

New Mexico Public Education Commission



2023 New Charter School Application Kit

Part A

Introduction, Instructions & Evaluation Rubric

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Introduction

The *New Mexico Charter School Application Kit* was developed to provide guidance in the writing and review of new charter school submissions. The target audience for this document is both the founding group (the applicant team), as they develop a charter school application, and the Authorizer—the Public Education Commission (PEC), Authorizer’s designee(s), or Authorizer’s legal counsel (collectively referred to as “Authorizer”), as they review and evaluate the quality and completeness of the application.

The New Mexico Charter Schools Act provides the following policy statement:

The Charter Schools Act is enacted to enable individual schools to structure their educational curriculum to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods that are based on reliable research and effective practices or have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics; to allow the development of different and innovative forms of measuring student learning and achievement; to address the needs of all students, including those determined to be at risk; to create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site; to improve student achievement; to provide parents and students with an educational alternative to create new, innovative and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system; to encourage parental and community involvement in the public school system; to develop and use site-based budgeting; and to hold charter schools accountable for meeting the department's educational standards and fiscal requirements. (22-8B-3 NMSA 1978 *et seq.*).

Starting a new charter school in New Mexico requires proposals from committed individuals who have the capacity to achieve strong, educational outcomes. Through charter schools, the PEC, as Authorizer, and the Charter Schools Division (CSD) in the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) seek to provide families with effective, quality educational options. The PEC makes the final determination regarding the application after reading the application, hearing from the applicants and the local community, and considering the information provided by the peer review team and the CSD.

Overview of the Review Process

Each year, the PEC approves and makes available, in writing at its office and on its website, a new charter school application kit for a specified fiscal year. The PEC-approved application kit for a new charter for the current application cycle includes templates and attachments approved by the PEC.

Technical Review—CSD staff will confirm whether the applicant team has met all requirements and whether the application kit contains all components required by statute, rule, and application instructions. An application kit will pass the technical review if:

1. The applicant team timely submitted a Notice of Intent no later than the second Tuesday of January of the year in which an application will be filed, to the PEC and the district in which the proposed school will be located;
2. The application kit contains complete information for each application component, including an Executive Summary, all completed narrative sections, and all required exhibits, attachments, appendices, including the 910B5 SEG worksheet and a five-year Budget Plan.

Failure to meet the criteria above will result in the application being deemed incomplete. The application will be evaluated based on the information that is included when it is submitted.

Templates and attachments must not be altered from the approved content, format, and sequence. An application kit submitted for a new charter will be deemed incomplete if it contains modifications to the content, format, or sequence of the application, templates, or attachments or if it contains templates or attachments that were approved for use in a prior fiscal year.

Applicants will receive written notification of the deficiencies not more than five business days after the submission of the application kit. If the application is deemed incomplete, the Applicant's file will be closed. The applicant team may, within five business days of receiving the notice of an incomplete application, request a review by the PEC at its next regularly scheduled meeting. No new information and no additional submissions will be accepted or reviewed by the PEC or CSD.

Review—Applications will be evaluated and rated using the Evaluation Rubric, which is included in this document, Part A. An external peer review team will review each application. The review team consists of New Mexico Charter School experts who are overseen by the CSD. Each peer review team member will review each new charter application kit independently and thoroughly. Once complete, the peer review team will come together to discuss the application package and provide a consensus score, reasoning, and analysis. This preliminary analysis will be provided to the applicant team and the PEC. The CSD has the ability to review scores for uniformity between applications assessed at the same time and review teams reviewing applications at the same time.

Capacity Interview—The peer review team will interview the applicant team. The questions are designed to determine the applicant team's capacity to implement the charter school proposed in the application and to provide an opportunity for the applicant team to clarify any weaknesses identified in the application preliminary review. The Application rating and analysis, along with a rating and analysis of the Capacity Interview, will form the basis for the CSD's analysis to the PEC. (See Part D below.)

Community Input Hearing—The PEC holds a public hearing at which the applicant team has an opportunity to answer the PEC's questions. During the hearing, the PEC also has a chance to hear from the community and to learn about the positives and negatives for potentially opening a school like the one proposed (NMSA 22-8B-6(K)). The PEC will ask the applicants to respond to questions on the application during the Community Input Hearing. The applicant team may have the personnel with the technical expertise at the hearing (and should have experts present who were involved in completing the application kit). However, all applicant team members should demonstrate knowledge and understanding in all areas of the application.

CSD Analysis—The CSD utilizes information from the external peer review team consensus rating analysis, and capacity interview, along with analysis of the community input hearing to prepare materials for the PEC. The analysis is presented to the applicants and PEC at least two weeks prior to the August PEC meeting.

PEC Consideration—The PEC will read and evaluate all applications and make the final decision to deny, approve, or approve with conditions each application. The PEC reads and evaluates all applications. The PEC's decision is based on, but not limited to the following:

1. complete application submitted by applicant team;
2. external peer review team analysis;
3. capacity interview and the peer review team final scoring Evaluation Rubric and analysis;
4. community input hearing;
5. CSD analysis;

6. all clarifying information and statements provided by announced deadlines; and applicants' statements at the PEC July meeting.

Please contact the Charter Schools Division at charter.schools@ped.nm.gov or (505) 827-6909 with any questions regarding this process.

The New Charter School Application Kit

The New Charter School Application Kit contains four main parts, plus appendices. All parts of the kit comply with the amended Charter School Act, which requires charter schools' performance to be measured according to a framework of specific criteria. The application itself is organized by the framework.

Part A, the Introduction, Instructions and Evaluation Rubric provides applicant teams with information regarding instructions, application timelines, contact information, an application glossary of terms, logistical information, and the Evaluation Rubric. The overall ability of the applicant team to create a clear, cohesive, comprehensive, reasonable, and innovative charter school application depends in large part on following the instructions and Evaluation Rubric in Part A.

Part B, the Executive Summary requires the applicant to provide an overview of the proposed school. This offers the reviewers a general understanding of what is described in detail in the application. This summary will be posted on the CSD website so that the public knows who is applying for a state-funded public charter school. This section is not evaluated for points. However, the summary should adequately reflect what is found in the rest of the application. It will be submitted along with Part C between May 1 and June 1 at 5:00 PM Mountain Time of the current year.

Part C, the Written Responses requests information from the applicant team that should be responded to completely. The Evaluation Rubric should guide the applicant team's responses. It is important not to compartmentalize responses but to use the prompts to present a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, reasonable, and innovative educational, organizational, and financial framework for the proposed public charter school. The peer reviewers and CSD will be looking for a consistent narrative that presents evidence of a thorough and thoughtful plan, formulated by a capable team, deserving of being entrusted with millions of dollars of public funds, and which will offer a vibrant and innovative educational option for New Mexican children and their families. The proposed school's mission should be reflected throughout the Application in all proposed curriculum, programs, budgets, and resource allocations.

Note: Simply following the prompts does not guarantee approval by the PEC.

Part D, the Capacity Interview Questions and Rubric does not require any written information from the applicant team. Applicant teams will be asked approximately 15-20 questions that will allow them to showcase the applicant team's capacity to implement the framework for the charter school outlined in the application.

Appendices:

- A. Governing Body Bylaws
- B. Head Administrator Job Description
- C. Job Descriptions for Certified, Licensed, and Other Key Staff
- D. Proposed Agreements Governing Third Party Relationships and Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) (required if applicable)
- E. PSFA-Approved Projected Facility Plan Documentation
- F. Five Years of 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimates
- G. Five-year Budget Plan

H. Internal Control Procedures

Summary

Experience has shown that successful charter schools tend to have a number of common characteristics such as:

- A clear, focused, results-oriented, measurable mission statement that aligns to all parts of the proposal
- A demonstrated understanding of the charter school's projected students, based on the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the charter school applies to operate
- An educational program that is likely to be effective for the school's projected students, based on the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the charter school applies to operate
- Strong goals to assist the school in meeting its mission and educational programming in an equitable way
- Strong, experienced, and diverse leadership and governance that aligns the mission of the school with results-oriented, measurable practice
- A Governing Body that provides strong, professional functions in financial oversight, Board functions, and supporting the leadership of the school
- Strong financial planning and management
- A school that demonstrates support and ownership of the school by the local community, not just the applicant team

The PEC expects thoughtful, well-developed applications from capable school developers who are committed to enhancing education in New Mexico. All successful applicants shall: 1) enter into a planning/implementation year including required monthly meetings, 2) complete a planning/implementation year checklist, and 3) negotiate a contract with the PEC prior to receiving approval from the PEC to commence operations. The templates used in the negotiations are available on PED's website.

Instructions and Timeframe

Notice of Intent	The Notice of Intent (NOI) must be submitted no later than the second Tuesday in January, on the form provided, to both the Public Education Commission and the local district where the proposed charter school intends to be located.
Technical Assistance Workshops	New Application Training Workshops will be provided by the CSD between January and May. Applicant teams that submit a timely NOI will be notified of the details, dates, times, and locations for all trainings via email. The CSD website for information regarding the Technical Assistance Workshops is: https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/options-parents-families/charter-schools/trainings-offered/). To RSVP, send participant's name, school affiliation, position, and email address to charter.schools@ped.nm.gov .

