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### 2020-2021 Annual School Performance Report: Taos Academy Charter School

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**School Name:** Taos Academy Academy Charter School

**School Address:** 110 Paseo del Cañon West, Taos, NM 87571

**Head Administrator:** Traci Filiss & Elizabeth LeBlanc

**Business Manager:** Pamela Rodriguez

**Authorized Grade Levels:** 5-12

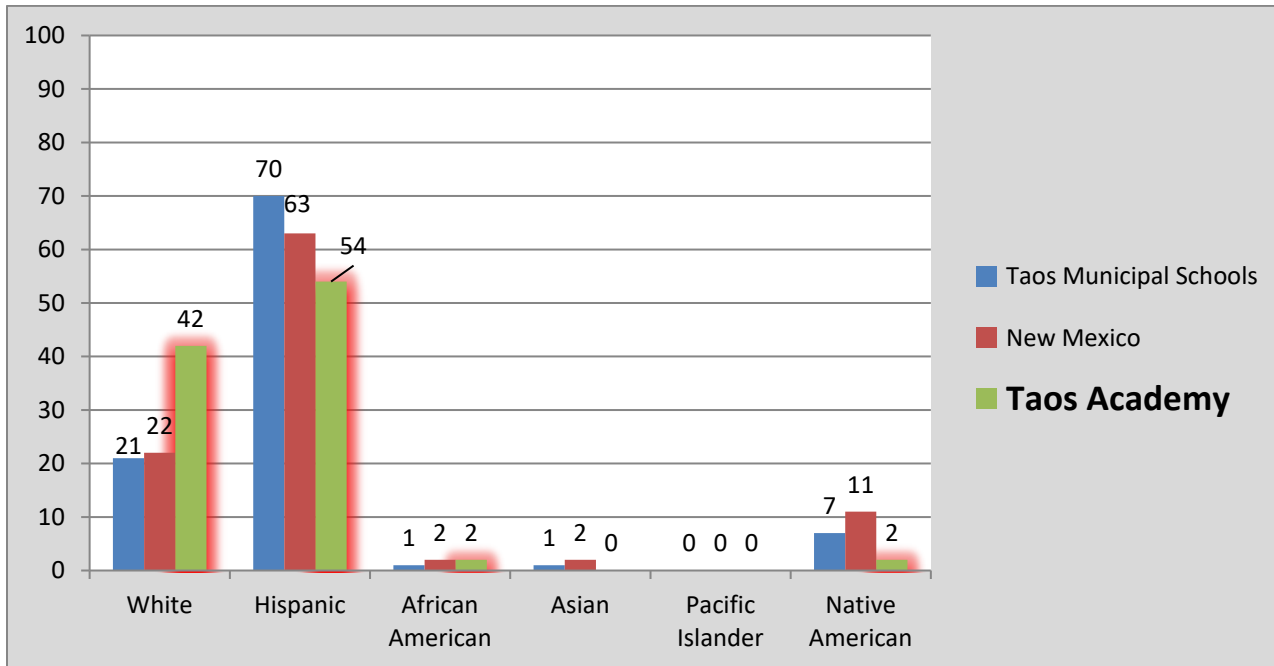
**Authorized Enrollment Cap:** 250

**Current Enrollment:** 250

**Contract Term:** 2019-2024

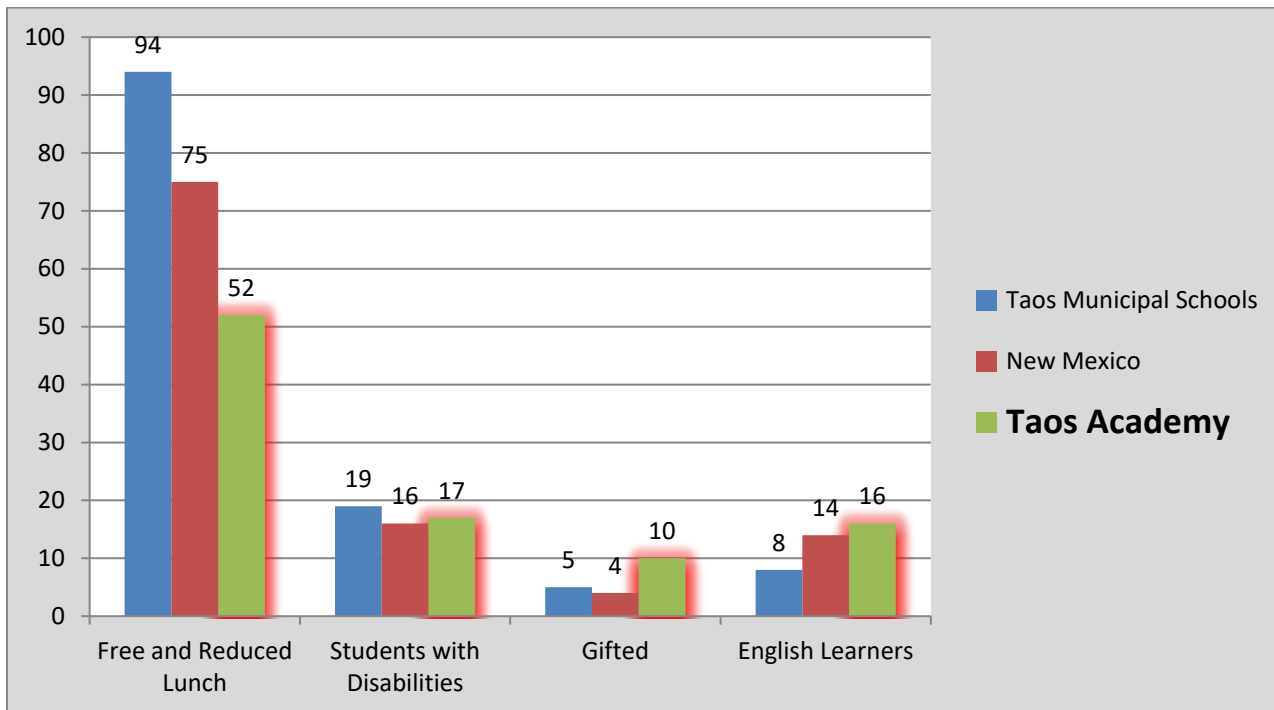
**Mission:** The mission of Taos Academy is to prepare students in fifth through twelfth grade to achieve and maintain a level of excellence by supporting and promoting academic achievement, strong leadership skills, and social responsibility. Through the use of innovative curriculum, leadership training, and enrichment opportunities, we foster a community of self-motivated, independent, lifelong learners. The partnership of school, parents, and community creates a learning environment where students acquire the knowledge, leadership skills, and sense of responsibility needed to succeed in the 21st century.

**Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**



Source: STARS District and Location Reports General Reports Enrollment Subgroup Percentages with Averages

**Enrollment by Other Subgroups**



Source: STARS District and Location Reports General Reports Enrollment Subgroup Percentages with Averages

## Site Visit Summary: April 28, 2021

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### Virtual Site Visit Participants

