	24.70%	6.50%	34.80%
West Mesa	27.10%	6.20%	2.90%	99.30%
Total	36.65%	14.73%	4.88%	69%

Special Factors: Based on the data and demographics throughout Albuquerque, Albuquerque's Westside, and nearby 87124, the RioGAFA Founding Team anticipates a richly diverse student body composed of students with various cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. 100% of schools in SW Albuquerque (87121) are Title 1 schools, while only 47% of schools in NW Albuquerque (87114, 87120) are Title 1. Through our curriculum and educational program, we will celebrate and meet the academic needs of what we believe will be a diverse population.

Educational Philosophy which Meets Students' Needs: Our educational philosophy that all students deserve a well-rounded, equitable, balanced, culturally linguistic, and civic-minded education will meet student's needs by giving students a standards-based art-integrated education. Our proposed instructional program has been designed using a research-based art-integrated curriculum and informed by the known success of arts-based schools. One school network, the A+ Schools of North Carolina, established in 1995, is the nation's "*longest-running, arts-based whole-school reform model*"⁴⁷. Their model weaves the arts into every aspect of student learning. A+ schools have seen an overall increase in student proficiency, with students from low-income families, identified disabilities, or English language learners showing the most significant and quickest gains in student achievement. Successful A+ schools also report improved attendance, fewer disciplinary problems, higher teacher satisfaction, and more significant community and family involvement levels⁴⁸. RioGAFA is committed

⁴⁷ A+ Schools as a Change Agent. (n.d.). Retrieved March 4, 2021, from <https://www.ncarts.org/aplus-schools/impact/schools-change-agent>

⁴⁸ A+ Schools as a Change Agent. (n.d.). Retrieved March 4, 2021, from <https://www.ncarts.org/aplus-schools/impact/schools-change-agent>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

to bridging the "opportunity gap" to close the achievement gaps we see in student learning through the arts.

Instructional Methods which Meet Students' Needs: As demonstrated in sections above, RioGAFA's proposed instructional methods are culturally linguistically responsive and based on evidenced-based and high-performing schools' instructional best practices. Our program will be an inclusive school with the goal of improving academic and social-emotional outcomes for all learners, including "at-risk" students. Using the Relay Graduate School for Education model for Observation and Feedback and Weekly Data Meetings, we will coach educators to deliver tier 1 instruction that meets the needs of diverse learners. Our coaching model will coach teachers to deliver high-quality instruction, implement high-quality instructional and behavioral interventions, and analyze data with every learner in mind. Modifications and adjustments to the instructional delivery will be based on student performance. Regular classroom instruction will be supported through whole group, small group, or one-on-one instruction and be based on the needs of all students.

Calendar and Daily Schedule which Meet Students' Needs: As seen in the data above, student achievement throughout Albuquerque is low. Only 27.8% (30% all APS) of students are currently proficient in English language arts and 17.7% (20% all APS) in math on Albuquerque's Westside.

One way to ensure that students achieve higher levels of success is to improve opportunities for students⁴⁹. The RioGAFA extended day and calendar has been built to ensure all students have the opportunities they deserve. RioGAFA's annual calendar consists of 189 instructional days, compared to Albuquerque Public Schools' 178 days. Elementary students will receive 7.25 hours, and secondary students will receive 7.4 hours of instruction daily. This is longer than New Mexico's required hours of 5.5 hours for elementary and 6 hours instruction. Our extended calendar and day:

- Ensures students have the opportunity for an arts-rich education. Students with an education rich in the arts have historically earned higher grade point averages and scored higher on the SAT than students without arts education. These gains hold regardless of socioeconomic status, which means that when at-risk students receive an arts education, it helps close the achievement gap.
- Assures that no content area is sacrificed, and students have sufficient time to meet both the NM Common Core State Standards and NM Core Arts Standards.
- Allows teachers collaboration and coaching time while contracted local professional artists teach students. This time will include professional development to develop an arts-focused lens, develop and calibrate rubrics for assessment, and look at student work and data to make informed instructional decisions.

⁴⁹ Mooney, T. (2018, September 11). Why We Say "Opportunity Gap" Instead of "Achievement Gap". Retrieved January 7, 2021, from <https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/why-we-say-opportunity-gap-instead-of-achievement-gap#:~:text=“Opportunity gap” refers to the best of their potential.>

We believe that the additional learning time is the best way RioGAFA can ensure fair, equitable opportunities for all students. If students from all backgrounds are given access to exceptional academic and cultural opportunities, we believe that we close the achievement gap⁵⁰.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the anticipated student population, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic information based on the local community population Educational proficiency based upon enrollment at the school Attendance and truancy trends English language proficiency At-Risk Students Special Educational needs; Explain any special factors influencing the makeup of the anticipated student population; Explain how the educational philosophy has been designed to meet students' needs; Explain how the instructional methods have been designed to meet students' needs and specifically how they will meet the needs of at-risk students; and Explain how the yearly calendar and daily schedule have been designed to meet students' needs.

RioGAFA addresses their community demographics and explain how, as a school, they will work to meet the special needs of the population.

G. Special Populations.

This includes those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) English Language Learners (ELLs), Native American Students, Hispanic Students, and Bilingual and Multicultural educational needs to improve student outcomes.

G. (1) Special Education.

⁵⁰ Mooney, T. (2018, September 11). Why We Say "Opportunity Gap" Instead of "Achievement Gap". Retrieved January 7, 2021, from <https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/why-we-say-opportunity-gap-instead-of-achievement-gap#:~:text=“Opportunity gap” refers to the best of their potential.>

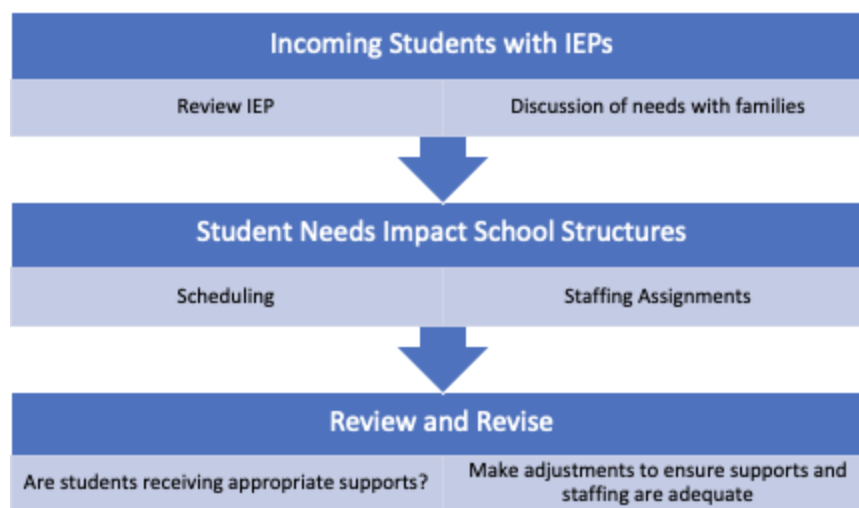
G. (1a) Provide a **clear, cohesive, and comprehensive** description of how the proposed school will provide required instructional services/supports to students with IEPs. Ensure you address both students with disabilities and students classified as gifted.

Identify and Provide Instructional Supports and Services to Students with Disabilities

RioGAFA is dedicated to ensuring all students, including those with disabilities, gifted students, and students who are struggling academically, are provided with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that includes the supports and resources needed to successfully engage in a variety of arts and while achieving their academic potential. All students will participate in a rigorous academic curriculum to prepare them to be successful after high school. The foundational components of the school, including RioGAFA's arts-integrated curriculum, provide a built-in opportunity for differentiation with both flexibilities in product outcomes and multiple means of learning content. Key components of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), including options for (student) engagement, representation (of content), and action and expression, are organically integrated into the curriculum.

When students initially enroll in RioGAFA, previous school records will be requested, as appropriate. In addition, RioGAFA will discuss the previous programming, including special education and gifted services, with enrolled families. RioGAFA will obtain previous records and implement IEPs or other programming as appropriate. The Director of Academics will also serve as the Special Education Coordinator (for the first few years) and oversee these record transfers and special education aspects.

Figure 39. Incoming Students with IEP



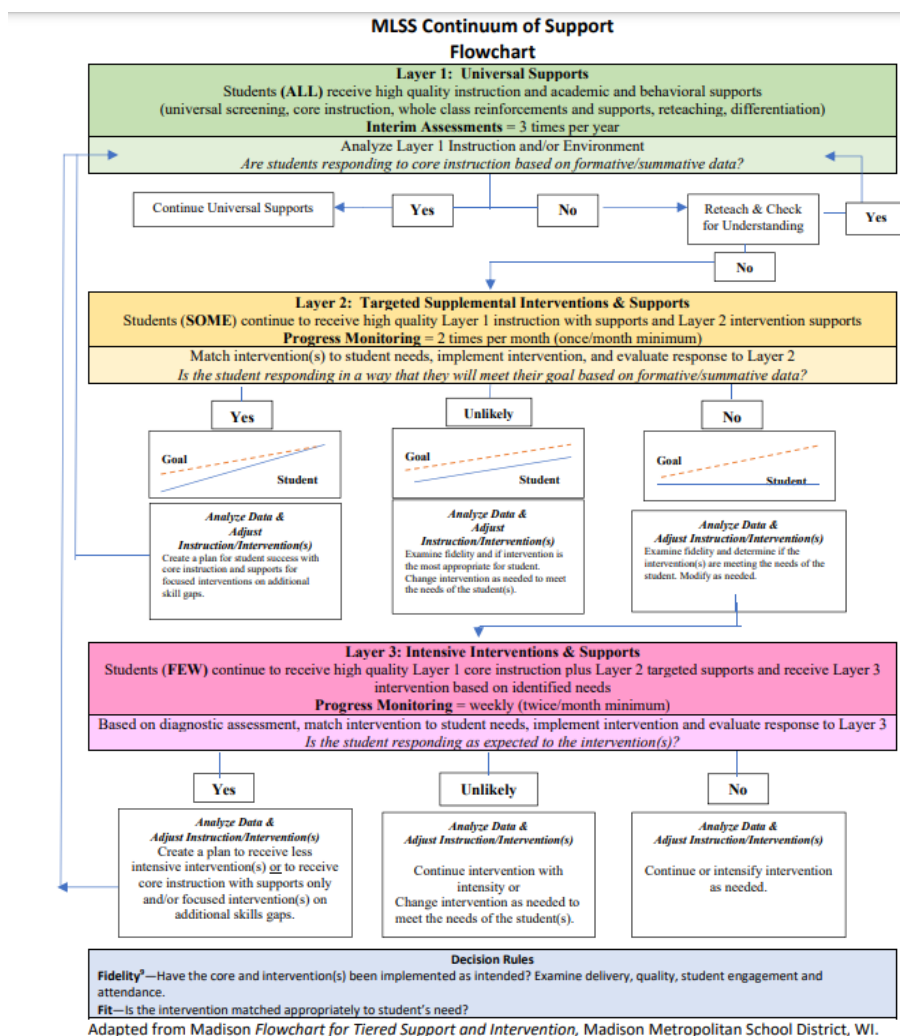
For students already identified with disabilities, RioGAFA will develop Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), annually, or more often, as appropriate, using objective, present levels of academic and functional performance (PLAFPs), to develop goals that support student growth while providing accommodations and modifications to ensure equal access to and progress in the general education curriculum. Students suspected of having a disability or students who are struggling academically will be supported through Child Find procedures outlined below. All applicable state and federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 Of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and New Mexico Administrative Code (6.31.2 NMAC) will be followed in both letter and spirit.

Child Find requirements will be addressed by early screening primary age students, in addition to teacher recommendations and ongoing analysis of school data. New Mexico's Multi-Layered Systems of Support (MLSS) will be the foundation for providing timely student supports in response to the classroom and school data. MLSS provides the opportunity for all students to receive any level of required supports. Students with identified disabilities have access to all supports at levels one, two, and three, in addition to specially designed instruction, as determined by their individual plan (IEP or 504). Students without identified disabilities also have access to all levels of intervention as needed and may move from layer to layer as determined by data.

Additionally, fluid intervention groups to address remediation, enrichment, and acceleration will be provided in core academic areas as determined by classroom data. These fluid groupings will be designed to meet the needs of individual students. Using a combination of special education teachers, gifted endorsed teachers, dual-licensed teachers, and educational assistants, RioGAFA will implement various co-teaching models to provide effective, inclusive supports to all students, primarily in the general education classroom, the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Students will only be removed

from the general education environment when student needs cannot be adequately addressed in the general education setting, with inclusive supports. A continuum of educational settings and services will be available to address the variety of RioGAFAs student needs. The Founding Team is committed to ensuring each student's individual needs are considered and addressed when determining schedules, staffing, and operational needs.

Figure 40. MLSS Continuum of Support Flowchart⁵¹



Identify Eligibility for an IEP and Ensure ELLs are Not Over Identified with Disabilities

Students requiring consistent, intensive supports (i.e., Layer 3 supports) may be referred to the Student Assistance Team (SAT). Once referred to SAT, targeted academic and/or behavioral interventions will be paired with progress monitoring and collaborative meetings with school staff and families to determine next steps, including possible referral to and evaluation for special education, in alignment with NMAC 6.31.2.10. An example of this process is below:

⁵¹ MLSS Continuum of Support Flowchart [Pdf]. (2020). Santa Fe: NMPED.

1. The student is consistently provided with Layer 3 supports and continues to make slower than expected progress.
2. The teacher contacts the SAT Coordinator and receives initial referral paperwork.
3. The teacher completes initial referral paperwork, identifying all areas of concern and providing comprehensive intervention data to date. Initial referral is submitted to the SAT Coordinator.
4. SAT Coordinator requests vision and hearing screening from the school nurse and completes a classroom observation.
5. SAT Coordinator sets up an initial meeting with family and teacher.
6. SAT meets and develops interventions for each area of concern. Interventions are conducted for nine weeks, and progress monitoring data is collected.
7. SAT reconvenes to analyze progress monitoring data and determine the effectiveness of interventions.
 - a. Option 1- continue interventions
 - b. Option 2- change interventions
 - c. Option 3- discontinue interventions- student no longer requires
8. Given Options 1 or 2, SAT reconvenes after another nine weeks of intervention to analyze progress monitoring data and determine the effectiveness of interventions.
 - a. Option 1- continue interventions
 - b. Option 2- change interventions
 - c. Option 3- discontinue interventions- student no longer requires
 - d. Option 4- Student referral to special education
9. Given options 1 or 2, repeat Step 8.
10. Given option 4, SAT Coordinator meets with Director of Academics (later the Special Education Coordinator) and Diagnostician/School Psychologist to review SAT referral and ensure completeness.
11. If the referral is complete, special education personnel will obtain informed consent for evaluation. The evaluation must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date of informed consent.
12. A determination of eligibility meeting is scheduled and, if appropriate, an IEP.

Spectrum of Needs

RioGAFA is committed to ensuring that culturally and linguistically diverse students and students who have not received adequate schooling will not be improperly identified as students with disabilities. Both MLSS and the New Mexico Technical Evaluation and Assessment Manual (NMTEAM) ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity must be ruled out as a primary factor for underachievement. Additionally, bilingual (or multilingual) evaluations are required if linguistic diversity is a factor for an individual student. The use of the MLSS supports interventions will ensure that RioGAFA students are provided the support needed to be successful in school regardless of special education status. MLSS provides all levels of support to all students, which means that students who are culturally and linguistically diverse can continue to receive interventions to address both linguistic and academic needs prior to referral and while in the SAT process. Sheltered Instruction and embedded English

Learner (EL) supports in the classrooms will also ensure that students receive language supports throughout their day, in addition to specific EL programming.

Students identified as gifted or who demonstrate a need for enrichment will also have access to various acceleration opportunities, enrichment groups, and differentiated instruction. Need will be determined by data and school records so that any child with or without a gifted identification can receive these supports. Likewise, any student with a gifted eligibility who demonstrates a need for remediation will also have access to appropriate supports to both remediate skills and provide enrichment or acceleration. IEP development, as described above, will also apply to gifted students, and RioGAFA teachers will provide specially designed instruction to address students' unique educational needs.

Ensure Students with Disabilities have Access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education

Finally, as defined by section 300.34 of the IDEA, related services will be available as determined by students' IEPs. According to IDEA, related services are provided when students require specialized supports to benefit from special education. This includes positions such as social workers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists. These related services personnel also address early childhood Child Find requirements. Related service providers will also focus on providing supports to ensure access to and progress in the general education curriculum.

In summary, the supports and expectations outlined above ensure a FAPE for each student, taking into account documented and undocumented learning differences and addressing each student's needs through carefully and thoughtfully planned and executed whole group, small group, and targeted instruction. RioGAFA believes that all educators are responsible for teaching all students, meaning that a team must approach students' educations.

Figure 41. Responsibilities of Directors, Teachers and Staff

Person(s) Responsible	Specific Responsibilities
Director of Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PD and training around differentiated instruction, MLSS, and the SAT process ● Observe teachers for use of interventions ● Data meetings with teachers to plan and train for re-teaches, interventions, and appropriate scaffolding ● Oversee that students are evaluated within 60 days ● Oversees student data ● Lead IEP meetings
Director of Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oversee records transfers ● Oversee maintenance of student records
Classroom Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement Layered interventions (Layer 1 all students, Layer 2 some students, Layer 3 fewer students)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actively monitors all students, collects and documents data ● Refer to SAT Coordinator if student has consistent Layer 3 interventions and shows little to no growth ● Differentiate instruction for all students (including students identified as gifted) ● Communication with the parent/guardian
SAT Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requests hearing and vision screening ● Sets initial meeting ● Develops interventions for each area of concern ● Collects data from students that have entered the SAT process ● Continues cycle of meetings with data looking at the results of interventions ● Refers to Director of Academics (later Special Education Coordinator) if slow or no growth.
Special Education Teachers/Case Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement Layered interventions (Layer 1 all students, Layer 2 some students, Layer 3 fewer students) ● Actively monitors all students, collects and documents data ● Refer to SAT Coordinator if student has consistent Layer 3 interventions and shows little to no growth ● Support with training of differentiated instruction, interventions and appropriate scaffolding ● Provide opportunities for gifted students to excel
Administrative Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request for records ● Organization and maintaining student records ● Call and schedule meetings with parent/guardian

Professional Development

Teachers will receive professional development around highly effective instructional strategies, including co-teaching and differentiation and special education-specific training as needed. Summer professional development and in-service training will be focused on developing teacher capacity (e.g., to provide meaningful, inclusive education), provide specific guidance regarding individual student needs, and address other needs as they arise. Again, it is the expectation that all educators work with all students and provide professional support to one another based on their areas of expertise, experience, and position.

Recruiting and retaining qualified special education teachers and dual licensed teachers is vital to being able to provide the necessary learning supports for all students with IEPs. Thus, providing concrete training and support opportunities for special education teachers will be a key staffing strategy for RioGAFA. Special education, dual licensed, and general education teachers will be provided with in-school professional development specific to not only students with disabilities, but for all students, including students identified as gifted. They will also be encouraged to take continuing education courses in special education and advanced education, in support of both special

and gifted education students. Starting in Year 2, the Director(s) and Business Manager will work to provide stipends for teachers willing to take extra classes and are willing to go back to school to become dual licensed in both special education and general education.

School staff will receive training on special education laws, MLSS, the IEP process, instructional strategies and interventions for specific disabilities, PBIS, and behavior de-escalation techniques. This will not only help our school to meet all legal requirements and remain compliant, it will also elevate everyone's ability to serve our students in the best and safest ways possible.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the proposed school will identify and provide instructional supports and services to students with disabilities, who have IEPs or are eligible for an IEP; • Describe how the proposed school will ensure that students who are ELs are not over-identified as students with disabilities; • Describe how the proposed school will identify and provide instructional supports and services to gifted students who have IEPs or are eligible for an IEP; • Describe how the school will address the spectrum of needs that students with IEPs may present; • Describe the steps to ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education; • Identify specific responsibilities for school staff, classroom teachers, and special education staff; and • Identify specific training and support that will be provided to teachers and school staff to ensure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities.

RioGAFA has a standard plan for the identification of IEPs. The school has identified general procedures to rule out language as a factor as identified in the NM TEAM manual. However, there is not a viable process to rule out language. The plan does not provide how SAT will approach ACCESS scores. The processes of sheltered instruction will be embedded into the school day but they do not provide examples of how students in need of intensive language intervention will be prioritized. In addition, the application does not specify the responsibilities of the SPED staff outside of standard job responsibilities and it is also concerning that they do not identify a special education coordinator. More concerning is the scope of work required of the Director of Academics, which according to job description, is in charge of compliance for Special Education. This is a massive undertaking along with leading the school in an arts integrated curriculum. Given the broad scope of this position, it is concerning that the director can ensure the identification, renewal, and IEP process while tending to all the other duties in an arts focused school.

G. (1b) Provide a **clear, cohesive, and comprehensive** description of how the proposed school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure

attainment of IEP goals. Ensure you address both students with disabilities and students classified as gifted.

Evaluating and Monitoring Progress and Success of Special Education Students

Student achievement is, of course, a vital indicator of a school's success. RioGAFA has established multiple means of monitoring and responding to student academic achievement. As discussed throughout this section and **Section II.D.4**, teachers will participate in weekly data collection and analyze the data with their instructional coach. As discussed in detail in **Section 1.H.2**, a student performing below proficiency or show little to no growth will automatically be flagged. The data will be examined to determine specific needs and will form the basis of an action plan to address those needs specifically.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) include a statement of how student progress toward IEP goals will be reported to parents at least as frequently as progress is reported to general education parents (i.e., as often as report cards are issued). RioGAFA plans to communicate with families weekly in various formats. Whereas report cards provide updates of a student's progress toward grade-level expectations, progress toward goals provides families with information about their child's progress toward their individualized goals. Progress towards goals generally provides more relevant and meaningful information to parents regarding their child's individualized learning goals.

Engaging Students and Families

In alignment with RioGAFA's frequent monitoring of student data, teachers will also collect regular data on academic achievement of students with IEPs. Quarterly, teachers will specifically report on students' progress toward their individual IEP goals. This may be collected in a variety of ways, as directed by the IEP itself. For example, some goals will be measured by teacher reports, short-cycle assessments, written assignments, or running records. Special education case managers will be responsible for collecting this data and administering any assessment that is not typically administered in the general education setting and sharing the data with general education teachers and educational assistants to collaborate on instructional programming. Case managers are responsible for informing parents of this data and working with students, as appropriate, to track and understand their data. This data will be maintained in case manager working files, documented in the IEP, and copies sent to parents via email.

Additionally, during annual (or more frequent) IEP reviews, previous student goals will be reviewed with the whole IEP team, including parents. A comprehensive review of progress will be included in the IEP's present levels of performance. Student progress toward the goals will also provide the IEP team with additional data about developing the next goal. As the Special Education Coordinator, the Director of Academics will ensure these data are appropriately documented.

These steps are in addition to RioGAFA's routine data monitoring from classroom assessments. Biweekly data will be used to determine intervention/enrichment groups for core content areas. This data will be collected for all students, including students with disabilities. As appropriate, these data can also be used to provide updates on IEP goals.

RioGAFA will also implement specific evaluation procedures to ensure the special education program addresses student and family needs while maintaining the highest standards of legal compliance. Frequent communication between families and special education staff will be our primary assurance that the program meets student needs. However, anonymous surveys may also be provided to families occasionally to ensure comprehensive feedback. RioGAFA will also analyze data and maintain records of students with IEPs to determine student growth (e.g., across standardized measures administered for tri-annual re-evaluations or short cycle assessments) and the overall percentage of special education students. IEP documents and meetings will also be monitored regularly to ensure quality and compliance.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has further provided indicators to measure compliance with special education programs. These indicators are measured annually by the NMPED, and results are provided to schools. These indicators are excellent, easily acquired measures of quality and will also be used by RioGAFA to identify areas of strength and improvement. For example, Indicator 5 measures student participation in the general education environment (LRE), while Indicators 9 and 10 address the disproportionate representation of students in special education or specific eligibility categories. Indicator 4 measures suspension and expulsion rates of students with disabilities, and Indicators 1, 2, 13, and 14 address transition outcomes. These indicators ensure that students with disabilities receive FAPE, and RioGAFA will use this data to ensure compliance and focus on program goals.

Figure 42. Monitoring Timeline

Person(s) Responsible	Frequency	Action Item	Deliverable
Director(s), Teachers	Weekly	At-Risk List	Students with IEPs on the At-Risk List
Case Managers, Teachers	Quarterly	Progress Towards Goals	Students with IEPs report to be attached to grades
Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Weekly	Weekly Data Input	Input weekly data into data dashboard Bring student work to weekly data with coach
Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Weekly	Weekly Data Analysis	Look at student work to identify gaps and plan re-teach and interventions

Director(s), Leadership	Monthly, Quarterly After Reports are Released	Proficiency Analysis Achievement Data	Student analysis based on state-required testing. Look at individual students, student subgroups, including those with IEPs
Case Managers, Teachers	Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly	Parent Communication	Call, Text, Email, Progress Reports through Communication "Folder," Conferences. Report Cards
Director(s), Case Managers	Twice Annually	IEP Compliance	IEP's complete, teachers following IEP, students receiving services
Teachers Director of Operations	Quarterly	Grades	Entering grades in the grade book system Run reports
SAT Team, Director of Academics	Ongoing	SAT Process	Conduct meetings, collect and document student interventions
Director of Academics, Case Managers, Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Bimonthly	Layer 2: Targeted Supplemental Interventions and Supports	Students (SOME) continue to receive high-quality Layer 1 instruction with supports, and Layer 2 intervention supports
Director of Academics, Case Managers, Instructional Coaches, Teachers	Weekly	Layer 3: Targeted Supplemental Interventions and Supports	Students (FEW) continue to receive high-quality Layer 1 core instruction plus Layer 2 targeted supports and receive Layer 3 intervention based on identified needs
Director(s), Case Managers, Teachers	Twice Annually (Fall/Spring)	ELL and IEP Program Comparison	Report of students in both programs
Director(s), Leadership, Governing Board, Teachers, Counselor	Annually	Program Evaluation	Create a strategic plan and action steps for improvement. Report to the Governing Board.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Describe how the proposed school will monitor the progress toward special education students' attainment of IEP goals;
- Identify specific responsibilities for school staff, classroom teachers, and special education staff;
- Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored and success will be evaluated;
- Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and or families; and
- Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its special education program and services.

The director of academics serving as the special education coordinator is an area of concern in terms of monitoring progress. This role likely needs a background within special education to properly ensure compliance with Special Education guidelines. In addition, the school is reliant upon reviewing prior IEPs to establish goals. There is no mention of a diagnostician or IEP facilitator who will take on this work. The Director of Academics must complete all of these steps. This particular plan leaves the school very vulnerable to timeline and compliance issues, which may lead to state complaints (FAPE).

G. (2) English Language Learner (ELLs).

G. (2a) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of how the proposed school will provide required curriculum, and instructional services/supports to students identified as ELs.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts is committed to the instruction and success of students that are identified s English Learners. RioGAFA will follow all state mandates for E.L. instruction and will instill in students the importance of culture. Through this value and consistency, RioGAFA will provide an environment and academic program culturally and linguistically responsive.

Identification of English Learners

Students enrolling at RioGAFA will go through a registration process to determine if RioGAFA is the first time the student is entering the public school system. If that is the case, the student will be asked to participate in a Language Usage Survey (LUS). The surveys are only to be administered to students once, so if this is not the first time the student is entering the public school system, RioGAFA staff will need to contact the last enrolled school and request the student's records. The Director of Operations will ensure that a system is built to engage with all new students to ensure that these language surveys are maintained in the student records.

After taking the LUS, the Director of Operations (later the Office Manager) will look at questions 1-7. If one or more responses indicate another language besides English used in this set of answers, the student will then be asked to participate in the WIDA Placement Test. This test will be the W-APT assessment for students entering kindergarten and the WIDA Screener Online for all other students grades 1-12. These assessments are the only department-approved English language proficiency assessment in New Mexico. The Director of Operations (later the Office Manager) will ensure that all students that have taken the LUS are given this assessment, and scores of these assessments are maintained in the student records.

Using the following graphic published by the Public Education Department, the RioGAFA Director of Academics and Director of Operations will determine how students qualify as English Learners (ELs).

Figure 43. W-APT and WIDA Screener Placement Criteria

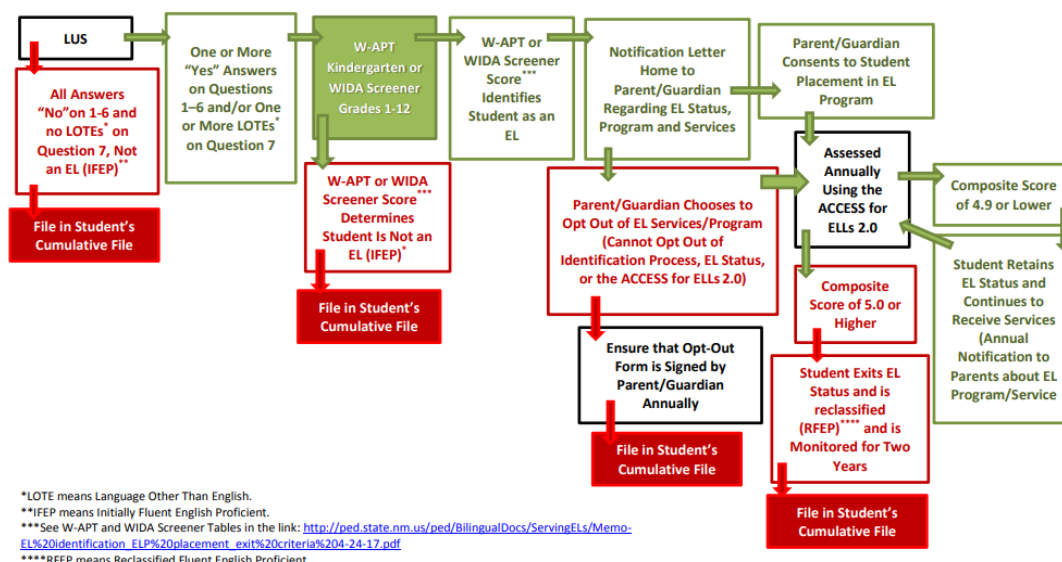
W-APT Placement Criteria

GRADE	DOMAINS	W-APT SCORE IDENTIFIES STUDENT AS AN EL	W-APT SCORE INDICATES STUDENT IS <u>NOT</u> AN EL
Kindergarten 1 st Semester	Listening & Speaking	26 or lower	27 or higher
Kindergarten 2 nd Semester	Listening & Speaking	26 or lower or	27 or higher and
	Reading	13 or lower or	14 or higher and
	Writing	16 or lower	17 or higher

WIDA Screener Placement Criteria

GRADE	DOMAINS	WIDA SCREENER SCORE IDENTIFIES STUDENT AS AN EL	WIDA SCREENER SCORE INDICATES STUDENT IS <u>NOT</u> AN EL
Grades 1-12	All Four Domains (listening, speaking, reading, & writing)	Composite (overall) score of 4.5 or lower*	Composite (overall) score of 5.0 or higher

Figure 44. EL Scoring and Eligibility Flowchart



Following the scoring and eligibility is determined for each student, the RioGAFA team will follow the above flow chart published by NM PED.

Parents will be notified of eligibility and given the option to opt-out of EL services. If a parent wishes to continue to services, the students will begin to receive services with annual notification to parents regarding EL services provided by RioGAFA.

Implementation of English Language Development Standards

RioGAFA will ensure that the five standards of English Language Development published by WIDA are addressed. These standards include the following⁵²:

- English Language Development Standard 1: English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.
- English Language Development Standard 2: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts.
- English Language Development Standard 3: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in mathematics.
- English Language Development Standard 4: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in science.
- English Language Development Standard 5: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies.

The RioGAFA Director of Academics, in collaboration with the Equity Council, will work with the proposed curriculum outlined in **Section I.C** to ensure that the curriculum has strategies implemented within it that are appropriate and suitable for EL students. A review of student progress towards English proficiency will be analyzed using our wide variety of assessments. The Director of Academics will assess the progress of EL students and will work directly with instructional coaches and teachers to provide support and individualized professional development to ensure that all students are given the correct tools to succeed. A curriculum review will occur continuously throughout the year with quarterly meetings with Equity Council, monthly student achievement reports to the Governing Board, and consistent communication with parents weekly and annually during student-led conferences.

The RioGAFA Director of Academics, in collaboration with the Equity Council, will work with the proposed curriculum outlined in **Section I.C.** to ensure that the curriculum has strategies implemented within it that are appropriate and suitable for E.L. students. A review of student progress towards English proficiency will be analyzed using our wide variety of assessments. The Director of Academics (later the Director of Special Services) will assess the progress of E.L. students and work directly with instructional coaches and teachers to provide support and individualized professional development to ensure that all students are given the correct tools to succeed. A curriculum review will occur continuously throughout the year with quarterly meetings with Equity

⁵² WIDA. (2020). *WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition Kindergarten - Grade 12*. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.

Council, monthly student achievement reports to the Governing Board, and consistent communication with parents weekly and annually during student-led conferences.

Instruction to Support English Proficiency

In collaboration with the Equity Council, the Director of Academics will use the 2020 WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework to incorporate strategies into the proposed curriculum. Within the framework, we will address best practices to include for all grade levels, including:

- Key Language Uses
- Language Expectations, Functions, and Features
- Annotated Language Samples
- Proficiency Level Descriptors.

The previous topics are covered within the framework and describe what framework standards need to be heavily addressed and in what content area. The framework will drive professional development for teachers to understand E.L. instruction and best practices.

In addition to developing a curriculum that is already culturally and linguistically responsive, RioGAFA will ensure the following built-in systems that will address and support English proficiency in the classroom:

- Students will have the opportunity to work in small groups collaboratively to share ideas.
- Individualized support teachers when appropriate for teachers.
- Students will collaborate in expressing their understanding and comprehension through art forms that connect to the student's culture and heritage.
- Students will have access to diverse literature to find themselves, their families, and their communities reflected and have historical and relevant ties to the present-day world and social issues.
- RioGAFA will also incorporate the Choose Love Curriculum that addresses students' social-emotional learning to ensure that a holistic approach to education is maintained for all students.
- Consistent, weekly communication with families and invitations for engagement and participation to all families.

Access to Grade-level Content

RioGAFA is committed to all students having equal access to grade-level content that is rigorous and challenges students academically while also having staff support students in language development. Our proposed curriculum will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards and all N.M. State Standards. The curriculum scope and sequence will ensure that content is vertically and horizontally aligned and that standards follow a sequential order that logically builds students' understanding. We believe that students have the most success when given scaffolded support of grade-level work to prioritize the building-block content from previous grades.

RioGAFA believes that the arts go hand-in-hand with language learning, whether it is learning new words through a song or a drawing. Our arts-integration curriculum allows for a natural connection between the arts and language. When students learn a new language, they often have a stronger understanding of the content than their vocabulary or self-confidence allows them to demonstrate. However, through our arts-integration curriculum, students will access grade-level content and demonstrate understanding of the content through an art form.

Spectrum of Needs

RioGAFA understands that it is the organization's responsibility to meet students and develop strategies and supports to ensure student achievement. The needs of English language learners encompass a broad range. We will be prepared for students that speak a wide range of languages and understand that students will come to RioGAFA at different English proficiency levels. All communication with parents should be conducted in a language the parents can understand. Where needed, parent notices will be translated into a parent's home language.

RioGAFA feels confident that the culture of communication and inclusivity will allow leadership and staff to collect resources and develop strategies to best suit the needs of E.L. students. Through staff professional development, feedback, and data meetings, RioGAFA will develop a clear instructional vision and high expectations for all English language learners.

During meetings with their instructional coach, teachers will have time to review accommodations and/or modifications based on student eligibility, including E.L. accommodations and modifications. Teachers will analyze student data to identify specific student needs and supports in each content area. Teachers will receive the support and development needed to help address students' academic and language needs in their classrooms. Our coaching model (outlined in **Section II.D.4**) ensures that all students are given equal access to strategies and scaffolding to set them up for success. By providing space for teachers to dive into each student's data, individualized plans will be formulated to meet the needs of each student.

The RioGAFA Leadership Team will provide many opportunities throughout the year for all families to be communicated with by a staff member regarding their student's performance. Communication weekly will be through phone calls, text messages, data reports, and/or a school communication app. Families will be encouraged to attend our student-led conferences. During these interactions, families will be given the option and opportunity to voice in their student's education and provide staff members ideas to incorporate in the classroom to fit the student's needs best. All communication with parents will be conducted in a language the parents/guardians can understand. When needed, parent/guardian notices will be translated into a parent's home language.

Staff Responsibilities

School staff will be asked to participate in parental communication regarding student achievement. The Director of Operations will ensure that all parents of E.L. students are properly notified in their home language and that all records are maintained regarding E.L. eligibility. The Director of Academics

will ensure that all testing is complete promptly and that ACCESS testing is administered to students yearly to track English proficiency.

Classroom Teacher Responsibilities: Classroom teachers will be required to implement evidence-based strategies and inventions that will allow for a broad spectrum of student needs to be addressed.

Specifically, teachers will be asked to participate in the following:

- Teachers will ensure weekly communication with families regarding students' progress.
- Teachers will attend weekly data meetings with their instructional coach to address achievement gaps and collaborate to incorporate best practices for students to be successful.
- Teachers will spend time to ensure they know all students' IEP and EL accommodations or modifications before the start of the academic year.

Professional Development

RioGAFA has developed a robust professional development to be implemented before the start of each academic year (outlined in **Section II.D.4**). Professional development will be developed by the RioGAFA Director(s) to be responsive to the needs of students. Using data from interim and summative assessments, the Director(s) will craft professional development sessions. Initially, professional development will focus on student engagement and least restrictive interventions (LRI) for all students.

RioGAFA will utilize materials developed by the Language and Culture Bureau to incorporate them into this professional development. As the need arises for different strategies to be implemented, the RioGAFA instructional support staff will refer to these documents and training materials to use in teacher classrooms. Data meetings will be used to address the needs of students to ensure that strategies are implemented that may be different for each student.

RioGAFA will commit to hiring TESOL endorsed teachers and potentially supporting teachers financially to receive these endorsements as the need arises.

The RioGAFA Equity Council will help develop and advise the Director(s) around professional development topics. The topics will be discussed during quarterly meetings with the Council and will be a part of the reflection of the Director(s) at the close of each academic year.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Describe how the proposed school will identify English learners (ELs) and provide the required curriculum and instructional services/supports to students identified as ELs;
- Identify how the school will implement the English Language Development Standards for ELs in its school;
- Identify how the school will provide ELs with instruction and support to develop English language proficiency;
- Identify how the school will provide ELs with access to grade-level content;
- Describe how the school will address the spectrum of needs that ELs may present;
- Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers; and
- Identify specific training, professional development and support that will be provided to teachers and school staff to ensure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities.

The school has a plan to meet the compliance pieces of EL program. It is stated that the ELD standards will be embedded within the instruction programs. The professional development will be delivered by the Director of Academics and Director of Operations, collaboratively. There are concerns regarding the scope of expectations for the directors as they may not have a background in EL instruction. In addition, how will these processes be evaluated to ensure they are successful? What are the mechanisms for implementing intensive intervention to students who demonstrate beginning levels of English proficiency as general sheltered strategies may not be as effective in helping the needs of these students, which looking at the demographics, may be a large percentage of students in the SW ABQ region.

G. (2b) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** to regularly evaluate and monitor the progress of English learners.

Monitoring Progress of English Learners

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts is committed to the appropriate monitoring of English language learners that complies with state regulations and guidelines. Using the Serving English Learners document created by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NM PED), RioGAFA will ensure that the following processes are followed:

Annual Progress Monitoring: The Director of Academics is responsible for ensuring that students new to the public school system must be given the Language Usage Survey (LUS) to fill out. The LUS will be administered and kept in the cumulative file for each student. The Director of Operations is responsible for maintaining the student files and ensuring each student's LUS is on file. If a student has one or more responses on the LUS that indicate that another language besides English is used at home, RioGAFA will then administer the WIDA Placement Test (W-APT) for students entering

Kindergarten. The WIDA Screener Online will be administered to students entering grades 1-12. The criteria rubrics created by the NMPED will be used in determining the students' placement. If a student is identified as an EL, a notification letter will be sent home to the families regarding their EL status. Parents can either opt-in or out of the EL Services. If families opt into the services, students will be given the ACCESS assessment annually to measure progress towards proficiency. Students who score a composite score of 5.0 or higher will be exited from EL services and monitored for two academic years. Students that score a composite score of 4.9 or lower will retain EL status and continue to receive services with annual notification given to parents regarding EL services.

Ongoing Progress Monitoring: The RioGAFA Team feels that the only way to guarantee success is to monitor ELL progress frequently. Progress monitoring with equity in mind will be achieved through formative and summative assessments that include but are not limited to arts-integration and interim assessments, group discussions, projects, independent work, and other instructional activities. All assessments will be planned, designed to gather information from all students, and aligned to the standards being taught.

During student-led conferences, all students will be asked to present parents with assessment data. This data will be presented twice a year and will include the following information that will pertain to EL students:

- State assessment scores;
- Interim assessment scores;
- Current year progress towards proficiency in each content area;
- Teacher observations for each classroom regarding engagement and work completion;
- Attendance and tardy data.

Responsible Parties

School Staff Responsibilities: The Director of Academics will ensure that all students have up-to-date testing that complies with state regulations and requirements. The Director of Operations will also ensure that all students are tested annually using the ACCESS assessment. The Director of Academics will also be asked to maintain record and progress of exited students for two academic years following exit from the program/services. Lastly, the Director of Academics will be asked to create the system for teachers to monitor EL students and communicate with families weekly. During student-led conferences, it will be the responsibility of the Director of Academics to make data readily available for teachers to review with families. The Director of Operations will ensure that proper records are maintained to reflect the current ACCESS data.

Classroom Teacher Responsibilities: Classroom teachers will be responsible for providing high-quality instruction to all students, with appropriate ELL students' appropriate support. Teachers will be tasked with academic monitoring of all students, encompassing EL students. During weekly data meetings, student data will be analyzed to ensure all students, including EL students, receive appropriate layered

interventions. Teachers will communicate weekly with parents regarding student achievement. Quarterly progress reports will be the responsibility of the teacher to prepare and distribute each grading period. Progress reports must contain accurate and current data and be translated as needed in the family's native language. Teachers certified in TESOL will be asked to provide professional development to their colleagues during grade-level and curriculum meetings. Strategies will be implemented to fit the needs of individual students.

Progress Monitoring:

RioGAFA believes we can monitor language development and content knowledge simultaneously. EL students will be assessed regularly and have many data points to analyze and monitor their progress individually and as a group. This analysis will be done daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. Data will be entered in our data dashboard weekly with the support of the Director of Academics and/or Instructional Coach. Subgroups, including ELL, will be identified on the dashboard to monitor progress and inform interventions, supports, and instruction. Due to the nature of RioGAFA and its arts-integration curriculum and assessment practices, ELs will have many data points that are used to tailor the educational experience to each of them individually. Assessments will include exit tickets, formative assessment scores, real-time teacher feedback on independent work, and standardized test scores.

Engaging Students and Families:

The RioGAFA Leadership believes in open communication. The expectation is that we have regular communication with families. The RioGAFA Director(s) will create a culture of inclusion for all families, with personalized communication strategies being implemented throughout the year to build long-lasting and trust-based relationships with families. Families will be communicated weekly, quarterly, bi-annually, and annually to maintain consistent communication for student achievement. Communication will be available in many formats and translated into the family's native language. Families will be encouraged to participate in student-led conferences, and we will invite a translator to assist when necessary. Other opportunities for engaging students and families include performances and art shows that embrace RioGAFA's students' cultures, math and literacy night, and our annual open house.

Evaluation of Effectiveness:

The Director of Academics will be tasked annually with gathering quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's English language learner (ELL) program and services. The US Department of Education guides what key elements to look at as part of a school's ELL program evaluation. RioGAFA will develop a process by which the key elements will be evaluated each year covering the following metrics:

- the number of EL families applying to enroll at RioGAFA,
- the number of ELL exit exam pass rates,
- the number of ELL enrollment levels across years,
- the number of ELL program exit rates,
- the school's ELL score according to the NM PED,

- the number of ELL IEP, including gifted rates,
- the number of ELL student academic and behavior concerns,
- parent and community input, involvement, and data,
- ACCESS scores and trends.

The Director of Academics will hold teacher observations to measure if teachers use instructional strategies that assist EL students with sheltered and individualized instruction to achieve proficiency in English. In addition, the Director(s) will work collaboratively with the Equity Council to ensure that there is input from various stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of EL services.

Monitoring Exited Students:

All students who score a 5.0 or higher on ACCESS will be exited from the ELL program and monitored for at least two academic school years. The exited students will move from EL to Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). RFEP students will continue to be monitored through monthly data analysis to support and ensure that they are successful without the ELL support they once received. Any concerns throughout the two years will lead to the student being re-evaluated using the WIDA screener to determine whether they need to receive additional ELL services. RioGAFA intends to track data weekly for all students. Through our data dashboard, we will identify student subgroups, including ELL, to ensure progress.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the proposed school will monitor the progress of ELs toward English language proficiency, both annually and within the school year; • Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers; • Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored; • Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and/or families; • Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its EL program and services; and • Describe how the school will monitor exited EL students (reclassified fluent English proficient students—RFEPs) for two years for academic progress.

RioGAFA meets criteria because they identify specific responsibilities for teachers and staff in terms of communication and they identify both an annual and ongoing process for reporting progress. However, it would be helpful for RioGAFA to specify their methods and processes for immediate communication with families once a student is identified as in need of support. There should be a specified, immediate communication process for explaining time-sensitive

test scores to families so that they fully understand and can support their child while at home.

G. (3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** to ensure adherence to ESSA and State statutes in addressing the needs of Native American Students, Hispanic Students, and Bilingual and Multicultural educational plan to improve educational outcomes. The narrative should include and explanation of the supplemental program or services offered to ensure implementation of the ACTS.

Educational Framework

The RioGAFA Founding Team has reviewed and is committed to compliance with all regulations associated with the New Mexico Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 2019 plan. RioGAFA holds to the NMPED belief that every New Mexico child can succeed regardless of their ethnic background, socioeconomic status, primary home language, prior academic experience, or home community. RioGAFA intends to work toward the goal set in motion to have 66% of working-age New Mexicans earning a college degree or postsecondary credential using the proposed plan. RioGAFA's educational program includes providing high-quality instruction through the arts-integrated approach that provides for timely supports for all students, including Hispanic and Native American students.

Hispanic Education: RioGAFA will ensure that all requirements of the NM Hispanic Education Act are fulfilled. Signed into law in 2010, the purpose of this bill is to:

- Provide for the study, development, and implementation of educational systems that affect the educational success of Hispanic students to close the achievement gap and increase graduation rates.
- Encourage and foster parental involvement in the education of their children.
- Provide mechanisms for parents, community and business organizations, public schools, school districts, charter schools, public postsecondary institutions, the department and state and local policymakers to work together to improve educational outcomes for Hispanic students to close the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention and completion.

RioGAFA will participate in providing the Public Education Department (PED) with all required data to include in their Hispanic Status Report to include, but not limited to:

- Hispanic student achievement data for all grades,
- attendance for all grades,
- the graduation rates of Hispanic students,
- the number and type of bilingual and multicultural programs.

Native American Education: RioGAFA will ensure that the Native American Education Act requirements are fulfilled. The purpose of this bill is to:

- Ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning environments, educational opportunities, and culturally relevant instructional materials for American Indian students enrolled in public schools.

- Ensure maintenance of native languages.
- Encourage and foster parental involvement in the education of Indian students.

RioGAFA will participate in providing the NMPED with all required data if asked regarding Native American students.

Bilingual/Multicultural Education and Curriculum: RioGAFA is committed to upholding the Hispanic Education Act and the Indian Education Act through our curriculum. RioGAFA will implement a culturally linguistic curriculum that is research-based and implemented in areas with student demographics similar to our proposed zip codes. These curricula (see **Section 1.C**) have improved student achievement and close the achievement gap for traditionally underserved students. The RioGAFA curriculum explores culture through the arts, literature, and social studies. Students will engage in activities and discussions around social justice relating to issues of the present times. By providing students with access to the arts and literature that presents these topics, students will find ways to affect social change. The NMPED refers to this type of instruction and responsiveness as "The Social Action Approach," which is their highest level of multicultural education. RioGAFA strives to have all classrooms implement this type of instruction to all students.

RioGAFA strives to implement an arts-integrated curriculum that connects to many cultures, including the Hispanic and American Indian cultures. Artists that specialize in this theory and practice of art will be asked to present and provide additional intellectual space for students to connect to their native cultures and learn the history and traditions of such cultures.

Although RioGAFA intends to not participate in a state-funded Bilingual Multicultural Education Plan (BMEP), RioGAFA intends to abide by the following statements of NMSA 22.23:

- Using the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in a multicultural education program
- Providing students with opportunities to expand their conceptual and linguistic abilities and potentials in a successful and positive manner.

RioGAFA will be a place where many different art forms are accessible to students. With each different art form comes a set of cultural traditions that stem from that art form. Part of the instructor's expectations will be to teach students the origin of the art form and the culture that it was created within. By doing this, RioGAFA will make New Mexico culture accessible and tangible for students. However, there will also be a place for students to learn and appreciate many different art forms.

Parent/Guardian Involvement: The Hispanic and Indian Act's purpose of fostering parental involvement and ensuring maintenance of native languages. It is essential to the RioGAFA Founding Team that the organization make every attempt to ensure that all families are engaged with their home language. The Founding Team intends to employ translation services if necessary, but we will make every effort to hire staff to communicate to families in their home language. As noted

throughout **Section G**, RioGAFA will encourage parents to, at minimum, participate in student-led conferences. Additionally, RioGAFA will provide consistent communication to parents regarding student achievement translated into the family's native language. Other opportunities for engaging students and families include performances and art shows that embrace RioGAFA's students' cultures, math and literacy night, and our annual open house.

Equity Council: To provide mechanisms for parents, community and business organizations, public schools, school districts, charter schools, public postsecondary institutions, the department and state and local policymakers will work together to improve educational outcomes for Hispanic students to close the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention and completion.

RioGAFA will utilize the Equity Council and the Governing Board reviews each year to ensure that the mission and vision of RioGAFA are being achieved by students that are traditionally underserved. The RioGAFA Director(s) will review interim assessment data for all students with members of the Leadership Team to make data-driven decisions regarding instruction that best fits the needs of students. This approach will be used for all students enrolled at RioGAFA to create the most efficient individualized strategies. Parents will also have representation on the Equity Council and will be asked to participate in the evaluation survey outlined in **Section II.B.2** to ensure that the mission and vision of RioGAFA are accessible for all students.

Figure 45. School Staff Responsibilities to Ensure the Multicultural Education Framework

Person(s) Responsible	Task/Action
Director of Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research and adopt a Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) curriculum. ● Develop and update curriculum maps and scope and sequence. ● Ensure teachers are meeting the needs of students through observations and assessing weekly data. ● Analyze interim assessment, arts-integration, and state testing data and identify gaps in learning. ● Monitor the progress of all student subgroups. ● Create/develop re-teach, supports, and intervention plans ● Ensure the implementation of re-teaching of content in new ways, supports, and interventions. ● Provide professional development around Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) teaching and multicultural education. ● Annually review and analyze the curriculum and assessments to ensure they are Culturally and Linguistically Responsive. ● Report to the Governing Board how RioGAFA addresses the needs of Hispanic, Native American, and Bilingual and Multicultural students.

Director of Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keeping and maintaining accurate records for Hispanic and Native American students ● Reporting required information to the NMPED
Grade Level Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and update curriculum maps and scope and sequence.
Instructional Coaches (Starting Year 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and update curriculum maps and scope and sequence. ● Ensure teachers are meeting the needs of students through observations and assessing weekly data. ● Analysis of interim assessment, arts-integration, and state testing data and identifying gaps in learning ● Monitor the progress of all student subgroups. ● Creating/developing re-teach, supports, and intervention plans ● Ensure the implementation of re-teaching of content in new ways, supports, and interventions. ● Provide professional development around Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) teaching and multicultural education. ● Annually review and analyze the curriculum and assessments to ensure they are Culturally and Linguistically Responsive.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement the CLR curriculum. ● Implement re-teaches, strategies, and interventions. ● Document weekly data. ● Communicate with families and their student's progress towards goals.*
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate with families* ● Maintain records ● Translate for families in their native language
Equity Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review proposed curriculum and make recommendations. ● Annual review of curriculum ● Advise around curriculum enhancement to include historical and contemporary figures, artists, and leaders

* If language services are needed to provide an accurate translation, the RioGAFA Administration will accommodate this need.

In **Section IC**, we fully describe our curriculum. The Director of Academics will lead in researching, selecting, and implementing curriculum that addresses the needs of Hispanic, Native American, and Bilingual and Multicultural students. During the planning year, the Equity Council will be asked to review the proposed curriculum. The Director(s) and the Equity Council will:

- Check for bias and implicit bias in curriculum and assessments.
- Ensure high-quality assignments against rigorous standards.

- Demonstrate mirrors that reflect the student's culture and windows that allow our students to understand the wider world.
- Include accurate representations in American history and governance.
- Include diversity and sustainability.
- Align with CTE standards.
- Ensure access and differentiation for students with disabilities.
- Ensure natural integration with the arts.

During Year 1 and moving forward, teachers will be involved in the curriculum review.

Ensuring Best Practices are Culturally and Linguistically Responsive

Teaching/Mentoring/Counseling: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) professional development will be ongoing to reduce negative profiling, misconceptions, prejudices, and discrimination and close the achievement gap. Beyond the arts-integration curriculum, topics for staff training will include but are not limited to instructing students to be critical thinkers using Bloom's Taxonomy framework, Equality vs. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and exploring personal beliefs, implicit biases, and misconceptions. We will kick off our summer professional development with the mission and vision of RioGAFA. This will include sharing the vision of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and ensuring that all staff is aligned with the vision. The Director(s) will use the professional development CLR Implementation Checklist to ensure our professional development is aligned with the goals, outcomes, decisions, and strategic plans RioGAFA has created.

The effective use of strategies will depend upon the particular student group and subject areas being taught. Our teachers will utilize their feedback and weekly data meetings, and professional learning communities to use our diverse students' cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and learning styles to make learning more engaging and effective. Teachers will practice research-based teaching strategies and methods. The Director of Academics will conduct observations to ensure teachers, mentors, and counselors implement CLR best practices. Teachers, mentors, and counselors will receive feedback and action steps to help improve their teaching and communication.

Administration: The RioGAFA Founding Team has high expectations for all students. The Founding Team has created an education model grounded in the belief that all students deserve high-quality grade-level work. When given grade-level work with appropriate scaffolding, students can meet mastery of grade-level standards. The Director(s), Governing Board, and Equity Council will create opportunities to promote equity within the school.

The RioGAFA Director(s), in collaboration with the Equity Council, will reflect on the progress towards cultural and linguistic responsiveness by asking the following NMPED created questions:

- Reflecting on the current climate of your district and school, how might you create educational opportunities for the students, teachers, and parents in your community and school to engage with the values of culturally and linguistic responsiveness?

- Reflecting on your professional and personal experiences, how might you map your vision to transform your district and school in such a way that promotes equity for all students and serves them successfully?
- How do you relate your own racial, ethnic, and cultural background to your leadership in our school?
- How do you reflect on the significance of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning from your personal experiences?
- How do you reflect on culturally relevant pedagogy and its practices to maximize the climate of inclusiveness in your district or school?
- What are the most important takeaways, challenges, or captures for you as an educational leader in your interest and commitment to understanding others?
- How do you reflect on equity and social justice in your school to transform your school climate?

Additionally, the Director(s) will evaluate:

- Students' Social and Emotional Development
- Classroom Climate and Safety
- Student Engagement
- Curriculum and Instruction
- English Language Learners and Bilingual-Multicultural Education
- Assessments
- Staff Culture and Climate
- Collaboration with Parents and Community

School Policies

To ensure that the organization has created culturally and linguistically responsive school policies, RioGAFA will adopt/adapt the NMPED's recommended Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) Framework. In **Section 1.D**, RioGAFA addresses our CLR Framework. We will build a Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) team within the Equity Council. The CLR team will be made up of school leaders, teachers, parents, and community members. The objective of the CLR team will be to create a school environment that is safe, equitable, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive.

The Director(s), Governing Board, and Equity Council team will work together to ensure that all school policies are culturally and linguistically responsive to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of all RioGAFA students. While we touch on our CLR Framework in **Section 1.D.2**, during the planning year, the Director(s), Governing Board, and Equity Council will complete the CLR Inventory collectively to determine components that may need more focus and/or intentionality. School policies will be developed keeping in mind our focused components.

Using the resources given to school districts by the NMPED, RioGAFA will review school policies annually. We will categorize the next steps needed to address CLR gaps. The categories will be:

- Curriculum
- Student Learning Environments
- Professional Development
- Parent Engagement
- Community Engagement

Development and Implementation

Throughout the planning year, the Director of Academics will lead on developing and implementing the RioGAFA curriculum and instructional materials. RioGAFA is committed to the development and implementation of rigorous CLR curricula. Throughout the planning year, the Director of Academics, with consultation from the Equity Council and curriculum consultants, will:

1. Review proposed curriculum and NM recommended curriculum
2. Adopt and develop a CLR curriculum
3. Create vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum maps
4. Create scope and sequence
5. Create Unit Plans

Described in detail in **Section I.C**, RioGAFA will continue the above process each school year. RioGAFA will examine curriculum for:

- Rigor
- Inclusion
- Diverse voices
- All cultural identities included
- Supports multiple learning modalities
- Accurate connections to culture and history

Monitoring Intervals

RioGAFA has a robust monitoring system for all students to ensure students are making progress towards goals. Student achievement will be assessed weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually. School interim assessments analyzed within 48 hours of scoring. Data analysis for students on state testing will occur when released. Additional consideration and analysis for Hispanic, Native American or Bilingual and Multicultural students will be built into the analysis period. See **Section I.H.1 and 2** for a detailed outline of our progress monitoring.

Engagement of Students and Families

The engagement of families and students is a priority for the RioGAFA Team. There is a strong connection and trust built when communication is open, and thus the RioGAFA team plans to engage with families regarding students' educational experiences. Teachers and school staff will be expected to provide communication consistently to families to ensure the success of all students. In having this expectation of communication engrained in the school culture, on-boarding of teachers will include strategies involving how to keep families informed of student progress. RioGAFA has planned two student-led conferences during the year to meet with parents/guardians to discuss their student's

progress. However, this should not be the initial contact a parent receives for updates to student progress. Student-led conferences will be a time where students can share their academic progress with their families. Student-led conferences give students ownership over their academic careers and create rich, transparent discussions around student goal-setting and our assessment process. Before conferences, students will organize their assessment reports, work reflecting their strengths, next steps, and academic goals. During the conference, students present to their family and teacher the organized portfolio. The student describes how the work is evidence of achieving the learning target and then shares their next steps and goals for improvement. Afterward, the parents/guardians can respond by asking questions about their students' scores, work, and goals. The parents/guardians, teacher, and students will review the student's goals and ensure action steps and clear supports to achieve academic goals. RioGAFA intends to make these conferences as accessible as possible and will work to ensure that families are allowed to receive translation services to maintain equity and understanding to all RioGAFA families.