PSFA Facilities Master Plan	Applications must include evidence that the Public-School Facilities Authority (PSFA) Master Plan has been completed. Form available on PSFA website, submitted to PSFA in April.
Deadline: Charter Application	Applications must be submitted by email to charter.schools@ped.nm.gov by June 1 by 5:00 PM Mountain Time.
Applications Provided to the PEC	All received applications will be transmitted to the PEC by June 8 after CSD checks for completeness
Substantive Review Period	An external peer review team of New Mexico charter school experts will read and analyze the applications in June. Each team is overseen by CSD staff.
Capacity Interviews	This interview, designed to demonstrate the applicant team’s capacity to implement the school as described in the application, will take place June 19-21.
Preliminary Analysis	The review team’s preliminary analysis of the application and capacity interview is provided to the applicant team and the PEC by June 30.
Community Input Hearings	The PEC will hold hearings July 10-12 to allow the local community, including the local school district, the opportunity to provide comments on the application. The PEC will also use this opportunity to obtain information from the applicants that may inform the commissioners.
Public Written Comments	Community input may include written or oral comments in favor of or in opposition to the application by members of the community and other interested individuals. Community input shall be provided between July 10 and 13.
CSD Analysis and Recommendation	The CSD will send its analysis by email to the PEC and to the applicant by July 14.
PEC Letter to Applicants	The PEC will inform applicants of their concerns by July 21.
PEC Decision- Making Meeting	The PEC will hold a public decision-making meeting on August 25 to a) approve, b) approve with conditions, or c) deny the Application. At this meeting, the applicants will have an additional opportunity, prior to the decision, to address the PEC and to answer questions from the PEC members.

Glossary of Terms Relevant to the Application

Alignment of Curriculum, Educational Program, Student Performance Standards: The curriculum of all public schools must be aligned with the New Mexico Common Core State Standards, Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards. An alignment document—by subject and grade level—lists each of the performance standards, cross- referenced with the instructional materials, and a timeline for when they are addressed.

Assessment: A valid formative and summative reliable method(s), tool(s), or system(s) to evaluate and demonstrate progress toward—or mastery of—the academic and non-academic performance goals stated in the application.

Charter Schools Act: The Charter Schools Act, 22-8B-1 et. seq. NMSA 1978, allows the authorization of charter schools that are independent public schools. Charter Schools operate under charters granted for up to five years by the Public Education Commission (PEC) or local school districts, known as Authorizers. Once an Authorizer has awarded a charter, the new charter school organizes around the mission, curriculum, theme, and/or teaching method described in its application. Charter schools are allowed autonomy, including control of their own budget, hiring their own employees, and other functions that the charter school is required to perform in order to carry out the educational program described in its charter. A charter school, on an annual basis, must demonstrate academic improvement, fiscal responsibility, and sound organizational operations that comply with the law.

In 2011, the Legislature amended sections of the Charter Schools Act to add and modify accountability requirements for charter schools and Authorizers. By using a Performance Contract and accompanying Performance Framework, charter schools have specific material terms they must meet. In addition, they are assessed by the indicators contained in the Performance Frameworks. The categories evaluated in the Performance Framework are Academic, Financial, and Organizational indicators. If the school is approved, the Authorizer negotiates terms of the Performance Contract, including mission-specific goals, with the charter school prior to the time that the school commences operations.

Instructional Hours: Hours in which regular students are in school-directed instructional programs, exclusive of lunch and breaks. This should include an example of a daily schedule in which the instructional hours will be fulfilled in order to visualize a typical day for students and teachers.

Mission: The mission of the school is a concise statement that describes the purpose of the school and how the school will achieve it. The mission should answer questions, such as: 1) what outcomes for students does the school seek to accomplish; 2) how will it accomplish those outcomes; and 3) what is unique about the school? The best mission statements are clear, focused, compelling, and have a focus on outputs rather than inputs. The statement should be the driving force and rationale behind all the other components of the application. There should be indicators throughout the application that show how the school will actualize the intended mission.

Mission-Specific Goals: The Amended Charter Schools Act requires that new charter applications include: the goals, objectives and student performance outcomes to be achieved by the charter school as well as a description of the charter school's plan for evaluating student performance, the types of assessments that will be used to measure student progress toward achievement of the state's standards and the school's student performance outcomes, the timeline for achievement of the outcomes and the procedures for taking corrective action in the event that student performance falls below the standards. (NMSA 22-8B-8(B)). This application requirement prepares the applicant team for the Performance Framework contents, which will be negotiated with the PEC if the proposed charter application is approved. Specifically, the performance framework shall allow for the inclusion of additional rigorous, valid, and reliable indicators proposed by a charter school to augment external evaluations of its performance, provided that the chartering authority shall approve the quality and rigor of such proposed indicators and the indicators are consistent with the purposes of the Charter Schools Act (NMSA 22-8B-9.1(c)).

New Mexico Common Core State Standards, Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards: The State of New Mexico has established the Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards to be used by all public schools, including charter schools, and state-supported

educational institutions to develop, deliver, and assess curriculum. New Mexico has adopted the Common Core State Standards. The NM Standards may be accessed at:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/instructional-materials/new-mexico-content-standards/>

NM Standards: Refers to New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards

Partnership: A partner organization supports the implementation of the school’s mission. A “partnership” is a formal relationship rather than an informal or tangential agreement to provide ancillary support to particular school programs through the commitment of funds or other resources to support the school’s operation and long-term existence. According to Charter Law, a charter school is a public school that may contract with a school district or other party for provision of financial management, food services, transportation, facilities, education-related services, or other services. The governing body shall not contract with a for-profit entity for the management of the charter school (NMSA 22-8B-4R).

Plagiarism: The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own will not be tolerated. Be sure to credit authors and cite sources for any references in the application.

Plan/Process: A plan, for purposes of this application, is a detailed statement of how an outcome will be achieved. A plan could include, as appropriate: clear expectations, criteria, actions steps, monitoring steps, timelines, benchmarks, onboarding procedures, and responsible parties.

Policy: A policy, for purposes of this application, is a guiding statement that reflects the principles, rules, or guidelines to be adopted by the school’s governing body once the charter contract is formally executed. Policy statements contain clear expectations, criteria, timelines, and responsible parties to be implemented on behalf of the governing body.

Procedure: A procedure, for purposes of this application, is a statement of the specific methods to be used or course of action that will be taken to implement a policy in the day-to-day operation of the school. A procedure identifies action steps, timelines, benchmarks, and responsible parties.

Remediation for students not achieving standards: Remediation, for purposes of this application, refers to a process, procedure, plan, or a variety of instructional support opportunities to assist individual students who are not achieving proficiency in the NM standards or other student performance expectations. There should be a detailed plan for how the school intends to provide a differentiated learning experience to support students in meeting their educational potential.

Scope and Sequence: A scope and sequence should include the following components:

- Grade levels, grade spans, age spans, or other sequence
- The knowledge, content standards/areas or organizing themes within the grade levels, grade spans, age spans, or other sequence.
- The time/number of lessons/etc. spent to address specific knowledge, content standards/areas or organizing themes.
- Sufficient coverage of all grade level content standards/areas required by the state.

SMART Goals: Mission-Specific Goals must be:

- **Specific.** A well-defined goal must be specific, clearly, and concisely stated, and easily understood. Educational goals should be tied to learning standards that specify what students should know and be able to do for each subject or content area and for each grade, age, or other grouping level.

- **Measurable.** A goal should be tied to measurable results to be achieved. Measurement is then simply an assessment of success or failure in achieving the goal.
- **Attainable.** A goal should be attainable and realistic.
- **Rigorous.** A goal should be challenging, based on current or expected performance.
- **Time-Specific with Target Dates.** A well-conceived goal should specify a timeframe or target date for achievement.

Special Populations: Special populations may include students who have been identified with special needs that require an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Accommodations plan, English learner (EL) instruction, or those who require access to ancillary services including, but not limited to, health, speech/language services, social work services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.

State and Federal Accountability System Academic Performance Indicator: The School Grading Accountability System is the first part of the academic framework that is used to evaluate all public schools, including charter schools, in the state of New Mexico. The NM System of School Support and Accountability Report includes criteria components such as Math and Reading Proficiency, Student Growth, English Learner Process, Science Proficiency, Chronic Absenteeism, Educational Climate, Graduation Rates, and College and Career Readiness (the latter two being appropriate for high school only). Understanding the State Accountability System is critical in the development of your school, as it is a major component of your school’s annual evaluation.

Unique: Unique, for the purposes of this application, describes specific methods that are different and innovative, based on reliable research, effective practices, or demonstrably successful in schools with diverse characteristics, not currently available to students in the proposed geographic area. Compare and contrast with educational programs of other public schools that serve the same grade levels in that area.

Evaluation Rubric for Part C: Application

Rating: Along with each prompt, the application identifies the elements that must be present for a response to be evaluated as “Meets the Criteria.” The following rubrics govern general rating practices. Please be sure that each response also completely addresses the bulleted points in the rubrics for each individual prompt.

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

ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS
<p>The founding team of the proposed Virtual Preparatory Academy of New Mexico (VPA of New Mexico) presents an academic framework that begins with a clear mission statement:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The mission of Virtual VPA of New Mexico is to provide every student with an individualized, college and career-focused education in an interactive learning environment rooted in rigor and innovation to connect K-12 success with future life success. VPA of New Mexico is dedicated to academic excellence that empowers and prepares students for a world of hope and opportunity.</p> <p>VPA of New Mexico intends to serve students virtually in grades K-12 who live throughout the state of New Mexico. The entire state is the proposed school’s community.</p> <p>The uniqueness and innovation of the proposed virtual program are described. The proposed virtual curriculum is described as courses curated primarily from five curriculum providers with a unique single sign-on experience. The founding team demonstrates how the curricula will meet the requirements of equity for students and how it will align with Common Core State Standards. Unclear, however, is how all five curricula will align to provide robust educational learning for students in a meaningful comprehensive way.</p> <p>The Academic Framework Meets the expectations for 9 of 18 Indicators, Approaches the expectations for 9 of 18 Indicators, and Does Not Meet for 0 of the 18 Indicators.</p> <p>One area of concern is noted regarding the mission-specific goals section. The founding team presented Two mission-specific goals, one measuring academic growth and one measuring graduation rates. Although the goals are well stated, the growth targets are set at 2% per year, a relatively low bar for success.</p> <p>Overall, the Academic Framework Section is the strongest of the three framework sections.</p>
ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS

The Organizational Framework Meets the expectations for 3 of 23 Indicators, Approaches the expectations for 14 of 23 Indicators, and Does Not Meet for 6 of the 23 Indicators.