*School:* Traci Filiss: Head Administrator; Elizabeth LeBlanc: Director of Teaching and Learning; Jamie Lucero: Equity Council Lead & teacher; H.W. Kelly: Dean of Students; Dr. Dean Caldwell: Governing Council

*OPFD/CSD:* Karen Woerner; Missy Wauneka; Rachel Stofocik

### Response to COVID Pandemic

[Taos Academy](#) has utilized hybrid learning for 12 years. The school currently serves 250 middle and high school students and has a waiting list. While there was a small decline in enrollment at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, by the winter, the school saw an increase in enrollment. Traci Filiss is the founder of the school and still the head administrator. She and Elizabeth LeBlanc, the school's Director of Teaching and Learning and (interim head administrator), led the initial discussions in the virtual site visit.

Taos Academy students and staff were prepared to move into a fully digital learning environment. Ms. Filiss explained that since Taos Academy instructors were already specialists in virtual learning, the community had a lot of trust in the model, which most likely explained the increase in enrollment and the long waiting list. Ms. Filiss also brought up the school leaders' abilities to successfully plan and begin the addition of a building to the school's campus even within the heavy workload brought on by the pandemic.

Ms. LeBlanc discussed the school's strong staff and applauded how flexible, creative, and accommodating they all remained. The teachers went above and beyond to help communicate and connect with students.