All material and information sent from RioGAFA will be sent out in English, Spanish, and other native languages our families may have. RioGAFA will hire front office staff that is bilingual to help address the linguistic needs of students.

RioGAFA has included in the calendar an open house, performing arts and visual arts shows, and family activity nights, including literacy and math nights that all families and stakeholders will be encouraged to attend. In addition, RioGAFA will have other specific events catered to the academic areas that students are studying. Our showcases and events are designed to celebrate culture, families, and student achievement.

The RioGAFA Founding Team has also researched best practices for engaging with diverse families and implementing successful strategies for engagement. The RioGAFA Director(s) will build a culture that promotes relationship-building and sets teacher leadership expectations. All RioGAFA staff will be a part of the community outreach plan to start each year. Teachers and staff will make calls to new and returning families after the lottery completes to welcome families to the school community. Teachers will then be expected to keep continuous communication regarding student achievement. Through a weekly newsletter (translated into native languages as needed), families will be able to keep apprised of school events, expectations, and upcoming dates and deadlines. The intention will be that families will be communicated with at least weekly regarding their child's success, growth areas, and/or any school events or opportunities.

The message of the administration of RioGAFA will be one of shared accountability to do what is best for students. Teachers will be asked to communicate with parents to foster partnership and collaboration to help reach student success. Teachers will be encouraged to maintain this messaging during any interaction involving parents or community members. By doing this, RioGAFA will develop a culture of teamwork and commitment to educating children. When communicating with parents, in alignment with the shared commitment, teachers will be encouraged to show interest in the student's home life and ask the family what strategies or techniques work at home to better serve students in

the building. This questioning empowers families to be solution-based and helps teachers bring more culturally responsive ideas into the classroom. In utilizing this type of communication of speaking with families to establish routines to fit the needs of students best, families will have a voice in their child's education. This will foster two-way communication by allowing parents to be responsive to their child's needs and comfortable enough to communicate these needs to school staff.

Trust with families is built over time. RioGAFA feels that consistency in communication and an open and encouraging invitation to community events will build trust in both the organization and the teachers. Our goal to establish a relationship of trust will allow families to feel comfortable and welcomed and encourage participation and voicing ways to improve the educational environment.

RioGAFA is committed to learning about our students, families, and the community. During the professional development, the staff will be presented with students' backgrounds that the RioGAFA Leadership Team will gather. This will include general statistics surrounding students to give the staff a sense of the student's background. Teachers and staff will be encouraged to spend time the first days of school and throughout the year to engage in activities to get to know students better. Activities could include:

- icebreakers,
- get to know me or learning style surveys,
- student of the week and have that student present their likes and dislikes,
- organize a potluck in which students bring food that is family favorite,
- writing/art activities with questions that allow students to share their culture,
- writing/art activities where students explore their identity.

Evaluation

Evaluating RioGAFA's programs will be ongoing throughout the year. Based on data analysis, we can assess teacher and student needs and make shifts as necessary. Progress towards student achievement will be reported during monthly board meetings to ensure effective strategies to maintain student growth and progress. The Director of Academics will provide professional development after each round of interim assessments to address topics to close school-wide gaps. Instructional coaches will give teachers bite-sized action steps and help plan re-teaches and coaching around intervention strategies and supports.

We will also assess the program's effectiveness annually through the Governing Board's evaluation of the Director(s). Additionally, the Equity Council will be a large piece of evaluating the effectiveness of our program. The Equity Council will meet quarterly and address all programs implemented to ensure access to our cultural and linguistic curriculum. The Equity Council will utilize the rubrics created by the NMPED in the CLR Handbook.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the proposed school will develop an educational framework to address the educational needs of Native American, Hispanic, and bilingual multicultural students within a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to learning; • Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers, including professional development for teachers; • Describe how the proposed school will ensure that the best practices are used in teaching, mentoring, counseling and administration are culturally and linguistically responsive to students; • Describe how school policies will be culturally and linguistically responsive; • Describe how rigorous and culturally meaningful curricula and instructional materials will be developed and implemented; • Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored; • Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and/or families; and • Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its programs to improve educational outcomes.

RioGAFA meets criteria because their school will use CLR and multicultural integrative-arts programming which inherently supports the education and learning of diverse populations.

H. Assessment and Accountability.

A charter school application should include a clear plan for evaluating student performance across the curriculum. This plan should align with state performance standards, as well as with the proposed school's student performance goals, and should be presented, along with a clear timeline for achieving these standards/indicators/goals. A clear explanation of the types of assessments and frequency of administration should be included, reflecting thoughtfulness given to tracking student progress. A plan for the use of data gathered through assessments

should include procedures for taking corrective action (both individually and collectively) if pupil performance falls below expected standards.

A quality assessment plan will include summative (end-of-year) assessments as well as formative (more frequent) assessments to track student skill and knowledge development and to inform instruction. The plan will include how this data will be used to guide professional development of teachers, as well as how this data will be used to guide refinement of the curriculum and instruction.

When developing the assessment plan, you should consider: 1) the appropriateness of assessments to the curriculum; 2) what will serve as baseline for student progress comparisons; 3) the inclusion of school, state, and other assessments to demonstrate appropriate student growth; 4) the ability of the assessment plan to provide for the early detection of students struggling with curriculum content; and 5) the ability of assessments to reflect the use of basic skills at grade-appropriate levels (e.g., reading, writing, problem-solving).

Note: Be aware that all New Mexico public schools, including charter schools, are subject to a variety of testing requirements, which are aligned with state and federal content standards.

For more information on NM assessment requirements, please see:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/>

H.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive assessment plan** that identifies what measures will be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, frequency of assessing, and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction. Please provide **clear** evidence that the applicant has considered the common core standards, all federally and state required assessments, and the proposed school's projected student population.

Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts understands that assessment is an essential part of the educational process that allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of standards within a content area. Formative and summative assessments enlighten us on what standards and skills students have learned. The data revealed always tells a story, revealing strengths to be celebrated and student and educator gaps to address. The goal of data informed instruction is that student performance improves. Formative assessments will be used to identify shortcomings and target instruction to address learning gaps. Summative assessments will guide any changes necessary in our curriculum, content, instructional strategies, and professional development plans. Effective teaching requires that teachers know how their students are performing daily. Staff will be trained in data collection and data analysis at the individual student level, classroom level and school-wide levels during professional development and our weekly Personal Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs will be scheduled four days weekly. Teachers and leadership will review weekly data points, decide layers of intervention, internalize lesson plans and modify instruction.

Assessment Overview:

RioGAFA's annual assessment plan includes the assessments that will be administered, timelines, each assessment's purpose, and a brief plan for data analysis. **Figure 46** displays the range of state mandated assessments for kindergarten through 12th-grade. It includes state-mandated assessments for English language arts, math, science, and our school chosen assessments for all content. Within the calendar, we address the purpose of each assessment and data analysis plan to verify, reinforce, or assess more deeply and to be able to provide more specific support.

Figure 46. Assessment Plan

Assessment	Testing Time Frame	Purpose	Frequency, Data Analysis to Inform Instruction
ECOT*	BOY: August	Grades: Kindergarten State mandated, measures 6 developmental domains will be Observed: Physical Development, Health, and Well-Being, Literacy, Numeracy, Scientific Conceptual Understanding, Self, Family, and Community, and Approaches to Learning	One Time Data will be analyzed and used to understand individual student skills to support instruction and make initial decisions regarding possible interventions for math and literacy.
Istation Indicators of Progress (ISIP) Early Reading*	BOY: August MOY: Within 1st 2 weeks of January EOY: Within 1st 2 weeks of May Regular monitoring	Grades: K-3 State mandated, short cycle computer adaptive assessment to assess basic early Literacy skills (in English or Spanish) for reading readiness ⁵³ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonemic awareness • Phonics • Fluency • Comprehension • Vocabulary 	BOY and Quarterly, Ongoing monitoring Data will be used to identify students at risk of developing reading difficulties and continuously monitor student progress in early grades reading. The assessment also serves to compare student progress school and statewide and to drive instruction.
Istation Indicators of Progress (ISIP) Advanced Reading	BOY: August MOY: Within 1st 2 weeks of January EOY: Within 1st 2 weeks of May Regular monitoring	Grades: 4-8 Short cycle, computer adaptive assessment to assess Literacy skills (in English or Spanish) for reading readiness ⁵⁴ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency • Comprehension • Vocabulary • Lexile Level Assessment is research based and aligned to the CCSS.	BOY and Quarterly, Ongoing monitoring Data will be used to identify students at risk of developing reading difficulties. The assessment also serves to drive instruction and identify a student's Lexile reading level will be used to help students choose just right books during independent reading and ensure students are reading on grade level.
Istation Indicators	BOY and at the end of each	Grades: K-8 Short cycle, computer adaptive	BOY and Quarterly, Ongoing monitoring

⁵³ Istation Reading. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2021, from <https://www.istation.com/Reading>

⁵⁴ Istation Reading. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2021, from <https://www.istation.com/Reading>

of Progress (ISIP) Math	quarter: October, December, March, and May	assessment to assess foundational skills for student mastery of mathematical concepts, such as: ⁵⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number Sense • Geometry • Operations • Measurement • Algebra • Data Analysis 	Data will be used to identify students at risk of developing math skills and continuously monitor student progress. The assessment also serves to drive instruction.
iMSSA*	October January (Within the testing windows)	Grades: 3-8 Measure student proficiency on common core aligned grade level ELA and math content at the beginning and middle of the year.	Twice annually Data will be analyzed to drive instruction in ELA and math to meet proficiency in standards
MSSA* (ELA, Math)	April - May (Within the testing window)	Grades: 3-8 Used to measure student proficiency on common core aligned grade level ELA and math content.	One time annually Data will be analyzed to determine ELA and math curricular, instructional effectiveness, and summer professional development.
NM-ASR* Assessment of Science Readiness	April - May (Within the testing window)	Grades: 5, 8, 11 Used to measure student proficiency on common core aligned grade level science content.	One time annually Data will be analyzed to determine science curricular, instructional effectiveness, and summer professional development.
Reading Inventory (RI)	BOY and at the end of each quarter: October, December, March, and May	Grades: 9-12 Used to measure a student's lexile and grade level reading proficiencies	BOY and Quarterly. Lexile levels will be used to drive student independent reading and the books they choose and to ensure students are reading on grade level.
PSAT	October	Grades: 10 and 11 Pre-SAT exam which also qualifies students for National Merit Scholarship consideration during their Junior year.	One time annually Data will be analyzed during the spring and used to inform ELA and math curriculum and lessons.
Accuplacer	Varies	Grades: 10-12 Used to determine qualifications for concurrent enrollment/dual credit courses for UNM and CNM	One time annually For students not scoring high enough in ELA and/or math, data will be analyzed and used to schedule appropriate classes to help them reach college readiness
SAT*	Given 7 times a year: March, May, June, August, October,	Grades: 11 and 12 College entrance exams which also serve as indicators for college readiness	Up to three times Data will be analyzed for trends and changes in scores to help interpret and understand students' participation and

⁵⁵Istation Reading. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2021, from <https://www.istation.com/Reading>

	November, and December.		performance. Data will drive curricular and instruction effectiveness.
--	-------------------------	--	--

** Mandated federal/state assessments, will change if the state changes required assessments.*

In addition to state-mandated assessments, RioGAFA's will monitor student work and progress daily, weekly, and monthly to ensure that we are continuously using student data to improve student outcomes. RioGAFA assessments will include exit tickets and arts-integrated activities aligned to daily lesson objectives, end of unit and interim assessments, the Istation Indicators of Progress Assessment for Advanced Reading and Math, Reading Inventory, Arts Performance Assessments, and the Senior Showcase.

Other District Ongoing Assessments

Teachers will use ongoing formative and summative assessments. Markers of formative assessment - daily objectives, pre-assessments and exit tickets - allow for more strategic teaching and productive learning.

Exit Tickets, Ongoing: Teacher or curriculum created, exit tickets are an arts-integrated assignment, short quiz or open-ended response to a text dependent question that measures understanding of daily lesson objectives. Exit tickets serve as immediate data allowing for quick analysis of student learning.

End of Unit and Interim Assessments, Every 4-8 Weeks: End of Unit and Interim Assessments will be curriculum or internally created to assess the standards within the unit. The assessments will likely combine arts-integrated assignments, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended responses to evaluate whether students have learned standards and content. RioGAFA will ensure all assessments are aligned with Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, all content specific State Standards, and New Mexico Core Arts Standards for the grade level. Teachers will participate in data meetings within two days of being scored in order to analyze student data. The data will inform us of strengths and shortcomings that will inform instructional practices.

Arts-Integration Assessment, Ongoing: Assessment in arts-integration is foundational to RioGAFA's mission and vision. Arts-integration assessment will be an ongoing cyclical process that begins with identifying clear instructional goals, observing, and responding to student needs during instruction, and engaging in student and teacher generated reflection throughout the learning experience. Assessment in arts-integration will measure the student's learning achievement by demonstrating an understanding of art form applied to content learning. Rubrics will be created by the Director(s) during the planning year and will focus on content, process, and product. Score norming on the rubric will occur during two afternoon professional development sessions within two days of completing the first assessment.

Rubrics for Problem Solving and Creative Thinking, Ongoing: Students will be assessed in cross-content standards and their problem-solving and creative thinking skills through our

arts-integrated curriculum. An arts-integrated assessment will address at least two different content standards - one academic and one art form. Each assessment will also assess how students solve problems and creative thinking. Norming on rubric scoring will occur during two afternoon professional development sessions within two days of completing the assessment.

Arts Performance/Presenting Assessments, Ongoing: The New Mexico Core Arts Standards include Performing and Presenting. Students will participate in a variety of performance assessments inside and outside the classroom. Will include students participating in statewide, district-wide, and school art shows and performances. Local and national competition-level arts activities include, but are not limited to, the Scholastics visual arts and writing, the Middle School Guitar Competition, Honor Band and Choir, All-state, and dance festivals.

Senior Showcase, Annually: The Senior Showcase provides an opportunity for seniors to highlight one chosen art form they have developed throughout high school. Students must complete the process and present or perform their artistry work to participate in the graduation ceremony. Preparation starts at the beginning of the student's senior year. Each senior will be enrolled in a Senior Showcase course in the student's chosen art form, counting for a .5 elective credit-earning a pass or fail grade. The Senior Showcase course teacher will serve as Showcase Mentor who facilitates and evaluates the development of the student's Showcase.

Special Populations Assessments:

In addition to the assessments outlined above, RioGAFA has included the state mandated assessments for our students with special needs and English Learners. Annual assessments for students identified with special needs and as English Learners are outlined below in **Figure .**

Figure 47. Assessments for Special Populations

Assessment	Testing Time Frame	Purpose	Frequency, Data Analysis, and Progress Monitoring
Dyslexia Screener* English screeners: Lexercise; Spanish screeners: Istation (ISIP)	Before 40th Day	Grades: 1st Grade State mandated, screener for dyslexia to identify children who are at risk for dyslexia. Students will be screened in their primary language.	One Time A student whose screening demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia shall receive targeted structured literacy interventions with ONGOING (daily and weekly) progress monitoring to determine if the student is making adequate progress
Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)*	Spring	Grades: 3-8 Assessment designed for students with multiple significant cognitive disabilities. Completely individualized test designed for students to show what they know and can do.	One time annually Data will be analyzed during the summer and used to inform English, math and science curriculum and lessons for students with specific IEPs. Students will receive targeted

			reading interventions and actively monitor student progress through independent practice and exit tickets.
W-APT* access placement test and WIDA ACCESS Screener	Listening and Speaking submit by 40th day Reading and Writing submit by 120th day	Grades: K-12 Identifies students who are potential English language learners (ELLs). The WIDA Screener is an English Language Proficiency screener given to incoming students and identified ELLs to determine English language learning level and the necessary supports needed for instruction. ACCESS is given to students already identified ELL that measures students' social and academic English language proficiency	One time annually BOY for WIDA Screener placement test Data will be used to identify potential ELL students. One time annually MOY for WIDA ACCESS Provides information to help teachers enhance instruction for ELLs, and gives information about the level of readiness of a student to exit English language support programs. EL students will receive targeted reading interventions and actively monitor student progress through independent practice and exit tickets.

Progress Monitoring for Special Populations:

All first-grade students will receive a dyslexia screener in which the classroom teacher will be provided targeted instruction and progress monitoring tools for students.

All students identified as English language learners (ELL) are required to take the WIDA ACCESS test annually to assess each ELL student's English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The Leadership team will analyze the data and use the reports to set benchmarks to measure future performance, identify progress, make reclassification decisions about whether a student can exit English language support services, and support decisions about instructional planning.

Students that have been identified with significant cognitive disabilities will participate in the Dynamic Learning Maps assessments to ensure that they are included in the state assessment and accountability programs. The data from the assessment will identify the student's performance level and can be used to develop student Individualized Education Program (IEP), set instructional goals, identify strengths and areas of growth and inform appropriate classroom instruction.

Teachers and leaders will monitor progress on an ongoing basis (daily and weekly) to ensure that students are making significant academic gains.

Data Analysis to Inform Instruction:

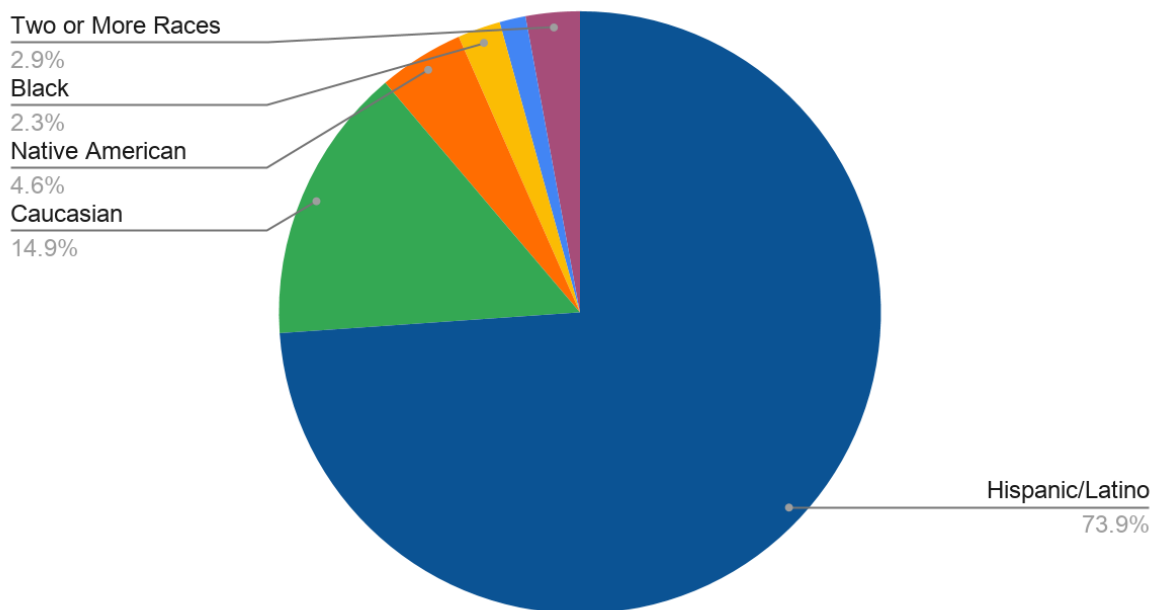
Alignment to Specific Needs of Projected Population:

We anticipate that our student population will reflect Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) demographics on Albuquerque's Westside - 871114, 87120, and 87121. Our targeted facility is located in zip code 87120. According to the website ZipDataMaps, almost three-quarters of the area's student population is Hispanic, at 71.9%. Students that qualify for free or reduced lunch are over half at 61%. See **Figure 48.** for a complete breakdown of the population by race. Our assessment plan includes assessments that will address our anticipated population's needs, including our special education and English Learner students. Assessments in our plan that are specifically for our special education and English language learners include the WIDA Access Placement Test, ACCESS for ELLs, and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLMs). Our arts-integrated curriculum and assessments allow all students to explore ideas and concepts creatively and use their strengths to express their learning and knowledge in various ways.

Figure 48. Anticipated Population based on the Zip Codes 87114, 87120⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Enrollment and Demographic Information. (n.d.). Retrieved April 21, 2021, from https://public.tableau.com/views/EnrollmentandDemographicInformation/Overall?:showVizHome=no&:display_count=y&publish=yes&:origin=viz_share_link#3

Demographics in Rio GAFA's Targeted Zip Codes



In **Figures 49 and 50** below, 3rd-grade students in our targeted community perform 2% below APS students and 8% below students in the state in reading. In math, students on the Westside are at 30% proficiency. Sadly, Westside 3rd-grade Caucasian students outperformed Hispanic students by 18% higher in reading and 20% higher in math. Those identified as economically disadvantaged showed only 17% proficiency in reading than the 25% of the rest of the state's 3rd graders identified as economically disadvantaged. This is almost half the proficiency rate of all 3rd graders tested around the state.

Figure 49. 3rd Grade Reading % Proficiency on New Mexico State Assessments (2019)⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*

3rd Grade Reading Proficiencies

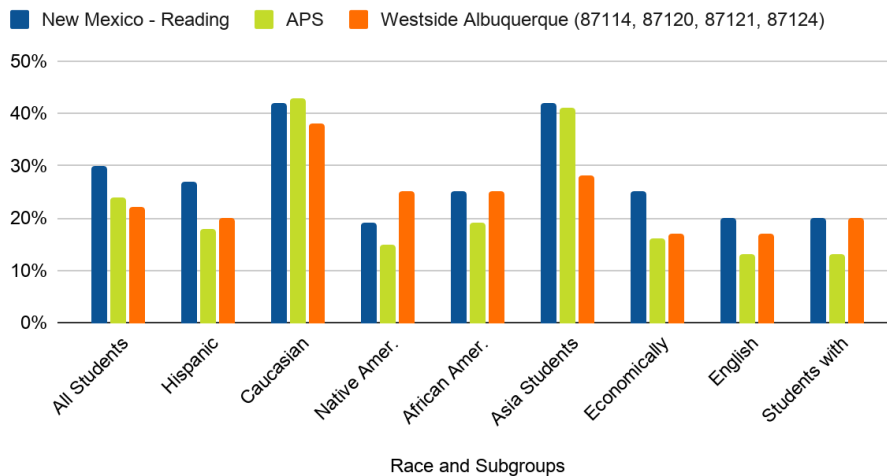
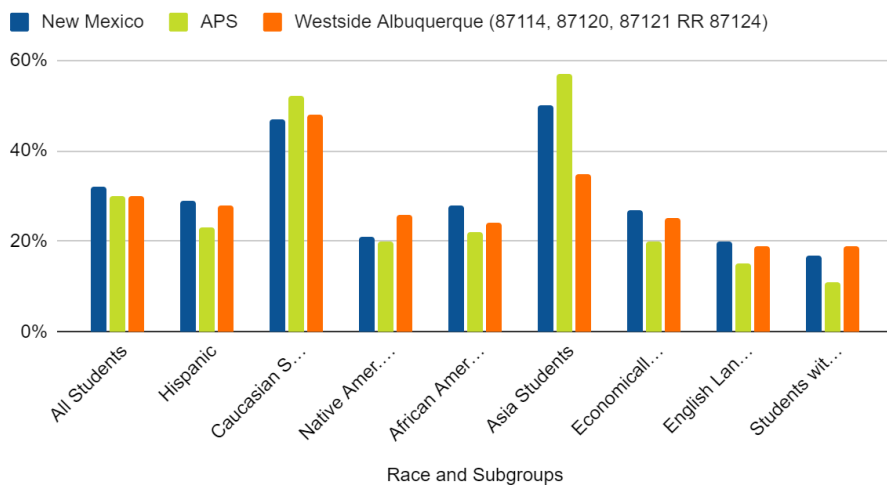


Figure 50. 3rd Grade Math % Proficiency on New Mexico State Assessments (2019)⁵⁸

3rd Grade Math Proficiencies



The trend of lower proficiency rates for Hispanic, Native American, and African American students continues in 8th-grade throughout the state and within our targeted zip codes. While students on Albuquerque's Westside (including nearby Rio Rancho, 87124) have slightly higher proficiency rates than the state, the proficiencies are still low. For Hispanic students reading is at 22%, and math is only

⁵⁸ Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*

16%. English language learners, students with disabilities, and students identified as low socioeconomic reading proficiencies are below 20%, and in math, proficiencies are below 15%.

Figure 51. 8th Grade Reading % Proficiency on New Mexico State Assessments (2019)⁵⁹

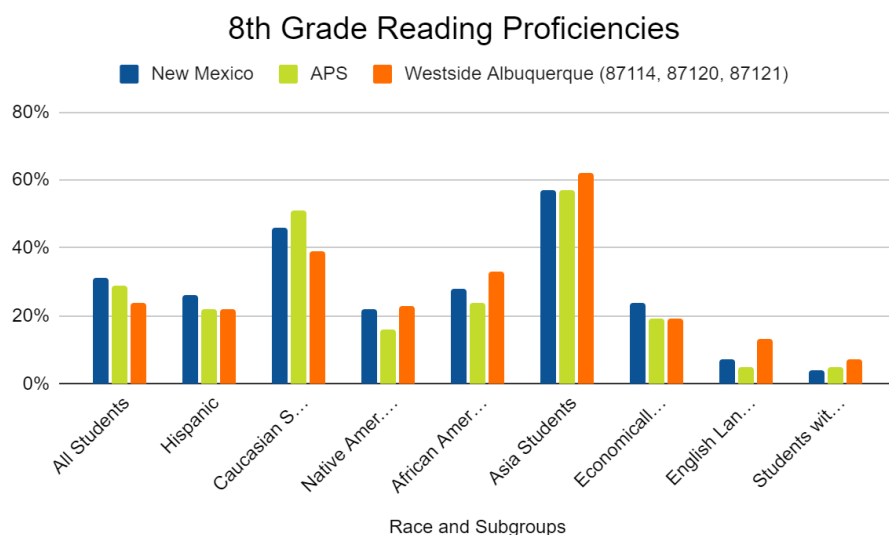
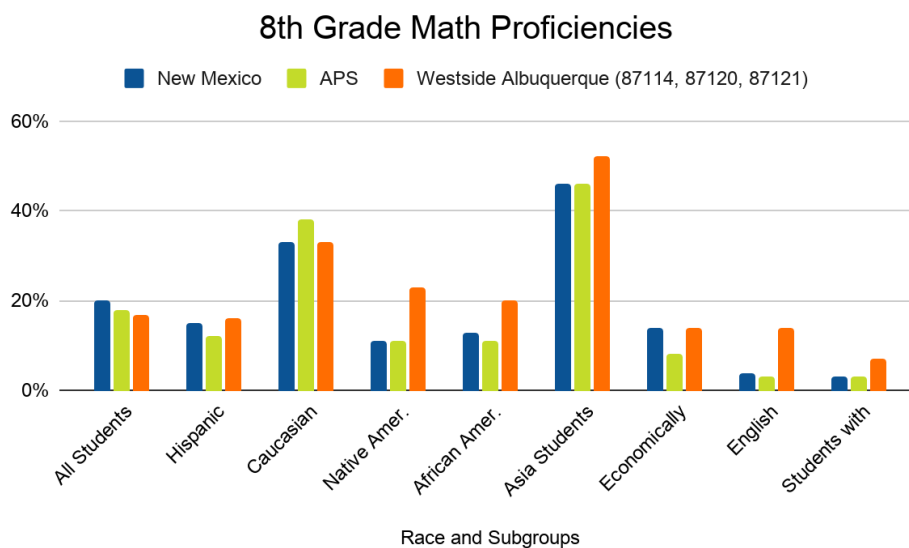


Figure 52. 8th Grade Math % Proficiency on New Mexico State Assessments (2019)⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*

⁶⁰ Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*



Reading proficiencies rose in 11th-grade students, however math proficiencies dip. In science, Caucasian students score 11%-14% higher than Hispanic, Native American, and African American students on Albuquerque's Westside.

Figure 53. 11th Grade Reading % Proficiency on New Mexico State Assessments (2019)⁶¹

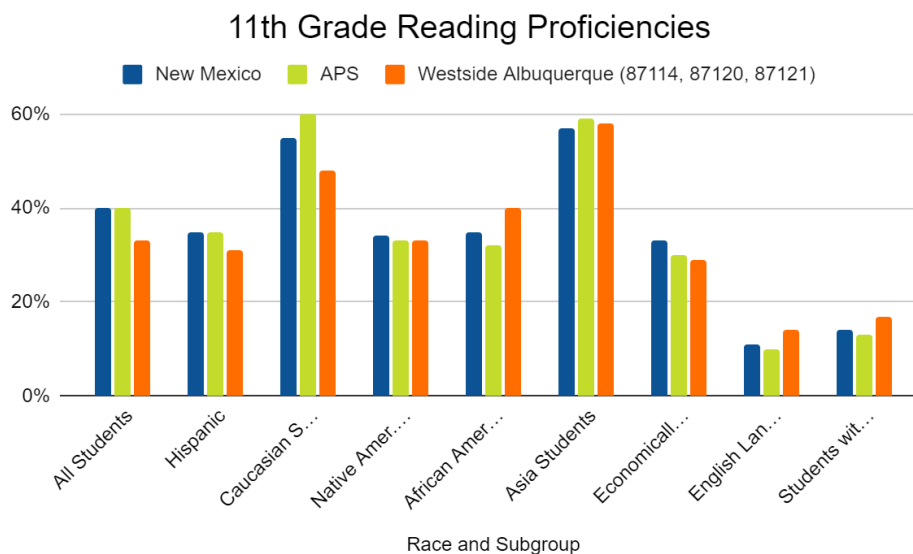
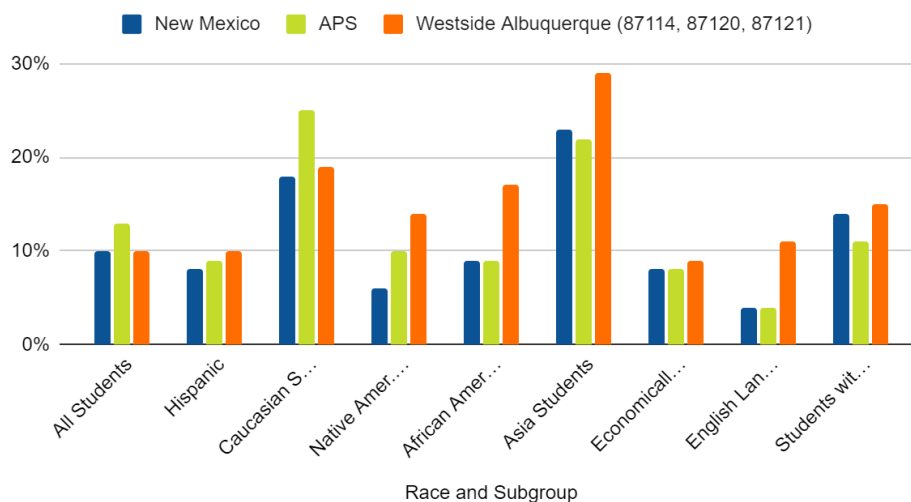


Figure 54. 11th Grade Math % Proficiency on New Mexico State Assessments (2019)⁶²

⁶¹ Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*

⁶² Based upon TAMELA released data by the New Mexico Public Education Department (2019) *Proficiencies Webfiles, State, District, School by Grade 2019*

11th Grade Math Proficiencies



Alignment to our Mission: Our data-driven approach to instruction is essential in ensuring that we stay true to our mission to educate and meet grade-level standards for all Kindergarten through 12th Grade students by learning to solve and think creatively through an arts-integration curriculum. All RioGAFA stakeholders will be informed of our annual assessment plan:

- the purpose of each assessment,
- the assessment calendar,
- who will take the assessment, and
- performance analysis on each assessment.

To show growth and show progress towards goals, RioGAFA will create a culture of data-driven instruction. Regular data collection will allow us to celebrate our strengths and identify student, classroom, grade-level, and school-wide shortcomings and gaps in learning within our PLCs. Our assessment plan includes measurements for assessing grade-level state and national standards and problem-solving and creative thinking. We will include assessments for all content, academic, and the arts and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery in various ways. Our interim assessments will often be performance-based arts-integration, allowing teachers and students to review student progress toward our academic and art goals in multiple modalities.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Meets

A complete response must

- Include an assessment calendar that identifies all state or district mandated assessment periods and dates related to teacher analysis/use of assessment data to inform instruction
 - Include assessments/progress monitoring for special populations;
- Identify, for all state or district mandated assessment periods, the grade levels at which the assessments will be administered;
- Describe, for all state or district mandated assessment periods, the specific data that will be collected, reported, analyzed, evaluated, and utilized to inform instruction;
- Describe how the data identified will be used to inform instruction;
- Align with all state assessment and data reporting requirements;
- Describe how the assessment plan meets the specific needs of the proposed school's projected student population;
- Describe how the assessment plan aligns to the proposed school's mission; and
- Include any assessments that may be negotiated as part of the performance framework and contract.

RioGAFA meets the criteria for the assessment plan. They provide an assessment calendar as well as assessments for special populations. I do think it would be advantageous for RioGAFA to innovate beyond the exit ticket for how they will track progress/assess students on an ongoing, internal basis. There were some specific assessment indicators that are in alignment with the mission of the school. While, performance based assessment may be more indicative of student progress, especially since RioGAFA is an arts/performance based school, it would be helpful for them to include more specific information (i.e. rubrics) about performance based assessments within the school.

H.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of the how assessment data will be analyzed and what corrective actions will be taken if the proposed school falls short of achieving student academic achievement, or growth expectations, or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) **and** school-wide levels. Provide a complete explanation of what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the proposed school will assess effectiveness.

Monitoring Academic Performance

Accountability is an essential component of any school's success, and RioGAFA will take a comprehensive approach to analyze data. Student achievement goals will be set and reviewed annually. Goals and progress towards goals will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders. The Director(s) will create an Academic Dashboard during the planning year. Beginning in Year 1, data will be entered in the dashboard from various assessments. The dashboard will identify strengths and shortcomings to formulate plans to reteach skills and standards in new ways that have not been mastered and identify when students need universal interventions. Our data analysis approach will be proactive in targeting students who need additional support. Our assessment cycle and weekly data meetings will ensure that teachers understand student instructional levels and needs.

RioGAFA will establish our culture of data-driven instruction during summer professional development. The cornerstone of our data analysis will be our weekly data meetings. Our plan includes formative, short cycle, and summative assessments across content areas and grade levels. Assessment data will be looked at and analyzed through exit tickets, rubrics, and interim assessments (including performance-based tasks). Looking at and analyzing student work will allow us to measure student progress on an ongoing basis and create plans to support student success better. We will have regular data analysis that takes place throughout the school in multiple ways:

- Regular academic data review at Governing Board meetings
- Data review at leadership team meetings
- Interim assessment item analysis conducted by teachers after an assessment.
- Assessment analysis meetings in grade levels and curriculum
- Weekly data meetings with the teacher and instructional coach

Using Paul Bambrick-Santoyo Driven by Data 2.0 and Relay's National Principal Academy Fellowship (NPAF) format, *See It Name It Do It*, we will look at student work weekly to ensure effective analysis. Allotting time for weekly data meetings is vital to building a data-driven culture. By focusing on student learning, the RioGAFA leadership team can help teachers improve their instructional methods and determine what strategies and techniques are working best. The weekly data meeting includes:

1. Prework:

- One to two days before the meeting, the teacher and coach look at the data independently to identify misconceptions in student work. The teacher will ensure that the coach has student work before the meeting.
- The coach will plan the meeting, preparing an exemplar, reteach plan, and teacher's action step.

2. The Meeting:

- See **Figure 55.** below

3. Follow-up:

- The coach will follow up with a scheduled observation during the reteach.
- The coach will give the teacher in-the-moment feedback to ensure students understand the skill or concept.

Figure 55. Weekly Data Meeting Relay Format (Relay Graduate School for Education)

Aspect	What to do
See it: Narrow your focus:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coach will pick only key parts of the standard/exemplar to unpack that will help name the student and teaching gap. • Create a Know/Show Chart (Unpack the standard with what the student should know and what the student should show.) • Compare the Know/Show Chart to the student work.
Name it-: Fully name the gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the teacher fully understands the gap, not just naming the gap, but able to explain the gap.
Do it: Fully pre-plan to be the model teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coach will have a completed re-teach and follow-up plan ready to use as the exemplar • The teacher will script the key parts of the model (think aloud), guided discourse (discussion questions) and/or monitoring • The teacher and coach perfect the plan before you practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select the type of re-teach • Plan your re-teach • The teacher and the coach compare exemplars reteach plans and revise as necessary • Identify how will actively monitor • Practice the reteach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice what will be hardest for the teacher to implement effectively
Follow up: This is not a sprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule and plan multiple re-assessments and lock in plan to track that performance

To ensure quality data, teachers will receive support from the Instructional Leadership team to:

- learn to mind the gap during independent student work,
- in recording data,

- develop and review curriculum assessments for rigor and assessing the correct standards,
- train to use data to adjust instruction to meet student needs most effectively.

Our data collection and analysis practices will be part of an ongoing process at the classroom, grade-level, and school-wide and begin from before the first day of school, using data from previous years when available. We firmly believe that our students can achieve outstanding results, demonstrating their high academic performance in various ways. For this to happen, we will provide students with a rigorous arts-integrated, personalized academic program taught by highly qualified educators driven by student data to ensure progress. Teachers will intervene with interventions and support students who show little to no progress. We will strive to improve teaching and curriculum that are ineffective and collaborate, celebrate and practice best practices that have resulted in student success.

While our teacher/coach weekly data meetings and weekly PLCs will monitor progress weekly, RioGAFA will also set expectations and monitor whole school and individual student assessment performance using five summative assessments.

1. New Mexico State Assessments: RioGAFA's long-term goal is for 100% of our students to show growth and meet or exceed grade-level proficiency every mandatory state assessment. We will establish targets for our collective student body, which will get them closer to reaching the goal with each succeeding school year.

2. Short-cycle Assessment: All students will be assessed quarterly to determine their progress towards goals. Teachers will analyze IA results in their grade level and curriculum meetings to create individualized support for struggling and excelling students. RioGAFA will use Istation Reading, Istation Reading Advanced, Reading Inventory, and Istation Math K-8 assessments as our proposed short-cycle assessments. Using baseline testing at the beginning of the school year, the RioGAFA leadership team will set targeted goals for our collective student body, which will get them closer to reaching 100% proficiency with each succeeding school year.

3. Interim Assessments (IA's): Students will be assessed through end-of-unit interim assessments that could be multiple choice, open-ended responses and/or arts-integrated assessments. (See below for our arts-integrated assessments. The curriculum will be broken into units, grouping standards together in sequential order. At the end of each unit, students must be assessed on the standards and skills taught within the unit. Units are expected to end every 4-8 weeks. We will administer our adopted curriculum's IA's. If we do not feel they meet our rigor standards after a thorough review of the curriculum IA's, we will create our own IA's aligned to grade-level state and national standards.

4. Special Population Assessments: Students with dyslexia, disabilities, gifted students, and English language learners (ELL) will be monitored regularly to ensure students are making consistent and positive academic progress. We will provide additional interventions, services, and support for all

students who qualify, and we will actively assess when and if students have reached a point to be exited from services.

5. Arts-Integrated Assessments: The process of merging the arts with content learning in the classroom through purposeful instructional practice that engages students in learning. arts-integration reaches all students in every classroom, including the lowest and highest performing learners. Our mission-specific goals include assessing problem-solving and creativity, which will support students' academic goals. We will monitor progress and growth in problem-solving and creativity to ensure that our set targeted goals for our collective student body will get them closer to reaching 100% proficiency with each successive year in our school.

Triggers for Corrective Action

RioGAFA will follow the NM PED's Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS) to provide immediate support for all student learning. The support students will receive includes supporting both student's learning and emotional needs. Our staff will be trained to use universal interventions, targeted, evidence-based interventions, and the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) framework. Research supports that using PBIS improves school culture and academic performance and reduces referrals and suspensions.

1. **Below Proficiency Scores:** A student performing below proficiency on any assessment will automatically be flagged for teacher and/or school leader review. The data will be examined to determine specific needs and will form the basis of an action plan to address those needs specifically. These actions will include MLSS Layer 2 strategic individual interventions and additional supports that are evidence-based and data-driven. If the student continues to perform below proficiency, teachers and leaders will look at the student's overall achievement and plan for MLSS Layer 3 Interventions. Students will receive all levels of support through intensive individual evidence-based interventions through curriculum and instruction. Students receiving Layer 3 intensive interventions will be closely monitored and assessed on a biweekly basis to ensure that interventions are successful and the student is progressing. Teachers and leaders will look at data in their individual data meetings and during our weekly meeting PLCs.
2. **Little or No Growth Based on Set Targeted Goals:** Students will be flagged, and we will implement the MLSS Framework as above in 1. *Below Proficiency Scores*.
3. **High School Credit Recovery:** Based on the data analysis performed after each academic term, an administrator will identify students who have failed a course. This trigger indicates that the student needs more support and monitoring in order to prevent further academic struggles. Within the first week at the beginning of the new academic term, an administrator or college and career counselors will meet with the student to reflect on the previous term and determine a plan to rectify and resolve the issue(s) of lost credit. RioGAFA's schedule will

provide a convenient path toward credit recovery for all high school credits that will not negatively impact the student.

4. **Less Than 70% of Students Meet or Exceed Annual Growth Targets:** If less than 70% of our students meet or exceed our annual growth targets, we will fall below our standard. The School Director(s) will thoroughly analyze the data to determine specific areas that need improvement, action steps taken after our quarterly assessments for both teachers and students. This data will be used to improve Professional Development for teachers, adapt curriculum, assessments, and procedures, and determine budgeting needs.
5. **Student is insufficiently challenged:** Students who move through material quickly; test well, but voice or seem apathetic in class; and/or have behavior issues could be students looking for more of a challenge. In this case we will look at several strategies for gifted and advanced students. Strategies may include planning for a higher layer of learning in lesson plans, enable gifted and advanced students opportunities to work together, give students a voice and/or encourage passion projects within their interests.
6. **The NM PED/PEC finds that RioGAFA is not performing to standards:** While we have every intention of performing at or above standards, RioGAFA will revise and prioritize the school budget to allocate additional resources toward academic programming as outlined in NMSA 22-2E-4(E) if we fall short. The Director(s) and Governing Board will thoroughly analyze the data from the NM PED/PEC (school growth, growth for students within the highest and lowest quartile, and any other low performing areas) to determine areas that need improvement. This data will be used to guide Professional Development for teachers, changes to school processes and procedures, curriculum changes, and developing a revised budget to meet school needs.

We will review the students' overall performance and look at student achievement from various perspectives and multiple other data points. These data sources will include:

Historical performance: Analyze student growth. A student who is low achieving, as measured by assessment scores and yet is still demonstrating growth from baseline scores, will be approached differently from a student who is achieving at a lower level and not demonstrating growth.

Attendance: Looking at the gaps in academics may be related to school attendance. Students who miss multiple days of instruction are often academically behind, which requires more than just an academic intervention. Students that have more than ten absences will be put on an attendance contract. Home visits will be required for students with a significant amount of absences.

Behavioral data: Behavior can often have an adverse effect on student academic progress. There are many factors in a student's life that can cause them to behave in inappropriate ways. We will conduct

a thorough evaluation if it appears that behavior is getting in the way of academic success and initiate a behavior intervention plan if necessary.

Class/grade-level/school-wide data: We will identify any trends that may be class, grade-level, or school-wide during data analysis. If we notice a high rate of SAT referrals and/or retention recommendations the Director(s) will evaluate the school's culture and climate, core instructional program, instructional practices, behavioral expectations. Action steps will be constructed to evaluate curriculum and/or improve instruction or teaching methods to ensure we close gaps in knowledge or skill.

Emotional well-being: We understand the importance of a student's social and emotional well-being and its role in academic progress. The appropriate intervention for a student who exhibits social or emotional problems that may affect a student's academic performance will be provided. We will rely on that student's attendance and behavioral record, parental input, and teacher observation data to determine the severity of the situation and the corrective action needed.

Effectiveness of Academic Program

As a data-driven school, RioGAFA will have student data readily available to the School Director(s), teachers, families, and students via our data dashboard. Our academic achievement and intervention process aligns with NMSA 22-2C-6(A) in that we will use individual assessment results as part of our process. The school Director(s), leadership, and teachers will regularly monitor student outcomes and ensure that students stay on a growth trajectory. We will regularly monitor our academic programs using student progress reports and our data overview. The data overview will give the Director(s) a big picture of overall school growth and goals. We will also look at individual student progress towards goals, proficiencies, and grades. These are the primary indicators that are useful for monitoring the effectiveness of our arts-integrated program. We will focus on both positive trends and negative trends in the data.

Data review will lead to several possible student interventions to support the student in making meaningful academic progress. Using the MLSS Framework, data-driven interventions include, but are not limited to:

- Increase active monitoring in class with individualized feedback
- Increase targeted, evidence-based interventions
- Increase small group or individual instruction time during English Language Arts and Math
- Adjust small groups to include different students and adjust instruction and reteaching
- More frequent monitoring of student progress
- Revise individual learning plan targets through adaptive computer software.
- arts-integrated interventions and tutoring
- Social and behavioral contracts

In all cases, we will contact the parents/guardians, encouraging family's involvement and commitment to their students' learning plan. Families will be given resources in order to create a

partnership between the family and RioGAFA. Using data to inform our decisions, we will make every effort to utilize all resources available to help every student succeed. Students will receive a layered continuum of support. During weekly meetings (PLCs), leaders will provide professional development around evidence-based interventions. Leadership will monitor that teachers are implementing interventions with fidelity. Both teachers and leaders will monitor the impact on student learning.

If a student continues to make little to no progress toward targeted goals, a referral will be made to the Student Assistance Team (SAT). Our SAT team, under 22-2C-6 NMSA, will include:

- School administrator
- Teacher
- School counselor
- Parent

RioGAFA will ensure that the following criteria are in place for a SAT referral:

- a lack of expected student progress,
- multiple data points, including a test-in-hand analysis of a universal screener or short cycle assessment,
- action plans,
- delivery of high quality, documented, differentiated instruction, and
- documentation of numerous evidence-based interventions with a student with slow to no progress.

Also, parents/guardians may refer their students to the SAT at any time as well.

Figure 56. Data Analysis Timeline

Action Step	Plan	Frequency	Responsible Parties
Develop Assessment and Data Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create the assessment plan and calendar - Create a detailed plan for data review to present to the Governing Board and staff 	Annually Year 0 - April & May Year 1 and subsequent years - April-July	Directors
Data Plan Overview	Introduce to staff during summer professional development	July	Directors
Analyze all internal assessment data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create re-teaching plans and practice plans. Implement the intervention process aligned to CCSS for individual students. Follow up with observation and feedback - Increase teacher support, if a class is not showing growth: 	Exit Tickets: Daily and Weekly	Teachers, Instructional Coaches, & Directors
Analyze Performance		Ongoing	Teachers, Instructional

Based Assessments	1. Increased number or length of observations by instructional coaches 2. Increased number of collaborative planning meetings with instructional coaches 3. Side-by-side data analysis meetings with teacher and instructional coach 4. Teacher observes model teaching by a peer or instructional coach - Increase professional development during grade-level or curriculum meetings if it is a grade-level or curriculum 1. Conduct analysis of curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If misalignment - Director(s) will devise a timeline and budget to align and present to Governing Board b. If more resources are needed, create a plan, resources list and adjusted budget to present to the Governing Board 		Coaches, & Directors
Analyze Interim Assessments		Quarterly	Teachers, Instructional Coaches, & Directors
Analyze State Mandated Interim Assessments		Quarterly	Teachers, Instructional Coaches, Director of Student Services & Directors
Analyze MSSA	Using data, the Director(s) will work with leadership to examine the state testing data and develop an action plan for the next school year. 1. Create a summer professional develop plan to align with findings from the state data 2. Conduct analysis of curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. If misalignment - Director(s) will devise a timeline and budget to align and present to Governing Board d. If more resources are needed, create a plan, resources list and adjusted budget to present to the Governing Board 3. Improve upon leadership training around coaching and curriculum	Annually June and July	Teachers, Instructional Coaches, Director of Student Services & Directors
Analyze NM-ASR			Teachers, Instructional Coaches, Director of Student Services & Directors
Analyze DLM			Teachers, Instructional Coaches, Director of Student Services & Directors
Analyze Accuplacer		Annually	Teachers, Instructional Coaches, College & Career and Directors
Analyze PSAT			Teachers, Instructional Coaches, College & Career and Directors
Analyze SAT			Teachers, Instructional

			Coaches, College & Career and Directors
--	--	--	---

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the processes the school will use, including specific action steps, triggers that would prompt action steps, responsible parties, timelines, and associated costs, to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitor academic performance and take appropriate corrective action if the school is not on track to or does not meet academic performance expectations; Address specific responsibilities related to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meeting student academic achievement or growth expectations <u>at the school-wide level</u> and meeting student academic achievement goals <u>at the individual student level</u> (remediation/at-risk student); and Describe how the school will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its academic program generally and the effectiveness of specific corrective actions or interventions.

In terms of how RioGAFA will analyze and use assessment data, they meet application requirements because they provide a clear, comprehensive and cohesive description of how assessment data will be analyzed and the corrective actions the school will take if they fall short of achieving student academic achievement or growth expectations or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) and school-wide levels. However, it is still unclear as to how they will use internal student performance data (i.e. performances and showcases) to inform instruction and next step plans.

H.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to students, parents, the proposed school's Governing Body, the proposed school's Authorizer, and the broader community. Please consider your selected community, their accessibility and communication options when answering this question.

RioGAFA believes that complete transparency is essential to student success and allows students to take ownership of their learning. The Director(s) will ensure that all data is accurate and acted upon quickly. All data will be made available in Spanish. Our data will be made available publicly following the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Sharing Data with Students: Students will have opportunities to frequently review their data so that students can take ownership of their learning. Within the first two weeks of school, students will create data portfolios. Teachers will hold mini conferences with each student regularly to set goals, prioritize work, track progress, and celebrate growth. During active monitoring, teachers will track data and give students immediate feedback on their work and learning. Twice a year, we will hold student-led conferences in which students will lead their conferences and share their progress and report cards with their families.

RioGAFA believes success should be celebrated and that schools that learn and grow together are successful and create a data-driven instruction culture. During weekly assemblies, we will celebrate the whole school, grade level, and student successes. Our celebration will include the arts, academic success, and attendance.

Sharing Data with Parents/Guardians: Families are essential to student success, and we will disseminate data to families in a timely manner. Report cards will be sent quarterly, and progress reports will be sent mid-quarter for academic and arts progress. If students are not making progress towards goals, parents/guardians will be contacted at the earliest sign that they need additional support to reach their targeted goals.

Families/guardians will be invited to student-led conferences twice a year, at the end of Quarter 1 and Quarter 3. Our goal is that 100% of students participate in a student-led conference. Student-led conferences encourage students to take ownership of their learning and create a setting for conversation around their students' learning instead of a teacher presenting the data.

Building a culture of community is foundational to the mission and vision of RioGAFA. Family and community events and performances will be scheduled throughout the year. Our community events will highlight student work and culture through an exhibition or performance. Attending these activities provides parents/guardians another opportunity to engage with teachers, leadership, and the Governing Board about school goals, instructional approaches, and student progress.

Sharing Data with the Governing Board: The Governing Board is responsible for adopting academic policies that meet all requirements outlined in NMSA 22-2C. The data report will be a standing agenda item each month. The Director(s) will be responsible for reporting academic, arts, and operational

data to the Governing Board each month and answer any questions the board may have. The Governing Board will also have access to the data dashboard described in I.H.1.

The Governing Board will also be invited to our community events and performances mentioned above under *Sharing Data with Parents/Guardians*. Community events and performances will allow the board to engage with families, teachers, and leadership about our mission and student progress towards goals.

Sharing Data with the Authorizer: RioGAFA is dedicated to reporting accurate assessment and performance data, attendance, and survey data according to the deadlines set by the PED/PEC using the state's STARS reporting system. During Year 1 and 2, the Director(s) will be responsible for STARS reporting. During Year 3, we will have a dedicated STARS coordinator that will work directly with the Director(s). We will also provide the PEC with required reports, including the PED monitoring plan, site visits, and the renewal application.

Sharing Data with the Broader Community: RioGAFA values strong, authentic community connections. We have worked diligently to establish connections within the community. We believe the key to successful community engagement is transparency, inclusion, and respect. Information about our arts and academic success will be accessible through our website, a weekly newsletter, social media platforms, community events and performances, and our Arts Advisory Council meetings (addressed in **Section I.A.2**), and our Equity Council meetings (outlined in **Section II.F**). Our data will be made available quarterly, and we will follow the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Communication Plan for Specific Assessment Data: RioGAFA will ensure meaningful communication with families taking into consideration language spoken in the home and the use of suitable media to guarantee families are informed clearly and promptly. All formal communication to parents/guardians will be in English and Spanish. We will share academic performance data with our stakeholders on all assessments outlined in our assessment plan following FERPA regulations. We will disseminate RioGAFA's assessment performance by grade level and subgroups in an easy-to-understand format.

Our short-cycle assessments, including interim content assessments, arts assessments, and Istation for Reading and Math (K-8), and our summative assessments, including the MSSA for English Language Arts and Mathematics, and NM-ARS (Science), will be communicated to all stakeholders in multiple ways. The broader community will receive a summary of the results via our website, social media accounts, the weekly newsletter, and our annual report. Families and students will receive individual reports for all assessments distributed quarterly and during our student-led conferences. Teachers and students will outline what the results mean and use them to support the individual student further. Reports will be available in English and Spanish or the family's native language.

Data from assessments specific to English Learners and students with special needs, including the W-APT/ACCESS and Dynamic Learning Maps, will only be shared with stakeholders as appropriate. Students and their families will receive individual reports for these assessments, with the appropriate

school staff member available to explain the reports and how it impacts their academic learning. The RioGAFA Governing Board will have access to all student data following FERPA regulations.

Communication Plan Effectiveness: Our communication plan for student assessment results and progress mainly targets the RioGAFA stakeholders: school staff, the Governing Board, NM PEC, school partners, and our families and students. For families lacking access to the internet or a computer, RioGAFA will distribute paper documents to give parents and set up community computers to access any data that may be online. The Governing Board and PEC will receive information directly from the Director(s) and/or Administrative Secretary. The general public will have access via our website and social media. We will prioritize attending neighborhood association meetings and community events to stay in touch with our surrounding area and invite the community to our community events and performances. We believe that with our various forms of communication, all RioGAFA stakeholders will stay informed.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how student achievement and progress will be communicated to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students Parents The governing body The authorizer The broader community; Identify the communication plan for each of the specific sources of student achievement data identified in H.(1) and any other relevant sources of student achievement data; and Provide information that demonstrates the plan is effective in reaching the targeted population and the specific community in which the school plans to locate.

RioGAFA meets the criteria for assessment communication because they have a clear procedure for how they will share student assessment data with student, parents/guardians, governing board, authorizer, and broader community.

II. Organizational Framework

A. Governing Body Creation/Capacity.

A.(1) Summarize and incorporate **all** key components of your governance structure, **specifically** outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body members (number of members, length of terms, offices to be created, committees, grounds for removal from office, and relationship with the proposed school's administration). Provide comprehensive "bylaws", attach bylaws as **Appendix A**.

Roles and Responsibilities of the RioGAFA Governing Board

The role of the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Governing Board is to provide oversight and guidance for the organization. Each member of the Board will have a duty to safeguard the long-term well-being of the school and a commitment to uphold the mission and vision created by the Founding Team. The Board will be composed of a various individuals that provide a representation of the community at large as well as professionals and community leaders to provide a comprehensive voice to ensure that the vision and mission of the organization are upheld. Aside from the task of upholding integrity of the founding mission and vision, the Governing Board will also be responsible for all aspects of oversight and governance, including oversight of the Founding Director(s). The Board is not involved in the day-to-day details of running the school or involving personnel or student needs. Rather, under best practices, the Board delegates the responsibility for running the charter school and implementing policies set in place by the Board to the Director(s).

Upon approval by the Public Education Committee (PEC) and the Public Education Department, the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Founding Board will transition into the initial Governing Board. During the initial board meeting, in compliance with the New Mexico Open Meetings Act (NMSA 10-15-1), board members will elect officers, endorse, and adopt the Bylaws and Conflict of Interest policy found in Appendix A, and form Board committees. These committees will be outlined later within this section.

The role of the Governing Board, as stated previously, is essential to uphold the mission and vision of RioGAFA. The following are the primary responsibilities of the board to maintain that the organizational, academic, financial, and management aspects of the school are executed correctly and in alliance with the school's mission and vision:

- **Mission/Vision Calibration**
 - The Founding Governing Board will be tasked with creating the school's mission and vision statement. These statements should include what the goals and objectives are for the organization. Once transitioned to the RioGAFA Governing Board, members will begin each board meeting with a review of the vision and mission. Reviewing the school's vision and mission statement will guarantee that this is at the forefront of all meetings to maintain its importance as both a guide and a measure of success. Each member of the Governing Board should know the mission and vision of the school and be able to articulate the progress towards these statements and what the Leadership Team and Governing Board are focusing on to improve the school's success rate to reach their goals.

- Academic Oversight
 - The Governing Board will be tasked with reviewing academic data of the students and specific subgroups of students monthly. This data will be made available by the Director of Academics and will include progress towards the Academic Performance Framework goals decided upon. The purpose of this will be to keep the Board informed of RioGAFA's progress towards academic goals and maintaining that Board members are informed of the school's happenings and allowing members to assess their commitment to RioGAFA.
- Legal Compliance Assessment
 - Compliance with state regulations and procedures is a huge priority for the RioGAFA team. Because of this, the Governing Board will be tasked with assuring the Director(s) is fulfilling all responsibilities in regard to compliance with all state and federal requirements monthly during the board meetings. Compliance information will be presented to the board monthly within the Director(s) reports. In addition, it will be required that at least two members of the RioGAFA Governing Board have a background and experience in educational law. This will both provide expertise in this area and uphold that board members have experience related to running a successful educational organization.
- Financial Compliance Assessment
 - As previously stated, the RioGAFA Governing Board will always be required to maintain that at least two board members have a background in finance, most specifically school finance. This will guarantee that the organization can lean on the expertise of the Board's as checks and balances when it comes to being a financially sound organization. Review of the school finances will occur monthly during board meetings, and the board will approve the annual budget each year.
- Leadership Evaluation
 - The Governing Board will be tasked with creating a job description for the Head Administrator. As this position is vital to the integrity of RioGAFA, it will be of the utmost importance to hire candidates that possess the qualities needed to execute the mission and vision. The board will hire, support, set the salary for, and evaluate this position annually.
- Strategic Thought Partners
 - The Governing Board will be asked to be extensively involved with the long-term strategic goals for RioGAFA. The Governing Board will assist in creating goals for finances, facilities, personnel, and academic goals. This process of setting long-term goals will be reviewed each year to assess progress towards these goals and setting new goals for each upcoming year. The Governing Board will be brought into strategic planning meetings to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and involved in the well-being of the school. Thus, creating an environment of shared leadership and collaboration.
- Public Accountability
 - The Governing Board will serve as advocates for RioGAFA. Advocacy will look like many different things, but members will be asked to support the school by engaging with community stakeholders by promotion. Promoting should occur during times where a concern regarding RioGAFA arises. At this time, board members will then act as community engagers to find additional support to carry out the mission and vision of the organization. Members will also serve as supporters by publishing and celebrating the academic results aligned to the created goals.

