



## **Part B—Progress Report**

(A report on the progress of meeting the academic performance, financial compliance, contractual, organizational, and governance responsibilities of the charter school, including achieving the school or mission specific goals, objectives, student performance outcomes, state standards of excellence and other terms of the charter contract, including the accountability requirements set forth in the Assessment and Accountability Act during the Current Charter Term)

The following rubric will be used to evaluate the narratives in Part B:

Meets the Standards	• In each year of the contract term, the school has a demonstrated record of meeting all standards, which is supported by evidence.	
Demonstrates Substantial Progress	Demonstration Through Data	Demonstration Through Systemic Improvement Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school <b>does not</b> have a demonstrated record of meeting all standards in each of the years in the contract term, <i>however...</i></li><li>• An evaluation of <i>all</i> data and evidence (for academic narrative this includes all available academic performance data, including state assessment data) demonstrates at least two years of sustained improvement toward meeting the standard.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school <b>does not</b> have a demonstrated record of meeting all standards in each of the years in the contract term, <i>however...</i></li><li>• The narrative describes <b>specific adult</b> (teacher, leader, board) <b>actions taken to improve performance and outcomes by addressing the root cause</b> of the inadequate performance; AND</li><li>• The <b>site visit</b> team can verify the <b>implementation of reported improvement actions</b> by evaluating <b>specific evidence</b> at the school site that is <b>observable, verifiable, and readily available</b>; AND</li><li>• The narrative identifies <b>measurable successes</b> during the most recent year <b>resulting from the improvement actions taken</b>; AND</li><li>• An evaluation of the data and <b>evidence supports the observable and reported successes</b>.</li></ul>
Failing to Demonstrate Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school <b>does not</b> have a demonstrated record of meeting all standards in each of the years of the contract term.</li><li>• An evaluation of data and evidence (for academic narrative this includes all available academic performance data, including state assessment data) does not demonstrate at least two years of sustained improvement toward meeting the standard. AND ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:</li><li>• The narrative is focused on <b>describing circumstances connected to the poor performance and/or excuses for the poor performance</b> (e.g. serving a disproportionately high rate of students with disabilities, serving a disproportionately high rate of “at-risk” students, a lack of funding, teacher/administrator turnover, etc.), and/or <b>either does not describe specific adult improvement actions taken</b> or describes <b>minimal adult improvement actions taken</b>; or</li><li>• The site visit team is not able to verify implementation of the reported adult improvement actions because there is no <b>observable, verifiable</b> evidence presented during the site including renewal site visit; or</li><li>• The narrative <b>fails to identify any measurable successes</b> during the most recent year, or evaluation of the <b>data and evidence directly contradicts reported successes</b>.</li></ul>	

## **1. Innovative and Distinctive Education Program**

Some of the purposes of the Charter Schools Act are to encourage different and innovating teaching and educational programs that improve student achievement, and encourage parental and community involvement. 1978 NMSA §22-8B-3.

### **a. School or Mission Specific Unique, Innovative, and Significant Contributions**

The school shall provide a narrative on how the school has fulfilled its mission and how the equity council has influenced any decisions for the 2020-2021 SY. These contributions may include:

1. Teaching methods
2. Measures of student achievement
3. Professional development for teachers
4. Learning programs
5. Encouraging parental or community involvement
6. School's Equity Plan
7. Monitoring students' social emotional and behavioral development

***School response:***

New America School-Las Cruces has responded to #1a and #1b to provide the Public Education Commission with a more holistic understanding about our school and to provide a wide view of the work we are doing to increase student achievement. Both items are not included as material terms of our charter contract and are not required performance evaluation criteria within the Charter Schools Act, nor are they criteria within our negotiated performance framework measures intended by the parties as the evaluation criteria for our charter's renewal consideration. Further we do not agree that #1a and #1b should be evaluated using the rubric for Part B, because no standards have been established by contract nor have standards for meeting these measures been developed and presented as part of the renewal application. By responding, we are not agreeing that this information can or should be used by the Commission to determine whether grounds for nonrenewal exist as enumerated in NMSA 1978, §22-8B-12(K).

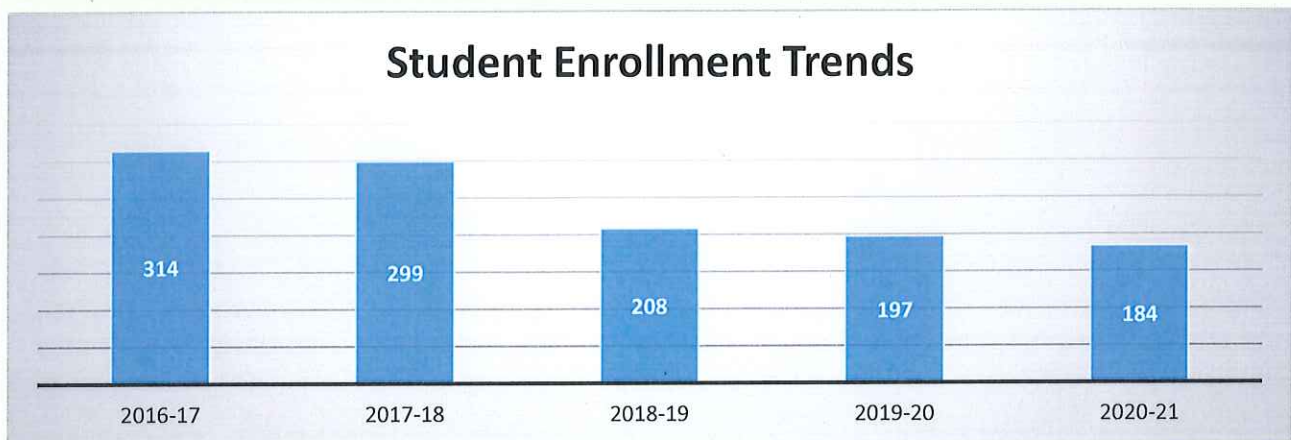
Mission: *The New America School-Las Cruces mission is to empower new immigrants, English language learners, and academically underserved students with the educational tools and support they need to maximize their potential, succeed, and live the American dream.* New America School-Las Cruces (NAS-LC) has achieved many accomplishments over the past five years supporting the mission. The students who we serve come from a variety of backgrounds and personal stories. As a result, we have created a service to students who prefer a smaller learning environment, to recover credits, or a safe place to begin anew. Our school has served and graduated many students, both traditional and non-traditional. Our populations are referred to as "highly mobile, impoverished and at-risk." Additional demographics who we serve include homeless, single and teen parents and non-traditional students (defined as a student who will not graduate within the four years of entering high school). NAS-LC has demonstrated increased academic growth regardless of our students' background. We have collaborated with community partners and have become a cornerstone in downtown Las Cruces with the purchase of its current facility to maintain that stability within the community.

Fulfilling our mission is the foundation of our day-to-day effort. The mission to empower *new immigrants* is a priority, and as a tool to support our mission, we have a structured two-hour ESL blocks within our daily master schedule. This block of time creates opportunities for teachers and staff to assist our students in learning survival English all the while learning literacy and numeracy (understanding working with numbers). Data shows that 43% of our *English Language learners* (ELL) are on track to increase their proficiency. Our learning programs are focused on language acquisition throughout the day in all content areas. We assist *underserved students* in our innovative evening program. Since its inception, NAS-LC has had a thriving evening program that runs after 4:30 to serve students ages 18-21 with a few additional students over 21. There is a great need in our community for a school like NAS-LC to support non-traditional students. Non-traditional students who attend NAS-LC may have been disenfranchised by other high schools for various reasons. They often feel unsupported by teachers; they struggle with learning in crowded classrooms or they are simply not engaged. Students drop out because they feel discouraged by their age or the lack of



credits earned. Many of the students we serve have even been encouraged by their previous school to attend NAS-LC to complete their credits because they are so far behind and will not graduate within four years. Our program is designed to help with that.

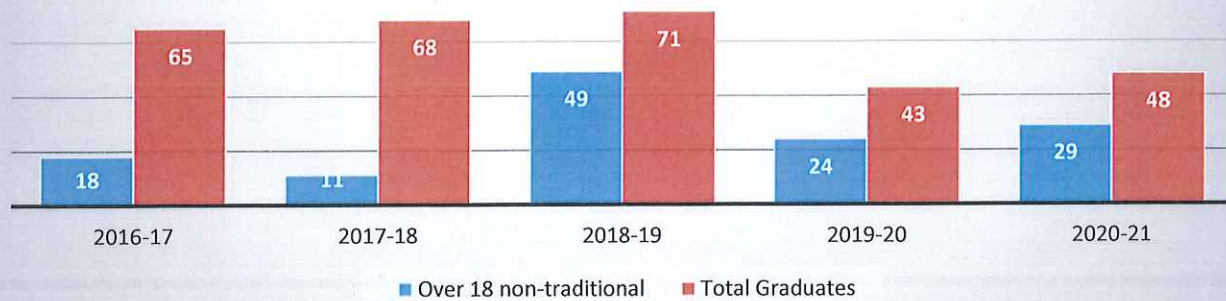
Before 2018, NAS-LC's enrollment numbers were much higher and our evening program was robust. Due to a change in legislation, we can only serve students up to age 21 now, so each year since the change NAS-LC has over 75 requests from adults over 21 who want to enroll but can no longer attend. The only students who are over 21 that are currently enrolled are grandfathered in until they earn their diploma. There are 17 students who are in this category. For newly interested adults, we redirect them to Dona Ana Community College to take the GED. The following graph depicts the drop in enrollment since 2016.



NAS-LC has graduated 254 non-traditional students since its inception. The school has a holistic approach to learning, by not only making an impact on the individual student, but their families and the community as well. Adults who graduate can continue onto higher education or the military no matter their age, offering more opportunities had they not graduated. Students also qualify for the NM Lottery Scholarship as well as other federal funding.

The adult learning community has been so significant to the school, that for some years, the non-traditional students constituted over 50% of our total graduates.

## Number of Graduates



Our daytime program is offered only to traditionally aged high school students, 14 to 18 or 19, and special education students up to 21. This program has grown in numbers and has demonstrated student success over the past few years. In the area of academic growth, there have been great gains, particularly in literacy proficiency. This growth earned NAS-LC a Distinction Award by the New Mexico Secretary of Education in 2018. In math, even though there is slight growth, our students are trending in a positive direction. Within the PED Letter Grade system that is no longer used, NAS-LC showed an overall growth of over 16 points in one year. This positive statistic indicates that our teachers and students are making academic gains and that students are learning and growing.

In April of 2021, NAS-LC finally entered into a lease purchase agreement with Families, Youth, Inc. This purchase came in at a very opportune time. The purchase allowed NAS-LC to use SB9 and HB33 monies that had been set aside for this specific purpose. Our SEG monies now can be focused on teachers and classroom resources. NAS-LC strategized on using the SEG budget to bring in more personnel to lower the pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) in order to reduce learning loss, specifically during the pandemic.

### Teaching Methods

NAS-LC has implemented a variety of teaching methods to best meet the needs of students. These methods and strategies are selected after analyzing data, and when students are showing growth, we know our strategies are effective. We use data from various assessment points, including state testing to inform school administration what needs should be met to meet the mission and to continue providing successful classroom experiences. The following teaching methods are explained in detail:

**On-Set Pandemic-Remote Learning:** When the pandemic began in March of 2020, our school was not prepared to teach remotely. For example, we did not have enough computers or hotspots for each student, and students did not know who to log on to our specific platform, Google Meets. Teachers did not know how to move from in-person to fully remote learning in a matter of weeks. However, because of the

cohesive learning environment and culture of forward-thinking at our school, we were able to transition swiftly. The first step was to identify options for remote learning. NAS-LC looked to other local high schools to adopt the same model in order to align the online timetable to help families navigate the same schedule if there were siblings at home. Administration identified models that worked better than others before guiding teachers to the adopted plan.

From April to May of 2020, teachers directed students to log on remotely into their classroom twice a week during a specific time on a specific day. For example, the Algebra I class was online on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-2pm. This remote schedule was *not* following NAS-LC's regular daily class schedule. Attendance became very inconsistent and difficult to monitor. Some days, no students attended class at the required time. Teachers were having difficulty marking attendance since class was scheduled "off" the regular in-person class time. Often time students would log on when they could and *not* during the newly scheduled time. Additionally, NAS-LC was not prepared to offer technology to all students. Laptops were readily available to only 75 students, and seniors were prioritized to help them graduate. Hot spots were also not readily available for the school to purchase from distributors. Overall, NAS-LC saw a steep decline in students completing assignments and earning credits during the first months of the pandemic. We observed that 84 of the 180 students did not complete any credits toward graduation. They received an "I", or incomplete, on their report cards. These students needed to complete make-up assignments to recover credits. After reviewing this data, NAS-LC decided to focus the ten extended learning days and an intensive summer session to credit recovery for these students, of which 61 students *did* recover credits.

As the 2020-21 school year approached, NAS-LC teachers convened over the summer to design the best remote program for our students, and the consensus was to change the model. The administrators and teachers decided that a daily teaching model would benefit our students and would create more opportunities for their success. The previous remote schedule that we implemented from April to May did not suit our population. Our students needed consistency, accountability and emotional support on a daily basis. We designed a "synchronized" learning model, meaning that our students and teachers would be online Monday- Thursday from 9:30am-4pm, and our evening program, 4:30pm-8:30pm. This model would reflect our daily "in-school" routine. In other words, they would be online with a teacher every day at the same time for the entire class period in 'real-time.' This model provided students with the most authentic way of learning during remote learning. It prepared our students to return to in-person learning with little disruption when we were allowed to return to the building. The synchronized model required our teachers to be present on the platform Google Meets the entire 55 minutes of the class period. They maintained the required lesson plan requirements of a warm-up, guided instruction, student independent work and exit tickets. Teachers were available online to answer questions and provide learning supports to students throughout the lesson, just as they would in person.

During remote learning, teachers were expected to submit lesson plans, identify the MPI and select weekly vocabulary words. All lessons were aligned to the Common Core State Standards, CCSS.

The synchronized model schedule was:

Monday –Thursday	
1st period:	9:30-10:20
2nd: period:	10:25-11:15
3rd: period:	11:20-12:10
Lunch (this gave students ample time to pick-up lunch at school)	
4th: period	1:05-1:55
5th: period	2:00-2:55
6th: period	3:00-3:55
Evening:	
10th: period	4:30-5:30
11th: period	5:30-7pm
12th: period	7-8:30pm.
ESL evening:	6-7pm

During remote learning and the stay-at-home order, the average attendance rate in February of 2021, was 66%. The prior year, in February 2020, the average attendance rate was at 81%. There was a 15% loss of attendance during virtual learning. This was a result of NAS-LC purchasing enough technology to provide each student with a laptop and hotspot during the full year of remote learning. Prior to the pandemic, NAS-LC had applied to participate in the extra ten days of the Extended Learning Time Program. These ten days were originally designed for “out of the box” activities, such as field trips and school-wide learning activities, but the activities had to be restructured to support learning loss and credit recover that occur during the pandemic. They were redesigned to support students with recovery time or learning loss prevention. Students who were on track with assignments completed activities to enrich their learning. For others who did not complete assignments to earn credits, these days became remediation and credit recovery time.

