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**Charter Schools Division
Preliminary Analysis of Renewal Application and Site Visit
November 2021**

School Name: Alma d'Arte Charter High School (Alma)
School Address: 402 W Court Avenue, Las Cruces, New Mexico
Head Administrator: Kayla Martinez
Governing Board Chair: Paul Dulin
Business Manager: Angie Lerner
Authorized Grade Levels: 9-12
Authorized Enrollment: 280
Contract Term: 2019 – 2022
Mission: To graduate artist-scholars prepared to succeed

Statutory Renewal Requirements

According to New Mexico Statutes Annotated (NMSA) 1979, Section 22-8B-12 K., a charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school did any of the following:

- (1) committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures set forth in the charter contract;
- (2) failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of the department's standards of excellence or student performance standards identified in the charter contract;
- (3) failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;
- (4) for a charter school located on tribal land, failed to comply with ongoing consultations pursuant to the Indian Education Act; or
- (5) violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.

Renewal Application

Parts A and F of the Renewal Application are provided by the Charter Schools Division (CSD). All other parts of the application are provided by the school.

PART A	Data analysis based on accountability and reporting data from current charter contract term
PART B	Progress report on meeting the academic performance, financial compliance and governance responsibilities of the charter school, including achieving the goals, objectives, student performance outcomes, and accountability requirements set forth in the Assessment and Accountability Act and the charter contract.
PART C	Financial Statement A financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that is understandable to the general public that allows comparison of costs to other schools.
PART D	Petitions in support of the charter renewing its charter status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petition signed by at least 65% of the school's employees, with certified affidavit: 25 of 26 = 96% • Petition signed by at least 75% of the households whose children are enrolled, with certified affidavit: 82 of 109 = 75%
PART E	Description of the Charter School Facilities and Assurances that the facilities are in compliance with the requirements of Section 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facility lease agreement as Appendix D • Narrative description of its facilities, attaching the Facility Master Plan, if available, as Appendix H • The building E Occupancy certificate(s) dated 11/6/2016. Maximum Occupancy (if listed): Not listed • Most recent facility NMCI Score 25.21% indicating that the school meets the requirements of Subsection C of 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978 • If the school is relocating or expanding, assurances that the facilities comply with the requirements of Section 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978: ___Public (Cert A) ___Private (Cert B) ___Foundation (Cert C)
PART F	Amendment Requests

The CSD team reviewed the school's Progress Report and conducted a renewal site visit on November 1, 2021, with classroom observations conducted November 3-5, 2021. Ratings are based on the rubric provided on page 14 of the [State Charter Renewal Application](#).

Progress Report (Part B) and Site Visit Evaluation		
Section	Indicator	Rating
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE		
1.a	Department's Standards of Excellence NM System of School Support and Accountability 2020-2021: <i>No data available for schools</i> 2019-2020: <i>No data available for schools</i>	<i>No rating</i>
1.b	Mission-Specific Goals	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE		
2.a	Audit <i>Organizational Performance Framework 2a-2e</i>	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
2.b	Board of Finance <i>The school has maintained a board of finance throughout the charter term.</i>	<i>Meets the Standard</i>
CONTRACTUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND GOVERNANCE		
3.a	Comprehensive Educational Program <i>See the narrative below for detail.</i>	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
3.b	Organizational Performance Framework <i>Organizational Performance Framework 1b-1f, 4a-4e, and 5a-5d</i>	<i>Demonstrates Substantial Progress</i>
3.c	Governance Responsibilities <i>Organizational Performance Framework 3a-3c</i>	<i>Meets the Standard</i>

Academic Performance

Given the 3-year contract term and COVID, the school has very little academic data to review, with no state assessments available for the charter term. Further, COVID impacted the school's ability to implement mission-specific goals, so modifications we made.

The school's mission-specific goal is both innovation and directly relates to the school's mission: *All students at Alma d'Arte Charter High School listed on the 120-day enrollment report will have demonstrated understanding through an art from by earning a C or better in arts integrated projects (such as Panel Presentations for grades 9-11 and Apprenticeship Presentations for grade 12.* The school developed rubrics to assess student performance.

The school met the goal in 2019-20, and in 2020-21.

In 2019-20, Apprenticeships were cut short, though seniors were able to complete most hours and were given credit. Students made presentations and the school met its target. Due to COVID in 2020-21, the 9-11 grades were exempt from having to present panels in their Platica (advisory) classes. The school modified its assessment of the goal to allow passing an arts elective (rather than presenting an arts integrated project) to meet the requirement. In grades 9-11, 92.5% of students met this requirement by passing an elective of the arts with a C or better at 120-day count. Out of the 39 senior cohort at 120-day count, 100% of students that participated in the senior panel project passed with a C or better.