Structure

The Governing Board of The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will consist of 7-11 board members. The following will be the officer positions of the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Governing Board:

- President
 - The President of the Governing Board will preside for all meetings and appoint committees with appropriate approval from board members. The President will also be tasked with the guidance of the implementation of the RioGAFA routines and procedures, as well as be the Chair of the Governance Committee. The President will work closely with the Leadership Team and will serve as an intermediary to bridge the connection between the Governing Board and the Leadership Team. The Board will maintain knowledge of the operational and organizational strategies of RioGAFA and then relay this information to the other Governing Board members. The President will be tasked with appointing chairs for the different committees and sharing in the innovation of new committees as the need arises. The President will oversee that these initial and developing committees operate effectively and efficiently to carry out the mission of RioGAFA. The President will also be responsible for evaluating individual Board members and will also evaluate the entire Board as one entity. This evaluation aims to uphold the Board's integrity and ensure that all board members continue to be committed and invested in the school's mission and vision while providing a continuously reflective aspect of itself. RioGAFA will maintain that progress towards its mission and vision is upheld and that the Board exemplifies this by continuing to strive for excellence.
- Vice President
 - The Vice President will be asked to step into the President's responsibilities if the President is unable to attend a meeting or meetings. In the event that the President resigns, or this position becomes vacant, the Vice President will automatically step into the role as President. The Vice President will be asked to be a part of all aspects of the President to ensure that should the need arise; the Vice President has been trained effectively and can take on the role of President as seamlessly and quickly as possible. Although not evaluative, the Vice President will serve as a thought partner for the President and will be involved in any conversations regarding evaluating the Board's effectiveness. This will make certain that the Vice President is calibrated with the President in measuring effectiveness. This model will be maintained throughout the years of RioGAFA to create a systemic leadership model of the Board.
- Treasurer
 - The Treasurer will take the lead of all financial aspects for RioGAFA and will be tasked with overseeing the financials to report to the board. The Treasurer will also be asked to be the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer will work closely with the Leadership Team and Business Manager to develop the school's annual budget. The Treasurer will help maintain that RioGAFA complies with all state and federal mandated reporting with this working relationship with the Leadership Team and the Business Manager. The Treasurer will be tasked with reporting the financial information to all board members during each board meeting. The goal of the Treasurer is to provide transparency for all stakeholders so that it is public knowledge

of how finances are distributed within the organization. The Treasurer will be focused on guaranteeing that the most funding possible is placed into the development of students by ensuring that the classroom is the priority and the primary focus for funding.

- Secretary
 - The Board Secretary will be responsible for maintaining all vital and essential records for the Governing Board. These will include but is not limited to the following:
 - Bylaws
 - Meeting Agendas
 - Board Meeting Minutes
 - Current Board Membership
 - Former Board Memberships
 - Board Policies
 - Board Procedures

Term Length

The election of Board officers will be an annual occurrence and will happen during the first board meeting after each school year. The goal of this meeting will be to act as a retreat for the Governing Board and the Leadership Team. This retreat will serve as a reflection exercise of the Board's performance of the board for that academic year as well as setting new goals for the next academic year. During this retreat, board members will examine each office position and vote on sustaining the officer or engage in discussion of new officers from members that would like to take on the role. There will be a presentation for each office, and the board will take nominations for each. If there are newly elected officers, these members will take office officially after this retreat, during the July board meeting. The elected terms will last one year, with a maximum term of three consecutive years in the same office position.

Committee Framework

The following committees will be created within 30 days of approval from the Public Education Commission. Members of the Governing Board will participate in at least one committee based on their skills, expertise, and experience. Each committee will have a minimum of three participants with a maximum number to be one below the number needed to reach a quorum. The following committees may include both board and community members, except for the Governance Committee, which will only be composed of board members. Membership of the committee will be a maximum of two years. The Board Chair will select the Chairs of these committees and must be members of the Governing Board. The committees are as follows:

- Governance Committee
 - Headed by the Board Chair, who will serve as Chair of this committee, the Governance Committee will be tasked with creating, developing, and evaluating the Governing Board itself. The Governance Committee will be asked each year to review

the Board at the closing of the academic year to evaluate the Board's progress in helping the school's mission and vision. In addition, the Governance Committee will be asked to lead the recruitment and selection of new board members. With that responsibility comes the necessity to form an onboarding process for newly selected board members. Ideally, the Governance Committee members will be those members with the most experience in management and human resource processes.

- **Academic Committee**
 - The Academic Committee will be tasked with knowledge of student success and be aware of the progress toward the RioGAFA outcomes for student achievement. The Academic Committee will provide updates to the Governing Board regarding student achievement data at each monthly board meeting. The Academic Committee will reflect with the Leadership Team at the close of each year to assess progress towards the goals set in place for the previous academic year. The Academic Committee will ensure that the goals created are aligned with the vision and mission of RioGAFA. Members of the academic committee will have the most experience in curriculum development and leadership within a school.
- **Finance Committee**
 - Led by the Treasurer, the Finance Committee will be composed of those board members who have the most finance and school finance experience. The Finance Committee will be tasked with collaborating with the Leadership Team to assess the school's budget statements and cash flow. This committee will also be tasked with updating the Governing Board on financial updates at all board meetings and ensuring that the school's financial health is their priority.
- **Audit Committee**
 - Led by the board members that have the most experience in financial compliance and who are not a part of the Finance Committee, this committee will be tasked with preparing and supporting RioGAFA in their annual audit. In addition, the Audit Committee will be responsible for meeting with the auditor during the audit process, reviewing the audit results, and tasked with presenting audit findings and the overall process of the audit with other members of the Board and the school's Director(s). Since this is a required committee per NMSA 22-8-12.3, this committee will include various stakeholders to include but not limited to a school leader, a member of the business management office, and a parent with a currently enrolled student.
- **Equity Council**
 - The Equity Council will be comprised of different stakeholders of the organization in accordance with Public Education Department Requirements to include taking the Yazzie/Martinez Readiness Assessment, creating a cultural and linguistic framework, tracking funding to report improved outcomes for at-risk students, and participate in a necessary and/or beneficial webinars provided by the Public Education Department.⁶³
- **Facilities Committee**
 - The facilities committee will be tasked with assisting the Leadership Team in acquiring a facility and maintaining that all facilities are up to the standards of the Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) requirements. The Facilities Committee will work with the school Leadership Team to ensure that new facilities or renovated facilities are built

⁶³ Bobroff, K. (2019, November 22). Equity Council & Martinez and Yazzie Consolidated Lawsuit [Letter to District and Charter School Leaders]. NMPED, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

according to the previously stated requirements to ensure RioGAFA's approval based on the Public Education Commission's Performance Review and Accountability System. The Facility Committee will be led by the board member who possesses the most experience in facilities, specifically school facilities.

Grounds for Removal

The Board Chair will determine removal from the Governing Board if a board member has participated in an action deemed grounds for removal. It will be the responsibility of the Board Chair to meet with the individual to determine the explanation of the action as well as if any actions would rectify the situation. Events that are deemed worthy of removal include but are not limited to the following:

- Violation of the Conflict-of-Interest Form that the individual board member signed.
- Violation of the Code of Ethics Form that the individual board member signed.
- Participation in activities that are illegal as deemed by the laws of New Mexico.
- Missing three consecutive board meetings without prior communication or approval from the Board Chair.

The Board Chair will review the board member's actions to determine if their actions violate these or any additional rules created by the Board Chair. If a violation is determined, the Board Chair will then discuss with the board member if any actions the violating board member could complete to rectify their actions. If there is nothing deemed by the Board Chair that can resolve the situation, the Board Chair will ask that board member to resign their position on the Board, or the board member will be formally removed using the following protocol:

- Thirty days before any action is taken, a letter will be sent to the board member via Certified Mail detailing the reason(s) for removal as well as the location, date, and time where the board plans to meet to take this action of removal.
- On the date of the proposed action for removal, the board member will be offered time to present to the Board the issue.
- A majority vote will result in the removal from the Board.

The selection of new board members is outlined in Section II.A.3.

Relationship with School Administration

The Governing Board will be responsible for upholding the mission and vision of RioGAFA. In terms of school administration, it will be the Board's responsibility to evaluate the performance of the school leader(s), the Director(s), at the closing of each academic year. The board will delegate the day-to-day operations to the Director(s) and will be responsible for the oversight of the position(s).

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Include governing body bylaws in **Appendix A**; and
- Summarize key governance components in the application response as follows:
 - Membership structure (number, roles, length of terms)
 - Officer structure (roles, election process, responsibilities, length of terms)
 - Committee structure that includes both legally required committees and school-specific committees (selection process, responsibilities, membership, length of service terms)
 - Member selection, discipline, and removal processes.

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for summarizing governance structure. While their byLaws were attached, after reading them, there are several questions and concerns; first, they do not have a timeline for filling vacant board spots, which must be filled within 45 days. Second, their stated term for board members is one year and they do not have a renewal option so this means that a new board with all new members must be created every year. Third, RioGAFA does not mention that the agenda for GB meetings needs to be posted no later than 72 hours before the scheduled meeting. Fourth, in regards to their finance Committee, they state that this committee will represent the school during the audit, which actually should be the function of the Audit Committee; there is also no mention that the Director/s need to be a part of this committee. Fifth, in regard to confidential Matters, RioGAFA needs to note that votes cannot be taken in a closed session. Furthermore, RioGAFA interchanges the label "Governing Board" and "Governing Council" in the document, this should be made consistent throughout the document. There is also no mention that a Governing Board member cannot be a member of another school's Governing Board. While their legal compliance assessment section guarantees that two board members will have experience in educational law, it is unclear as to whether they can truly guarantee that members will have this skill set. Lastly, in regard to their financial compliance assessment, RioGAFA guarantees that two board members will have expertise in school finance. Again, it is not made clear that they truly guarantee this.

A. (2) Enumerate the qualifications desired for governing body members that will ensure the proposed school's governance is competent to operate a public school. Provide a **list** of all proposed, initial Governing Body members along with their experience, skills, and qualifications. Ensure that the **membership reflects** the diverse experiences and skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the proposed school. In your list of proposed initial governing body members, describe the expertise represented in order to demonstrate their capacity to initiate the opening of the charter school (e.g., ensure student success, develop, implement, oversee the management of public funds, and oversee the proposed school's compliance with legal obligations).

Qualifications and Skill Sets Desired for the Governing Body

The Founding Team understands the importance and necessity for a qualified, committed, and engaged governing body that will work in tandem with the leadership of the school to promote success for all students, faculty and staff, parents, community stakeholders, and others who will benefit from a progressive school focused on college and life-readiness through an arts-integrated curriculum. The team, Jordan Franco, Michele Platis, and Michelle Sanchez-St. Andre has considered the following desired qualifications and skill sets for the initial governing body for Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RioGAFA), which will provide a firm governing foundation for the establishment and future success of the charter school. In their pursuit for persons to serve on the initial governing body, these qualities and skills have been considered:

- **A Passion for and Commitment to Providing an Equitable Education for All Children**
 - The community members on the governing body who will support and promote the successful establishment and maintenance of an innovative and rigorous charter school will have a passion and a commitment to providing an equitable education for all children. Ingrained in this commitment is the belief and understanding that each child, regardless of geographic location, race, ethnicity, cultural background, gender, economic status, or challenges in academic progress should be provided with an equitable, appropriate, challenging, fair, and respectful experience in their school and academic pursuits.
 - Understanding varying learning styles and thus a need for diverse pathways to academic success is an essential part of this equitable concept. The community members on the governing body will be cognizant and educated in the need for differentiated instruction and intervention strategies for all students, including those identified as English Language Learners (ELL) and those with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Strategies will be based on the data derived from summative and formative assessments. They will understand that each child brings social and emotional needs to the learning day. The governing body will have this understanding because to provide all these things, the governing body will be acutely aware of funding, training, and implementation. In order to adequately monitor the ongoing growth and pursuit of excellence in the school, the governing body must commit to this equity just as the leaders of the school have.

- With an eye on the environment and the school's goals in mind, the governing body members will need to always have in the forefront what an equitable education is and what it looks like in action.
- **An Express Understanding of Evidence-Based Education Practices, Including an Arts-Integrated Curriculum**
 - The community members on the governing body will be more practically successful in monitoring and supporting a charter school when they hold an express overall understanding of evidence-based education practices including an arts-integrated curriculum usage. They will understand the efficacious practices of Special Education practices, bilingual educational strategies, projects-based learning, collaborative learning processes, and other practices that promote learning for all students. This knowledge will increase their ability to make useful and adequate decisions about financial needs and leadership oversight.
 - Community members on the governing body who oversee the founding and the implementation of the school must understand the unique focus of an arts-integrated curriculum. An arts-integrated curriculum in the facilitation of student engagement leading to academic success is an exciting and forward-thinking approach to education. Arts-integration nurtures the whole child - body, mind, emotionally, and socially - using a variety of teaching strategies involving multiple intelligences such as:
 - verbal–linguistic (word intelligent)
 - logical–mathematical (logic intelligent)
 - visual–spatial (picture intelligent)
 - auditory–musical (music intelligent)
 - bodily–kinesthetic (body intelligent)
 - interpersonal (people intelligent)
 - intrapersonal (self intelligent)
 - naturalistic (nature intelligent)
 - A basic or deep understanding of these evidenced-based practices will keep the governing body's decisions and actions grounded in what education should look like when speaking on behalf of the school to the parents, public supporters, and state partners. They will be better equipped to advocate on behalf of the school and

promote the efficacy of the charter school, its mission, and its strategies and processes used to achieve these goals.

- **An Understanding of the Philosophy of Facilitating Student Assets and Nourishing Their Innate Desire to Succeed**

- The community members on the governing body will understand the philosophy of facilitating student assets and nourishing their innate desire to succeed. In the description of the mission of RioGAFA, it is stated,
RioGAFA is to educate students through an arts integration curriculum that promotes problem solving and creativity and supports all K-12 students to achieve grade-level standards. Ultimately, through this connection of critical and creative problem solving, the students of RioGAFA will become successful in academics and the arts, leading to a successful future in higher education and a career in the arts or career of choice.

Each person has the ability to be creative. With proper nurturing of that ability through recognizing and developing a student's assets rather than focusing on any deficits, the students will begin recognizing their own strengths and finding and feeling the thrill of accomplishment, which will be a motivating factor in other accomplishments in school and beyond.

- With the belief in this concept of learning, the governing body is empowered to promote in the community the efficacy of Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts and be passionate supporters of the call to help students become critical readers, thinkers, writers, speakers, learners, and artistic creatives.

- **Progressive, Proactive, and Strategic Pursuit of Excellence in Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Population**

- The governing body will have a collective goal to ensure that the progressive, proactive, and strategic pursuit of excellence in meeting the needs of a diverse population are fulfilled. With this goal, they will utilize data-driven decision making relative to:
 - funding needs and abilities,
 - student academic progress support,
 - facilities management,
 - leadership accountability,
 - support of the school leadership regarding the oversight of faculty and staff and students,

- promotional efforts toward school growth and viability, and
 - other needs that arise.
-
- The team members on the governing body will, with this pursuit, keep the goal of meeting the needs of a diverse community strong and in focus. This will include how the funds are used for support services to enhance the wellness and overall social, emotional, mental, and physical health of the student body as appropriate and as needed.
-
- **Skill for Public Communication and Involvement**
 - Community members serving on the governing body will be experienced and comfortable in communicating and engaging with the public, parents, faculty, and community partners. There will be opportunities to convey meaning, propose plans, communicate needs, and warrant conflict resolution. This ability to effectively communicate must include oral communication, written communication, listening skills, and an overall diplomatic and collaborative demeanor in order to further support the mission and vision of Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts.
-
- **Experience in the Business World**
 - A person with business experience will be better able to see the organizational, structural, legal, and financial needs of a charter school. Though it is not necessary for every person on the governing body to be a business owner, it is helpful that some be, and that all become familiar with
 - state requirements for oversight and funding,
 - state requirements for academic progress and any needs for intervention,
 - legal considerations relative to the functioning charter school,
 - logical and timely assessment and reviews,
 - data gathering and management,
 - strategic plans including appropriate timelines,
 - bookkeeping and/or accounting, and
 - local community ordinances and expectations.
 - Business knowledge often includes the ability to organize and train persons within the organization. This enables the governing body to enlist new members when needed and train them to be successful, contributing members. The ability to organize and train or provide training will be instrumental in the growth and strength of the governing body and, in the end, the success of the school.
 - With an ability to navigate the financial and legal requirements for maintaining the progress of the school, the initial governing body will be more confident and

competent in transitioning from founding entity, helping the applicant team to get the school started. They will also have a solid understanding of running a rigorous and committed governing body at the appropriate time, providing oversight and continuing to strengthen the performance of the governing body in its duties.

- **Experiential Commitment to Collaborative Teamwork and Respectful Management**

- The governing body will bring to the oversight task an experiential commitment to collaborative teamwork and respectful management. Collaboration is an important component of effective team results. The collaborative and respectful team will have a developed and developing knowledge of and experience in:
 - effective planning,
 - sharing ideas and negotiating the outcomes,
 - active listening to others' ideas and then matching ideas to needs,
 - constructive problem-solving skills,
 - shared responsibility and shared leadership,
 - and proactive leadership and training skills.
- This commitment to collaborative teamwork will be a necessary foundation for sustainable success and creating a high-functioning governing body. Members recognize the need for diversity in the governing body and the school's leadership. The governing body will strive to add, as needed, persons with diverse experience and skills.

- **Passionate, Supportive Belief in the Mission and Vision of the School**

- By passionately believing in the mission and vision of an organization, in this instance, a new charter school, members of the governing body will be highly motivated to help the organization succeed.
- The motivation to see students succeed involves wanting the leaders to succeed and wanting the parents to be affirmed in their desire to help their children succeed. A passionate, supportive belief in RioGAFA's mission will create enthusiasm for the process and progress. Enthusiasm is contagious. With passion, enthusiasm, and belief in RioGAFA's mission, the governing body will impact all those they encounter. Their passion will sustain them through the conversations and planning, and it will drive their desire to do the tedious and hard work needed to help make this vision a reality.

Following the birth of the school, their fervor will enhance their desire to support it to continue success for the community in which the school resides.

These skills and qualifications will be necessary to the success of the team and Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts in the goal to provide an equitable education through an arts-integrated curriculum. In our school that will nurture each child's discovery of the intrinsic motivation to be a lifelong learner, problem-solver, and critical thinker in all areas of their lives, it will be crucial to have a team that believes whole-heartedly in the mission. Maintaining a governing body with these and additional skills will ensure a progressive and sustainable team that can support and oversee a high-performing school for years to come.

List of Proposed Governing Body Members

The applicant team, Jordan Franco, Michele Platis, and Michelle Sanchez-St. Andre has recruited 6 (six) proposed Governing Board members. There will be additional members added as the process of recruitment continues. The following persons were chosen to serve on the governing body because of their passionate commitment and extensive experience in the educational processes and their service to this community in diverse ways and from multiple perspectives and interests. The proposed board members have demonstrated varied interests in the overall community, helping underserved students in the school and community environments. They aim to strengthen community organizations through their participation and to consult, providing training and leadership in their areas of expertise, and many other communities strengthening gifts. They have been very interested in our proposed RioGAFA endeavor from the first conversations about the school and soon accepted a place on the governing body. They each have exhibited a passion for equity and accessibility in education for all students, in both their personal work and professional careers. They have demonstrated a willingness to work and create a supportive foundation and environment for the well-rounded education for all students. Finally, each has developed through experience the larger picture of how the parts and the whole work together to achieve the much-desired outcome of academic success. This academic success will inevitably lead to emotional, social, mental, physical, financial, and creative strength in students' present life and the future they will be empowered to build.

Dr. Jennifer Peña

Dr. Jenn Peña earned her BS in Biology from Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA, and then her MA in Special Education from UNM. She worked for 17 years in public and charter Title I schools in New Mexico. Dr. Pena served in many roles in her schools, including a special educator, inclusion co-teacher, general educator, district test coordinator, ELL Coordinator, and Special Education Director. She is especially passionate about high academic achievement for all students, inclusive education, and providing teachers with effective and practical tools to improve student learning. Due to her passion for excellence and equity, Dr. Pena participates in professional organizations related to Special Education, and she presently serves on the Professional Practices and Standards Council through the New Mexico Public Education Department, helping to ensure alignment with state laws and improve the quality of teacher and administrator prep programs. Shortly after earning her Ph.D. in Special Education from UNM, Jenn started to look for opportunities to share her experience and help teachers and schools improve educational experiences for students. She works as a part-time faculty at Central New Mexico Community College in the Alternative Teacher Licensure Program. With her skills and experiences, she decided to broaden her mentoring areas and opened her own highly successful educational consulting business, focused on providing teacher and administrator training,

mentoring new special education directors, and ensuring compliance with special education programs.

Dr. Susan McConnell

Dr. Susan McConnell is an educator who has devoted her skills and interests in New Mexico schools in numerous venues and responsibilities. She is retiring as the Chief Administrator of North Valley Academy Charter School with all the administrative duties of a person responsible for a thriving charter school. Prior to that, Dr. McConnell served as an Assistant Principal in that same school with the tasks of student support, supervision, evaluation, Title One Coordinator, Administrative Liaison to Parent Teacher Organization, facilities management, and many other responsibilities as needed to serve a vibrant school. Dr. McConnell has a rich and diverse leadership background in area schools. She was Rio Rancho High School Director of Student Activities, a recreational therapist, owner and operator of a children's art and drama camp, and other eclectic community services to create a better opportunity for children, teens, and adults. Dr. McConnell received her Master of Arts degree in Education Administration as a Danforth Fellow in UNM's CEAIP program and her Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Phoenix. She has received several recognitions, including New Mexico Charter School Administrator of the Year and New Mexico Advisor of the Year.

Kathy McClendon

Ms. McClendon earned her BS at the University of New Mexico and her Master of Arts in Educational Leadership at California State University Sacramento. She served schools in California and New Mexico in K-12 traditional settings, charter settings, and alternative school settings, including a facility for incarcerated young people. She has been an Assistant Principal at three high schools, a Principal at one high school, and a teacher at six schools. Her tenure in classroom education has included teaching arts-integrated language arts curriculum, reading and language intervention, and a variety of high school and middle school subjects. As an administrator, Ms. McClendon fulfilled many responsibilities: Faculty and Staff Evaluation, Staff Training, Disciplinary Management and Documentation, Parent Conflict Resolution, Building and Maintenance, Event Planning, Assessment and Accountability, Graduation Readiness Documentation and Tracking, Safety and Security, Hiring, AVID District Coordinator, Power School Management relative to Gradebook, GPA structure and maintenance, and Master Scheduling, and other district and site tasks as required. Through these multiple types of schools and responsibilities, she developed a wealth of tools for educational leadership. Ms. McClendon recently retired and has pursued her love and passion for art, creativity, and critical learning through her art business in Albuquerque.

Lee Baldwin

Mr. Lee Baldwin is an Accounting Director and the owner of Baldwin Accounting & Consulting, LLC, in Albuquerque, NM. Lee brings a lot to the founding board, such as his prior experience serving on a board and finance committee for two different charter schools. On top of his experience serving on boards professionally, he founded and owns an accounting practice, where most of his experience is auditing. He has audited various governmental entities, including school districts and charter schools. His experience and expertise with financial practices and auditing/accounting enable him to help navigate through the financial/audit aspects of founding and maintaining a school, especially implementing accounting policies and procedures, and helping the charter school prepare for an audit.

Christine Mya-San

Christine Mya-San is currently working in the Pharmaceutical Industry as a Distribution Channel Manager, focusing on business development and sales operations across North, Central and South America. She received her MBA from Saint Louis University's Chaifetz School of Business with a focus in General Business and Marketing and her BS in Biology from Dickinson College.

Christine's passion for the arts is deep rooted. Throughout grade school, she performed in musical theater and was in choir since she was eight years old. While in college, Christine was also a member of the all-female a Capella singing group.

Christine is the proud mother of an almost three-year-old, Luca. She, her husband Günter and son live in St. Louis, Missouri.

Amer R. Child

Mr. Amer Child holds a BS in Technology and Training and is currently working as a Sr. Solutions Architect supporting customers on a global scale for RiskSense. RiskSense is a global cybersecurity company founded in May 2015. Amer has worked as an IT professional for over 20 years, starting as a web developer for Correa Enterprises, a web developer and trainer for BASIS International, and finally at RiskSense. His work in this field gives him a deep understanding and perspective of the need for, the use of, and the security needed relative to modern day technology. In 2017 he completed his bachelor's degree in Technology and Training at the University of New Mexico. He cares about those in his community and beyond and used some of his time and resources to serve as a volunteer for the March of Dimes organization from 2013 to 2015.

Why the Identified Qualifications and Skill Sets Will Ensure the Governing Body Has the Required Capacity and Enable The Governing Body to Operate a Successful, High-Quality Public School

Ensure Student Success and Academic Achievement

Among the members, they have multiple and varied experiences regarding non-traditional education settings, different types of training, and a bank of tools gained through their years of work and areas of expertise. The first three governing board members, Dr. Pena, Dr. McConnell, and Ms. McClendon, each have extensive knowledge and experience in education, including many combined years of classroom instruction and even more combined years in administration and oversight positions. They have dealt successfully with state funding issues, considerations, and requirements. All three have managed site-level goals and challenges over more than one school site. Four of the board members have had experience with state charter schools. Two of the board members have had experience serving on a governing body. Their experiential learning is a most powerful tool in preparing them for the role of governing body members.

Oversee the Stewardship and Management of Public Funds and Responsible Government Accounting

The governing body members share responsibility in the financial oversight and stewardship of public funds and government accounting. The reserved seat for a member who has accounting/bookkeeping skills to support the governing body in this task will be an essential addition to the governing body. Overseeing the management of public funds is a crucial responsibility. With the professional support of an accounting firm the school will enlist, the governing body will be best prepared to ensure that the government and public funds are handled with integrity and accuracy. The RioGAFA site team, and specifically the Director(s), will fulfill the role of managing the expenditure of financial resources in a responsible, compliant, and legal manner.

Ensure Compliance with Legal Obligations Related to Government Organizations and Public Schools

All persons on the initial governing body have varied experience with compliance relative to legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools. Though the Director(s) will be aware of and responsible for the obligations and compliance issues, the school will obtain the credible support of outside legal counsel familiar with public education requirements for government reporting and legal obligations. This support will be an added safeguard to the work of the governing body and the school's Administration.

Select and Oversee a Qualified and Highly Effective School Leader

Half of the initial governing body members have been personally involved in education setting hiring processes for numerous years. Having such a combination of experiences with faculty management and supervision, hiring processes, and a variety of charter school experiences, they are all acutely aware of what a charter school needs in the Director(s) area. These various experiences and training, combined with their knowledge of school processes and needs, ensure that the governing body will be very versed in the oversight of a highly effective school leader.

Support the Applicant Team in Moving From an Application to a Fully Operational School

The governing body has a genuine interest and desire to see the applicant team succeed in their process from conception to maturity, including the start-up and the upcoming growing stages. Since the governing body has the skill sets aforementioned, the governing body will be supportive and active in:

- helping recruit the new members of the governing body,
- selecting effective Director(s),
- helping recruit students,
- securing properties,
- and supporting the preparation of the academic plans and physical space.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Identify all qualifications and skill sets that the governing body will require and ensure those are represented within its regular membership;
- Explain why and how the identified qualifications and skills will ensure the governing body has the required capacity and enable the governing body to operate a successful, high-quality public school;
- Include a list of all proposed initial governing body members, describe each proposed member's specific qualifications and skill sets through verifiable prior experience, and ensure the represented qualifications and skill sets align with the previously identified qualifications and skill sets that the governing body will require; and
- Specifically address how the governing body will have the skills to
 - Ensure student success and academic achievement;
 - Oversee the stewardship and management of public funds and responsible government accounting;
 - Ensure compliance with legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools;
 - Select and oversee a qualified and highly effective school leader; and
 - Support the applicant team in moving from an application to a fully operational school.

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for enumerating the qualifications desired for governing body members. In the previous section, RioGAFA states that two board members will have educational law experience and that two board members will have school finance experience. In the list of founding board members, there is no evidence of members having educational law experience and only one member who has school finance experience via an audit. Additionally, one founding board member is not a resident of New Mexico, so it is unclear as to how this individual will perform their duties (i.e. advocating and promoting the school) when they do not reside in this state. Furthermore, there is no process or explanation regarding oversight of the school leader.

A.(3) Provide a **clear and appropriate process or plan** for selecting new Governing Body members that is focused on selecting **quality leaders** who have the identified skills necessary to govern the proposed school. Describe how governing body members will be recruited, evaluated, and selected as vacancies arise.

RioGAFA prioritizes that a well-rounded and effective board is crucial in the success and growth of the organization, so it will be of the utmost importance that the Governing Board be composed of fully committed individuals that are invested in the mission and vision of the school. Once approved, the Founding Board Members, with the exception of the members of the Founding Leadership Team, will remain members of the Governing Board. At this time, the focus of the Governing Board will be recruitment and selection of board members in accordance with NMSA 22-8-12.3. RioGAFA will maintain that there are, at a minimum, two members qualified to participate in the Finance Committee and two separate members who are eligible to participate in the Audit Committee.

According to the RioGAFA Bylaws, the Governance Committee will maintain that any potential vacancies are filled within 45 days of necessity with candidates who possess the correct skill sets to address the need and maintain an efficient and effective board.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts strives to build a strong foundation to provide stability and expertise throughout the growth of our school. As a result of this notion of sustainability, it is essential to create a process to select board members that will bring an expertise and skill set that will benefit the growth of RioGAFA.

The process for selecting new board members will involve a six-step process. The process will allow for input from all founding board members to ensure that new board members are in alignment and able to contribute to the mission and vision of RioGAFA and are able to guide and help implement the mission and vision for our school community.

Immediately following approval, it will be the task of the Governance Committee as defined in **Section II.A.1** to begin the process of recruiting new board members to participate in the following protocol for member selection:

Figure 57. Ongoing Governance Recruitment

Action	Timelines	Responsible Party
Form Governance Committee: The Governance Committee will be tasked with the initial recruitment of new board members as well as filling any vacancy.	30 days following approval from the Public Education Commission	Board Chair
Review Existing Board Members and Create Need Assessment: The Governance Committee will assess the current skill set of the founding board members to strategically assess professional expertise needed to create a well-rounded board.	45 days following approval from the Public Education Commission and at the close of each academic school year	Governance Committee Members
Develop Diversity Chart: This list will serve two purposes: to ensure equity and diversity are maintained in new board member selection and as a contact list of potential board members if a vacancy arises.	50 days following approval from the Public Education Commission and review quarterly	Governance Committee Members

<p>Initial Contact, Interviewing, Observation, and Board Meeting Attendance of Potential Board Member: The Governance Committee will begin the process of contacting new board members to schedule interviews and moving forward with the process of school tours and formal board meeting attendance if the candidate is deemed a good fit (process explained further below).</p>	<p>90 days following approval from the Public Education Commission and 15 days following a board vacancy</p>	<p>Governance Committee Members</p>
<p>Selection of New Board Members: The Governance Committee will nominate potential board members until there are at least 7 members.</p>	<p>90 days following approval from the Public Education Commission and 30 days following a board vacancy</p>	<p>Governance Committee Members</p>

- Step 1: Review of Existing Board Members
 - RioGAFA intends to be a reflective organization that continuously focuses on areas that could and should be improved to do what is best for its students. This includes the highest entity of the organization, the board itself. Board members will be asked to meet collectively with the school leadership to assess what areas of expertise lack from the board. The Governance Committee will then use this information to begin the process of finding new board members to address areas that need reinforcement. The intention is to have members of the board that are experts in as many facets of the fine arts as possible with members who also have extensive experience in academics, finance, legal expertise, facilities, and experience in running an educational organization through the role of an administrator. It is also essential to RioGAFA that the board represents the cultural diversity we intend to provide access to for our students. The Governance Committee will keep a record of demographic data of all board members to include member age, gender, race, and ethnicity to ensure that the Governing Board of RioGAFA is intentionally diverse and reflective of the RioGAFA community. The Governance Committee will ensure that this recruitment, evaluation, and selection process is in accordance with the RioGAFA bylaws (**Appendix A**).
- Step 2: Working List
 - After the initial reflection of the board is completed, the Governance Committee will then be tasked with finding members of the board that will help address these skill gaps that they have identified. Outreach for candidates to address these areas of need will need to be handled promptly. The Governance Committee will be asked to begin this process immediately following approval of the RioGAFA application. The Governance Committee will utilize their personal and professional connections to recommend and refer potential board candidates to partake in the subsequent process. They will also use the communication channels of RioGAFA that include but

are not limited to: newsletters, social media platforms, and mass communications software. Aside from these lines of communication tied to RioGAFA, members of the Governance Council will also use reputable sources such as the Public Charter Schools of New Mexico's webpage and the Association of Charter School Education Services' website. This running list will be compiled of multiple potential board members in a specific area of expertise if a board member position opens or there is a need to add an additional board member. RioGAFA plans to maintain between 7-15 board members within the Governing Board.

- Step 3: Initial Contact
 - After finding potential new board members, the Governance Committee members will begin the initial contact process. The purpose is to build a working relationship immediately and determine if the individual is mission-aligned to RioGAFA. The contacting board member will schedule an initial conversation with the prospective board member and a RioGAFA Founder. Questions will be standard questions designed by the Governing Board to evaluate if the candidate aligns with the mission, vision, fine arts, and academic focus as well as ensure that equality, integrity, access, and diversity are upheld. If the interviewing board member and the RioGAFA Governance Committee feel that the candidate is a good fit and will benefit the RioGAFA team and the candidate wants to continue the vetting process, a request for a resume and a background check will be made. At this time, the individual will participate in a conversation with the other board members, tour the school and observe a typical school day. The reason for this visit and observation is to allow the interested board member to see the daily work of the school and determine if they are indeed a fit for the school. This "open door" policy will provide RioGAFA with the guarantee that board members are immediately exposed to the mission and vision of the school and the sense of community that the school will intentionally cultivate.
- Step 4: Attending a Board Meeting
 - It is important to the RioGAFA team that interested board members attend a board meeting before becoming a full board member. Although candidates will have already met and have had conversations with one existing board member, they must participate in a board meeting as a participant. The prospective board member will be brought formally in front of all board members to answer questions and evaluate their alignment to the mission and vision of RioGAFA. During this meeting, existing board members will also ask the candidate to discuss their observations and how they feel that their involvement in the board would push the organization to become stronger and more sustainable. By asking direct questions of the mission, the board will see if the candidate truly understands our mission and their interpretation of how our mission will serve New Mexico students in the most beneficial way. At the end of this board meeting, board members will then fill out an evaluation of the candidate and their testimonial within the board meeting.
- Step 5: Evaluation
 - The evaluation of the proposed candidate will take place using an internally created rubric that will be designed by the founding board members and the founding

leadership team. The rationale for the structure and uniform measure of evaluation will ensure all interested and prospective candidates are treated and measured against the same standards. The resume, summary of the tour, and participation in the board meeting will all be evaluated individually by each board member using the evaluation rubric. Board members will then discuss their scoring of the candidate and collectively decide if the candidate is a proper fit for the mission and vision of RioGAFA. Additionally, the Governing Board will discuss any potential deficits that they foresee may develop to determine if the new board member would potentially violate any conflict-of-interest regulations.

- Step 6: Selection of New Board Members
 - After the Governance Committee completes the comprehensive evaluation of the potential board member, a recommendation to offer the candidate a position on the Governing Board will occur. The Governing Board will then take this recommendation and as a collective entity, review the potential board member and vote to determine if the candidate be offered an official position on the Governing Board. According to the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Governing Board bylaws, candidates must receive a majority vote to receive the formal offer of participation into the Governing Board. If a majority vote is achieved, the candidate will be notified and officially offered board membership. Should the candidate accept, they will be required to sign a Board Member Agreement Form and a Conflict-of-Interest Form before they are allowed to join the Governing Board officially. The Governance Committee will track candidates that are not selected. The Governance Committee will also be tasked with maintaining communication with board members not selected if the opportunity arises to occupy a vacant seat on the board. By maintaining communication with candidates that have shown interest, the Governance Committee will ensure that Governing Board membership is always maintained and that needs that arise during the growth of RioGAFA are addressed with the most effective and collaborative board maintained.

It will be the task of the Governance Committee to ensure that previously interested candidates and their resumes and evaluations are maintained in an organized and straightforward system for transparency purposes. RioGAFA recognizes that the organization has to uphold the Governing Board's stability and sustainability because of their responsibility to determine appropriation of public funds. The intention of the RioGAFA Governing Board is to provide the most effective team of members to deliver the mission and vision of the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Identify a regular and on-going governing body recruitment process, including identification of action steps, timelines, and responsible parties;
- Identify a formalized governing body potential member evaluation and selection process, including identification of action steps, timelines, and responsible parties;
- Describe how the processes will ensure that all governing body vacancies are filled within 45 days;
- Describe how the processes will ensure the regular governing body membership will have all of the required qualifications and skill sets identified in question A.(2); and
- Describe how the processes will ensure that governing body members are vetted appropriately to ensure they are able to meet the obligations and fulfill the responsibilities of governing body service.

RioGAFA addresses some of the criteria for this section, but does not sufficiently identify an ongoing recruitment process for prospective board members. While RioGAFA appears to have an ongoing process for initial recruitment for their governing board, they do not appear to have a process that truly continues to ensure a pool of highly qualified applicants.

In the Narrative, the applicant states vacant board seats will be filled within 45 days. This is a required timeline and should be included in the by-laws. RioGAFA should also include verbiage into their bylaws regarding board members positions on other boards because they cannot be a member of another school board.

B. Governing Body Training and Evaluation.

B.(1) Provide an **ongoing, clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for annual Governing Body training that complies with state requirements, meets your governing body training needs, includes training on the Open Meetings Act, and is **completely supported** by the budget you propose.

RioGAFA will be an intentionally reflective organization that will focus on continuous growth and progress towards its mission and vision. This commitment to upholding the mission and vision will be exemplified in all aspects of board training. In order to maintain a fully functional board, there must be a robust onboarding process as well as an evaluation to address areas for growth of the Governing Board. Below is the outlined process for both onboarding and training processes for the RioGAFA Governing Board:

- **Onboarding**
 - **Mandatory Governing Board Body Trainings**
 - Immediately following approval from the Public Education Commission, the founding board members will transition to the official RioGAFA Governing Board. Although state statute states that the Governing Board will have the first quarter to complete the mandatory training, The Governing Board will have 90 days from their formal acceptance as a board member to fulfill the following trainings in accordance with NMAC 6.80.5.8:
 - Two hours of training on public official/charter school governing body ethics and responsibilities
 - Two hours of training on charter school fiscal requirements
 - One hour of training on understanding and evaluating academic data.
 - One hour of training on open government, legal, and organizational performance requirements
 - One hour of training on equity and culturally and linguistically responsive practices
 - Three hours of additional training standards identified by the individual governing bodies and governing body members.
 - These three additional hours will be completed using the Public Education Department options or through a verified provider.
 - **New Board Member Internal Training**
 - Within the first 60 days of membership, the Board Chair will be responsible in training the new board in the following documents that are essential to the RioGAFA mission and vision and required by NMAC 6.80.5.8:
 - RioGAFA Governing Board Handbook to include but not limited to:
 - RioGAFA Bylaws
 - RioGAFA Governing Board Code of Ethics
 - RioGAFA Governing Board Letter of Commitment
 - RioGAFA Governing Board Conflict of Interest Policy
 - Charter School Law Information to include:
 - Open Meetings Act
 - The educational philosophy and instructional methods of RioGAFA
 - The previous year's achievement data for RioGAFA
 - The current fiscal year's budget

- The previous year's audit financial statements
 - The RioGAFA Strategic Plan
- **Outline for Additional Board Trainings**
 - In alignment with NMAC 6.80.5.9, all continuing board members must participate in the following eight hours of board training following the end of their first fiscal year as a board member unless exempt as outline in NMAC 6.80.5.9.B. These trainings may be completed using an approved provider:
 - One hour of training on public official/charter school governing body ethics and responsibilities
 - Three hours of training on charter school fiscal requirements
 - Two hours of training on understanding and evaluating academic data
 - One hour of training on open government, legal, and organizational performance requirements
 - One hour of training on equity and culturally and linguistically responsive practices
 - Selection of additional standards within the previously listed training topics will be determined by the Governing Board at the close of the previous academic year.
 - In addition to these required trainings, all board members will be asked to participate in a board retreat before the beginning of each academic year to review the following topics:
 - The educational philosophy and instructional methods of RioGAFA
 - The previous year's achievement data
 - The current fiscal year's budget
 - The previous year's audit financial statements
 - The RioGAFA Strategic Plan
 - **Tracking of Board Trainings**
 - In accordance with 6.80.5.10, proof of attendance of previously stated training will be submitted to the Public Education Department no later than July 1st. The Secretary of the Governing Board will be asked to monitor attendance quarterly to ensure that the RioGAFA Governing Board is in compliance and up to date with all necessary training. The Secretary will also be responsible for monitoring board training hours to ensure compliance with state mandates.
- **Financial Costs**
 - The RioGAFA budget will allocate a maximum of \$2,000 dollars for Board training and expenses. This money can be used to pay for training, purchase materials for training or mileage for board members when necessary.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a process for governing body member onboarding to ensure new members are properly trained and able to meet the obligations and fulfill the responsibilities of governing body service, include action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Identify a plan for annual governing body training, including action steps, timelines, and responsible parties, include how it will be tracked and monitored. • Describe how the plan will identify governing body training needs, meet governing body training needs, and comply with state requirements, including any requirements that may change from year to year; • Identify any costs required to support the training plan or onboarding process and describe how those costs are supported in the budget; and • Ensure the onboarding process and training plan address training on the open meetings act and responsibilities.

While RioGAFA does provide the minimum requirements for governing board trainings, they are lacking in terms of the specifics of their timelines; they give general windows of time only. Internal training should also include giving new board members a copy of the current charter document and copies of the PED site visit reports for the current charter term. There should also be mention of ongoing trainings specific on instruction and assessment approaches outlined in the curriculum for members.

B. (2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for an annual self-evaluation of the Governing Body that reflects that body's effectiveness and focuses on continuous improvement.

Self-Evaluation Process

The self-evaluation process for RioGAFA will be completed for individual member contributions and collectively as a Governing Board. This process will be completed no later than July 1st to comprehensively reflect on the Board's progress and goal setting for the upcoming academic year. The Governing Board's responsibility will be to ensure that the vision and mission of RioGAFA are executed through the responsibilities outlined in the application **Section II.A.1:**

- mission/vision calibration,
- academic oversight,
- legal compliance,
- financial compliance,
- leadership evaluation,
- and public accountability

An example of the self-evaluation is below. A finalized version will be completed immediately following approval from the Public Education Commission:

Figure 58. Self Evaluation Rubric

Domain 1: Mission/Vision Calibration:	Score	Notes
Board decisions for the previous year have upheld the integrity of the vision and mission of RioGAFA.	1 2 3 4 5	
The RioGAFA vision and mission is brought up at each board meeting, and the meetings are structured to discuss progress towards them.	1 2 3 4 5	
Board members were trained this year on the vision and mission of RioGAFA and understand its vitality to the educational philosophy and instruction model.	1 2 3 4 5	
What is one area of improvement that you can identify for this domain?		

Domain 2: Academic Oversight:	Score	Notes
All members of the board are aware of the academic goals set in place by the RioGAFA Leadership Team and understand their oversight responsibility.	1 2 3 4 5	
The Academic Committee updated the board each meeting this year of academic progress.	1 2 3 4 5	
Board members were trained this year in understanding academic language and data as well as how RioGAFA uses these results to drive instructional decisions.	1 2 3 4 5	
What is one area of improvement that you can identify for this domain?		

Domain 3: Legal Compliance:	Score	Notes
Board members have an understanding of educational law.	1 2 3 4 5	
The RioGAFA Governing Board bylaws were reviewed this year.	1 2 3 4 5	
Board members were trained this year on the Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest, and understand overall Governing Board ethics and responsibilities.	1 2 3 4 5	

What is one area of improvement that you can identify for this domain?

Domain 4: Financial Compliance:
Score
Notes

Board members have been trained in the fiscal requirements of RioGAFA in accordance with the Public Education Department.

1 2 3 4 5

The RioGAFA financials were on every board agenda and an update was given at each board meeting.

1 2 3 4 5

Board members approved a budget this year that was aligned to the vision and mission of RioGAFA.

1 2 3 4 5

What is one area of improvement that you can identify for this domain?

Domain 5: Leadership Evaluation:
Score
Notes

Board members participated in the established process of leadership evaluation and input was requested from each board member.

1 2 3 4 5

Evaluation of the Leadership revolved around progress of the RioGAFA vision and mission.

1 2 3 4 5

Board members were trained this year on the vision and mission of RioGAFA and understand its vitality to the educational philosophy and instruction model.

1 2 3 4 5

What is one area of improvement that you can identify for this domain?

Domain 6: Public Accountability:
Score
Notes

Board members were asked to participate in community events to establish and maintain relationships with community stakeholders.

1 2 3 4 5

Board members were asked to attend events to speak on behalf of RioGAFA.

1 2 3 4 5

What is one area of improvement that you can identify for this domain?

Evaluation from Staff

The RioGAFA faculty and staff will be given the opportunity to evaluate the Governing Board for the current academic year. Gathering of this data will occur through an online resource such as a Google Form to ensure that as many staff as possible access to the evaluation. The opportunity to have this information remain anonymous is available on this resource. The survey will address the same standards as the Board's evaluation and will ask staff to rate the contribution of the Board on a scale of 1 to 10. A sample of this survey is below. A finalized survey will be created by the end of the first academic semester immediately following opening and will be sent out to staff by the end of January to ensure board members review the results before their deadline of June 1st for their self-evaluation:

Figure 59. Staff Evaluation Governing Board Rubric

Please rate the RioGAFA Governing Board using the following domains to the best of your knowledge.		
Domain	Score	Notes
The Governing Board of RioGAFA knows the mission and vision and strives to see it executed.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
The Governing Board of RioGAFA knows the academic goals and supports the school in achieving these goals.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
The Governing Board serves as a support for the school when it comes to compliance to state regulations.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
The Governing Board approved a budget that supports the vision and mission of RioGAFA	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
The Governing Board has an evaluation process of the school's leadership that revolves around the execution of its vision and mission	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
The Governing Board was visible during community events and participated in events to promote RioGAFA	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	

Evaluation from Parents/Families

As previously mentioned, RioGAFA intends to be a reflective organization that strives to continuously improve based on the input of many stakeholders. The community of parents will be included in the evaluation of the board to ensure that they not only know who the board members are and what they bring to the organization, but also are allowed to voice their thoughts on the progress of the board and how they have pushed the mission and vision of RioGAFA. The survey will be similar to the survey

sent to faculty and staff and will be sent to all family members via an online platform such as Google Forms, but the objective of this survey will be to address the performance of the board from the community's perspective, meaning some of the standards used previously will be replaced with more relevant standards. A sample of the survey is below. A finalized survey will be created by the end of the first academic semester immediately following opening. It will be sent out to staff by the end of January to ensure its results are reviewed by board members before their deadline of June 1st for their self-evaluation.

Figure 60. Parents/Families Governing Board Evaluation Rubric

Please rate the RioGAFA Governing Board using the following prompts to the best of your knowledge.		
Prompt	Score	Notes
I feel that the Governing Board of RioGAFA knows the mission and vision and strives to see it executed.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
I feel that the Governing Board has established financial decisions to meet the needs of the mission and vision.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
I feel that the Governing Board has created and executed an evaluation process for the RioGAFA leadership.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
I feel that the RioGAFA Governing Board is present during community events.	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	
I feel that the RioGAFA Governing Board Members serve as advocates for the school	1 2 3 4 5 or Do Not Know	

Continuous Improvement

Each year during the summer board retreat, the data collected from each of these surveys will be collected and shared. The Governing Board will be tasked with selecting board members to assist in collecting and interpreting the data, and this will be the driving force of the board retreat. During this retreat, strengths and weaknesses will be reviewed that were seen in the data, and strategic board goals will be created for the following academic year to maintain areas that were scored high and improve areas that scored low.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for annual governing body self-evaluation, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; ● include action steps to obtain feedback from, at a minimum, parents and families and all willing staff; ● The plan must include action steps to evaluate the effectiveness of the governing body in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maintaining regular membership that has all of the required qualifications and skill sets identified in question A.(2) ○ meeting all training requirements ○ ensuring student success and academic achievement ○ ensuring fulfillment to the school's mission ○ overseeing the stewardship and management of public funds and responsible government accounting ○ ensuring compliance with legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools ○ selecting and overseeing a qualified and highly effective school leader ○ addressing grievances received from staff and parents and families; and ● Describe how the identified plan will focus on and support continuous improvement.

RioGAFA approaches some of the criteria for this section but it is curious as to why they are not choosing to gather feedback from all stakeholders. The narrative also states that members will be training in internal items, but it does not state anything about the external training, in this section. The narrative also does not contain anything about how the school will maintain ongoing board membership specific to all of the required qualifications and skill sets outlined in the application.

C. Leadership and Management.

C.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for how the governing body will monitor organizational, financial, and academic outcomes on an ongoing basis to ensure that the proposed school is successfully meeting its mission and providing a quality education.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts strives to be a reflective organization that consistently revisits its mission and vision to ensure calibration and accountability toward its goals. The monitoring plan for the Governing Board will reflect this practice by providing accountability measures that will be used to assess progress. It will initially be the responsibility of the Director of Academics and the Director of Operations to gather this data for the Governing Board and report this information in a timely manner. The monitoring plan for RioGAFA stems from the most current Public Education Commission Performance Review and Accountability System to ensure that RioGAFA stays in compliance with all

regulations and successfully meets the standards set in place by the Public Education Commission. The following sections outline the system of accountability:

- **Academic Performance**

- As a school that strives to provide both rigorous academic and fine arts programs, the RioGAFA Governing Board will serve to provide accountability to ensure that the academic goals set in place each year are met. By providing this oversight and accountability, the school will ensure that its mission of meeting grade-level standards from grades K-12 is achieved.
 - At a minimum of four times a year, the Governing Board, with the Leadership Team (Director of Operations, Director of Academics, Instructional Coach), will meet to review the PEC Academic Performance Framework to assess the following benchmarks. It will be the responsibility of the Leadership team to gather this data to present to the board during these meetings:
 - Proficiency in reading and math according to the interim assessments that the Leadership Team determines to use during the planning year.
 - Further focus will be placed on evaluating students' performance in the top 75 percentile and those performed in the lowest 25 percentile.
 - The value-added growth model as defined in the PEC framework.
 - The College and Career readiness of RioGAFA high school students when this data is gathered (by year 7 of opening)
 - Attendance rates for all students grades K-12
 - Review and progress of the SMART goals that are outlined in Section 1 B.1
 - In addition to reviewing the benchmarks created by the PEC for the academic framework, the RioGAFA Governing Board will also be tasked with reviewing the following academic benchmarks set in place by the Leadership Team of RioGAFA:
 - Recurrent enrollment from the previous academic year
 - The graduation rate of RioGAFA students (beginning in year 7)
 - Discipline data for all students grades K-12

- **Organizational Performance**

- The organizational structure of RioGAFA is crucial in its success. The Governing Board will be asked to meet with the Leadership Team at a minimum of quarterly to ensure that the following benchmarks are met and reviewed. It will be the Leadership Team's responsibility to gather necessary data for these benchmarks for the quarterly meetings. The Governing Board will not involve themselves with the administrative functions of the organization. However, this oversight will be set to address the requirements set in place by the PEC. As the PEC Performance Review and Accountability System is divided into six categories, the Governing Board Oversight Plan will be designed to have the following committees responsible for reviewing the categories:
 - Educational Program Requirements:
 - The Academic Committee will be responsible for reviewing the six sections of the document and assessing the RioGAFA performance

towards these standards. It will be the Leadership Team's responsibility to gather the necessary data needed to present quarterly progress.

- Financial Management and Oversight
 - With the Finance Committee taking the lead, the RioGAFA Business Manager will be asked by the Leadership Team to gather this data to be presented quarterly. The Business Manager will be tasked with reporting progress towards the five areas of accountability presented in the PEC document at the request of the RioGAFA Leadership Team.
- Governance and Reporting
 - The Governance Committee will be responsible for assessing three benchmarks of the PEC rubric. It will be the task of the Board Chair, and the Leadership Team to assess these areas and the Board Chair will be responsible for reporting them out during the quarterly review.
- Students and Employees
 - The Audit Committee will be tasked with taking the lead in this section of the PEC rubric. With the help of the Leadership to gather this data, the Audit Committee will report progress during the quarterly board meetings of these five sections.
- School Environment
 - The Facility Committee will maintain oversight of the four benchmarks presented in the PEC document. The chair of the Facility Committee will report out progress during the quarterly meeting to ensure RioGAFA approval based on the PEC rubric.
- **Financial Performance**
 - As the PEC rubric for Financial Performance is under review, RioGAFA will propose the following benchmarks. The Finance Committee will lead oversight of financial performance. With the Treasurer as the lead of this committee, the Finance Committee will review the following and report out progress in these areas monthly. The Leadership Team, more specifically the Director of Operations, will collaborate with the Finance Committee to ensure these reports are presented accurately monthly:
 - Adopted budget in comparison to the actual budget
 - Financial decisions and alignment with the RioGAFA vision and mission
 - Previous requirements included in the PEC Framework include the following:
 - Operating Budgets
 - Periodic Reports
 - Expenditures
 - Reimbursements
 - Audit Reviews

By requiring that the proposed frameworks provide oversight at a minimum of quarterly, RioGAFA will uphold the integrity of its mission and vision by providing accountability. Decisions that are made will

be transparent to ensure that they stem from the mission and vision. By asking for transparency, RioGAFA will be the student-centered organization that it is designed to be. The RioGAFA Founding Team realizes that the proposed ideas of the school are ambitious, and we feel that the best way to maintain that we are one track to reaching these goals and executing our mission and vision effectively requires oversight. That oversight will come from the Governing Board and continuously ensure that RioGAFA is aligned with the requirements of the Public Education Commission.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor academic performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; • Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor organizational performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; • Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor financial performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; and • Describe how each of the monitoring plans will focus on ensuring the school is meeting its mission, providing a quality education, and acting as a responsible public entity.

While RioGAFA does meet the criteria for providing a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan for how their board will monitor organizational, financial, and academic outcomes, it is unclear as to why their board will meet quarterly, at a minimum. It is best practice for a governing board to meet monthly.

C. (2) Identify and provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan for hiring a head administrator. Include a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of the leadership characteristics and qualifications for the head administrator needed to run the proposed school. In your description, take **into account the mission of the proposed school**. Include **evidence of a clear plan** (e.g., job search process, timelines) to hire and evaluate a highly qualified administrator no later than July 1.

If the proposed head administrator is a founder or already identified, provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of his/her leadership characteristics and qualifications for running the proposed school and delivering its unique mission.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts process for hiring a Director(s) is vital to the mission and vision of the school. The Governing Board must have a process designed to ensure that the Director(s) share a passion for the school's mission and vision and a commitment to see that all decisions made are brought back to see the vision and mission to fruition. With the oversight of the Governing Board, RioGAFA will guarantee that accountability is brought to this position and that the school's academic program, financial management, and overall organizational health are maintained. The Director(s) is the only school position that will report to the Board and be evaluated.

- **Process for Hiring Director(s)**
 - Immediately following approval, RioGAFA will begin the process of hiring a Director(s) and will have an approved and appointed candidate no later than 60 days following approval. Being that the Director(s) will play a vital role in the school's enrollment and process of opening, the Governing Board will be asked to hire this position(s) quickly to begin planning and solidifying progress towards the RioGAFA vision and mission. The outline created below will be the process for hiring an initial School Director(s). In the event that this position becomes vacant, the Board will follow the same process to ensure that the position is filled in a timely manner. Upon approval, the School Director(s) will enter into an annually renewable contract and be evaluated by the Board each year. It is the Board's responsibility and the Director(s) to inform one another of either a non-renewal or a resignation by March of each school year.
 - **Responsible Parties**
 - The Governance Committee will be in charge of taking the lead in finding a School Director(s). They will recruit, screen, and interview initial candidates. Once a candidate has been identified as suitable, they will recommend the Governing Board for final consideration. The Governing Board will vote to approve or deny the proposed candidate(s).
 - **Identified Criteria/Standards**
 - Aside from the leadership characteristics that will be outlined further in this section, the following criteria (In compliance with NMSA 22-10A of the New Mexico School Personnel Act) must be met for a candidate to be considered for the position(s):
 - Master's Degree or higher

- Preference will be given to those candidates that emphasize Educational Leadership, Organizational Leadership, or Curriculum and Instruction.
- Hold an NM Level IIIB Administrative License or the ability to obtain the license.
- State-required fingerprints
- State-required background check
- Minimum of six years teaching experience.
- Minimum of two years in the administration of a school

Figure 61. Outline of Initial Hiring of Director(s) Process

Timeline	Responsible Party	Description
August 2021 (More specifically, the day after approval from the Public Education Commission)	RioGAFA Governance Committee	Immediately following approval, the Governance Committee will post the School Director position via online websites such as Association of Charter School Education Services (ACES), Indeed.com, LinkedIn.com and Ziprecruiter.com to reach a wide variety of candidates and receive multiple resumes to review.
15 days after approval from PEC	RioGAFA Governance Committee	Two weeks after the initial posting of the Director job position, The Governance Committee will collect application materials from all interested candidates. Applications must be complete with a cover letter, resume, constructed responses and references.

30 days after approval from PEC	RioGAFA Governance Committee	The Governance Committee will review all resumes received and will contact those candidates deemed as the highest quality. These candidates will be asked to participate in an initial phone interview with the Governance Committee.
45 days after approval from PEC	RioGAFA Governance Committee	Candidates that have passed the initial resume review and provided answers during the phone interview that were strong and indicative of someone that would uphold the mission and vision of RioGAFA, will be asked to participate in a formal interview to include visiting the school, meeting with staff, participation in a teaching and coaching session and attending a special meeting with the entire Governing Board.
55 days after approval from PEC	RioGAFA Governance Board	The Governance Committee will give a formal report to the Governing Board with their recommendation for Director(s).
60 days after approval from PEC	RioGAFA Governing Board	The Board will either approve or reject the recommendation of the Governance Committee. If approved, a formal offer letter will be extended to the recommended candidate.