Ms. LeBlanc also lauded the students and families during the year and a half. She discussed how many of the high schoolers have seen an increase in responsibilities, like taking jobs to provide for their family or becoming the caregivers to siblings. The academy's model has supported flexibility since its foundation since so many students live far away from the actual building. Specifically, with [Edgenuity](#), the school's digital learning platform, is asynchronous and available 24/7. For live classes, teachers either record or create content that students can interact with asynchronously. The school did a big push 3 years ago to ensure students could access content from home. Ms. Filiss explained that "We serve a really spread-out group of students in a rural community; teachers build relationships, teachers help make meaning, but we aren't the conduits for information, and we work to ensure students can access and make up lessons." Thus, this ingrained flexibility helped students who had to take on heavier workloads. The students worked on their own at their own pace if they maintained progress.

To best support the staff, the school leaders found PD that was meaningful to what teachers were being asked to do uniquely in COVID; for example, Ms. LeBlanc explained that classroom management is very different in the digital world and PD was provided on those specific strategies and tools. The school also cut back on the daily staff meetings that normally took place and replaced them with individual check-ins to ensure teachers felt supported. A Friday "de-stress" class was also provided by a community member for the staff.

### Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

School leaders explained that the school's learning model went through many iterations during the year and a half. In the first iteration, the school changed the schedule and relied on google meets. Through google meets, the staff provided a hotline for students who were struggling and offered tutoring in the afternoons. As the new school year began, the teachers added enrichment courses for deep critical thinking, discussions, and hands-on learning opportunities. At this time, the school also provided 10 small learning labs. As the year went on, the learning labs grew. The school also had electives including a STEM institute which continued online. Even though the STEM institute

is normally very hands-on instruction, the teachers found innovative ways to continue the program. The school offered a total of 29 unique classes to MS and HS students and had 98 students participate. Some of the classes were: creative coding, STEM classes, music, intro to video, fencing, culinary arts, etc. The school shared a list of the many competitions that the students participated in and won. To name just a few, some students won the STEM science program in MS and HS; students won the [E-Cyber](#) mission with US army; and the school's science team will move onto the national competition. The students also participated in the [Samsung Challenge](#) and got to the state competition.

In addition, grades went up in the spring and in the fall of 2020. In fact, grades in the fall were at par or even higher than in previous years. Ms. Filiss explained that the school's model and mission allows students to work independently and that with supports and planning, those students can really thrive. During the past school year, several Taos Academy students graduated early. Finally, Ms. Filiss talked about the many student accomplishments in art and E-sports. There will be shows now and throughout the summer in Taos that displays TA students' art and photography.

### **Student and Family Support and Engagement**

Ms. Filiss discussed the three drive-through events that the school hosted for families. A Fall festival, Christmas, (in which turkeys were given out) and a spring event were organized.

The school leaders stated that in some ways the school had a lot more opportunity to concentrate on communicating with parents because of what the remote learning required. The teachers made hundreds of calls and managed to maintain relationships with all the families in the school. The school also formed a plan of action if a student was not logging in; the teacher would immediately email and call. If the teacher did not hear back from the family, then each day a staff member was a dedicated contact person who would keep reaching out to see what could be done to re-engage the student. Mr. Kelly highlighted the restorative practice and justice approach that the school utilized in this work; the students were not punished or reprimanded when called about attendance or falling behind. Instead, the school staff tried to have an honest conversation with the student about what was needed to help them succeed.

## Performance Framework Indicators (school-specific questions)

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### 1.c. Is the school protecting the rights of students with special needs?

Indicator 8 requirement must be completed, according to the Special Education Division. However, it is noted that the lateness is due to no fault of the school. This is the result of PED bureaus keeping lists that are outdated and repeatedly trying to contact staff who are no longer employed.

*The school recommends that STARS data should be referenced, charter school leaders be copied, and a complete outline of lists that are maintained by bureaus would help ensure staff role changes are reported as needed.*

### 1.d. Is the school protecting the rights of English Learner students?

Two students on the STARS ELP Error Report. The school is asked to make sure that the research done on the students' ELL History be saved and be included in students cum folders.

### 2a-2c Audit Findings FY20

**2.a. There were two findings in FY19 which were relatively very minor, and it appears that there are no audit findings for FY20. Congratulations!**

### 2.d. Is the school managing grant funds responsibly?

The last Title II RfR submitted was 10/30/2020, 57.90% of GY19 remaining. Please be sure to submit RfRs to avoid losing funds. Also, the school should expend GEER funds of \$4,666.07 by 5/21/21.

