

New Mexico Public Education Commission



2023 Charter School Renewal Application Part B: Progress Report

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Instructions

Please read the entire Charter School Renewal Application Kit before preparing documents. In an effort to help applicants understand the requirements of the Renewal Application, the CSD will hold a minimum of two technical assistance workshops. Applicants will be notified of the dates, times, and locations of the workshops.

Enter applicant responses in boxes below. Answer all questions unless the question indicates that applicants should answer only under certain conditions (e.g., rating on a Performance Framework indicator requires explanation, etc.). Narrative responses should be verifiable through documents submitted or observable evidence at the renewal site visit and will be scored according to the rubric in the main 2022 Charter Renewal Application document.

School Information

Name of School: Dream Dine' Charter School

Authorizer: Central Consolidated School District

Current Charter Term: 2019-2024

Academic Performance

Student Outcomes

1. Academic Performance

The school reports on its academic performance during the term of the contract, including achieving its goals, student performance outcomes, state standards of excellence and accountability requirements set forth in the Assessment and Accountability Act.

School response:

First and foremost, the Central Consolidated School District (CCSD), despite numerous requests over the past 5 months, has been unable to produce the Dream Dine' Charter School 2019-2024 Performance Framework. Over the past 4 years, district leadership has not engaged in a single Annual Site Visit or performance review. The results in this recharter application are directly related to this lack of partnership and oversight by the local authorizer.

And the past (almost) four years can be best characterized by the Covid-19 pandemic, which impacted every level and system of education. While everyone is tired of hearing the pandemic as "an excuse", it is still the event that fundamentally floored education in the 2020-2022. Professionals and lay people alike see the impact of lockdown and fear on the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. Even gifted students aren't as readily identified in classrooms in 2023, because they too are not performing at grade level. And while the school is now poised to focus more intently on academic achievement, the focus in school for 3 of the 5 years of the current charter was emotional well-being and teaching young students what it meant to be in school, when many did not even have the benefit of attending preschool, due to lockdown.

Consider the timeline of Covid and the impacts of the pandemic on the youngest of students in New Mexico:

2019-20 is the beginning of lockdown. The students currently in the 5th grade at Dream Dine' were in 2nd grade, and Kindergartners were 2-years-old. In 2020, the school was not required to administer end-of-year interim assessments or a summative assessment.

2020-21 was the year of lockdown. Schools were not required to administer end-of-year interim assessments or a summative assessment. Families struggled with internet access and the use of outdated technology.

2021-22 was when students could return to school. And Dream Dine' maintained hybrid classes until spring break of 2022. Hybrid students continued to struggle with old chromebooks and hotspots. The State did not require a summative assessment this year either.

2022-23 was the year characterized by shifting from explicit social and emotional support focus to academic press. This was also the first year the school used NWEA as an interim assessment.

With Dream Dine' Charter School we must realize that the sample size of classes and the school in its entirety is small; therefore the low performance of one student has profound impacts on the data.

However, Dream Dine' is designed to celebrate and teach Dine' language and culture but also to support success in western academics. Dream Dine' does not feel the current picture of student academic proficiency is acceptable and will be working to leverage the analysis of NWEA interim assessment

results to target instruction and identify students in need of MLSS Layer 2 interventions to achieve adequate growth in science, reading, writing, and mathematics.

An additional note is that the school has experienced administrator and teacher turnover and is now working on staff stability and retention. Leadership is working on creating a staff culture that knows a charter school requires more than academics. At Dream Dine', the focus is on Dine' language and culture and land-based learning experiences within the curriculum. Teaching and supporting Dine' language & culture is a lot of work and requires a different mindset. If teachers cannot understand this and embrace it, they tend to burn out early and leave.

