

Hózhó Academy Mission Amendment Request
Public Education Commission (PEC) Meeting, December 16, 2022
Charter Schools Division (CSD) Analysis

Hózhó Academy requests PEC approval to amend the mission statement in its contract from:

Hózhó Academy is committed to the tradition of a Classical education. We are committed to a rigorous program that will develop students who are educated in all of the liberal arts and sciences as well as in moral character and civic virtue. Our goal is to provide the best education possible which will permit a full understanding of all students' cultures.

To:

The mission of Hózhó Academy is to train the minds, improve the hearts and strengthen the bodies of our students through a Classical education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character, civic virtue, and physical vigor.

The school's governing board voted to approve the change in April 2022 and the school has been using this new mission on its website and in all school materials. The head administrator indicated that the school intended to submit a mission statement amendment at that time, but did not in fact do so. When this was discovered during CSD's renewal investigation, an amendment request was submitted.

The new mission's emphasis on a holistic approach to supporting students is in alignment with one of the pillars of the Public Education Department's strategic plan, supporting the whole child. The CSD does question, however, the decision to omit culture from the otherwise comprehensive holistic approach. Hózhó Academy was founded in a Native American majority community with the explicit purpose of providing an education in a context that blended a classical curriculum with Hózhó the Diné wellness philosophy with principles that guide one's thoughts, actions, behaviors, and speech.

Given the school's location and demographics, and the fact the school is named for this philosophy, the CSD recommends modifying the new mission to acknowledge the importance of culture, perhaps replacing "improve the hearts and strengthen the bodies" with "improve the hearts, strengthen the bodies, and honor the cultures"? Please note that this is only an example; the school and its board will determine the final form of its mission.

The CSD recommends that the school consider revising its proposed mission and that the PEC consider the amendment request at its January meeting.