The Organizational Framework section appears to be a work in progress that reflects the beginning stages of gathering examples of generic documents waiting to be custom tailored to eventually serve their part in creating a cohesive whole. The organizational chart is presented without a narrative. The Governing Council and the Equity Council do not have a place on the chart. Job descriptions are presented for only 10 of the 13 positions on the organizational chart. Positions are included in the budget but do not appear in the staffing plan. At this stage of development, the reader encounters a number of misalignments between the application narratives and the required attachments. If the documents have not yet been developed, sources are identified that can assist in the completion of the required plans. For example, the Governing Body self-evaluation plan has not been developed, however, the National Governance Association and the New Mexico School Board Association will serve as a source of guidance in developing the detailed governing body self-evaluation plan. The Organizational Framework is in the beginning stage of developing the blueprint for governance. The remaining sections of the Organizational Framework reflect similar concerns.

Of significant concern is the proposed contractor relationship with Accel, LLC. the organization that will develop the virtual ecosystem upon which the proposed school's curriculum will be dependent. An unsigned, undated services agreement from Accel, LLC is presented as Appendix D. The agreement states that Accel, LLC will provide business management services, personnel management support, maintain student records, maintain the facility, etc. This appears to be a school management company and not simply a provider of technology services for on-line learning. The description of the relationship in the narrative does not fully capture what is written in the multi-page agreement. During the capacity interview, however, the founding team stated that Accel, LLC would not be the provider. A different provider will be selected and will not be a contracted manager of any type.

This section's narrative is not developed enough to serve as a guide for the implementation of the Organizational Framework.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS

The Financial Framework Meets the expectations for 1 of 11 Indicators, Approaches the expectations for 5 of 11 indicators and Does Not Meet for 5 of the 11 Indicators. The Financial Framework analysis is similar to the previous Organizational Framework analysis. Errors, misalignments, and use of generic documents in the Financial Framework are concerning. Examples follow.

In response to the Budget section expectations to include a complete 910B5 Worksheet, a non-traditional form was used, one not utilized by charter applicants, but one that is from the OBMS Reporting site. This form summarizes the budget at a higher level. Job codes were missing for all positions in the budget, therefore, analyzing employee salaries could not be completed. The internal controls document (Appendix H) is generic in nature and not in alignment with how accounting processes are done in New Mexico. The applicants referred to following GSA procedures; however, New Mexico follows New Mexico Procurement Code and New Mexico statute when performing financial procedures.

A Finance Director and a Finance Director's job description is included; however, there are no salary and benefits budgeted for this position. It is stated that the Board Treasurer would be charged with managing the financial affairs, but the Board Treasurer's function is oversight.

The responses to the expectations for this section do not demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding of

charter school finances required to serve as a guide for implementation of the Financial Framework.

EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT ANALYSIS

The Evidence of Support section Meets the expectations for 0 of 3 Indicators, Approaches the expectations for 2 of 3 Indicators and Does Not Meet for 1 of 3 Indicators.

The community of the proposed school is the entire state of New Mexico. The outreach program described in this section has been fairly limited from that perspective. Missing is a description of how this outreach has enabled an understanding of the needs of the communities in which the school will be providing virtual education, encouraging family engagement, and providing support systems.

OVERALL APPLICANT CAPACITY REPORT

The founding team's capacity, as demonstrated through the development of the application, is strongest in aspects of curriculum, instruction, support services, and the many requirements necessary to implement all components of the Academic Framework. The analyses of the Organizational and Financial Frameworks indicate that additional expertise would be necessary to fully develop and implement all components of the Organizational and Financial Frameworks.

I. Academic Framework

A. Mission and Vision

A. (1)	<u>MISSION</u>
Rating	Expectations
Meets	A complete response must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify how the proposed school will achieve its mission. ● Discuss the importance of the mission to your proposed community ● Be clear, concise, innovative, and measurable ● Discuss what mission success will look like
The VPA of New Mexico founding team's response for this section is complete.	

A. (2)	<u>VISION STATEMENT</u>
Rating	This narrative will be rated for completion, not content

Complete	<p>A complete response must describe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team’s reasoning and purpose • Why your team is committed to providing a public education platform for your proposed community • How your team intends to interact with your proposed community in order to provide their children with better academic outcomes • What about your proposed program serves the proposed community in unique and innovative ways?
<p>The VPA of New Mexico founding team's response for this section is complete.</p>	

A. (3)	<u>UNIQUENESS AND INNOVATION</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the uniqueness, innovation, and significant contribution of your educational program to the local NM public education environment; • Describe the needs of the community; and • Demonstrate how the applicant team knows there is a compelling demand for the proposed school’s educational program in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate. • Ensure that the evidence establishes a compelling demand for the proposed school’s educational program based on reliable research, effective practices, or demonstrated success in schools with diverse characteristics.
<p>The VPA of New Mexico founding team's response approaches the criteria for this section. The uniqueness of the proposed educational program is described. The narrative does not, however, fully address the needs of the statewide community or demonstrate a compelling demand for the program based on reliable research, effective practices, or demonstrated success in schools with diverse characteristics.</p>	

B. Mission-Specific Goals

B.	<u>Mission-Specific Goals</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include two mission-specific goals; • Align to the student outcomes identified in the mission response (A.1.); • Be guided by the elements of the SMART format: • Include measures and metrics. • Include how the board of the proposed school intends to regularly monitor equitable mission success
<p>The VPA of New Mexico founding team's response approaches the criteria for this section. The team provided two mission-specific goals aligned to the student outcomes identified in the mission response (Section A.1). Goal 1 measures student growth in ELA and Math. Goal 2 measures graduation rates. Both goals define targeted</p>	

growth as two percent (2%). The SMART Goal elements as defined in the New Charter Application's glossary include "Rigorous". Two percent (2%) does not meet the definition of Rigorous.

C. Curriculum, Educational Program, Student Performance Standards

C.	<u>Curriculum, Educational Program, Student Performance Standards</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the proposed school’s curriculum <i>including research-based evidence that supports the effectiveness of the selected model and the target population</i>; • Describe how the proposed school’s curriculum will meet the requirements of equity for all underserved populations. • Identify information that demonstrates how the curriculum will align with the New Mexico Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and New Mexico Content Standards; • Identify information that demonstrates how the curriculum will align with the proposed school’s mission; and • Include a reasonable (as based on the professional judgment of experienced educators) timeline and plan for the development of the entire proposed curriculum—including scope and sequence, unit plans, daily lesson plans, project plans and rubrics, and unit and course assessments.

The founding team's response indicates that the proposed courses are curated primarily from five curriculum providers: AMP for Education; Accelerate Education (AED); StrongMind (SM); eDynamic Learning (eDL); and, FlexPoint. These methods are described as research-based; however, no specific research-based evidence is provided that supports the effectiveness of the selected models for the statewide targeted population. The team demonstrates how the curricula will meet the requirements of equity for students and how it will align with Common Core State Standards. Unclear, however, is how all five curricula will align to provide robust educational learning for students in a meaningful comprehensive way.

D. Bilingual Multicultural Education, Indian Education, Hispanic Education and Black Education

D (1).	Bilingual Multicultural, Indian, Hispanic and Black Education Acts
Rating	Expectations

Meets	<p>A complete response must ensure equal education opportunities for students in New Mexico by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Addressing the goals of the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act (NMSA §22-23-1) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ providing students with opportunities to expand their conceptual and linguistic abilities and potentials in a successful and positive manner; ○ teaching students to appreciate the value and beauty of different languages and cultures; and ○ meeting state academic content standards and benchmarks in all subject areas. ● Addressing the goals of the Indian Education Act (NMSA §22-23A-1) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring equitable and culturally relevant learning environments and culturally relevant instructional materials for American Indian students ○ Providing for the study, development and implementation of educational systems that affect the educational success of American Indian students to close the achievement gap, increase graduation rates; ○ Encouraging and fostering parental involvement in the education of their children; and ○ Providing mechanisms to improve educational opportunities for Native American students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention, and completion. ● Addressing the purpose of the Hispanic Education Act (NMSA §22-23B-2), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing for the study, development and implementation of educational systems that affect the educational success of Hispanic students to close the achievement gap, increase graduation rates; ○ Encouraging and fostering parental involvement in the education of their children; and ○ Providing mechanisms to improve educational opportunities for Hispanic students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention, and completion. ○ initiate and organize an equity council composed of multiple school stakeholders with the intent to create more equitable learning opportunities for marginalized students. ● Address the purpose of the Black Education Act (HB 43), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing and including anti-racism policies ○ Developing curricula and instructional materials that recognize and teach black culture and anti-racism. Implementing anti-racism training for teachers and staff ○ Opportunities to explore one’s identity and societal systems that may impact their identity and future. <p>The founding team’s response for this section is complete.</p>
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D (2).	Equity Plan
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	Proposed school will create an effective and equitable system of supports for all students focused on root-cause analysis, equity-focused leadership, and continuous improvement, and culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum and pedagogy
Rating	Expectations
Meets	<p>A complete response must ensure equal education opportunities for students in New Mexico by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A plan to initiate and organize an equity council composed of multiple school stakeholders with the intent to create more equitable learning opportunities for marginalized students. ● If the proposed school is to be located in a historically defined Indian impacted school district, a plan for conducting a needs assessment to determine what supports are needed in the public charter school, at home and in the community to help Indian students succeed in school, graduate with a diploma of excellence and be prepared to enter post-secondary education or the workplace. ● A detailed plan for the implementation of a culturally and linguistically responsive framework. ● A detailed plan for attracting and retaining quality and diverse teachers to teach New Mexico’s multicultural student population