Multiple reasons exist to explain the high rate of staff turnover. The school transitioned to a new director in July 2022. The school leader was not provided guidelines or orientation, including the realities of operating a school with a charter contract. Teachers reported that promises made to them that couldn't be fulfilled for various reasons (e.g., copy machines and internet issues). The new director discovered that office staff were not fulfilling their required job duties. Teachers were unused to being held accountable for students' academic growth, particularly for SPED students. These teachers were not a fit for the school culture. The current staff for the 2023-24 school year is already performing at a higher level of capacity than the staff last year.

The current school leader is also stressing the importance of professional development that leads to the creation of cross curricular learning with western academics embedded in Dine' language and culture in an immersion learning format. Understand that working in a charter school takes work and commitment to make positive changes for our students. Teachers are provided respectful stipends for attending training, developing curriculum, and facilitating after school activities.

The table below is a summary of the results of summative assessments for Dream Dine' 3rd to 5th grade students. This table shows clearly differential achievement between 5th grade students, who experienced in-person education for their earliest learning, kindergarten and first grade. Third grade students did not even have the benefit of attending in-person preschool or Head Start due to Covid-19 lockdown.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1.Student Outcomes

1.a. How has the school measured student proficiency and growth, including action taken in the absence of state summative assessments in 2019-20 and 2020-21? Describe interim and formative assessments used, and the results of those assessments. Include a detailed narrative that addresses the actions taken to improve student outcomes, and the success of those actions. Schools may take the opportunity to include data in support of the narrative. If providing data to support the school’s narrative, provide it in **Appendix A-1 Academic Data**. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit.

School response:

The school has administered iStation reading and math to all grade levels and, beginning in 2022-2023, the NWEA interim assessment was used to analyze reading, math, and science growth. Table 2 below shows that progress can be made to assist more students to achieve adequate growth in academic subjects, particularly after the devastating impacts of learning loss due to necessary public health measures. Dream Dine’ is prepared to leverage the assistance provided by the CSI designation to work to better assist students in achieving academic growth.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

The academic growth data for early reading (grades K-3), advanced reading (grades 4 and 5), and math show a positive trend. While there are issues with the testing data, such as the impact of Covid-19 on if the test was even given or not, even a cursory glance at the comparison of beginning-of-year (BOY) proficiency rates with those at end-of-year (EOY) reveals that the Dream Dine’ academic model can yield academic growth and attainment.

Pages 5-7 have been removed to redact data in accordance with FERPA and NMPED data masking rules.

1.b. Mission-specific or School-Specific Goals

Report on the school's performance in relation to the school- or mission-specific goals in the negotiated performance framework. Performance reports related to school or mission specific goals should be supported by raw data (masked to protect PII) and provided in **Appendix A-2 Mission Goal Data**. The school should report on the performance in each year of the contract term.

Schools that have not met their school- or mission-specific goals in each year of the contract term should provide a narrative that addresses the improvement actions taken and the success of those actions. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting the school or mission specific goals and maintaining that performance level. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit.