The school indicated that it uses Title II funds to pay staff via stipends at mid-year and end-of-year. The funds will be expended with ending payroll. The school will also be sure to expend the GEER funds. In fact, the school leader had already contacted the SBO about this, after the Secretary mentioned it in the morning call.

### 3.a. Is the school complying with governance requirements?

The school posts agendas (required), meeting minutes, and bylaws on the website. Please note that the bylaws posted are not dated. It is also recommended to post the annual Open Meetings Act (OMA) Resolution.

### How does the Governing Board monitor/track completion of required training hours?

It appears that 3 of the 5 members have completed training and 2 have not even started.

The school indicated that the board members were working on self-paced training. If so, that must be via a third-party provider (such as PCSNM) and must be completed and reported to CSD by 6/30/2021.

### 4.c. Is the school meeting teacher and other staff credentialing requirements?

Five (5) Professional Licensure Discrepancies were listed on one or more of the following reports in STARS: Licensure Discrepancy for Staff Assignments by District, Location or Licensure Discrepancy for Courses by District, Location. The school staff indicated that they were unaware of any discrepancies as the school was cleared at 120-day. The school was advised to follow up with the Licensure Bureau regarding the following:

- Jamie Lucero - Algebra I - Required License not Issued
- Tim Martinson - Mathematics-Other - Required License not Issued
- Karin Moulton - Work Experience - Lacks Endorsement
- Michael Musialowski - Consumer/Business Math-Expired License
- Kelci Pike - History of Math-Algebra - Lacks Endorsement

**Mission-Specific Goals:**

Mission Goal 1: 80% or higher of Taos Academy students will complete at least 1 credit in Career and Technology Education (CTE) course each year with a passing grade of “B” (80%) or higher.

School Response: Taos Academy “meets standard” with 71% of students completing at least 1 credit in Career and Technology Education (CTE) course each year with a passing grade of “B” (80%) or higher. See attached data chart.

**Assurances:**

The school provided the signed assurances document (Appendix B).

**Overall Financial/Organizational Framework Rating: Meets Expectations / Does Not Meet Expectations**

*If a school receives a “Does Not Meet Standard” rating for three or more indicators, the school will receive an overall organizational framework rating of “Does Not Meet Standard” for the year. In addition, if a school receives a “Does Not Meet Standard” rating, on any indicator, the CSD and PEC may conduct a closer review the following year on that indicator, and/or the PEC may require the school to submit a corrective action plan to specify actions and a timeline to correct the performance deficiency. See ratings for individual indicators in Appendix A.*

**Taos Academy is on track for expedited renewal/full renewal/renewal with conditions/non-renewal.** Please see the PEC Performance Review and Accountability System (Attachment A to the Charter Contract) for details on renewal profiles and renewal recommendations.

**PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION (PEC) TIER LEVEL**

The 2020-21 Performance Monitoring Plan was modified in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many of the indicators were unmeasurable and the Performance Framework ratings in Appendix A is reflective of this. Rather than identifying evidence of compliance, schools are required to sign an assurance of compliance.

PEC Tier Levels are based on three indicators: (1) NM School System of Support and Accountability, (2) Student Subgroup Performance, and (3) Mission Specific Goals. Again, due to the pandemic and the resulting flexible administration of state assessments, in 2020-21 there is limited academic data, that could be used as an accountability measure. **Therefore, PEC Tier Levels cannot be assigned for the 2020-2021 academic year.**

**Academic Performance:** The school may provide evidence of meeting mission-specific goals to receive a rating on indicator 3 of the Academic Performance, however, if the school was unable to implement the goals due to the pandemic, the school will not be rated in this section.

**Organizational Performance** The assurances document covers the majority of the indicators of organizational performance. Where possible, results of desktop monitoring and bureau/division reports will be considered.

**Financial Performance Framework:** For indicator 2.c, evidence of implementing an Action Plan to prevent further findings will not be collected this year, therefore the school’s rating is solely based on repeat findings.