Alma has collected no interim assessment data during the charter term. In 2020-21 all students (100%) completed the dual credit, online course, and/or AP/Honors requirement and the school improved its graduation rate. The school is working to implement Illuminate interim assessment to track student progress. The expectation was for assessment testing to occur in late October, but at the time of the site visit, the staff training for implementation had just been completed and testing was scheduled for January 2022. The school has made strides identifying students in need of help and putting into place academic supports for students such tutoring, MLSS and SAT processes.

The school will implement Reading Plus for reading interventions in spring 2022. Due in part to staff turnover in the math department, the school has not yet determined which program they will use to assist with math interventions.

Public Education Commission Performance Framework

Alma d'arte Charter School	2019-2020	2020-2021
Category I. Academic Performance Framework		
Indicator 1 Components of School Accountability System		Unable to Review - COVID
Indicator 2 Subgroup Performance		Unable to Review - COVID
Indicator 3 Mission Specific Goals		Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Category II. Organizational Performance Framework		
Indicator 1a Educational Program: mission and educational program of approved charter	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 1b Educational Program: state assessment requirements	Working to Meet Standard	Unable to Review - COVID
Indicator 1c Educational Program: protecting the rights of students with disabilities	Working to Meet Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 1d Educational Program: protecting the rights of English Language Learners	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard
Indicator 1e Educational Program: meeting program requirements for all PED and federal	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 1f Educational Program: NM DASH Plan	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Indicator 2a Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting financial reporting and compliance requ	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard
Indicator 2b Financial Mgmt & Oversight: following generally accepted accounting principl	Does Not Meet Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
Indicator 2c Financial Mgmt & Oversight: responsive to audit findings	Does Not Meet Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
Indicator 2d Financial Mgmt & Oversight: managing grant funds responsibility	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 2e Financial Mgmt & Oversight: staffing to ensure proper fiscal management	Working to Meet Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 2f Financial Mgmt & Oversight: meeting obligations timely / appropriate interna	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 3a Governance & Reporting: complying with governance requirements	Working to Meet Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 3b Governance & Reporting: complying with nepotism and conflict of interest re	Working to Meet Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 3c Governance & Reporting: meeting obligations timely / appropriate internal co	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 4a Students & Employees: protecting the rights of all students	Working to Meet Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 4b Students & Employees: attendance, retention, and recurrent enrollment	Working to Meet Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 4c Students & Employees: meeting teacher and other staff credentialing require	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard
Indicator 4d Students & Employees: respecting employee rights	Working to Meet Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 4e Students & Employees: completing required background checks / reporting e	Working to Meet Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 5a School Environment: complying with facilities requirements	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 5b School Environment: complying with transportation requirements	Not Applicable	ASSURANCES
Indicator 5c School Environment: complying with health and safety requirements	Working to Meet Standard	ASSURANCES
Indicator 5d School Environment: handling information appropriately	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	ASSURANCES
Category III. Financial Performance Framework		
Self-Assessment Survey completed and signed by Head Admin, SBO, and Finance	Meets (or Exceeds) Standard	Not Applicable

Organizational Performance

The only areas in which the school has received *Does Not Meet Standard* ratings are in the areas of financial management, due in part to a large number of audit findings. Alma as received *Working to Meet* ratings in other areas in previous years, but in the most recent year the only area outside finance that Alma received this rating was in protecting the rights of English learners. The school received a Meets Standard rating for protecting the rights of students with disabilities in 2020-21, and parents told the renewal team in the focus group that special education services were meeting students' needs.

Alma has experienced a significant amount of turnover during the course of the school's short contract in the areas of administration, governing board and staff. The current contract was signed by head administrator Holly Schullo, who was replaced by Dan Lere as the interim administrator until the board hired Kayla Martinez to permanently fill the position in June 2020. The governing board has experienced 100% turnover in this time, and the teacher retention rate in 2019-20 and 2020-21 was 56% and 59% respectively.

Financial Performance

Alma d'Arte is on a quarterly reporting status, which indicates the school's business manager is responsive to School Budget Bureau requests and reports are submitted in a timely manner. Throughout the contract term the school's business management services have been under contract to the same firm and at no time during the contract has the school moved from quarterly reporting status.

Student membership has seen a decline during the short contract, to a total drop from the first contract year of 144 students in 2019 to 132 in 2021.

The school received thirteen (13) audit findings in 2019 and 2020 combined.

Audit Year	Findings	Repeat Findings	Material Weaknesses	Significant Deficiencies
FY 2020	4	4	0	1
FY 2019	9	2	0	2

During the contract term the school has been able to prioritize spending in the classroom at an average of 68%, which is impressive given the student enrollment. The school leases the building from Las Cruces Public Schools and the terms of the annual lease is limited to the amount of funds awarded by Public School Capital Outlay fund, so the school's operational budget does not incur rent expense.