When the PED allowed hybrid in-person learning in February 2021, a poll was given to families and students, and found that only 35% of our students wanted to return to the building for hybrid learning. After staff discussions, it was decided to remain with remote learning. In April of 2021, when students were allowed to return to full reentry, only 10% of our students returned to campus. This was due to their fear of the virus, childcare conflicts or work, since many of our students were forced to find jobs to support their families during the pandemic. As in-person learning continued, NAS-LC continued to offer Friday School to students to recover their credits. This targeted time gave students the time and individualized help they needed to complete missing assignments.

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**Daily Lessons:** The NM Public Education Department, (PED) recommends that schools who serve English Language learners (ELLs) use the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) framework as



best practice. The goal of this approach is to promote language learning in ways that are helpful to both teacher and students to increase English command in all subject matter, including literacy and numeracy. According to the WIDA website, the curriculum is defined as “[providing] language development resources to those who support the academic success of multilingual learners.” The philosophy of teaching at NAS-LC is based on the WIDA standards of applying the four domains of speaking (S), writing (W), reading (R), and listening, (L), to all content areas during every lesson, every day in every class. This is referred to as “SWRL (swirl).” A structured lesson plan and classroom observations assist in monitoring that all teachers are swirling. Each class and daily lesson has a warm-up, guided instruction that is driven by the daily objective, (MPI), time for student practice and an exit ticket to ensure students learn content. To assist students in attaining academic language and learn concepts, students must **speak** the new vocabulary, they must **write** using academic language, they **read** content material at grade level and they must take time to **listen** about the content. Additionally, certified staff receives yearly lesson planning professional development on further strengthening daily focused objectives and how to teach vocabulary. Below is one example of SWRL from an English 12 lesson plan:

	Monday	Tuesday
<b>Opening Activity:</b> pg.11 Warm-up /Question (Bell work, do now) <b>5 minutes</b>	Review classroom procedures. <b>WRITE:</b> Students will respond to writing prompt on their google slide.	Review classroom procedures. <b>WRITE:</b> Students will respond to writing prompt on their google slide.
<b>Teacher Activity:</b> (Hook, mini lecture) <b>15 minutes</b>	<b>LISTEN –</b> -Review classroom expectations on Google Meets -Review syllabus -Teacher Introduction	<b>LISTEN –</b> -Students will share their response from the warmup -Students will share about their virtual locker assignment.
<b>Student Activity:</b> (Groups, pairs, independent) <b>20 minutes</b>	<b>READ:</b> Read and review class expectations and syllabus <b>WRITE:</b> Students will write down in “Author’s notes” about their virtual locker. <b>SPEAK:</b> Students and teacher will discuss our likes and dislikes as a classroom ice breaker.	<b>READ:</b> Students will continue to share their virtual lockers. <b>WRITE-</b> Students will write down in “Author’s notes” about their virtual locker. <b>SPEAK:</b> Students share their individual lockers with the classes.
<b>Closing</b> Reflect on MPI <b>7 minutes</b> Exit Ticket: <b>5 minutes</b>	Exit Ticket: Do you think using NewsELA and google classrooms will be beneficial for you?	Exit Ticket: After the writing with a prompt, what is one issue you’re concerned about?

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**Model Performance Indicator, MPI:** A critical portion of the lesson plan is that each teacher must include a daily lesson objective or what WIDA calls a *Model Performance Indicator (MPI)*, which is the purpose of the lesson and includes both language and performance objectives. This means that each lesson must include a state standard, or Common Core State Standard (CCSS) along with how it will be learned and what language function the student will be doing. For example, a Social Studies MPI could be: Students will *examine* (language objective) the *amendments of the US Constitution* (state standard) by notetaking each amendment individually on a chart with real life situations and pictures (activity). Lesson plans are expected to be submitted each Monday before the instructional day begins. These lesson plans are reviewed by administration and are used as a guide during classroom visits. Informing students of the daily objective or MPI is also an expectation in the NM Elevate teacher evaluation.

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**New Mexico Instructional Scope, NMIS:** In the school year 2020-21, NAS-LC applied and was selected to participate in learning and implementing the New Mexico Instructional Scope (NMIS). There were only 24 schools in New Mexico that were chosen to be part of this program. This initiative was part of the PED Roadmap to Accelerated Learning that provides instructors a guide on how to provide students with at-grade-level instruction. The NMIS is a guiding document to increase the rigor in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics classrooms. The premise of NMIS is to help teachers learn how to instruct at grade-level and to assign grade-level assignments according to the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math. The NMIS for science was newly released in July of 2021 and will be used as a supporting document during the school year.

NMIS was first introduced in school year 2020-21. It was a planning and learning year for school leaders. The Superintendent, Ms. Margarita Porter, participated in monthly trainings along with personalized coaching in order to prepare for the full school-wide rollout in 2021-22. Ms. Porter learned how to use the supporting document and how to work with teachers to use the NMIS. The next step was to get a baseline of grade-level instructional time. In the spring of 2021, NMIS coaches observed NAS-LC classrooms and evaluated lesson plans to rate the number of grade-level activities and rated strong instruction. This opportunity gave NAS-LC a baseline of where each teacher scored in minutes of strong instruction. After the observations of English and Math classes, an Opportunity Scorecard was shared with Ms. Porter with the identified “opportunities” for growth. Data indicated that out of 180 hours of instructional time, only 63 hours were on grade-level-appropriate assignments (35%) and only 45 hours captured strong instruction (25%). These results showed that NAS-LC has additional work to do to increase the number of hours students spend on grade-appropriate assignments and time they receive strong instruction. NAS-LC will continue using the NMIS to increase grade-level instruction in both English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics (MA) and soon Science.

In the summer of 2021, a team of NMIS instructors were on the NAS-LC campus to deliver a two-day training on using the NMIS alongside the CCSS. This gave English and math teachers an opportunity to receive individualized training on using the NMIS. Next steps were to continue collaboration with NMIS instructors throughout the 2021-22 school year. In the spring of 2022, NMIS coaches will be invited back to observe and rate the rigor of the classrooms again to evaluate the growth of instruction levels. We anticipate an increase in both areas. The scorecard has been included in the Appendices.

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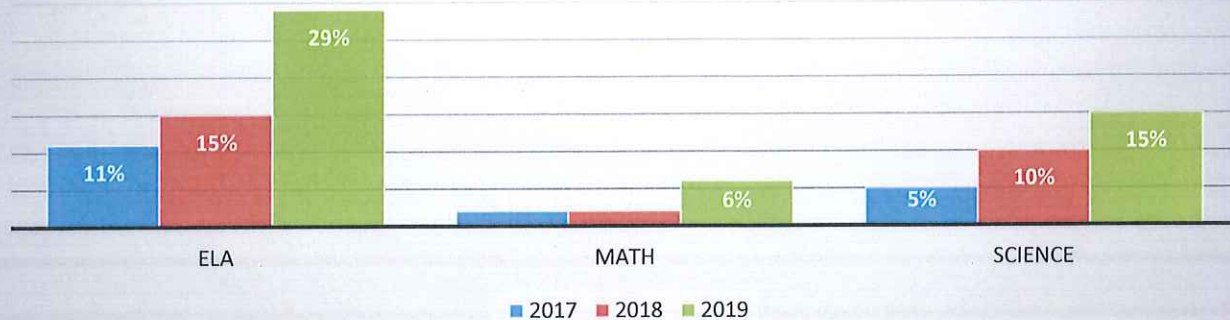
#### Measures of Student Achievement

**MAP:** From 2016-17, NAS-LC used the assessment Measured Academic Progress (MAP) to measure student growth. Beginning in school year 2017-18, NAS-LC moved away from MAP (as recommended by the Charter School Division's director) and chose to use PARCC data to identify student growth, along with teacher made exams to measure interim growth. For the upcoming 2021-22 school year, because the PARCC is no longer available, NAS-LC will return to using MAP as the short cycle assessment to measure student growth in literacy, math and science. The assessment will be used as a baseline in the fall and will compare to the end-of-year post assessment. NAS-LC teachers and administration will receive MAP professional development in October 2021 to learn how to read MAP data and how to use these results to inform instruction.

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**PARCC:** The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) was the state assessment that was initiated in school year 2014-15 and continued through school year 2018-19 when it became a transitional assessment. PARCC measured English Language Arts (ELA) and math. Science was measured by the Standards Based Assessment (SBA), which was the previous state assessment used before PARCC began. The science section of the SBA was the only part that continued to be used. The other content was measured by PARCC. The graph below indicates NAS-LC's proficiency growth over a three-year period in all three areas. This growth was due to the implementation of the NM Dash Plan, the corrective action plan which was set forth by PED. The graph below shows the increase in student proficiency over three years of administering the PARCC and Science SBA.

## Proficiency



In 2018-19, the PARCC assessment was discontinued. As a transition exam between PARCC and SAT, the Transitional Assessment for Math and English Language Arts (TAMELA) was administered. The TAMELA assessment consisted of a few components from the PARCC assessment.

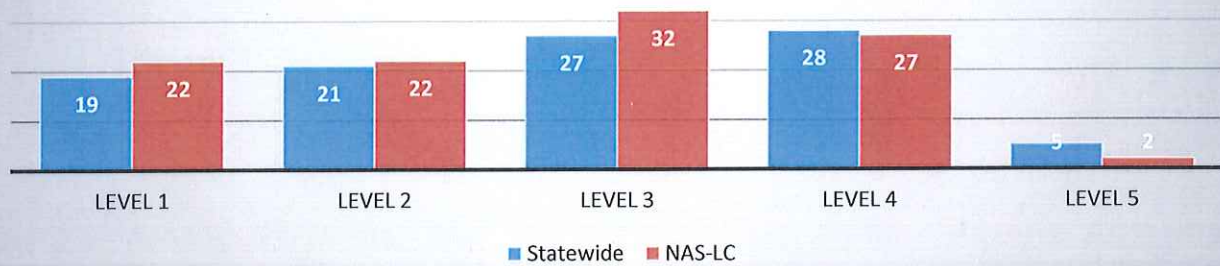
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**TAMELA RESULTS** After receiving TAMELA results in 2019, and comparing them to the state results, we observed that NAS-LC continued to make gains. NAS-LC scored within the same ranges as the state results.

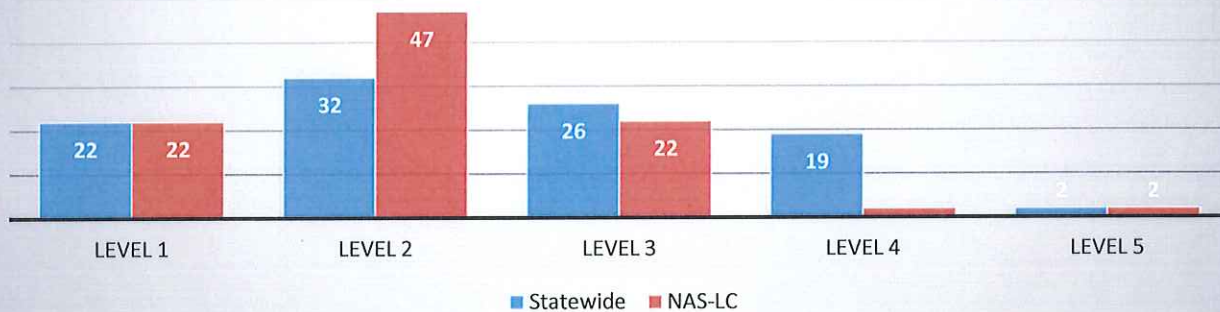
TAMELA	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4 Proficient	Level 5 Proficient
STATEWIDE READING	19	21	27	28	5
NAS-LC READING	20-24 (Avg 22%)	20-24 (Avg 22%)	30-34 (Avg 32%)	25-29 (Avg 27%)	≤ 5 (Avg 2%)
STATEWIDE MATH	22	32	26	19	2
NAS-LC MATH	20-24 (Avg 22%)	45-49 (Ag 47%)	20-24 (Avg 22%)	≤ 5 (Avg 2%)	≤ 5 (Avg 2%)



## TAMELA Reading



## TAMELA Math



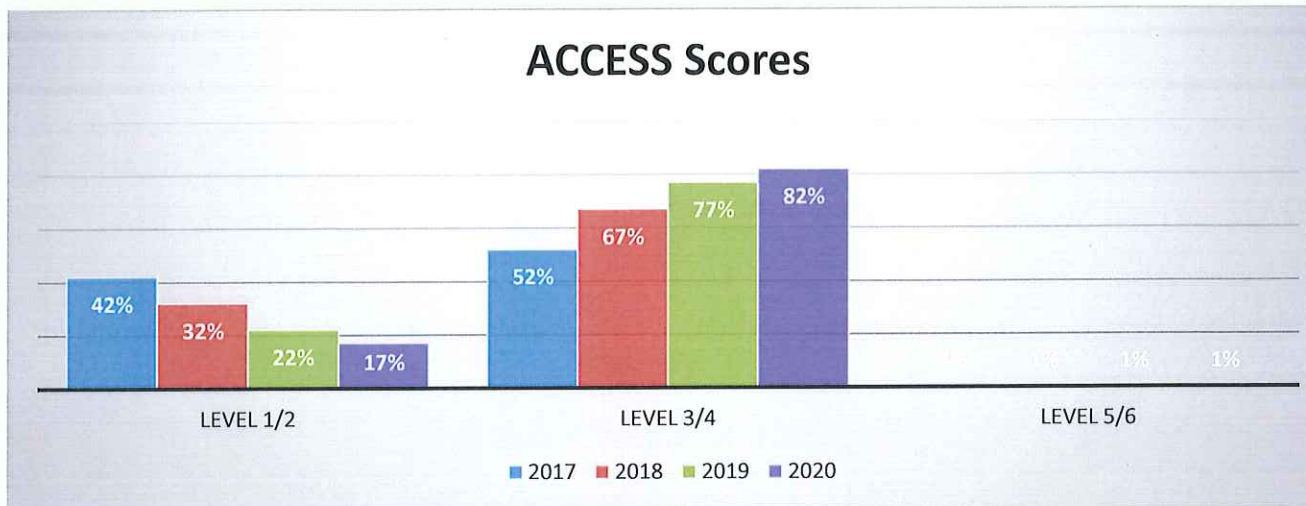
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**ACCESS:** The Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners assessment (ACCESS) is the required assessment for students who have not demonstrated English proficiency. Each year, students who do not score at levels five or six must continue to receive English as a Second Language (ESL) services. The scores are based on SWRL, speaking, writing, reading and listening. These results provide NAS-LC with data on how students are attaining English. The scores reemphasize that the four domains of SWRL are vital in increasing student language achievement. Each year, NAS-LC has a full day of professional development to understand the data and how to use the results in our daily instruction. This information is also needed to understand the individual literacy skills of each student. In school year 21-22, during Professional Learning Communities, (PLC) teachers will discuss and deepen their understanding of the WIDA levels and how to support students at their different levels of language acquisition.

During the two-hour block of ESL, the English teacher, who is also ESL certified, uses a variety of teaching strategies in the four domains of language, which include speaking, writing, reading and listening (SWRL).

Even though students SWRL in other classes, the ESL class is taught with an emphasis on language development.