The founding team's response for this section is complete

E. Graduation Requirements

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

The founding team's response for this section is complete

F. Instruction

F. (1) Instruction	<u>Teaching and Instructional Philosophy</u>
Rating	Expectations
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the teaching and instructional philosophy of the proposed school; ● Identify primary instructional methods to be implemented that ensure equity and that align to the philosophy; ● Identify information that demonstrates the instructional methods are research-based; and ● Describe how the educational philosophy and instructional methods support and align to the mission and curriculum. ● How the proposed instructional methods will best support the population the school intends to serve.
The founding team's response for this section is complete	

F. (2) Instruction	<u>Yearly Calendar and Daily Schedule</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include a yearly calendar that identifies the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual start date and end date ○ Teacher professional development days and times ○ School-wide assessment periods ○ School days, holidays, and partial days ○ Teacher parent conferences; ● Include a daily schedule that identifies the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructional times ○ Break times ○ Start and end times ○ Differences in the daily schedule for full and partial days; ● Meet all minimum hour (total instructional time) requirements laid out in NMSA 22-2-8.1; ● Describe how the calendar and schedule support the proposed school's educational program; ● Describe how the calendar and schedule are optimal for achieving high outcomes for the anticipated student population; ● Describe the extended learning time programs to improve academic success of students and professional learning of teachers; ● If this is an elementary school, and you are participating in k-5 plus or extended learning program, describe the k-5 plus program and extended learning program and provide your calendar for year 2; and ● Be supported by the proposed budget found in the Financial Framework section of the application. ● Describe how the proposed calendar supports and values the community it intends to serve.

The founding team's response approaches the criteria for this section. Based on the criteria, a detailed analysis of the 181-day yearly calendar and daily schedule indicated the following concerns: (1) The K-5 daily schedule has a 5.75-hour day (lunch and a 5-minute passing period cannot be included in instructional hours). The elementary school calendar/hours per day is short by 99.25 hours. (2) The response does not state how the calendar and schedule are optimal for achieving high outcomes or how they will improve academic success. (3) The team does not address how the calendar is supported by the proposed budget or how it supports the values of the community. (4) The narrative states there will be 2 to 8 days per month for outside school activities. These days are scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Dual Enrollment Classes are included. It is unclear if these days and hours can accommodate dual enrollment classes. It is also unclear as to how the school will be monitoring this time (11.5-14 hours are asynchronous). A concern may be that Tuesdays and Thursdays are "internships/concurrent classes".

F. (3) Instruction	<u>How Instruction will be effective for the student population.</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the anticipated student population, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demographic information based on the local community population ○ Educational proficiency based upon enrollment at the school ○ Attendance and truancy trends ○ English language proficiency ○ Diverse populations ○ At-Risk populations ○ Special Educational needs; ● Explain any special factors influencing the makeup of the anticipated student population; ● Explain how the educational philosophy has been designed to meet students' needs; ● Explain how the instructional methods have been designed to meet students' needs and specifically how they will meet the needs of at-risk students; and ● Explain how the yearly calendar and daily schedule have been designed to meet students' needs. ● Explain how the yearly calendar and daily schedule have been designed to meet students' needs.

The founding team's response approaches the criteria for this section. Missing is an explanation of how the instructional methods have been designed to specifically meet the needs of at-risk students.

G. Special Populations

G.(1a)	<u>Instructional Services and Supports for Students with IEPs</u>
Rating	Expectations

Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <p>Describe how the proposed school will identify and provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● instructional supports and services to the spectrum of needs of students with disabilities, who have IEPs or are eligible for an IEP; ● instructional supports and services to gifted students who have IEPs or are eligible for an IEP; <p>Describe how the proposed school will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that students who are ELs are not over-identified as students with disabilities; ● Identify specific responsibilities for school staff, classroom teachers, and special education staff; and ● Identify specific training and support that will be provided to teachers and school staff to ensure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities. <p>Describe the proposed school's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timeline, benchmarks, and people responsible for developing discipline policies and protocols for your special populations. ● Capacity of the school district in the geographic boundaries of the proposed school to provide special education services and FAPE. ● Process for tracking this protected population's progress and services, how that will be reported to the board.
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The founding team's response for this section is complete.

G. (1b)	<u>Monitoring and Evaluation of Special Education Students</u>
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Rating	Expectations
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Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how the proposed school will monitor the progress toward special education students' attainment of IEP goals; ● Identify specific responsibilities for school staff, classroom teachers, and special education staff; including when and who will be reporting on progress towards goals. ● Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored and success will be evaluated; ● Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage and inform students and or families; and ● Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its special education program and services. ● Describe how mission success will be tracked, measured, ensured, and reported on with these special populations.
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The founding team's response is complete related to most criteria required for this section. However, a description of how mission success will be tracked, measured, ensured, and reported on with students on IEPs is not included.

G. (2)	<u>Required Curriculum and Instructional Supports for English Learners</u>
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Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how the proposed school will identify English Learners (ELs) and provide the required curriculum and instructional services/supports to students identified as ELs; ● Identify how the school will implement the English Language Development Standards for ELs in its school; ● Identify how the school will provide ELs with instruction and support to develop English language proficiency; ● Identify how the school will provide ELs with access to grade-level content; ● Describe how the school will address the spectrum of needs that ELs may present; ● Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers; and ● Identify specific training, professional development and support that will be provided to teachers and school staff to ensure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities; ● Describe the proposed school’s process for tracking this protected population’s progress and services, how that will be reported to the board.

Although the team’s response addresses most criteria required for this section, the following are not sufficiently addressed: (1) identifying how the school will implement the English Language Development Standards for ELs in its school, (2) how the school will provide ELs with instruction and support to develop English language proficiency, and (3) a description of how progress and services will be reported to the board.

G.(2b)	<u>Monitoring and Evaluation of English Learners</u>
Rating	Expectations
Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how the proposed school will monitor the progress of ELs toward English language proficiency, both annually and within the school year; ● Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers; ● Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored; ● Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and/or families; ● Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its EL program and services; and ● Describe how the school will monitor exited EL students (reclassified fluent English proficient students—RFEPs) for two years for academic progress.

The founding team’s response for this section is complete

G. (3)	<u>Plan to adhere to ESSA and State Statutes</u>
Rating	Expectations

Approaches	<p>A complete response must describe how the proposed school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop an educational framework to address the educational needs of Native American, Hispanic, Black, and bilingual multicultural students within a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to learning; ● Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers, including professional development for teachers; ● Ensure that the best practices are used in teaching, mentoring, counseling, and administration are culturally and linguistically responsive to students; ● Ensure policies will be culturally and linguistically responsive; ● Demonstrate rigorous and culturally meaningful curricula and instructional materials will be developed and implemented; ● Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored; ● Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and/or families; and ● Evaluate the effectiveness of its programs to improve educational outcomes. ● Describe how the proposed school will meet the specific requirements of the Black Education Act
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The founding team's response focuses on development of a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) framework to address the educational needs of Native American, Hispanic, Black, and bilingual multicultural students. It is unclear how the framework will address a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to learning. It is also unclear how the school will meet the specific requirements of the Black Education Act.

H. Assessment and Accountability

H. (1)	<u>Assessment Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations

Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include an assessment calendar that identifies all state or district mandated assessment periods and dates related to teacher analysis/use of assessment data to inform instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include assessments/progress monitoring for special populations; ● Identify, for all state or district mandated assessment periods, the grade levels at which the assessments will be administered; ● Describe, for all state or district mandated assessment periods, the specific data that will be collected, reported, analyzed, evaluated, and utilized to inform instruction; ● Describe how the data identified will be used to inform instruction; ● Describe the school’s philosophy on the use of data and how teachers will be onboarded, trained, and supported to ensure the schools philosophy is followed; ● Align with all state assessment and data reporting requirements; ● Describe how the assessment plan meets the specific needs to equitably assess the proposed school’s projected student population; ● Describe how the assessment plan aligns to the proposed school’s mission and any assessments that may be used to determine, measure, and track equitable mission achievement; and ● Include any assessments that may be negotiated as part of the performance framework and contract.
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The team's response provides a clear assessment plan identifying assessments to be used, assessment periods, grade levels to be administered, how data will be used to inform instruction, plan to meet specific needs of the school's projected student population, and alignment to mission. Missing, however, is a description of how teachers will be onboarded, trained, and supported to ensure the schools philosophy on the use of data is followed.

H. (2)	<u>Plan for Data Assessment Analysis</u>
Rating	Expectations

Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the processes the school will use, including specific action steps, triggers that would prompt action steps, responsible parties, timelines, and associated costs, to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ monitor academic performance and ○ take appropriate corrective action if the school is not on track to or does not meet academic performance expectations; ● Address specific responsibilities related to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ meeting student academic achievement or growth expectations <u>at the school-wide level</u> and ○ meeting student academic achievement goals <u>at the individual student level</u> (remediation/at-risk student); and ● Describe how the school will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its academic program generally and the effectiveness of specific corrective actions or interventions. ● Describe how the proposed school intends to use the data gathered from assessments to drive instruction ● Describe the board's role in analyzing the data gathered to inform school wide progress and potential changes.
The founding team's response for this section is complete.	