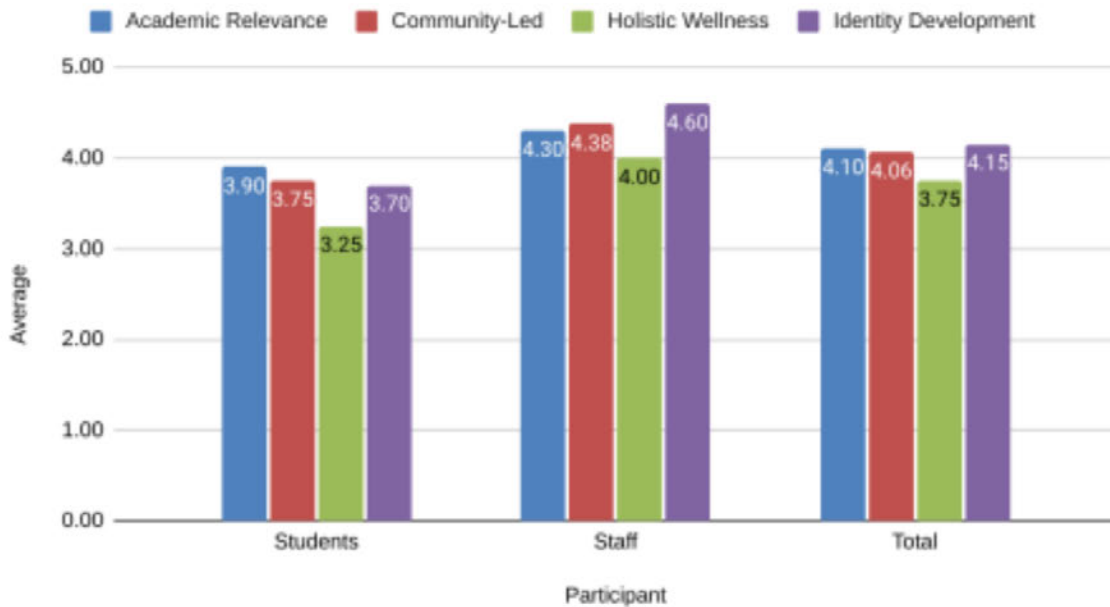
School response:

Teaching Navajo Language & Culture as an integral part of the academic program is the mission of Dream Dine' Charter School. In the school year 2022-23, under the new direction of the current principal, a review of the Navajo Nation curriculum was conducted. One perceived weakness of the curriculum is the lack of guidance regarding benchmarks in language and cultural knowledge acquisition across grade levels. The language and culture teachers at Dream Dine' developed classroom-based instruction on vocabulary, spelling, and reading words (See Appendix A-2).

Currently, without a copy of the performance framework of the current charter, the improved action is to first determine an appropriate language and culture-based mission-specific goal for the new charter contract. Second, the school is planning to develop a formal Dine' language and culture program strategic plan with outcomes and measurable objectives using benchmark assessments.

The NACA-Inspired Schools Network surveyed students and staff about culture and identity development in school. The response is positive, as is evident in the table below (See Appendix A-2).

Responses by Participant



2. Organizational Performance

2.a. Educational Program

How is the school implementing the distinctive educational program described in its contract (Performance Framework Indicator 1.a.)? The response should address the ways in which the school is implementing the family, teacher, and student-focused terms of its contract. Please discuss any innovations the school has implemented in support of its mission and educational program.

School response:

The Dream Dine' Navajo Language and Culture program is unique in that it is designed to embed western academics into Navajo language instruction, which functions to decolonize education by centering indigenous language and culture and adding western academics to that container. Parents and guardians report appreciation in their children coming home and speaking Navajo. When the school focuses on language and culture, it legitimizes the indigenous identity. To fully support this mission-specific program, the school employs a 520-licensed language and culture teacher to design and implement it. (Though this position is currently unfilled.)

Land-based learning is being reclaimed and implemented to better meet the school mission after transition in leadership. The innovative partnership between Americorp through the Naca-Inspired Schools Network (NISN) and Dream Dine' is working to implement an important feature of the school's mission. Further, the school received an Accessing choices in Education (ACES) grant that supports culture and language learning in an afterschool program.

The school has been awarded an agricultural grant to support the land-based learning. The school will be employing a local, Navajo farmer to work with students to learn farming techniques. Students are learning about irrigation in the high desert. In the coming year, the teacher will be introducing hydroponic farming as an alternative way to irrigate plants in farming.

At Dream Dine’ mandated assessments are not add-ons but are opportunities for learning and growth. The school’s assessment practices are designed to be student-engaged. Students engage in guided self-reflection on their own assessment scores and set goals for growth on standardized assessments. This process has increased students’ feelings of ownership and responsibility for growth. Dream Dine’ is also in the early stages of implementing student-led conferences, which will help students set and monitor their achievement of explicit goals, hence teaching emotional intelligence.

2.b. Financial Compliance

How is the school managing its finances (Performance Framework Indicators 2.a-f.)?