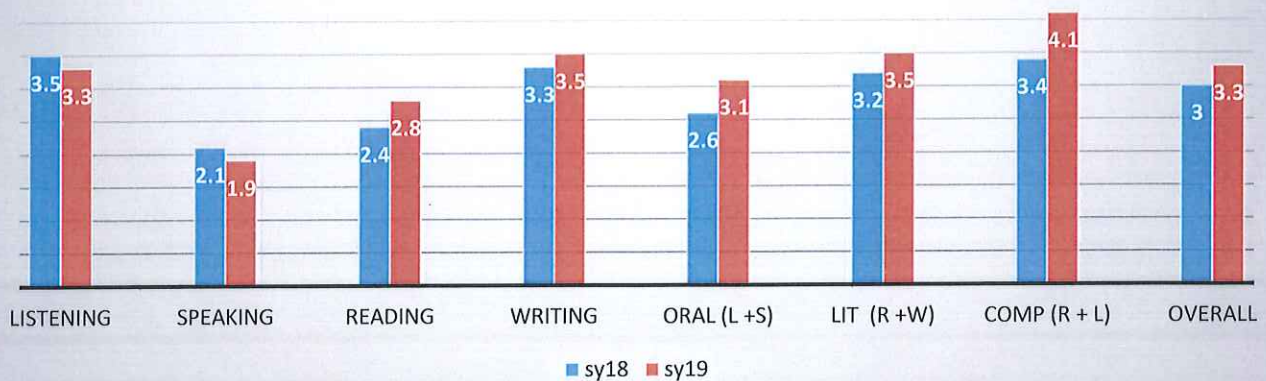
For four consecutive years, the number of students in levels one and two on the ACCESS have decreased. This means that more and more students are attaining the English language and are scoring in levels three and above. For levels five and six, which are English Proficient levels, the data shows that there are less than 5% each year that exit their ELL status. The number of student exiting the ESL program is low. NAS-LC will continue learning about WIDA and how to differentiate lesson to best meet language needs through the PLC monthly meetings.



In comparing the school years 2018 and 2019, we observed that individual listening and speaking scores decreased. As a staff, we determined that students needed more time listening to the language and they need time to use and practice the language. Deeper analysis of the data informed teachers that students needed to practice ACCESS released items to better prepare students and ensure the gain confidence in taking the test. In the graph below, there is clear evidence that teachers need to spend more time allowing our ELL to practice oral language and listening skills. Our stand-alone speaking scores are the lowest of the four areas. Listening and speaking scores have both decreased. However, the other scores and combined scores have all increased and are trending positively. After one year, the overall scores for our ELLs have increased.



## ACCESS



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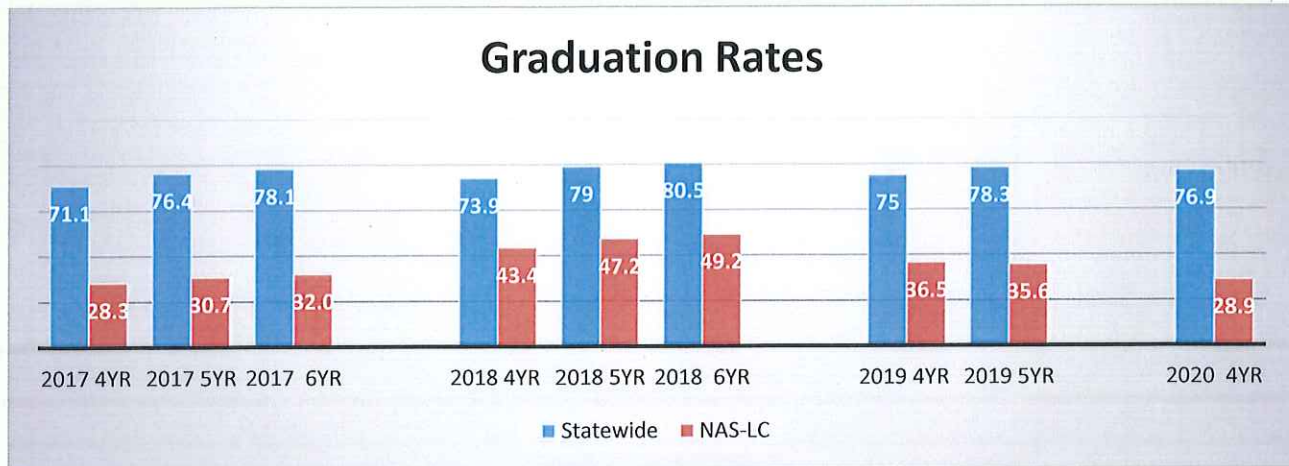
**Graduation:** Data provided by the PED indicates that NAS-LC has inconsistent graduation rates. For school years 2017 and 2018, the graduation rates were increasing, however in 2019 and 2020, the rates decreased. We concluded that during the last few months of the pandemic, our seniors even though had technology, did not know how to access the platform, had no time to log on or lacked motivation. Some seniors had other priorities, such as getting a job to help their families survive the pandemic or taking care of their younger siblings during the stay-at-home order.

The historical data from the 40day count and the 120day counts suggest more students enroll at NAS-LC in the second semester. As we take anecdotal accounts, students who fail the first semester at a larger school, enroll at a NAS-LC in order to recover credits or receive more individualized attention. With that being said, looking at the trends for graduation, the graduation rates for NAS-LC are much lower than those statewide. We are capturing a population that is being underserved at other schools.

NAS-LC continues to implement different strategies to support graduation. Those strategies to are to continue a four-day week to support working or parenting students, continue the night program for working adults, offer an online recovery program (Edgenuity), and offer *free* summer school. NAS-LC conducts home visits, provides monthly bus passes, and now has a daycare for single parents.

NAS-LC also offer the dual credit classes to our juniors and seniors to help encourage higher education. When a student has a job, NAS-LC uses those hours as “work experience” toward an elective credit. Students must submit their work pay stubs to earn the credit. Only one elective credit may be earned per semester.

## Graduation Rates



During the pandemic, NAS-LC prioritized seniors during remote learning by providing the limited technology to them first; however, even so, our seniors did not fully participate. Even though we offered supports, our “at-risk” community needed more structure, more support and self-discipline. This past summer of 2021, our summer school students had the choice of attending virtually, in-person or hybrid. Our teachers offered classes as many ways as possible.

Our Academic Advisor has the task of meeting with each senior to verify their educational plan, known as the Next Step Plan (NSP). This ensures that each student is on track for graduation and has a plan for after graduation. This opportunity is used to encourage our students to create personal goals toward college or career.

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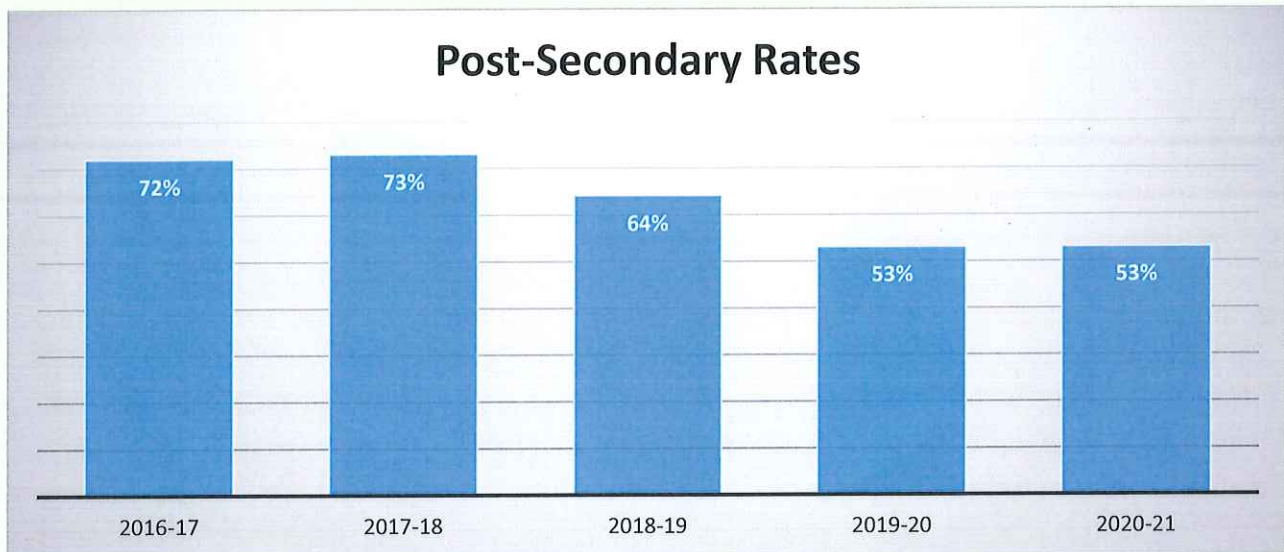
**Post-Secondary:** NAS-LC has an MOU with Doña Ana Community College’s Dual Credit Program to encourage our juniors and seniors to continue higher education or a learn trade. Students are able to attend college courses on the college campus while earning credits for high school and college simultaneously. In 2015, NAS-LC applied and was granted funding for a College Navigator. This position was to assist students in transitioning to college or career. The rate of post-secondary enrollments in higher education institutions or military in 2015 was at 55%. In one year, the rate increased to 72% and we attribute the increase to this position.

Our College Navigator helps complete the FAFSA and the application process to local university and colleges. Students also participate in annual trips to campuses to help them feel more confident when they are on their own. After the grant expired, NAS continued to fund this position due to its success.

The following graph indicates the number of students who enrolled in post-secondary programs. The trends showed that when NAS-LC served adults over 21 years old, there were more students who continued their



education. This correlates to the number of students we served. NAS-LC attributes the decline in post-secondary attendance due to students getting immediate employment after graduation or their immigration status. Students who are undocumented do not qualify for federal funds which makes college too costly for families. The pandemic also limited the direct contact our College Navigator had with students. When students were on campus, it was easier to personally encourage them to fill out paperwork or access DACC advisors.



**Career Technical Education, CTE:** NAS-LC has not historically had a strong CTE program. The courses we have offered have been in web design, computer applications, and child development. In 2020-21, NAS-LC received its first CTE grant. This grant was used to fund part of the academic advisor's summer contract to meet with students individually and to fund part of an electives teacher. NAS-LC is in the process of designing a stronger master schedule to include topics and classes that interest our students. The most challenging component to CTE is finding licensed personnel to provide the courses students have interest.

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#### Professional development for teachers

NAS-LC has 16 days of professional development (PD) built into the contracted year. The beginning-of-the-year in-service days are dedicated to the analysis of state testing, including State Assessment scores and ACCESS scores, learning the lesson plan template, and curriculum development. The remaining PD days are held once a month on Fridays. During these days, PD are utilized to examine daily practices, collaborate with content teams, discover and problem solve challenges and grow and learn together about school wide topics.

**School-wide Professional Development Plan, PDP:** For the past three years, NAS-LC has made a commitment to grow and learn together on issues that concern all of our students. In 2018-19, teachers

noticed that many of our students came to school with a closed mindset. They were unwilling to try or to make any effort in taking risks so we decided that our students would benefit from a growth mindset. We studied, Growth Mindset by Carole Dweck. Teachers were committed to learning about growth mindset and set out to implement the strategies in their classrooms. All teachers used the same language with students and created an environment to change the school culture. Teachers began to notice a difference in students. Their phrases began to change from "I can't" to "I'll try."

During school year 2019-20, the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies were explored in the same manner. We studied each competency and became knowledgeable about each one and how they could be used to lower the affective filter of students who were struggling at school. When teachers understand what is happening in a child's emotional stage, we can better teach them or help them work through it so that they can learn.

In school year, 2020-21, we studied Emotional Poverty by Dr. Ruby Payne. The book was chosen to help teachers understand the realities of home life that can interfere with learning. Strategies were shared each month on how to support students when they arrive at school ill-equipped and emotionally deprived. Each teacher was responsible for reading a chapter and teaching it to the rest of the staff. Learning about emotional poverty helped understand our students and the issues that impede their learning.

In school year 2021-22, the staff chose to continue learning about the Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Curriculum (CLR). The PED had provided professional learning via Pathways I and II in 2019-20, but due to the pandemic, the in-person training was postponed. Our staff felt that continuing to learn CLR would foster positive relationships by building, bridging, affirming and validating students' culture and create safer learning environments. Each teacher is responsible to learn a chapter and teach it to their colleagues to ensure teambuilding and accountability. NAS-LC is working closely with the PED Language and Cultural Division for support.

At the end of each school year, we discuss the topics that will offer the most leverage to student achievement. We choose the most significant topics and strategically place them throughout the school year.

Other PD topics that we study:

- MLSS – Multi Level Student Supports
- Special education accommodations
- Teacher collaboration/team building
- Final exam development
- Vocabulary building/strategies
- Daily Objective writing
- NM Elevate: Domains 1-4
- QPR: Question, Persuade, Respond: Suicide Prevention

- Data analysis of student assessments

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**The Early Warning System, EWS:** NAS-LC has participated in this PED program since 2016. The EWS is a system that identifies students who are at risk of dropping out or failing school. The teaching and support staff meets once a month to identify students who are most “at-risk.” We discuss the students’ new or existing family issues, safety concerns, attendance, behavior and anything else that might prevent the students from being successful. The EWS’s goal is to examine the student in the areas of ABC: attendance, behavior and coursework. The identified student is then paired up with a Champion and interventions are placed to help support the student. The Champion is a school staff member who volunteers to meet informally with the student to offer a check-in or offer additional support. The Champion already has a relationship established with the student and the student most likely trusts this adult.

Another important part of the EWS program is Report Card Talks. After each quarter ends and report cards are printed, each student sits individually with a support staff member or an administrator to review their report card. The conversation focuses on grades, attendance and opportunities to improve. For others, it is a celebration of their accomplishments. These conversations can positively change student behavior. This school year, NAS-LC teachers and administrators discussed changing the Report Card Talks to Progress Report Card Talks. These conversations would happen after progress reports were distributed, and the strategic change would give our students time to change their grade through tutoring or Friday School. We are being proactive.

During the school year 2020-21, two of our staff members participated in ECHO/EWS program. This program was a statewide initiative where schools came together to discuss a specific student to identify additional interventions. These two staff members continued to learn about EWS in biweekly meetings for the entire school year and presented a case study to the statewide team for feedback. The ECHO program is in conjunction with the University of New Mexico.

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**Classroom Walk-Throughs:** One goal that has been established from the administrator’s evaluation, is that the Governing Council encourages classroom visits weekly, if not daily. Each classroom walk-through focuses on teacher behavior and student engagement. The data is used to understand the quality of teaching and to be informed of the classroom activity. MPI’s should be posted, standards should be the driver of instruction, and instruction needs to be rigorous. Strategies and instructional practices are observed. The walk-throughs provide the administrator information to give immediate and relevant feedback regarding classroom instruction and learning. The walk-throughs also give the administrators information about where professional development might be needed. If there is a trend in all classrooms, then the administrator will use PD time to redirect the expectations.

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**Administration Professional Development:** The Superintendent was selected in 2018 to participate in the prestigious and highly competitive two-year RISE program. RISE is Reset-Reignite-Reimagine foundations for School Leaders, formerly known as the Principals Pursuing Excellence (PPE). This is a PED program to help grow and strengthen principals which has proven to increase school performance.

The following year in 2019, Mrs. Christina Montoya, the Assistant Principal, was also selected to participate in RISE. The administrative team is continually learning and growing as instructional leaders. In 2021-22, Mrs. Montoya was selected to participate in THRIVE. This is an additional one-year program for administrators to learn how to provide effective feedback to teachers.