H. (3)	<u>Plan for Student Progress/Achievement & Communication Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify how student achievement and progress will be communicated to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students ○ Parents ○ The governing body ○ The authorizer ○ The broader community; ● Identify the communication plan for each of the specific sources of student achievement data identified in H. (1) and any other relevant sources of student achievement data; and ● Provide information that demonstrates the plan is effective in reaching the targeted population and the specific community in which the school plans to locate.
The founding team's response for this section is complete.	

II. Organizational Framework

A. Governing Body Creation/Capacity

A charter application shall include a description of the governing body and operation of the charter school, including: (1) how the governing body will be selected; (2) qualification and terms of members, how vacancies on the governing body will be filled and procedures for changing governing body

membership; and (3) the nature and extent of parental, professional educator and community involvement in the governance and operation of the school (NMSA 22-8B-8(I)).

A. (1)	<u>Key Components of Governance Structure</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include governing body bylaws in Appendix A; and ● Summarize <u>key</u> governance components in the application response as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership structure (number, roles, length of terms) ○ Officer structure (roles, election process, responsibilities, length of terms) ○ Committee structure that includes both legally required committees and school-specific committees (selection process, responsibilities, membership, length of service terms) ○ Member recruitment, selection, discipline, and removal processes.
<p>The founding team presents a narrative that incorporates the key components of the governance structure and a set of bylaws in Appendix A. The bylaws appear to be generic with only the first sections completed to indicate the school's ownership and mission. However, the Mission Statement included in the bylaws is similar to but does not match the Mission Statement provided on page 3 of the application. Virtual Preparatory Academy of New Mexico (VPA of New Mexico) is referred to by name only in Articles I and II. VPA of New Mexico is referred to as "SCHOOL" throughout the document. The following concerns are noted: 1) The bylaws state: "If Board membership falls below five (5) the vacancy shall be filled within sixty (60) days from creation of the vacancy." Statute requires that a board vacancy be filled within 45 days, no matter if the remaining number of board members total more than the minimum 5. 2) Under Article VII.4 Disqualifications/Nepotism Rule, the narrative states: "In no event shall a Board member be a SCHOOL employee, spouse of another Board member, or have a contract for provision of services or property with SCHOOL." The full nepotism rule applies to any board member. Therefore, the following should be included in addition to "spouse": the father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, or daughter-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, or sibling of another Board member. 3) There is no mention that the governing board is required to be a Board of Finance. This is a requirement as the school will be chartered under the New Mexico Public Education Commission.</p>	

A. (2)	<u>Governing Body Qualifications</u>
Rating	Expectations

Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify all qualifications and skill sets that the governing body will require and ensure those are represented within its regular membership and how the proposed board would be able to ensure the long-term success of this school if, by some circumstance, the Founders were no longer involved. ● Explain why and how the identified qualifications and skills will ensure the governing body has the required capacity and enable the governing body to operate a successful, high-quality public school; ● Describe how the board will ensure robust board membership including training expectations, time commitments, and member onboarding. ● Include a list of all proposed initial governing body members, describe each proposed member’s specific qualifications and skill sets through verifiable prior experience, and ensure the represented qualifications and skill sets align with the previously identified qualifications and skill sets that the governing body will require.
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The Founding Board members will transition into the Governing Board during the first year of operation after approval. A description of each proposed member's specific qualifications and skill sets is provided. Missing from the narrative, however, is a description of how the proposed board would be able to ensure the long-term success of this school if, by some circumstance, the Founders were no longer involved. In addition, member onboarding is not specifically addressed.

A. (3)	<u>Selection of Governing Body Members</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a regular and ongoing governing body recruitment process, including identification of action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; ● Describe the onboarding process, the board’s role in chartering and re-chartering, authorizer relations, and time commitment.

The founding team's response includes creation and maintenance of a list of potential community members that exhibit diverse backgrounds as well as a variety of expertise to create a pool to choose from when an opening is available. Action steps, timelines, and responsible parties, however, are not clearly addressed. Missing are a description of the onboarding process, the board's role in chartering and re-chartering, and authorizer relationships.

B. Governing Body Training and Evaluation

B. (1)	<u>Governing Body Training Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations

Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a process for governing body member onboarding to ensure new members are properly trained and able to meet the obligations and fulfill the responsibilities of governing body service, include action & monitoring steps, timelines, and responsible parties; ● Describe how the plan will identify governing body training needs, meet governing body training needs, and comply with state requirements, including any requirements that may change from year to year; ● Identify any costs required to support the training plan or onboarding process and describe how those costs are supported in the budget; and ● Develop an onboarding process and training that all new board members will be expected to complete including an outline of topics, who will be responsible for onboarding new board members, timeline for onboarding, and procedure for gathering feedback on the effectiveness of the onboarding process. ● Ensure the onboarding process and training plan address training on the open meetings act and responsibilities.
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The founding team's response for this section is complete.

B. (2)	<u>Governing Body Self-Evaluation Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for annual governing body self-evaluation, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, timeline on the annual board calendar and identified criteria or standards; and ● Describe how the identified plan will focus on and support continuous improvement.

The founding team intends to seek guidance for annual governing body self-evaluation from plans offered by the National Governance Association and training offered by the New Mexico School Board Association. However, the narrative does not contain a plan for annual self-evaluation specific to the Governing Body for VPA of New Mexico that includes action steps, timelines, responsible parties, a timeline on the annual board calendar and identified criteria or standards. No plan is provided to support continuous improvement.

C. Leadership and Management

C. (1)	<u>Governing Body Plan for Monitoring Outcomes</u>
Rating	Expectations

Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor academic performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; ● Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor organizational performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; ● Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor financial performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; and ● Describe how each of the monitoring plans will focus on ensuring the school is meeting its mission, providing a quality education, and acting as a responsible public entity. ● Describe how all of the above will be reflected in meeting agendas and the annual board calendar
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The founding team's response presents a general overview of major activities for monitoring organizational, financial, and academic outcomes in alignment with the Public Education Commission's Performance Review and Accountability System. However, the plan lacks clear action steps, specific timelines and identified criteria/standards. Audits, audit findings and monitoring to assure a clean audit and cleared audit findings are important items that are not addressed in the Financial section. Missing also is a description of how the plans will be specifically reflected in meeting agendas and the annual board calendar.

C. (2)	<u>Plan for Hiring Head Administrator</u>
Rating	Expectations

Does Not Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify an ongoing process for hiring a head administrator, both for the initial hiring and for any time the position becomes vacant, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; ● Identify all leadership characteristics and all qualifications the head administrator must possess; ● Explain why and how the identified leadership characteristics; including educational background, experience and qualifications will ensure the head administrator has the required capacity and enable the head administrator to operate the proposed school as a successful, high-quality public charter school; ● Explain how the identified leader, both for the initial hiring and for any time the position becomes vacant, will be on boarded including setting the expectations of how they will be reporting to, and working for and with the board. ● Describe how the identified process will ensure the school is able to identify and equitably (openly advertise and interview multiple candidates) hire a highly qualified, licensed administrator; and ● If a potential head administrator has already been identified and/or is a founder, include an assurance that the individual understands they must be selected and hired by an independent governing body and identify the individual's specific leadership skills and qualifications, through verifiable prior experience, that makes them qualified for the position, including holding the required licensure.
<p>The founding team provided an overview of a basic plan for hiring a head administrator. However, the basic plan does not sufficiently address any of the criteria required for this section.</p>	

C. (3)	<u>Distinguished Roles & Responsibilities</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the process the governing body will use for distinguishing their roles and responsibilities with those of the head administrator; ● Include specific actions the governing body will take to ensure the head administrator understands the obligations of the charter contract, the boards' role in oversight and chartering, and the requirements of all elements of the plan contained in this application; and ● Attach a job description in Appendix B that includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lists all major responsibilities of the head administrator ○ Includes responsibilities that are unique to charter school leaders ○ Includes responsibilities that specifically relate to the school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy ○ Identifies all hiring requirements including all previously identified requirements related to characteristics and qualifications.
<p>The founding team presents a "School Leader" job description that is generic rather than specific to a charter school or virtual school. The duties and responsibilities of the "School Leader" do not align between the</p>	

application and the Appendix B. The job description states under Organizational Leadership: Understand all compliance items as they relate to the school's Sponsor Agreement. The term "sponsor agreement" is unclear. The Appendix B job description does not include qualifications and certifications required for the job, hiring/firing employees, fiscal oversight/financial leadership responsibilities, operational management and reporting to the governing council.

C. (4)	<u>Head Administrator Evaluation Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the plan for annually evaluating the head administrator, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and standards or criteria including how this will be maintained in the boards' annual calendar process; ● Include action steps to evaluate the effectiveness of the head administrator ● Describe how the plan specifically takes into account ensuring the equitable implementation of the mission and goals of the proposed school; and ● Ensure the plan meets the requirements identified in NMAC 6.69.7.8 and 6.69.7.9.

The founding team's narrative states that the school Leader is the equivalent of a superintendent, therefore he/she will be evaluated using the same protocol as a superintendent rather than the evaluation provided in NMAC 6.69.7.8 and 6.69.7.9 for Principals. Missing from the narrative response is a description of how the plan specifically takes into account ensuring the equitable implementation of the mission and goals of the proposed school.

D. Organizational Structure of the Proposed School

D. (1)	<u>Organizational Chart</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include an organizational chart for each year as part of the rollout with grade additions; ● Show how the Equity Council is incorporated into to organizational chart; ● Include a narrative that describes the structures and relationships represented in the organizational chart; ● Include all entities essential to the operation and success of the proposed school; and ● Describe the relationship among each of the relevant entities.

The founding team's response includes a 5-year organizational chart. However, the charts do not incorporate the Governing Council or an Equity Council. In addition, no description is provided to describe the structures and relationships represented in the organizational charts.