For each year in which the school had a significant deficiency, material weakness, or repeated finding(s) identified in the external audit, the school must provide a narrative explaining the improvement actions made to meet financial compliance requirements and the effectiveness of those actions in improving financial compliance. Success should be identified by specific changes in practice and changes in the audit findings in subsequent years. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward achieving and maintaining financial compliance. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the site including renewal site visit.

If the school’s Board of Finance was suspended at any time during the term of the contract, the school must provide a narrative explaining the actions taken on the school’s own initiative to correct financial compliance and regain the Board of Finance Authority and the success of those actions. The school must also describe the current status of the Board of Finance and continuing actions to ensure the same financial challenges do not reoccur. Success should be identified by specific changes in practice. The narrative must be supported by evidence to be reviewed during the renewal site visit.

School response:

Dream Dine’ Charter School realizes the importance of fiduciary responsibility. As a charter school authorized by the Public Education Commission, the Governing Board realizes it will be required to operate as a Board of Finance. With the assistance and oversight of the NM Charter School Division, Dream Dine’ welcomes coaching to build the systems and structures to fulfill this function to its highest degree.

The first structure to create is the finance committee. This committee is to make recommendations to the governing council in the following areas:

- financial planning, including reviews of the school's revenue and expenditure projections;
- review of financial statements and periodic monitoring of revenues and expenses;
- annual budget preparation and oversight; and
- procurement.

It is also to serve as an external monitoring committee on budget and other financial matters.

	Audit findings: Significant deficiency, material weakness, or repeated finding(s) identified in the external audit	Narrative Response: Improvement actions made to meet financial compliance requirements and the effectiveness of those actions in improving financial compliance
2019	2019-001-Material Weakness	The Business Manager created a process to confirm that all payments are paid out before

		the bank reconciliation is completed. The Business Manager should contact the auditor for non-routine activities. The Business Manager required guidance from the auditor regarding closing out the year.
2019	2019-004-Non Compliance (repeat #2017-003)	The School modified its procedures to create change purchase orders. If the school needs to increase the vendor purchase order the principal approves, the office manager emails the business manager, a change order is created, PO is printed and signed by the principal.
2021	2021-014-Significant Deficiency-Lack of Controls over AR	The Business Manager reviewed subsequent transactions with the Finance Committee in the first Finance Meeting in the new fiscal year to ensure all subsequent transactions are identified in the audit.

2.c. Governance Responsibilities

Describe how the school has met governance responsibilities during the term of the contract (Performance Framework Indicators 3.a.). Specifically, identify any time when membership on the governing body fell below the requirements in their by-laws or the statutory minimum of five members. Identify the amount of time any vacancies were open and identify any board members who did not complete required training hours in any year of the contract term. For any governance requirements the school was unable to meet, provide a narrative describing the improvement actions the school implemented to move toward full compliance. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting all governance requirements. The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the renewal site visit.

School response:

Dream Dine’ realizes the importance of maintaining a Governing Board of at least 5 members and that those members are trained appropriately, as with their role comes the responsibility of managing allocations of taxpayer money.

The training for Governing Board officials helps them understand their charter school governing body ethics and responsibilities, including fiscal requirements; understanding and evaluating academic data (state assessment data, school and teacher accountability systems data, interim and summative academic assessment data); open government and requirements regarding free public school education; and understanding and overseeing the organizational performance of a charter school.

Dream Dine’ is considering implementing the following action plan to encourage board members to complete their required annual training.

Action plan for improvement:

1 - Change policy/by-laws to include cause for termination for not getting training.

2 - Provide two reminders to complete all training.

3 - Removal from service.