After completing RISE, in the school year, 2020-21, Ms. Porter was selected as a Performance Coach in the Launch Program. Launch is a one-year program for incoming/novice principals who need support. Ms. Porter mentored two new charter school principals on topics such as observations, evaluations and other personnel issues. Coaching and serving as a thought partner for the two principals solidified the knowledge and complexity of all the nuances of being a charter school principal. In both RISE and Launch, participating in the Community of Practice learning sessions are a requirement. During these sessions, professional readings, leadership strategies, and other topics are discussed.

The Superintendent was requested for a second year to continue as a Performance Coach RISE and a new program, NM School Lead Program. NM Lead is a program to support new principals who have been in the profession for one to three years. Ms. Porter is mentoring two principals, one of which is a new charter leader.

In May of 2021, Ms. Porter was requested to be part of the team of educators across the state to review and make recommendations to the Multi-Layered Student Success Structuring Guide. This document is to be widely shared with all schools in NM. Ms. Porter offered feedback and edits to the guide. Her expertise is recognized and valued by other leaders in the state.

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### Learning Programs

NAS-LC uses a variety of programs to enhance learning and achievement for all students. Below is a description of our learning programs.

#### **G.R.A.D.S- Graduation, Reality, And Dual-Role Skills: (The Dual-Role is Student and Parent)**

NM Grads Program is program to support teen parents through curriculum and an on-site daycare. GRADS is a multi-generational case management model which helps students:

- Identify and remove barriers contributing to success for themselves and their children,
- Overcome the cycle of poverty by achieving a high school education and employability skills,
- Develop positive parent and healthy relationship skills.



The NM GRADS program is funded by the NM Legislature and through a US Department of Health and Human Services Office Pregnancy Assistance Funded Grant, administered and overseen by the NMPED.

When teen parents are supported with a childcare center at school, the students are more likely to graduate. In New Mexico, during 2020, 88% of GRADS students graduated from high school in comparison to the national average of 55%.

During the year 2019-20, 14 students (about 8% of the population) left New America School when they became pregnant or had a baby. It was alarming since some of these students who were close to graduation, dropped out due to childcare issues or financial obligations. One of the students was a 14-year-old freshman. Of the 14 students, three students returned to school but only one graduated in 2021. Two others were unsuccessful during the pandemic with virtual learning. The other 11, never returned regardless of the outreach. Ms. Guerrero, a certified teacher, had participated in the GRADS program at her own high school when she became a teen mom. She recognized the need for this program at NAS-LC. She took the initiative to seek out the program and bring it to NAS-LC.

The process of bringing the GRADS program to NAS-LC and opening childcare center on our campus began in the Spring of 2019. It was a long process and ground work had to be done. Ms. Guerrero, worked with the PED GRADS department to begin to process for the childcare space as well as learning the GRADS curriculum. The building needed to be remodeled with a new toddler bathroom, an egress window and all of the furniture needed to be purchased. After 18 months of work, a childcare center is available to our students. The baby bathroom is ready, a GRADS elective class has started, the room is fully furnished and the emergency exit is clearly displayed. "New Beginnings" Daycare Center opened on August 30, 2021.

NAS-LC is currently the only state-chartered high school to house such a program. The childcare center is a reliable and dependable place where the students can bring their children while they attend school. Young parents have to learn to balance parenting, school, and work. A school-based childcare center gives students peace-of-mind knowing that their child is close and being taken care of by licensed, early childhood teachers. There is an established curriculum for the children who attend the childcare center. Lesson plans are developed and goals are set for each individual baby and toddler. The young parents participate in the GRADS class where a teacher provides the required curriculum. This curriculum teaches the parents to parent, to manage time, to discipline, and other important life skills.

For the 2021-2022 school year, we have seven new teen parents enrolled in GRADS. There are currently four children enrolled from the ages of six weeks to two years at New Beginnings. There are four pregnant teens enrolled at NAS-LC.

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**English as a Second Language, ESL:** Students are placed in ESL classes dependent upon their WIDA screener or ACCESS scores. NAS-LC has an ESL program to help support students who have just entered the United States and those who have continued to have a barrier with learning English. Both the online program and the classroom resources are used that align to the WIDA standards to support ELL learners. Some of the strategies include listening to digital short stories, retelling read-aloud with comprehension questions, and using prompts to help with understanding stories. Vocabulary cards are used to support new word

acquisition. Teachers and students engage in short conversations to practice speaking skills. According to the PED Vistas data, 43% of our students are on target to increase in language proficiency.

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**MATH:** Over the past 4 years, NAS-LC has evolved in the math curriculum to support student learning. The first year of the renewal cycle, NAS continued with the same curriculum. NAS-LC struggled to find a strong instructor. For an entire year, there was a substitute teacher and there was no movement in math proficiency. In the second year of the charter, NAS-LC made a staffing change by finding a seasoned teacher who recommended using Agile Mind. Agile Mind is a curriculum that incorporates computer work for students to learn concepts, but it is more of a remediation math program. However, given our math data, we selected Agile Mind to best support our math growth. We concluded that this type of program would benefit our students. In the second year, students' proficiency increased by 4%.

In the transition from PARCC to TAMELA, the PED had a math adoption year. After doing research, teachers noticed that Carnegie Learning was the curriculum that ranked the highest and met all of the criteria on the PED rubric. According to [edreports.org](http://edreports.org), Carnegie's MATHia rates very high for quality math instructional material. During the pandemic, the math instructors made the change from Agile Mind to MATHia.

Carnegie Learning (CL) is used for all math classes; Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Financial Literacy. CL is a curriculum that is exploratory and allows students to develop conceptual understanding and deepen their skills. CL has 3 components: engage, develop, and demonstrate. With CL, MATHia is included, which is an online learning platform designed for students to master grade level standards at their own pace. This platform is designed to encourage student thinking with guidance as if a teacher was working with them individually. MATHia is unique in which the classroom is synchronous but students are able to challenge themselves and continue to learn using the program at their own pace. The NAS-LC math team will be using NMIS alongside CL to support grade-level assignments and increase the rigor in each classroom.

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**ELA:** The English Language Arts department uses two programs that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. *Springboard* is a curriculum that is associated with CollegeBoard. It is also aligned with the SAT content that will be the state required assessment for graduation. Students become familiar with the vocabulary and the rigor associated with SAT and ACT when using Springboard. It has graphic organizers, scaffold activities to build knowledge and has content relevant to the units in a variety of formats such as short stories, poems, articles, novels, and real-life events.

The second element that is used in ELA classes is NewsELA. NewsELA uses a variety of elements to help prepare students to use critical thinking skills. There are elements for students to annotate the text and review notes and vocabulary. There is a comprehension quiz that uses terms such as, author's purpose, theme and main ideas. NewsELA also utilizes students' prior knowledge to build on and practice their comprehensive writing skills. The articles are leveled to the students' reading abilities. The quizzes used

gage and give teachers reports of the students' scores throughout the year. Another useful tool is that NewsELA has articles both in English and Spanish.

**Labster:** Science classes are taught with Labster. Labster is a virtual lab that allows students to complete laboratory experiments, exploring concepts online. This interactive lab is used in conjunction with our 3-D computers. Labster is another way for students to understand topics. Students log in and work through a simulation. Throughout the lab, the students have to read information and answer question on that information. The lab will also have them apply the information while working on the lab.

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#### Encouraging parental or community involvement

**COMMUNITY NIGHT:** NAS-LC has various ways to connect with family and community. Each year there are two very large events on campus to encourage parental engagement. The event is known as our "Community Night." There is one scheduled each semester. These events are held in the evenings to accommodate working families. Community Night is catered event to encourage attendance. Incentives and prizes such as t-shirts, backpacks and other NAS branded materials are shared. Outside organizations are invited to participate to educate our families about available assistance and information in our community. The visitors are from NMSU, NM Workforce Solutions, Vista College, Dona Ana Community College, Armed Forces, Catholic Charities and Tresco, just to name a few. The agencies share information about college, career, or work opportunities. NAS-LC also uses this time to meet with families to establish relationships. State testing and school information is also distributed. The average number of visitors is 120 for each event. Unfortunately, these events were cancelled due to the pandemic. For school year 2021-22, the event has been postponed due to rising cases of the COVID-19 virus.

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**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Learning Day:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'what are you doing for others?'" NAS-LC uses this quote to define a tradition. For most students, Dr. King's birthday is a federal holiday, but for NAS-LC students, it has been a way to stand out and serve others. Local food pantries, homeless shelters, parks, nursing homes, and other community centers, are visited by our students on the Monday each year. NAS-LC students commit to helping others to honor Dr. King. The goal is to instill a sense of community connectedness and responsibility in each of our students. Even through the pandemic, NAS-LC continued its legacy of service. Students wrote gratitude letters to frontline workers or picked up trash in their neighborhood. Students were asked to submit their letters to their homeroom teachers or take a photo of their collected trash. Attendance during the pandemic on this day was 85%. This data shows that our students cared about others and their community even when there was a stay-at-home order. Every year, NAS is either featured on the local front page or on a news segment demonstrating how our students are serving others. Students feel a sense of pride as they give back to the community.

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**Traveling Holocaust Museum:** In 2016, New America School hosted a traveling Holocaust Museum that was sponsored by the New Mexico Human Rights Project. Even though the Museum was specifically shared with the School, NAS-LC offered the entire city the opportunity to visit the panels. The Museum was set up and displayed at the Mesilla Valley Mall during spring break. Our students volunteered their time and were docents or guides. The docents learned the 16 panels and hosted visitors throughout the Museum. Trained students were on a daily schedule and assisted visitors by walking with them through the panels while giving them detailed information. The Museum hosted over 1,200 visitors. The Choices display, as it is called, tells the story in words and pictures of the devastation of the Holocaust. This exhibit provided the people of our community with information about the history of the Holocaust and how its lessons continue to be relevant, especially regarding bullying.

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**Traveling Anne Frank Museum:** In 2017, NAS-LC again requested to be a host for the Anne Frank Traveling Museum. This museum was set up in the same fashion as the Holocaust Museum. This 16-panel museum was set up at four different locations in order to be more widely visited. The Museum was set up at three other local high schools and at the Dona Ana County Building for a full day. Our students became docents. As docents, they set up all panels, engaged with visitors as they walked through the museum and were in charge of breaking down and setting up again at the next location. The Anne Frank Museum was visited by 1,600 people.

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**Catholic Charities, CC:** NAS-LC has created a collaboration with Catholic Charities. This is a non-profit organization that supports the neediest in our community. Our Homeless Liaison works closely with CC. For the last two years, they have provided NAS-LC a check for \$7,500 to assist our homeless students with emergency housing, food, hot meals, clothing and bedding. Because of this assistance, NAS-LC was able to establish and maintain a food pantry. Catholic Charities has also awarded three homeless students with \$5,000 scholarships to continue their education post high school. In the 2021-22 school year, Catholic Charities was able to secure another \$5,000 micro grant to support our homeless students.

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**Metro League Sports:** Other local charter schools and neighboring cities' private schools came together and to form a league, Metro League, to encourage competitive sports within our small schools. Our students have participated in volleyball, basketball, flag football, and track. NAS-LC students have traveled to El Paso, Silver City, Deming and Alamogordo to compete. The creation of this league has allowed students to be part of a team. For many students, this is the first time they play or have "made" the team. For example, an NAS-LC student who has cerebral palsy was able to play basketball with her teammates. This gave her confidence and a sense of community. In a larger high school, this would not have been possible. This opportunity also



allows our students to feel like they are in a larger high school setting where sports is relevant to the culture of the school. Sports is a part of our culture.

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**Nuevo America Mariachi, NAM:** NAS-LC established a mariachi band in the first few years of its inception. The Nuevo America Mariachi has thrived. The NAM played at several events, such as graduation, private parties, and at the Farmer's Market on Saturdays. The Mariachi was established as a way to support students in their musicality. La Academia Dolores Huerta, another local charter middle school has students participating in mariachi music classes. As a way to support this cultural practice from middle school to high school, NAS-LC invested funds to hire a mariachi teacher, traditional mariachi instruments, and wardrobe to encourage students to continue this tradition in high school.

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**Hygiene Drive:** The NAS-LC Student Council began a hygiene drive in 2013. This is another great contribution to our community. Each November through December every year, our Student Council invites students and the larger community to donate hygiene products, such as laundry detergent, shampoo, feminine products etc., to be donated to the local homeless shelter. Each year NAS-LC collects and donates over 500 pounds of products to restock their pantry. It is unique in which other groups might donate non-perishable food to the homeless shelter, but according to the shelter, NAS-LC is the only entity to hold such an impactful community drive.

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**MOU with NMSU:** NAS-LC recently entered into an MOU with New Mexico State University. The Dean of the College of Education reached out to NAS-LC to work on the partnership. The memorandum between both entities agreed to support each other in professional development, hosting student teachers, offering counseling students internships, and offering rising administrators the opportunity to grow professionally. The MOU has been included in the appendices.

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**Kellogg Grant:** Both New America School-Las Cruces and New America School-New Mexico (Albuquerque) submitted a grant proposal to the Kellogg Foundation to complete a study of students who attended either school in years 2014-17. The schools were awarded a grant of \$300,000 to conduct a two-year study on the impact New America Schools have had on families and communities. The study was done by interviewing currently enrolled students, graduates and drop outs along with teachers and staff members. The conclusion of the study, as stated on page 38 of the report, states:

"The study confirmed that students who attended NAS tend to have any number of obstacles to completing high school. These obstacles include family obligations, work conflicts and other

immediate demands that can converge to derail any person's pathway. For those students who get the support they need to finish, the positive impacts ripple through families and communities as graduates show their children...parents and friends that education is important and that a high school diploma is attainable. In NM, where we have such high rates of intergenerational poverty, this is a pathway out."

This only reinforces that NAS provides a pathway for not only students, but families to begin changing the poverty cycle. NAS in Las Cruces offers families an opportunity that is unlike any other school.

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**School's Equity Council, EC:** In 2020-21, NAS-LC created an Equity Council comprised of a team: Ms. Porter, Superintendent, Mrs. Christina Montoya, Assistant Principal representing ELL and Special Ed, Mrs. Christy Jo Serna, teacher representing ELL, and Mrs. Veronica Gonzalez, a parent. The work of the Equity Council, (EC) which involves students, was not implemented due to synchronized teaching and learning. However, Ms. Porter attended all statewide meetings, worked with the PED Equity Council liaison and prepared PowerPoints to roll out the monthly EC in 2021-22. The EC began with students participating in the monthly meetings beginning in October. The meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month. The conversations are geared to gather information on inequities at NAS-LC. Each homeroom selected one to two representatives represent their peers. The information learned at each EC will be disseminated with others. NAS-LC is also collaborating with two other local charter high schools to combine forces in creating stronger EC by hiring a liaison who can facilitate the meetings. Future joint EC meetings are a possibility.

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#### Monitoring students' social emotional and behavioral development

New America School-Las Cruces is a small school with a culture built on trust and relationships. One expectation is that each teacher greets each student at the door after each period. Many of our students have chosen to attend our school due to the lack of support from other larger high schools. NAS-LC provides instruction in small classrooms with less than 25 students. The number of students per class is a way that teachers can help more students during class.

**Friday School, FS:** Teachers offer individualized support with our Friday School model. This FS model offers three hours, from 9am -12pm each Friday for assistance to students who are failing, were absent, or who need deeper understanding of concepts. Lunch is served as each student leaves for the day.