Figure 62. Outline for Ongoing Process for Hiring of Director(s)

Timeline	Responsible Party	Description
March	RioGAFA Governance Committee	Immediately following approval, the Governance Committee will post the School Director position via online websites such as ACES, Indeed.com, LinkedIn.com and Ziprecruiter.com to reach a wide variety of candidates and receive multiple resumes to review.
15 days after initial job posting	RioGAFA Governance Committee	Two weeks after the initial posting of the School Director job post, The Governance Committee will collect application materials from all interested candidates. Applications must be complete with a cover letter, resume, constructed responses and references
30 days after initial job posting	RioGAFA Governance Committee	The Governance Committee will review all resumes received and will contact those candidates deemed as the highest quality. These candidates will be asked to participate in an initial phone interview with the Governance Committee.
45 days after initial job posting	RioGAFA Governance Committee	Candidates that have passed the initial resume review and provided answers during the phone interview that we strong and indicative of someone that would uphold the mission and vision of RioGAFA will be asked to participate in formal interview to include visiting the school, meeting with staff, participation in a teaching and coaching session and attending a special meeting with the entire Governing Board
55 days after initial job posting	RioGAFA Governance Board	The Governance Board will give a formal report to the Governing Board with their recommendation from School Director
60 day after initial job posting	RioGAFA Governing Board	The Board will either approve or reject the recommendation of the Governance Committee. If approved, a formal offer letter will be extended to the recommended candidate.

▪ **Leadership Characteristics of RioGAFA Director(s) Position(s)**

- As RioGAFA is proposing providing students with a strong academic and arts program, it is essential that the leader(s) of the school possess characteristics and experience that will lend itself to facilitating the mission and vision of the school to do what is best for students. The following is an initial list of identified characteristics:
 - Student-Focused Mindset
 - A RioGAFA School Director puts students first and makes decisions necessary to ensure that students are provided with the best educational experience possible.
 - Commitment to the Mission and Vision
 - A RioGAFA School Director sees the value and necessity of the organization's vision and mission and is committed to those goals. They consistently refer to the mission and vision while making decisions to maintain alignment.
 - Fine Arts Passion
 - In order to truly connect and commit to the RioGAFA vision and mission, the School Director(s) must have experience in the fine arts with either personal or professional experience. They must also show a passion for the arts and bring that passion into the classrooms.
 - Adaptability
 - A RioGAFA School Director is willing and able to adjust to the different needs of the school. As RioGAFA grows, the School Director will need to consistently push the mission and vision through the many stages of development by learning and making decisions that will serve the students effectively.
 - Standard of Excellence
 - A RioGAFA School Director holds a sense of pride when discussing students' academic and artistic achievements and holds that success in academics and arts is best for students. With that thought in mind, the organization's standard must be held high because this is what the School Director(s) sees is best for kids.
 - Communication
 - A RioGAFA School Director must be able to communicate effectively with a multitude of people and organizations. This includes but is not limited to students, parents, staff, community members, and partner organizations.
 - Stakeholder Relationship
 - A RioGAFA School Director must maintain relationships with individuals and organizations to achieve the same outcome for RioGAFA students. They must be able to gain the trust of these individuals and organizations and maintain that trust.
 - Resiliency
 - A RioGAFA School Director must show evidence of resilient commitment to student achievement throughout their educational career. As previously stated, the vision and

mission are essential to be upheld, and the School Director must be willing to ensure its progress in the face of challenges.

- Eliminating Achievement Gaps
 - A RioGAFA School Director must have success in closing achievement gaps for students through their educational experiences. This experience is necessary for RioGAFA students, and the achievement gap for New Mexico students is significant and must be addressed each year consistently.
- Equity and Fairness
 - A RioGAFA School Director must believe that equity and fairness should be the cornerstone in decision making. The School Director should also show evidence of this in their educational experiences.
- Solutions-Oriented Mindset
 - A RioGAFA School Director should be someone that focuses on solutions when challenges arise. As RioGAFA is proposing to be the first K-12 fine arts charter school, the School Director must be willing to create a structure that New Mexico has yet to see.
- Organization and Planning
 - A RioGAFA School Director must maintain that deadlines are met while also planning for the future. As RioGAFA plans to expand to high school, it will be necessary for the School Director(s) to have a vision and plan for this expansion and make decisions that will set up the organization to be successful during these expansions.
- Collaboration
 - A RioGAFA School Director must show evidence of collaboration. We intend to be a community hub for local, national, and global artists. In order to make these partnerships successful, the School Director(s) must be willing to collaborate with many people, groups, or organizations to see that these partnerships are successful and fruitful.
- Responsiveness
 - A RioGAFA School Director must respond to the needs of the student community. As stated, the School Director must be student-focused, and this requires making decisions for students as RioGAFA as an organization develops.
- Staff Development
 - A RioGAFA School Director should demonstrate coaching ability within their educational experiences. The intention of the School Director should be to help coach and train staff to become effective while pushing them to be reflective and continuously learn from feedback.
- Self-Aware

- A RioGAFA School Director should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and be willing to seek out professional advice and training in those areas.
- Continuous Learning
 - A RioGAFA School Director should exemplify what a life-long learner is and be willing to instill the same culture within the organization. RioGAFA intends to be a reflective school that consistently pushes itself to be better by learning from those that have implemented similar programs.
- Results-Oriented
 - A RioGAFA School Director is committed to reviewing achievement results throughout the year. More specifically, the School Director(s) must be reflective each year and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. The Director should always feel that there is room to improve, and that should be evident in their reflections and goal-setting processes for the following academic years.
- In reviewing these characteristics, the RioGAFA Founding Team is confident that candidates that possess these characteristics will be successful in achieving progress towards the RioGAFA mission and vision. In addition, by asking for evidence of these characteristics, the RioGAFA Governing board will ensure that well-rounded candidates who demonstrate success are brought into the organization. This success will be apparent in both fine arts and academics, which will ensure that the School Director(s) create and maintain a high-performing, high-quality charter school for New Mexico students.
- **Potential School Director(s)**
 - The RioGAFA Governing Board initiated its search for a school leader that exemplifies both the characteristics and possesses the necessary state requirements to support the mission and vision. It has identified two potential candidates to serve as Co-Directors to lead the organization as the Director of Operations and the Director of Academics. The Governing Board and the potential Founding School Directors are fully aware that the School Directors must possess both the identified leadership skills, qualifications, licensure, and experience. The potential School Directors have been involved in the application process; this has provided support to the Board in assessing their competencies and skills.
- **Proposed Founding Director of Operations**
 - Jordan Franco is a founding Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Team member and a native of Albuquerque, NM. He is the proposed Founding School Director of Operations.
 - **Verified Prior Experience**
 - Jordan's educational experience holds a variety of roles. He has been involved in education since 2006 as a substitute teacher, educational assistant, and athletic coach. Since graduating college in 2012, he taught 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade mathematics and an elective class for the AVID program. The Public Education Department noted him as being

amongst the most successful teachers in closing the achievement gap for students in low-income areas. He initiated different organizations to benefit students at the schools he worked in, such as dance clubs, student government, and drawing clubs.

- After teaching for six years, he took the position of Dean of Students at Tony Hillerman Middle School in Albuquerque, NM. He was asked to create a streamlined system for 1,200 students that was equitable, fair, and incorporated restorative justice for students. That system of redirection and discipline still is implemented today.
- In 2017 he took an Assistant Principal position at Mission Achievement and Success Charter School in Albuquerque, NM. Jordan was the first administrator to be hired from outside of the organization. As Assistant Principal, he was asked to implement a discipline policy and external communications and connections for the school and both of its locations. He developed a system for recruiting and hiring teachers as well as administrators.
- In 2018, he was given the role of Lead Assistant Principal to provide oversight for the organization's overall culture. He was asked to handle all Human Resources of the organization and develop initiatives for increased enrollment of both campuses.
- In 2019, he took the role of Vice-President of Operations. Responsibilities of this role included full ownership of all operations of the organization and all campuses under the district. Developed transportation plans for both campuses and all students, oversaw enrollment numbers and recruitment for both campuses, oversaw Human Resources and compliance to all state mandates, created an external communications plan and oversaw this department alongside the talent and recruitment department, was involved in planning stages for building a permanent second facility and was in charge of all facilities within both campuses.

○ **Education and Qualifications**

- B.A. Elementary Education, University of New Mexico (2012)
- M.A. Educational Leadership, New Mexico Highlands University

○ **Licensure**

- Jordan holds the following New Mexico State licenses under license 337682
 - Teaching License K-8, Level II, Endorsement: Mathematics
 - Educational Administration License PreK-12 Level III B

• **Proposed Founding Director of Academics**

- Michele Platis is a member of the Founding Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Team, and her educational career has been solely in New Mexico charter schools. She is the proposed Founding School Director of Academics.

○ **Verified Prior Experience**

- Michele's educational experience holds a variety of roles. She started teaching while at the Albuquerque Children's Museum in 1993-1994 and then taught art to homeschoolers from 2002-2004.

- In 2006, Michele started substitute teaching at North Valley Academy Charter School, where her three children attended. She received a long-term substitute teaching position in kindergarten, teaching for all but the first month of the school year. During that time, she applied for her alternative licensure and entered into a Master's in Education program at Wayland Baptist University.
- From 2008-2013 Michele taught kindergarten, 5th, and 6th-grader at North Valley Academy. She developed her arts-integrated curriculum and co-chaired the schoolwide arts show each year.
- In 2013, Michele began teaching visual arts at North Valley Academy and served on the Lead Team as North Valley Academy's Programs Director. Starting in 2014, as the Programs Director, Michele developed a fine arts program that included visual arts, guitar, theater, and music. Michele created an award-winning visual arts program in which she had multiple student winners in the NM State Fair Student Art Show and Scholastic Art Awards, 2015, 2017-2019.
- In 2015, Michele was one of seventeen teachers chosen from across the nation to pilot the Model Cornerstone Assessments in visual arts for the new National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). The assessments were created to be authentic performance-based assessments for the arts. Michele's student work continues to be featured on the NCAS website.
- In 2016, Michele served as the New Mexico Art Education Association (NMAEA) Secretary. She participated in a two-year restructuring of the Board to allow the Board and Advisory Council to work more efficiently and effectively and allow for more volunteer and advocacy opportunities.
- Serving as the NMAEA President from 2018-2020, Michele ensured stability within the organization after the restructure.
- From 2017-2019 she worked with Lynn Vasquez, Division Director of Assessment & Learning Management Systems with the NM PED, on fine arts End of Course (EOC) and performance-based exams. Michele collaborated with educators around the state to create EOC's that effectively aligned to the NCAS.
- In 2019, Michele became the Assistant Principal of Middle School and the Instructional Coach for 4th-8th-grade ELA and K-6 PE and art at Mission Achievement and Success (MAS) 1.0. She helped develop a test prep class focused on close reading a passage, improving reading comprehension, and applying reading strategies. Michele moved to MAS 2.0 in 2020 as the Assistant Principal of Middle School and the Academic Coach for the ELA Instructional Coach and continued to coach K-6 PE and art.
- In 2021 she graduated as National Principal Academy Fellow (NPAF) of Relay Graduate School of Education.

○ **Education and Qualifications**

- B.F.A. in Painting and Photography, Alfred University (1993)
- M.A. Education, Wayland Baptist University (2010)

- Principal Leadership Development, Cooperative Educational Services (2018)
- **Licensure**
 - Michele holds the following New Mexico State licenses under license 312346:
 - Teaching License K-8, Level III, Endorsement: Visual Arts
 - Educational Administration License PreK-12 Level III B
- **Co-Leadership Model**
 - Throughout the application process, the Founding Team of RioGAFA researched successful charter schools throughout New Mexico that elicit the co-director model. After finding successful schools such as Altura Preparatory School and Tierra Adentro of New Mexico that provide students with academic success and fine arts integration, the RioGAFA Founding Team decided that a Co-Director model was most appropriate for the success of the organizations.
 - As RioGAFA intends to be a genuinely collaborative and community-focused organization, the school's leadership must exemplify this to its core. Having two highly effective and certified administrators serving as co-directors will create a culture of teamwork and inclusivity.
 - The research surrounding co-leadership models suggests that co-leaders are more effective in simultaneously bringing productivity and making more effective decisions. According to DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2003), the traditional role of the school leader has expanded over the last two decades to include responsibilities that far outweigh the capacity for one person. With this increase of responsibilities for a traditional leadership model, research has shown that a decrease in overall satisfaction and longevity in these positions has developed. The traditional leader cannot possibly achieve proficiency in all areas necessary to be effective simultaneously, which is why RioGAFA is proposing a Co-Director model. The following are examples of how the proposed Co-Directors would make an excellent fit for RioGAFA and how they have demonstrated shared leadership and accountability previously:
 - Michele and Jordan have a history of working together as administrators in their previous positions where they worked at the same school. Within these positions, they collaborated to create systems within the organization that would sustain and create fairness and equality.
 - They share the same passions for academics and fine arts and want to bring this same passion to the organization.
 - They have a mutual respect for each other and find that this respect transcends any egocentricity.
 - Going through the application process with the Founding Team has provided Michele and Jordan with reinforcing evidence that their strengths complement each other and that their ability to work together. Furthermore, this process has shown that the success of RioGAFA will be reached with a co-leadership model. The priorities of the RioGAFA co-leadership model will include but will not be limited to the following:
 - Co-Director Definition: Founders with a shared mission, vision, and philosophy. Share the load and everything for the good of the school.

- In the school's first years, leaders will also take on extra responsibilities to ensure that at least 80% of the budget is spent on student learning.
- Share authority and power (balance), take individual responsibility for assigned roles and tasks.
 - This lessens work burnout by job sharing. All well acquainted with every aspect of the job, but individual strengths will be utilized.⁶⁴
- Both accountable to the Governing Board
 - Evaluation will be individual as well as a team.
 - The Governing Board can choose to remove a Founding Director with confidence that the other Founding Director can uphold the organization's integrity.
- Vision cast and create together five days a week on all aspects of mission, vision, and the key categories of day-to-day operations, which include:
 - policy, school culture, faculty decisions, and care, and enrollment decisions
- Rotate visibility.
- Maximizes the range of knowledge and experience that go into school administration.
- Makes all key administrative decisions visible and transparent.
- Holds one another accountable for the effective management of the school.
- Promotes harmonious administration.
- Cultivates the civic goals of schooling.
- Advance the quality of school life and thereby foster student development and performance.
- As the school grows, continue a distributive model with staff and teachers to leverage skills and gifts each teacher and staff member has.
 - Builds investment in the school.
 - Creates more transparency.
 - Can aid in the retention of teachers.
 - Ensures that school will not become too top heavy, and funding continues to be spent on students

Figure 63. Proposed set of responsibilities for the Director of Academics and Director of Operations

Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts

⁶⁴ Dipaola, M., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2003). The Principalship at a Crossroads: A Study of the Conditions and Concerns of Principals. *NASSP Bulletin*, 87(634), 43-65. doi:10.1177/019263650308763404

Co-Director Responsibilities	
Director of Academics	Director of Operations
Curriculum Development and Implementation	Transportation
Profession Development: Internal and External	Student Recruitment/Enrollment
Instructional Coach	Compliance of State Deadlines
Academic and Arts Programs	Facilities
Assessment Planning	External Communications
Testing Coordinator	Human Resources
Academic Progress	School Foods
Dean of Students: Attendance and Behavior	School Operations
Student Services	Payroll
Special Education Coordinator	Purchasing
Shared Responsibilities	
Creation and Execution of Mission and Vision	
Creating Annual Goals/Benchmarks	
School Culture	
Reviewing Student Achievement Scores and Accountability	
Teacher Evaluations and Yearly Renewals	
Personnel Matters	
Staff Recruitment	
Budgetary Planning	
Strategic Planning	
Scheduling/School Calendar	

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Identify an ongoing process for hiring a head administrator, both for the initial hiring and for any time the position becomes vacant, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards;
- Identify all leadership characteristics and all qualifications the head administrator must possess;
- Explain why and how the identified leadership characteristics and qualifications will ensure the head administrator has the required capacity and enable the head administrator to operate the proposed school as a successful, high-quality public school;
- Explain how the identified leadership characteristics and qualifications take into account the mission of the proposed school;
- Describe how the identified process will ensure the school is able to identify and hire a highly qualified, licensed administrator no later than July 1, 2018; and
- If a potential head administrator has already been identified and/or is a founder, include an assurance that the individual understands they must be selected and hired by an independent governing body and identify the individual's specific leadership skills and qualifications, through verifiable prior experience, that makes them qualified for the position, including holding the required licensure.

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for hiring a strong head administrator because while they do have a process for hiring a director(s), it is unclear if this process is ongoing or if it will take place once a head administrator gives their notice. It is also concerning that RioGAFA will have two co-administrators, while there are several advantages to this format, it is imperative that roles and responsibilities are explicitly defined to all stakeholders, including students, staff, families, and community members so that there is not any ambiguity in the chain of command.

C. (3) Describe how the governing body will convey and distinguish their roles and responsibilities with those of the proposed school's head administrator. Provide a proposed job description for the head administrator including responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders and the proposed school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy. Attach the job description as **Appendix B**.

As stated in the previous section, the roles and responsibilities of the school leadership will be of the utmost importance. Distinguishing these roles from the roles of the Governing Board will be essential to provide clear guidelines for accountability while maintaining that the vision and mission of RioGAFA are at the forefront of all decision-making. Since RioGAFA is proposing a Co-Director organizational model, the Governing Board will need to be clear regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Founding Director of Operations and the Founding Director of Academics.⁶⁵

- **Process for Distinguishing Roles and Responsibilities**

- Immediately following approval, the proposed Governing Board members will transition to become the official RioGAFA Governing Board. Board members will participate in the state mandated training to understand their responsibilities as a board member and their role in the school.
- After attending the necessary training, the Board will meet collectively to create a table that clearly outlines their roles and responsibilities from that of the Director(s). Overall, the board should have responsibilities that correlate to the following statements made by the Public Education Department in a presentation made regarding governing board responsibilities:
 - Select, support, and evaluate the school leader(s).
 - Make strategic decisions.
 - Monitor and strengthen the quality of the program.
 - Protect assets and provide financial oversight.
 - Build and maintain a competent board.
 - Enhance the school's benefit to the community.
 - Establish the mission and purpose.
- These responsibilities should differ from that of the Director(s) which is outlined in the job description attached in Appendix B and follows the outlined PED statements outlined below for Head Administrators:
 - Operates the school in line with the board's direction.
 - Implements decisions and policies of the board.
 - Keeps the board informed and educated.
 - Supplies the board with clear, honest, and comprehensive documentation to support oversight responsibilities.

⁶⁵ The Role of the Governing Board in School Success, C. N. (n.d.). The Role of the Governing Board in School Success [PPT]. Santa Fe: NMPED.

- All board members will vote on their list of responsibilities as well as the list of responsibilities listed in the Director(s) job description. These documents will become final after the vote is made and will be included in both the Governing Board and the School Director(s) Handbook. This process should be completed as soon as possible following approval from the Public Education Commission.
- **Director(s) Onboarding Process**
 - After naming a Director(s), the Board will provide onboarding training to review the School Director(s) Handbook. It will review the table that they have created distinguishing their role from that of the Director(s). Within this process, additional documents will be reviewed: the charter plan, The Director(s) job description, the Governing Board job description, and the Bylaws. The final part of this onboarding training will include reviewing the charter contract and providing written evidence that the Director(s) agree with it.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the process the governing body will use for distinguishing their roles and responsibilities with those of the head administrator; ● Include specific actions the governing body will take to ensure the head administrator understands the obligations of the charter contract and the requirements of all elements of the plan contained in this application; and ● Attach a job description in Appendix B that includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lists all major responsibilities of the head administrator ○ Includes responsibilities that are unique to charter school leaders ○ Includes responsibilities that specifically relate to the school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy ○ Identifies all hiring requirements including all previously identified requirements related to characteristics and qualifications.

RioGAFA approaches criteria for how they will delineate roles for their head administration. This is because both of the school's leaders have identical duties & responsibilities in their job descriptions. Neither director seems to have oversight of the business manager and the financial area of the school. It is also unclear as to how either description for each Director position will work to achieve RioGAFA's requirement that, "the Director embodies the school's mission and articulates the mission for all aspects of the school's program. In keeping with the school's mission, the Director fosters a culture of learning, a passion for the arts, and the building of relationships."

C. (4) Identify and provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan for annually evaluating the head administrator. In your description, take into account the mission and goals of the proposed school.

Continuous evaluation of school administration is vital to the effectiveness of the RioGAFA Leadership Team. To ensure that the organization's Director(s) are held accountable consistently, they will be reviewed twice each year, every year. The first of these evaluations will occur in January each year. It will determine if a contract renewal will be offered, while the second will occur in June each year to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Director(s).

- **Plan for Self-Evaluation**

- Within 40 days of the beginning of a new school year, in compliance with the New Mexico Administrative Code 6.69.7.8 and 6.69.7.9, the Director(s) must develop a Professional Development Plan (PDP). This PDP will be developed using the standards within the self-evaluation and in alignment with the Highly Objective Uniform Statewide Standard of Evaluation of Principals and Assistant Principals (HOUSSE-P). The Director(s) will be asked to identify a focus with these five domains and develop a plan to strengthen this area of need.
- The Director(s) will be asked to complete two self-assessments each year to present to the Governing Board mid-year in January and at the close of the academic year in June. Being that RioGAFA strives to be a reflective organization, the purpose of the self-assessment will be to allow the school leader(s) to present their strengths and weaknesses to develop a plan for the following school year.
- The self-evaluation of the Director(s) will be in alignment with the HOUSSE-P to address the following areas:
 - Instructional Leadership
 - A RioGAFA Director should develop a culture that is centered around student success. This should be reflected in the coaching plan for each teacher with decisions based on data. In addition, a RioGAFA leader should develop a professional development plan that, at its core, is created to address student data from the previous year and develop new goals to benefit all students. More specifically, RioGAFA Director(s) will also provide narratives to reflect on the following topics:
 - Student Success/Achievement
 - RioGAFA Directors will be asked to provide a narrative within their self-assessment to present to the board their formal evaluation that reviews student achievement and growth data through interim and summative assessments.
 - Progress of RioGAFA Mission
 - Progression of the mission of RioGAFA is imperative for the continuous growth of the organization. RioGAFA Directors will be asked to present narratives within their self-evaluations that address what programs have been brought in or developed within the school to push RioGAFA to achieve its mission.

- The board will review these to ensure that the mission and vision of RioGAFA is maintained yearly.
- Financial Success
 - The RioGAFA Director(s) will be asked to present to the board monthly regarding budgetary updates. Within their self-evaluation, RioGAFA Directors will summarize their financial management of funds throughout the year using these updates.
 - Compliance
 - The monthly board meetings of RioGAFA will address compliance measurements. Within the self-evaluation, the RioGAFA Director(s) will address deadlines that were met for state and federal requirements.
 - Grievances
 - RioGAFA Director(s) will include narratives of any grievances that have been received throughout the year in their self-evaluations. The Governing Board will also address these in their formal evaluation of the Director(s)
 - Communication
 - A RioGAFA Director should develop working relationships with many different stakeholders and develop these relationships to benefit the organization.
 - Professional Development
 - A RioGAFA Director must exemplify the consistent need and want for professional development for herself/himself as well as for the staff. There should be a plan created to address the needs of the staff, both academic and operational, to ensure that RioGAFA staff are consistently learning and growing.
 - Operations Management
 - A RioGAFA Director must address the needs of the organization in areas including budget, facilities, and daily operations. Decisions should be made based on the mission and vision of the school and creating systemic changes to create more efficiency.
 - Scope of Responsibility in Secondary Schools
 - A RioGAFA Director should make attendance, suspension rates, graduation rates, and college and career readiness a priority. They should make decisions based on these concepts to benefit their secondary students and develop systems to address the needs of these students.
 - Both the Director of Operations and the Director of Academics will be asked to partake in the same self-evaluation. RioGAFA feels that each Director must be evaluated using the same rubric to increase collaboration and co-managerial skills

necessary to make a co-director model successful. The organization's success and progression depend on the success of these two positions, so it is only logical that they both be evaluated using the same system since all decisions will be made collectively between the two co-directors.

- **Plan for Formal Summative Evaluation**

- The Governing Board will conduct a formal evaluation of the Director(s) after the last day of the academic year and before the close of the fiscal year. This evaluation will be aligned to NMTeach Principal Summative Evaluation and will address the following benchmarks:

- **Student Achievement**

- Student achievement will be the preliminary measurement for RioGAFA Directors to determine if the Director(s) have met the goals of the mission and vision and will account for both growth and proficiency. In addition, Director(s) will be evaluated on the school environment in relation to teachers using recognized instructional materials and attendance rates.

- **Observations**

- RioGAFA Directors will be evaluated on the performance of those teachers that they evaluate. The robust coaching model is explained in **Section II.D.4**. Since the RioGAFA coaching model requires more frequent observations, RioGAFA Directors will be evaluated on their ability to complete both weekly and annual observations. For the summative evaluations, successful observation metrics will be measured by increased student achievement on interim assessment data.

- **Multiple Measures**

- The Governing Board will assess the Director(s) based upon the benchmarks of the self-assessment that the Director(s) are required to complete twice a year. The five focus areas will be the same as Instructional Leadership, Communication, Professional Development, Operations Management, and Scope of Responsibility in Secondary Schools.

- **Community Feedback**

- As RioGAFA intends to be a collaborative and community focus organization, the Governing Board will ask the following groups of stakeholders to provide feedback of the Director(s):
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Staff and Faculty
 - Leadership Members
 - Community Leaders
- Feedback from these groups will be in the form of surveys using platforms such as Google Forms to reach many constituents.
- Any grievances will be included in this portion of the evaluation and will be documented and discussed.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the plan for annually evaluating the head administrator, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and standards or criteria;• Include action steps to evaluate the effectiveness of the head administrator in the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ ensuring student success and academic achievement○ ensuring fulfillment to the school's mission○ overseeing the stewardship and management of public funds and responsible government accounting○ ensuring compliance with legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools○ addressing grievances received from staff and parents and families;• Describe how the plan specifically takes into account the mission and goals of the proposed school; and• Ensure the plan meets the requirements identified in NMAC 6.69.7.8 and 6.69.7.9.

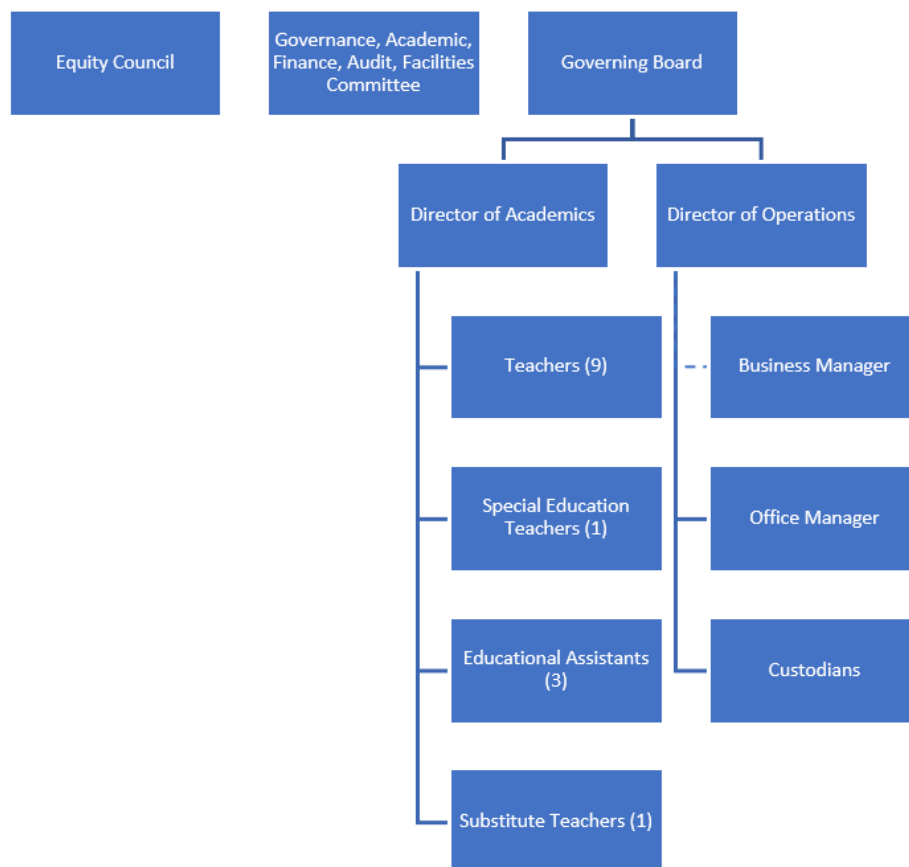
While RioGAFA meets the criteria for how the head administrator will be evaluated, they should consider coming up with a protocol and procedure for how administrator-related grievances will be handled (google forms is a great example of a platform for this).

D. Organizational Structure of the Proposed School.

D.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable** organizational chart and narrative that **aligns structures with the mission of the proposed school** and demonstrates a **clear** understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, equity council and external agencies that are essential to the proposed school.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts is committed to creating a sustainable and clear plan for organizational management. It is a priority for the school to create clear expectations and responsibilities for each position to allow for expectations to be met and for lines of communication to be solid. The intention of RioGAFA is to spend the majority of the school's budget (80 percent) within the classroom to provide a program for students that is as rich in academics and arts as possible. With that being said, the Founding Team is aware that within the first years of opening, the founding positions will need to take on many responsibilities that could potentially be turned into faculty positions in the future. The mission and vision are of the utmost importance to the RioGAFA Team. In order to achieve the goals established by this mission and vision, a priority must be given to teachers and their needs in order to see this plan to fruition. Below are both sample organization charts for each year until year five, and a sample of the goal of what the organization will look like when it has reached full enrollment:

Figure 64. Year One and Year Two Organizational Chart

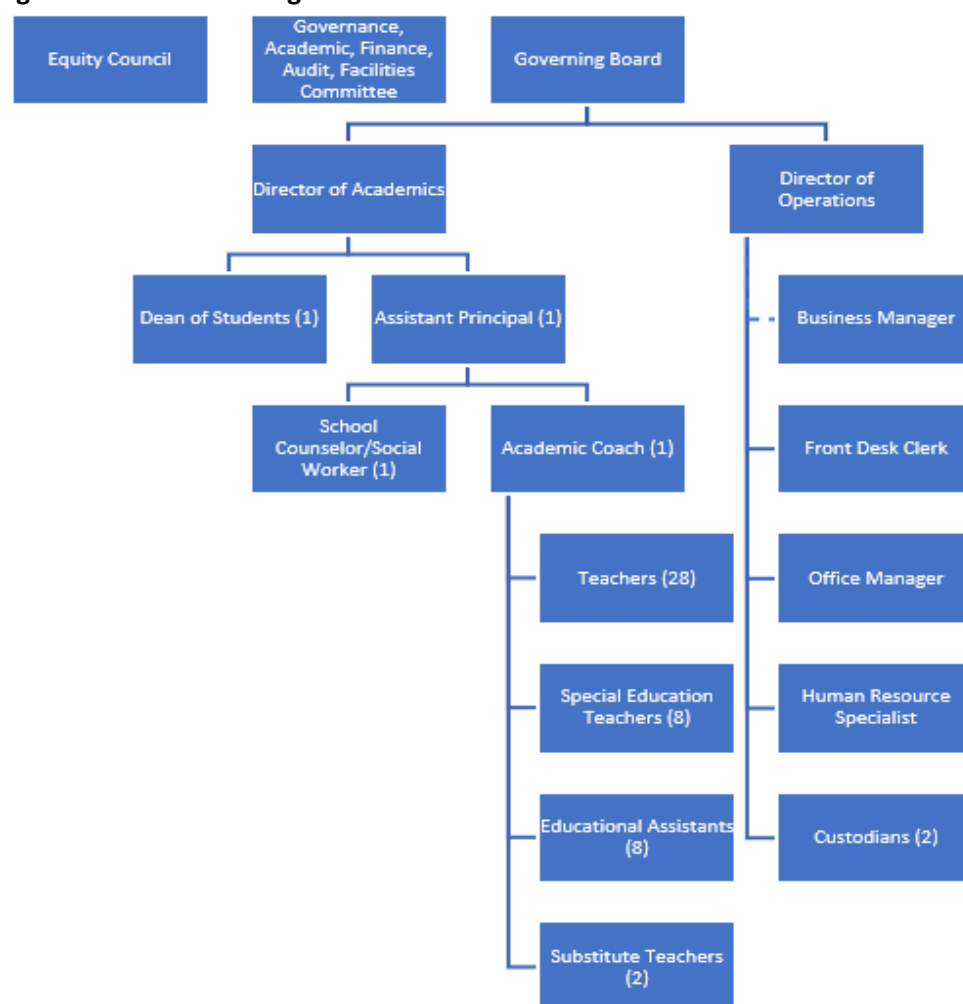


Details of New Positions

- **Governing Board**
 - As previously stated in Section II.A.1, the RioGAFA Governing Board will consist of 7-15 board members. These members will adopt policies and create the framework of the initial committees. These committees will be the Governance, Academic, Financial, Facilities, and Audit Committees. They will also be tasked with recruiting candidates and offering the positions of Director of Academics and Director of Operations.
- **Equity Council**
 - The Equity Council will be composed of many different stakeholders of RioGAFA including members of Leadership, teachers, parents, students, and community members. The Equity Council will work with the RioGAFA Directors to review that the school's practices, policies, and materials are culturally and linguistically equitable for all students. The Equity Council will meet once a quarter to collaborate.
- **Director of Academics**
 - The Director of Academics (together with the Director of Operations) will report directly to the Governing Board. For year one, The Director of Academics will oversee the school counselor/social worker and academic coach. The Director of Academics will be tasked with implementation and execution of the proposed curriculum as well as monitoring assessment distribution and data. The RioGAFA coaching model will be monitored and evaluated by the Director of Academics. Together with the Director of Operations, all personnel issues will be handled using the Co-Director model and the process of hiring, firing, or corrective action will be the responsibility of both Directors.
- **Teachers, Substitutes and Educational Assistants**
 - Teachers, Substitutes and Educational Assistants will report to the Academic Coach. They will be tasked with implementation and execution of the proposed curriculum in Section I.C.1. In year 1, RioGAFA will need a total of 9 teachers, 1 special education teacher, 3 educational assistants, and 1 substitute. In year 2, RioGAFA will need a total of 19 teachers, 5 special education teachers, 6 educational assistants, and 1 substitute teacher.
- **Director of Operations**
 - The Director of Operations (together with the Director of Academics) will report directly to the Governing Board. For year one, the Director of Operations will oversee office staff, an office manager, and the custodial staff. The Director of Operations will be tasked with ensuring that the day-to-day operation of the school is sound and in compliance with all state requirements. In addition, all aspects of enrollment, facilities, student services, STARS reporting, transportation, payroll, external communications, and staff recruitment will fall under the responsibilities of the Director of Operations. The Director of Operations will also work with the Business Manager of the school.
- **Business Manager**
 - It is imperative to the RioGAFA staff that finances are maintained appropriately and a partnership with a certified and experienced business manager and accountant organization is formed. RioGAFA will partner with K12 Accounting for financial and accounting services. K12 will not report to the Director of Operations but rather will communicate directly and collaborate with the individual that holds this position.
- **Front Desk Clerk/Office Manager**

- In year 1, the Front Desk Clerk and the Office Manager will be the same position. The Front Desk Clerk will handle all communication with the community via in person methods of communication and external communication such as phone and email blasts. The Office Manager will oversee all aspects of the administrative duties required to effectively operate a school. These positions will report directly to the Director of Operations.
- **Custodians**
 - Custodial staff will report directly to the Director of Operations. For year one, there will be one custodian needed to maintain the facilities for RioGAFA. This person will be in charge of cleaning common spaces, classrooms, light maintenance responsibilities and restrooms.

Figure 65. Year Three Organizational Chart



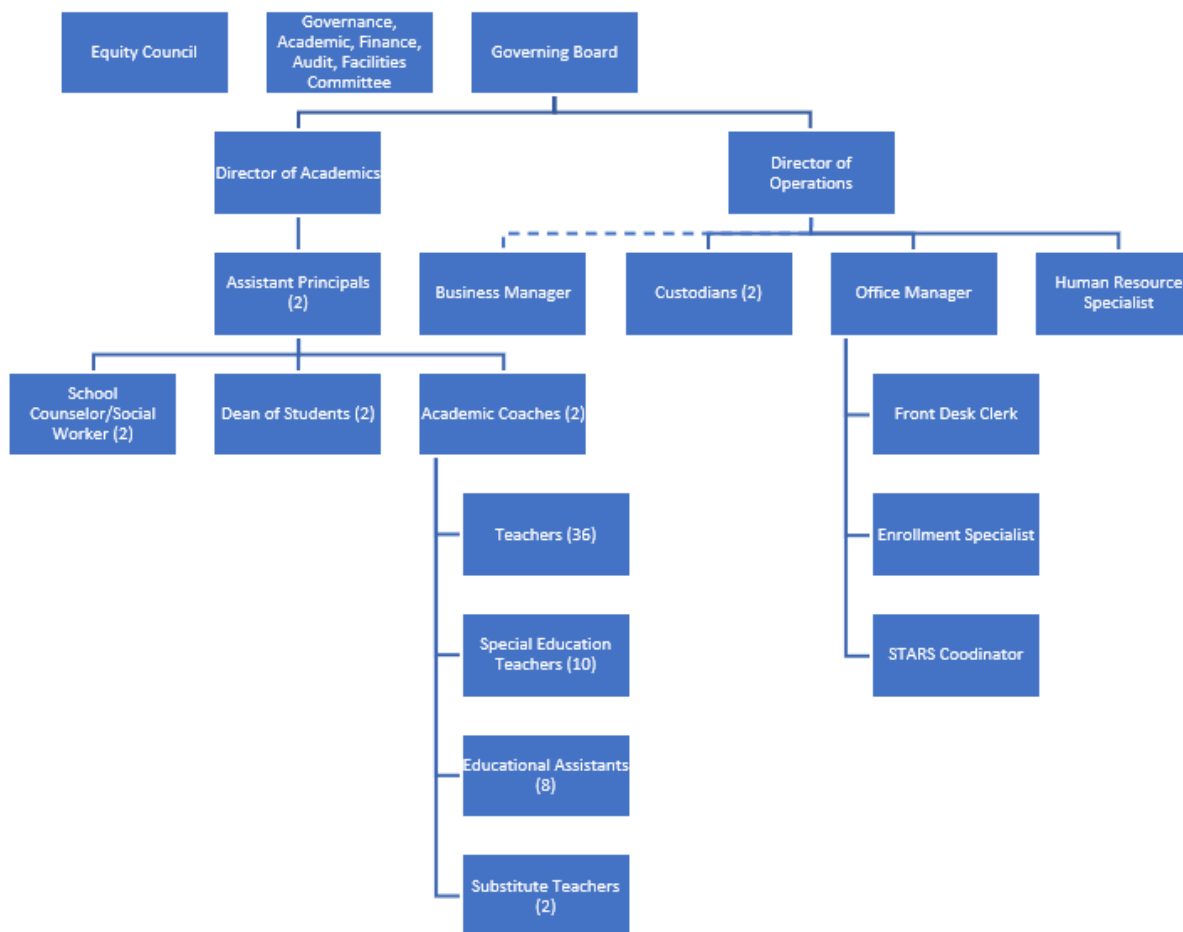
Details of New Positions

- **Assistant Principals**

- The RioGAFA team feels that there will be more stable funding for the school by the third year of operation. With this, there is an opportunity to build up the leadership team of RioGAFA by hiring two Assistant Principals. One of these Assistant Principals will oversee the elementary levels and the other will oversee the middle school levels. These positions will report directly to the Director of Operations and will be responsible for overseeing the Dean of Students and the Academic Coaches for their respective levels.
- **Dean of Students**
 - In addition to hiring Assistant Principals, the RioGAFA Team will hire a Dean of Students for each level. These positions will report directly to the Assistant Principals of their respective levels and will help promote and cultivate the behavior and culture of the high school, including management of disciplinary issues. These positions will be tasked with creating a system for discipline that is equitable and incorporates the social emotional systems created for RioGAFA students. These positions will form relationships with families to help address truancy of high school students and will track suspension numbers for high school students. The Dean of Students will collaborate with teachers to support and develop classroom management systems that are standard in RioGAFA classrooms.
- **School Social Worker/Counselor**
 - The school social worker/counselor will take the lead of creating and implementing a process for addressing the social emotional needs of RioGAFA students. In year three, the need for a certified social worker and/or counselor to serve students will arise. These positions will collaborate with teachers to ensure that there are strategies implemented in each classroom catering to social and emotional needs. This position will report directly to the Director of Academics.
- **Academic Coaches**
 - The Academic Coach will report directly to the Director of Academics and will be responsible for the coaching and observation of the teachers, substitute teachers, and educational assistants. They will be asked to comply with the coaching model outlined in Section II.D.4 and to provide in the moment feedback for teaching staff. They will ensure that teaching staff are properly and consistently receiving professional development based upon the needs seen during classroom observations.
- **Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Educational Assistants, Substitute Teachers**
 - The number of teachers needed to effectively implement the proposed curriculum of RioGAFA for year three will be at least 28 teachers, 8 special education teachers, 8 educational assistants, and 2 substitute teachers. These positions will report to their respective academic coaches to maintain implementation and executive of the proposed curriculum.
- **Front Desk Clerk**
 - For year three, the Office Manager and the Front Desk Clerk will become two different positions. The Front Desk Clerk will be responsible for greeting families and providing excellent customer service as this position will be the primary point of contact for parents both in the building or calling the school. This position will report directly to the Office Manager.
- **Human Resources Specialist**
 - This position will report directly to the Director of Operations and will be responsible for maintaining employee records as well as conducting payroll for employees.

Maintenance and compliance of employee licensure and benefits will also fall under the responsibility of this position.

Figure 66. Year Four Organizational Chart

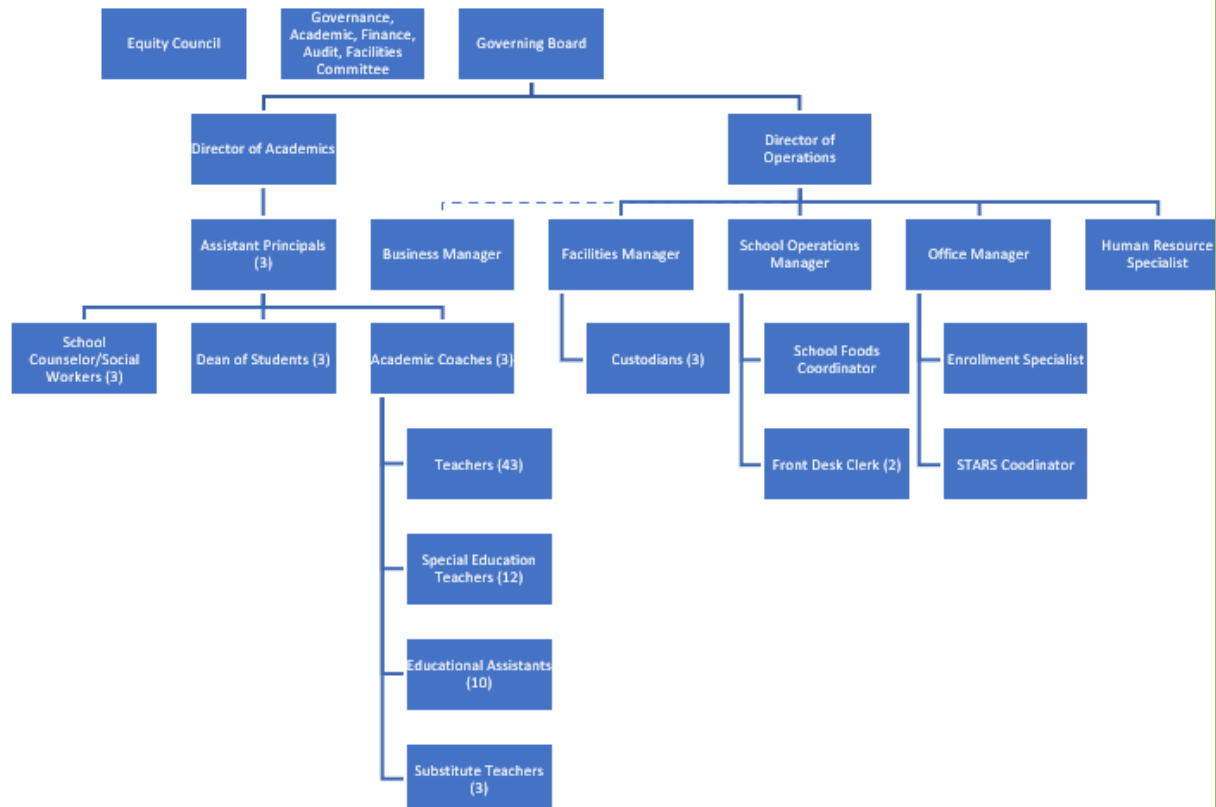


Details of New Positions

- **Enrollment Specialist**
 - An Enrollment Specialist will be hired during year three of operation. This person will report to the Office Manager and will be in charge of enrollment numbers and management of enrollment databases. This person will also take the lead regarding student recruitment and will be the point of contact for all people interested in enrolling their student at RioGAFA.
- **STARS Coordinator**
 - Proper management of the STARS database is key to the vitality of an educational organization. As we are adding multiple grade levels each year, by year three it will be necessary to hire someone to take on the responsibility of compliance and proper reporting for the STARS database. This person will report directly to the Office Manager.
- **Teachers**
 - The number of teachers needed to effectively implement the proposed curriculum of RioGAFA for year four will be at least 36 teachers. 10 special education teachers, 8

educational assistants, and 2 substitute teachers. These teachers will report to their respective academic coaches to maintain implementation and execution of the proposed curriculum.

Figure 67. Year Five - Seven Organizational Chart



Details of New Positions

- **Facilities Manager**
 - Within this year of operation, there will be a need to bring on someone who can serve as Facilities Manager. This person will report directly to the Director of Operations and will oversee the custodians. This person will also be involved with creating strategic plans to upgrade current facilities and plan future facilities to create spaces that will help reach the mission and vision of RioGAFA. These spaces will meet the needs of the arts program and will need someone to oversee the compliance with PSFA requirements.
- **School Operations Manager**
 - The School Operations Manager will report to the Director of Operations and will be in charge of ensuring that all support needed for teaching staff in regards to materials, classroom needs, and functionality is met. The School Operations Manager will also make sure that there are systems in place for students to utilize spaces such as technology labs and art studios. They will also create and oversee schoolwide systems such as student transitions to lunch and arrival/dismissal practices. The School Operations Manager will oversee the School Foods Coordinator and the Front Desk Clerks.

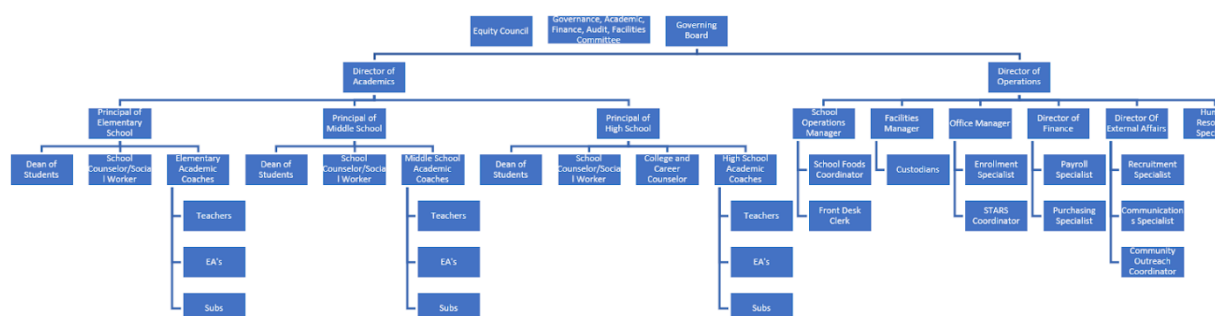
- **School Foods Coordinator**

- The Schools Foods Coordinator will oversee compliance for the school's food service program. The RioGAFA intention is to apply for the Breakfast After the Bell (BATB) and the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) and the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CAFCP) so it will be necessary to have someone on staff that can maintain records of enrollment for this program to ensure RioGAFA's participation each year.

- **Teachers**

- The number of teachers needed to effectively implement the proposed curriculum of RioGAFA for year five will be at least 43 teachers, 12 special education teachers, 10 educational assistants, and 3 substitute teachers. For year six, RioGAFA will hire 46 teachers, 14 special education teachers, 10 educational, and 3 substitute teachers. For year seven, RioGAFA will hire 50 teachers, 16 special education teachers, 10 educational assistants, and 3 substitute teachers. These teachers will report to their respective academic coaches to maintain implementation of the proposed curriculum.

Figure 68. RioGAFA Organizational Goals



Changes from Year One Organizational Chart

The above spreadsheet is the goal for the organization at fruition. The hiring of the new positions listed below will be based upon need and financial availability starting after Year 5. The goal of RioGAFA is to spend at least 80 percent of its budget within the classroom, so as the resources are made available, decisions to hire these positions will be made based on the needs of the organization and will be made strategically to ensure that this 80 percent goal is maintained.

- **Elementary, Middle, High School Principals**

- The end goal for RioGAFA is to establish principals for the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The hope is that the previous year's Assistant Principals would gain the experience necessary to take these positions. The Principals of each level would be responsible for overseeing the Dean of Students, Academic Coach and School Counselor/Social Worker for their level. They would be tasked with all things academic and cultural for their level of students, as well as creating a system for collaboration between the levels. The only difference will be that the High School Principal will be responsible for oversight of the College and Career Counselors. These positions would report directly to the Director of Academics.

- **College and Career Counselors**
 - A priority of the high school support staff will be to prepare high school students for college and serve as a resource for them while they navigate any dual-credit courses that they enroll in. These positions will be in charge of creating Next Step Plans for all high school students and will continuously meet with parents to engage with them and provide services for families necessary to be successful in high school and beyond. These positions will report directly to the High School Principal
- **Director of Finance**
 - The Director of Finance will report to the Director of Operations. This position will be responsible for oversight of the Payroll Specialist and the Purchasing Manager. Responsibilities of this position will be to maintain the budget for the organization and will work directly with the Business Manager to ensure that the financial health of the organization is up to date and will assist the Director of Academics and Operations in the creation of the yearly budget.
- **Payroll Specialist**
 - Being that RioGAFA will employ well over 60 teachers and a number of substitutes and educational assistants, there will be a necessity to bring someone into the organization with experience in payroll with large companies. This person's primary responsibility will be payroll, but they will also work with the Director of Finance in any capacity necessary that involves finances. This position will report directly to the Director of Finance.
- **Purchasing Specialist**
 - A purchasing specialist will be hired to oversee all aspects of purchasing including invoicing, vendor management and accounts payable. Because these responsibilities fall into the financial department of the organization, this position will report directly to the Director of Finance. As with the Payroll Specialist, this position's primary duties will be payroll, but collaboration with the Director of Finance regarding budgetary planning will also be a part of their responsibility.
- **Director of External Affairs**
 - Outreach and advocacy will be the responsibility of the Director of External Affairs, which will report directly to the Director of Operations. This position will be asked to create and execute a plan for outreach to parents, community leaders, current stakeholders, potential stakeholders, current partner organizations, potential partner organizations and potential funders. In addition, they will oversee the Recruitment and Communications Specialists as well as the Community Outreach Coordinators.
- **Recruitment Specialist**
 - A Recruitment Specialist will be brought into the organization to create and execute a strategic plan to recruit talent for the organization. This position will proactively create a system to identify candidates for upcoming positions or vacancies to provide a minimal gap between employment of any position within the organization. This position will report directly to the Director of External Affairs.
- **Communications Specialist**
 - Under the management of the Director of External Affairs, the Communications Specialist will support the Director of External Affairs with advocacy and communications. The Communications Specialist will be responsible for any social media platforms that the Director of External Affairs establishes and will create content that is centered around the mission and vision of the school. In addition, the Communications Specialist will collaborate with the Director of External Affairs to

create meaningful conversation between stakeholders and develop meaningful actions such as the creation of published articles or promotional material to be used for the benefit of the organization.

- **Community Outreach Coordinator**

- The Community Outreach Coordinator will be responsible for the mobilization of the community and all stakeholders of RioGAFA. The intention will be for this position to consistently build connections to establish relationships to benefit RioGAFA. This person will help mobilize families while also assessing and addressing what the needs are of RioGAFA families. This person will serve as a liaison between parents, community members, students and RioGAFA to create support beyond that of a traditional district school. This position will report directly to the Director of External Affairs.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include an organizational chart for each year as part of the rollout with grade additions; • Show how the Equity Council is incorporated into to organizational chart; • Include a narrative that describes the structures and relationships represented in the organizational chart; • Include all entities essential to the operation and success of the proposed school; and • Reflect an understanding of the appropriate relationship among each of the relevant entities.

RioGAFA meets criteria for providing a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable organizational chart and narrative that aligns structures with the mission of the proposed school. Their organizational chart demonstrates a clear understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teachers, and support staff. They also have clearly represented their equity council on their organizational chart. Descriptions and details of positions within the school are clear and include all entities associated with the success of the school.

D. (2) Provide **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** job descriptions for all certified and licensed staff and any other key staff (if your charter requires non-traditional roles or positions, identify and describe here). In the job descriptions, clearly outline necessary qualifications and **appropriate** reporting lines that are consistent with the organizational chart. In your descriptions, take into account the mission of the proposed school. Attach staff job descriptions as **Appendix C**.

Figure 69. Certified Staff Five Year Plan

Name of Position	2022-2023 School Year	2023-2024 School Year	2024-2025 School Year	2026-2027 School Year	2027-2028 School Year
Director of Academics	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total
Director of Operations	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total
Assistant Principals			1 Total	2 Total	3 Total
Dean of Students			1 Total	2 Total	3 Total
Social Worker and/or Counselors			1 Total	2 Total	3 Total
Academic Coaches			1 Total	2 Total	3 Total
Teachers	11 Total	19 Total	28 Total	36 Total	43 Total
Special Education Teachers	3 Total	5 Total	8 Total	10 Total	12 Total
Educational Assistants	6 Total	6 Total	8 Total	8 Total	10 Total
Substitute Teachers	1 Total	1 Total	2 Total	2 Total	3 Total
Total Number of Staff	24 Total	34 Total	55 Total	67 Total	80 Total

Description of Necessity of Certified Positions

- **Director of Academics**
 - The Director of Academics will create a strategic plan for implementation of the proposed curriculum. They will create goals for student achievement and assess previous year data to create decisions based on the needs of the school. The Director of Academics will create and adjust the proposed coaching model to provide teachers with adequate and continuous professional development to cultivate talent within the organization that is of the highest caliber. The Director of Academics is essential in the progress of all aspects of the academic curriculum and will be responsible for the

evaluation of teachers. Because of this, RioGAFA requires that this person hold an administrative license and have experience teaching in a classroom.

- **Director of Operations**

- The operations of RioGAFA require ownership and direction. The Director of Operations will be the person to provide these things to ensure that the future of the organization progresses effectively and efficiently. In order to guarantee that RioGAFA employs someone who understands the operations of a school, RioGAFA will require that the Director of Operations hold an administrative license and have experience teaching in a classroom. The Director of Operations will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of transportation, facilities, human resources, external communications, enrollment, compliance, and meeting deadlines set in place by the state. This position is essential to the RioGAFA Organizational Framework to allow for one person to focus on this aspect of running an effective charter school.

- **Assistant Principal/Principal**

- Assistant Principals will act as the liaison of the Director of Academics and the leadership of their respective levels. These positions will ensure that the initiatives of the Director of Academics and Operations are carried out within their levels. In order to create a charter school that provides a well-connected and fluid program for all grades, these Assistant Principals will also take the lead on ensuring that their level benchmarks and standards are related and calibrated to prepare students for the next level of education. These positions are essential to maintaining the culture and integrity of the mission and vision for each level of student education.

- **Dean of Students**

- The Dean of Students will be in charge of all things related to culture and discipline for their levels. Their direction and systems will stem from the initiatives decided from the Director of Academics and Operations. These positions are essential to allow for someone to focus on the systems surrounding classroom management and to be able to help teachers develop sustainable plans to allow for maximum engagement. These positions will also act as liaisons to parents to engage them and inform them on their student's progress in school.

- **Social Workers/School Counselors**

- Social Workers and School Counselors are essential to any educational organization. Specifically, for RioGAFA, these positions will support teaching staff in addressing the needs of social, emotional, and mental health for students. These positions are necessary to ensure that teachers are given strategies to address these needs effectively and to provide support when necessary, for students. Social emotional learning will be a large priority of the RioGAFA model, and these positions will collaborate with the Director of Academics to create and implement a strategic plan for implementing a curriculum that is focused around this area of education.

- **Academic Coaches**

- The coaching model that RioGAFA will implement will be that of high rigor and accountability to provide the best education possible for students. The Academic Coaches will be the most crucial part in seeing this coaching model to fruition. These positions will be asked to consistently be in classrooms to provide meaningful and in-the-moment feedback to instantly address the needs of students. All coaches will be highly trained by the Director of Academics and Assistant Principals/Principals to maintain consistency in instruction throughout the organization.

- **Teachers (Regular and Special Education)**

- Teaching staff are the most important and vital part of RioGAFA. The priority of the budget will be put into the classrooms of teachers to allow for them to focus and implement the most dynamic and rigorous arts-integrated instruction possible. Without a strongly developed and trained teaching staff, the framework of the RioGAFA curriculum will not be successful, and because of that RioGAFA is prepared to commit as many resources as possible to ensure that teachers are highly qualified to teach in an arts-integrated school.
- **Educational Assistants**
 - Educational Assistants are required to be in Kinder classrooms, however, the intention of RioGAFA is to hire these educational assistants and create a pipeline for educator talent. We hope to seek out individuals interested in pursuing careers in education and providing them the experience of working in a classroom. We hope that by creating this pipeline we provide a natural transition and opportunity for teachers that are experienced in the proposed model.
- **Substitute Teachers**
 - Substitute teachers will be full-time employees at RioGAFA and will have other duties within the organization. We feel that this model is most effective by providing individuals to cover classrooms that are familiar with the model and trained to provide effective instruction. Substitute teachers will also be individuals that are interested in pursuing careers in education to further the progression of this educator talent pipeline.