<b>Taos Academy</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
<b>Category I. Academic Performance Framework</b>	
<u>Indicator 1</u> Components of School Accountability System	Unable to Review - COVID
<u>Indicator 2</u> Subgroup Performance	Unable to Review - COVID
<u>Indicator 3</u> Mission Specific Goals	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<b>Category II. Organizational Performance Framework</b>	
<u>Indicator 1a</u> Educational Program: mission and educational program of approved charter application	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 1b</u> Educational Program: state assessment requirements	Unable to Review - COVID
<u>Indicator 1c</u> Educational Program: protecting the rights of students with disabilities	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 1d</u> Educational Program: protecting the rights of English Language Learners	Working to Meet Standard
<u>Indicator 1e</u> Educational Program: meeting program requirements for all PED and federal grant programs	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 1f</u> Educational Program: NM DASH Plan	Not Applicable
<u>Indicator 2a</u> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting financial reporting and compliance requirements	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 2b</u> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: following generally accepted accounting principles	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 2c</u> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: responsive to audit findings	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 2d</u> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: managing grant funds responsibility	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 2e</u> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: staffing to ensure proper fiscal management	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 2f</u> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting obligations timely / appropriate internal controls	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 3a</u> Governance & Reporting: complying with governance requirements	Working to Meet Standard
<u>Indicator 3b</u> Governance & Reporting: complying with nepotism and conflict of interest requirements	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 3c</u> Governance & Reporting: meeting obligations timely / appropriate internal controls	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 4a</u> Students & Employees: protecting the rights of all students	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 4b</u> Students & Employees: attendance, retention, and recurrent enrollment	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
<u>Indicator 4c</u> Students & Employees: meeting teacher and other staff credentialing requirements	Working to Meet Standard
<u>Indicator 4d</u> Students & Employees: respecting employee rights	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 4e</u> Students & Employees: completing required background checks / reporting ethical violations	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 5a</u> School Environment: complying with facilities requirements	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 5b</u> School Environment: complying with transportation requirements	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 5c</u> School Environment: complying with health and safety requirements	ASSURANCES
<u>Indicator 5d</u> School Environment: handling information appropriately	ASSURANCES
<b>Category III. Financial Performance Framework</b>	
Self-Assessment Survey completed and signed by Head Admin, SBO, and Finance Chair	Not Applicable

[Appendix A: Historical Performance Framework Ratings during Current Charter Contract Term](#)

<b>Taos Academy</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>
<b>Category I. Academic Performance Framework</b>	
<b>Indicator 1</b> Components of School Accountability System	
<b>Indicator 2</b> Subgroup Performance	
<b>Indicator 3</b> Mission Specific Goals	
<b>Category II. Organizational Performance Framework</b>	
<b>Indicator 1a</b> Educational Program: mission and educational program of approved charter application	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 1b</b> Educational Program: state assessment requirements	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 1c</b> Educational Program: protecting the rights of students with disabilities	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 1d</b> Educational Program: protecting the rights of English Language Learners	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 1e</b> Educational Program: meeting program requirements for all PED and federal grant programs	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 1f</b> Educational Program: NM DASH Plan	Not Applicable ▼
<b>Indicator 2a</b> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting financial reporting and compliance requirements	Working to Meet Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 2b</b> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: following generally accepted accounting principles	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 2c</b> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: responsive to audit findings	Working to Meet Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 2d</b> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: managing grant funds responsibility	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 2e</b> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: staffing to ensure proper fiscal management	Working to Meet Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 2f</b> Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting obligations timely / appropriate internal controls	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 3a</b> Governance & Reporting: complying with governance requirements	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 3b</b> Governance & Reporting: complying with nepotism and conflict of interest requirements	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 3c</b> Governance & Reporting: meeting obligations timely / appropriate internal controls	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 4a</b> Students & Employees: protecting the rights of all students	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 4b</b> Students & Employees: attendance, retention, and recurrent enrollment	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Indicator 4c</b> Students & Employees: meeting teacher and other staff credentialing requirements	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 4d</b> Students & Employees: respecting employee rights	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 4e</b> Students & Employees: completing required background checks / reporting ethical violations	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 5a</b> School Environment: complying with facilities requirements	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 5b</b> School Environment: complying with transportation requirements	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 5c</b> School Environment: complying with health and safety requirements	Unable to Review - COVID ▼
<b>Indicator 5d</b> School Environment: handling information appropriately	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼
<b>Category III. Financial Performance Framework</b>	
Self-Assessment Survey completed and signed by Head Admin, SBO, and Finance Chair	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard ▼