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**Homeless Liaison:** During the pandemic, our social worker and our Homeless Liaison continued to facilitate outreach to our students with the greatest needs. Our Homeless Liaison continued to deliver groceries and

assisted with providing other basic necessities, including bedding, to our students. She uses the Catholic Charities grant along with Title I funding to support our students.

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**Fun Fridays:** An activity that started in school year 2021, post-pandemic, are “Fun Fridays.” Our school is comprised of 94% of youth of color/minorities who live in poverty and encounter significant life stressors. This places our students disproportionately at-risk for mental health problems, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and school dropout. Our population also has behavioral and mental health needs that often go untreated. The ultimate goal of this new and innovative program is for students to develop self-awareness and to help build the social emotional skills they need for success in the classroom and beyond. The objective is to build stronger peer relationships and find that they are more alike than they are different. Positive social behavior, social and emotional knowledge, a positive school climate, while also reducing problem behaviors and emotional distress are among the goals. The essential goal of these days are to bring students together to build the NAS community, utilizing teambuilding activities and incorporating important life lessons. Our Fun Fridays will be held once a month, from 11:00 – 1:30 including lunch. All students are invited to participate. Our first Fun Friday which was held on August 17, 2021 attracted 35 students! The second Fun Friday brought 17 students. Teachers encouraged their homeroom students to attend and offered extra credit points. Social Emotional Learning concepts:

1. Self Esteem
2. Resilience
3. Empathy
4. Courage
5. Self Respect
6. Respect
7. Honesty
8. Leadership
9. Tolerance
10. Compassion

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**Lunch and School Breakfast Program:** NAS-LC offers breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students at no cost to families through the Community Eligibility Provision. During the year of virtual learning, parents were able to pick up lunches on Mondays or Tuesdays for the entire week. This helped families save on traveling to the school site. For sixteen families, NAS-LC hand-delivered meals to their homes. This was due to lack of transportation. When PED changed all schools to the summer seamless option (SSO), NAS-LC was able to deliver food to all of the school-aged children in the same household.

## **b. Equity and Identity within the Culture of the School including Student Support**

This item of the renewal application allows schools the opportunity to include additional information that is not already collected, but that should be considered when making a determination about the renewal of its charter. The school will create a representation that highlights how their school environment is inclusive, reflective of the community, validates students' cultures and identities, and supports all students' sense of belonging.

Note: If your school wishes to display visual art or performance art (such as sculpture, painting, recorded performance or live performance by students), your school will be given no more than 15 minutes at its renewal hearing to present the representation. If a school wishes to submit a narrative, it shall be submitted along with the renewal application.

### ***School response:***

New America School-Las Cruces has included additional information in Appendix 1A. It is a series of articles featured in our local newspapers, Sun-News and The Bulletin. Additionally, NAS-LC has created a video with student testimonies. There are several students sharing their personal stories. Students from all backgrounds and cultures are represented. These students represent our mission; an limited English speaker, immigrants, and students who were underserved by other schools. Please access it on YouTube: [https://youtu.be/JKzc\\_aMzf1I](https://youtu.be/JKzc_aMzf1I)



## 2. Academic Performance

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school... failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of student performance standards identified in the charter contract.

### a. School Support and Accountability

**Any school that has not maintained a "C" or better letter grade in SY2017 and SY2018 OR is not identified in the top 75% of all schools in SY2019 and SY2020 on the NM System of School Support and Accountability, must provide a narrative that describes the improvement actions targeted to improve the student outcomes (school/adult/leader/teacher actions) and the success of those actions (student academic successes/improved outcomes).**

Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through documented evidence at the site including renewal site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/teacher actions and the student academic successes/improved outcomes in the narrative.**

The narrative should reference performance data that can be reviewed and verified either during the renewal site visit or during the "desk audit" review of the application. If providing data, please attach in Appendix E and reference the appendix by name in this narrative. (Appendix E – Academic Data)

**Schools that have maintained a "C" or better letter grade in SY2017 and SY2018 and were identified in the top 75% of all schools in SY2019 and SY2020 in the NM System of School Support and Accountability AND have not received a "D" or "F" in any indicator of the state report card during SY2017 and SY2018 do NOT complete this section.**

**School response:** New America School-Las Cruces has demonstrated academic growth in all subject areas including English language arts, mathematics and science. The persistent and effective work from educators has demonstrated progress in this renewal cycle. Throughout the PED letter-based grade system, NAS-LC demonstrated a consistency in letter grade and an increase in overall performance of over 16 points. NAS-LC created school-wide changes and developed an improvement plan that resulted in an increase in proficiency.

*Inasmuch as the Part A data analysis provided to the renewing schools by CSD contained data from the 2016-17 school year and appeared to ask applicants to provide information relating to that school year, NAS-LC has complied and has provided information. However, since that school year preceded the current charter term (2017-2022), it is NAS-LC's belief and understanding that the 2016-17 school year data and information should not be considered as part of the current renewal cycle.*

## **2016-17 Academic Progress and Improved Outcomes**

### **2016-17 PARCC DATA**

PARCC was the required state assessment for school year 2016-17. The data was disaggregated and used to inform the School of areas of improvement and areas of strength.

**Literacy:** Based on the PARCC assessments only 11% of our students performed at the proficiency level. Teachers and administrators analyzed the data and determined that vocabulary and writing skills needed the most development.

Root Cause of the low proficiency scores: Teachers were not taking time to deliberately teach vocabulary. Students were not using a universal template or structure to answer written questions. Student were not familiar or confident with taking the test, understanding the test vocabulary or the test format. It was also determined that a root cause of low reading scores was that students did not spend time reading.

### **LITERACY Improvement Activities:**

**Reading, RTI:** According to the International Reading Association, students who read for pleasure make significantly more progress in vocabulary, spelling and math than children who read minimally. With this in mind, a 30-minute daily block for silent reading, SSR (sustained, silent reading) was created within the master schedule to fully implement a school-wide initiative. Students were encouraged to read for enjoyment during this uninterrupted time.

**Cite, Evidence, and Expand, CEE:** is a paragraph template that supports writing in all English classes. Students were expected to use this template in writing for informational text and to cite evidence in other types of literature to support a thought. After implementing this template, the PARCC scores improved the following year in each grade level.

**Test prep** At the beginning of each class, student start with a "bell ringer" or a warm-up activity. Teachers were directed to use the same format as the PARCC to start opening activities. Final exams in each course had

to mirror the PARCC format. Teachers had to ask 2-part questions and follow up with written responses to help students feel confident with the test format.

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**Math** Students were performing at a 2% proficiency rate. Scores had not increased in two years.

Root Cause of low proficiency: Students did not understand how to answer the math question correctly because the vocabulary was very difficult. Teachers did not teach students how to maneuver the computer math applications such as the tools/calculator.

**MATH Improvement Activities:**

**Extended Math Time:** Algebra classes were strategically placed on the master schedule to allow for an extra 30 minutes of math instruction. This additional time was spent on remediating basic math skills that students lacked. The math curriculum was also selected based on research completed at New Mexico State University's Teacher program: MC2(squared). The curriculum selected was Agile Minds. It mirrored PARCC and used vocabulary that is used on the PARCC.

Title I funds were used to secure another math teacher. This teacher was to be used to support students with an additional math class, as an elective, to remediate low math skills. Students who scored very low on the PARCC were identified and assigned to this class.

**Test prep:** For "bell ringer" or warm-up, teachers had to use the released PARCC math questions. Teachers went over test strategies and test vocabulary. The computer lab was used to introduce students to the PARCC tools such as the calculator.

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**Science:** NAS-LC science scores were also very low. Our students only scored 5% proficiency on the Standards Based Assessment, SBA.

Root Cause: Teachers were not teaching vocabulary explicitly on the science test. Students did not feel confident in taking the test. Students needed test taking strategies.

**SCIENCE Improvement Activities:**

**Test prep:** For the daily "bell ringer" or warm up, teachers were required to use the released SBA science questions. Teachers practiced test strategies and test vocabulary.

**Teacher change:** Strong science teachers are sparse. However, NAS-LC was able to identify a candidate for science in both the day and evening classes who brought in strong strategies and teaching experience. She was able to provide students with direct instruction.

**Curriculum support:** Teachers were given the autonomy to choose curriculum that supported the Science State Standards. Teachers used a variety of strategies to engage students. Classroom walkthroughs and feedback were used to offer focused feedback for improvements in teaching.

## **SCHOOL-WIDE Improvement Activities**

**School-wide Non-negotiable vocabulary:** Teachers assessed the results of the PARCC scores and confirmed that students needed to hear the same vocabulary in all content areas. This became a school-wide strategy to support vocabulary building. The teaching staff compiled a list of the most important 31 high frequency words in Common Core State Standards and in PARCC. We called these words “power” words. These words were to be used in all content areas for the entire week. For example: Word of the Week: Analyze. All teachers were to use these power words during their daily objectives. If the word of the week was “analyze,” all math, social studies, ELA, and science classes were expected to be “analyzing” in their content area. This strategy would support our students to learn that they could analyze in different classes for different subjects and internalize the vocabulary word. The words were: analyze, infer, justify, organize, apply, compare/contrast, identify/distinguish, represent, prove, evaluate, develop, cause/effect, expand/elaborate, paraphrase, argue, express, demonstrate, conclude, determine, persuade/convince, predict, generate, prepare, describe, interpret, summarize.

**NM Dash Plan:** In August of 2017, when NAS-LC received its only D letter grade, the staff took a deep dive into the data to disaggregate where teachers needed to focus or reteach. The PED and Charter School Division expected for all schools that scored a D or F, to complete this action plan. Charter schools were given a choice to choose NM Dash or another corrective action plan. NAS chose to design and implement the NM Dash Plan. In the Dash, the two focus areas that were selected to provide students with the most leverage in growth were:



Focus Areas	
<i>Focus Area: What are the 2-3 highest-leverage Focus Areas (best practices – see pp. 3-5) that must be addressed to reach the student achievement goals?</i>	<i>Data Connection: What quantitative and qualitative data led you to these Focus Areas? How do you know that these are the highest-leverage areas of focus?</i>
Standard Alignment	<p>Classroom walkthroughs indicate that teachers are not using curriculum as rigorous as PARCC.</p> <p>Curriculum maps and common assessments were not being used to guide content teachers.</p> <p>Principal did not review curriculum maps for alignment.</p> <p>Curriculum maps were not aligned to EOC or CCSS.</p> <p>Classroom walkthroughs indicated there is not enough consistency in instructional strategies.</p>
Data Driven Instruction	<p>Teachers do not use data to drive curriculum instruction and professional development decisions.</p> <p>Assessment practices are not consistent from teacher to teacher.</p> <p>Assessment instruments used to judge student progress are not as rigorous as those on standardized assessments used by the state.</p> <p>Teachers' assessment results are not being discussed for deeper data analysis. Post conversations are not happening to reveal areas of concern.</p> <p>Teachers are not using short cycle assessments (MAP) to better inform curriculum planning instructional practices.</p> <p>The principal needs to examine assessment practices to ensure that tests align with all areas of Bloom's taxonomy.</p>

These two areas did produce higher proficiency levels in all areas. Both administration and teachers needed to agree on the plan and follow through on all of the step to improvement. The Dash was monitored every 30, 60 and 90 days. Reflections and adjustments were made to the Plan to ensure that benchmarks were attained.

## 2017-18 Academic Progress and Improved Outcomes

### 2017-18 PARCC DATA

NAS-LC *did* raise the letter grade to a C in one year with the NM Dash action plan in place. Literacy increased by 4% but math remained the same. The Dash Plan had proved that the steps taken were supporting some achievement in literacy but lagged in math. The staff continued to disaggregate the data to identify the areas where teachers needed to focus.

**Literacy:** From the data, it was determined that students were making progress with a focus on the Dash. The teachers determined that the writing template, CEE should be implemented not only in English classes, but across all content areas.

**Root Cause:** Students needed more time to strengthen their academic vocabulary and more practice of using the CEE to answer questions in social studies, science and math if possible.

#### **LITERACY Improvement Activities:**

The final exams in ELA classes that were created by teachers mirrored the same format as the PARCC so that students could be comfortable and confident. Each reading question has two parts: the first part asks the question and the second part of the question asks about the supporting evidence.

ALL teachers across all content areas received professional development on how to use the CEE. They practiced using the template and scored student samples together. Teachers also introduced the PARCC rubric to students so they understood the grade and how feedback was provided on their writing assignments.

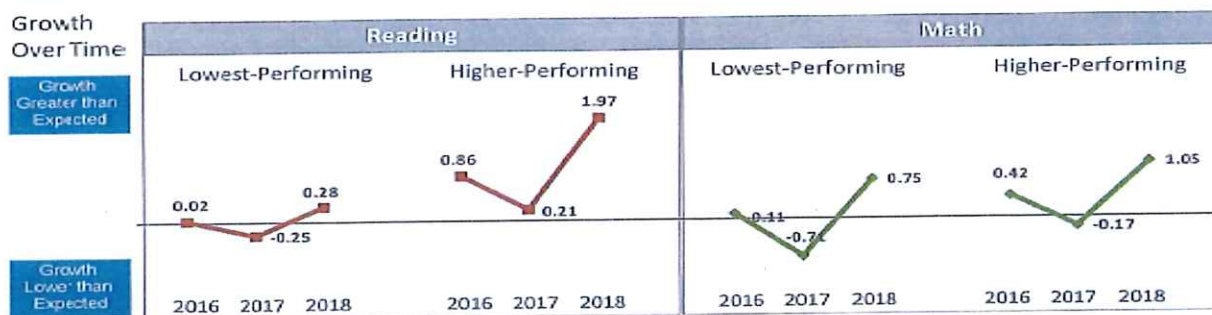
**MATH:** It was determined that students needed basic skills along with the comprehension of mathematical problems to raise their proficiency levels.

**Root Cause:** Students needed more practice with the new math curriculum, more time to understand math prompts and questions.

#### **MATH Improvement Activities:**

The math teachers continued to use Agile Mind. There was not an increase in proficiency, but individual students' scores increased. Students needed to get time to become familiar with learning and "doing" math on a computer. We continued the longer blocks for the Algebra I classes (ALG. I Lab) and incorporated a longer block of time for students who scored in the bottom quartile would help remediate their skills. The math curriculum was used with fidelity. Students needed more time to feel comfortable with completing the assignments on the computer on a daily basis. Math classes all had a COW, Computer on Wheels dedicated only for those classes for students to use everyday.

As the graph shows, for the school year 2017-18, both reading and math growth were more than expected. The teacher commitment and school-wide changes resulted in academic growth in both areas.



Through the use of the NM Dash Plan and the hard work by teachers, NAS-LC grew over 16 points in one school year.



## School Grading Report Card 2018

New America School - Las Cruces

Location: New America School - Las Cruces

Range: 9-12 Code: 549001

Final Grade 2018

**C**

Overall Score 58.23

C - State benchmark established in 2012

Possible Points

This School Earned

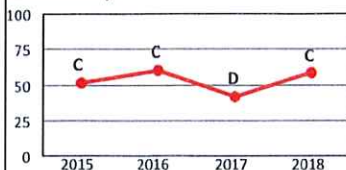
Performance Standing	Score	Grade
Students performing on grade level? Did they improve more or less than expected?	10.91	C
School Improvement	9.54	A
Improvement of Higher-Performing Students	9.14	A
Improvement of Lowest-Performing Students	6.91	D
Opportunity to Learn	7.37	A
Graduation	5.21	F
College and Career Readiness	5.15	F

### Points

Schools can earn points for reducing truancy, promoting extracurricular activities, engaging families, and using technology.