Figure 70. Non-Certified Staff

Name of Position	2022-2023 School Year	2023-2024 School Year	2024-2025 School Year	2025-2026 School Year	2026-2027 School Year
Facilities Manager					1 Total
School Operations Manager					1 Total
Office Manager	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total	1 Total
Human Resources Specialist			1 Total	1 Total	1 Total
Custodians	1 Total	1 Total	2 Total	2 Total	3 Total
School Foods Coordinator					1 Total
Front Desk Clerk			1 Total	1 Total	2 Total
Enrollment Specialist				1 Total	1 Total
STARS Coordinator				1 Total	1 Total

Director of Finance - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate	Business Operations will be handled by K12 Accounting	Business Operations will be handled by K12 Accounting	Business Operations will be handled by K12 Accounting		
Payroll Specialist - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate					
Purchasing Specialist - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate					
Director of External Affairs - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate					
Recruitment Specialist - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate					
Communications Specialist - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate					
Community Outreach Coordinator - Will hire when resources are available and when appropriate					
Total	4 Total	4 Total	7 Total	10 Total	12 Total

Description of Necessity for Non-Certified Positions

- **Facilities Manager**
 - The Facilities Manager will be the point of contact for all aspects of current and future development of the RioGAFA facility. They will collaborate with the Director of Operations to execute a plan to create spaces based on the needs of the organization to become a community hub for multiple artistic modes. The facilities manager will also ensure that the facility is up to state codes and requirements and that each progressing year the facility is updated. RioGAFA intends to become a sustainable and

eco-friendly facility, so this position will collaborate with the Director of Operations to creatively think of different ways to create opportunities to increase sustainability.

- **School Operations Manager**

- The School Manager will be an essential piece of connection for teaching and operational staff. This position will be a liaison between teachers and the Director of Operations to maintain that teachers' needs are met within their classrooms. The School Operations Manager will maintain that all aspects of instruction regarding materials and furniture are addressed and will create systems for processes such as arrival and dismissal to create efficiency throughout the building.

- **Office Manager**

- The Office Manager will oversee that all administrative, clerical responsibilities and positions are executed effectively, efficiently, and accurately. It is imperative that this person be trained in all administrative positions to train and provide feedback to ensure maximum compliance. This person will be an essential piece in state reporting and evaluations and will collaborate with the Director of Operations to create sustainable and long-term systems for these positions.

- **Human Resource Specialist**

- The Human Resource Specialist will oversee all aspects of licensure, benefits, and onboarding of new staff. They will collaborate with the Director of Operations to create an onboarding plan for each staff member and will maintain staff files with all necessary information readily available for visits from the Public Education Department. Licensure compliance will also fall under this position and maintaining a database of certified employees will be a primary responsibility. They will also ensure that all staff are properly enrolled in all benefits and will be in charge of tracking compliance with state requirements such as submissions of Professional Development Plans (PDPs).

- **Custodians**

- Schools cannot operate without a custodial/maintenance staff. The custodial crew will be tasked with ensuring proper cleaning and sanitation of all commonly used areas in the facility as well as light maintenance responsibilities. In addition, these employees will be trained in proper COVID-19 protocols to maintain safety for all students and staff.

- **School Foods Coordinator**

- Proper reporting for state programs such as the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is essential for providing the necessary resources for students while they are at school. This position will be responsible for assisting parents in gathering information to enroll their students into free or reduced lunch programs and will report these numbers to the state accordingly.

- **Front Desk Clerk**

- The Front Desk Clerk will be the primary person that families and visitors will see when they enter the school. This position will be essential in setting the tone of the building by creating a professional and welcoming environment. By providing excellent customer service and communication skills, this person will also begin to identify what families are involved and willing to volunteer to help throughout the day.

- **Enrollment Specialist**

- The enrollment specialist will be the primary point of contact for families that are interested in enrolling their students at RioGAFA. This person will help them navigate

the process of applying and will be the primary person to contact students when they are called through the lottery process. Families will engage with this person to provide all necessary documents to enroll their students if they are offered a spot, and this person will be in charge of maintaining all student files.

- **STARS Coordinator**

- Proper reporting, data entry and schedule creation is essential in all education organizations. The STARS coordinator will ensure that all data necessary to successfully report for the Public Education Departments 40th, 80th, and 120th day reporting periods is collected and entered. By allowing for this person to focus on STARS reporting, RioGAFA will provide the state with accurate reporting and will ensure that funding is reflective of this accuracy. For years 1 and 2, the Director of Operations will be in charge of STARS reporting.

- **Director of Finance (Future Hire)**

- As the organization grows, the intention of RioGAFA is to create a robust plan to gain outside funding and partnerships. We will seek out arts organizations to bring resources into New Mexico that will benefit our students within the classroom. With the anticipated increase in funding, RioGAFA will need someone to be in charge of these finances and to maintain the budget. This person will collaborate with the Director of Operations to create a yearly budgetary plan as well as work directly with the school's business manager.

- **Payroll Specialist (Future Hire)**

- Being that RioGAFA intends to employ at least 100 staff by year five of opening, the need for a payroll specialist will present itself quickly. This person will be in charge of tracking all aspects of payroll to ensure that all employees are paid properly, timely and accurately.

- **Purchasing Specialist (Future Hire)**

- As RioGAFA expands to include grade K-12, purchasing will look different for each grade level. This means that the curriculum needed for each classroom will be unique. In addition to the academic curriculum, the arts materials needed for each teacher will be different as well. A Purchasing Manager will be needed to keep track of these orders and make certain that all invoices and bills are paid on time and are in compliance with state requirements regarding dollar amounts.

- **Director of External Affairs (Future Hire)**

- The expansion of RioGAFA will include a robust plan to create community support and advocacy. The Director of External Affairs will partner with the Director of Operations to create a plan to promote the school in the public sector. This will include aspects of social media and promotional materials to gain larger community support. This person will also serve as a representative for the school in meetings with the Public Education Department as well as potential and current partnerships. This position will create an outreach strategy to potential funders and will serve as the liaison of communicating the mission and vision to the potential partners.

- **Recruitment Specialist (Future Hire)**

- Hiring qualified and experienced talent will be necessary as RioGAFA expands. The Recruitment Specialist will travel across the state and surrounding states to find educators that are interested in education or have experience in education and are looking to work in a fine-arts integrated school. In addition, this position will look within the arts communities of these states to find artists that can come into the organization and provide instruction to our students. High quality artists are vital to

the implementation of our fine arts courses, and with that a Recruitment Specialist that is mission and vision aligned is essential to finding these people.

- **Communications Specialist (Future Hire)**

- As previously stated, external communications are essential to gaining community support for RioGAFA. The Communications Specialist will work with the Director of Operations to create a plan for communications as it pertains to social media, marketing and advertising. This person will connect with the Community Outreach Coordinator to find content to promote the school and create consistent information to push out to current and potential stakeholders regarding the events occurring within RioGAFA.

- **Community Outreach Coordinator (Future Hire)**

- The Community Outreach Director will serve as a liaison between the community and the school. This person will immerse themselves in the families within our school to address their needs outside of student academics. Serving as a community support, the Community Outreach Director will find resources for families that they can benefit from while also building lasting relationships. Through these relationships, the Community Outreach Director will build up parent advocates that can be mobilized to show support for RioGAFA to the public.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all certified and licensed staff identified in the application ○ all non-certified or unlicensed staff identified in the application who could be considered essential to the operation and success of the proposed school ○ any non-traditional roles or positions; • Describe why the identified roles are key to the operation and success of the proposed school; and • Attach staff job descriptions as Appendix C for all of the positions identified in the application response and include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ List all major responsibilities of the positions ○ Include responsibilities that specifically relate to the school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy ○ Identify all hiring requirements including qualifications and licensure or certification ○ Identify reporting lines ("reports to") that aligns to the organizational chart.

RioGAFA approaches criteria for providing clear, comprehensive, and cohesive job descriptions for all certified and licensed staff and any other key staff. RioGAFA will partner with K12 Accounting for financial and accounting services. K12 will not report to the Director of Operations but rather, will communicate directly and collaborate with the individual that holds this position. The applicants have budgeted \$72,000+ for the cost of accounting services. Therefore, they must procure through a sealed bid process and a specific provider, such as K-12, cannot be identified in the charter application. Additionally, if K12 does not

report directly to the Director of Operations, it is unclear as to who is in charge of maintaining accountability for their services.

Position descriptions in Appendix C do not align with all of the positions identified in the application response.

- Identify reporting lines (“reports to”) that aligns to the organizational chart.

D.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** staffing plan that demonstrates an understanding of the proposed school’s staffing needs, is **reasonable and adequate** to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/curriculum, and is aligned with the budget and projected enrollment. Include evidence of a clear plan (job search process, timelines etc.) to hire and evaluate highly qualified staff no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts is committed to creating an educational environment that places focus on hiring qualified and mission-aligned instructional and operational staff. RioGAFA will follow a slow-growth model for expanding the leadership and operational team to allow for the maximum amount of funding to be placed in the classroom. By prioritizing the classroom, RioGAFA can ensure that the needs of its students are met to provide a truly arts-integrated, highly rigorous model of instruction. The below examples and explanations of the proposed staffing model will be reviewed each year to assess priorities as well as budgetary resources to maintain that the goal of at least 80 percent of the RioGAFA budget will go towards the classroom.

Initial Hiring Plan

Immediately following approval, the Governing Board will hire the Director(s). As stated in **Section II.C.2**, the goal for the Governing Board will be to fill this position no later than 60 days after approval. Following this, the Director(s) will begin the process of hiring the necessary Leadership and Operational positions to begin the task of filling positions necessary for the opening and operation of the new school.

Immediately following approval and official offer letter presentation to the Director(s), the Director of Academics and Operations will assess the needs of the organization and finalize the positions needed for the initial opening year. This will include verification of the proposed plan as well as assessing the goal of 80 percent of the initial budget going towards the classroom. In January, the job openings for the initial academic year will be posted on local and national sources such as LinkedIn, Indeed, and the Albuquerque Journal. Interested applicants will be asked to submit a resume, references for review and submission of written answers to preliminary interview questions. Jobs posted will include:

- Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Educational Assistants
- Substitute Teachers
- Office Manager
- Custodian

Jobs will be posted and resumes will be collected for at least 30 days. After 30 days, The Director of Operations and Academics will review submitted resumes and submitted written answers to the following questions (along with others created by the Director(s)) to ensure mission and vision alignment:

Figure 71. Sample Written Response Questions

Leadership Team Positions
<p>What about the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts educational model aligns with you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This question allows for the RioGAFA team to assess the experience of the candidate along with their comprehension of what the educational model is and how their experiences relate.
<p>What do you think that you could contribute to the overall vision and mission of the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By asking this question, the RioGAFA team is setting up the environment of the organization to be one that is consistent with the implementation of the vision and mission. This will also help provide information of comprehension of the vision and mission and will allow the candidate to highlight aspects of their career that will help push the RioGAFA mission and vision to fruition.
<p>What leadership skill or skills are your strengths and which are ones that you are improving on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This question aligns with the intention of RioGAFA to be a reflective organization that is always trying to improve. This self-assessment will highlight leaders that are self-aware of their areas of needed growth but also have a plan to address these so RioGAFA will have a well-rounded member on the leadership team.
<p>What do you see as the future for RioGAFA and how do you intend to see this to fulfillment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RioGAFA team will be able to gain some insight into the futuristic thinking of the candidate using this question. They will be able to see if the candidate is able to come up with strategic plans with specific action steps for themselves to execute these plans. This will also allow the RioGAFA team to assess if the candidate is aligned to the vision and mission in their future plans for the school.
Instructional Support Staff
<p>How have you supported teacher development in the past and what skills will you be bringing to RioGAFA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The answer to this question will determine what skill set the candidate feels is his/her strongest and will help determine professional development he/she can offer to teachers to make them stronger.
<p>What examples do you have of closing the achievement gap due to your past coaching experience, and what was the method of coaching?</p>

- Answering this question will show the RioGAFA team if the candidate has had experience with students similar to those we serve. In addition, this question will also allow the candidate to present his/her coaching model to assess if this aligns with the RioGAFA coaching model.

What plan do you have for onboarding new teachers and/or support staff?

- Answers to this question will be very important to starting RioGAFA with mission- aligned staff. Instructional Support Staff must be able to have a structured plan for new staff that provides adequate professional development to set up teachers for success. Within this plan, RioGAFA leaders should be looking for accountability measures presented by the candidates as well as action steps that they have set in place for themselves.

What information do you use to create goals for each academic year?

- By asking this question, candidates will be able to present how they use data to drive instructional decisions. Being responsive to the needs of students based on achievement data will be essential to the academic success of RioGAFA.

How would you support a struggling teacher?

- Answering this question will give a multitude of insights into the applicant's ability to close achievement gaps and support teachers in arts-integrated instruction. Creating a plan to ensure that both academics and arts are incorporated by a teacher that has not had experience in this specific type of education but has educational experience will take finesse and consistency. Applicants' answers to this question will show their ability to gain staff buy-in while creating a sustainable teaching model.

Teaching Staff

Why are you interested in teaching at the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts?

- Applicant reviewers should be looking for key components of answers to include evidence of arts-integrated instruction interest or experience, as well as mission and vision alignment. Interested teachers should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the RioGAFA instructional model and be able to share why their experiences would be instrumental in their success at RioGAFA.

What do you think arts-integration is and how do you plan to incorporate this into your classroom?

- Answering this question will give a baseline to applicant reviewers. This will allow them to see what areas of the RioGAFA definition of arts-integration will need to be presented to the applicant if hired. They will be able to also see what new ideas applicants bring to the table regarding the implementation of arts-integration. By being open to the ideas of interested candidates, RioGAFA holds true to its mission and vision of cultivating creative problem solvers and will strengthen this culture within the school.

What does a typical day in your classroom look like?

- Similar to the previous question, this question will provide reviewers with a baseline of basic understanding of classroom management as well as teaching strategies. This will allow for the instructional support staff and the leadership team to proactively create a plan for professional development for any interested applicants.

What does classroom community mean to you, and what steps would you take to build this in your classroom?

- RioGAFA intends to be a community-oriented school that promotes art. With that, a strong community must be built within the classroom to ensure that this culture of collaboration is promoted and developed. By asking this question, applicant reviewers can continue to formulate individualized professional development strategies to meet the proposed candidate where they are if they are to be employed by RioGAFA.

What do you use to address the academic needs of your students?

- This question will be included to assess if the applicant is thinking in terms of data-driven instruction and responding to student needs based off of this data. Similar to the question asked of the Instructional Support Staff, this will allow the applicant reviewer to begin to assess the needs of the potential hire to proactively create a coaching plan.

Operational Support Staff

What is a team player to you and how do you intend to be a team player for a new charter school?

- Finding team members that are willing to go above and beyond will be crucial for the first few years following opening. Employees must be able and willing to take responsibilities for the benefit of the school and to embrace the mindset that this is what is best for students. Operational Staff should consist of people that have previously demonstrated a team mentality while also strategizing systems to set in place in the organization to create more efficient processes.

If hired, what skill sets do you bring to a brand-new charter school?

- Being that RioGAFA intends to place as many financial resources as possible into the classroom, knowing what strengths Operational Support Staff possess will be vital to knowing what duties can be assigned to the Operational Team, and what training will be needed to fill any gaps.

Give an example of a time when you have received feedback. What feedback did you receive, from whom, and what did you do with it?

- This question will serve to show the reflective capabilities of the candidate. As RioGAFA strives to be continuously improving, the mission and vision of the organization require people to be brought into it with the ability to receive constructive criticism and apply it for the good of the organization.

Following review of resumes and written responses, the Director of Academics and Operations will invite qualified applicants to participate in a formal interview. However, the processes of the instructional staff and the operational staff will be different as shown below:

Figure 72. Formal Interview Process

Leadership Team Candidates

Leadership Candidates will be asked to participate in a more extensive interview process to determine their capabilities and alignment with the RioGAFA vision and mission.

- Candidates will be asked to create a presentation to be presented to the Leadership Team (defined as the Director of Operations, Director of Academics and/or the Assistant Principals) highlighting their career experiences and why they feel that they would be a good fit for the RioGAFA team.
- Candidates will be asked to participate in a sample coaching session of instructional staff or operations staff with members of the Leadership Team.
- Candidates will be asked to review results of either student achievement or operational data to determine a proposed plan to improve the data.

(In the event that the candidates will be filling the roles of either the Director of Operations or Director of Academics, the Governing Board will follow the process for this as outlined in Section II.C.2 The above process will only be used for the hiring of Assistant Principals)

Instructional Support Staff

Instructional staff will be asked to participate in the following protocol:

- Candidates will participate in an observation of a RioGAFA teacher. They will observe a full period of instruction from this teacher. Following this observation, the candidate will be asked to present their takeaways from the instructor and what their coaching plan would be based on the observation. For initial staffing, the instructional candidate will be asked to watch a sample video of a teacher to follow this process.
- Candidates will also be asked to prepare a sample lesson to teach to the interview team. The candidate will be given real-time feedback in alignment with the coaching model from a current Academic Coach.

Teaching Staff

Teachers will be asked to participate in a sample lesson to be delivered in front of the Academic Coach(es). Coaches will provide the lesson to the candidate ahead of time to allow them to prepare. Candidates will be given in-the-moment feedback during their lesson to assess receptivity of the RioGAFA coaching model.

Operational Staff

Operational staff will be asked to participate in a traditional formal interview with members of the Instruction Support Staff, Leadership Team and current Operational Staff.

No later than 30 days following the final day of job posting, qualified candidates will be interviewed, and an offer will be made to the chosen candidate. A table outlining the timeline for hiring the necessary positions to be opened and ongoing recruitment is listed below:

Figure 73. Timeline for Hires

Position Type	Beginning of Recruitment	Deadline of Hire	Responsible Parties
---------------	--------------------------	------------------	---------------------

Leadership Team Positions	October 2021 of the planning year, in April of subsequent years if the position becomes vacant	December 2021 of the planning year, in June of subsequent years if the position becomes vacant	Governing Board for Director of Operations and Director of Academics Directors for Assistant Principals
Instructional Support Team Positions	February 2022 of the planning year, in May of subsequent years if the position becomes vacant	April 2022 of the planning year, in June of the subsequent years if the position becomes vacant	Leadership Team Members
Teaching Staff Positions	May 2022 of the planning year and each May following	July 2022 of the planning year and each July following	Instructional Support and Leadership Team Members
Operational Support Staff	June 2022 of the planning year and each June following	July 2022 of the planning year and each July following	Instructional Support and Leadership Team Members

As can be seen from the table above, RioGAFA is committed to ensuring that all necessary jobs will be staffed by July of the opening year and each subsequent year to allow for all staff to participate in the beginning year professional development. Hiring positions will follow this order to allow for Leadership and Instructional Support staff to create a robust professional development plan for all employees both academic and operational to be implemented before the beginning of the academic year. This will be reviewed each year to fill any vacancies and to guarantee that RioGAFA is always staffed at the beginning of each year. The below table outlines the RioGAFA plan for filling these positions for each academic year. This is to be reviewed each year by the Leadership Team and the Governing Board to determine if any revisions must be made.

Figure 74. Seven Year Staffing Plan

	Plannin g Year	Year 22-23	Year 23-24	Year 24-25	Year 25-26	Year 26-27	Year 27-28	Year 28-29
		176 Student s	308 Student s	484 Student s	660 Student s	836 Student s	968 Student s	1100 Student s
Leadership Team								
Director of Operations	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Academics	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal				1	2	3	3	3

Total Staff		2	2	3	4	5	5	5
Instructional Support Team								
Dean of Students				1	2	3	3	3
Social Worker or Counselor				1	2	3	3	3
Academic Coach				1	2	3	3	3
Total				3	6	9	9	9
Teaching Staff								
Teachers		9	19	28	36	43	46	50
Special Education Teachers		1	5	8	10	12	14	16
Substitutes		1	1	2	2	3	3	3
Educational Assistants		3	6	8	8	10	10	10
Total		14	31	46	56	68	73	79
Operational Support Staff								
Office Manager		1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Human Resources Specialist				1	1	1	1	1
Custodians		1	1	2	2	3	3	3
Front Desk Clerk				1	1	2	2	2
Facilities Manager						1	1	1
School Operations Manager						1	1	1

School Foods Coordinator						1	1	1
Enrollment Specialist				1	1	1	1	1
STARS Coordinator				1	1	1	1	1
Total		2	2	7	7	12	12	12
Comprehensive Total Number of Staff		18	35	59	73	94	99	105

Alignment to Budget

RioGAFA has created a budget that places the majority of funding into the classroom and programs that benefit students. The budget has been created without the Charter School Programs (CSP) Grant in the event that the school is not awarded the funding. Based solely off of State Equalization Guarantee, the RioGAFA budget places priority funding in classrooms as well as transportation and food services to meet the basic needs of students. The RioGAFA budget is based on the projected enrollment each year, starting with an opening enrollment of 176 students. If the school is awarded with CSP funds, RioGAFA will add more teaching positions and establish a reserve of funds to fund contract services from local art organizations to provide instruction to RioGAFA students.

Budgetary Challenges

RioGAFA plans to recruit and hire teachers based on enrollment numbers. As stated, recruitment of teachers will begin each May with the intention that all hires be made by July. Initially, the RioGAFA Leadership Team will make decisions to hire teachers only when there are enough students enrolled to fund that teacher. However, if there are not enough students to generate the amount of funding for a teacher, but it is necessary to hire the teacher because of enrolled students, the Leadership Team will assess where budgetary cuts should be made with the least impact upon the education of RioGAFA students and maximize the resources placed into the classroom.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

<p>✓ Approaches</p>	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an ongoing staffing plan and process for hiring all necessary staff, both for the initial hiring and for any time a position becomes vacant, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties; • Describe how the staffing plan and process will ensure the school is able to hire highly qualified staff, no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year, on an annual basis, and fill all vacancies within a reasonable time; include how the school will recruit and hire highly-qualified licensed staff; • Describe how the staffing plan and process is reasonable and adequate to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/curriculum during the planning year and for all subsequent years; • Describe how the staffing plan and process is aligned with the budget and the school's projected enrollment; and • Describe how the school will make adjustments to the staffing plan in the case that there are differences in projected and actual enrollment.
-------------------------	--

RioGAFA approaches criteria for providing a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive staffing plan. The applicant states that, "80% of the budget will go toward instruction," but the layering of non-academic positions as the school grows cannot be supported by 20% of the remaining budget and it appears that many of those positions will not be categorized as full-time. There are also variances between the narrative and the budget on positions. The narrative states more teachers & special education teachers than have been budgeted in all five years. However, the following positions are not reflected in the budget: Stars Coordinator, Academic Coaches, Enrollment Specialist, Facility Manager and School Foods Coordinator (in this position, there was no function 3100 food services in the budget template).

D.(4) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and compelling** plan for Professional Development that meets state requirements and supports the implementation of the proposed school's educational plan, mission, and performance goals. Ensure that the plan is supported by the budget.

An excellent curriculum is no good without great teachers. Teachers need training in both curriculum and pedagogy. Doug Lemov, in his book *Teach Like a Champion* (2015), Lemov begins with "*Great teaching is an art.*" Great artists, like great teachers, have their own distinctive style, and all have developed their craft through training and practice. One essential quality in all good teachers and leaders is the desire to grow and improve their craft⁶⁶. RioGAFA will provide extensive professional development that will support all teachers in best practices in culturally responsive teaching, curriculum design, instruction, and assessment. Developing teachers with an arts-centered lens will be crucial to the implementation of our charter. Ongoing staff development will be delivered to ensure that arts-integration is a part of curricula areas, intending to provide students with the ability to retain information and create a dynamic learning environment through arts-integration.

We plan to prioritize ongoing and varied opportunities for teachers to improve their instruction. Professional Development will be driven by school-wide, grade level, class level, and teacher level goals and needs. Our core development structure consists of:

Figure 75. Professional Development and Timeline

Professional Development	Timeline	Responsible Parties
Annual Summer Institute	Two Weeks Before School Begins	Director(s) and Instructional Coaches
Weekly Staff Development	Tuesday-Friday 2:30-3:30	Director(s) and Instructional Coaches
Weekly Individualized Coaching for Teachers	2-3 Hours Weekly	Director(s) and Instructional Coaches
Fall/Winter Staff Professional Development	6.5 Hours September 6 November 21-22 January 3-4	Director(s) and Instructional Coaches
External Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Mandated • Arts Related • Curriculum Related 	Ongoing	Various depending on the PD. Director(s) will ensure registration is complete
Mentorship Program for Novice Teachers	Ongoing and through the Individualized Coaching	Year 1: Director(s) and Instructional Coach Year 2 and on: Identified Exemplar Teachers and/or Instructional Coaches

⁶⁶ Lemov, D., Hernandez, J., & Kim, J. (2016). *Teach like a champion*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Book Studies	Twice Yearly	Director(s)
--------------	--------------	-------------

Annual Summer Institute:

All teachers will be required to attend a two-week summer institute to prepare for the new school year. This will be included in staff contracts and will be covered within their salaries. The first week will be onboarding and orientation for teachers to unpack our mission, vision, and values and look at the whole school organization, including arts-integration, Academic, and Assessment calendars. After we unpack the mission, vision, and values, we will focus on RioGAFA classroom and school-wide systems of organization, culture, behavior, and instruction in academic and arts-integration. All training will be grounded in our *Culturally Linguistically Responsive Framework* (as seen in **Figure. Section I.H.3**).

To set up school-wide systems and culture, our teachers will practice common language, nonverbals, and instructional moves, gleaned from Doug Lemov's book *Teach Like a Champion* (2015) to ensure that all staff communicate the exact expectations in similar language and signals. While we know that all teachers have their distinctive styles, great teachers all hold common teaching elements. Common language and nonverbals allow for more effective communication throughout the school. The founding team believes this is essential to creating and stamping our school culture.

The second week of RioGAFA's Summer Institute will be dedicated to curriculum to teachers, including the Scope and Sequences, Interim Assessments, unpacking the first units, arts-integration, and lesson planning. After Year 1, content focuses for Onboarding and Orientation will be further delineated. New teachers and returning teachers will have training based on their individual needs.

Figure 76. *Teach Like a Champion* (Lemov) Strategies to Cover During Summer Institute⁶⁷

Strategy	Criteria For Success
Strong Start Design and establish efficient routines and procedures for students for the first 5 minutes of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students greeted at the door • Do Now in place and students know the system • Attendance taken • Do Now reviewed and check for student understanding
Threshold Meet students at the door, setting expectations before entering the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First interaction is positive and warm • Give clear and precise what to do
Strong Voice Affirm your authority through intentional verbal and nonverbal, especially at moments of needed control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal register • Square up and stand still • Exude quiet power • Use of economy of language • Only one talking
Radar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be seen looking

⁶⁷ Lemov, D., Hernandez, J., & Kim, J. (2016). *Teach like a champion*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Prevent nonproductive behavior by developing your ability to see it when it happens and by subtly reminding students that you are looking	
Warm Strict Be warm and strict at the same time to send the message of high expectations, caring, and respect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caring and nurturing while holding students accountable to expectations

The second week of RioGAFA's Summer Institute will be dedicated to presenting curriculum to teachers, including the Scope and Sequences, Interim Assessments, unpacking the first units, arts-integration, and lesson planning. After Year 1, content priorities for Onboarding and Orientation will be further delineated. New teachers and returning teachers will have training based on their individual needs.

Weekly Staff Development:

Teachers will attend weekly professional development after school Tuesday-Friday 2:30-3:30. Mondays (2:30-3:30) will be dedicated to staff meetings.

- Tuesday: Content Curriculum PD
- Wednesday: Content Curriculum PD
- Thursday: Whole Staff Development
- Friday: Grade Level

Content Curriculum PD: We will plan time twice weekly during which content area teachers can meet to unpack academic content and instructional practices further. The content area instructional coach will focus on professional development, which will be best practices for planning and executing lessons and analyzing student data specific to the core content areas. Besides examining academic content and instructional practices, content area teachers will do a weekly study of student performance. Data will drive professional development topics.

Whole Staff Development: During staff development, all teachers and staff will participate in professional development around a variety of topics including but not limited to:

- Culturally Linguistically Responsive Teaching
- Special Education Laws
- IEP process
- Writing Progress Towards Goals for IEPs
- Instructional Strategies and Interventions for Specific Disabilities
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- Behavior De-Escalation Techniques
- Collecting Data and Entering in Data Dashboard
- Classroom Management
- Parent Communication Systems/Students Information System

Grade Level: Grade level development is dedicated to reviewing cultural and academic patterns within the grade level. We will also focus on managing culture as a team and prioritizing time for our

teachers to plan and discuss students with their colleagues. Teachers will look at student academic and behavior trends.

Throughout the school year, we will continue to build our teacher toolboxes with effective classroom management and instructional strategies and techniques. Teachers will receive training to address topics such as arts-integration in the classroom, addressing specific needs of students, the Multi-Layered System of Support (MLSS) and utilizing MLSS as an intervention, social-emotional learning, best practices for English language learners, and classroom management strategies.

Figure 77. *Teach Like a Champion* (Lemov) Instructional Strategies to Cover Throughout SY⁶⁸

Strategy	Criteria For Success
Positive Framing Guide students to do better work while motivating and inspiring them by using a positive tone to deliver feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live it in the moment • Assume the best • Allow opportunity for students to meet expectations • Narrate the positive
Check for Understanding Stopping to check for clear understanding before moving on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pause to ask questions for students to demonstrate understanding
Culture of Error Creating an environment where students feel safe making and discussing mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect error • Plan for error • Communicate using positive language
Cold/Warm/Batch Call Call on students regardless of their hand being raised After monitoring student work, let student(s) know you will be calling on them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active monitoring during independent work • Data informed
Least Invasive Interventions Maximize teaching time and minimize “drama” by using the subtlest and least invasive tactic possible to correct off task students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonverbal or quiet one on one interaction with student • Anonymous interaction (example: “Waiting on one”) • Private Individual Precise Praise
Turn and Talk Encourage students to better formulate their thoughts by better formulating their thoughts by including short, contained paired discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear concise directions • Pairs set • Clear cue in • Clear cue out
Habits of Discussion Habits to make discussion more productive and shifting the lift to students to lead the discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice • Tracking the speaker

⁶⁸ Lemov, D., Hernandez, J., & Kim, J. (2016). *Teach like a champion*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Follow up prompting
- Revoicing
- Agree/Disagree with evidence
- Resonating/Hand signals

Weekly Individualized Teacher Coaching:

We believe that students deserve our best. Teachers, leaders, or team members will receive high-quality one-on-one coaching, support, and professional development from the founding team that believes in educator success. The best assessments, curriculum, and data analysis mean nothing unless teaching improves (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2019). Improved teaching equals improved student learning. Founder, Michele Platis, has been through Relay's National Principal Academy Fellowship (NPAF), a graduate school program dedicated to training principals to become instructional leaders of their schools and specifically coach teachers using the Get Better Faster format. Using the Get Better Faster format, *See It, Name It, Do It*, RioGAFA will include weekly Individualized Professional Development through observation feedback meetings, intellectual preparation on lessons, and weekly data meetings. It lasts one year and is worth 12 graduate school credits. Each teacher will have about 2.5 hours of individualized PD weekly with almost 100 hours of personalized professional development a year. See **Figure 78** for an example.

Figure 78. Sample of Weekly Individualized Professional Development⁶⁹

Day of the Week	Administrator/Instructional Coach
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly walkthrough (these are 5-minute classroom pop-in's)
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe the teacher highlighting strengths and identifying the highest leverage action step. • We are looking to create an action step for a teacher that illustrates what they need to improve and exactly how they are to improve in that area with step-by-step instructions. Action steps will be observable/practicable, highest leverage (most important), and bite sized (able to be accomplished in about a week)
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50-minute Weekly Observation Feedback with teacher that was observed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan See It, Name It, Do It format ○ Walk the teacher through what the coach saw in the observation. ○ Lead the teacher on how they will close the gap between what they saw and what they are doing in order to name their action step. ○ Plan how to implement this action step into the lesson by changing the lesson or writing scripts. ○ Practice ○ Set up time to observe
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20–30-minute teacher observation to observe action step

⁶⁹ Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2016). *Get better faster: A 90-day plan for coaching new teachers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Give hip to hip feedback as necessary. ○ Collect exit tickets, assessment or artist statements
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 70-minute weekly data meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See It, Name It, Do It format ○ Look at work collected ○ Identify the gap in student work ○ Identify the teacher move to fix the gap ○ Create reteach based on upcoming lesson ○ Practice ○ Schedule time to observe reteach

Fall/Winter Staff Professional Development:

RioGAFA has designated five extra days for teacher professional development in the school calendar. Staff contracts include the dates to cover staffing expenses within salaries. Professional development will be centered around curriculum needs, instructional strategies, and data that will drive instruction. Three weeks before the professional development, leadership will look at student and teacher data to decide what will be covered during that time.

External Professional Development:

External professional opportunities will include the New Mexico Public Education Department's (NM PED) training, curriculum-related training, arts-integrated professional development, and arts organization training provided. The NM PED provides various professional development training for teachers and school leaders throughout the school year, including the required LETRS training. RioGAFA will participate in required training and those aligned with our goals, identified needs, areas of development and growth for staff, and ability to attend while maintaining coverage of school-based classrooms and needs. Most NM PED training is of no cost or low cost.

As funds are available, RioGAFA will also send leadership and select teaching staff to visit and learn from other arts-integrated schools around the nation. During the planning year, the Director(s) will identify and reach out to the school(s) with thriving arts-integrated programs to create partnerships with schools.

Additionally, RioGAFA will fund all teacher memberships of their arts educator professional organization of choice. Professional organizations often offer no cost and low-cost professional development to members. RioGAFA will build financial support into the budget and calendar for teachers to attend arts education professional development. Teachers will rotate attending the New Mexico Fine Arts Education Act (FAEA) Winter Meeting held each February.

Lastly, external professional development will include local and national training to align with RioGAFA's mission, vision, and educational program. The training may include but are not limited to workshops from Relay Graduate School of Education and the Kennedy Center and curriculum-focused professional development. Associated costs for external professional development will include travel, per diem, and cost of training programs.

Mentorship Program for Novice Teachers:

First-year teachers can become overwhelmed and feel isolated during their first year in teaching. There is a large amount of responsibility landing on teachers that even seasoned teachers struggle with every year. First-year teachers who have effective support from a mentor teacher are more likely to be retained. Mentor teachers can provide invaluable support for new teachers. Mentors will be experienced, patient, knowledgeable veteran teachers or coaches selected to guide new teachers. Mentors will help new teachers adapt to the school culture and norms. They will also guide the new teachers with curriculum, teaching strategies, data, and communication skills.

Per New Mexico administrative code 6.60.10.8 NMAC - N "Requirements for Mentorship Programs," all beginning teachers at RioGAFA will participate in our Novice Teacher Mentoring Program. During Year 1, the Director(s) will mentor all staff as the school's processes and culture will be developed in the beginning stages. The new teacher mentor process will be developed during Year 1 and will formally begin in year 2. During Year 1, the Director(s) will identify highly effective, "Innovating" (per Evaluate NM) teachers and begin training and building capacity to be a mentor teacher/coach.

Mentors/Coaches will receive structured and research-based training, including the development and needs of beginning teachers, developing mentorship relationships, the observation feedback process, and best practices in working with first-year teachers. The Director of Academics will manage mentor training and general oversight of RioGAFA's Novice Teacher Mentoring Program. Mentors will receive a stipend for their services and support.

The Director of Academics will look for the following qualifications when identifying mentors/coaches:

- Experienced teacher (particularly in arts-integration and/or at RioGAFA)
- History of achieving strong student results.
- Strong interpersonal skills and a record of working well in teams
- Willingness to support another teacher's growth.
- Demonstrated commitment to RioGAFA's mission, vision, and values.

During Year 1 the Director of Academics will be the Instructional Coach and will be solely responsible for the mentorship of novice teachers until other experienced teachers are identified.

Book Studies:

Throughout the year, the Director(s) will choose a topic for leadership, teachers, and staff relevant to teaching and learning to gain a deeper understanding of research-based practices. Book studies could be the whole school or more individualized based on teachers and staff's needs. Books that the founding team is currently looking at are:

- *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov - whole school.
- *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* by Zaretta Hammond - whole school
- *Get Better Faster* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo - Leadership
- *The Innovator's Mindset: Empower Learning, Unleash Talent, and Lead a Culture of Creativity* by George Couros - Teachers and Leadership
- *The Writing Revolution* by Judith C Hochman and Natalie Wexler - Leadership
- *Arts Integration: Teaching Subject Matter Through the Arts in Multicultural Settings* by Merry Goldberg

Professional Development Plan Budget Support

The RioGAFA budget will allocate funds each year for professional development. The amounts allocated in the general fund range from \$3,000 in Year 1 up to \$22,000 by Year 5 (Function 1000,

Object 53330) We will apply for the Charter School Program (CSP) funds as a new charter. If received, we will receive up to \$300,000 in the planning year, \$3,000 in Year 1, and \$3,000 in Year 2 to be used for staff training (Fund 24146, Function 1000, Object 5330). There will be Title II funds in years 2 through 5 for teacher training as well, a portion of which will be used to support the new teacher mentoring program (Fund 24154, Function 1000, Object 51300).

Professional Development Plan Support for Mission and Goals

RioGAFA's professional development plan supports our mission to educate all students through learning to problem solve and think with creativity through an arts-integration curriculum. Our professional development plan and mentorship program are fully supported by the 5-year budget plan (**Appendix G**), represented in Function: 1000, Object: 53330. Furthermore, our team's broad set of knowledge and skills will be necessary for accomplishing the aggressive targets that we have set for annual student achievement. As we work towards implementing our educational plan and later reflect upon our progress, we will make the additions and adjustments necessary to strengthen our PD plan. The goal is to ensure that our dedicated team receives the skills and support required to educate creative learners with the first academically rigorous, arts-integrated, and arts-enhanced education accessible to all students to provide learning in both the arts and through the arts.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an annual professional development plan with action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the plan meets state requirements and rules; and Describe how the school will ensure professional development time is not used for routine staff meetings. Identify a mentorship plan for novice teachers, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs that meets the requirements of PED rules; and Describe how the annual professional development plan and the mentorship plan for novice teachers ensure the following occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are supported by the budget support the implementation of the proposed school's educational plan, mission, and performance goals not only address required annual trainings, but are also tailored to address school- and teacher-specific professional development needs.

RioGAFA meets criteria for developing a professional development plan. However, the budget explanation should provide alternative ways of paying for PD for staff; it is also unclear if the budget will also cover teacher salaries beyond the extended learning school year.

E. Employees.

E. **Clearly describe** the employer/employee relationship and provide **clear terms** and conditions of employment for all classes of employees (administration, professional staff, and administrative staff). Include benefits, work schedules, annual number of contract days, pay terms. Please offer a **complete and appropriate explanation of** how you will address employees' recognized representatives.

The mission and vision of The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will be the driving force when making decisions regarding staffing and strategic hiring of positions. It is essential that people be brought into the organization committed to the mission and vision and have ideas to push further progress towards reaching the school goals. A comprehensive personnel handbook will be adopted by the Governing Board and distributed to staff members. The handbook will cover all necessary topics according to the School Personnel Act, New Mexico State Statute, and the New Mexico Administrative Code. Below are the conditions of employment for all classes of employment:

- Employment Classes

RioGAFA employees will be divided into the following classes:

- Full-time
 - A full-time employee of RioGAFA works at least 32 hours a week and is eligible to enroll in the benefits program.
- Part-time
 - A part-time employee of RioGAFA works less than 32 hours a week and is not eligible to enroll in the benefits program.
- Certified Employees
 - Certified employees will hold the specific license required by the Public Education Department to continue employment in a particular position such as teaching.
- Non-Certified Employees
 - Positions will be filled with people that do not require a license to meet the requirements of employment for RioGAFA.
- Exempt Employees
 - In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), these employees are not eligible to be paid overtime.
- Non-Exempt Employees
 - In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), these employees are eligible to be paid overtime.
- Consultant or Contract Employees
 - These are positions that are agreed upon between the contractor and RioGAFA. These positions are not eligible for the benefits program as they are not considered employees of RioGAFA.
- Administration/Leadership Team Positions
 - Administrators and members of the Leadership Team will be employed as full-time, certified, exempt employees.
- Professional Staff
 - Members of the Instructional Support Team and the Teaching Staff will be employed as full-time, certified, exempt employees.
- Administrative Staff
 - Members of the Operational Team may be employed as either full-time or part-time employees. They will be considered non-certified and exempt employees.

- Requirements for Employment

Basic requirements for all employees will be as follows:

- Background Check
- Fingerprints
- Signature of Employee Contract
- Three References

Additionally, Members of the Leadership Team and the Instructional Support Team will be required to have:

- Bachelor's or Master's Degree
- Proof of Teaching Licensure
- Submission and Verification of College Transcripts

- Major Conditions of Employment

In addition to the New Mexico Code of Ethical Responsibility of the Education Profession, a final list of conditions of employment will be adopted by the Governing Board and placed in the Personnel Handbook to be distributed to each new staff member and to be reviewed annually.⁷⁰

- Benefits

RioGAFA intends to provide all required benefits to employees, including but not limited to the following:

- Health Insurance
- Life Insurance
- New Mexico Retirement Plan
- Workers' Compensation
- Leave Benefits such as Leave of Absence.
- Annual Leave
- Family and Medical Leave Policy (FMLA)
- Bereavement Leave

- Work Schedules

RioGAFA staff will be asked to report to the building by 8:15 and stay until 3:45. Some staff may be required to stay after being employed as an instructor for the Artistry Block. The number of contract days for all staff categories can be seen below:

- Leadership Team Members - 225 Contract Days
- Instructional Support Team Members - 220 Contract Days
- Teaching Staff Team Members - 215 Contract Days

⁷⁰ Statutes, codes, and regulations. (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://casetext.com/regulation/new-mexico-administrative-code/title-6-primary-and-secondary-education/chapter-60-school-personnel-general-provisions/part-9-licensure-requirements-code-of-ethical-responsibility-of-the-education-profession/section-66099-standards-of-professional-conduct>

- Operational Support Team Members - 220 Contract Days
- Pay Terms and Scales

Figure 79. Pay Terms and Scales

Experience	Level I				
	BA	BA+15	BA+45 / MA	MA+15	MA+45
0	\$ 41,500	\$ 41,600	\$ 41,700	\$ 41,800	\$ 41,900
1	\$ 41,550	\$ 41,650	\$ 41,750	\$ 41,850	\$ 41,950
2	\$ 41,600	\$ 41,700	\$ 41,800	\$ 41,900	\$ 42,000
3	\$ 41,650	\$ 41,750	\$ 41,850	\$ 41,950	\$ 42,050
4	\$ 41,700	\$ 41,800	\$ 41,900	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,100
5	\$ 41,750	\$ 41,850	\$ 41,950	\$ 42,050	\$ 42,150
6	\$ 41,800	\$ 41,900	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,100	\$ 42,200
7	\$ 41,850	\$ 41,950	\$ 42,050	\$ 42,150	\$ 42,250
8	\$ 41,900	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,100	\$ 42,200	\$ 42,300
9	\$ 41,950	\$ 42,050	\$ 42,150	\$ 42,250	\$ 42,350
10	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,100	\$ 42,200	\$ 42,300	\$ 42,400
11	\$ 42,050	\$ 42,150	\$ 42,250	\$ 42,350	\$ 42,450
12	\$ 42,100	\$ 42,200	\$ 42,300	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,500
13	\$ 42,150	\$ 42,250	\$ 42,350	\$ 42,450	\$ 42,550
14	\$ 42,200	\$ 42,300	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,600
15	\$ 42,250	\$ 42,350	\$ 42,450	\$ 42,550	\$ 42,650
16	\$ 42,300	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,600	\$ 42,700
17	\$ 42,350	\$ 42,450	\$ 42,550	\$ 42,650	\$ 42,750
18	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,600	\$ 42,700	\$ 42,800
19	\$ 42,450	\$ 42,550	\$ 42,650	\$ 42,750	\$ 42,850
20	\$ 42,500	\$ 42,600	\$ 42,700	\$ 42,800	\$ 42,900
21	\$ 42,550	\$ 42,650	\$ 42,750	\$ 42,850	\$ 42,950
22	\$ 42,600	\$ 42,700	\$ 42,800	\$ 42,900	\$ 43,000
23	\$ 42,650	\$ 42,750	\$ 42,850	\$ 42,950	\$ 43,050
24	\$ 42,700	\$ 42,800	\$ 42,900	\$ 43,000	\$ 43,100
25	\$ 42,750	\$ 42,850	\$ 42,950	\$ 43,050	\$ 43,150
26	\$ 42,800	\$ 42,900	\$ 43,000	\$ 43,100	\$ 43,200
27	\$ 42,850	\$ 42,950	\$ 43,050	\$ 43,150	\$ 43,250
28	\$ 42,900	\$ 43,000	\$ 43,100	\$ 43,200	\$ 43,300
29	\$ 42,950	\$ 43,050	\$ 43,150	\$ 43,250	\$ 43,350
30	\$ 43,000	\$ 43,100	\$ 43,200	\$ 43,300	\$ 43,400

LEVEL II					
Experience	BA	BA+15	BA+45 / MA	MA+15	MA+45
0					
1					
2					
3	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,100	\$ 51,200	\$ 51,300	\$ 51,400
4	\$ 51,100	\$ 51,200	\$ 51,300	\$ 51,400	\$ 51,500
5	\$ 51,200	\$ 51,300	\$ 51,400	\$ 51,500	\$ 51,600
6	\$ 51,300	\$ 51,400	\$ 51,500	\$ 51,600	\$ 51,700
7	\$ 51,400	\$ 51,500	\$ 51,600	\$ 51,700	\$ 51,800
8	\$ 51,500	\$ 51,600	\$ 51,700	\$ 51,800	\$ 51,900
9	\$ 51,600	\$ 51,700	\$ 51,800	\$ 51,900	\$ 52,000
10	\$ 51,700	\$ 51,800	\$ 51,900	\$ 52,000	\$ 52,100
11	\$ 51,800	\$ 51,900	\$ 52,000	\$ 52,100	\$ 52,200
12	\$ 51,900	\$ 52,000	\$ 52,100	\$ 52,200	\$ 52,300
13	\$ 52,000	\$ 52,100	\$ 52,200	\$ 52,300	\$ 52,400
14	\$ 52,100	\$ 52,200	\$ 52,300	\$ 52,400	\$ 52,500
15	\$ 52,200	\$ 52,300	\$ 52,400	\$ 52,500	\$ 52,600
16	\$ 52,300	\$ 52,400	\$ 52,500	\$ 52,600	\$ 52,700
17	\$ 52,400	\$ 52,500	\$ 52,600	\$ 52,700	\$ 52,800
18	\$ 52,500	\$ 52,600	\$ 52,700	\$ 52,800	\$ 52,900
19	\$ 52,600	\$ 52,700	\$ 52,800	\$ 52,900	\$ 53,000
20	\$ 52,700	\$ 52,800	\$ 52,900	\$ 53,000	\$ 53,100
21	\$ 52,800	\$ 52,900	\$ 53,000	\$ 53,100	\$ 53,200
22	\$ 52,900	\$ 53,000	\$ 53,100	\$ 53,200	\$ 53,300
23	\$ 53,000	\$ 53,100	\$ 53,200	\$ 53,300	\$ 53,400
24	\$ 53,100	\$ 53,200	\$ 53,300	\$ 53,400	\$ 53,500
25	\$ 53,200	\$ 53,300	\$ 53,400	\$ 53,500	\$ 53,600
26	\$ 53,300	\$ 53,400	\$ 53,500	\$ 53,600	\$ 53,700
27	\$ 53,400	\$ 53,500	\$ 53,600	\$ 53,700	\$ 53,800
28	\$ 53,500	\$ 53,600	\$ 53,700	\$ 53,800	\$ 53,900
29	\$ 53,600	\$ 53,700	\$ 53,800	\$ 53,900	\$ 54,000
30	\$ 53,700	\$ 53,800	\$ 53,900	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,100

LEVEL III				
Experience	BA+15	BA+45 / MA	MA+15	MA+45
0				
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6	\$ 61,000	\$ 61,100	\$ 61,200	\$ 61,300
7	\$ 61,150	\$ 61,250	\$ 61,350	\$ 61,450
8	\$ 61,300	\$ 61,400	\$ 61,500	\$ 61,600
9	\$ 61,450	\$ 61,550	\$ 61,650	\$ 61,750
10	\$ 61,600	\$ 61,700	\$ 61,800	\$ 61,900
11	\$ 61,750	\$ 61,850	\$ 61,950	\$ 62,050
12	\$ 61,900	\$ 62,000	\$ 62,100	\$ 62,200
13	\$ 62,050	\$ 62,150	\$ 62,250	\$ 62,350
14	\$ 62,200	\$ 62,300	\$ 62,400	\$ 62,500
15	\$ 62,350	\$ 62,450	\$ 62,550	\$ 62,650
16	\$ 62,500	\$ 62,600	\$ 62,700	\$ 62,800
17	\$ 62,650	\$ 62,750	\$ 62,850	\$ 62,950
18	\$ 62,800	\$ 62,900	\$ 63,000	\$ 63,100
19	\$ 62,950	\$ 63,050	\$ 63,150	\$ 63,250
20	\$ 63,100	\$ 63,200	\$ 63,300	\$ 63,400
21	\$ 63,250	\$ 63,350	\$ 63,450	\$ 63,550
22	\$ 63,400	\$ 63,500	\$ 63,600	\$ 63,700
23	\$ 63,550	\$ 63,650	\$ 63,750	\$ 63,850
24	\$ 63,700	\$ 63,800	\$ 63,900	\$ 64,000
25	\$ 63,850	\$ 63,950	\$ 64,050	\$ 64,150
26	\$ 64,000	\$ 64,100	\$ 64,200	\$ 64,300
27	\$ 64,150	\$ 64,250	\$ 64,350	\$ 64,450
28	\$ 64,300	\$ 64,400	\$ 64,500	\$ 64,600
29	\$ 64,450	\$ 64,550	\$ 64,650	\$ 64,750
30	\$ 64,600	\$ 64,700	\$ 64,800	\$ 64,900

- Annual Contract Days
Leave
 - Although the RioGAFA team emphasizes consistently being at work and providing the best instruction and environment for students always, we are aware that there are factors that may require staff members to take leave. In particular, careful attention will be taken to sick days and sick leave as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety of the RioGAFA staff and students. Our proposed leave categories can be seen below:
 - Sick Leave - Staff members will accrue sick leave throughout the year rather than be awarded this at contract signing. Accrual will equal one sick day per month, with a maximum of 12 days a year for full-time employees and work 12 months a year. Unused leave will roll over into the following year of employment.
 - Personal Leave - All staff members will receive two personal days of leave each year. Personal days will be awarded to employees

immediately following contract signature and will not be rolled over into any subsequent years of employment.

- FMLA Leave - Full-time staff members that have 90 days of continuous employment in their positions will be eligible for FMLA Leave for up to 12 weeks. Eligibility for FMLA will be determined by the United States Department of Labor's criteria.⁷¹
- Bereavement Leave - RioGAFA employees are eligible to access three days of bereavement leave in the event of an immediate family member (defined as current spouse, parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, step-parent-in-law, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, sibling, step-siblings, current domestic partner, child of current domestic partner, or any other relative living in the current household) passing.
- Jury Duty - For up to two weeks of paid leave, RioGAFA employees will have access to the leave for purposes of jury duty or if subpoenaed to testify in a legal case with appropriate documentation.
- Professional Leave - RioGAFA employees will be able to use professional leave at the discretion of the Director(s). This leave may be used for professional development purposes pertaining to the employee's position.
- Military Leave - RioGAFA will allow employees who serve in the United States military organizations to take off up to 15 days of paid leave to fulfill any obligation necessary to these commitments.
- Voting Leave - RioGAFA will allow employees a maximum of two hours on voting days to participate in voter duties. This leave will be dependent on positions and availability.
- Renewal/Termination of Contracts
 - Recontracting
 - In accordance with the New Mexico Administrative Code, employees that will be offered a contract renewal will be notified fifteen days before the last day of the school year and will have fifteen days after the offer to accept.
 - Contract Terminations
 - In accordance with the New Mexico Administrative Code, RioGAFA contracts are based on a fiscal year, and each contract should be signed two days prior to the first day of the new school year. Employees that will not have their contracts renewed will be notified before the last day of the school year or the existing contract.
 - Employees with less than two years of employment at RioGAFA may have their contract terminated for any sufficient rationale. These employees will be given a written explanation of non-renewal within ten days if they request such information.
 - Employees with more than two years of employment at RioGAFA must be given justification for their termination, which could include

⁷¹ Family and Medical Leave (FMLA). (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/benefits-leave/fmla>
New Mexico Public Education Commission, approved January 15, 2021

insufficient performance or failure to meet job responsibilities.
Non-renewal must not infringe upon the employee's civil or constitutional rights.

Discharging Employees

- RioGAFA intends to avoid discharging employees by imploring the use of improvement plans and a robust coaching model.
- In accordance with the New Mexico Administrative Code, RioGAFA may discharge an employee prior to the end of their contract. If an employee is discharged, just cause must be given, which should be based upon lack of performance or follow-through on outlined responsibilities. The rationale given to the employee must not infringe upon the employee's civil or constitutional rights.
- Employees that have been discharged may request a hearing that will occur within 30 days of discharge. The Governing Board will reach a decision and communicate this to the employee within ten days of the hearing, and this decision will be considered final.

- Employee Discipline⁷²

Employee discipline will be handled on a case-to-case basis. RioGAFA intends to create a culture of excellence and professionalism in all of its employees. The following list of actions that elicit discipline will be reviewed and adopted with additional edits made by the RioGAFA Governing Board and distributed to all staff:

- Violation of any RioGAFA procedures
- Violation of RioGAFA safety procedures or rules
- Careless action that places another staff or student in danger
- Intoxication or under the influence of any controlled substance in any quantity while on campus premises or a RioGAFA sponsored event
 - Exceptions would be medications prescribed by a physician to the employee in which these medications would not impair work performance.
- Possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, explosives, and weapons on campus premises or at any location where RioGAFA sponsored students are participating in an event.
- Engaging in criminal conduct, acts of violence, or making threats of violence towards anyone on campus premises or at any location where RioGAFA sponsored students are participating in an event.
- Insubordination or refusing to obey reasonable instructions or directives given to an employee by their supervisor while at work.

⁷² Statutes, codes, and regulations. (2021, May 4). Retrieved May 10, 2021, from <https://casetext.com/regulation/new-mexico-administrative-code/title-6-primary-and-secondary-education/chapter-60-school-personnel-general-provisions/part-9-licensure-requirements-code-of-ethical-responsibility-of-the-education-profession/section-66099-standards-of-professional-conduct>

- Intentional or negligence leading to the destruction of any RioGAFA property or that of other employees or visitors.
 - Dishonesty, falsification, or misrepresentation on an application for employment
 - Dishonesty regarding sick leave or reason for a leave of absence
 - Unauthorized alteration of RioGAFA student records
 - Engagement in behavior that creates a lack of harmony that interferes with another employee's ability to perform their responsibilities
 - Unsatisfactory work or failure to meet productivity standards.
 - Engagement in any type of harassment or harassing behavior
 - Not using work time appropriately
 - Failure to report to work on time and prepared.
 - Failure to report an absence.
 - Failure to report immediately to the proper personnel if a hindrance is preventing them from arriving at work on time.
 - Use of inappropriate language or any disorderly/antagonistic conduct directed toward a supervisor, employee, parent, or student.
- Discipline Procedure

RioGAFA intends to be an organization that uses a progressive discipline model to allow staff to grow in their positions and correct any issues that may arise. The following methods may be used by managerial staff in disciplinary matters:

 - Verbal warnings
 - Written warnings
 - Suspensions
 - Discharge/Termination
 - Administrative Leave (With or without pay)

Although the intention is to be progressive, it will be at the discretion of the Director of Academics and the Director of Operations to follow this model depending on the employee's action. In cases such as this, a suspension or administrative leave period of the employee may be implemented.
- Grievances

Definitions

 - Grievant - refers to the employee personally and directly affected by the condition that he/she/they are trying to seek resolution.
 - Grievance - the allegation by a RioGAFA employee that the treatment he/she/they received from a supervisor is unfair.
 - Resolution - a proposed written decision by the appropriate administrator(s) or Governing Board in response to the grievance.

The RioGAFA Governing Board will take every grievance seriously and seek to handle it appropriately and timely. Although the goal will be to avoid any specific grievance, the below procedure is designed to address the employee's needs by submitting the grievance by providing a communication line between both parties to address the issue. The process is outlined below:

- If the concern or issue is between two employees:
 - Employees will be encouraged to speak to each other to resolve matters.
 - If a meeting has occurred between the two employees and a resolution is not met, the employees may elicit the intervention of a supervisor to facilitate a mediation between the two employees.
 - In this mediation, the supervisor will create a written resolution that will be sent to each involved party outlining the decision of the supervisor and any required action for either employee and shall be considered final.
- If the concern or issue is between an employee and the Director(s):
 - Employees will be encouraged to approach the Director(s) to address their concerns professionally and collaboratively.
 - If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of this meeting, a written grievance must be sent by the employee to their supervisor addressing the issue or concern within ten business days of the alleged action.
 - Within five business days after submission, the Director(s) should respond in writing or verbally.
 - If the grievant is not satisfied with the Director's response, they should report this to the Governing Board in written form.
 - The Governing Board will have 15 business days to respond in writing to the grievant. The decision reached by the Governing Board shall be considered final.
 - Any form of retaliation against the grievant will be considered unacceptable.
- Unions

RioGAFA employees will not be covered under a collective bargaining agreement and do not intend to create one. However, if one is certified, the RioGAFA Governing Board will negotiate a collective bargaining agreement in good faith guided by the Public Employee Labor Relations Act.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all primary classes of employees the school will employ (e.g., administrative, professional, term, contract); • Identify the primary conditions of employment for each class of employees, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benefits and pay terms ○ Daily work schedules and annual work calendars ○ Major conditions of employment ○ Employee conflict and grievance resolution processes ○ Employee discipline, re-contracting, and contract termination processes; and • Explain how the school, through the governing body and head administrator, will address employee unions and other school-specific employee representatives.
--------------	--

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for clearly describing the employer/employee relationship and providing clear terms and conditions of employment for all classes of employees. The applicants need to discern between which employees receive contracts and those that are employed through a memorandum of employment.

The applicants state that, "employees working less than 32 hours per week are part-time and not eligible for benefits." However, NMPSIA statute states that all employees working 20 or more hours per week are eligible for insurance benefits. ERB and RHC requires that all employees that are classified as .25FTE or more participate in the retirement program. Furthermore, RioGAFA intends to provide all required benefits to employees, including but not limited to the following:

Health Insurance , Life Insurance, New Mexico Retirement Plan

Workers' Compensation. The statement "intends to provide" is confusing and suggestions that they have an option to provide these benefits, which are mandatory. They should make it explicitly clear in their application which benefits are mandatory. The application also states that full time staff members will be eligible for FMLA. When in fact, FMLA is not available until there is an equivalent of 50 FTE employees. The school can, at its discretion, create a plan equivalent to FMLA when there are less than 50 FTE. RioGAFA should also note that an EA's tenure begins after one year of employment, which is not reflected in this section's narrative. Staff time on campus is also unclear because, according to their application, staff are asked to report to the building by 8:15 a.m. and stay until 3:45 p.m. However, their calendar states that school hours end at 4:45 p.m.

F. Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance.

F. Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan that describes school structures that will provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the proposed school. The plan includes structures to facilitate **parental involvement that will help to advance** the proposed school's mission.

Please note that charter schools *may not require* community or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting or not accepting a student.

Creating opportunities for engagement for all types of stakeholders will be a huge priority for RioGAFA. It is necessary to provide opportunities for participation and input of all the following groups of stakeholders. Creating buy-in from the following groups will create sustainability in people who are aware and believe in the school's mission and vision and want to see it progress and reach its goals.

- **Parental Input**

- End-of-Year Survey

- At the end of each academic year, a survey will be sent out to the parents and guardians, asking for feedback regarding their experience during the year. The survey will be sent as a Google Form to maximize accessibility and return rates. The survey will be brief but will ask direct questions to include the following:
 - On a scale of 1-4, how would you rate your student's academic experience at the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts?
 - On a scale of 1-4, how would you rate your student's art experience at the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts?
 - What is something that is going well at RioGAFA that you would like the school to continue doing? Why?
 - What is something that you would like the RioGAFA Leadership Team to consider changing? Why?

- Student-Led Conference Survey

- Twice a year, the RioGAFA team will ask parents to participate in student-led conferences led entirely by students. We plan to make these conferences remote to allow for maximum participation from parents. In the rare situation that remote access is not possible for a parent, we will offer an opportunity for an in-person meeting. A brief survey will be given at each of the conferences to improve the value of the conference to parents, see areas for improvement and gain data on how parents are feeling about their students' successes or struggles. The following questions will be asked:
 - On a scale of 1-4, how would you rate the value of this parent/teacher conference?
 - On a scale of 1-4, how much did you learn about your student's academic successes at this conference?
 - On a scale of 1-4, how much did you learn about your student's artistic successes at this conference?
 - What feedback do you have to make these conferences better and more valuable?

- **Parental/Guardian Participation**

- Family Nights
 - Family Nights will be a regular occurrence at RioGAFA. Family Nights will range from events that involve academics, arts, and connection to other parents. These nights will serve as opportunities to create a conversation between RioGAFA families and build a collaboration culture. RioGAFA plans to have these nights around holidays to provide fun and engaging activities for students to form connections. Families can feel welcome to connect with school staff and leadership in an informal and fun environment. Initially, RioGAFA plans to begin an annual Fall Festival, Winter Showcase, and a Spring Showcase to serve as family nights to demonstrate students' successes in the arts. For academics, RioGAFA plans to facilitate nights around Literacy that demonstrate the arts-integrated model.
- Curriculum Nights
 - Curriculum Nights will be centered around culminating projects that students have completed to present to their families. These nights will incorporate a specific content area such as math or reading and demonstrate student mastery by culminating learning into an artistic display of knowledge. These nights will be based around the completion of units and will focus on a particular grade level.
- Performances
 - Student performances will be a vital part of the RioGAFA model and will serve as summative assessments for the fine arts classes for all students. These will happen at least twice a year with the Winter and Spring Showcases. These performances will highlight student work and allow parents to see their student's progress towards achieving the mission and vision set in place by RioGAFA.
- Student-Led Conferences
 - Parents/guardians will be asked to participate in student-led conferences twice a year. These will occur during the Fall and Spring semesters and will be led by students to review their successes, interim assessment data, progress compared to their beginning scores, and demonstrate art-integration benchmarks. These conferences will engage parents in the school's mission and vision and allow the Leadership Team to be transparent regarding student data.
- Senior Showcase
 - The Senior Showcase will be the final requirement for graduation. Seniors must demonstrate their focus of interest in the fine arts field to be eligible for graduation. The Senior Showcase will be a huge event for RioGAFA, and parents will be strongly encouraged to attend.

- **Professional Educator Input**

- Survey
 - As part of the Director and Governing Board evaluations, teachers will be asked to provide feedback on the performance of both. By asking teachers to participate in this survey, a unique perspective will be seen to ensure that the

organization's cornerstone is heard, and their perspective is considered when making decisions to help drive the mission and vision.

- **Professional Educator Participation**

- Leadership Meetings
 - Teachers will be encouraged to inquire about participation in leadership meetings. RioGAFA intends to create a talent pipeline for teachers to become leaders of the school and maintain the integrity of the progress towards the mission and vision. Teachers will be asked to provide input in these meetings to continuously push the progression of the mission and vision of RioGAFA. Leadership meetings will occur weekly and will include all Leadership and Instructional Support Staff Members. These meetings will review progress towards academic goals based on interim assessments and cover integrating arts into curricula and assessing if students have achieved mastery of arts benchmarks.
- Grade Level Meetings
 - Grade level meetings will be a weekly occurrence that will be a part of the weekly professional development plan. During these meetings, teachers will discuss matters involving student discipline and progress in classes. Teachers will be asked to come up with individual interventions and plans for students to be successful. Plans will be presented to their respective Instructional Coach, and they will see to the implementation and follow up of these plans. Each grade level will have a lead teacher who will take ownership of their grade levels and be responsible for tracking data and creating different strategies to support students. These strategies will be related to the Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS) document presented by the Public Education Department.⁷³

- **Community Input**

- Surveys
 - Community members will also have the opportunity to participate in the evaluations of the Directors and the Governing Board. It is essential that the RioGAFA community members and stakeholders feel included and given the opportunity to have their voices heard. By giving them the opportunity to have input in the evaluation of the leadership of the organization, RioGAFA can guarantee that the community is brought into the mission and vision and involved with its progression. Community members will be defined as parents, teachers, students, and partners in the community.

- **Community Participation**

- Governing Board Meetings
 - Per the Open Meetings Act, community members will have the opportunity to view the Governing Board Agendas prior to the meeting and there will be a specified amount of time allotted in the board meeting for public comment. Community members will be allowed to give feedback, share ideas and suggest opportunities for improvement.

⁷³ Martinez, S., Russell, B., PhD, Baca, G., Hopper, D., & Vasquez, Y. (2020). Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS) 2020 [Pdf]. Santa Fe: NMPED.

- Partnerships
 - Promoting the art community in Albuquerque is a priority to the RioGAFA team. The Leadership Members will actively recruit new organizations to be a part of implementing the mission and vision. Our initial focus will intentionally be on those organizations that have historically supported arts and arts programs. Still, we will ensure that all businesses, nonprofits, and organizations surrounding the school will be asked to be involved in the progression of RioGAFA.
- Performances
 - Similar to the showcases previously presented, performances will also be hosted for community artists to showcase their work. RioGAFA hopes to serve as a community hub for the arts and to create that, we hope to have our facility used to help promote upcoming artists. Ideally, these artists would partner with RioGAFA students to provide instruction, but the community should feel free to approach the Leadership Team to organize events pertaining to the arts.
- **Advancing the Mission and Vision**
 - By providing these varied avenues of community input to the school's different groups of stakeholders, RioGAFA will create excitement and motivation to progress the mission and vision of the school. This work will provide input and participation to all key stakeholders to develop communication, collaboration, and support from both the school and the constituents.
- **Role of Equity Council**
 - The Equity Council will have a member of each of the previous groups involved as members to include parents, educators, board, and leadership members. This Council will meet to assess and create reports in accordance with the Equity Regulations set in place by the Public Education Department.⁷⁴
- **Assurance**
 - While RioGAFA encourages parent involvement and participation of community events and school related functions, this is not and will never be a factor of enrollment in any capacity. Clear processes will be communicated for any parent or family who wish to opt-out of RioGAFA engagement opportunities.

⁷⁴ Bobroff, K. (2019, November 22). Equity Council & Martinez and Yazzie Consolidated Lawsuit [Letter to District and Charter School Leaders]. NMPED, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify school operation and governance structures that will provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A meaningful opportunity for parental input and participation ○ A meaningful opportunity for professional educator input and participation ○ A meaningful opportunity for community input and participation; • Describe how the structures will facilitate parental involvement that will help advance the proposed school's mission; • Explain the role of the Equity Council in the governance and operation of the proposed school; • Include assurances that the school understands it may not require family or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting, not accepting, enrolling, dis-enrolling, or otherwise differentiating treatment of a student; and • If the school plans to offer opportunities for parent support, explain the process of opting out for parents who are unwilling or unable to meet the proposed school's support opportunities.

RioGAFA meets criteria for providing a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan that describes school structures that will provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the proposed school. Their plan also explains the opt-out process for parents who are unwilling/unable to meet the school's suggested terms for service and/or support.

F. (2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents. The plan is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and ensures a timely and meaningful response from school administration and the governing body.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts strives to be a school for the community to be involved in as much as possible. With attention to community involvement comes a commitment to consistently engage with the community to ask about their ideas and thoughts surrounding the progression of the RioGAFA mission and vision. This communication line will be helpful when complaints and issues arise from community members that they ask to have addressed. With an established relationship and connection, many of the issues that community members and parents will bring up will be avoided. RioGAFA feels that issues may arise within organizations because of a lack of clear communication, so the intention will be to form these relationships to keep communication lines between RioGAFA staff and community stakeholders are proactive and consistent. The following is the process that these community members will use to file official complaints and grievances:

- **Initiation**
 - As previously mentioned, RioGAFA intends to create communication lines between staff members and community stakeholders. If there comes a time where a concern arises, community members will be encouraged to initially reach out directly to the

specific staff member to address the situation. The RioGAFA team is confident that this focus and push for community involvement and engagement will relieve these issues as they arrive.

- **Formal Complaint Protocol**

- In the case that a resolution is not reached between the staff member and the community stakeholder, the community member will follow the below process to submit a formal complaint. Complaints related to issues of discrimination or harassment regarding an individual's race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, mental or physical disabilities, health, or age by a RioGAFA must file a written complaint. The documentation must be provided to the Director of Operations within 30 days of the alleged action. If the complaint is regarding the Director of Operations, the documentation must be submitted to the Director of Academics. The complaint must include the following details to be formally submitted:
 - The full name of the person that is formally submitting the complaint. If the person is submitting the complaint on behalf of a student, they must include their name and the student's name.
 - Valid contact information for the person submitting the complaint. The information must include:
 - Address
 - Phone Number
 - Email Address
 - The name of the person that the grievance is being filed against
 - The date of the alleged discrimination or harassment
 - The name of any potential or verified witnesses that may be willing and able to provide the organization with more information.
 - Description of the proposed resolution that the person filing the complaint would like to see.

- **Review of Formal Complaint**

- Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Director of Operations and the Director of Academics will review the complaint and conduct a thorough investigation. This review and investigation must happen ten days after the submission of the formal complaint. However, in necessary circumstances regarding issues that require more detail and attention, this review and investigation will take more time. In these instances, the Director of Operations or Academics will communicate with the complainant detailing more time. Within the proposed ten days, the purpose of the investigation will be to gather evidence and information pertinent to the issue. The Director of Operations and Academics will interview necessary participants to gain insight into the issue and formulate a plan to address the concern. After the ten-day deadline, the Director of Operations and the Director of Academics will have the next five days to schedule a meeting with the complainant to review their findings and present their solution. At this meeting, the complainant will be provided with a verbal and written summary of their complaint and the proposed resolution of the Director of Operations and Academics. The purpose of this meeting will be to address the

initial issue, provide a potential solution to resolve it and create a continuous solution to avoid the issue occurring again.

- **Formal Grievance**

- If the complainant feels that the proposed resolution is not adequate to resolve the complaint, they may appeal to the RioGAFA Governing Board. The Board Chair will be responsible for receiving these complaints in writing. The Board Chair will have 30 days to conduct a final review and investigation and give the complainant a written response to their original complaint. This written response will include the decision of the Governing Board and will be considered final.

- **Transparency/Accessibility**

- As previously explained, the RioGAFA Governing Board will review all submitted grievances annually to ensure they have been addressed and no apparent patterns must be addressed. Community members will be given contact information for all staff members via our website, and this will be updated weekly to include any changes. Providing this information will allow for verbal and digital communication between community stakeholders and staff members. The above process allows community members to build relationships with the RioGAFA staff, even if through concerns that arise. Confidentiality will be maintained to the greatest extent possible, and retaliation against the complainant will be considered unacceptable and grounds for disciplinary action.

- **McKinney Vento/Special Education Assurance**

- RioGAFA is committed to serving all students, and as a result of that, is committed to the requirements in accordance with the McKinney Vento Act, which include the following:
 - Enrolling homeless children immediately regardless of possession of necessary documents or compliance with the application, registration, or enrollment deadlines during times of homelessness.
 - Removing barriers to maintain enrollment of homeless students such as class fees, school fines, or absenteeism.
 - In cases where a dispute arises over eligibility, the student must be enrolled in the school chosen by the parent or guardian pending resolution of the appeal.
 - Removing barriers to the identification process of students experiencing homelessness.
 - Removing barriers for students experiencing homelessness to have access to after-school programs and extracurricular activities.
- RioGAFA intends to foster the communication lines outlined above to all families and personally ensure that students experiencing homelessness are given every opportunity to access school resources and programs. In the event that there is a complaint that pertains to the McKinney Vento Act, the Director of Operations will be responsible for the handling of this as part of his/her/their responsibilities as the Homeless Liaison for the organization. Initially, using the process outlined above, the Director of Operations will attempt to resolve the issue. If a resolution is not reached through this process, the Director of Operations will connect specifically with the

- students' family to outline the process to formally submit a complaint to the Public Education Department per the New Mexico Administrative Code section 6.10.3.
- In addition to providing necessary avenues for students experiencing homelessness, RioGAFA is committed to ensuring that students with special needs are also accommodated and supported to the fullest extent. Parents and guardians of students with special needs will be encouraged to follow the process outlined above. If the resolution is unsatisfactory to these parents, the RioGAFA staff will seek out the expertise of a trained mediator from the New Mexico Public Education Department Special Education Bureau. If this mediation still does not provide an agreed-upon resolution, the family may seek the assistance of an outside advocacy organization such as the Public Education Department Parent Liaison. As a final step in the process, families of students with special needs will be informed of submitting a formal complaint to the state or requesting a due process hearing in accordance with the outlined process in the New Mexico Administrative Code Section 6.31.2.

Resources:

NMAC 6.10.3 <http://164.64.110.134/parts/title06/06.010.0003.html>

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a grievance process to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community, parents and families, and students that includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; ● Include a final step in the process that provides the grievant a meaningful opportunity to be heard by, and receive a response from, the governing body; if they are unable to obtain resolution from the head administrator; ● Describe how the process is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and ensure a timely and meaningful response; and ● Provide assurances that the school will additionally meet the specific legal requirements of the McKinney Vento and special education grievance processes.

RioGAFA approaches criteria for grievance process because while almost all criteria were addressed, it is unclear how the process will work if/when a grievance arises involving one of the school directors and how this process will be handled equitably.

G. Student Recruitment and Enrollment.

G.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** outreach and recruitment plan that ensures equal access to the proposed school and is likely to be effective in attracting a representative student body from the targeted community. The recruitment/enrollment timelines presented are **reasonable**.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will have a robust plan for recruitment outreach that will allow for interest in the school to grow in many different communities. As it is the mission of RioGAFA to serve all students, it is necessary to create a plan that not only includes the surrounding community, but also the greater Albuquerque area. It is essential that as many students as possible are given the

opportunity to attend RioGAFA, and the RioGAFA Team is confident that the plan outlined below will provide an opportunity to engage with the school to increase enrollment interest:

- **Annual Plan for Recruitment and Outreach**

- Social Media Campaign

- Social Media will be an ongoing strategy used to create interest in RioGAFA. The social media campaigns will be designed to run each month with a focus on specific events and staff at the school. We will create a culture of inclusivity by featuring staff members and teachers weekly while also providing the audience with updates regarding the school. Features will include video testimonials for staff, parents, teachers, alumni, and current students explicitly saying why RioGAFA was beneficial for them in furthering their academic and fine arts careers. These campaigns will feature all staff throughout the year to create a sense of community among all stakeholders and provide the public with many different testimonials to support RioGAFA. As a team, the RioGAFA leaders will create and utilize a specific and consistent messaging template and will encourage staff to participate in promoting the school. Social media will also be an avenue used to promote the different events that will be focused around recruitment. These ads will be paid ads if the budget allows, and we will target specifically people in New Mexico that are interested in topics such as fine arts, art schools and arts-integration. By focusing on these areas and providing a well-planned campaign, RioGAFA will ensure that the story of our school is presented on social media platforms with staff, students, and families who do support the school and others who might be prospective supporters of the school.

- Timeline

- The timeline for social media will be continuous. As a team, the RioGAFA Leadership Team will decide on a monthly calendar to feature staff, students and parents as well as featuring the specific events catered to recruitment.

- Responsible Party

- The Leadership Team will be in charge of creating the calendar of social media campaigns, but it will be the responsibility of the Director of Operations to see that the proposed calendar is implemented fully.

- Mailing

- The RioGAFA team will send a mass mailing each year to families who are within the zip code of the school. These mailings will contain informational brochures of the school featuring highlights from the fine arts and academic achievements of the students. These mailings will also include information regarding the virtual and in-person open houses as well as links to follow RioGAFA on its social media platforms. We hope that by providing a different medium for communication we will reach even more people that do not have access to social media for advertisements.

- Timeline

- Mailings will occur each January to increase interest in enrollment for potential families.
- Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations will be responsible for sending out mailings.
- Virtual Open Houses
 - In response to the COVID pandemic, RioGAFA is committed to serving interested families in ways that are comfortable for them. In an effort to provide families that are not comfortable going to an open house in person, RioGAFA will facilitate virtual open houses to these families. These meetings will be facilitated by the staff, teachers, and members of the Leadership Team. This will be an opportunity for interested parents to get to know the Leadership Team and the mission and vision of the school. Parents will have the opportunity to participate in breakout rooms with teachers that coordinate with their student's grade to provide a more individualized connection. There will also be a block of time to allow for parents to ask questions directly to the RioGAFA staff to immediately establish the line of communication.
 - Timeline
 - Virtual Open Houses will begin in January following approval and will happen once a month until the beginning of school. The first open houses will be for any interested family and there will be two times given to families as options, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. During the month of July, these open houses will be focused more on currently enrolled students. All families are welcome to attend, but these open houses will cover policies and procedures for students as well as allowing teachers and parents to connect directly to establish a communication line.
 - Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations and Director of Academics will be responsible for setting up these open houses and all available staff will attend to increase communication.
- In-person Open Houses
 - In-person open houses will be a great way to provide families with the opportunity to see the model of RioGAFA in action. We will begin these open houses in January. Parents will meet with the Leadership Team for a brief overview of procedures, routines, and the instructional model. Parents will then be given the opportunity to be led by current students and members of the Leadership Team on a guided tour of their student's level of school (Elementary, Middle or High School). Parents will be allowed into classrooms to see the model in action and observe students in their learning. After the tour, the groups will be brought together to allow for the opportunity to ask questions of school staff. These events will happen once a month starting in January and will last until June. The July open house will be in person but will be more focused around the daily systems and routines of RioGAFA for

currently enrolled students. By providing an event such as this, RioGAFA will recruit parents that are invested in the model that they have seen firsthand.

- Timeline
 - In-person events, following approval, will begin starting in January, even in the planning year. The intention of these meetings will be to gather invested parents and present the formalized plans that the RioGAFA Leadership Team has set in place for the upcoming school year. This will also serve as a way to update parents on the facility and potentially find parents willing to volunteer to assist in opening. Following the opening year, these meetings will occur in the school building once a month and will be held two times (one afternoon and one evening) to allow for maximum participation.
- Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations and Director of Academics will be responsible for planning and facilitating these events. All staff will be encouraged to attend.
- Community Events
 - As stated in previous sections, RioGAFA hopes to be a community hub for the arts. The RioGAFA team feels that there is a huge community of artists that reside in the Albuquerque area that do not have a place to serve as a meeting space or collaborative space to showcase many different art forms. Community events will include but will not be limited to art showings of both students and local artists, performances featuring students and local artists and community building events such as Fall Festivals. These events will be responsive to the needs of the community, but RioGAFA will create annual events that it hosts. These events will include but will not be limited to Fall Festival, Winter Showcase, Senior Showcase and Summer Showcase.
 - Timeline
 - Events featuring local artists will be planned as they present themselves, but the following events will occur as follows:
 - Fall Festival - each October.
 - Winter Showcase - each December before the Winter Break.
 - Senior Showcase - each May before the graduation ceremony.
 - Summer Showcase - the week of the last school day.
 - Responsible Party
 - The RioGAFA Leadership Team will be in charge of planning these events and will require the assistance of the Instructional Support Team and Teaching Team to help ensure that these shows are a success.
- Flyers and Brochures
 - RioGAFA students will play a huge part in the recruitment of new students. RioGAFA will host three events during the month of March, April, and May and will ask students to participate in these events. These events will take place in public venues and students will pass out informational materials to

interested families. We hope to target community events with a variety of different aged students to ensure that we receive interest from all grade levels. Volunteer students and their parents will engage with community members to talk about the school and answer potential questions families may have. In addition, they will provide families with information regarding the previously outlined recruitment events.

- Timeline
 - These events will happen once a month for the three months of March, April, and May.
- Responsible Party
 - The Leadership Team will be in charge of planning and facilitating these events and finding volunteer parents, teachers, and students to participate in these events.
- Pre-K Outreach
 - To create a pipeline for enrollment, RioGAFA will conduct recruitment at local preschools that surround the school. With the permission of the school, we will host information sessions with interested parents to tell them about our school and answer any questions that they may have. We will leave informational materials at these organizations for parents to have access to as the year progresses. As a byproduct of these events, we hope to build relationships with these organizations where they come to recommend our school consistently to their parents as a next step for their students.
 - Timeline
 - Outreach to these preschools will begin in January following approval. We hope to visit at least one different preschool a month until the beginning of school, but this will be dependent on the availability of the preschool and their willingness to have us facilitate an event or participate in one of their events.
 - Responsible Party
 - The Director of Academics and Director of Operations will coordinate these events and will be present to facilitate them.
- National School Choice Week
 - RioGAFA plans to participate in a multitude of recruitment events around New Mexico as they become available. However, our focus will be to attend the National School Choice Week event that is held annually. We will be present to discuss our plans during the planning year, and each subsequent year we will attend this event with volunteer parents and students to help discuss the school. We will also use these events to feature our students' work in the fine arts by showcasing performances from our students.
 - Timeline
 - National School Choice Week is the last week in January, so this will be a standard event for RioGAFA to participate in.
 - Responsible Party

- The Director of Operations and Director of Academics will be responsible for coordinating attendance in these events. The assistance of teaching and instructional support staff may be elicited for this event.
- Senior Showcase
 - The Senior Showcase will be a pinnacle activity for our senior class as participation is required for graduation. The Senior Showcase will be an event for each senior to display mastery of their specific art medium to the RioGAFA staff, student body and all community members that attend. We plan to invite all existing families as well as interested families to this event to serve as an opportunity for recruitment. There will be time allotted for seniors to interact with the audience and allow for interested families to ask seniors about their experience at RioGAFA.
 - Timeline
 - The Senior Showcase will occur before graduation and will have multiple showings throughout a weekend.
 - Responsible Party
 - Teachers that instruct the senior class will be in charge of planning these events with the help of the Director of Operations.
- Radio Campaigns
 - As budget permits, RioGAFA will invest in radio campaigns that target both English and Spanish speaking families. We will create short ads to air throughout the working day that will give families information about the school and tell them about the open house events that are scheduled.
 - Timeline
 - These ads will be created and featured during the summer months of June and July to help enrollment for the upcoming school year. If budget permits, these ads will run annually.
 - Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations will be responsible for the creation of these ads and ensuring that they run throughout the summer months.
- Personal Outreach to Families
 - Personal connection to families will be a priority for the entire staff of RioGAFA. It will be a responsibility of all staff to make personalized phone calls to families each year after the lottery has been completed. Staff will be given lists of families to call and talking points to go over with for each family. RioGAFA will ensure that Spanish-speaking families are accommodated by tasking bilingual staff with reaching out specifically to these families. During these calls, staff will ask each family if they have any other family members that are interested in attending RioGAFA. Staff will ask the family to share the contact information of the interested family, and RioGAFA staff will then turn this information over to the Director of Operations. The Director of Operations will create an outreach plan to communicate with these

interested families to schedule a meeting with them and invite them to a tour or to the planned open house events.

- Timeline
 - Personalized outreach of families will occur right after the lottery in April.
- Responsible Party
 - All staff will be asked to participate in outreach to families with oversight provided by the Director of Operations.
- Open Door Policy
 - RioGAFA will adopt an open-door policy to interested families. This means that at any time, a family will be allowed and encouraged to come and tour the school during business hours. It will be a priority for all non-instructional staff to provide individualized tours to these families.
 - Timeline
 - Ongoing
 - Responsible Party
 - All non-instructional staff
- **Accessibility**
 - RioGAFA has provided both in-person and virtual events with different time schedules to accommodate as many possibilities as possible for all families to attend. In addition, RioGAFA is committed to provide presentations and events in Spanish to encourage and welcome parents that are monolingual Spanish speakers. For those families that cannot attend either of these events, they will have access to mailing information, flyer events, radio ads and social media campaigns. The RioGAFA Team is confident that we have created a strong recruitment that provides inclusivity and a variety of modalities to meet the needs of all parents.
- **Targeted Demographic**
 - Although we will focus on the proposed zip codes, the plan presented above will allow for all students in Albuquerque to have access to the promotion and recruitment efforts. However, annually, the RioGAFA team will look at the demographics of the students to determine if the surrounding community is represented appropriately. If we find that there is a time when the surrounding zip codes and community are not properly represented, we will focus our recruitment efforts on these areas. Annual Review
 - After the beginning of the school year, the RioGAFA Leadership Team will collaborate to assess the successes of the recruitment plan and consider any adjustments that would be beneficial to consider as well as map out the success rate in areas of Albuquerque to guarantee that the surrounding area of the school is served.
- **Reasonability**
 - The proposed plan above is well within the capabilities of the RioGAFA Team. The proposed ideas all stem from the priority of the school to create relationships and community among many different stakeholders. The majority of the events take place throughout the year, with a large push of recruitment efforts beginning in January. The RioGAFA Team believes it is necessary to begin efforts in January to ensure that

enrollment numbers are met and that there is adequate time for a genuine connection to be made between interested parents and RioGAFA staff.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a prospective student outreach and recruitment plan, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs; Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how the plan is tailored to ensure equal access to the school why the plan is likely to attract a student body that is demographically reflective of the local community and school district; Describe how the school will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach and recruitment efforts in ensuring equal access to the school and attracting a student body that is demographically reflective of the local community and school district and how the school will use that information to make adjustments to the outreach and recruitment plan; and Explain why the recruitment and enrollment timelines are reasonable.

RioGAFA meets criteria for equitable outreach and recruitment because they provide a clear and realistic plan that includes specific ideas that are in alignment with and support the success of the school.

G. (2) Provide a **complete, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan to implement a lottery process. Ensure all proposed procedures and policies comply with state statutes and **support equal access** to the proposed school; include how a wait list will be maintained. Please provide tentative timeframes or dates.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts is committed to providing a lottery and registration process that is inclusive to all interested parties regardless of their race, gender, national origin, disability, and age.

All aspects of the lottery and enrollment process will comply with the guidance provided in the New Mexico Administrative Code Section 22-8B-4.1 and 6.80.4.19 NMAC.

- Pre-lottery Entry
 - RioGAFA will accept new applications during the months of January through March. Applications will be both online and provided as hard copies. If requested, families can also request that an application be mailed to them via email or mail. In addition, these applications will be made available in both English and Spanish. As families express interest, a RioGAFA staff member will make a personal connection with the families to assist them in filling out application paperwork. These families will be identified during the open house events. The application will consist of basic information necessary such as the name of the prospective student, parent or guardian name, phone number, address, email address and the grade of the student that they wish to enroll into the school. The RioGAFA staff will aim to recruit at least 1.5 times the number of needed seats for year one. This will require that the recruitment plan presented in Section II.G.1 to be fully implemented with all available staff ready to assist. If the cumulative number of applications received does not exceed the number of available seats, these families that have submitted applications will be contacted and formally offered a seat at RioGAFA. If they accept, these families will move directly to the registration protocol. If applications are received after the last day in March, they will be taken in the order and admitted in the order they are received until all available seats are claimed. Once RioGAFA has reached capacity, a waitlist will be formed in the order that applications are received.
 - Timeline
 - Recruitment and outreach for interested families in the process of submitting an application will begin in January and will end the last day of March.
 - Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations will be in charge of overseeing the outreach of potential parents and creating a plan for staff to make connections with interested parents to help with the application documents.
- Lottery
 - Lotteries will be conducted in person the second Wednesday of April. All interested families will be encouraged but not required to be in attendance. Names will be pulled by an impartial third party and students will be divided by their grade and in the number that they were pulled. Per the New Mexico Statutes and New Mexico Administrative Code, if a student has a sibling, this will be noted, and that sibling will receive a seat in their respective grade level.
 - Timeline
 - Each year, the second Wednesday of April will be when the lottery is conducted for RioGAFA.
 - Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations will be in charge of overseeing that the lottery is conducted, and a waitlist based on the students' lottery number from the drawing is created each year.
- Post-Lottery Registration
 - After the lottery is conducted, the Director of Operations will create a plan for all families to be personally contacted by a RioGAFA staff member. The staff member will

review the enrollment process to the families, and they will inform them that they will have two weeks to complete the necessary paperwork to secure a seat for their student if they intend to accept the formal offer for the seat. In the event that a family does not finish their paperwork within the two-week period and a staff member is not able to connect with them, the RioGAFA staff will move on to the next student on the waitlist to offer a seat. During the beginning of the second semester, families of current RioGAFA students will be asked to submit re-enrollment paperwork to secure their students' seats for the following academic year.

- Timeline
 - Registration will be open to new families for two weeks following the lottery. Submission of re-enrollment paperwork will be accepted until the day before the lottery.
- Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations will be responsible for overseeing communication with families to complete registration paperwork.
- Waitlist Maintenance and Entry
 - Families will be kept on a waitlist in the order that their name was pulled during each lottery. Families that submit an application after this date will be placed at the end of the waitlist in the order that their application is received. Families offered a seat from the waitlist will have five days to complete their enrollment paperwork. A RioGAFA staff member will attempt three times to connect with the family to offer support in filling out the necessary paperwork. If the family is not able to be reached or they decline the spot, the seat will then be offered to the next student on the waitlist. This process will repeat itself until all seats are all full. The waitlist will be created each year and families will be communicated with regarding their students' position on the waitlist each year. In compliance with the New Mexico Administrative Code, siblings of enrolled students will be given preference when offering seats to students.
 - Timeline
 - Waitlist management will be a daily routine incorporated into the Operational Support Team's job duties. Parent outreach and support to complete paperwork will be a crucial aspect of the enrollment process.
 - Responsible Party
 - The Director of Operations will be responsible for overseeing waitlist management and will ensure that it is kept up to date.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Identify a plan to implement a lottery admission process if necessary, include action steps, timelines, and responsible parties;
- Describe each of the steps of the process to include the following:
 - Pre-lottery entry
 - Lottery
 - Post-lottery registration
 - Waitlist maintenance and entry; and
- Describe how the lottery process supports equal access to the school.

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for providing a complete, comprehensive, and cohesive plan to implement an equitable lottery process. Does seem to be an equitable process. It is unclear as to how the process will be conducted to support equal access. It should also be noted that students that are on the waitlist in a particular school year (i.e. SY22) will not be rolled over to the wait list for the next school year (i.e. SY23). They must reapply for the grade that their student will be in for the subsequent school year when the lottery process opens for a new school year.

H. Legal Compliance.

H. Provide a **current, clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** Conflict of Interest Policy that demonstrates an understanding of, **and capacity** to meet all conflict of interest requirements including nepotism. Provide a sample disclosure statement of any real or potential conflict of interest.

The Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Statement can be found in the Attachment B. This document includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties to guide the RioGAFA Governing Board in actions related to signing and reviewing the policy, as well as the procedure to follow if a member is perceived to be or is in violation of the policy. In accordance with New Mexico State Statute (22-8B-5), the RioGAFA Conflict of Interest Policy meets all requirements set in place and addresses the following:

- A person shall not serve as a member of the governing body of a charter school if the person or an immediate family member of the person is an owner, agent of, a contractor with or otherwise has a financial interest in a for-profit or nonprofit entity with which the charter school contracts directly, for professional services, goods, or facilities. A violation of this subsection renders the contract between the person or person's immediate family member and the charter school voidable at the option of the chartering authority, the department, or the governing body. A person who knowingly violates this subsection may be individually liable to the charter school for any financial damage caused by the violation.
- No member of a governing body or employee, officer, or agent of a charter school shall participate in selecting, awarding, or administering a contract with the charter school if a conflict of interest exists. A conflict of interest exists when the member, employee, officer, agent, or an immediate family member of the member, employee, officer, or agent has a financial interest in the entity with which the charter school is contracting. A violation of this subsection renders the contract voidable.

- Any employee, agent, or board member of the chartering authority who participates in the initial review, approval, ongoing oversight, evaluation, or charter renewal process of a charter school is ineligible to serve on the governing body of the charter school chartered by the chartering authority.

This policy defines an “immediate family member” as a spouse, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, or any other relative that is financially supported by the Governing Board Member.

The disclosure statement contains the following language in regards to the Conflict of Interest Policy to serve as a written acknowledgment of the policy and an opportunity to identify perceived conflicts of interest before signature:

- Describe any relationships, circumstances, or positions in which you or any immediate family members have that may be in conflict with the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Charter School Conflict of Interest Policy or result in a conflict of interest, as defined by the RioGAFA Conflict of Interest Policy*
- I ensure that the information stated above is true, to the best of my knowledge, and that I have reviewed and will follow the most current RioGAFA Conflict of Interest Policy.*

Rating	Expectations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets	A complete response must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a governing body conflict of interest policy that includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; Describe how the policy meets the requirements of New Mexico law addressing all areas of potential conflicts of interest; and Include all forms the governing body will or may be required to submit pursuant to the policy.
<input type="checkbox"/> Approaches	
<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet	

RioGAFA meets criteria for legal compliance because they provide a clear conflict of interest policy that demonstrates an understanding of, and capacity to meet all necessary requirements.

I. Evidence of Partnership/Contractor relationship. (If Applicable.)

I.(1) If there is /are third party relationship(s) (partner organization, a contractor, foundation) that are essential to the existence of your charter school, governance, key instructional staff, or management functions, identify them (entity, person, contact information etc.). Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of all of those third-party relationships that are considered integral to accomplishing the mission of the proposed school. In your description, please demonstrate that you have a **complete understanding** of the legal implication of the relationship to the proposed school.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts does not have any third-party relationships that are necessary for the existence of the organization.

Rating	Expectations
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify any third party relationships with specific, identified organizations that control or influence essential elements—including the existence, operation, curriculum, or instruction of the proposed charter school—that are required by a partner organization or any part of the application;Describe, in detail, the relationships;Describe why the relationships are essential or required, or how they control essential elements of the proposed charter school;If any such relationships exist identify the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">The specific, identified organizationsContact information for that organizationSpecific individuals in the organization that will be associated with the proposed school; andDescribe all legal implications of the essential/required relationships, including the legal benefits and responsibilities of each party.
<input type="checkbox"/> Approaches	
<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet	
N/A	

I.(2) If applicable, provide and attach as **Appendix D**, a proposed, **signed, clear, formal** agreement between the applicant and each third party relationship **OR** memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the applicant and each prospective third-party, delineating the appropriate responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.

Not Applicable.

Rating	Expectations
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets	A response is only required if relationships were identified in questions I.(1)
<input type="checkbox"/> Approaches	A complete response must <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify all MOUs or formal agreements that are attached in Appendix D;Include proposed formal agreements or MOUs that are signed in Appendix D; andIdentify the responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.
<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet	
N/A	

J. Waivers.

J. Identify all non-discretionary waivers that will be utilized and discretionary waivers that will be requested. For discretionary waivers, specifically identify statutes or state rules for which a waiver is requested. For all, describe how the waiver will support the proposed school's plan; the description should **clearly demonstrate** how requested waivers **align with the proposed school's mission and the educational program and curriculum**. For further information please see the following link:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/information/waivers/>

NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) Waiver	Utilized	Description of how waiver will support school's plan.
Individual class load	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>NMSA 22-10A-20</p> <p>Fine art classes will be multi-grade and enrollment in these classes will be based upon interest. Because of this, some classes may be required to allow for larger class loads than that required in statute (20 students per kindergarten class, 22 students per class in grades 1-3, 24 students per class in grades 4-6, and 160 students a day for grades 6-12). In addition, classes for grades K-5 will be 22 students. RioGAFA will provide all Kinder teachers with a full-time educational assistant.</p> <p>RioGAFA understands that this request for waiver comes with the understanding that this will be presented to staff annually and that the organization must base this request on a viable alternative</p>

		curricular plan that is in the best interest of the school.
Teaching load	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>NMSA 22-10A-20</p> <p>Fine art classes will be multi-grade and enrollment in these classes will be based upon interest. Because of this, some classes may be required to allow for larger class loads than that required in statute (20 students per kindergarten class, 22 students per class in grades 1-3, 24 students per class in grades 4-6, and 160 students a day for grades 6-12). In addition, classes for grades K-5 will be 22 students. RioGAFA will provide all Kinder teachers with a full-time educational assistant.</p> <p>RioGAFA understands that this request for waiver comes with the understanding that this will be presented to staff annually and that the organization must base this request on a viable alternative curricular plan that is in the best interest of the school.</p>
Length of school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>NMSA 22-10A-20</p> <p>To provide time exclusive to fine arts education, RioGAFA will utilize this waiver to extend the school day to provide classes that are exploratory in arts for all grade levels. Students will attend these classes at the end of the day. By providing this extended time, we will also provide extended access to our building which will be beneficial for students and will provide opportunities for enrichment in both arts and academics.</p>
Staffing pattern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Subject areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Purchase of instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>NMSA 22-15-8</p> <p>The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will utilize this waiver to purchase curricula that fits the needs of the students to be academically successful while aligning with the proposed mission and vision. RioGAFA intends to use curricula that are used by high-performing charter schools with demographics similar to our proposed school community. We anticipate that the curriculum will be on the approved list but believe it best to not be limited and will demonstrate standards alignment for any materials purchased that are not on the department's approved list.</p>
Evaluation standards for school personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
School principal duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Drivers education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Statute for which Waiver Requested under NMSA 1978 § 22-2-2.1	Description of how waiver will support school's plan.	
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Does Not Meet

A complete response must

- Identify all non-discretionary waivers that will be utilized;
- Describe how the non-discretionary waiver will support the school's plan, including the following:
 - a specific description of how the waiver will be used and how the school's practice will vary from the standard legal requirement
 - a specific explanation of how the waiver aligns to the school's mission, educational program, and curriculum;
- Identify all discretionary waivers that will be requested and the specific statutes or state rules for which the waivers will be requested; and
- Describe how the discretionary waivers will support the school's plan, including the following:
 - a specific description of how the waiver will be used and how the school's practice will vary from the standard legal requirement
 - a specific explanation of how the waiver aligns to the school's mission, educational program, and curriculum
 - how the school will meet the requirements for being granted a discretionary waiver.

RioGAFA does not meet the criteria for waivers because although the school completed the reasoning behind the waivers they sought, they did not check the box in column 2, therefore the waiver cannot be granted.

K. Transportation and Food.

K. (1) *If applicable*, state how the proposed school plans to offer transportation to its students. Provide a **clear description** of how student transportation needs will be met that are supported by the proposed budget.

For further information, please see the following link:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/transportation/>.

In order to provide an opportunity for all students to have access to arts education, The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts plans to offer its students access to transportation. The proposed zip codes that RioGAFA plans to be located in have a high number of students with low socioeconomic status. RioGAFA intends to remove as many barriers as possible that may hinder a student's ability to access our program. Because we believe strongly that we must provide transportation, we have created space within our budget to provide transportation in year one. The RioGAFA Director(s) are prepared to teach within the first year of operation in order to provide transportation if the school is not granted the Charter School Programs (CSP) Grant.

- **Plan for Transportation**
 - **Equipment Purchase/Contracting Needs**
 - After speaking with two of the most popular vendors for transportation within Albuquerque, RioGAFA will work directly with the vendor to establish the needs of equipment and contracting needs. As it stands, we have been communicated that the equipment for transportation will only include the cost of the bus as well as payment for the driver. If the need arises to purchase additional equipment to meet the needs of students, RioGAFA will

work directly with the contractor to ensure that all requirements under NM 22-8-27 are met.

- **Hiring/Contracting**

- RioGAFA will meet with the vendor directly to discuss specific needs for hiring. This will occur in the contract negotiations. As both vendors that have been approached have quoted RioGAFA under the amount of \$60,000, RioGAFA will not need to follow the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and will enter negotiations directly with the vendor.

- **Training Needs/Inspection Process**

- RioGAFA will work with the vendor directly to ensure that the following state statutes are met:

- 6.41.2.9

- Maintain records in accordance with the Public Education Department's guide for school bus maintenance and safety audit program.
 - Semi-annual inspection records completed by the contractor.
 - Pre-and-post trip records of daily inspections for the school year to be completed by the contractor.
 - Inspection records of random inspections conducted by inspectors or auditors authorized by the department.
 - Certify to PED that semi-annual inspections and daily driver inspections have been conducted and are on file.

- RioGAFA will work with the Transportation Bureau and the vendor directly to ensure that all School Bus Driver (SBDI) training is completed, and all additional training requirements are met.

- **Establishing Routes**

- As stated in NM 22-16-4, all school bus routes will be established by the local school district. RioGAFA will work directly with the vendor to establish the most appropriate routes for students. By collecting data during registration, RioGAFA and the vendor will work collectively to establish bus stops within areas most filled with enrolled RioGAFA students. We will work directly with the vendor to establish how many stops will be necessary, mileage to each stop, and times for pick up and drop off. These times will then be communicated with families. For the first days of school, RioGAFA will ask staff to be present at these stops in the morning to assist students and establish routines. In addition, it is the intention of RioGAFA to have a staff member ride the bus after the duty day to ensure that students are picked up by parents and/or guardians.

- **Transportation Policies and Practices**

- RioGAFA will work directly with the vendor to establish rules, policies, and practices for RioGAFA employees, RioGAFA students, and vendor employees. The RioGAFA employees and students will be made aware of these policies and procedures in their respective handbooks. These will be reviewed at the beginning of each year.

- **Student Transportation Needs**

- RioGAFA will provide transportation to all eligible students as stated in NM 6.41.4.7. This includes students with IEP accommodations and modifications. During registration, student IEPs will be reviewed to ensure that any newly enrolled students have been reviewed to see if they require accommodations for transportation. If this arises, the RioGAFA Director of Operations will work directly with the vendor and the student's family to address all needs of the student. It will be the responsibility of the RioGAFA team to ensure that this process is completed each year during registration time.
- **Funding**
 - Funding for transportation will come out of the CSP Grant if RioGAFA is awarded the grant. In the event that this does not happen, the RioGAFA budget has been adjusted to operate without these funds, including transportation. Funding transportation is a priority for the RioGAFA team, and as such, the Director(s) are prepared to teach classes to allow for the allocation of budgetary resources to go towards the funding of free transportation for students.
- **Potential Vendors**
 - RioGAFA has been in contact with both the Albert Sanchez Bus Company and Herrera School Buses and Coaches to discuss contracting for transportation services. Both companies have quoted the RioGAFA team an estimated \$40-50,000 price for bus funding as well as a \$50-100 inspection fee. Both companies are awaiting the next steps, and following approval, RioGAFA will contact each vendor to decide which company meets the needs of RioGAFA students. Contact to these vendors will begin in January of 2022, following approval.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A response is only required if the school plans to offer regular transportation either for daily transportation to/from school OR for transportation to/from school specific activities and events that are a necessary part of the mission.</p> <p>All schools must be prepared to meet IEP transportation requirements.</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for establishing transportation services at the school including specific action steps, timelines responsible parties, and associated costs that address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying equipment purchase or contracting needs ○ Identifying hiring and or contracting needs ○ Hiring or contracting ○ Establishing training needs and inspection process needs ○ Establishing travel routes and pickup/drop off points ○ Establishing transportation policies and practices ○ Identifying student transportation needs; ● Identify how the school will fund the transportation plan costs; and ● Identify all, but at least one, specific entities or organizations that have been identified as potential partners or vendors for these services and describe all steps that have been taken to create a relationship, establish a relationship, or develop a partnership to provide these services.

The applicant meets criteria for school transportation. However, the applicant states that, "funding will initially come from the CSP grant," but nothing is budgeted in this grant for transportation. The applicant budgeted an amount in the operating fund for year one only and in the transportation fund years 2-5. The transportation fund is not a part of the operating fund. The applicant did state that they would adjust their operating budget to provide transportation.

K. (2) *If applicable*, provide a plan to offer food services to students (e.g., contracting with approved/appropriate food service vendors, providing free and reduced lunch). If planning to offer a PreK or early childhood program, provide a plan to offer food services to this population of students. Provide a **clear description** of how food services will be provided that is supported by the proposed budget.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts feels that the basic needs of students must be met before they are fully able to learn. In order to fully process and develop their cognitive abilities in both academics and fine arts, students must have access to consistently healthy and well-balanced meals. Because of this, we feel that the organization is obligated to seek out and provide a food service plan for our students. Research has shown that the benefits to provide students participation in the USDA School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program include high scores in student achievement and fewer absences. In addition, our plan is to provide classes with a high volume of student movement, which requires that we must ensure that students have been given the opportunity to consume nutrients necessary for participation. To ensure that students have multiple opportunities to access this nutrition, students will be offered breakfast, lunch and a snack before students attend their

artistry block. The below plan outlines the RioGAFA plan for obtaining food services:

- **Food Services Plan**

- Identifying Equipment Purchases or Contracting Needs
 - To adequately provide necessary resources to facilitate a food services plan, RioGAFA will have to base these decisions on the needs of the facility and the agreed upon vendor. Once approved, the priority will be to find a facility. After a facility is acquired, the Director of Operations will work with the Governing Board to create the Request For Proposals (RFPs) with the proposed food service vendors. In October of 2021, RioGAFA will meet with the Student Success and Wellness Bureau to submit the Request for Proposal using their contract template. The RFP will go out no later than February 1st, 2022 with all proposals due by March 1st, 2022. Included in the proposals, vendors will be asked to submit the following informational:
 - Costs associated with proposed service.
 - Cost of food and non-food items
 - Plan and costs associated with staffing.
 - All equipment needed to serve food safely and effectively.
 - Compliance with county, city, state, and federal regulations.
 - A plan to meet the needs of the RioGAFA facility.
 - Once all proposals are submitted, the Governing Board will convene to review each proposal using the previous information required. Although the Governing Board will make the decision, the RioGAFA Director of Operations and Director of Academics will be asked for their input.
 - In May of 2022, RioGAFA will meet with the Student Success and Wellness Bureau to submit our application to participate in the National School Lunch Program.
 - The RioGAFA Food service plan will be created to ensure that all students are provided adequate nutrition throughout the school day. In order to do that, the Director of Operations will meet with the selected vendor to establish systems and routines to address dietary restrictions of children. This will be addressed each year with the vendor and the Director of Operations to ensure that all students have equal access to the food service program. Information on dietary restrictions will be asked from parents during the registration process. This information will be kept up to date with the oversight coming from the Director of Operations. As new students are enrolled, the Director of Operations will meet monthly with the food service provider to ensure that new students with dietary restrictions are made aware of the vendor. Before the beginning of each new school year, the Director of Operations will meet with the vendor to review any newly enrolled students' dietary restrictions to create a plan for these students.
 - Per the requirements of becoming a SFA, The Director of Operations will be responsible for creating an advisory committee composed of school staff, students, and parents to collaborate in planning the school menus. The

Director of Operations will assure that regular meetings are established for this committee to review the menus and these meetings are documented.

- Establishing Training and Inspection Process Needs
 - The Director of Operations will be responsible for facilitating two visits a year as outlined by the Student Success and Wellness Bureau. Using the School Food Authority (SFA) Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Monitoring Form, The Director of Operations will ensure that the following areas are met:
 - For the first contract year, The FSMC followed the 21-day cycle menu for the first 21 days of operation.
 - If changes to the menu were made, the SFA approved these changes.
 - All menus have been developed using the agreed upon menu planning system(s)
 - The FSMC is serving reimbursable meals that comply with the latest USDA dietary guidelines.
 - Production records are completed each day for all meals claimed for reimbursements.
 - All regulations regarding sale of food with minimal nutritional values are followed.
 - Purchased foods meet the quality specification standards.
 - Accurate reporting of the food service daily meal count records.
 - Facilities and equipment are adequately maintained.
 - Employees practice safe food handling procedures.
 - State health licenses are maintained.
 - RioGAFA followed all requirements and procurement procedures when awarding the FSMC contract.
 - The Director of Operations will be responsible for ensuring that all necessary staff are properly trained for the food service program to be in operation. The Director of Operations will also be annually trained in accordance with the state requirements for food service requirements outlined by the Student Success and Wellness Bureau. The Director of Operations will maintain documentation of the training to include but not limited to the location of the meeting, dates of the training session, names of staff present, and topics covered.
 - Inspections will take place a minimum of two times throughout the year using the SFA and FSMC monitoring form. The Director of Operations will coordinate with the Food Service Manager to participate in these inspections. RioGAFA will complete an inspection from the Environmental Department before the first day of operation of food services.
 - In July of each year, every employee handling food will be required to participate in the following two training sessions:
 - Food Handler Safety
 - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
- Hiring or Contracting
 - As previously stated, RioGAFA will follow the Request for Proposal process to hire a contractor for food services.

- Application/Reporting Requirements
 - RioGAFA will follow a plan structured around the SFA and FSMC document to ensure that all requirements for reporting and applications are met. This includes the following:
 - Attendance/Participation - The Director of Operations will oversee that the proper records are kept to maintain that all students participating in the food service program are accurate for each day of operation. These records will be taken for breakfast, lunch, and snack and will include data for meal counts.
 - Income Eligibility Applications - Each RioGAFA family will be given the opportunity to fill out this application. However, students that qualify for free or reduced lunch prices must have this information filled out and placed in their student records. The Director of Operations will oversee that this data is housed and maintained each year to accurately report this. These forms will be due each July from families to be reviewed before August.
 - Claim for Reimbursement - the Director of Operations will be tasked with ensuring that this is completed by the 10th of each month.
- **Identified Service Programs**
 - Below is the list of federal and state programs that RioGAFA intends but is not limited to participate in:
 - National School Lunch Program
 - Breakfast Program
 - It is important to the RioGAFA team that we provide our students with an opportunity to access nutrition at the beginning of the day. This will allow our students to perform better throughout the day and have enough nutrition to sustain a healthy level of energy for their classes. Research has shown that providing students an option in the morning promotes more attention and capacity to learn throughout the day. We feel strongly that meeting the basic needs of our students will benefit their success in school.
 - New Mexico Grown Program
 - This program is designed to provide students with regional fruits and vegetables. This initiative benefits local farmers and benefits both the students and the farmers. The produce that is provided to students benefits the diet of the students and economically provides support for the local farmers.
 - Seamless Summer Option
 - It is important to the RioGAFA team that students have access to meals during the summer months. Participation in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) allows for the NSLP to provide a free summer meal to students. Eligibility for this program is dependent on the percentage of free/reduced prices. As previously stated, the zipcodes that we propose far exceed the 50% student free/reduced eligibility to participate in this program. The Director of Operations will oversee

that meal counting, end of point service, and submissions of claims are all met in a timely manner.

- Community Eligibility Program (CEP)/Provision 2
 - RioGAFA will either participate in CEP or Provision II, whichever fits the needs of the community that the school is located within. CEP is a non-pricing meal service that allows high poverty schools to serve breakfast and lunch with no cost to all enrolled students without the collection of household applications. Provision 2 also reduces application forms and allows for schools to serve breakfast and lunch free of charge to all students for a 4-year period.
- **Funding Prior to Reimbursement⁷⁵**
 - With the proposed zip codes of RioGAFA, we anticipate a high number of students to qualify for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. The Director of Operations will work closely with the Public Education Department (PED) and the Student Success and Wellness Bureau to ensure that all necessary paperwork is filled to participate in this program. All necessary Free and Reduced materials will be distributed to families during registration and the Director of Operations will collect these forms and maintain each year's records. Prior to reimbursement, RioGAFA has built in the budget financial support to cover costs for students. Based on demographic studies conducted in the proposed zip codes, we anticipate that 85-90% of our students will qualify for free or reduced lunch prices. With that said, RioGAFA is prepared to take on the cost of the program for the days of operation of the school while awaiting reimbursement.⁷⁶

Figure 80. Funding

School Year	Student Enrollment	Total Costs (48 days x 6.82 x number of students)
2022-2023	176	\$57,615.36
2023-2024	308	\$100,826.88
2024-2025	484	\$158,442.24
2025-2026	660	\$216,057.60
2026-2027	836	\$273,672.96
2027-2028	968	\$316,884.48
2028-2029	1100	\$360,096.00

⁷⁵ National School Lunch, Special Milk, and School Breakfast Programs, National Average Payments/Maximum Reimbursement Rates. (2019, August 07). Retrieved March 13, 2021, from <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/08/07/2019-16903/national-school-lunch-special-milk-and-school-breakfast-programs-national-average-paymentsmaximum>

⁷⁶ Food Service Management Company Monitoring Form [Pdf]. (n.d.). Washington DC: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

- **Potential Vendors**

- We have met with John McCarthy of Canteen of Central New Mexico to discuss the necessary equipment to purchase for the beginning year with 242 students. Below is equipment they requested be purchased or leased for year one:

Figure 81. Canteen Quotes

Item Name	Quantity	Price
Milk Cooler	1	\$2,768.42
Hot Food Serving Counter/Table	1	\$1,961.41
Work Table	3	\$840.78
Three Compartment Sink	1	\$797.69
Dishwasher	1	\$14,778.61
Soiled Dishtable	1	\$2,105.21
Clean Dishtable	1	\$1,003.47
Hand Sink	1	\$105.84
Icemaker	1	\$4,423.04
Dishwasher Rack	2	\$26.50
Wire Shelving	20	\$1,373.60
Reach-In Freezer	1	\$2,083.22
Reach-In Refrigerator	1	\$2,044.31
Convection Oven	1	\$10,363.53
Total		\$44,675.63

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A response is only required if the school plans to offer food services at the school.</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for establishing food services at the school, including specific action steps, timelines responsible parties, and associated costs that address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying equipment purchase or contracting needs ○ Identifying hiring and/or contracting needs ○ Hiring or contracting ○ Establishing training and inspection process needs ○ Identifying and completing relevant program application and reporting requirements; ● Identify all federal and state food service programs the school plans to participate in; ● If providing or planning to offer a PreK or Early Childhood program, provide a plan for food service; ● Identify how the school will fund the food service plan costs prior to receiving any applicable reimbursements; and ● Identify all, but at least one, specific entities or organizations that have been identified as potential partners or vendors for these services and describe all steps that have been taken to create a relationship, establish a relationship, or develop a partnership to provide these services.

RioGAFA approaches criteria for providing a plan to offer food services to students. The applicant states, "that the cost of food service equipment will be \$44,675, but there is nothing budgeted for this in fund 21000. Additionally, the applicant states, "prior to reimbursement, RioGAFA has built in the budget financial support to cover costs for students." Neither of these costs could be identified in the budget template. However, the budget area for food services in fund 11000 is not included in the budget template. Additionally, the applicant budgeted 100% of the food cost in fund 21000 but experience states that not all food costs will be reimbursed through fund 21000. Again, the budget area for food services in fund 11000 is not included in the budget template.

The applicant also previously stated that they will join the JPA for NM ACES. NM ACES has a contract with food service providers, so doing their own RFP may not be necessary.

L. Facilities/ School Environment.

Applicants must complete the required Facilities Master Plan Ed. Spec. Checklist form, referenced below as III M. (1), and submit it to the Public Schools Facilities Authority no later than **the published deadline in the month of April**. The Facilities Master Plan/Ed. Spec. Checklist form can be accessed on the PSFA website at:

nmpsfa.org/legacy/pdf/planning/Charter_School_FMPEd_Specs_Renewal_Program_August_2019.pdf

L.(1) **Complete, submit, and attach as Appendix E**, the Public Schools Facilities Authority (PSFA) approval of the proposed school's Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist.

Attached as Appendix E is The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts Facility Master Plan Ed/Spec checklist approval letter.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the applicant submitted a Facilities Master Plan to PSFA by the deadline; • If offering or planning or offer a PreK or Early Childhood program, provide a description of the facilities and playground in the Facilities Master Plan; and • Demonstrate the PSFA has approved the applicant's Facilities Master Plan.

RioGAFA meets criteria for PSFA facilities master plan. Applicants have a primary school site address picked out and have three other potential sites with the desired zip codes of the school.

L. (2) Provide evidence that you have researched facilities/properties and **identified at least one appropriate, viable facility/property in the targeted geographic location**. Include evidence of a **clear plan** to prepare the facility/property in time for the proposed school's opening, including a reasonable estimate and description of capital outlay needs and how the project will be funded.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts has focused its searches for available buildings on the westside of Albuquerque. More specifically, the 87114, 87120, 87121, and 87124 zip codes. We have located several locations that we feel will meet the needs of our beginning years of operations. However, one location we found would meet the needs of our organization throughout the growth years and would be sustainable and effective for full enrollment. We have reached out to the Albuquerque Public Schools to inquire about any available facilities that are currently vacant, but we have not received a response to this request for information. We do not anticipate that APS will respond with any available spaces based on our own research.

To move forward and continue to find a suitable location, we have begun working with Jeremy Nelson with Absolute Investment Reality to help us find a proper location that would fit the needs of our proposed school. Through our own research, we were able to identify three properties within our proposed zip codes that we feel would meet our needs. Two of these properties are vacant retail spaces, and the third is a vacant facility that was once the location of the Desert Hills Charter School at 5301 Sequoia Rd. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120. Attachment of these buildings can be seen in the Attachment C.

The third location would be ideal for our educational program because of the variety of spaces that are provided in the different buildings. In total, the facility is over 111,000 square feet, which will adequately meet the needs of the organization outlined below.

Projected Square Footage For Classrooms Per Year

In accordance with state statute, RioGAFA will ensure that elementary classrooms meet the standard requirement present in 6.27.30 NMAC which states that all Kindergarten classrooms must be at least 50 square feet per student, all 1st-5th grade classroom must be at least 32 square feet per student, and all 6-8 classroom be at least 28 square feet per student. Although state statute allows for high school classrooms to be 25 square feet per student, RioGAFA will maintain a standard that all 6-12 classrooms be at least 28 square feet per student.