D. (2)	<u>Job Descriptions for Certified/Licensed Staff</u>
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Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all certified and licensed staff identified in the application ○ all non-certified or unlicensed staff identified in the application who could be considered essential to the operation and success of the proposed school ○ any non-traditional roles or positions; ● Describe why the identified roles are key to the operation and success of the proposed school; and ● Attach staff job descriptions as Appendix C for all of the positions identified in the application response and include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ List all major responsibilities of the positions ○ Include responsibilities that specifically relate to the school’s mission, goals, and educational philosophy ○ Identify all hiring requirements including qualifications and licensure or certification ○ Identify reporting lines (“reports to”) that align to the organizational chart.

The founding team's response includes job descriptions for 10 of the 13 positions noted on the Year 5 Organizational Chart in the previous section D. (1). Missing are job descriptions for a Success Coach, CTE Coordinator, and Student Services. Expectations are listed for the 10 positions. Hiring requirements (qualifications and licensure or certification) are not identified. The only narrative provided for this section is "All job descriptions are found in Appendices B and C."

D. (3)	
<u>Staffing Needs and Plan</u>	
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify an ongoing staffing plan and process for hiring all necessary staff, both for the initial hiring and for any time a position becomes vacant, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties; ● Describe how the staffing plan and process will ensure the school is able to hire highly qualified staff, no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year, on an annual basis, and fill all vacancies within a reasonable time; include how the school will recruit and hire highly qualified licensed staff; ● Describe how the staffing plan and process is reasonable and adequate to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/curriculum during the planning year and for all subsequent years; ● Describe how the staffing plan and process is aligned with the budget and the school’s projected enrollment; and ● Describe how the school will make adjustments to the staffing plan in the case that there are differences in projected and actual enrollment.

The founding team provides a Staffing Chart that meets the needs of the school if enrollment projections are fulfilled at capacity. No narrative response was provided to address the Staffing Chart or any of the criteria for this section. The lack of job codes in the budget causes uncertainty about whether or not these positions are included. Conversely, ancillary service providers are included in the budget but not in the staffing plan.

D. (4)	<u>Professional Development Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify an annual professional development plan with action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe how the plan meets state requirements and rules; and ○ Describe how the school will ensure professional development time is not used for routine staff meetings. ● Identify a mentorship plan for novice teachers, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs that meets the requirements of PED rules; and ● Describe how the annual professional development plan and the mentorship plan for novice teachers ensure the following occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are supported by the budget ○ support the implementation of the proposed school’s educational plan, mission, and performance goals ○ not only address required annual training but are also tailored to address school- and teacher-specific professional development needs.

The founding team presented a general plan for professional development including two weeks of robust pre-service training for teachers new to the school via synchronous live training sessions and asynchronous coursework. The calendar, however, notes only one week of professional development prior to the first day of school. Professional development also includes participation in weekly professional learning communities (PLCs) and a minimum of one large or small group formal professional development opportunity presented each month. Professional development will also occur in ongoing team meetings and through the informal observation and feedback cycle. Additional opportunities for professional development were included as well. However, not one of the specific criteria required for this section was sufficiently addressed.

E. Employees

E.	<u>Employer/Employee Terms</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify all primary classes of employees the school will employ (e.g., administrative, professional, term, contract); ● Include an employment policy and handbook ● Provide an explanation for onboarding new staff and re-training returning staff on the terms within the handbook and policy. ● Explain how the school, through the governing body and head administrator, will address employee unions and other school-specific employee representatives.

The founding team provided an employment policy and handbook indicating that it is generic and in need of an attorney to finalize it. The employee handbook states: "Employees must consult their supervisors or managers

for review and approval of outside employment prior to beginning outside employment." This is unenforceable as is including an employee's outside work in the annual evaluation. Additionally, an employer cannot prevent an employee from using PTO for outside work. Also noted is that the employee handbook will be reviewed each year as the onboarding process for new employees. Unions are addressed.

F. Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance

F. (1)	<u>Parental, Professional Educator, and Community Involvement in Governance Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify school operation and governance structures that will provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A meaningful opportunity for parental input and participation ○ A meaningful opportunity for professional educator input and participation ○ A meaningful opportunity for community input and participation; ● Describe how the structures will facilitate parental involvement that will help advance the proposed school's mission; ● Explain the role of the Equity Council in the governance and operation of the proposed school; ● Include assurances that the school understands it may not require family or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting, not accepting, enrolling, dis-enrolling, or otherwise differentiating treatment of a student; and ● If the school plans to offer opportunities for parent support, explain the process of opting out for parents who are unwilling or unable to meet the proposed school's support opportunities.

The founding team identifies meaningful opportunities for parental, professional educator and community input and participation. Not addressed, however, are 1) how the structures will facilitate parental involvement that will help advance the proposed school's mission, 2) an explanation of the role of the Equity Council in the governance and operation, and 3) assurances that the school understands it may not require family or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting, not accepting, enrolling, dis-enrolling, or otherwise differentiating treatment of a student. Additionally, no explanation was provided about the school's process for parents opting out if the school plans to offer opportunities for parent support.

F. (2)	<u>Plan for Processing Concerns and Complaints</u>
Rating	Expectations

Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a grievance process to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community, parents and families, and students that includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; ● Include a final step in the process that provides the grievant a meaningful opportunity to be heard by, and receive a response from, the governing body; if they are unable to obtain resolution from the head administrator; ● Describe how the process is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and ensure a timely and meaningful response; and ● describe how the school will provide assurances that the school will additionally meet the specific legal requirements of the McKinney Vento and special education grievance processes.
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The founding team's response provides a grievance process to receive and process student/family concerns and complaints. However, community concerns and McKinney Vento grievance processes are not addressed. In step 3 of the process, the narrative becomes unclear in regard to filing an unresolved complaint with the Public Education Commission and/or with the PED for a Special Education dispute resolution.

G. Student Recruitment and Enrollment

G. (1)	<u>Outreach & Recruitment Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a prospective student outreach and recruitment plan, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs; ● Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ how the plan is tailored to ensure equal access to the school ○ why the plan is likely to attract a student body that is demographically reflective of the local community and school district; ○ provide a description of how the school will change recruitment plans and outreach if projected student enrollment is not reached ● Describe how the school will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach and recruitment efforts in ensuring equal access to the school and attracting a student body that is demographically reflective of the local community and school district and how the school will use that information to make adjustments to the outreach and recruitment plan.

The founding team presents a broad statewide recruitment plan. However, timelines, responsible parties and associated costs are not detailed. Not addressed are how the plan will attract a demographically reflective student body, the effectiveness of the recruitment plan, and changing recruitment plans if necessary.

G. (2)	<u>Lottery Admission Process</u>
Rating	Expectations

Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan to implement a lottery admission process, if necessary, include action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; ● Describe each of the steps of the process to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-lottery entry ○ Lottery ○ Post-lottery registration ○ Waitlist maintenance and entry; and ● Describe how the lottery process supports equal access to the school.
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With the exception of post-lottery registration, the founding team addressed the required criteria. However, the narrative states: "The Board authorizes the Head of School to receive, review, and consider applications for admission. The Board authorizes the Head of School to notify parents/students of the approval or denial of their application." This statement is unclear in its meaning and seems to convey that the Head of School can make decisions about lottery participation and admissions. In addition, it appears that the student is applying to the school and not the lottery. Similarly, using the verbiage "applications for admission" may cause some confusion for parents and students. The school cannot deny participation in the lottery when required due to more applicants than openings available

H. Legal Compliance

H.	<u>Conflict of Interest Policy</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a governing body conflict of interest policy that includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; ● Describe how the policy meets the requirements of New Mexico law addressing all areas of potential conflicts of interest; and ● Include all forms the governing body will or may be required to submit pursuant to the policy.

The founding team provided a DRAFT Conflict of Interest Policy. However, the policy does not include a timeline. In addition, the narrative does not describe how the policy meets the requirements of New Mexico law addressing all areas of potential conflicts of interest and does not address all forms the governing body will or may be required to submit pursuant to the policy.

I. Evidence of Partnership/Contractor relationship (if applicable)

I. (1)	<u>Essential Third-Party Relationships</u>
Rating	Expectations

Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify any third-party relationships with specific, identified organizations that control or influence essential elements—including the existence, operation, curriculum, or instruction of the proposed charter school—that are required by a partner organization or any part of the application; ● Describe, in detail, the relationships; ● Describe why the relationships are essential or required, or how they control essential elements of the proposed charter school; ● If any such relationships exist identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The specific, identified organizations ○ Contact information for that organization ○ Specific individuals in the organization that will be associated with the proposed school; ● Describe all legal implications of the essential/required relationships, including the legal benefits and responsibilities of each party.
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The founding team states its intention to partner with ACCEL Schools as they “. . . meet the specifications needed to successfully support the students and teachers of VPA of New Mexico.” The founding team states that services to be provided include personnel services, accounting services, professional and technical services, software, and curriculum. A proposed draft partnership agreement is included as Appendix D. Appendix D is an unsigned, undated template from Accel LLC., titled "VPA of New Mexico Educational Products, Administrative and Technology Services Agreement". Some services listed in the agreement raise a concern that Accel LLC. may be considered a school management company and not simply a provider of technology services for on-line learning; however, clarification is needed to determine the exact nature of this agreement. Contact information and specific individuals in the organization that will be associated with VPA of New Mexico are not identified.

I. (2)	<u>Appendix D Attachment Formal Agreement Documentation</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A response is only required if relationships were identified in questions I. (1)</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify all MOUs or formal agreements that are attached in Appendix D; ● Include proposed formal agreements or MOUs that are signed in Appendix D; and ● Identify the responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.