Appendix B: Assurances

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>Charter Schools Division</b> <b>Performance Indicator Assurances</b> <b>2020-21</b></p> </div> <p><b>Charter School Name:</b> Taos Academy</p> <p>In an effort to support the 2021 modified site visits and ensure compliance with contracts and applicable federal and state law, state-authorized charter schools shall provide assurances of compliance with the performance framework indicators listed below. Please check the box next to the indicator, then date and sign the form. Signatures of school leaders and governing board presidents are required.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school protects the rights of students with special needs, by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Providing services per Individual IEP,</li> <li>✓ Maintaining both direct service and ancillary support logs,</li> <li>✓ Including a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sheet documenting date, person, and purpose for reviewing student's IEP in all IEP folders.</li> </ul> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school protects the rights of English Learner (EL) students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ School complies with requirements for English Learners in accordance with federal and state guidance, for identifying, screening, serving, assessing students and providing annual notification to parents.</li> </ul> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school complies with federal and state grant program requirements.</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school meets Governance and reporting requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Governing Board completes and documents (with signatures) an annual evaluation of Head Administrator.</li> <li>✓ School has a governing board-approved Conflict of Interest Policy that complies with NMSA § 22-8B-5.2.</li> <li>✓ School has a governing board-approved Anti-Nepotism Policy that complies with NMSA § 22-8B-10(B).</li> </ul> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school protects the rights of all students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ School meets all Culturally &amp; Linguistically Responsive Framework requirements.</li> <li>✓ School maintains lottery and enrollment practices as described in NMSA § 22-8B-4.1.</li> <li>✓ School has a Discipline Policy to include the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying per NMSA § 22-35-1.</li> <li>✓ School follows a board-approved student/parent grievance policy and dispute resolution process per NMSA § 22-8B-9(12)</li> <li>✓ School complies with the McKinney Vento Act, with a board-approved dispute resolution policy that meets ESSA guideline.</li> <li>✓ School is implementing the Multi-Level Systems of Support (MLSS) NMAC 6.30. 17</li> <li>✓ School updates Next Step Plans annually for all high school students.</li> </ul> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school's attendance policy aligns with the Attendance for Success Act NMSA § 22-12A-1.</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school protects employee rights:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Staff files contain signed contracts, official transcripts, and verification of employment forms.</li> <li>✓ School has an employee handbook that includes discipline and grievance policies.</li> <li>✓ School has a salary schedule that complies with minimum teacher salaries.</li> <li>✓ School has a documented mentorship program for first year Level One teachers.</li> <li>✓ School obtains legally compliant background checks per NMSA § 22-10A-5.</li> </ul> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school complies with facility requirements in NMSA § 22-8B-4.2.</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school complies with transportation requirements, including all inspections and insurance, if applicable.</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">2020-21 Charter Performance Indicator Assurances <span style="float: right;">Page 1 of 2</span></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school complies with health and safety requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The school conducts all required emergency drills per <a href="#">PED memorandum of 3/25/21</a>.</li> <li>✓ The school maintains immunization records, including a master immunization log.</li> <li>✓ All staff complete training on reporting child abuse and neglect.</li> <li>✓ The school has a Diabetes Management plan.</li> </ul> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>The school handles information appropriately:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ School completes all STARS reporting requirements on time.</li> <li>✓ School follows proper security procedures, including keeping student files locked.</li> <li>✓ School follows all FERPA and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines.</li> <li>✓ School maintains a procedure for the transfer of cumulative files.</li> </ul> <p>By checking the box for each indicator above (on both pages) and signing this document, I affirm that the school complies with the performance framework items listed.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"><b>School Leader Printed Name</b></td> <td>Dr. Traci Filiss</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Signature</b></td> <td><i>Traci Filiss</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Date</b></td> <td>07/28/2021</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"><b>Board Chair Printed Name</b></td> <td>William MacDonald</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Signature</b></td> <td><i>William MacDonald</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Date</b></td> <td>07/28/2021</td> </tr> </table>	<b>School Leader Printed Name</b>	Dr. Traci Filiss	<b>Signature</b>	<i>Traci Filiss</i>	<b>Date</b>	07/28/2021	<b>Board Chair Printed Name</b>	William MacDonald	<b>Signature</b>	<i>William MacDonald</i>	<b>Date</b>	07/28/2021
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