	Membership at 5+	Training
Year 1 2020	Telletha Valenski - President Clarence Hogue - Vice President Donna Fernandez Christina Benally Jenna Landers - Secretary	All members met required training hours during the fiscal year 2020.
Year 2 2021	Telletha Valenski - President Clarence Hogue - Vice President Donna Fernandez Shaneyka Yazzie Jenna Landers - Secretary	All but one member did not complete the required training hours. Ms. Yazzie was removed on 12/13/21
Year 3 2022	Telletha Valenski - President/Secretary Clarence Hogue - Vice President Donna Fernandez Daniela Allen Allen Brauer	All but one member did not complete the required training hours. Mrs. Allen onboarded late in the year and was only able to complete 2 training hours.
Year 4 2023	Donna Fernandez - President/Secretary Daniela Allen Virginia Kirk Veronica Tso	We were without a fifth board member for an entire year. Efforts to recruit for a fifth member were unsuccessful. Two of the new board members fail to complete their required training hours.
Year 5 2024	Daniela Allen - President Donna Fernandez - Vice President Virginia Kirk - Secretary Veronica Tso - Treasurer	Members are currently working on completing their required training hours.

2.d. Equity and Identity

How is the school protecting the rights of all students (Performance Framework Indicator 4.a.)? How is the school complying with the Martinez-Yazzie mandate to provide culturally and linguistically relevant instruction and to support and validate students' cultures, identities, and sense of belonging? How is the school complying with the requirements of the Indian Education Act (NMSA § 22-23A), the Hispanic Education Act (NMSA § 22-23B), and the Black Education Act NMSA § 22-23C)? What role does the school's equity council play in protecting the rights of all students?

School response:



Dream Dine' serves Navajo students and is committed to the healing of Dine' families and communities through the embrace of Navajo language and culture. The school is focused on the integration of land-based learning into a relevant and engaging curriculum. The goal is to strengthen this curriculum and implementation over the next 5 years.

The following list provides examples of how language and culture are honored and integrated into the school day:

- Every morning we gather the students for our Positive Thought activity. Students recite the Pledge in Navajo, including the morning prayer. The hummingbird pledge is all recited by all students. Students are given the opportunity to share their weekend.
- The ACES grant supports the Navajo way of teaching and culture by bringing in knowledge keepers to share stories of kinship, songs of beauty and blessings, weaving, and traditional ways of cooking.

- The school adopted a curriculum for ELA and math written by AZ and NM teachers and related to Navajo language and culture.

2.e. Tribal Consultation

Pursuant to the Indian Education Act, NMSA 22-23A-1 et. seq, and Subsections C and D of the Charter School Act, NMSA 22-8B-12.2, if the school is located on tribal land or serves a high percentage of Native American students, describe how the school complied with the requirements of ongoing consultations with tribal authorities.

School response:

Dream Dine' and the Department of Dine' Education (DODE) meet in September at a time determined by the Nation and prior to education plans, before any significant decisions regarding plans are made, and to ensure that officials from the Nation meaningfully and substantially contribute to the school's planning. The school also engages continuing consultation around any planned substantive changes in the program or submitting applications for grant funding.

Consultation agendas are built around educational resources, curriculum development, or the development, changes, and implementation of educational policies and procedures that address the unique educational needs of Native American students. Consultation also involves information sharing.

2.f. Other Performance Framework Indicators

For any Performance Framework indicator for which a school received a "Does Not Meet Standard" or a repeated "Working to Meet Standard" rating over the term of the contract, the school should provide a narrative to address improvement actions it has made to correct those findings. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting organizational performance

expectations. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit.

If the school has received any Office of Civil Rights (OCR) complaints, formal special education complaints or NM Attorney General complaints, the school must identify those, provide all communications (redacted to protect PII) related to those complaints in **Appendix B-1 Complaint Communications**, and describe the current status of the complaint process. If any of those complaints have been resolved and resulted in a finding that the school violated any law, the school must provide a narrative describing the required compensatory and corrective actions required and their status in implementing those actions. The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the renewal site visit.

School response:

The school received no Office of Civil Rights (OCR) complaints, formal special education complaints or NM Attorney General complaints.