The agreement attached as Appendix D is titled "VPA of New Mexico Educational Products, Administrative and Technology Services Agreement". The Agreement is unsigned and undated. Compensation, payments, Interest rates, etc. are addressed. However, specific dollar amounts (costs) are not included.

J. Transportation and Food

J. (1)	<u>Transportation Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations

Not Applicable	<p>A response is only required if the school plans to offer regular transportation either for daily transportation to/from school OR for transportation to/from school specific activities and events that are a necessary part of the mission. All schools must be prepared to meet IEP transportation requirements.</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for establishing transportation services at the school including specific action steps, timelines responsible parties, and associated costs that address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying equipment purchase or contracting needs ○ Identifying hiring and or contracting needs ○ Hiring or contracting ○ Establishing training needs and inspection process needs ○ Establishing travel routes and pick up/drop off points ○ Establishing transportation policies and practices ○ Identifying student transportation needs; transportation plan costs; and ● Identify all, but at least one, specific entities or organizations that have been identified as potential partners or vendors for these services
Not Applicable	

J. (2)	<u>Food Services Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Not Applicable	<p>A response is only required if the school plans to offer food services at the school.</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify a plan for establishing food services at the school, including specific action steps, timelines responsible parties, and associated costs that address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying equipment purchase or contracting needs ○ Identifying hiring and/or contracting needs ○ Hiring or contracting ○ Establishing training and inspection process needs ○ Identifying and completing relevant program application and reporting requirements; ● Identify all federal and state food service programs the school plans to participate in; ● If providing or planning to offer a PreK or Early Childhood program, provide a plan for food service; ● Identify how the school will fund the food service plan costs prior to receiving any applicable reimbursements; and ● Identify all, but at least one, specific entities or organizations that have been identified as potential partners or vendors for these services and describe all steps that have been taken to create a relationship, establish a relationship, or develop a partnership to provide these services.
Not Applicable	

K. Facilities/School Environment

K. (1)	<u>Appendix E Attachment: Facilities Master Plan Ed/ Spec Checklist</u>
Rating	Expectations
Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the applicant submitted a Facilities Master Plan to PSFA by the deadline; ● If offering or planning or offer a PreK or Early Childhood program, provide a description of the facilities and playground in the Facilities Master Plan; and ● Demonstrate the PSFA has approved the applicant’s Facilities Master Plan.
<p>The FMP Plan approved by PSFA in Letter of March 28, 2023, is attached as Appendix E. Quote from letter: "Since students will not access the office site, PSFA assessment of the facility is not required."</p>	

K. (2)	<u>Evidence of Researched Facilities/Properties</u>
Rating	Expectations
Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the applicant has done the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conducted outreach and researched multiple facilities or properties in the targeted geographic location to understand if there are public facilities that are available, appropriate, and viable ○ Identified whether or not each potential property will meet the requirements of NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-4.2, including occupancy, adequacy, and ownership; ● Identify at least one potential facility or property that meets requirements. ● Identify a plan that would enable the applicant to prepare the facility/property to meet the facility needs of the proposed school in time for the proposed school’s opening date, include specific action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and capital outlay needs; ● Identify how the project to prepare the facility will be funded.
<p>The FMP Plan approved by PSFA in Letter of March 28, 2023, is attached as Appendix E. Quote from letter: "Since students will not access the office site, PSFA assessment of the facility is not required."</p>	

III. Financial Framework

A. School Size

A.	<u>Projected Enrollment</u>
Rating	Expectations

Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the anticipated number of students for each of the first five years and “at capacity”, based on the long-term strategic plan; ● Identify the grade levels requested to be served in each of the first five years (phase in plan) and “at capacity”, based on the long term strategic plan; and ● Identify the student/teacher ratio (not student/staff ratio) that aligns with the number of students served, grade levels, and staffing plan for each of the first five years and “at capacity”, based on the long term strategic plan.
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The founding team identifies the anticipated number of students for each of the first five years and "at capacity". Student enrollment at capacity will be 2,000. Grade levels at capacity will be K-12. VPA of New Mexico student teacher ratios for the first five years and at capacity will be as follows: grades K-5 45:1 per course and grades 6-12 33:1 per course. The plan is not in compliance with student/teacher ratios as stated in NMSA § 22-10A-20, Staffing patterns; class load, teaching load.

B. Budgets

B. (1)	<u>Attached Appendix F, 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG)</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include a complete 910B5 Worksheet in Appendix F; ● Use appropriate values and computations in each year; ● Use projected unit value; and ● Budget the correct special education percentage based on the local special education population, unless the school has a sufficient justification for why it will have a larger population (provide justification, if applicable).

Student counts for any reporting period should be in whole numbers. The founding team inserted non-whole numbers in some of the reporting periods (i.e., 25.25 students, should be 25 or 26). In addition, the At-risk factor is missing.

B. (2)	<u>Attached Appendix G: Proposed five-year Budget Plan</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include a five-year budget plan in Appendix G that is based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet from Appendix F; ● Support the proposed school’s mission and all elements of the proposed program laid out in the application; and ● Align with the proposed school’s five-year growth plan.

A non-traditional form was used, one not utilized by charter applicants, but one that is from the OBMS Reporting site. This form summarizes the budget at a higher level. Job codes were missing for all positions in the budget, therefore, analyzing employee salaries could not be completed. Concerns/unanswered questions: 1) Why is there employee travel budgeted in functions 2100 and 2500 when there are no employees budgeted in both functions? 2) What is employee travel for when the school is virtual? 3) When adding students, why are the special education ancillary costs not increasing over time? 4) What is the additional compensation "stipends" for? The narrative mentions bonuses, but bonuses are not allowed in New Mexico unless they are tied to employee performance and enumerated in the employee contract. 5) In function 2400, there is a

negative expense. This does not meet GAAP. The negative expense is unclear. They seem to be depending on this to balance the budget since Expenditures minus this credit = 910B-5. 6) Why are advertising costs so high? 7) Business support (contracted services) costs are too high in years 3-5. Those costs should not exceed \$100,000-ish. 8) Why are ancillary services so high when the ancillary FTE is .93 in all years?

B. (3)	<u>Budget Narrative</u>
Rating	Expectations
Meets	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain basic assumptions; ● Identify reliable sources for each assumption; ● Include priorities consistent with the proposed school’s mission; ● Include priorities consistent with the proposed school’s educational program; ● Include priorities consistent with the proposed school’s staffing; and ● Include priorities consistent with the proposed school’s facility.

The founding team’s response for this section is complete.

B. (4)	<u>Budget Adjustments</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe budget control strategies as well as budget adjustments that will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges; ● Describe budget control strategies as well as budget adjustments that will be made to address the failure to receive any anticipated funding sources; ● Include explanations that are viable and realistic, based on the professional judgment of experienced, licensed, school business officials; ● Address how special education students will receive services before special education funding is provided, based on accurate 40-day counts; and ● Address how gaps between budgeted students and actual enrollment will be addressed. ● Demonstrate how budget control strategies provide capacity to manage the budget successfully. ● Address how the school will modify the budget for students with special needs. ● describe how the proposed school will address the budget in the event that the proposed school has budgeted for more students, based on early enrollment, than actually enroll in the proposed school at the beginning of the proposed school year.

The narrative states, regarding cash flow: "In order to assist with this, the school will pursue vendor relationships to take advantage of deferred payment options." This is not a good plan. Invoices have to be paid within terms, and if there is any A/P at the end of the school year, there must be sufficient carryover cash to pay for A/P and payroll liabilities in the new school year. Prior year liabilities cannot be paid with new year funds. The narrative states: "Staffing is based on minimum enrollment estimates." This is difficult to determine when the charter application does not include an expenditure budget that details out the number of FTEs per job code. Criteria numbers 2 & 5 were not adequately addressed. No details were given

as to where cuts would be made in the budget. The narrative states "...the board will take steps to reduce expenditures....", but which expenditures?

C. Financial Policies, Oversight, Compliance, and Sustainability

C. (1)	<u>Internal Control Procedures</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify all the internal control procedures that have been attached in Appendix H; ● Attach in Appendix H internal control procedures the proposed school will utilize to assure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ safeguard assets ○ segregate its payroll ○ segregate cash and check disbursement duties ○ provide reliable financial information and promote operational efficiency ○ ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules; ● Attach procedures that—based on the professional judgment of experienced, licensed, school business officials—successfully ensure appropriate segregation of duties; and ● Provide a process the school will use to regularly evaluate compliance with the internal control procedures that have been attached in Appendix H and other internal control procedures that will be developed and implemented by the school.

The internal controls document (Appendix H) is generic in nature and not in alignment with how accounting processes are done in New Mexico. The document includes a detailed segregation of duties. A position of Controller was identified, but that position doesn't really exist in public schools, especially charter schools. The narrative stated that there was no need for cash controls since the school would not be collecting cash. The founding team failed to realize that cash pertains to actual cash, checks and direct deposits. The founding team referred to following GSA procedures; however, New Mexico follows New Mexico Procurement Code and New Mexico statute when performing financial procedures. Reference was made to having checks laser signed and forwarded to the board for signature. That is outside of routine for New Mexico schools.

C. (2)	<u>Staff for Financial Tasks</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the appropriate staff to perform each financial task identified in the response to B (1) and all other required financial tasks; ● Align completely with the organizational chart from response to D (1) in the Organizational Framework; ● Align completely with the budget in A (1) and A (2) responses in Financial Framework; ● Describe appropriate qualifications and responsibilities for each of the identified positions; and ● Include a plan that will result in the recruitment, identification, the evaluation of candidates, and the hiring of highly qualified staff for each of the identified positions, no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.