+ 4.00

### School's History



### Note for Families

If your student is enrolled in a school that has earned two "F" grades in the last four years, state law allows you to transfer your child to a school with a higher grade. Please call (505)-827-6909 to learn more. For information about other schools in your community, please visit the School Grading web page at <http://aae.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolGrading.html>.

Mexico School Grading 2018

Card 2017

Final Grade 2017

**D**

Overall Score 41.60

State benchmark established in 2012

Possible Points

This School Earned

Students performing on grade level? Did they improve more or less than expected?	6.45	F
School Improvement	2.79	F
Improvement of Higher-Performing Students	5.09	B
Improvement of Lowest-Performing Students	3.19	F
Opportunity to Learn	7.22	A
Graduation	7.01	F
College and Career Readiness	4.85	F

+ 5.00

BY:

### Note for Families

If your student is enrolled in a school that has earned two "F" grades in the last four years, state law allows you to transfer your child to a school with a higher grade. Please call (505)-827-4527 to learn more. For information about other schools in your community, please visit the School Grading web page at <http://ped.state.nm.us/SchoolGrading>.

**Science:** Science proficiency rose by 5% in one year. The strategies that were implemented school-wide and teacher experience, were effective in raising student achievement. In the summer of 2017, NAS-LC invested Spaceport money to purchase 3-D computers. These computers are used to offer students the ability to explore science concepts without a large science room. Students can dissect animals, view space, shape in 3 dimensions by using special glasses. NAS-LC purchased 5 computers.



## 2018-19 Academic Progress and Improved Outcomes

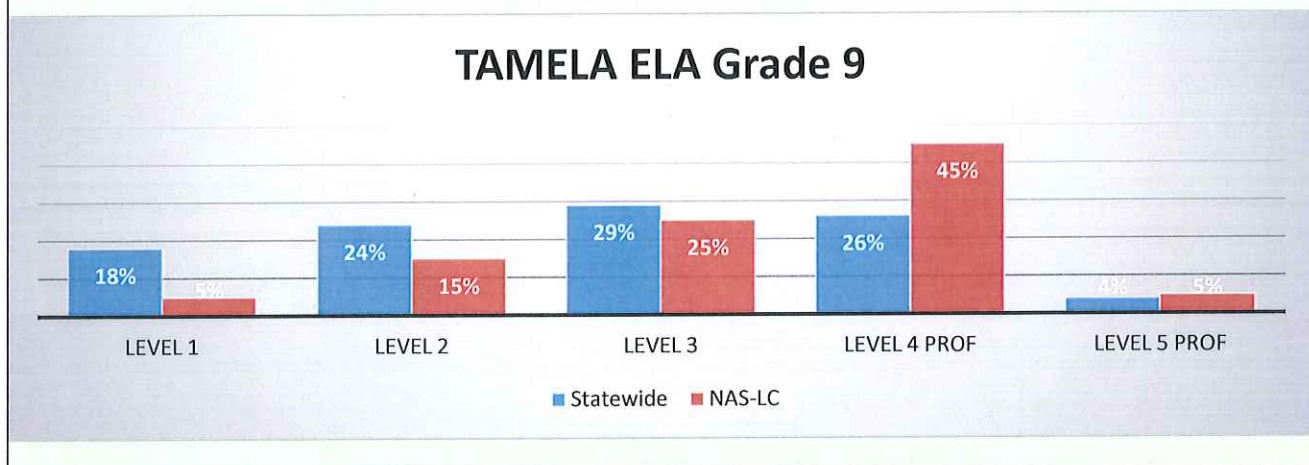
### 2018-19 TAMELA DATA

**Literacy:** After two years of CEE implementation and SSR time, literacy proficiency rates went up by 14%, reaching a 29% proficiency level.

**ELA:** According to NMPED data, our 9<sup>th</sup> grade students outperformed the state on proficiency levels of 4 and 5. This resulted in a Top 10 Charter Schools Literacy Growth recognition by the PED Secretary of Education.

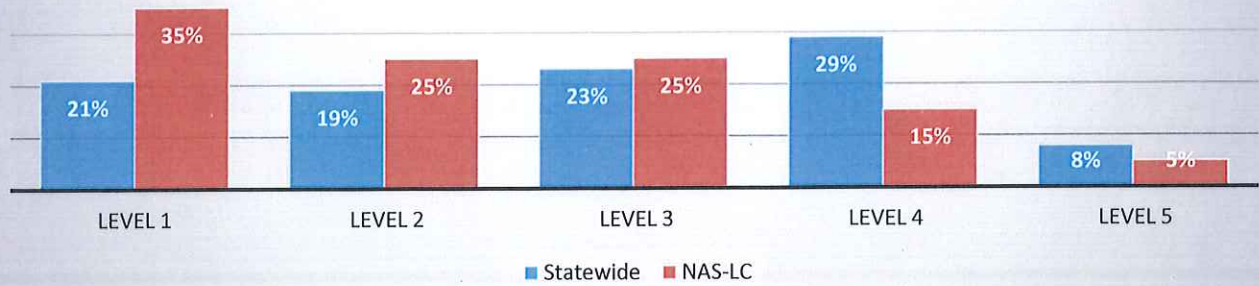
**Math:** The math classes continued to use Agile Mind. This resulted in a 6% math proficiency after the second year. The math proficiency showed no increase previously, but increased by 4% in one year.

**TAMELA Comparison:** When compared to the state results, NAS-LC fared well within the state average and in some areas scored better than the state average. The PED valued Levels 4 and 5 as proficient. NAS-LC was more proficient than the state average in ELA 9 (Levels 4 and 5), Algebra I (Level 5) and Geometry (Level 5).

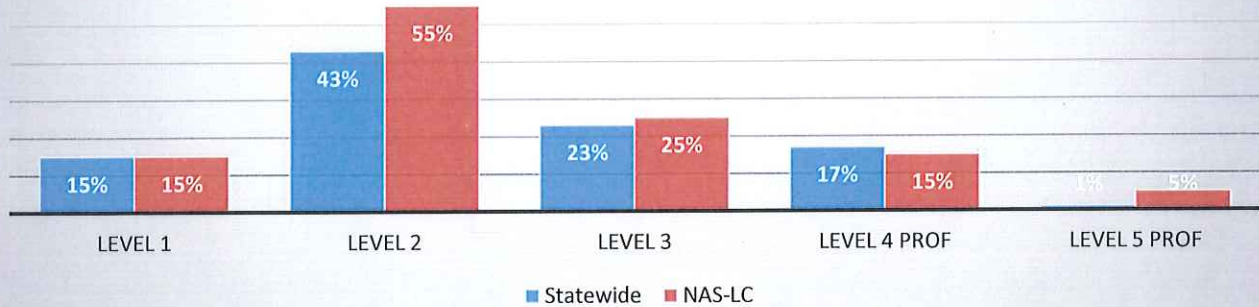




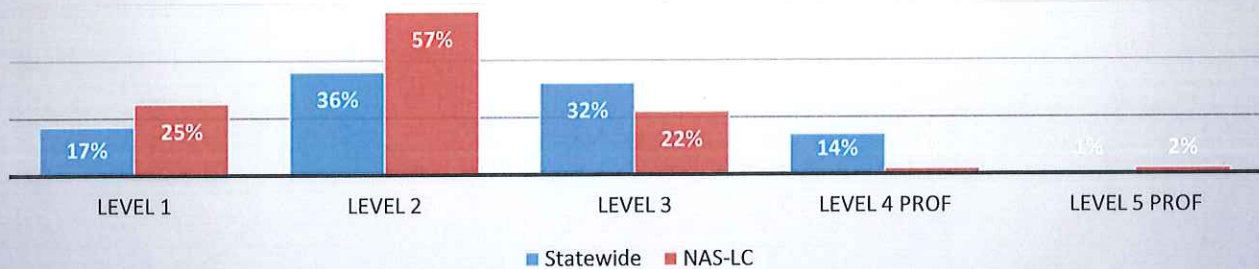
## TAMELA ELA 10th Grade



## TAMELA Alg I



## TAMELA Geometry



## **2019-20 Academic Progress and Improved Outcomes**

This was the year of SAT implementation. For this school year, students were to take the SAT to offer baseline data. Due to school closures, students did not participate in SAT.

**Literacy:** English teachers continued to use Springboard to support student learning. The CEE is in place and continues to be used in all content areas.

**Math:** The math department continued Agile Mind for another year. This curriculum is based on a computer program that modifies the lesson according to the students' mastery skills.

**Science:** NAS-LC has begun implementing the Next Gen Science Standards, NGSS. Teachers have been learning the curriculum, attended professional development opportunities and have started implementing the NGSS in their lesson plans and classrooms. Science classes continue to use Labster and 3-D computers.

## **b. School or Mission Specific Charter Goals**

Pursuant to 1978 NMSA, §22-8B-9.1 each charter school authorizer must allow for the inclusion of additional rigorous, valid and reliable indicators proposed by a charter school in each school's performance framework to augment external evaluations of its performance, provided that the chartering authority approves the quality and rigor of the indicators and the indicators are consistent with the purposes of the Charter Schools Act.

**All applicants must report on each school or mission specific charter goal that is included in the school's performance framework.** Applicants must provide a summary analysis of their performance on each goal over the term of the contract. This analysis must state, for each year of the contract, whether the goal was met and must include longitudinal data that can show the progress of the school over the contract term. For each goal, the applicant should provide a visual representation of the longitudinal data.

**For any applicant that did not meet all of their goals in each year of the contract term, provide a narrative that addresses the improvement actions (school/adult/leader/teacher actions) targeted to improve the school's performance on that school or mission specific goal and the success of those actions (student academic successes/improved outcomes).** The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward achieving and maintaining sufficient performance on the school or mission specific goal. The narrative should only address a goal that was not met in each year of the contract term.

Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through documented evidence at the renewal site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/teacher actions and the student academic successes/improved outcomes in the narrative.**

The narrative should reference performance data that can be reviewed and verified either during the renewal site visit or during the "desk audit" review of the application. If providing data, please attach in Appendix A and reference the appendix by name in the narrative. (Appendix A – Mission Goal Data)

**Schools that have met all of their school or mission specific goals in each year of the contract term do NOT provide a narrative.**

***School response:***

**ACT WorkKeys:** ACT WorkKeys is an assessment that measures a student's ability to show work-place readiness. New America School-Las Cruces has implemented Workkeys testing for all graduating seniors for the last three years. In implementing Workkeys, students are required to take a pre-test in August/September followed by using the Workkeys Curriculum and then a post-test in April/May to include the three subtests required for a National Career Readiness Certificate. These subtests include Workplace Documents, Applied Mathematics and Graphic Literacy.

This assessment is used to measure one year's student achievement in seniors. ACT WorkKeys has been implemented for the past three years. The use of the ACT assessment is an indicator of our success toward our mission. It aligns with our commitment to developing students to maximize their potential for the work force.

The four levels of the certificate are bronze, silver, gold and platinum. A pre-test and post-test are given to seniors who begin the school year and end that same year at NAS-LC. After taking the baseline assessment in the fall, students set their goals for completion in the spring. Students who increase one or more levels meet the benchmark.

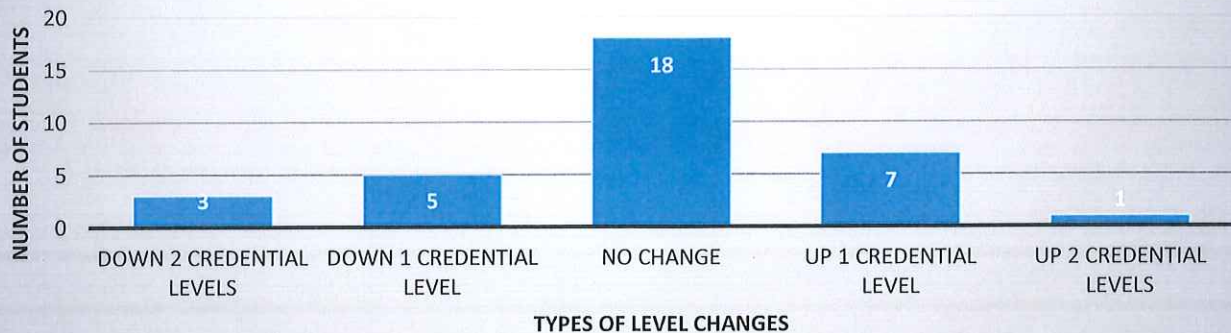
The charter specific goal is that "students will improve their performance from the fall to spring by at least one level on the National Career Readiness Certificate.... The school will calculate the percentage of students in the data set who improved by at least one level on the NCRC."

In the first year of the WorkKeys testing, our students "fell far below" in reaching the expected growth. This was attributed to the lack of understanding the value of the certificate and being confident with the test format. One additional strategy to support our students was to offer the WorkKeys curriculum for each senior. Each senior is expected to practice this curriculum on a daily basis to build work place skills and demonstrate growth on the three subtests in order to earn a higher certificate.

**2018-19 WORKKEYS RESULTS**



## CREDENTIAL LEVEL CHANGES FALL 2018 TO SPRING 2019



Measure Rating Category	Description of Target for this Performance Level
<i>Exceeds Standard</i>	90% or more of students in the data set improve their performance by at least one level on the National Career Readiness Certificate from fall to spring.
<i>Meets Standard</i>	60% - 89% of students in the data set improve their performance by at least one level on the National Career Readiness Certificate from fall to spring.
<i>Does Not Meet Standard</i>	40% - 59% of students in the data set improve their performance by at least one level on the National Career Readiness Certificate from fall to spring.
<b><i>Falls Far Below Standard</i></b>	<b>0% - 39% of students in the data set improve their performance by at least one level on the National Career Readiness Certificate from fall to spring.</b>

In school year 2018-2019, there were 34 seniors who took the pre-test in the Fall of 2018 and the post-test in the Spring of 2019. The charts above show data for scale score changes from the Fall semester to the Spring Semester. NAS-LC scored in "Does not meet Standard." Only 24% of the students met the goal.

After these results, NAS-LC began to speak to seniors individually to explain the importance of this test and to explain the value of the ACT WorkKeys Certificate. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to observe an increase in overall progress.

### 2019-20 WORKKEYS RESULTS

In school year 2019-20, only a pretest was administered due to school closures. Below are the number of certificates that were earned.