General Fund (11000) data as reported in OBMS - Fourth Quarter		Contract Years			
		Actual	Actual	Budgeted	
		General Fund - 11000- Amounts (in whole dollars)			
		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	
Enrollment					
120D Student membership		130	132	132.5	
40D program units from final funded run		363,037	360,521	313,8	
Function	Function Name	Description of Expenditures			
1000	Direct Instruction	Classroom teachers, educational assistants, instructional coaches, textbooks, classroom technology	1,112,534	1,043,961	1,126,503
2100	Student Support	Attendance, social worker, guidance, health, psychological, speech & occupational therapy services	188,763	132,877	107,276
2200	Instructional Support	Library, instruction related technology	4,738	354	110
2300	Central Administration	Governance council, Office of Superintendent, community relations	190,454	153,819	172,805
2400	School Administration	Office of the Principal	39,284	40,957	50,770
2500	Central Services	Business management, administrative support, admin technology	199,705	200,888	206,168
2600	Maintenance & Operations	Building operations, maintenance, equipment upkeep, security & safety	127,782	162,002	206,054
2700-5900	All Other Function Codes	Transportation, food service & capital outlay	39,852	33,014	27,444
Total		1,903,113	1,767,871	1,897,130	
Total State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Funding		1,718,481	1,668,905	1,686,572	
Other Operational Revenue					
Carryover(Shortfall)		(184,631)	(98,966)		
How Funds Were Spent in Percentages of Total					
Classroom		69%	67%	65%	
Administration		23%	22%	23%	
Other		9%	11%	12%	

The PED Operating Budget Management System (OBMS) showed 68%, approximately \$186,000, of the schools grant fund requests for reimbursements (RfRs) were submitted during June and July 2021.

Governance

During the three year contract term, the school experienced 100% turnover in the governing board. In a few instances board members were approved in one meeting and by the following meeting the member resigned. On a positive note, the current board members have fulfilled all required board training.

Board Members	FY20	FY21
Steven Aquino	8	
Casilda Provencio	8	
Carolyn Williams	8	
Ronald Fitzherbert	10	11
Paul Dulin	10	12
Kim Skaggs		11
Ceara Angel		10
Vernon Wilson		16
Richelle Ponder		10
Michelle Rodriguez	10	
Rachel Garcia Banegas	9	
Rachel Padilla	10	

Black shading indicates that the member did not serve a full year in that fiscal year; yellow indicates that the member did not complete all required training hours during that fiscal year. Training requirements are 8 hours per year for returning board members, and 10 hours for new members. Exemptions are noted in years marked by an asterisk.

Comprehensive Educational Program

Alma d'Arte was established as an integrated arts school with a focus on culinary arts, performing arts, visual arts, and literary arts. In previous years, students have catered events, participated in art shows, and performed both solo and in ensembles. However, the school was not able to participate in these sorts of events in the last two years due to the pandemic.

Seniors are required to complete 100 hours in an apprenticeship. The intention is to allow students to partnering with community members to explore the career field they are interested in pursuing. The apprenticeship teacher has a list of available apprenticeships from which students can choose, or students pursue an apprenticeship of their own choosing with the assistance of their Plática teacher. Plática is an advisory class which includes offering college and career readiness, grade checks, resume building, attendance monitoring, participation in a virtual job-sharing program and study hall. The school has a long-standing and successful culinary arts program which provides lunch for students. A former Alma student is currently teaching culinary courses and is seeking an alternate teaching license to teach algebra 1 at the school.

Students also prepare an art project that addresses an essential question posed at the beginning of the school year. Students have the opportunity to explore the question and respond with their own unique perspective. Previous essential questions have included: What is beauty? What is the responsibility of an artist? How do I effect change in the world?

Prior to the pandemic, the school's curriculum was delivered in person but also provided instruction via the Edgenuity program, both for credit recovery and to provide courses that do not fit into students' schedules otherwise. During the pandemic, it was also used for remote instruction. Edgenuity is monitored by the school's registrar, who provides weekly and bi-weekly progress reports to students and families. The school estimates approximately 28% of students are currently enrolled in an Edgenuity course.

Alma partners with New Mexico State University and Doña Ana Community College to provide dual credit courses to 11th and 12th graders, during the site visit we were told there are seven (7) students currently participating the dual credit program. Since the school moved from a seven (7) credit schedule to and eight (8), the school leader feels this will provide more opportunity for students to participate in dual credit courses.

Students who participated in the focus group mentioned that they feel supported at Alma, both by teachers who they felt really care for them, and by classmates who they described as very accepting of individual students' identity. Parents expressed great satisfaction with the school, given the many high school options in Las Cruces. Across the board, all stakeholders articulated the important role Alma plays in the Las Cruces community, citing the arts focus, community partnerships and accomplishments of alumni. Staff described a greater focus on student social emotional well-being, with recent hires of a social worker and special education staff, MLSS implementation and more frequent discussions during staff meetings about struggling students. Overall, the school climate reflected a caring and calm environment as evidence of the positive school culture.