Figure 82. Projected Square Footage For Classrooms Per Year

Academic Year	Number of Classrooms Needed	Square Footage Per Classroom	Total Square Footage Required
2022 - 2023	11	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (6) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (4) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	7,788 sq.ft.
2023 - 2024	19	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (10) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (8) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	13,068 sq.ft.
2024 - 2025	28	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (15) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (12) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	19,052 sq.ft.
2025 - 2026	36	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (19) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (16) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	24,332 sq.ft.
2026 - 2027	43	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (23) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (19) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	28,996 sq.ft.
2027 - 2028	46	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (23) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (22) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	30,844 sq.ft.
2028 - 2029	50	(1) K: 1,100 sq.ft. (23) 1-5: 704 sq.ft. (26) 6-12: 616 sq.ft.	33,308 sq.ft.

RioGAFA Proposed Additional Spaces Required

The following is a comprehensive list of additional spaces that RioGAFA would like to have in order to implement our educational program adequately. However, we are actively thinking of how to utilize spaces to their potential. For example, although we plan to find a location that will support or currently have a performing arts theater, we are also prepared to utilize either the gymnasium or the cafeteria to support the need for a performance space. As a further example, although ideally, we would like to have a dedicated cafeteria and gymnasium, we are also planning to utilize one facility for these necessities depending on the building that we find.

Figure 83. Proposed Additional Spaces Required

Additional Spaces	Estimated Square Footage Requirement for Year 1	Estimated Square Footage Requirement for Year 3	Estimated Square Footage Requirement for Year 5
Administrative Offices	513 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC requirements	1,041 sq.ft.	1,536 sq.ft.
Art Studio	800 sq.ft. - Above the 6.27.30 NMAC requirements.	(2) 800 sq.ft.	(3) 800 sq.ft.
Gymnasium	6,500 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC	6,500 sq.ft.	6,500 sq.ft.
Library	3,000 sq.ft. - Above the 6.27.30 NMAC Requirement	3,000 sq.ft.	3,000 sq.ft.
Theater	6,000 sq.ft.	6,000 sq.ft.	6,000 sq.ft.
Cafeteria	2,310 sq.ft - In accordance to 6.27.30 NMAC 15sf/student during the largest serving time.	4,950 sq.ft.	7,590 sq.ft.
Kitchen	1,700 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC regulations.	1,700 sq.ft.	1,700 sq.ft.
Multipurpose Space	300 sq.ft.	300 sq. ft.	600 sq.ft.
Custodial Space	242 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC regulations	594 sq.ft.	924 sq.ft.
Technology Space	300 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC regulations	300 sq.ft.	600 sq.ft.
Teacher Workroom	242 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC	594 sq.ft.	924 sq.ft.

Restrooms	4 Restrooms with 4 stalls each - 1200 sq.ft	4 Restrooms with 4 stalls each - 1200 sq.ft	8 Restrooms with 4 stalls each - 2400 sq.ft
Student Health Center	242 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC regulations	594 sq.ft.	924 sq.ft.
Special Education Classrooms	450 sq.ft. - In accordance with 6.27.30 NMAC regulations	450 sq.ft.	900 sq.ft
Total Additional Square Footage Proposed	23,799 sq.ft.	28,823 sq.ft.	35,998 sq.ft.

Total Proposed Square Footage Needed

Below is a table combining the proposed classroom space needed with the proposed additional spaces needed for the first, third, fifth and full capacity years.

Figure 84. Total Proposed Square Footage

Academic Year	Combined Square Footage Required
2022 - 2023	31,587 sq.ft.
2024-2025 (Year 3)	47,875 sq.ft.
2026-2027 (Year 5)	64,994 sq.ft.
2028-2029 (Full Capacity)	69,306 sq.ft.

Remodeling

If acquired, this facility would need some remodeling to meet the needs of the NMAC 6.27.30.13 requirements of classrooms. Remodeling would mostly consist of taking down walls that divide spaces that could be converted to larger classrooms to provide for the proposed fine arts classrooms. In addition, the larger areas already in existence would need remodels to be utilized as performance spaces for the school and the surrounding arts community.

Timeline

Immediately following approval, the RioGAFA Founding Team will convene to complete the following action steps to secure and create a plan to renovate either the above building or a different facility that is the best option for RioGAFA and its needs:

- Identify a location that is the best option for RioGAFA and its model.

- Determine the entity that will take on the cost of renovations whether that be the owner or a potential developer.
- Work with the Public School Facility Authority (PSFA) to develop a finalized Facility Master Plan.
- Determine the necessary renovations needed to meet the needs of RioGAFA for the first year of operation.
- Implement a plan to meet these renovations in time for students during the opening year.
- Receive e-occupancy for secured facility.

Responsible Parties

The following is a list of people that will be responsible in the acquisition of a facility and oversight of the proposed renovation plans to meet the needs of the school:

- PSFA
- Building Owner
- Real Estate Broker/Developer
- Contractor
- RioGAFA Governing Board
- Director of Operations

We anticipate that renovations will not be necessary for the opening year if the proposed building is acquired. However, RioGAFA intends to ensure that all classroom and occupied spaces are within the state requirements and that an E-occupancy has been received before opening. The RioGAFA Leadership Team will compose a plan to submit to the Governing Board with renovations to fulfill the mission and vision. The Governing Board will review these plans to ensure that decisions for the benefit of the school are made.

Funding

RioGAFA has prepared a budget that includes a surplus of \$160,000 to be used for rent and remodeling. This money has been allocated using only funds provided by the State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) funds. If awarded the Charter School Programs (CSP) Grant, RioGAFA intends to put more financial resources towards preparing the facility for future years of operation.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Demonstrate the applicant has done the following:
 - Conducted outreach and research to understand if there are public facilities that are available, appropriate, and viable
 - Researched multiple facilities or properties in the targeted geographic location to identify all facilities or properties that are available, appropriate, and viable
 - Identified whether or not each potential property will meet the requirements of NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-4.2, including occupancy, adequacy, and ownership;
- Identify at least one potential facility or property that is appropriate, viable, and located in the targeted geographic location;
- Identify a plan that would enable the applicant to prepare the facility/property to meet the facility needs of the proposed school in time for the proposed school's opening date, include specific action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and capital outlay needs;
- Describe how the identified facility meets the student population and transportation needs; and
- Identify how the project to prepare the facility will be funded.
- New Applicants intending to build, remodel, or install portables must demonstrate that they have researched all state, local, city, and county requirements for the proposed site.

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for providing evidence for facilities research. They state that the \$160,000.00 budgeted in year 1 for operating funds is for rent and remodeling it is unclear if the amount designated is enough for the targeted property.

The amount they pay in rent from operating funds decreases year after year, with no money budgeted in year 5.

The amount of money they have budgeted overall from \$11,000.00 and \$31,200.00 seems inadequate for the facility that they have targeted. That facility is listed at approximately 14 million dollars.

Why does the rent amount increase each year if they are occupying the same facility year over year. A stable rent amount should be in the rental/LPA agreement.

There is no mention of how the identified facility meets the transportation needs of students."

III. Financial Framework

A. School size.

State the requested enrollment, grade levels to be served, and student/teacher ratio. Please note that this is a projected enrollment. If approved, actual funding will be determined by NMPED School Budget Bureau based on data regarding enrollment membership including, but not limited to, lottery applications submitted and registrations completed prior to May 15 of the implementation year.

A. Academic Year	Number of Students	Grade Levels	Student/Teacher Ratio
Year 1	176	K, 1, 6	22:1
Year 2	308	K, 1, 2, 6, 7	22:1
Year 3	484	K, 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8	22:1
Year 4	660	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9	22:1
Year 5	836	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	22:1
At Capacity (Enrollment Cap)	1144	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	22:1

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the anticipated number of students for each of the first five years and “at capacity”, based on the long-term strategic plan; Identify the grade levels requested to be served in each of the first five years (phase in plan) and “at capacity”, based on the long term strategic plan; and Identify the student/teacher ratio (not student/staff ratio) that aligns with the number of students served, grade levels, and staffing plan for each of the first five years and “at capacity”, based on the long term strategic plan.

RioGAFA meets the criteria for requested enrollment. They state requested enrollment numbers, grade levels to be served, and student/teacher ratio. They also have a realistic student to teacher phased plan.

B. Budgets.

Please note that the PEC will ask the applicants to respond to questions on the budget during the Community Input Hearing. The applicants may have the personnel with the technical expertise with them at the table (and *should* have these people with them if these people were primarily responsible for drafting a section). However, the applicants themselves should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of all areas of the budget.

B. (1) Provide, and attach as **Appendix F**, a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet, using appropriate values and computations for each year of the five-year budget plan (use projected unit value and for special education, please budget the local district's percentage of special education unless the school has a sufficient justification for why it will have a larger population). State and federal funds, including but not limited to student funding shall not be used to pay, compensate or reimburse contract management organization or education management organization, regardless of their organizational or tax-exempt status. Ensure that your worksheet **clearly demonstrates your understanding of, and your capacity to implement, New Mexico public school funding.**

The 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet was developed using RioGAFA's projected enrollment found in **Section II.A.(1.)**. RioGAFA used the 2020-2021 Albuquerque Public School District average of SPED students (20%). To budget conservatively, the school did not include gifted students in their A/B student projections and used a teacher cost index of 1.0. The 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet is attached as **Appendix F**.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a complete 910B5 Worksheet in Appendix F; • Use appropriate values and computations in each year; • Use projected unit value; and • Budget the correct special education percentage based on the local special education population, unless the school has a sufficient justification for why it will have a larger population (provide justification, if applicable).

RioGAFA address some of the criteria, but does not sufficiently address the following:

In the initial year, they do not use the districts TCI Index, which they will be able to do in year 1. They did not include the small school size adjustment, which they can in year one as this is the final year of the phase out.

In regards to their Elementary Fine Arts Program:

They did not include projected new membership (estimated new K-5 mem in the current year), only prior year 80/120 mem.

In regards to their K-5 program:

For all years, they included total enrollment of all grades, including the upper grades. This program is for students in the K-5 program.

They did not include projected new membership (estimated new K-5 mem in the current year), only prior year 80/120 mem.

They only included this program for years 1-3, did not include in years 4-5.

In regards to their ELTP Program:

They included all grades. It is unclear if they intend to have the ELTP program for grades K-5, as well as the ELTP program extending the number of school days by 20 days for the younger grades.

They did not include projected new membership (estimated new ELTP mem in the current year), only prior year 80/120 mem.

They only included this program for years 1-3, did not include in years 4-5.

Note:

The applicants chose to not estimate an increase in the SEG year after year.

B.(2) Provide, and attach as **Appendix G**, a proposed five-year budget plan, fully aligned with the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet that clearly supports the proposed school's mission and aligns with the proposed school's five-year growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, and services. State and federal funds, including but not limited to student funding shall not be used to pay, compensate or reimburse contract management organization or education management organization, regardless of their organizational or tax-exempt status. Ensure that your draft budget clearly demonstrates the financial capacity and long-term sustainability of the proposed school (consider your growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, mission etc.).

Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RioGAFA) prepared a proposed five-year budget plan based on the projected revenue in **Appendix F** that supported the school's mission and other areas of the application. The completed five-year budget plan is included in **Appendix G**.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a five-year budget plan in Appendix G that is based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet from Appendix F; • Support the proposed school's mission and all elements of the proposed program laid out in the application; and • Align with the proposed school's five-year growth plan.

The applicants have not adequately budgeted for staff insurance costs, all health insurance appears to be budgeted for a single person.

The applicant states, "RioGAFA prioritized the need for a healthy fund balance to weather changes in State Equalization Guarantee funding and in anticipation of building their cash to eventually allow for a permanent school building." The cash balance for each year is less than 1 month's SEG allocation. This would not sustain the school should an emergency arise

or help them weather changes in funding. Additionally, they cannot use cash balance to cover payroll and recurring expenditures in a subsequent year, so this would not help them with these costs if SEG funding were to decrease.

In a previous section, the applicant states that 80% of revenue would go to the classroom. However, after subtracting what is budgeted in object code 57331 (this is where cash balance is budgeted), the percentage going to the classroom (function 1000, 2100 and 2200) is:

Year 1 = 47%, Year 2 = 71%, Year 3 = 74%, Year 4 = 77%, Year 5 = 78%

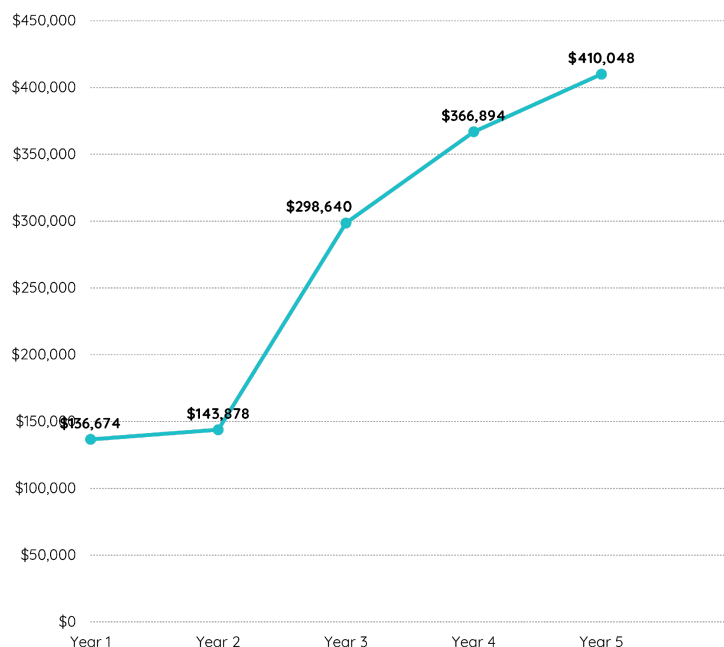
B.(3) Provide a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable budget narrative that explains basic assumptions, how those were determined based on reliable sources, and identifies all priorities that are consistent with the proposed school's mission, educational program, staffing, and facility. The budget narrative demonstrates the proposed school's thorough understanding of the budget and of budgeting.

Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RioGAFA) developed their five-year budget collaboratively with K12 Accounting to focus on the school's mission and education program. The budget uses a conservative approach that allows room for budget fluctuations and gradual growth. When developing the projected revenues and projected expenditures, the school considered the changing educational environment and chose to use conservative projections in the 910B5 projections by budgeting moderate SPED level C and D students, utilizing the minimum teacher cost index as a multiplier and basing ancillary FTE projections on actual services that other charter schools in the Albuquerque area of a similar SPED population are using.

While preparing the budget RioGAFA prioritized the need for a healthy fund balance to weather changes in State Equalization Guarantee funding and in anticipation of building their cash to eventually allow for a permanent school building. One of the main priorities of our budget was to be able to support RioGAFA's mission and education program on SEG funding and using federal flow-through funds such as Title I, Title II and IDEA-B to supplement the school's educational program. RioGAFA's five-year budget includes the following possible funding sources that will supplement the school's educational program; Title I, Title II, IDEA-B. Other funding sources that are anticipated are the CSP Grant, Student Transportation and the National School Lunch Program.

The school has prepared their budget to allow for yearly increases in their projected ending fund balance to build up a cash reserve and eventually find a permanent facility for their campus. The school's excess fund balance is being budgeted in object 57331.

Figure 85. Projected Fund Balance by Year



Revenue Assumptions

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts five-year budget used conservative assumptions throughout the revenue budgeting process. The school focused on being able to include priorities of the school's mission and prioritize their educational program within the funding obtained by the State Equalization Guarantee. The school also included revenue from Special Revenue Funds which will supplement their education program.

Operational Funding

State Equalization Guarantee (SEG)

State Equalization Guarantee projected revenue was based on the 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Revenue Workbook provided, while keeping in mind statutory changes that will have phased in by the first year of operations with students. The school conservatively assumed that the unit value would remain the same over the five-year period and used the 2021–2022-unit value of \$4,770.70 for all five years of SEG projections. We have also assumed that the T&E index will be completely phased out and replaced by the Teacher Cost Index. We have used a conservative estimate of TCI of 1.0. We have also built the SEG revenue budget on the assumption that the small school size adjustment will no longer be available to the school.

The special education population included in the 910B5 projections is based on the Albuquerque Public Schools' rate of a 20% SPED population. For SEG calculation purposes, we were conservative to limit the funding generated from Level C and D students and include a heavier SPED population of A/B students. The school looked at other charter schools in the Albuquerque area to gather information on ancillary FTE used per SPED student and included an ancillary FTE of 0.025 per SPED student.

As a school serving elementary students, RioGAFA will be eligible for the Fine Arts Education Act (FAEA) for their elementary students in grades K-5. FAEA units for projected membership in grades K-5 have been included in the projected 910B5.

While we anticipate a large English Language Learner population, we did not assume any funding from bilingual units. Each year of the 910B5 projected revenue includes the PED 2% administrative fee being withheld.

Transportation Funding

RioGAFA will apply for transportation funding through the NMPED for their second year of operations with students. RioGAFA will assume the costs of transportation in Year 1, including an assumption of \$45,000 per school bus, per year, with the intent of generating transportation funding beginning in Year 2. This cost assumption is based on a quote obtained from Herrera School Bus and Coach, Inc. The revenue budget was based on the projecting of \$680 per rider, with an assumption that 53% of the school's population will participate in transportation, a percentage that is in alignment with Albuquerque Public Schools.

Federal Funding

Food Services

RioGAFA will apply for the USDA National School Lunch Program to provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks. The revenue in the Food Services budget was built on the assumption that the school would have a free (64.9%) and reduced (1.5%) population similar to Albuquerque Public Schools, and be reimbursed at current USDA rates for Free, Reduced and Paid Students. Below is a summary of reimbursement rates used for all five years of projections:

Breakfast

Free	\$	2.26
Reduced	\$	1.90
Paid	\$	0.34

Lunch

Free	\$	3.60
Reduced	\$	3.20
Paid	\$	0.42

Snack

Free	\$	0.96
-------------	----	------

Title I

RioGAFA assuming that they will be identified as a Title I school. Our revenue assumption is based on the per pupil funding of Christine Duncan Heritage Academy, a charter in the Albuquerque area. The total they receive per student is around \$400. However, to be conservative we have budgeted revenues to be 75% of this amount (\$300), with the funding directly supporting direct instruction.

Title II

RioGAFA will apply to receive Title II funds as a flow-through entity from NMPED. Our budget was based on the assumption of receiving \$49 per student, the amount allocated by the Title II Bureau at the New Mexico Public Education Department.

IDEA-B

RioGAFA anticipates receiving supplemental funding for special education from IDEA. Based on information received from other charter schools with similar demographics, we are making the assumption that the school will receive an average of approximately \$1,000 per SPED student. Additional funding received from IDEA will be used to support the costs of providing ancillary services and adding additional support into the classrooms.

Charter School Program (CSP) Grant

RioGAFA's 5-year budget includes the assumption that the school will receive the CSP Grant at the maximum amount of \$900,000 based on our projected membership of 836 in year five. The school is anticipating that many of the costs associated with the school's startup will occur in the planning year and first year with students. RioGAFA has allocated the grant to receive 39% in the planning year, 48% in year 1 with students and 13% in year 3. This funding will cover operational expenditures and contracts in the planning year, provide advertising, make purchases of furniture, curriculum, and advertising for the school.

Capital Funding**Lease Assistance**

RioGAFA developed a budget that is conservative and assumes a rate of \$560.47 which is 80% of the current lease assistance rate. RioGAFA has assumed that the first year will be based on the first year's 40th day membership and the following years will be based on the prior year's average of 80th and 120th day membership.

Expense Assumptions

RioGAFA centered their budget process around prioritizing funding for their school's mission, educational program, staffing, and facility. When looking at the operational budget as a whole, salaries and benefits make up the majority of the budget in all five years.

Figure 86. RioGAFA's fund 11000 broken out by object.

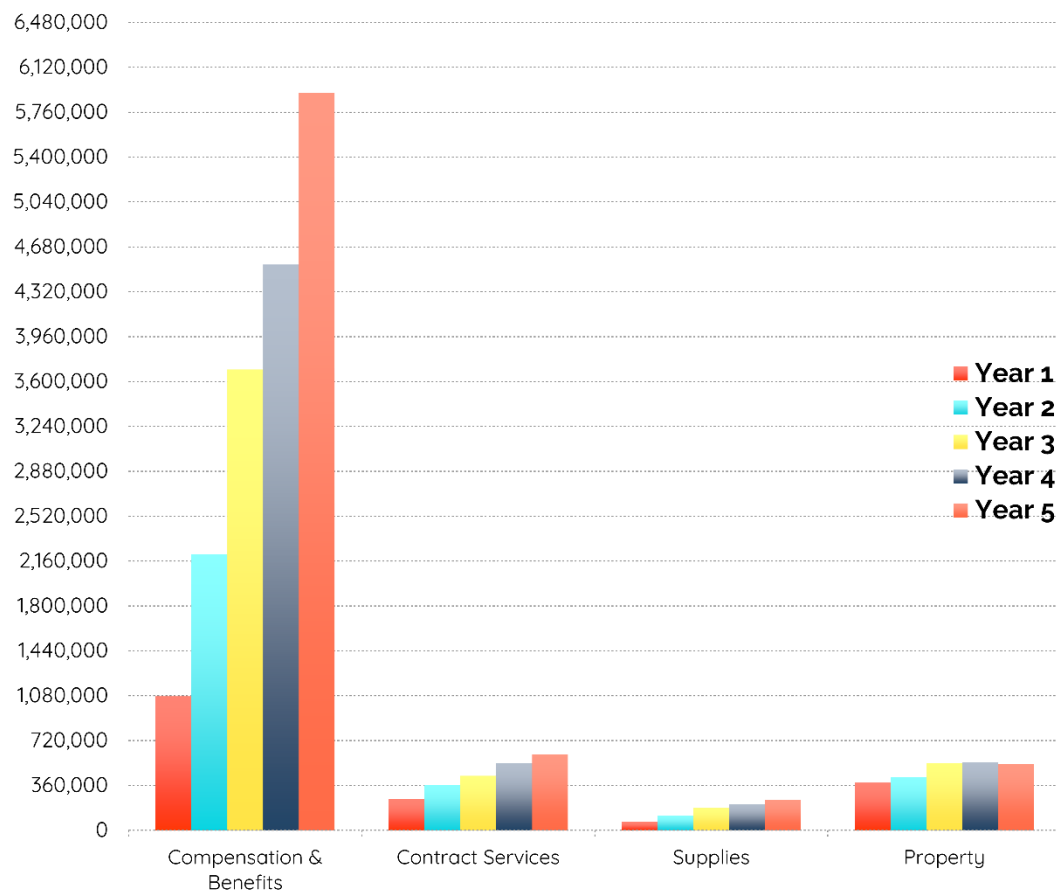
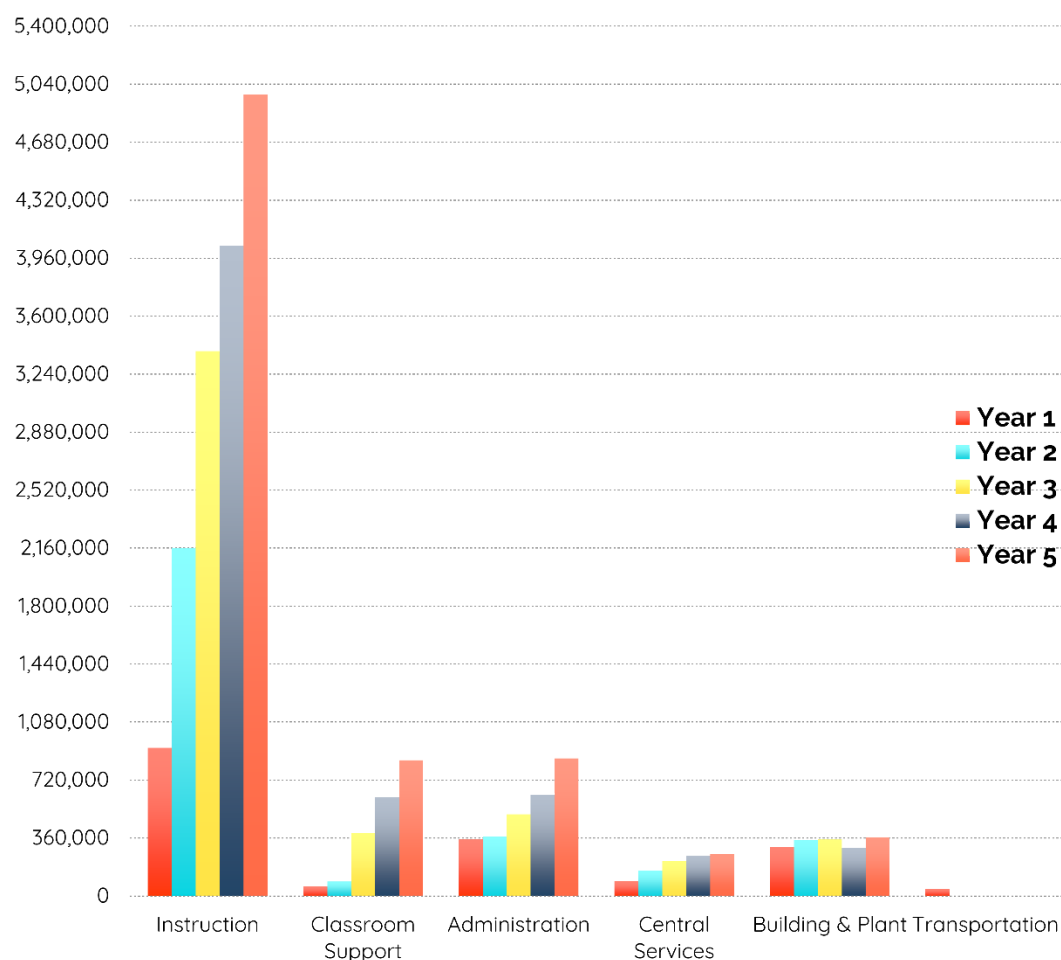


Figure 87. RioGAFA's fund 11000 broken out by function



Salaries and Benefits

Salary

RioGAFA placed a priority on finding high quality teachers and an administration that is developed to support them. During the budget process RioGAFA assumed they would be hiring a mix of teachers at different licensure levels but placed an emphasis on budgeting most positions at Level II to provide high quality instruction. RioGAFA also assumed that the majority of teachers would continue on with the school over the 5-year period and built in the salary schedule increases for the positions budgeted. Salary schedules were built to be competitive and considered the statutory minimums of \$41,000 for a Level I teacher, \$50,000 for a Level II teacher, and \$60,000 for a Level II teacher. Salary expenses are budgeted in the object codes starting with a 51.

Benefits

RioGAFA created their benefits budget to include Educational Retirement at 15.1%, Retiree Health Care at 2%, FICA at 6.2% and Medicare at 1.45%. In addition to these mandatory contributions, RioGAFA took into account the current NMPSIA rates with a 1.5% increase per year. For the purposes of the budget, RioGAFA assumed that all employees would participate in health and dental benefits. While this is usually not the case in schools, we wanted to be conservative with our budget. RioGAFA operate the food services program 191 days per year (the total number of school days at RioGAFA), has budgeted approximately \$8,500 per employee for medical, dental, vision, life, and

disability benefits in the first year and gradually increased rates in year two through five. Benefits are budgeted in the object codes starting with a 52.

Contract Services*Professional Development*

RioGAFA has placed a priority on providing their teachers with professional development that will assist them with providing instructs that allow for arts-integration. RioGAFA has allotted CSP Funds in years 1, 2, and 3 towards professional development and the entirety of their Title II allocation to go towards professional development. The amounts allocated to professional development are as follows:

Year 0 - \$3,000

Year 1 - \$18,624

Year 2 - \$25,092

Year 3 - \$23,716

Year 4 - \$32,340

Year 5 - \$40,964

Professional Services

RioGAFA has allocated money in their five-year budget to go towards professional services. RioGAFA has allocated money to contract their legal services, business office services, ancillary services, other miscellaneous charges and to pay for their annual external audit.

Food Services

RioGAFA has built their budget on the assumption that the Food Services program will be self-sustaining and able to carry forward a small fund balance. RioGAFA has allocated \$44,676 in CSP supply assets to pay for start-up equipment associated with starting a food service program. RioGAFA will utilize a food service contractor and estimates that revenues generated by the National School Lunch Program will cover 100% of the costs of food service, plus allow the school to build up a fund balance in the Food Service fund, which is budgeted to the 57332-object code. The school will perform monthly analysis on projected revenues for Food Service vs. Actual amounts and adjust the budget as needed.

Transportation Services

RioGAFA has allocated \$45,000 from operational funds and \$45,000 from CSP funds to fund two buses to provide student transportation in year 1. RioGAFA will apply for transportation for years 2-5. The RioGAFA budget was built with the assumption that they would be awarded transportation funds from the NMPED and that the transportation funding would fully pay for the costs associated with bus services after year 1.

Other Contracted Services

RioGAFA has allocated money in the 55915 function to go towards collaboration with local artists to come in and provide additional fine arts instruction to their students.

Supplies

Instructional Materials

RioGAFA has allocated a portion of their operational funds to go towards the mandatory SEG instructional materials allocation. Amounts were estimated based on other schools with similar SEG sizes. Instructional materials expenses are budgeted in object 56112.

Supplies

RioGAFA has allocated money to go towards classroom supplies, testing, and building supplies. Amounts were estimated based on other schools with a similar student enrollment size. Supplies are budgeted in the 56118-object code.

Software

RioGAFA has allocated money to go towards classroom software, business office software, and software for the registrar. Software prices were based on oral quotes from software vendors. Software expenses are budgeted in the 56113-object code.

Property*Facilities*

RioGAFA is currently searching for a facility that will meet their needs of being a multifunctional space that can be used for arts education as well as a highly rigorous academic program. The school is looking for a commercial building that is a minimum of 19,977 square feet. To build a budget for facilities the school assumed they would find a space of approximately 20,000 square feet. They assumed the cost would be around \$13.26/sq ft based on current rental rates for commercial buildings. RioGAFA has assumed a yearly increase of 10% to rent. The school built their budget on the assumption that the landlord would provide all buildout of the building to get it up to state adequacy standards. RioGAFA built the budget with the assumption that they would receive lease assistance in the first year of operations, but also have to supplement the rent from the operational fund until they find a permanent building. Expenses associated with the lease expense are found in object 54610.

Utilities

Utilities were budgeted with the assumption that they would cost similar to what other charters in similar sized buildings were paying for utilities. They also include the assumption that they would increase with the increase of enrollment. RioGAFA budgeted utilities with a yearly increase of 15%. Expenses associated with utilities can be found in object 54411 through 54416.

Assets and Supply Assets

RioGAFA assumed that there would be substantial expenditures during the first year of operations for furniture, technology and equipment. The school has allocated \$339,534 of their CSP funds to pay for these expenses.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Approaches

A complete response must

- Explain basic assumptions;
- Identify reliable sources for each assumption;
- Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's mission;
- Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's educational program;
- Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's staffing; and
- Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's facility.

RioGAFA addresses some criteria for this section but narrative for IDEA does not equal budget. The applicant states some IDEA funds will go toward ancillary services, but there is nothing in that budget for those line items. The narrative for Title 2 did not state what types of PD the school will be considering. The Narrative for the CSP grant does not state what types of contract services the applicants are considering to purchase, but they have budgeted a large amount of their budget to other services so further explanation is needed in this section.

As stated in another section, there are concerns that the applicants have not budgeted adequately for lease expenses based on the facility they state they are considering to occupy. The projected increase for NMPSIA benefits each year, 1.5%, is too low. Historically, NMPSIA increases are 5% to 6% for Health insurance. The applicant also states that the expenditures for food services equipment are in the CSP grant, but it is unclear where this is budgeted in the budget. The applicant states that they have budgeted \$339,534 of their CSP funds for equipment. If they include the \$90,000 for busses, this is true. However, in a previous section, they stated they would use a bus contractor.

B. (4) Provide a **clear and meaningful** description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges, or to address the failure to receive any anticipated funding sources. Ensure that your explanations provide **clear evidence** that the adjustments are viable and realistic. The suggested budget control strategies demonstrate **capacity** to manage the budget successfully.

Provide a narrative description of how the proposed school will modify the budget when there are students with special education needs currently attending the proposed school, but under the funding formula, the proposed school will only receive additional funding during the next school year.

Provide a narrative description of how the proposed school will address the budget in the event that the proposed school has budgeted for more students, based on early enrollment, than actually enroll in the proposed school at the beginning of the proposed school year.

Strategy 1: Reduce Costs

The proposed annual budgets identify projected membership with incremental increases each year. If the membership is not realized, the school plans to reduce necessary costs to balance the current year revenue with budgeted expenditures. If the shortfall is significant, the school will focus on salary and benefits since this is a significant portion of the budget. However, the school will take into consideration the student, teacher ratio when finalizing the budget reduction plan.

Other cost saving measures that will be considered include: 1) converting the custodial position to contractual; and 2) reduce other variable costs linked to number of students being served like materials and supplies, contractual services, etc.

Strategy 2: Timing

The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts will consider start dates for employment and contractual agreements in alignment with meeting projected enrollment goals. For example, if the enrollment is below the goal, the school may consider a delay in hiring staff. The priority will be to finalize key positions until enrollment numbers materialize.

Strategy 3: Reserve

The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts has budgeted reserves each fiscal year to allow for long-term sustainability and flexibility to address unforeseen budget shortfalls requiring a budget decrease. The school is prepared to decrease this budget line item, if necessary, and plan to replenish when budget allows. This component will be implemented only if Component 1 is unable to address the budget shortfall.

The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts will implement strong purchasing controls to ensure only allowable, necessary, and reasonable purchases are made for the benefit of the school. The school's purchasing decisions will consider the required minimal costs to operate and only initiate additional costs once the membership is realized. This will ensure that excess cost is limited without impacting successful operation of the school.

Budget Controls

The Operations Director and Business Manager will meet regularly to review the status of budget, membership, cashflow, operations of the school, etc. The Business Manager will provide financial report and recommend plan to the Director to address any changes that may require Budget Adjustment Requests (BAR) or purchasing changes to reduce or increase costs. The team will then identify strategy that will enable for goals to be met by year-end. If the outcome requires BARs, the Business Manager will follow procedure and obtain Governing Council approval during monthly meetings which may also require PED approval for transfer, increase, or decrease BARs.

Special Education Needs

RioGAFA understands enrollment may include students who require special education services per the IEP completed at the prior school and will not receive the funding until the following school year. The proposed budget anticipates this delay and has included in Year 1 a Special Education Instructor and \$68,300 for various ancillary services. The school will identify the required services per the IEP and initiate contracts with the providers while considering maintaining costs, if applicable. For example, if group sessions are allowable to reduce costs, the school will consider this agreement with the provider.

Unforeseen Cash Flow Challenges

RioGAFA will monitor cash flow projections regularly to ensure that sufficient cash is available to cover current costs. This may impact timing of purchases to ensure that operations of the school are not negatively impacted. In order to assist with this, the school will pursue vendor relationships to take

advantage of deferred payment options from 30 to 120 days. This plan should provide adequate cash flow to meet critical expenses such as payroll and special education services.

The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts plans to apply for additional funding to support start-up costs and assist with meeting any cash flow challenges during Year 1.

As described above, The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts will implement the following measures, if the school faces a budget shortfall:

1. Revise instructional staffing plan, which may include reduction in FTE, based on enrollment.
2. Reduce costs by potentially re-organizing non-instructional positions; and eliminating variable costs like materials.

Reduce reserve line item

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe budget control strategies as well as budget adjustments that will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges; Describe budget control strategies as well as budget adjustments that will be made to address the failure to receive any anticipated funding sources; Include explanations that are viable and realistic, based on the professional judgment of experienced, licensed, school business officials; Address how special education students will receive services before special education funding is provided, based on accurate 40-day counts; and Address how gaps between budgeted students and actual enrollment will be addressed.

The applicant states: "The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts has budgeted reserves each fiscal year to allow for long-term sustainability and flexibility to address unforeseen budget shortfalls requiring a budget decrease. The school is prepared to decrease this budget line item, if necessary, and plan to replenish when budget allows. This component will be implemented only if Component 1 is unable to address the budget shortfall" This is not an option because cash balances from a previous year cannot be used to pay for payroll or recurring expenditures in a subsequent year The applicant states, "the proposed budget anticipates this delay and has included in Year 1 a Special Education Instructor and \$68,300 for various ancillary services." This is problematic because if a special needs student requires a 1:1 service provider, the school cannot sacrifice providing services to other students to cut costs in order to provide the 1:1 service to a high needs student.

The applicant states, "the school will pursue vendor relationships to take advantage of deferred payment options from 30 to 120 days". This is not an option. Statute mandates that bills are paid within 30 day of invoice date, and cannot be paid in a subsequent year

without having the cash balance at the end of the year to pay for them (current year revenue cannot be used to pay prior year expenses).

The applicant states, "The Rio Grande Academy of the Fine Arts plans to apply for additional funding to support start-up costs and assist with meeting any cash flow challenges during Year 1." Non-recurring revenue cannot be used to pay for recurring expenditures. Budget strategies show how the school will deal with failure to receive anticipated funding. This includes explanations on actual student enrollment versus projected student enrollment.

C. Financial Policies, Oversight, Compliance, and Sustainability

C.(1) Provide a description of the internal control procedures the proposed school will utilize to safeguard assets, segregate its payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency, and ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the proposed school's procedures.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts and K12 Accounting have worked together to create the financial policies and procedures for the school that insure solid internal controls, safeguard the school's assets, and follow New Mexico Statutes specific to New Mexico Public Schools and the New Mexico Audit Rule. Copies of the school's business office procedures and internal controls can be found in **Appendix H**.

Internal Controls

Safeguarding Assets

The proposed RioGAFA Directors will set an example as ethical leaders that follow state law and rules surrounding New Mexico Public Schools. Their ethical example will set a positive example for other employees and contractors to behave in a similar manner.

Segregation of duties can help to ensure a safeguarding of assets. Individuals who handle cash will not have access to the general ledger.

All cash will be received and receipted with a triplicate part receipt by the Office Manager. One receipt will go to the individual making the deposit, one will go to the business office with supporting documentation, and the third will be left in the receipt book. All cash will be counted, verified, and compared to the receipt in the receipt book by the Director of Operations the first two years and the Front Desk Clerk in later years. The deposit will always be verified by someone other than the one who initially took the cash. Once the cash has been verified it will either be locked in a safe or taken to the bank. All deposits will be made within 24 hours. The deposit slip will go to the business office to reconcile and enter the deposit into the general ledger.

Payroll Processing

Payroll processing will be performed by the Assistant Business Manager (ABM) provided by K12 Accounting. No new employees will be added to payroll without a valid contract and valid corresponding new hire paperwork. After the ABM has entered all applicable data, they will create a

review packet for the Business Manager (BM), also provided by K12 Accounting, will review for accuracy. Once the BM has approved the packet, it will go to the Director of Operations to review and approve. After the Director of Operations has approved the payroll packet, the ABM will upload the direct deposit file and pay corresponding payroll taxes. The Business Manager will review that the upload matches the direct deposit amount indicated in the packet.

The ABM will reconcile all payroll liabilities of the school on a monthly basis. Payroll liabilities will be paid on-time by their individual due dates. The BM will review all payroll liability reconciliations for accuracy. Once the BM has approved, the Director of Operations will review and approve.

Check Disbursements

The Director of Academics, Director of Operations and the Board Treasurer will have signatory rights on the school's bank account. None of these individuals will have access to cut checks from the accounting system or make changes to the General Ledger. Individuals from K12 Accounting with access to cut checks and make journal entries within the accounting system, will not have signatory authority on RioGAFA's bank accounts.

The ABM will prepare a review packet that includes the purchase order, a packing slip or sign off of services, and an invoice. The packet will go to the BM to review and check for allowability and accuracy. Once the BM has approved, the Director of Operations will review the checks with the corresponding accuracy. If all items are accurate, the Director of Operations will sign off on the disbursements.

Reliable Financial Information

The bank accounts of the school will be reconciled on a monthly basis within two weeks of month end by the BM. All bank reconciliations will tie back to the general ledger with zero variances. The Director of Operations will review and sign off on all bank reconciliations. The BM and Director of Operations will meet weekly to discuss financial matters. RioGAFA will hold monthly finance committee meetings in which a detailed packet with the schools' financials will be reviewed and discussed in detail.

The school will submit the PED Cash Report quarterly to the school's budget analyst at the NMPED. The PED Cash Report will have zero variances to the general ledger.

Operational Efficiency

RioGAFA and K12 Accounting will continue to work as a team to identify areas in which they can approve operational efficiency.

Compliance

The Director of Operations, the Business Manager and the Finance Committee will review business office procedures and internal controls on a yearly basis. As new applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, rules or GASB pronouncements become available, procedures and internal controls will be updated if necessary.

The Director of Operations and the Business Manager will attend the yearly New Mexico State Audit Rule training, the New Mexico Association of School Business Officials Fall and Spring Conferences annually as well as the yearly Spring Budget Conference put on in conjunction with the New Mexico

Public Education Department to gain more information on potential changes that may need to be made to procedures or internal controls.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all the internal control procedures that have been attached in Appendix H; • Attach in Appendix H internal control procedures the proposed school will utilize to assure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ safeguard assets ○ segregate its payroll ○ segregate cash and check disbursement duties ○ provide reliable financial information and promote operational efficiency ○ ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules; • Attach procedures that—based on the professional judgment of experienced, licensed, school business officials—successfully ensure appropriate segregation of duties; and • Provide a process the school will use to regularly evaluate compliance with the internal control procedures that have been attached in Appendix H and other internal control procedures that will be developed and implemented by the school.

RioGAFA meets criteria for providing a description of the internal control procedures they will utilize to safeguard assets, segregate its payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency and ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the proposed school's procedures. Descriptions provided about safeguard and specific regulations provided and included. However, it appears that RioGAFA has predesignated an Assistant Business Manager (ABM) provided by K12 Accounting. As the applicant has budgeted over \$60,000 for accounting services, they will have to go through the RFP process, so a specific company should not be named in the application.

Furthermore, RioGAFA states that the Director of Operations will approve the payroll packet which will then be uploaded by the ABM. Uploading the direct file should be a two-step process by two separate individuals to assure that the approved file has not been altered subsequent to approval and prior to upload.

C. (2) Identify the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks and ensure that the staff positions are **completely supported** in the organizational structure/chart and in the budget. Clearly provide the qualifications and responsibilities for those positions. Include evidence of a clear plan (e.g., job search process, timelines) to hire and evaluate highly qualified staff no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.

RioGAFA and K12 Accounting have been working collaboratively together in the preparation for the submission of this charter application. K12 Accounting came highly recommended as an expert in New Mexico Public School Finances and has a team of twenty highly qualified employees that serve public schools in New Mexico. Many of the Business Managers on the K12 Accounting team have experience working as external auditors, hold bachelor's and/or Master of Accountancy degrees, and are licensed Level II School Business Officials.

Per our organizational chart and Section II.D.(1) of our application, K12 Accounting is a contracted service. K12 Accounting will assign both a highly qualified Business Manager and Assistant Business Manager to work with the RioGAFA team on-site to provide high quality business management services. Immediately following the charter approval, the RioGAFA Governing Board will vote on a contract with K12 Accounting to immediately begin providing business management services.

Qualifications of a Business Manager and Assistant Business Manager that will meet the needs of the RioGAFA organization are outlined below.

Business Manager*Qualifications:***Education:**

- Required: Bachelor's Degree in accounting
- Preferred: Master's Degree in accounting. MBA and/or a CPA

Experience:

- A minimum of 2 years in School Business Office or similar environment and/or
- A minimum of 4 years of experience in a supervisory accounting role

Technical Requirements:

- Proficient using business software (e.g., MS Windows, MS Outlook, MS Word, and MS Excel, Adobe PDF, etc.)
- Proficient using computer equipment and associated peripherals (e.g., computers, laptops, scanners, printers, smart cell phones, etc.)
- Proficient in Cloud computing environment (e.g., MS Office 365, online banking, online storage, etc.)
- Familiarity with accounting concepts and terminology.
- Advanced knowledge of Microsoft computer programs (advanced knowledge of Excel, pivot tables, formulas, etc.)
- Knowledge of database structures, data verification methodology, operating systems, standard software applications.
- Knowledge of payroll accounting.
- Knowledge of school Ability, Visions and/or AptaFund software.

Other Requirements:

- Ability to pass employment verification and background check.
- Holds a New Mexico School Business Official License

*Responsibilities:**Monthly*

- Oversee Purchasing
- Oversee Accounts Payable including Travel & Per Diem
- Oversee Cash Receipts
- Oversee Bank Reconciliations
- Oversee Federal Programs
- Monitor Cash Flow
- Setup new vendors
- Setup new customers
- Maintains federal funds and reviews spending.
- Calculate indirect costs and enter journal entries.
- Submits Request for Reimbursement
- Journal entries as necessary
- Record, analyze and report financial transactions in accordance with General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and rules.
- Ensure compliance with Public Education Department General Administrative Regulations
- Provide the Governing Council/Board of Education with timely, accurate and relevant financial information in the form of a Finance Packet.
- Report to the Governing Council/Board of Education meetings.

Quarterly

- Provide all financial reporting to the New Mexico Public Education Department and required federal agencies including, but not limited to, Cash Reports.
- Review Maintenance of Effort
- Medicaid Reimbursements
- Review Open PO Listing
- Prepare and present all Budget Adjustment Requests, as required.

Annually

- Review and create annual vendor contracts.
- Enter/Import new FY POs for recurrent expenditures.
- Oversee audit, provide auditors with all necessary materials, and respond to and clear all audit findings.
- Review federal awards from the prior year that need to be spent by 09/30.
- Reviews and approves 1099s.
- 1099 Electronic Submission
- Semi-Annual Time & Effort Certifications
- Grant applications
- Grant amendments
- Annual budget preparation
- Present budget to the public, Board of Education and New Mexico Public Education Department, and respond to any questions as needed
- Analyze, develop, and implement policies, procedures and systems that improve the District/School business operations in efficiency and effectiveness.
- Invest District funds and maintain and review reconciliation of all investments, where applicable.

- Effectively handle employee and community complaints, problems and questions related to finance.

Assistant Business Manager*Qualifications:***Education:**

- Associates Degree with two semesters of accounting and/or business administration
- Preferred: Bachelor's Degree in accounting and/or business administration

Experience:

- One year in School Business Office or similar environment, or
- One year working as an accountant or bookkeeper for CPA or accounting firm.
- Experience requirement waived for new/recent college graduates.

Technical Requirements:

- Proficient using business software (e.g., MS Windows, MS Outlook, MS Word, and MS Excel, Adobe PDF, etc.)
- Proficient using computer equipment and associated peripherals (e.g., computers, laptops, scanners, printers, smart cell phones, etc.)
- Proficient in Cloud computing environment (e.g., MS Office 365, online banking, online storage, etc.)
- Familiarity with accounting concepts and terminology.

Other Requirements:

- Ability to pass employment verification and background check.

Responsibilities:

1. Compile and maintain K12 Accounting-compliant records for:
 - HR files for all employees
 - Vendor files for all vendors
 - Procurement files (as necessary)
 - Payroll records
 - Budget Adjustment Requests
 - Grants & associated Requests for Reimbursement
 - Governing Council Meeting Packets
 - Other miscellaneous records
2. Manage/coordinate all HR and Payroll activities including, but not limited to:
 - Collecting and entering timecards
 - Collecting and entering employee leave
 - Print Payroll checks
 - Reconcile Payroll Liabilities
3. Manage/coordinate all purchasing activities including, but not limited to:
 - Process all Purchase Requisitions
 - Place approved orders
 - Process order receipts

- Enter invoices
 - Print A/P checks
- 4. Enter cash receipts
- 5. Maintain Capital Asset and Inventory records
- 6. Scan and upload all document to K12 Accounting Cloud storage
- 7. Support the following activities as necessary:
 - Budget development
 - Financial audit
 - Fiscal Year End transition
- 8. Support Business Manager as necessary

In addition to the K12 Accounting Business Manager and Assistant Business Manager, the Director of Operations and Office Manager will also be involved in different financial tasks for the school.

Director of Operations

Qualifications:

The Director of Operations must be filled by someone with financial experience and the willingness and ability to collaborate with the K12 Accounting Team.

Both the proposed Director of Academics and Director of Operations have been actively involved in preparing the budget and developing the overall financial framework of this charter application. In addition, both proposed Directors have assisted K12 Accounting in developing the RioGAFA financial policies for the Governing Board as well as the Internal Controls procedures.

The proposed Director of Operations worked hand-in-hand with K12 Accounting to build a budget that reflected the school's mission and academic goals and create business office procedures and internal controls that ensure the safeguarding of the school's assets. The Director of Operations will serve as the school's Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) and be responsible for final approval of payroll, disbursements, and Purchase Orders. The job description with a full listing of qualifications and responsibilities can be found in Appendix B.

Hiring Timeline:

Immediately following the charter approval, the RioGAFA Governing Board will follow the appropriate hiring process to hire the Director of Operations, as outlined in Section II.C.(2). The Founding Team will hire this position within the first sixty days following approval.

Office Manager

Qualifications:

The Office Manager will work with the Director of Operations and K12 Accounting to assist with collecting cash receipts, entering in purchase requisitions, and receiving and verifying orders for the school. The job description with a full listing of qualifications and responsibilities can be found in Appendix C.

Hiring Timeline:

RioGAFA will begin their search for an Office Manager in late Spring of 2022 by posting the position on Indeed, LinkedIn and NMASBO's website. The candidates will be interviewed and evaluated by the Director of Operations and the Director of Academics. RioGAFA hopes to have this position start by July 1, 2022.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the appropriate staff to perform each financial task identified in the response to B(1) and all other required financial tasks; • Align completely with the organizational chart from response to D(1) in the Organizational Framework; • Align completely with the budget in A(1) and A(2) responses in Financial Framework; • Describe appropriate qualifications and responsibilities for each of the identified positions; and • Include a plan that will result in the recruitment, identification, the evaluation of candidates, and the hiring of highly qualified staff for each of the identified positions, no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.

RioGAFA approaches the criteria for this section, but does not specify RFP services for K12 Accounting. The applicant states, "per our organizational chart and Section II.D.(1) of our application, K12 Accounting is a contracted service. K12 Accounting will assign both a highly qualified Business Manager and Assistant Business Manager to work with the RioGAFA team on-site to provide high quality business management services. Immediately following the charter approval, the RioGAFA Governing Board will vote on a contract with K12 Accounting to immediately begin providing business management services. " As stated in other areas of this document, an RFP to procure this service is required since the cost of this service, per the budget, will be greater than \$60,000. It is also unclear who will submit year W-2's to the SSA, it is not a part of any staff members' job description. The applicant also states that the business manager has familiarity with accounting concepts and terminology. This is concerning because a highly qualified business manager should have more than a familiarity, they should have a vast knowledge of accounting concepts and terminology.

C.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for how the Governing Body will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight, include the responsibilities of the state-required audit and finance committees, and explain how these committees will operate in the proposed school's overall governance and management.

The RioGAFA Governing Council will be responsible for financial oversight of the school. As the oversight body, the governing council will approve payment vouchers, approve budget adjustment requests (BARs), approve significant contracts of the school, and approve the Directors employment

contracts and set their salaries. The RioGAFA Governing Council will appoint members of the Governing Council to sit on both the Finance Committee and the Audit Committee.

Finance Committee

The Treasurer and an additional board member with financial experience will be appointed by the RioGAFA board to serve on the Finance Committee. The Director of Operations and the Business Manager will serve as ex officio members of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will meet monthly with the Director of Operations and the Business Manager to review the school's monthly finance packet prepared by the Business Manager.

Monthly, the Finance Committee will review any Budget Adjustment Requests (BARs), review disbursements, review bank reconciliations, review financial statements and other analytical information, review the quarterly cash reports, review journal entries, and review the outstanding Request for Reimbursement (RfR) requests of the school.

Yearly, the Finance Committee (in conjunction with the Business Manager and Director of Operations). They will also sit on the Budget Committee and be involved and provide input in the yearly budget prepared by the school.

The Finance Committee will report to the other members of the Governing Council on the status of the school's financial health and provide a "do pass" or "do not pass" recommendation to the other members of the Governing Council for the financial related consent agenda items.

Audit Committee

RioGAFA will create a yearly Audit committee to oversee the annual external audit. The Governing Council will appoint two board members with financial experience to sit on the Audit Committee. The school will also obtain a community member with financial expertise and a parent to sit on the Audit Committee. The Director of Operations and the Business Manager will serve as ex officio members of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee will meet with the auditors at the beginning of the audit in an audit entrance conference. The committee members will continue to meet monthly until the audit has been released by the New Mexico State Auditor's Office. At the conclusion of the audit, the committee will meet with the auditors in the audit exit conference. If the school receives findings, the committee will work with the Director of Operations and the Business Manager to create a corrective action plan (CAP) that addresses the issue.

Once the audit has been released by the New Mexico State Auditor's Office, the audit will be discussed with Governing Council members in a public meeting.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Meets

A complete response must

- Describe how the Governing Body audit and finance committees will be formed and how they will:
 - Function generally
 - Ensure proper legal oversight
 - Ensure proper financial oversight;
- Describe how the proposed school's audit and finance committees will interact with the school's management; and
- Describe how the audit and finance committees will interact with the full Governing Body.

RioGAFA meets criteria for how the governing board will provide fiscal and legal oversight. They identify specific committees in order to provide oversight of both financial and legal logistics for the proposed school.

IV. Evidence of Support

A. Outreach Activities.

A. (1) Provide **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** evidence that you have developed an effective and thoughtful outreach program. Provide **sound** evidence that you have addressed a broad audience to develop community support for the proposed school. Provide clear descriptions of outreach activities, demonstrating that the applicant is attempting to reach a broad audience and understand the community's needs.

- Description
 - The mission of RioGAFA is to educate students through an arts integration curriculum that promotes problem solving and creativity and supports all K-12 students to achieve grade-level standards. To do this effectively, the Founding Team understands that the support of the community is necessary. RioGAFA will be a community hub for the arts community of New Mexico, and partnerships with long-lasting relationships are essential to make this happen. The Founding Team began reaching out to community members starting in November 2020. Meetings were done virtually and were one-to-one with a member of the Founding Team. The Founding Team felt that the best way to gain community support was to meet with people individually to allow for questions and ideas to originate in a small setting. Since November, the team has met with over 159 people ranging from parents, teachers, art organizations, business associations, educational organizations, nonprofits, and elected officials. As in-person events were not an option for the Founding Team to participate in, online social media platforms were heavily used to find individuals interested in supporting RioGAFA. Using platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook provided access to many different individuals that the Founding Team then reached out to individuals to facilitate meetings.
- Participation in Specific Activities
 - The Founding Team was creative in participating in socially distant events and reached a broad audience of people. The team was fortunate to participate in a television interview with the KAZQ station, where they were able to share the mission and vision of RioGAFA to an audience that reached constituents in New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado. Screenshots from this interview can be seen below.





- In addition to this interview, the RioGAFA team went to grocery stores within the proposed zip codes to place flyers on vehicles that directed people to our Facebook page. The flyer used can be seen below:

**COMING FALL 2022
to the Albuquerque Westside**



RIO GRANDE
ACADEMY of FINE ARTS

The vision of Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (Rio GAFA) is to educate creative learners with the first academically rigorous, arts-integrated, and arts-enhanced education accessible to all Kindergarten through 12th-grade students.

Please show your support for our vision by using the QR Code to fill out our Community Support Form and don't forget to

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/RioGrandeAcademyofFineArts>



- RioGAFA was recently asked to be a part of two events as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. The first of which occurred on May 8th, 2021. This event occurred in Old Town and was for the opening of a new coffee shop named "The Flying Roadrunner." The Founding Team was able to talk to patrons of the new shop about the school and its mission and vision. Photos taken from this event can be seen below.





- Future Plan of Events
 - As previously stated, restrictions are beginning to lift for Bernalillo County. With that, RioGAFA has developed a plan for events that will start in July, assuming that state restrictions will allow for community events to occur. These events are outlined below:
 - Paint Nights - Michele Platis and Kathy McClendon, members of The Founding Team, will be hosting paint nights for interested parents and business associations at the Taylor Ranch Community Center, West Mesa Community Center, and the Westside Community Center. A founding team member will attend these events to present the framework of RioGAFA and allow for community input from families. The Founding Team has reached out to all three community centers regarding scheduling. However, the community centers are waiting until restrictions are fully lifted in Bernalillo County to allow us to schedule these events.
 - Farmers Market Participation - The RioGAFA team wishes to start building community relationships within consistent events that occur weekly within Albuquerque. One of these events is the Downtown Farmer's Market that occurs weekly in downtown Albuquerque. RioGAFA has been in contact with the facilitator of the market and, providing all state restrictions have been lifted, we have planned to attend the following dates to promote RioGAFA:
 - July 17th, 2021
 - July 24th, 2021
 - Informal Information Connections - The Founding Team believes that in-person connections are essential in gaining support. We will be holding monthly activities at local grocery stores where the Founding Team will pass out literature regarding RioGAFA and meet with residents one-on-one to gain interest and awareness.
- Evidence Broad Audience
 - As previously stated, the primary strategy used for the Founding Team of RioGAFA was one-on-one virtual meetings with community members to gain interest. Below is a comprehensive list of all community members that we have met with, categorized as parents, business associations, potential board members, educational organizations, and elected officials.

**Figure 8.8 Evidence of Meetings
Parents/Community Members**

Date	Name	Title	Organization	Purpose
08/15/2020	Renay Silva	Administrative Assistant	Retired	Spoke with Renay about developing and writing a charter, helpful in finding resources.

09/15/2020	Valerie Carley	Administrative Assistant	Sandia Laboratories	Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.
09/24/2020	Jill Dooner	Teacher	Explore Academy	Spoke with Jill about the mission and vision of RioGAFA, sought advice, compared charter school notes.
10/01/2020	Mariana Vasquez	Special Ed Teacher	V. Sue Cleveland High School	Spoke with Mariana about a potential position as a teacher.
10/01/2020	Gabreila Carcereio	Special Ed Teacher	V. Sue Cleveland High School	Spoke with Gabriela about a potential position as a teacher.
10/12/2020	Justin Makemson	Professor	UNM College of Fine Arts & Art Ed	Spoke with Justin regarding a partnership with RioGAFA, with the UNM Dual Credit program.
11/2/2020	Ryan Beach	Community Member		Spoke to Ryan about the RioGAFA mission and vision
11/19/2020	Theresa Archuleta	Co-Director	Tierra Adentro of New Mexico	Met with Theresa to discuss experiences with arts in charter schools.
12/22/2020	Julie Geldmacher	Chief Instructional Officer	North Valley Academy	Spoke to Julie about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and the proposed coaching model.
1/11/2021	Teisha Kyla	Parent		Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.
1/15/2021	Vicki Breen	Arts Consultant	NM PED	Talked about the arts integrated curriculum charter school plan
1/25/2021	Karen Grudzinskas	Artisan	Retired	Spoke with Karen about potential board position
1/25/2021	Lisa Herrera	Retired		Spoke to Lisa about the RioGAFA vision and mission. Lisa is a retired folklorico dancer and a current singer.
1/28/21	Alberto Cantos	Teacher		Spoke with Alberto about a potential position as a teacher.
1/29/2021	Veronica Toledo		United Students and Parents	Spoke with Veronica about formal board membership as well as ideas around family engagement.
2/8/2021	Erika Brown	Parent		Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.
2/8/2021	Laurel Berez	Parent		Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.