## WORKKEYS CERTIFICATES EARNED 2020



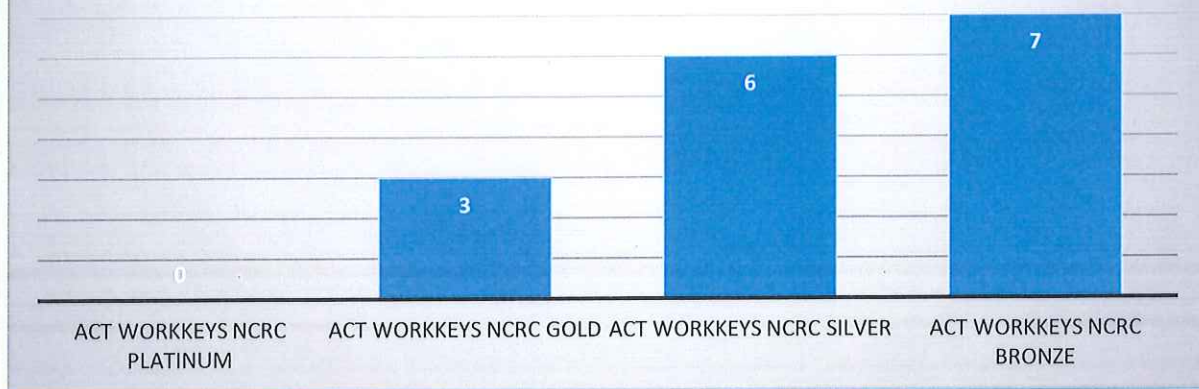
In school year 2019-2020, with the closure of schools, only a pre-test was given and Workkeys curriculum also came to a halt as we rearranged schedules for remote learning. In school year 2020-2021, we began with a synchronous, remote learning schedule and NAS was focused on core classes so the Workkeys Curriculum was not assigned to seniors.

Due to NMPED COVID school guidelines, which included proper filtration regulations, which New America School was in the process of receiving, a pre-test was not scheduled in early Fall. Then, with the return of students to in-person learning in April, 2021 New America school opted to test Seniors in the Spring in order to give them the opportunity to still earn a National Career Readiness Certificate before graduating.

### 2020-21 WORKKEYS RESULTS

Only a post-test was administered due to school closures.

## WorkKey Certificates Earned 2021



In May, 2021, NAS tested 19 students and, of those students, 16 earned a certificate. There were 7 students who earned Bronze Certificates, which means they scored a 3 on all 3 subtests. There were 6 students who earned a Silver certificate, which means they scored a 4 on all 3 subtests. There were 3 students who earned a Gold Certificate, which means they scored a 5 on all three subtests and there were no platinum certificates earned, which would require a 6 or better on each of the 3 subtests. All components are scheduled for school year 2021-2022 to include pre-tests and post-tests. Workkeys curriculum will also resume and students will be able to review concepts throughout the school year to help with moving to a higher level of certificate after their post-test in May.



### **3. Financial Compliance**

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school...failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

#### **a. Audit Report Summary**

Every charter school is subject to the Audit Act. (1978 NMSA §22-8B-4; 1978 NMSA 22-8-1 *et. seq.*) The Public School Finance Act requires the audit committee of each charter school governing body to track and report progress on the status of the most recent audit findings and advise the local school board on policy changes needed to address audit findings.



Please edit the actual year you are referring to in the table. For example, Year 1 should be changed to the audited year (such as FY16) within the current contract. Also, provide a summary of the nature of findings including category levels. Include and indicate any repeat audit findings involving a material weakness or significant deficiency.

### Year 1: 2016/17 – 0 Findings

### Year 2: 2017/18 – 1 Finding

#### 2018-001 Internal Control over Cash Receipts (Other Noncompliance)

**Condition:** During our audit, we noted the following issues as they relate to cash receipts:

- 4 out of 17 receipt packets with receipts totaling approximately \$4,500 that lacked individual cash receipt slips for each receipt. Each receipt slip contained numerous cash receipts, which also indicates that the payees didn't receive a carbon copy of the receipt.
- During our review of the cash receipting/handling process, we noted a lack of adequate segregation of duties. Receipt slips and daily bank deposit reconciliation were processed by the same individual who makes the actual bank deposit.

**Criteria:** Per NMAC 6.20.2.14, School districts shall establish and maintain a cash management program to safeguard cash and provide prompt and accurate reporting that adheres to cash management requirements of the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The school district shall issue a factory pre-numbered receipt for all money received. Pre-numbered receipts are to be controlled and secured. If a receipt is voided, all copies shall be marked "Void" and retained in the receipt book. Each school district shall develop, establish, and maintain a structure of internal accounting controls and written procedures to provide for segregation of duties, a system of authorization and recording procedures, and sound accounting practices in performance of duties and functions. The duties to be segregated are the authorization to execute a transaction, recording the transaction, and custody of assets involved in the transaction.

**Cause:** Lack of adequate internal controls surrounding cash receipts.

**Effect:** Possible misappropriation of assets and misstatement to the financial statements.

**Auditor's Recommendation:** We recommend that procedures be updated and designated individuals understand their roles with the cash handing and receipting process. In addition, we recommend that compensating controls be considered in cases of limited staffing.

**Management's Response:** The School has implemented proper internal controls and procedures surrounding cash receipts in its policies. These controls and policies have been re-emphasized to the responsible staff to ensure they are followed correctly. Each deposit will be verified by a second person to validate the correct amount of the deposit.



### Year 3: 2018-19----4 Findings

#### 2019-001 Internal Controls over Cash Receipts (Other Non-Compliance)

**Condition:** During our testing over Cash Receipts we identified 4 out of 9 cash packets include one receipt slip used to record multiple cash transactions. The packet did not include a supporting cash log to review how many transactions made up the one deposit. In addition, one cash receipt did not include a receipt slip and based on the support we were unable to determine if receipts were deposited with the next business day.

**Criteria:** NMAC 6.20.2.14 states that money received and receipted shall be deposited in the bank within twenty-four (24) hours or one banking day. Per NMAC 6.20.2.11, every school district shall establish and maintain an internal control structure to provide management with reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, and that transactions are executed in accordance with management's authorization and recorded properly to permit the preparation of general purpose financial statements in accordance with GAAP. Per NMAC 6.20.2.14, School districts shall establish and maintain a cash management program to safeguard cash and provide prompt and accurate reporting that adheres to cash management requirements of the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The school district shall issue a factory pre-numbered receipt for all money received. Pre-numbered receipts are to be controlled and secured. If a receipt is voided, all copies shall be marked "Void" and retained in the receipt book. Each school district shall develop, establish, and maintain a structure of internal accounting controls and written procedures to provide for segregation of duties, a system of authorization and recording procedures, and sound accounting practices in performance of duties and functions. The duties to be segregated are the authorization to execute a transaction, recording the transaction, and custody of assets involved in the transaction.

**Cause:** Management oversight.

**Effect:** Noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations, possible misappropriations of assets.

**Auditor's Recommendation:** We recommend that management establish cash logs and implement effective internal controls over cash receipts.

**Management's Response:** The school does have proper internal controls and procedures surrounding cash receipts in its policies. These controls and policies have been re-emphasized to the responsible staff to ensure they are followed correctly. The school will also develop additional policies to ensure deposits are properly tracked for require deposit time. A log has been created for each transaction made. The school has made a protocol to ascertain that money is being deposited with the next business day.

Implementation: 12/31/2019

Person Responsible: Business Manager, Assistant Business Manager.

#### 2019-002 Internal Controls over Payroll File Maintenance (Other Non-Compliance)



**Condition:** We identified 3 out of the 4 employee files reviewed did not have an ERB enrollment form included in the payroll file, however, withholdings for ERB were present on the employee paycheck.

**Criteria:** Per NMAC 6.20.2.18, the local board shall establish written payroll policies and procedures which comply with state and federal regulations on payroll, as well as maintaining strict internal controls, close supervision, and financial accounting in accordance with GAAP. School district shall maintain and have available for inspection the following employee record documentation: employment contracts (including increments), personnel/payroll action forms, certification records, employment eligibility verification (federal form I-9 for citizenship certification), federal and state withholding allowance certification, pay deductions authorizations, pay or position change notices, Education Retirement Act plan application, and direct deposit authorization.

**Cause:** Lack of adequate controls surrounding personnel file maintenance.

**Effect:** Noncompliance with applicable rules and regulations. Auditor's Recommendation: We recommend management to implement effective controls to ensure that all employee files contain the proper documentation.

**Management's Response:** The school will establish a process to check all employee folders yearly, so all required personnel documents are kept in the appropriate employee folder. This process will include a checklist of needed items that will be completed by the business office and reviewed by the superintendent.

Implementation: 12/31/2019

Person Responsible: Business Office, Superintendent

### **2019-003 Purchasing (Other Non-Compliance)**

**Condition:** During testing over general cash disbursements and credit card testing we identified the following:

- 4 out of 28 cash disbursements, which had a purchase order created subsequent to the purchase or service being provided to the school.
- A disbursement was made to a home improvement store which consisted of purchasing \$3,000 in gift cards. Although, receipts were kept it was difficult to determine if any of the gift cards held a remaining balance at year end. The School does not have a current process to properly reconcile and monitor all gift card balances agree to approved purchases.
- Review of credit card purchases, it was identified that purchase orders are created subsequent to the purchases being made as it is prepared once the credit card statement is received. The School is currently not maintaining support of approvals for credit card purchases taking place prior to the purchase.

**Criteria:** Per PSAB Supplement 13-Purchasing, the preparation and execution of a duly authorized purchase order must precede the placement of any order for goods, services, or construction. Per NMAC 6.20.2.11, every school district shall establish and maintain an internal control structure to provide management with reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, and that transactions



are executed in accordance with management's authorization and recorded properly to permit the preparation of general purpose financial statements in accordance with GAAP.

**Cause:** Management oversight, lack of internal controls over gift cards

**Effect:** Noncompliance with applicable rules and regulations, risk of possible misappropriation of assets

**Auditor's Recommendation:** We recommend that the School create internal controls over the use, monitoring and reconciliation of gift card and credit card purchases. In addition, that the School ensure a purchase orders are established prior to purchases and services being ordered by the School.

**Management's Response:** Management will review its purchasing processes and procedures to ensure all purchases have proper approval before the purchase is made. The school will also establish additional processes around its approval of P-card and gift card purchases which will include an approved requisition submission before any card is used and all receipts will be kept with a log to track the balance/history of all purchases. Credit card statements will be reviewed monthly with the Superintendent.

#### **2019-004 Anti-Donation (Other Non-Compliance)**

**Condition:** During our audit, we identified gift cards were purchased by the School and given to students as incentives.

**Criteria:** Per Article IX Section 14, neither the state nor any country, school district, or municipality, except as otherwise provided in this constitution, shall directly or indirectly lend or pledge its credit or make any donations to or aid of any person, association, or public or private corporation.

**Cause:** Lack of management understanding of applicable regulations of the state and charters.

**Effect:** Noncompliance with applicable statutes and possible misappropriation of asset of the School.

**Auditor's Recommendation:** We recommend that management familiarize themselves with applicable rules and regulations in the State of New Mexico as it pertains to a charter school.

**Management's Response:** Student incentives for certain programs and events were mistakenly booked to the operational fund instead of the activity fund which fundraised monies for these incentives. The school will confirm all purchases are properly coded to the correct funds, and incentives will only be purchased with fiduciary funds raised for that purpose. This includes following the school's processes of dual review of purchase orders in which the assistant business manager codes and prepares the PO and the business manager reviews the PO with coding before it is issued by the CPO.

### **Year 4: 2019-20----2 Findings**

#### **2020-001 Internal Controls over Cash Receipts (Other Non-Compliance)**

**Condition:** During our testing over cash receipts, we identified 1 out of 8 receipt packets in which the transaction of \$454.60 was not deposited within 24 hours of receipt. Further review the collections related to a February



student fundraiser that were not provided to the school business office for deposit until May.

**Criteria:** NMAC 6.20.2.14 states that money received and receipted shall be deposited in the bank within twenty-four (24) hours or one banking day. Per NMAC 6.20.2.14, School districts shall establish and maintain a cash management program to safeguard cash and provide prompt and accurate reporting that adheres to cash management requirements of the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The school district shall issue a factory pre-numbered receipt for all money received. Pre-numbered receipts are to be controlled and secured. If a receipt is voided, all copies shall be marked "Void" and retained in the receipt book. Each school district shall develop, establish, and maintain a structure of internal accounting controls and written procedures to provide for segregation of duties, a system of authorization and recording procedures, and sound accounting practices in performance of duties and functions. The duties to be segregated are the authorization to execute a transaction, recording the transaction, and custody of assets involved in the transaction.

**Cause:** Management oversight and lack of effective tracking of school activity or fundraiser events in order to manage timely collections.

**Effect:** Noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations, possible misappropriations of assets.

**Auditor's Recommendation:** Although, the significant delay in deposit is primarily due to the Covid-19 school closure, the event occurring in February would have allowed for timely deposit of cash receipts by the club sponsor. We recommend that management establish a tracking schedule to maintain fundraising or student activity events in order to manage the timely collections from the events. In addition, that all sponsoring staff review the schools cash receipting process prior to sponsoring an event.

**Management's Response:** The school does have proper procedures and controls in place for cash receipts and deposits. The superintendent and assistant business manager sent an email to all staff who may sponsor an event or handle any type of school funds to emphasize the importance of the procedures and processes needed for any and all deposits. A log will be used to enter all transactions during the fundraiser. This log will be submitted daily to ensure deposits are made in the appropriate time.

## **2020-002 Purchasing (Other Non-Compliance)**

**Condition:** During testing over general cash disbursements and credit card testing we identified the following:

- 1 out of 34 cash disbursements, which had a purchase order created subsequent to the purchases being made.
- Review of credit card purchases, it was identified that purchase orders are created subsequent to the purchases being made as it is prepared once the credit card statement is received. Purchase requisitions and approval should still be required prior to the purchase along with independent review of the supporting reconciling items to the credit card statement.

**Criteria:** Per PSAB Supplement 13-Purchasing, the preparation and execution of a duly authorized purchase order must precede the placement of any order for goods, services, or construction. Per NMAC 6.20.2.11, every



school district shall establish and maintain an internal control structure to provide management with reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, and that transactions are executed in accordance with management's authorization and recorded properly to permit the preparation of general purpose financial statements in accordance with GAAP.

**Cause:** Management oversight, lack of internal controls over gift cards

**Effect:** Noncompliance with applicable rules and regulations, risk of possible misappropriation of assets

**Auditor's Recommendation:** We recommend that the School enhance their internal controls over purchasing to include training staff of the requisition process. In addition, that the school utilize a purchase requisition and approved purchase order prior to making credit card purchases and be included monitoring the use and reconciliation of the School credit card.

**Management's Response:** The school does have policies and procedures for purchasing that does require requisition approval before purchases can be made. These have been re-emphasized to all staff by the superintendent. The assistant business manager will also make sure there is the appropriate requisition in place before the p-card can be checked out or used.

**Year 5: 2020/21----- pending report**

## b. Board of Finance

Pursuant to 1978 NMSA §22-8-38, failure of the governing body of a state-chartered charter school to qualify for designation as a board of finance constitutes good and just grounds for nonrenewal or revocation of its charter.

Further, pursuant to 1978 NMSA §22-8-39, the department may at any time suspend a local school board or governing body of a state-chartered charter school from acting as a board of finance if the department reasonably believes there is mismanagement, improper recording or improper reporting of public school funds under the local school board's or governing body of a state-chartered charter school's control.

When the governing body of a state-chartered charter school is suspended from acting as a board of finance, the department is required to consider commencing proceedings before the Commission to revoke or refuse to renew the charter of the state-chartered charter school.

If the school's **Board of Finance was suspended** at any time during the term of the contract, the school must provide a narrative explaining the actions taken (**school/adult/leader/board actions**) on the school's own initiative to correct financial compliance and regain the Board of Finance Authority and the success of those actions (**improved practices and outcomes**).

The school must also describe the current status of the Board of Finance and continuing actions to ensure the same financial challenges do not reoccur. Success should be identified by specific changes in practice.