A Finance Director and a Finance Director job description is included; however, there are no salary and benefits budgeted for this position. It is stated that the board treasurer would be charged with managing the financial affairs, but the board treasurer's function is oversight. Board members do not participate in the daily activities and management of a school. It is stated that a proposed partner school finance team would be utilized, but there is no job description for this team. No financial tasks were assigned to this team. The Business/Operations Manager was included in the organizational chart from the team's response to D (1) in the Organizational Framework. There is no job search process, timelines, etc. for hiring a Finance Director or a partner school finance team. Segregation of duties is not addressed.

C. (3)	<u>Governing Body Legal & Fiscal Oversight</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how the Governing Body audit and finance committees will be formed and how they will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Function generally ○ Ensure proper legal oversight ○ Ensure proper financial oversight; ● Describe how the proposed school's audit and finance committees will interact with the school's management; and ● Describe how the audit and finance committees will interact with the full Governing Body.

The narrative for this section states that the business manager and director of operations would be on the finance committee and the audit committee. Not addressed is how the audit and finance committees will interact with the School Leader.

IV. Evidence of Support

A. Outreach Activities

A.	<u>Outreach Program</u>
Rating	Expectations
Does Not Meet	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe an outreach program to develop community support for the proposed school that has been implemented during the application process; ● Describe specific activities that have been implemented, include evidence of implementation; ● Include evidence that demonstrates the activities reached a broad audience that is representative of the community in which the proposed school will be located; and ● Describe how this outreach has enabled the applicant team to understand the needs of the community in which the proposed school intends to locate.

The founding team provides an accounting of its outreach program to develop community support for the proposed school. A general map of locations is included. The list of specific activities completed by the founding team does not, however, provide detailed evidence of implementation. The narrative indicates that the team

spoke with 209 families in 29 of 33 counties. (This would average 9 families per county.) Missing is a description of how this outreach has enabled an understanding of the needs of the communities in which the school will be providing virtual education.

B. Community Support

B.	<u>Evidence of Community Support</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include quantitative data that demonstrates community support from a broad audience for this proposed school; ● Include qualitative data that demonstrates community support from a broad audience for this proposed school; ● Include descriptions of the anticipated demographics of the students who will be served by the proposed school, disaggregate the number of prospective students by zip code, school of attendance (current), gender, type of current school (home, private, public), or other pertinent data. ● Ensure the demonstrated support includes support within the community of the specific targeted geographic location; and ● Describe why the applicant team believes the evidence demonstrates the school will be embraced and supported as the community's school and that there is abundant support for this school as a part of the community.

The founding team provides a log of Community Support and Meetings from around the state by zip code. A variety of individuals were interviewed and/or provided letters of support. Grouping responses by zip codes, rather than random placement would have assisted in determining where interest was the greatest. A chart is also provided showing the demographic makeup of the support community. However, no information was presented regarding current school of attendance, gender, grade level, or other pertinent data.

C. Community Relationships

C.	<u>Networking with Community</u>
Rating	Expectations
Approaches	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and describe specific meaningful and strategic networking relationships with local community agencies, groups, or individuals that will support the school. Include evidence of these relationships; ● Identify and describe specific meaningful and strategic resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals that will support the school. Include evidence of these relationships; and ● Describe why the applicant team believes the identified relationships demonstrate the school will be embraced and supported as the community's school and that there is abundant support for this school as a part of the community.

The founding team identifies many community groups as current or pending partnerships; however, no evidence was presented that any meaningful and strategic partnerships have already been formed.

A. Capacity Interview

Question 1	How will the mission, as described in the application, enhance, and transform the proposed community?
Rating	Meets
The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.	

Question 2	What is the most important contribution your proposed school will bring to the community in which you propose to operate?
Rating	Meets
The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.	

Question 3	What does mission success look like?
Rating	Meets
The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.	

Question 4	Describe how the board will provide oversight of your proposed school.
Rating	Meets
The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.	

Question 5	There are a lot of roles and responsibilities which a district provides
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	to traditional schools. Who will fill those roles at your proposed school?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team demonstrated knowledge of roles and responsibilities that a district would typically provide for a traditional school. The proposed charter school would need to have a Special Education Coordinator, a Business Manager, and contracted ancillary services that would include a diagnostician and others. Required positions that were not identified include a District Test Coordinator (DTC) and a McKinney-Vento Liaison.</p>	

Question 6	How will the proposed school ensure that policies and procedures are not only compliant, but also well implemented, current, and effective?
Rating	Meets
<p>The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.</p>	

Question 7	What will be the responsibilities of the board in reporting to their authorizer?
Rating	Meets
<p>The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.</p>	

Question 8	How does a charter school board ensure the long-term sustainability of the school?
Rating	Meets
<p>The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.</p>	

Question 9	Describe the students whose needs your school will serve.
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team described general needs of students across the state of New Mexico as well as instructional methods and strategies to engage students. Because the community for the application is the entire state of New Mexico, the team’s response to this question would have been strengthened by addressing anticipated student needs in specific regions of New Mexico, e.g., agricultural, urban, indigenous, and other distinctive settings. Including ethnicity and economically disadvantaged students in the discussion would also have strengthened the team’s response.</p>	

Question 10	What opportunities will your school offer to the community that are not currently available?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team focused on offering educational opportunities to and from the community that would capture student interest, bring businesses into the lives of children, and provide an understanding of the economic base that various businesses hold for the community. The discussion would have been strengthened by using examples from and demonstrating knowledge of various New Mexico communities, each with their own distinct characteristics.</p>	

Question 11	Describe your vision for engaging students and their families to fully participate in your proposed school?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team identified various ways to engage students and their families through online and/or phone communications, including providing assistance with the technology when needed. The school’s Student Support Team will also have constant communication with the families and will assist in getting a student back on track if the need arises. The discussion would be enhanced by including solutions for challenges that may come up for English learners and/or engagement challenges for students and their families from various cultural backgrounds.</p>	

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Question 12	Describe your plan for attracting and keeping high-quality teachers. What is your contingency plan if you can't find the teachers you need to fill all positions?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team discussed advertising both in New Mexico and outside of New Mexico, offering bonuses and benefits, a mentoring program and recruiting teachers from Eastern New Mexico University near the proposed school's office in Portales. Retention strategies would include providing resources and training that are relevant to teachers' needs, strong leadership, and development of a culture in which educators and staff would want to work. Development of a concrete contingency plan is recommended.</p>	

Question 13	How are you going to open your proposed school without federal start-up funds?
Rating	Does Not Meet
<p>The founding team briefly stated an intention to develop an agreement with the curriculum provider to cover any additional start-up funds that might be needed. The discussion was succinct and brief with no elaboration on the plan. Additional information is needed to fully understand the team's intention as stated.</p>	

Question 14	Describe how you will make enrollment projections to establish and submit your first budget to PED? How will you ensure these enrollment projections are reasonable and align closely to your actual 40-day count?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team determined a conservative projection based on predictive data from a social media survey. An aggressive marketing plan will be implemented.</p>	

Staffing will be based on “intents to enroll”. Numbers will be available by June. If enrollment projections fall short, the hiring of teachers will be delayed, and the marketing plan will be revisited. Although not discussed, the founding team might choose to consider any possible enrollment or staffing issues that may arise from opening with enrollment projections for 11 grades levels (K-10)?

Question 15	Suppose your actual enrollment on the first day is 50% below your pre-opening projection. What are your next steps?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team will revisit their marketing strategy, delay hiring and adjust the budget. It is advisable to develop a well thought out plan that includes specific next steps for implementation should the pre-opening projection fall short.</p>	

Question 16	Why can't your proposed students have their educational needs met with the existing virtual school options?
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team addressed the uniqueness of the VPA program that includes a K-12 career and college readiness program, offers curriculum in 40 languages, provides a unique single sign-on system, and includes family engagement. The single sign-on system is unique and has yet to be developed. The question is, will it be ready for use on opening day?</p>	

Question 17	How do you plan to monitor student learning during the large chunks of asynchronous time?
Rating	Does Not Meet
<p>The founding team provided assurances that the learning ecosystem will provide data for monitoring time during the school day and time external to the school day when students may be working on projects. Monitoring can also be achieved through “cold-call testing”. The school schedules time on Tuesdays and Thursdays</p>	

for outside school activities and dual enrollment classes. It remains unclear to the reviewers as to how this time will be monitored (11.5-14 hours are asynchronous).

Question 18	Explain the relationship with Accel LLC, how it's NOT a CMO and why is Accel giving the school money?
Rating	Does Not Meet
<p>Contrary to information provided in the written application, the founding team stated that Accel LLC. will not be the provider. A different provider, to be selected, will not be a contracted manager of any type. The founding team limited its discussion regarding this issue. This is a major change that has the potential of significantly affecting both the organizational and financial sections of the written application. Additional information on this proposed change is required.</p>	

Question 19	How will you support students who have internet connectivity issues?
Rating	Meets
<p>The founding team fully responded to the components of the question.</p>	

Question 20	Please explain how the multiple learning platforms and management systems will be synthesized cohesively. AMP, Accelerate Education, StrongMind, eDynamic Learning, FlexPoint, MasteryConnect, Canvas.
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team explained that CAMPUS will be the learning management system. Within CANVAS, AMP will be the data point. Power School will be the student information system. All others provide the curriculum. The team stated that they know it is possible to create this seamless system because they have done the research. The founding team did not address a timeline for development. The unanswered question is whether or not the system will have</p>	

been fully developed and in use by the time the proposed school would open.

Question 21	Please describe how the board will ensure all monies flow through the school appropriately.
Rating	Approaches
<p>The founding team stated that policies and procedures will be in place, all involved need training in regard to public money, and transparency is essential. Finance and Audit Committees will be established as required by statute. A full understanding of the specific requirements of grant funds and expenditures is essential to ensuring that all monies flow through the school appropriately.</p>	