2/10/2021	Eugenia Torres	Community Member		Spoke to Eugenia about the RioGAFA vision and mission.
2/15/2021	Joel Adelstone	CPA	Self Employed	Spoke about the process of writing the charter and approval.
2/17/2021	James Clark	Artist	Self Employed	Spoke about possible partnership and mentoring of students
2/17/2021	Paul Torres	Community Member		Spoke to Paul about the RioGAFA mission and vision
2/18/2021	Paula Lopez	Educational Assistant	Various Schools	Spoke about community support.
2/20/2021	Celina Herrera	Community Member		Spoke to Celina about the RioGAFA mission and vision.
2/20/2021	Marissa Hughes-Naz	Educator	Mission Achievement and Success	Talked about the new charter school plan
2/26/2021	Erika Quist	Owner/Operator	Studio 6 Salon	Spoke with Erika with regards to a partnership to teach business and entrepreneurship to RioGAFA students as the company's philanthropy work to the future RioGAFA foundation.
2/26/2021	Carolina Gonzales	Parent		Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.
3/2/2021	Sherrye Hubbard	Chief Academic Officer	Mission Achievement and Success	Spoke with Sherrye about a curriculum that would integrate well with the arts.
3/4/2021	Sharon Hughes	Children's Author	Self Employed	Spoke with Sharon about potential partnership and mentorship.
3/13/2021	Brian Wilkening	Educator	North Valley Academy	Talked about the new charter school plan
3/18/2021	Morgan Wilson	Community Member		Spoke to Morgan about the vision and mission of RioGAFA
3/20/2021	Dominique Espot	Staff Engineer	Jacobs	Spoke with Dominique about the arts-integration model.
3/24/2021	Cherish Dranberg	Weapon System Software	Air Force Safety Center	Spoke with Cherish on ideas on how to incorporate STEM strategies with arts-integration.

3/27/2021	Tyler Griffith	Senior software Engineer	Automated Election Services	Spoke to Tyler about the mission and vision of RioGAFA.
3/29/2021	Emily Stringer	Salon Coordinator	Lavish Hair Lounge	Spoke with Emily and the mission and vision of RioGAFA.
3/31/21	Stefanie Oelrich	Parent		Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.
04/02/2021	Matthew Dillard	Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant	Indigo Therapy	Spoke with Matt about promoting RioGAFA to his organization and what strategies would work with students in need of Occupational Therapy.
04/02/2021	Nattalie Dillard	Patient Services Specialist	New Mexico Orthopaedics Associates	Spoke with Natalie about promoting RioGAFA to his organization and what strategies would work with students in need of Occupational Therapy.
04/02/2021	Paul Jenks	Acupuncturist	Shendao Family Center	Spoke to Paul about the RioGAFA mission and vision.
4/2/2021	Jayma Reid	Realtor/Westside and former teacher	Reid Realty	Spoke to Jayma about a letter of support and need for a fine arts school on the Westside.
4/3/2021	Azil Pay	Teacher		Spoke with Azil about potential position as a teacher.
4/11/2021	Lorraine Chavez	College and Career Readiness Counselor	Albuquerque Public Schools	Spoke with Lorraine about college and career strategies for future RioGAFA high school.
4/12/2021	Elizabeth Owens	AP Secretary	Albuquerque Public Schools	Spoke to Betsy about strategies for enrollment and bookkeeping for RioGAFA.
4/15/2021	Lydia Flores	Public School Teacher	APS	Talked about the new charter school plan
4/18/2021	Melanie Telles	Community Member		Spoke with Melanie about connections to non-profit organizations for RioGAFA support as well as parent groups.
4/18/2021	Lea Anderson	Artist/Professor	CNM/Harwood Art Center	Spoke with Lea regarding a partnership with RioGAFA, as a teaching artist and CNM Dual Credit program.

4/18/2021	Angela Murray	Assistant Principal	Mission Achievement and Success	Spoke about a potential internship during RioGAFA's planning year
4/18/2021	Erika Black	Special Ed Teacher/Artisan	RRPS	Spoke with Erika about a potential position as a teacher.
4/19/2021	Aaron Romero	Lead Technician	Cypress Communication System	Spoke with Aaron about potential partnership for RioGAFA facility communication.
4/19/2021	Phyllis Kennedy	Volunteer	NM Arts	Spoke about the NM Arts grant and how RioGAFA can apply for the grant and seeking support
4/23/2021	Lauren	Artist	Retired	Talked about the new charter school plan
4/23/2021	Emily VanDyke	Math Instructional Coach	Mission Achievement and Success Charter	Spoke about consultation about the math curriculum for RioGAFA.
4/24/21	Larry Lovato	Guitarist	Community Member	Talk about the future of RioGAFA and addressing the socioemotional needs of its students.
4/27/2021	Claudia Terrazas Zamora	Parent		Spoke to Claudia about enrollment opportunities.
4/28/2021	Gigi Bella	Poet/Artist		Spoke about working with RioGAFA to help promote and build a partnership for a potential workshop for our students.
4/28/2021	Bonnie Dismore	Parent		Spoke to parent about enrollment opportunities
5/1/2021	M. Spader	Artist	Retired Business Owner	Spoke with Mr. Spader about RioGAFA starting next year
5/1/2021	Zachary Martinez	Artist	Self Employed	Spoke to Zachary about partnering with RioGAFA to commission murals for the school and teaching students
5/1/2021	Sergio Herrera	Engineer	Sandia National Labs	Spoke with Sergio about the RioGAFA vision and mission
5/1/2021	Dale Griego	Retired		Spoke to Dale about RioGAFA vision and mission. She had seen the new interview with the RioGAFA Founders.

5/4/2021	TJ Bonzon	computer science, robotics, STEM & animation editor/instructor/coach, Dean of Students	Los Alamos Public Schools	Shared the vision and mission of RioGAFA Talked about the needs of the school.
5/5/2021	Diana Knapp	Office Personnel	APS Offices	Shared about the new charter school preparation
5/5/2021	Jennifer Hillsey	Teacher	Saint Pius X High School	Spoke to Jennifer about RioGAFA. She will write us a letter of support as a parent and educator.
5/10/2021	Eva Vigil	Retired	APS Offices	Spoke with Eva about RioGAFA's vision and mission. She will be writing us a letter of support and is already serving on a charter board.
5/10/2021	Anamargarita Otero	Community Outreach Director	APS	Spoke with Anamargarita about the RioGAFA vision and mission. She will be writing a letter of support for RioGAFA to be located in her district.
5/13/2021	Tennise Lucas	Dean of Students	Mission Achievement and Success Charter School	Spoke with Tennise about a partnership for college and career services for RioGAFA.
5/13/2021	Andrea Boltwood	College and Career Counselor	Mission Achievement and Success Charter School	Spoke with Andrea about a partnership for college and career services for RioGAFA.
5/13/2021	Duncan McIvor	ELA Instructional Coach	Mission Achievement and Success	Spoke with Duncan about the mission and vision of RioGAFA.
5/16/2021	Bryan Galbadon	Counselor	Highland High School	Spoke with Bryan about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and the possibility of needing a guidance/scheduling counselor.
5/18/2021	Rick Platis	Operating Officer	Upstate Medical University	Spoke with Rick about the mission and vision of RioGAFA.
5/18/2021	Amanda Catanzaro	Chief Operating Officer	North Valley Academy Charter	Spoke about location and student recruitment for RioGAFA.
5/19/2021	Felicia Castro	Artist	University of Georgia/Las Cruces, NM	Spoke with Felicia about the RioGAFA mission and

				invited her to be a teaching artist
05/19/2021	Rebecca Babinski	Nurse Practitioner	Women's Pelvic Specialty	Spoke with parent about enrollment opportunities.
5/19/2021	Bruce Langston	Community Member		Spoke to Bruce about potential board membership
5/20/2021	Rachel Rounsville Christensen	Artist	Self Employed	Spoke with Rachel about the RioGAFA mission and invited her to be a teaching artist
5/20/2021	Bonnie Hager	Teacher		Spoke with Bonnie about a potential teaching position.
5/20/2021	John Dao	Teacher	MAS	Spoke to John about the RioGAFA mission and vision.
5/22/2021	Kelly Luzzi	Art Teacher	Rio Rancho Public Schools	Talked to Kelly about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and PD around teaching indigenous cultures.
5/24/2021	Miguel Lastra	Artist	Rhode Island School of Art and Design	Spoke with Miguel about the RioGAFA mission and invited him to be a teaching artist
10/15/2021	Jessie DuBois	Artistic Outreach Director	National Dance Institute	Spoke to Jessie about potential partnership and enrollment opportunities.
11/2/2021	Jenn Prye	Assistant Principal	MAS	Spoke to Jenn about the RioGAFA mission and vision.

Business Associations

Date	Name	Title	Organization	Purpose
1/28/2021	Linda Pino-MacEachen	Sales Representative	Clear Channel	Spoke with Linda about market tools for RioGAFA and a potential partnership.
11/20/2020	Ronald Ortiz	Construction Manager	APS	Discussed potential construction projects for the school
2/3/2021	Scott Hindman	Executive Director	Excellent Schools New Mexico	Spoke to Scott about the mission and vision of RioGAFA.
02/03/2021	Angela Muxworthy	VP Mortgage Lending	Nusenda Credit Union	Spoke with Angela regarding a partnership with Nusenda community foundation and the RioGAFA foundation

2/9/2021	Shelly Cherrin	Consultant	Advance New Mexico	Spoke to Shelly about reviewing RioGAFA mission and vision.
2/16/2021	Mike Vigil	Business Manager	The Vigil Group	Spoke to Mike about RioGAFA partnership with The Vigil Group.
2/17/2021	Bryan Runyan	Co-Founder/CEO	K12 Accounting	Spoke to Bryan about RioGAFA partnership with K12
2/18/2021	Katie Rarick	Client Manager	EdTec	Spoke to Katie about RioGAFA partnership with K12
2/24/2021	Melissa Sanchez	Executive Director	Albuquerque Westside Business Association	About new charter and partnerships
2/25/2021	Liz Salganek	Artistic Director	NDI	Spoke to Liz about RioGAFA and NDI partnering for dance classes for kids.
3/15/2021	Patty Matthews	Attorney	Matthews & Fox	Spoke with Patty about RioGAFA representation.
3/18/2021	Dan Hill	Attorney	InAccord	Spoke with Dan about RioGAFA representation.
3/24/2021	Rachael Maestas	Owner	RM Communications	Spoke with Rachael regarding communications work for RioGAFA and connections that may be interested in partnering.
3/31/2021	Nathan Shiferaw		New Schools Inc	Spoke to Nathan about potential partnership with RioGAFA and NSI.
4/2/2021	Jayma Reid	Realtor/Westside and former teacher	Reid Realty	Spoke to Jayma about a letter of support and need for a fine arts school on the Westside.
4/2/2021	Shari Montoya	Business Director	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and initial contact for possible support and partnership with Rio Grande and RioGAFA.
4/5/2021	John Langley	Receiving Team Leader	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with John about the mission and vision of RioGAFA
4/5/2021	Gilbert Sanchez	Inventory Management	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with Gilbert about the mission and vision of RioGAFA

4/5/2021	Rosa Martinez	Receiving Associate	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with Rosa about the mission and vision of RioGAFA
4/5/2021	David Schneider	Inventory Management	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with David about the mission and vision of RioGAFA
4/5/2021	Joseph Donnelly	Receiving Associate	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with Joseph about the mission and vision of RioGAFA
4/5/2021	Desiree Robledo	Receiving Associate	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke with Desiree about the mission and vision of RioGAFA
4/10/2021	Shira Greenburg	Founder/Director	Keshet Dance & Center for the Arts	Talked about the new charter school plan. She was happy to write a letter of support.
4/17/2021	Rochell Lopez	Broker	Cyber Agent Insurance	Spoke about insurance for the school once we have a building.
4/18/2021	Augustine Chris Baca	Director	Yes! Housing	Reached out to gain community support from Yes! housing in regards to purchasing a building for Rio GAFA
4/21/2021	John McCarthy	Sales Director	Canteen of New Mexico	Spoke with John about food services and partnership for RioGAFA.
4/25/2021	Carr McClendon	Financial Consultant	Retired	Talked about the new charter school plan
4/25/2021	Sarah Fitzgerald	SCP of Policy Research & Strategic Communications of Greater Alb Chamber of Commerce		Community Support and Partnership
4/27/2021	Alber Sanchez	Owner	Albert Sanchez Bus Company	Spoke to Albert about bus quotes and the process to secure a contract.
4/28/2021	Alfredo Barrenechea	Qualifying Broker	Absolute Investment Realty	Spoke about the acquisition of a facility and next step plans for RioGAFA.
4/28/2021	Aaron Clark	Manager	Panera Bakery	Spoke with Aaron about a possible fundraiser for the school.
4/30/2021	Monica Nunez	Director	MANA de Albuquerque, A National Latina Organization	Spoke with Monica about a potential partnership with RioGAFA to serve her community of parents.

5/1/2021	Kim Koonce	Artist and Accounts Manager	ABQ Construction Company	Talked about the arts integrated curriculum charter school plan
5/1/2021	Chris Chavez	Videographer	Chavez Creative Company	Spoke with Chris about partnering with our students to provide film classes.
5/1/2021	Sarah Grado	Owner/Operator	Flying Roadrunner	Spoke with Sarah about RioGAFA and attending events at the cafe to promote the school.
5/1/2021	Ambrose Martinez	Owner/Operator	Flying Roadrunner	Spoke with Ambrose about RioGAFA mission and vision and partnership with to attend events at the cafe to promote the school.
5/3/2021	Mark Fidel	Co-Founder	US at RiskSense	Spoke with Mark about a potential board member and also future support and connections he had.
5/9/2021	David Ortiz	Owner/Operator	Albuquerque Tents	Spoke with David with regards to the company's philanthropy work and asking for support for the future RioGAFA foundation
5/10/2021	Scott Benson	Salesman	Davis Publications	Spoke with Scott regarding how Davis Publications can support the curriculum of Rio GAFA
5/11/2021	Molly Bell	Executive Vice President	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke about the vision and mission as well as potential Board member and what a partnership can look like
5/11/2021	Janet Haldeman	Executive Assistant	Rio Grande Jewelry	Spoke about the vision and mission as well as potential Board member and what a partnership can look like
5/20/2021	Nancy Walkup	Editor	School Arts Magazine	Spoke with Nancy regarding the school and it mission and having School Arts Publication's support
5/20/2021	Adam Greenhood	Owner/Operator	Ad Wallet	Spoke with Adam regarding partnership, providing internships and support for the RioGAFA Foundation
5/21/2021	Tim McGrath	Owner/Operator	3 Advertising	Spoke with Tim regarding partnership, providing internships and support for the RioGAFA Foundation

Potential Board Members

Date	Name	Title	Organization	Purpose
7/12/2020	Kathy McClendon	Administrator	Retired	Spoke to Kathy to discuss potential board membership
1/14/2021	Susan McConnell	Head Administrator	North Valley Academy	Spoke with Susan to discuss official position on the Board
2/12/2021	Jenn Pena	CEO	JMP Academy	Spoke to Jenn about formal board membership.
2/21/2021	Jonathan Miller	Attorney	Law Officer C. Miller	Spoke to Jonathan about a potential board position.
2/25/2021	Bruce Langston	Head Coach	APS	Spoke to Bruce about potential board membership.
2/28/2021	Paul Jew	Film Maker	MojiCinema	Spoke to Paul about a potential board position.
4/22/2021	Lee Baldwin	Accounting Director	Baldwin Accounting & Consulting, LLC	Talked about the new charter school plan
5/1/2021	Lee Baldwin	Certified Public Accountant	Baldwin CPA	Second interview for board membership.
5/4/2021	Amer Child	Sr. Solutions Engineer	RiskSense	Spoke with Amer about potential board membership. He is interested in speaking to current board members as a secondary conversation.
5/6/2021	Christine Mya-san	Channel Manager	Roquette America Inc	Spoke with Chrisitne about board membership.
5/21/21	Deian McBryde	Attorney	McBryde Law	Spoke to Deian about potential board membership

Educators/Educational Organizations

Date	Name	Title	Organization	Purpose
11/20/2020	Matt Pahl	Executive Director	Public Charter Schools of New Mexico	Spoke with Matt to discuss the Notice of Intent for RioGAFA and the mission and vision.
11/20/2020	Susan Lumley	Director of School Quality and Support	Public Charter Schools of New Mexico	Spoke with Susan to discuss the Notice of Intent for RioGAFA and the mission and vision.
11/30/2020	Sean Duncan	Founder	Thrive Community Charter School	Spoke to Sean about experiences with the Notice of Intent as well as ideas for our applications.
12/10/2020	Sarah Nager	ELA Coach	Navigator, AF Accelerate	Talk about new charter school plan and using the Achievement First curriculum
1/7/2021	Eric Crites	Head of School	New Mexico School for the Arts	Spoke with Eric about the model of NMSA and how to find educators to teach arts classes.

2/3/2021	Alexandra Boyd	CEO	The Ask Academy	Spoke to Alexandra about the mission and vision of RioGAFA as well as ideas surrounding application narratives.
2/8/2021	Rachael Sowards	Founder	Solare Collegiate Charter School	Spoke to Rachael about contacts for business managers and realtors.
2/16/2021	Steve Heil	President	New Mexico Art Educators Association	Talked about the new charter school plan and support for fine arts school
2/18/2021	Neil Swapp	Director	New Mexico Music Educators Association	Talked about the new charter school plan and support for fine arts school
2/26/2021	Issac Rivas-Save II	Founder	Voz Collegiate Charter School	Spoke with Issac about the application process and insight for systems and routines.
2/26/2021	Chris Eide	Head Administrator	Turquoise Trail Charter School	Spoke to Chris about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and insight to building a school community.
3/5/2021	Jade Rivera	Founder/Executive Director	Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School	Spoke with Jade about the application process and ideas surrounding community support.
3/23/2021	Harris Smith	Dean	UNM College of Fine Arts	Spoke with Dean Harris regarding partnership of UNM and RioGAFA to provide arts instruction.
4/18/2021	Roddy Thompson	Board Member	Albuquerque Museum of Art	Reached out to gain community support and partnership from the museum.
4/20/2021	Lara Beard	Children's PreSchool Director	Tennessee Faith Based Company	Talked about the new charter school plan
5/3/2021	Nick Jones	Teacher/Manager	Music On The Westside	Spoke with Nick about a partnership of his teaching staff and RioGAFA. He will be writing a letter of support for the future partnership.
5/4/2021	Minea Armijo	Faulty	CNM Teacher Preparatory Program	Spoke to Minea about a partnership with RioGAFA and CNM. She will be writing a letter of support stating a potential partnership.
5/14/2021	Denise Balderas	NM ABLE Coordinator	New Mexico Highlands University	Spoke with Denise about a partnership with NMHU for professional development and student teacher pipeline.
5/19/2021	Charles Gamble	Artistic Director	Kennedy Center	Spoke with Charles regarding how RioGAFA will adopt the Kennedy Center's philosophy of arts integration in its curriculum.

5/21/2021	Diane Thomas	Principal	Dorn Community Charter School	Spoke with Diane about ideas to incorporate film into the high school offerings for RioGAFA students.
5/25/2021	Christine Lutz	Principal	Southwest Secondary Learning Center	Spoke with Christine about the mission and vision of RioGAFA

Elected Officials

Date	Name	Title	Organization	Purpose
02/10/2021	Steven Michael Quezada	Chair	Bernalillo County Board of Commissioners	Spoke with Steven about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and ideas or potential locations and connections for support. In addition, we discussed formal board membership.
5/4/2021	Antonio "Moe" Maestas	Representative	NM House	Spoke to Representative Maestas about RioGAFA. He will write a letter of support and also reach out to two neighborhood associations on the behalf of RioGAFA.
5/24/2021	Steven Carrillo	Commissioner	District Ten	Spoke with Commissioner Carrillo regarding the mission and vision of RioGAFA.
12/01/2021	Melissa Armijo	Public Education Commissioner	District One	Spoke with Melissa about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and ideas or potential locations and connections for support.
12/01/2021	Rebekka Burt	Public Education Commissioner	District Four	Spoke with Rebekka about the mission and vision of RioGAFA and ideas or potential locations and connections for support.
5/24/2021	Georgene Louis	Representative	House	Spoke to Georgene about future plans of RioGAFA
5/25/2021	Daniel Silva	Representative	House	Spoke to Daniel about the possibility of advocacy for facility funding.

- Online Presence
 - RioGAFA started a Facebook page in November 2020. Since initiation, we have over 568 followers. The Founding Team feels strongly that focusing on a Facebook Page was a logistical move to gain interest. The Founding Team uses the Facebook Page to update the community of the school's progress and updates with information regarding partnerships and supporters that have stepped up to write letters of support for the organization. We have also launched an introduction video to the community introducing the Founding Team and their background in the arts and their passion for providing access to the arts to the New Mexico Community. We also have a standing petition linked to our updates and our Facebook Page that will be presented in Section IV.B.

- Understanding the Needs of the Community
 - Throughout our meetings and interaction with the community, the overwhelming theme is that there is a need for the westside of Albuquerque to have a charter school that is focused on fine arts and arts integration. However, in talking to parents, the concern was that RioGAFA would not hold the standard of academics as high as other schools. In looking at the mission with these families, The Founding Team was able to explain to parents that the team's commitment was to develop a rigorous academic program alongside a well-developed and well-rounded arts integration model and fine arts department. This message was well-received by families and potential students. Data will be presented in the following sections outlining the support that RioGAFA received and testimonials from people willing to show their support.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe an outreach program to develop community support for the proposed school that has been implemented during the application process; ● Describe specific activities that have been implemented, include evidence of implementation; ● Include evidence that demonstrates the activities reached a broad audience that is representative of the community in which the proposed school will be located; and ● Describe how this outreach has enabled the applicant team to understand the needs of the community in which the proposed school intends to locate.

RioGAFA meets criteria for their community outreach program. They provide evidence of multiple sources for community outreach to gain support for the school community.

B. Community Support.

B. (1) Provide **sufficient measurable**, quantifiable, and **qualitative** data-based evidence of abundant, broad-based support for the proposed school among residents in the targeted community. (For instance, provide the total number of students interested in the charter by grade level. **DO NOT provide names or specific letters of interest from families or students.** If appropriate, to support earlier descriptions of the anticipated demographics of the students who will be served by the proposed school, disaggregate the number of prospective students by zip code, school of attendance (current), gender, type of current school (home, private, public), or other pertinent data.

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts strives to be a community hub for the New Mexico arts community. To do that, the Founding Team participated in a widespread outreach program to gain the support of parents, students, community members, and business associations within the proposed zip codes. It was essential to the team that as many different stakeholders were engaged as possible to ensure support.

This engagement began with a survey that was sent to members of the community. The survey asked participants to provide information regarding zip code and interest in the school and any short testimonials they wish to present on behalf of RioGAFA. To date, we have 179 signatures on our Google Form. Our efforts to gain signatures on the Google Form were built around placing informational materials easily accessible to the public but following the COVID-19 guidelines.

We created a plan of engagement from this survey to include one-on-one meetings, email newsletter listserv, and follow-up meetings with potential partners. We currently have 120 people signed up for our newsletter and 42 committed to sending students there. Additionally, we have 20 parents interested in sending students to RioGAFA, but these students are not included in our initial grade level opening plan of Kindergarten, 1st, and 6th. Following the information given, we approached people willing to write short narratives of why they supported opening a fine arts-integrated charter school on the westside. To date, we have 104 narratives that include the following highlights showing support for RioGAFA. The following narratives are from participants within the proposed zip codes of 87114, 87120, 87121, and 87124:

- “A high quality education is incomplete without the arts, and the arts can't fulfill their societal role unless informed by a good education. There is a need for a school with a symbiotic balance of the two.”
- “A performing arts school is well overdue for ABQ's westside.”
- “I hope when my children are old enough for school they experience the joy of artistry. I drew constantly in elementary, learned dance in middle school, and love drama/acting and singing in high school. I feel skills learned in different arts helped me be a better student and I would enroll my children in a school like RioGAFA instead of the current traditional public or private schools available.”
- “I think having options for students of all interests is important. We have schools where academics or online learning is available. We need to have the same option for students who are passionate about the arts.”
- “I went to an art school for college, I know how important the arts are for children first hand. This school will be a wonderful addition to Albuquerque.”
- “Not every kid learns the same way. We need more schools to provide variety in learning. Arts in the public school system is underwhelming, overlooked and under-appreciated.”
- “Promoting Arts is just as important as the promotion of STEM!”

- “We need more arts-integrated education systems in Albuquerque that offer quality programs. New Mexico is trailing behind most states in terms of education and this could be part of the solution.”
- “An integrated arts school is necessary for Albuquerque because arts develop imagination and imagination is the pathway to learning.”
- “Arts are so crucial to creating well-balanced students. Studies show that arts education also increases reading comprehension and math literacy skills in addition to addressing much needed SEL skills.”
- “As a middle school teacher, I encounter numerous students who want to attend a performing arts based high school but can't make the drive across town. A school of this kind is desperately needed to give our more creative students an outlet that allows them to be who they are.”
- “I think an arts integrated school would benefit the community as well as those who have a passion for the arts. Not everyone learns in the “traditional” way and this school could be an opportunity for those who learn more through right brain processes (creativity, music, movement, art, etc). It would give these individuals a place where they can thrive.”
- “New Mexico is filled with the arts, every child in New Mexico needs the opportunity to embark on the adventure of art through education.”
- “The Arts is constantly put on the back burner in public education. It is vital for the well-roundedness of students as well as making people more expressive and open.”
- “This is a wonderful opportunity for children to blossom...utilizing their authentic skills in fine arts, such as dance, theater, music and literature.”
- “Education with a dedicated curriculum to the arts is sorely needed for students seeking to learn and grow new skills in the arts and I believe RioGAFA will fill the gap for these students.”
- “The arts are so important in a student's education. It truly makes for a well rounded individual and enriches all aspects of their lives.”
- “The west side doesn't have much options for schooling other than APS schools , and this school would provide good opportunities for learning”
- “We need schools that address the various educational needs of our students. RioGAFA would be a school that would help meet those needs.”
- “By creating and supporting a fine arts charter school in our community, we create necessary space for young visionaries. We encourage the future careers of the next generation of writers, dancers, filmmakers, visual artists, actors, musicians, etc. I believe this school can be a safe haven for so many, an access point, an incubator for students to become exactly who they are.”
- “I believe and have seen charter schools make a difference in Albuquerque. But now with a K-12 fine art scope and focus. Very exciting.”
- “I would like my students to build their skills in the area of fine arts. I feel this would be beneficial to help improve their academic skills as well
- “This could change the lives of so many children. Art is so fundamental to life and can shape a child in ways we never know. I wish I had this growing up on the west side.”
- “Learning to think creatively will help future generations in Albuquerque no matter what they end up doing when they get older. I currently work in tech, and even in a corporate, engineering setting, the people who are able to think creatively to solve problems are the most successful and are able to build things that help the community.”
- “An alternative to a traditional school in Albuquerque would be great for students with expanded interests in the arts.”

- “Art is such an important part of a school’s curriculum. It allows for self expression and benefits students both socially and academically.”
- “Arts in education is an imperative part of student development. Music and Arts are the foundation by which students are not only convinced to come to school but are the medium by which they learn to love education. These activities build communities and support structures like nothing else and every child deserves access to the world they offer. Albuquerque does not have sufficient infrastructure by which our students gain this access. I believe RioGAFA is an integral part of providing futures for our children where they do not just graduate high school or college but also have the confidence to follow their dreams.”
- “More now than ever the arts are an essential skill to support the full person and at the same time bring our students into the workforce with key skills of creativity, innovation, and conceptualization.”
- “In New Mexico, where our education has low scoring in comparison to neighboring states, this school/program is needed. The student population is made up of a variety of different styles of learning. However, we do not have the ability to help all of them, only what we believe to cover the general mass population, or as we see it traditionally. As we have evolved as humans, and through the assistance of society the general population has changed on how we learn. Art integration empowers children to be their own advocate to a degree, an area where the "traditional" in my opinion lacks. It's through that empowerment you help children gain confidence, self-awareness, discipline, and integrity. It is more than allowing them to follow directions, so when they are adults in today's world they become lost when instructions are lacking, but to thrive in the creative process and utilizing the untapped potential that arts integration can provide. The creative process is more than a single event, but an entire process that is able to be used throughout life, with all areas of life. The art form in itself speaks to children in a new and exciting avenue to them, allowing them to learn in a way they understand more. A way that speaks to not just their brain, but their heart. It ignites the passion in their being, and allows them to keep that flame burning during their education process. Albuquerque is in desperate need of an arts integrated school because we can not afford to not have this for the sake of our children.”

The following narratives are from parents interested in sending their students to RioGAFA but reside outside of the proposed zip codes:

- The integration of arts in our public schools is an area that is so crucial for student success, but is often overlooked. Many of our students have amazing talents that need to be fostered to encourage their development and provide potential avenues for careers in the arts. RioGAFA would provide a space for many of these talented students in Albuquerque to grow their craft and develop academically. It would provide opportunities for more well-rounded learning experience and bring a missing piece to the Albuquerque educational opportunities.
- “As a program coordinator in APS after school programs and as a program director at a local children’s museum, I was able to observe, first hand, the kind of impact that a school like this can have on a community. Not every child is designed to breeze through the system and acquire the skills they need to thrive. A school like this is a lifeline for the rest of us and our future generations.”
- “I’m only aware of one other fine arts school in Albuquerque, PAPA, and due to the lottery system and high interest my granddaughter was unable to enroll.”
- “Too many schools are pushing to prioritize "academic" curriculum when research indicates that having a strong fine arts curriculum to balance it is beneficial.”

- “I would like my students to build their skills in the area of fine arts. I feel this would be beneficial to help improve their academic skills as well”
- “Education is one of the greatest gifts, if not THE greatest gift, a child can receive. In today's world/society, "formal" education doesn't always meet our youth's needs. In turn, this leads to our children getting distracted and as a result, they turn to other outlets that are not always positive, which in turn leads to a road of self destruction. It is a recurring cycle that has repeated itself throughout history. Our community needs to be able to adapt to these needs and have different outlets/forms of education in order to captivate our youth and keep them engaged in their passions while navigating through their lives.”
- “A school like RioGAFA would offer our youth a different approach on education that would offer new forms of outlets in order to provide support and guidance for these children to tap into THEIR inner desires, needs and passions. By doing this, we set our youth up for success and keep them focused and engaged throughout their childhood development.”
- “Creative outlets are necessary in everyone’s lives, especially our children’s. Too often are arts cut from school programs and this school will provide a wonderful opportunity for all those who attend.”
- “The arts are being taken away from our students at nearly every school in every state. All of the arts have been proven to be imperative for students' learning as well as critical brain development starting from a young age. New Mexico is one of the poorest states, and Albuquerque is just as divided as a city when compared to the rest of the United States. Many families cannot afford to pay for their students to go to a better school, therefore a charter of this nature is truly imperative for our city. It has been proven that students who are exposed to activities like reading or playing music, creating art and other such avenues not only excel in school but also enjoy it more.”
- “An arts integrated school is greatly needed in the Albuquerque area to foster the potential of Albuquerque's creative youth.”

After participants filled out the survey, we followed up with interested parents as well as business and educational organizations to facilitate one-on-one meetings. As of today, the Founding Team has participated in over 159 face-to-face meetings. Through these meetings, the Founding Team asked participants to write formal letters of support for RioGAFA. To date, RioGAFA has received 27 official letters. Below are highlight narratives from these letters:

- “I have been a proud resident of the west side for my entire life, living and growing up in Westgate and Taylor Ranch. I am a proud graduate of UNM as well as currently attending ENMU for my MBA. I attended Jimmy Carter and LBJ middle schools, and I went to Cibola for high school. I did not care for the arts, but now being older, I see how important the Fine Arts are, especially with helping people unlock different ways to think and solve real life problems and enhancing one's creativity. However, this letter is not about me, but more about the future of children and young teens in the Albuquerque area, one of them being my young son growing up as well on the west side of town. It also gives young people an avenue for expressing their emotions and learning about the rich culture of New Mexico. Having a young son, I want him to be able to grow around the arts and this beautiful culture, allowing him to think and express himself freely and discover what he truly loves. I feel public schools do not allow this freedom, and public schools do not embrace the culture and lifestyle in which I feel young people need to learn about to be successful and more importantly, happy. Please consider approving the charter and grant this opportunity for our children.”
- “As parents of two young children, lifelong Albuquerque residents, and products of the Albuquerque Public Schools, we have a strong interest in ensuring that our family — and all

families in our city — have access to a variety of high-quality public educational options. Given the success of rigorous schools centered around fine arts elsewhere in the country and in other parts of New Mexico, we would be excited to have such a school approved to open in the Albuquerque area. Fine arts are a critical and too often neglected part of any child's education, and for some children the opportunity to pursue an interest in the arts can make an enormous difference in their educational outcomes, college attendance, and career. The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts has a mission aligned with these values, and we believe it could be an important addition to the educational landscape in our city."

- "A charter school for fine arts certainly fits what I know to be a great need in our community only made greater with New Mexico's emergence at a top film making destination in the Nation. There are many more avenues that exist as career options now than ever before. It is for those reasons that I wholeheartedly support the application for charter status for the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts."
- "My name is, a teacher with. I have over ten years of experience as a teacher of the arts, specifically teaching Flamenco dance and I have over twenty years of experience as a Flamenco dancer, choreographer and community organizer. I am very excited to endorse, to support and to encourage the mission of the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts. The city of Albuquerque is long overdue for an addition of an arts centered education. Our population, especially on the Westside of Albuquerque, can support it. I am certain that this school will fulfill a need and fill in the gap in arts-centric education."
- "I believe the RioGAFA mission is essential to the success of an underrepresented population of kids that need it most. Those students with talent and passion for the Arts truly do not have a place to go. Similarly, we know Art Education is a huge component academically to bridge the gap of Social Emotional Learning. Through this pandemic, it has been a profound need in my work as a direct supervisor of many of these students, and we simply don't have the space to send our students to either on our own campus or in our community. A recent study suggests "that arts education settings are sites of great potential. Learning literary or media arts, visual arts, theatre, dance, or music has great intrinsic benefits for young people, as they are exposed to creative humanistic experiences and the potential for rigorous skill development. However, with deliberate planning and awareness, a skilled instructor can shape these lessons into spaces for deep and lasting development of those young people's social and emotional skills and well-being."(Farrington et al, 2019). Whether it's an art bound college student first in their family, or a struggling artist looking for a purpose, RioGAFA is necessary in the WestSide of Albuquerque."
- "This Albuquerque charter school presents a much-needed opportunity for students; a place dedicated to core curriculum integrated with arts curriculum, shepherding successful paths for young people whose inclinations and passions align with the arts. Integrating academic success AND creativity will maximize the potential of these young people. Engaging in arts as a learning tool can have positive and lasting effects. The discipline inherent in creative arts supports deeper learning skills such as perseverance and collaboration. This project will provide students with experiences, activities, and tools to engage in real-world activities that will prepare them for the future."
- "At this time in our history, with many issues needing solutions, young people need to have the skills and the strength to help solve them as they become adults. It is so important, so crucial, for strong, intentional Arts Education to be available to our young students. The RiOGAFA Charter School mission statement seeks to support K-12 students to "learn, problem-solve, and think with creativity through arts-integration. It will be a wise and forward-thinking decision to approve this school and its worthy mission. I ask that the NMPED

PEC approve this charter because I feel it will greatly benefit New Mexico's students and give them a solid foundation to grow upon."

- "I am pleased to write this letter in support of the charter application for Rio Grande Academy for Fine Arts. I support their mission to provide motivated students with the opportunity to achieve academic excellence through school choice and believe this school will be an asset for students and the West Side community."
- "Although I and many others love homeschooling, I ask the NMPED PEC to approve the Rio Grande Fine Arts Academy charter. Albuquerque families want a program that helps our home learners reenter the public education system. However, many can't or won't take that chance right now because they don't feel the right school exists. This charter, with its art-integration focus, would be the answer that so many are looking for. Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts is an investment that our students and community needs. Please provide a home for our unique learners."
- "Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will make a positive impact in the lives of children who live in the surrounding area of Albuquerque, New Mexico. As someone who views the arts as incredible instruments to developing cognitive functioning and behavioral skills, Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts' mission statement demonstrates a concrete and valid point of using creativity to establish key components of development. The arts are vital tools to ensuring a student's long-term success into adulthood – seeing who they are and could potentially become. The arts allow students to envision the possibilities into who they can be through creative thinking. The arts are essential to allowing students, our children, to dream big. From personal experience teaching and assisting special needs children, the arts allowed them to feel welcomed as part of the community when others (mainly adults) failed to recognize their potential. I had students who were not academically gifted but excelled in drawing. I had students and children who struggled reading but were excellent musicians. I had students and children who had difficulty communicating but when given a pen and paper drew pictures of what they needed. These were the moments that changed my life. These are the moments that I believe Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will represent. The focus of the arts into developing a child's potential and skillset will make huge differences in their lives. All it takes are encouraging environments that I fully support the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts will establish. This will make the Albuquerque community's growth and academic success strive. If you target a child's creativity, they can instill the lessons into their academics. It is not impossible, it might take time, patience is key, but I have no doubt that Rio Grande Academy can make it happen."
- "Because I have seen first hand the impact an arts-focused education can have on a student, and because my fifth-grade daughter is passionate about the performing arts, we put her name in the lottery for the Public Academy for Performing Arts this year. She was initially waitlisted, but when we got the call that a spot had opened up for her, my daughter actually wept with joy. The only hardship for us is the drive; we live and work on the Westside. Crossing the river four times a day is no easy feat, but we will make that sacrifice so that our daughter can have an arts-integrated education. I assure you that if RioGAFA were already up and running on the Westside, we would send her there. In fact, many PAPA students live on the Westside indicating the need for a fine arts charter school on this side of the river. Further, if RioGAFA had existed when we were choosing a kindergarten for her, we would have enrolled her then instead of waiting for middle school."
- "As stated within the Rio GAFA mission description, *Lack of art instruction is a global issue for students, and the arts are continuously cut year to year due to lack of funding. In New Mexico, there are 877 schools as of the 2020-2021 school year. Of those schools, ten charter schools*

are dedicated in some way to art instruction making 1% of our educational system developing both academic and creative problem-solving. Of these ten schools, none of them serve students beginning in kindergarten and ending in 12th grade. The mission of Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RIOGAFA) is to provide New Mexico students a rigorous, arts-integrated education accessible to all kindergarten through 12th-grade students interested in the arts. RiOGAFA would be the first school in New Mexico to provide a rigorous curriculum in academics and enriched in the fine arts for all students grades K-12. RioGAFA provides all students a complete education through an arts-integrated curriculum seeking to connect the creative processes with critical thinking to inspire a love of learning. Ultimately, through this connection of critical and creative problem solving, the students of RioGAFA will become successful in academics and the arts, leading to a successful future in higher education and a career in the arts or career of choice. As an individual who is deeply committed to the continued health and wellness of the New Mexico arts and culture landscape, and as the leader of an organization woven into this landscape, I believe our community will be adding a strong, reliable, conscientious, and knowledgeable partner with the addition of the RioGAFA as part of this community tapestry. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss further.”

- “I support RioGAFA’s mission because creativity is essential to well-being. Without art, life has no meaning. We must encourage the youth to foster creativity and resilience within them. We can do that by integrating art into education. Albuquerque needs this school because it values the human as a creator. A school environment that promotes creativity and innovation is the perfect place for a child to develop the necessary skills to navigate through life with confidence, ease and empowerment. I would definitely sign up my own child for this charter because I believe in its mission whole-heartedly.”
- “Discovering a love of the arts at an early age can have a profound impact on an individual. Being the child of artists has had that impact on me, and though I’ve focused my efforts in the art of business I’ve done it in a way that supports professional artisans. Careers in the fields of art and craftsmanship can be very rewarding. Having artisans in the community keeps more of our discretionary spending local, and it can have a real economic impact at a grassroots level.”
- “I support the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts because of how important the arts are not just in the creation process but the development process. The arts have taught me the value of self-expression and exploration by utilizing something as simple as an idea. The arts are imperative in developing self-expression while also building confidence that is much needed early on in providing a healthy mindset. The arts help with an interaction with the world and all that surrounds it in building strong communication skills so that they can understand how to form ideas and express them without hesitation. In the videography world, you can express just how you are feeling without the need for a spoken word. That is created when you understand storytelling and storytelling is created through the art of creativity and exploration.”
- “As a parent of a 4-year-old who has very artistic tendencies who also lives on the westside of Albuquerque, I can’t tell you how exciting it is to hear the prospect of a fine arts school that will serve children as young as he will be next year, all the way to the day he will graduate.”
- “Albuquerque’s Westside is rapidly growing in population and we see a need for more educational facilities. We believe in giving our youth an opportunity to think creatively through arts-integration.”

- “Working in the schools, I have seen the need for stronger arts programs. The arts are frequently cut from schools or their funding is depleted. In my current setting, our students do not have any arts programs or options at all. I see students who have immense artistic talent, but have no way to showcase it. I see students who are angry, sad, or withdrawn; students who need an outlet to funnel these emotions. Students who continuously fall behind in school because there is such a significant disconnect between what they learn in school and what they are passionate about. I wholeheartedly believe that a school who can integrate the two, academics and the arts, can capture so many students who’ve been falling through the cracks for years”
- “For many reasons this school would benefit the Albuquerque community. It is my belief that the education provided at the Rio Grande Academy of fine arts will foster creative problem solving in students. This dynamic and engaging education will also serve to reinforce the principle of inclusion and celebrate the diverse New Mexican culture. Blending arts and education serves to engage the young mind and creates a safe and structured environment for expression and feedback; life skills that will serve the students well. Students graduating from this school can then use the skills learned to give back to their local community, creating a cycle of reciprocity.”
- “Our public schools do have some arts in their curriculum; however, I was trained very early in my career on the use of art to teach other areas of the curriculum. I saw students who were not highly involved in their learning blossom due to their interest in art and their other curricular areas improved immensely. The artists in our communities have a great deal to share with our students and our teachers. The standards we teach in our schools will be richly enhanced if we utilize fine arts as a focal point for many of our students.”
- “My passion for the theatre has touched every part of my life and shown me how important the fine arts are to me and how I live my life. I am currently enrolled at the University of Utah, where I plan to earn my Master of Education, which I hope to use to further my love of the theatre by teaching it. One day, I hope to teach at the Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts, as it embodies the way I imagine students learning, through the theatre and fine arts.”
- “It is my pleasure to write this letter to you as a recommendation for your venture at Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts. As a former Director of the Albuquerque Public Schools Equal Opportunity Services Office, and the current State President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of New Mexico, I remain committed to equal educational opportunities for our young people. The information brought to my attention about Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts demonstrates a commitment to a diverse student population, academic accountability, and the opportunity for growth in an area of education that has been underrepresented in traditional educational arenas, the fine arts. “

The RioGAFA Team found that the overwhelming response from the community is that there is a need for a fine arts-integrated school in Albuquerque, more specifically the westside. Throughout the 159 one-on-one meetings, the amount of support for the arts was apparent, and this is reflected in the number of parents that are already committed to sending their students to our school. In addition, the potential partnerships that have been formed build a confident case that RioGAFA is supported by the business and educational community of Albuquerque. Included as attachments will be the formal letters of support of these organizations. However, RioGAFA has received a commitment from higher education organizations interested in forming partnerships to create a teacher and talent pipeline to

benefit the RioGAFA students. Furthering the support in the community, RioGAFA has received commitments from local art establishments and companies that are interested in partnering with RioGAFA to help staff the fine arts department of the school. Regarding funding, RioGAFA has also received support from local art organizations that have committed to providing additional funding for RioGAFA regarding supplies needed to run a well-developed fine arts-integrated program.

The RioGAFA Founding Team is excited to maintain current and develop new relationships and partnerships with the New Mexico art community. RioGAFA feels strongly that the arts community is a powerful and largely untapped resource that has demonstrated its support in our school. We are committed to bringing local New Mexico artists into the school to feature their passions and develop the passion in students for the arts. These supportive relationships and commitment to future partnerships is an exciting development for RioGAFA and one that makes the team feel even more committed to this work.

Rating	Expectations
✓ Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include quantitative data that demonstrates community support from a broad audience for this proposed school; • Include qualitative data that demonstrates community support from a broad audience for this proposed school; • Ensure the demonstrated support includes support within the community of the specific targeted geographic location; and • Describe why the applicant team believes the evidence demonstrates the school will be embraced and supported as the community's school and that there is abundant support for this school as a part of the community.

RioGAFA approaches criteria for providing sufficient measurable, qualitative data-based evidence of abundant, broad-based support for the proposed school because while they do in fact provide an abundance of qualitative data in support of the school, they do not present any quantitative data.

C. Community Relationships

C. (1) Clearly demonstrate that you have developed **meaningful and strategic** networking relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. (This differs from the formal partnership agreements that are integral to the proposed school's operations, as described in Section II. I (1) of this application.)

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts has met with a variety of different organizations to develop substantial and long-lasting relationships to support the opening of the school. These relationships and connections were overwhelmingly positive and leaders within these organizations have verbally

committed to partnerships ranging from potential funding to developing pipelines of talent to benefit new teachers finishing their college degrees. The Founding Team of RioGAFA has focused their efforts on organizations that service and support educational programs and students within the proposed zip codes. Below is a list of the partnerships that have been created with organizations that want to support RioGAFA in a capacity:

- **Luis Hernandez**
 - Luis is the Executive Director of the West Central Community Development Group. Luis was instrumental in getting RioGAFA support from the following neighborhood associations located on the westside of Albuquerque: Alamosa, Anderson Hills, Avalon, Crestview Bluff, Huning Castle, West Central, Route 66 West, Skyview West, Vecinos Del Bosque, Westgate Heights, West Mesa, West Side, Desert Springs, Los Altos Civic, and Stinson Tower.
- **InAccord**
 - RioGAFA has met with Dan Hill from InAccord to discuss representation. Dan has agreed to represent RioGAFA starting before approval and in the planning and implementation year. RioGAFA will rely heavily on the support of Dan and his knowledge of policy and litigation to ensure that RioGAFA is in compliance with all state regulations and has created sound rules and regulations within the adopted policies. RioGAFA and Dan have arranged payment that is suitable for the planning year and the first year of operation.
- **Keshet Dance & Center for the Arts**
 - Keshet is an arts-based non-profit organization that strives to “unite the arts, the artist, and the audience.” They work to create possibilities through dance, mentorship, and creative spaces for the arts. RioGAFA is excited about the prospect of working with Keshet to discuss opportunities for RioGAFA students to receive instruction from Keshet instructors. In addition, we hope to further partner with Keshet to expand the RioGAFA art program to include all forms of art that the organization provides.
- **Baldwin Accounting & Consulting, LLC**
 - Lee Baldwin is a Certified Public Accountant. RioGAFA met with Lee as he has been someone interested in the education sector for some time. RioGAFA presented the mission and vision to Lee and asked to join the proposed Governing Board. RioGAFA is excited to have the financial expertise of Lee on the Board to ensure that the financial status is held to a high standard.
- **Albuquerque Westside Business Association**
 - RioGAFA has had multiple interactions with Melissa Sanchez, the Executive Director of the Albuquerque Westside Business Association to discuss support from Westside Businesses. Melissa has put us in contact with neighborhood associations and is supporting us in looking for a location on the Westside. Melissa has written us a letter on behalf of the Association and believes there is a great need for a fine arts school on the Westside. She is looking forward to RioGAFA being a significant addition to Albuquerque’s Westside.
- **Absolute Investment Realty**
 - RioGAFA has created a working relationship with Jeremy Nelson from Absolute Investment Realty. Absolute Investment Realty works with a number of charter schools in New Mexico and provides support in finding facilities. RioGAFA will be working with Jeremy following approval to find a facility that is suitable to the needs of the school.

- **MANA de Albuquerque**
 - MANA de Albuquerque is an organization that works to empower and support Latina women through “education, leadership, development, community service, and advocacy.” RioGAFA met with Hermanitas Director Monica Nunez. Monica was excited to build a partnership for parents that she works with to get their students access to the arts.
- **Chavez Creative Company**
 - RioGAFA met with the CEO of Chavez Creative Company, Chris Chavez. The Chavez Creative Company specializes in advertising and marketing but is looking to create space to provide film instruction to students. Chris Chavez and RioGAFA are excited to create a partnership to provide instruction to students looking to get into the film industry.
- **RiskSense**
 - RiskSense specializes in cybersecurity and creating systems in place for organizations to protect their privacy and online presence. RioGAFA met with Co-Founder Mark Fidel to discuss RioGAFA and its mission and vision. Mark and RioGAFA will work together to find nonprofit partnerships following approval. Because of this connection, RioGAFA connected with Amer Child, who is a member of the proposed Governing Board.
- **RM Communications**
 - Rachel Maestas is a local new-industry professional that has begun her own communications firm. Rachel and RioGAFA met to discuss marketing and advertising following approval. RioGAFA and Rachel are excited to work together to come up with a robust student recruitment plan to reach students within the proposed zip codes interested in enrolling at the school.
- **University of New Mexico**
 - RioGAFA met with UNM Fine Arts Dean Harris Smith to discuss a potential partnership. Dean Harris is open to working with the RioGAFA team to develop a pipeline for staff at UNM to provide instruction to RioGAFA students as well as developing a dual-credit program for RioGAFA high school students. RioGAFA is excited to continue this relationship to develop a teacher pipeline for college students interested in both the arts and education.
 - RioGAFA met with UNM Art Education Department Associate Professor, Justin Makemson. We will be working with the UNM Art Education Department in developing a dual-credit program for RioGAFA high school students. RioGAFA is excited to continue this relationship to develop a teacher pipeline for college students interested in both the arts and education.
- **Music on the Westside**
 - RioGAFA met with Manager Nick Jones of Music on the Westside. Music on the Westside is a Music School that provides private instruction for students. The program is expanding to get their teachers special education certifications and Nick would like to explore having his staff teach more consistently at one location. As it stands right now, his teachers only teach after school hours, so the prospect of partnering with RioGAFA is beneficial for his staff. In addition, Nick would also like to develop a pipeline for RioGAFA students to teach at his facility after school hours to build a career path for them.
- **Central New Mexico Community College**

- RioGAFA met with the CNM Teacher Prep program to discuss the mission and vision of the school. CNM staff were eager to partner together to develop a pipeline for education students to student teach at the RioGAFA facility. RioGAFA will be contacting CNM after approval to discuss logistics of housing student teachers that are interested in the arts.
- **New Mexico Highlands University**
 - NMHU and RioGAFA are excited to move forward with a partnership to attend the Problem of Practice Summit. This summit is designed for schools to identify a focus area that they hope to achieve in the following academic year. Throughout the year, NMHU provides support to the school and finds resources and connections that could be beneficial for the problem of practice they have identified. In addition, NMHU would like to provide accessibility to their student teachers to teach at the RioGAFA campus, particularly those students interested in teaching arts courses.
- **K12 Accounting**
 - RioGAFA has decided to partner with K12 Accounting for business management services. K12 fits the needs of RioGAFA and has the forward thinking that the organization is looking for to take the model to the next level and find funding to implement the mission and vision currently.
- **National Dance Institute**
 - NDI and RioGAFA have met to discuss dance programs in the school. NDI is in the process of developing a K-1 curriculum that they hope to involve RioGAFA in. RioGAFA will continue this relationship as the organization hopes to involve NDI as soon as possible to provide RioGAFA students with dance instruction as soon as possible.
- **Commissioner Steven Michael Quezada**
 - Commissioner Quezada has been a huge asset for RioGAFA. He is in full support of the school and of the arts. He has committed to helping the school in any way possible, and would like to help find a facility for year one. RioGAFA has continued to update Commissioner Quezada on the progress of the application and will continue to do so following approval.
- **Representative Antonio “Moe” Maestas**
 - Representative Maestas has been another great partner for RioGAFA. He believes that there is a need for a fine arts school on the westside of Albuquerque. Representative Maestas has helped RioGAFA by writing a letter of support along with approaching two of the largest neighborhood organizations on the westside to gain their support. RioGAFA continues to update Representative Maestas on the progress of RioGAFA.
- **Tennise Lucas and Andrea Boltwood**
 - RioGAFA met with Tennise Lucas and Andrea Boltwood. Both are current College and Career Counselors that are looking to start a program to help students get enrolled in colleges and track their progress throughout their college careers. RioGAFA has committed to collaborating with these individuals once we reach 9th grade to build a robust and well-planned college and career readiness program for RioGAFA students.
- **Gigi Bella**
 - Gigi is the 10th ranked female poet in the world. She has performed at a multitude of different venues to a wide variety of audiences. She is a published writer and is passionate about working with RioGAFA. Gigi has committed to helping RioGAFA recruit students and perform for events that are sponsored by RioGAFA. She has also committed to teaching the founding 6th grade students poetry.

- **New Mexico Arts Education Association (NMAEA)**
 - Steve Heil, the Current President of the NMAEA believes there is a great need for a fine arts school in New Mexico. He has written a letter of support and is interested in ways that RioGAFA and NMAEA can partner in the future.
- **Rio Grande Jewelry**
 - Rio GAFA and Molly Bell, Executive Vice President of Rio Grande Jewelry, met to discuss support and a possible partnership. Molly has many resources and connections in the arts community that she has begun to share. She believes in RioGAFA's mission and has written us a letter of support. She hopes to support RioGAFA in the future and is considering a Board position.
- **New Mexico Arts**
 - Phyllis Kennedy is the Programs Director of New Mexico Arts responsible for grants in the categories of Arts & Education, Arts in Social Services, and Colleges, Universities, and Government Entities. Spoke about a letter of support and possible grants RioGAFA can apply.
- **Clear Channel**
 - Linda Pino is a sales representative for Clear Channel. We spoke about advertising for RioGAFA.
- **Screen Kings Printshop**
 - RioGAFA met with Cori Luzietti, the owner of this organization. Cori and RioGAFA will partner to attend the pop-up market that Cori's organization hosts each week. Currently, RioGAFA is looking to attend these events on July 31st and August 7th.

The RioGAFA team feels that these organizations demonstrate a need for this school. RioGAFA has gained the support of local businesses, art programs, and higher education organizations that will help to build a solid foundation for RioGAFA students. RioGAFA will maintain these relationships with these stakeholders to ensure that the best resources and programs are provided to the students of RioGAFA. The RioGAFA Founding Team has received an immense amount of community support from higher education organizations that hope to build a talent pipeline of RioGAFA students and their organizations both to prepare future teachers and provide RioGAFA students the opportunity to take college courses in art that are aligned to their passions. The RioGAFA team is committed to building these relationships to set students up for a future at a college fully prepared to succeed in both academics and the arts.

Rating	Expectations
--------	--------------

✓ Meets

A complete response must

- Identify and describe specific meaningful and strategic networking relationships with local community agencies, groups, or individuals that will support the school. Include evidence of these relationships;
- Identify and describe specific meaningful and strategic resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals that will support the school. Include evidence of these relationships; and
- Describe why the applicant team believes the identified relationships demonstrate the school will be embraced and supported as the community's school and that there is abundant support for this school as a part of the community.

RioGAFA demonstrates that they have built community based networking relationships.

V. Applicant Remarks

Additional Remarks

The Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts (RioGAFA) Founding Team believes strongly that our school is necessary for New Mexico students. In our research on arts in New Mexico and with families and community members we have spoken to about our school model, we can conclude that Albuquerque wants and needs a K-12 arts-integrated school.

The Founding Team has spoken to parents, community leaders, businesses, and students, and we are humbled and excited about the support given to us. We acknowledge that we have hard work ahead of us, and we are committed to adhering to the plan we have laid out within this application. Our arts-integration model aligns with what parents want for their children and what students want for themselves. Students have expressed that RioGAFA would be the place for them to flourish, fit in, and grow. Currently, many students do not have the option to choose an arts-integrated school. Of the 142 schools within Albuquerque Public Schools and the 52 charter schools within Albuquerque, there are three schools dedicated in some way to the arts. Of these three schools, not one of them is located on the westside of Albuquerque. In addition, there is not a school anywhere in New Mexico that implements a K-12 art-integrated model.

As discussed throughout the application, the students that we hope to serve are traditionally underserved, and with that comes even less exposure and enrichment through the arts. In some Westside schools, if arts education exists, it is limited to music or visual art. Data collected from our targeted zip codes shows a need for a different approach to education to demonstrate student achievement. RioGAFA seeks to provide students the opportunity to connect to the arts and find a community that will be supportive and creative alongside them. We hope to remove barriers for these students. We believe that it is our responsibility to ensure that students do not have to use financial resources to access a high-quality and rigorous academic and fine arts program. The RioGAFA Team is determined to provide these services and programs free of charge to families while also providing free meals and transportation to students.

It is time for New Mexico students to have the option to experience education through the arts from kindergarten to graduation. As the research presented in our application explains, such as an increase in academic achievement and a decrease in behavior issues, our proposed model is powerful and effective. Students learn to be creative problem solvers and critical thinkers, which the professional sector is looking to hire. RioGAFA students will be prepared to succeed in academics and arts and will be encouraged to stay in New Mexico and use their skills to benefit New Mexico. The RioGAFA team is committed to doing whatever it takes to make that happen.

New Mexico students, families, and the arts community need RioGAFA. The Founding Team is committed to upholding the mission and vision and growing within the community.

The applicant team is invited to provide additional remarks, not to exceed 500 words. This section will not be rated by the Peer Review Team.

Appendices and Attachments

Appendix Number	Appendix Description	File Naming Convention	Attached (Check if Yes)
A	II-A1_Governing Body Bylaws	A_SchoolName_Bylaws	X
B	II-C3_Head Administrator Job Description	B_SchoolName_HeadAdmin	X
C	II-D2_Job Descriptions for Certified, Licensed, and Other Key Staff	C_SchoolName_Job Desc	X
D	II-I2_Proposed Agreements Governing Third Party Relationships and Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) (*Required if applicable*)	D_SchoolName_MOUs	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	II-L1_PSFA-Approved Projected Facility Plan Documentation	E_SchoolName_FacilityPlan	X
F	III-B1_Five Years of 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheets	F_SchoolName_910B5	X
G	III-B2_Five-year Budget Plan	G_SchoolName_BudgetPlan	X
H	III-C1_Internal Control Procedures	H_SchoolName_InternalControls	X