The narrative must be supported by evidence provided in an appendix (Appendix B – Board of Finance) and verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/board actions and the improved practices and outcomes in the narrative.**

**Schools that have maintained all Board of Finance authority during the entire term of the contract do NOT complete this Section.**

### ***School response:***

**NAS-LC has maintained all Board of Finance authority during the entire term of the contract.**

#### **4. Contractual, Organizational, and Governance Responsibilities**

The Charter School Act provides as follows:

A charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school...committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter... or...violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.

##### **a. Charter Material Terms of Comprehensive Educational Program**

Pursuant to 1978 NMSA §22-8B-9, each charter contract must contain material terms of the charter application as determined by the parties to the contract. The PEC's contract identifies all material terms, or in some contract versions, the components of the comprehensive educational program.

If a school received a rating of "working to meet standard" or "Does not meet standard" for Indicator 1.a in its Web-EPSS annual report for any year within the contract term, the school must describe the improvement actions the school made to address the deficiencies.



**School response:**

**1.a. Educational Program: Mission and educational program of approved charter application.**

**2018-19: WORKING TO MEET STANDARD; 44.92 points (lower middle)**

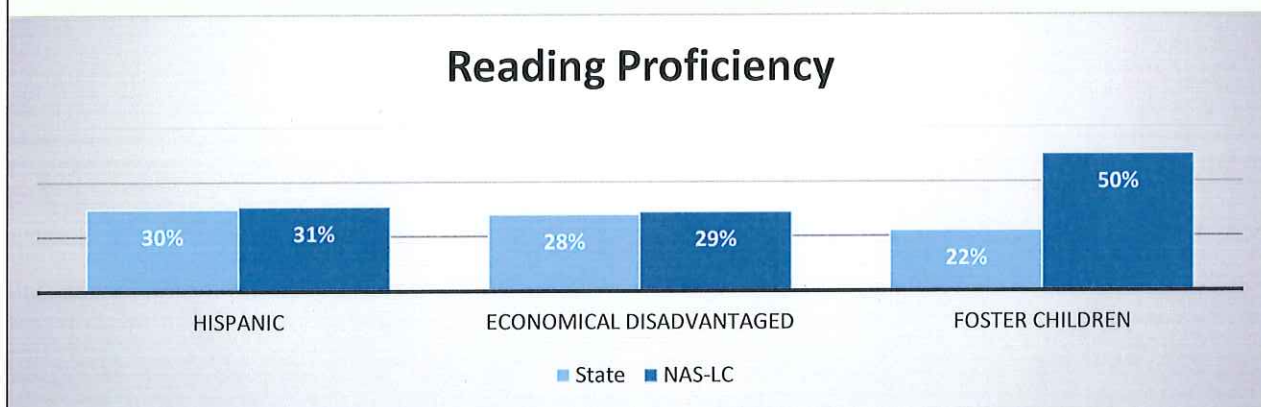
*CSD Stated: Based on performance across the academic indicators and measures, schools receive an overall academic tier rating that is used by the PEC in annual monitoring and renewal decisions.*

As the PED moved away from letter grade, it moved to a different accountability system. According to the PED Vistas website, NAS-LC scored 45 points out of 100 possible points. This is based on student performance, school climate, attendance, and graduation rates. The average score for high schools in NM is 49 points. NAS-LC is slightly below average.

Conversely, the Vistas Summary Report indicated that NAS scored a 73 for academic growth in reading. This is 23 *more* points than other students who are academically similar. In math, NAS-LC scored a 50 which is about the same growth as similar students.

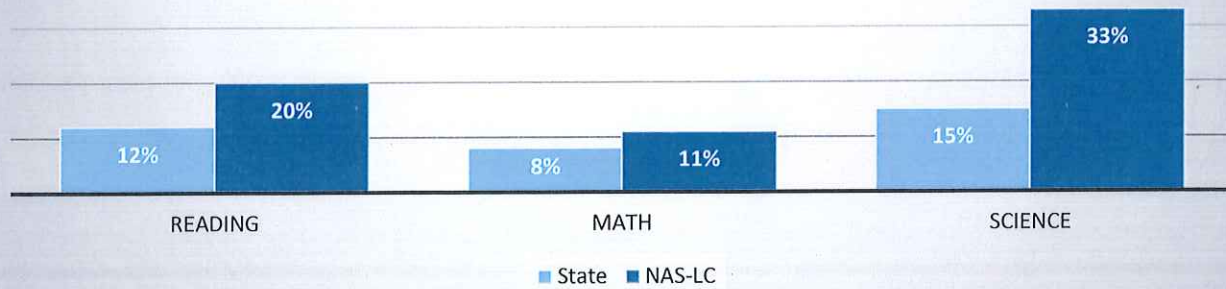
Other notable areas for NAS-LC that proficiencies outscored state results:

Reading Proficiency:



In the subcategory of Students with Disabilities, NAS-LC students outscored the state averages in all areas:

## Proficiency in Students with Disabilities



### 1.a. Educational Program: Mission and educational program of approved charter application.

#### 2020-21: **WORKING TO MEET STANDARD**

CSD stated: "1a Educational Program-Working to Meet because 9 out of 19 students met the goal (47%) however, because of COVID, the goal could not be executed as planned. The school is considered working to meet because of efforts toward meeting the goal."

**School Response:** NAS-LC had 16 out of 19 students earned a certificate. This is 84%. Because of COVID, the goal could not be executed as planned due to no pre-test given.

### b. Organizational Performance Framework

Pursuant to NMSA §22-8B-9.1, the performance framework for each charter school must include performance indicators and performance targets for governing body performance, including compliance with all applicable laws, rules and terms of the charter contract.

**For any school that has received a repeated “working to meet standard” rating or any “Does not meet standard” rating for one or more of the organizational performance framework indicators on the most recently completed organizational performance framework evaluation provide a narrative explaining the improvement actions made (school/adult/leader/board actions) to meet all legal compliance requirements and the effectiveness of those actions (improved practices and outcomes) in improving organizational performance and compliance.**

The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward achieving and maintaining organizational performance and compliance.

Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the site visit. **Please identify specific evidence of both the school/adult/leader/board actions and the improved practices and outcomes in the narrative.**

**If the school has received any Office of Civil Rights complaints, formal special education complaints or NM Attorney General complaints or enforcement action, or, the school must identify those, provide all communications (redacted to protect PII) related to those complaints in an appendix (Appendix C – Complaint Communications), and describe the current status of the complaint. If any of those complaints have been resolved and resulted in a finding that the school violated any law, the school must provide a narrative describing the required compensatory and corrective actions required and their status in implementing those actions. The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the renewal site visit.**

**Schools that do not have any repeated “working to meet standard” ratings or any “Does not meet standard” ratings on the most recent organizational performance framework evaluation do NOT complete this Section.**



**School response:**

Repeated Ratings for 2019-20 and 2020-21, “Working to meet standard” and “Does not meet standard”:

**REPEATED: Indicator 1d. Educational Program- Protecting the Rights of English Language Learners**

**Rating: WORKING TO MEET STANDARD**

*CSD stated: Indicator 1d Protecting the rights of students—working to meet because there are 31 students on the STARS ELP Error Report. The school needs a more coherent process for addressing the Error reports.*

**School Response:** NAS-LC is working closely with Accountability and Compliance Resources, LLC (ACR) in conjunction with our STARS coordinator. The team will develop a system to identify ELL status for all incoming students as well as the exited students and to enter them correctly on the STARS system. When a new student enrolls at NAS we will look them up in STARS in a report called Student Display. This report shows any history for the student including whether they have been reported as an EL student and if they have any language assessment tests. Then we can update the data in our Student Information System (SIS.) At each reporting period, we are making changes before our official upload. Before we tell PED we are ready for our reporting review, we run the report to check for errors. Then we can go back and correct the data.

At the 120<sup>th</sup> day report in 2020-21, NAS-LC had 47 errors. At the end-of-year reporting, there were only 3. We are improving.

**REPEATED: Indicator 4 b. Students & Employers- Attendance, retention and recurrent enrollment**

**Rating: WORKING TO MEET STANDARD**

*CSD stated: The rating was based off of the Charter School Enrollment Report on STARS. Schools are supposed to maintain at least 80% retention of enrolled students from date of enrollment until the end of the school year, or students who leave prior to the end of the year are classified as graduates, completers, or have earned their GEDs. New America LC had 69.26 retention in 2020-21.*

**School Response:** In 2019-20, NAS-LC has a retention rate of enrolled students during the year of 62.15% as reported by CSD in the PED Authorized Performance Review. This is an increase of over 7% of retention rate. The efforts to increase the retention rate have supported retention.

NAS-LC submitted three action plans to the CSD that outlined the school’s efforts toward increasing student attendance, decreasing absenteeism and increase the retention rate. The three plans have been included as evidence. Each year, NAS-LC reviews systems in place to address these areas. NAS-LC has a high mobility rate and dropout rate due to student circumstances. Students are responsive to the supports that are offered.

**REPEATED: Indicator 2 a. Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting financial reports and compliance requirements**



**Rating: WORKING TO MEET STANDARD**

*CSD: Indicator 2.b If a school received an audit finding in the categories of: "Material Weakness," or "Significant Deficiency" in the audit conducted for FY20, the school will receive a rating of "Does Not Meet" for this indicator.*

**School Response:** NAS-LC received two "working to meet standard" on 2a, not 2b.

CSD sent a statement referring to 2b, which on the 2020-21 Organizational Performance Framework is "meets." NAS-LC has not received any categories of "Material Weakness," or "Significant Deficiency." This rating we believe should be "meets."

NAS-LC is responding to 2019-20: NAS-LC had four audit findings. NAS-LC will work closely with the business manager and assistant business manager to correct these findings. The Corrective Action Plan has been created and is followed. Checks and balance protocols have been established to avoid any findings or repeat findings. The findings for SY 2019-20 were corrected.

**REPEATED: Indicator 2 c. Financial Mgmt & Oversight: Responsive to audit findings**

**Rating: Does not meet**

*CSD: Indicator 2.c If a school received a repeat audit finding in the audit conducted for FY20, the school will receive a rating of "Does Not Meet".*

**School Response:**

In response to the repeated findings, NAS-LC has reviewed the details of each.

In 2019-20, the two repeated findings were under the same category, but for different issues.

- 1.) The first repeated finding under *Internal Controls over Cash Receipts*. In 2018-19, a cash log was not kept for each cash deposit. If a club was selling items, an entry needed to be logged to monitor the amount of money being collected. This was corrected by asking sponsors to maintain a daily log as a receipt book for each item sold. The following year, 2019-20, the finding under this same category was that cash deposits were not completed within 24 hours. The School corrected this finding by establishing protocols for all club sales to be turned in at the end of the school day. This money is now deposited within 24 hours of receipt.
- 2.) The second repeated finding is under the category *Purchasing*. In 2019-20, the finding was that the credit card/Purchasing Card (P-Card) was being used prior to the Purchasing Order (PO) being created. This has been corrected in which the Assistant Business Manager and the Business Manager will follow the correct protocol to have all POs created prior to using the P-Card. The following year, 2019-20, the finding under this same category was that the P-Card was being used prior to receiving the Superintendent's written approval or a requisition for approval. This was corrected by asking staff to submit a requisition and/or sending an email to the Superintendent asking for written approval.



### c. Governance Responsibilities\*

Pursuant to 1978 NMSA §22-8B-4, each charter school must, at all times, have at least five members and no members may serve on any other charter school governing body. Further, the governing bodies must operate in accordance with their charter contract and bylaws. The PEC's performance contract requires that the PEC is notified of board vacancies within 30 days, and that vacancies are filled within 45 days.

Additionally, pursuant to NMSA §22-8-12.3, Boards must maintain audit and finance committees that meet statutory requirements.

Further, pursuant to NMAC 6.80.5.8, and 6.80.5.9, each charter school governing body member must annually complete certain hours of approved training.

Finally, governing body members are held to the conflict of interest requirements laid out in NMSA §22-8B-5.2.

**Each school must identify how they have met governance responsibilities during the term of the contract.** Specifically, the school must identify:

- the membership of their boards, at all times, during the term of the contract (with roles and service terms for all members), this should also include membership of the required committees;
- any time when membership on the governing body fell below the requirements in their by-laws or the statutory minimum of 5 members;
- any time when the governing body did not maintain the required committee membership;
- the amount of time any vacancies were open;
- any board members that did not complete required training hours in any of the years of the contract term.

**If the school identified any governance requirements they were unable to meet,** the school must provide a narrative describing the improvement actions the school implemented to move toward full compliance with governance responsibilities.

The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting all governance requirements.

The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the renewal site visit.

**School response:**

## School Year 2017-18

Member	GC Member, Role	Join Date	Term
1	Susie Kimble, President <i>Finance/Audit committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
2	Fernando Macias, Vice President	2016	2016-2019
3	Martha Valdez, Secretary <i>Finance committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
4	Jennifer Garcia Kozlowski, Treasurer <i>Audit committee</i>	2015	2015-2018
5	Toby Rue, Member	2015 Resigned in 2018	2015-2018
6	Oscar Juarez, Member	2017	2015-2018

## School Year 2018-19

Member	GC Member, Role	Join Date	Term
1	Susie Kimble, President <i>Finance/Audit committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
2	Fernando Macias, Vice President	2016	2016-2019
3	Martha Valdez, Secretary <i>Finance committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
4	Jennifer Garcia Kozlowski, Treasurer <i>Audit committee</i> <b>Did not complete hours of GC Training</b>	2015	2018-2021
5	Oscar Juarez, Member	2017	2018-2021

## School Year 2019-20

Member	GC Member, Role	Join Date	Term
1	Susie Kimble, President <i>Finance/Audit committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
2	Fernando Macias, Vice President	2016	2020-2023
3	Martha Valdez, Secretary <i>Finance committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
4	Jennifer Garcia Kozlowski, Treasurer <i>Audit committee</i>	2015	2019-2022



5	Oscar Juarez, Member	2017	2020-2023
School Year 2020-21			
Member	GC Member, Role	Join Date	Term
1	Susie Kimble, President <i>Finance/Audit committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
2	Fernando Macias, Vice President	2016	2020-2023
3	Martha Valdez, Secretary <i>Finance committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
4	Jennifer Garcia Kozlowski, Treasurer <i>Audit committee</i>	2015	2019-2022
5	Oscar Juarez, Member	2017	2020-2023
School Year 2021-22			
Member	GC Member, Role	Join Date	Term
1	Susie Kimble, President <i>Finance/Audit committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
2	Fernando Macias, Vice President	2016	2020-2023
3	Martha Valdez, Secretary <i>Finance committee</i>	2012	2018-2021
4	Jennifer Garcia Kozlowski, Treasurer <i>Audit committee</i>	2015	2019-2022
5	Oscar Juarez, Member	2017	2020-2023
<p>2017-18: All GC trainings; met standard</p> <p>2018-19: <b>WORKING AT MEETING STANDARD:</b> One member of the GC completed the requirements for the required trainings due to traveling and personal work obligations. NAS-LC contracted with Public Charter Schools of New Mexico and Kelly Callahan to support the GC with the required training for next school year 2019-20.</p> <p>2019-20: All GC trainings; met standard</p> <p>2020-21: All GC trainings; met standard</p>			

**\* All schools must provide a response for this section of the application.**