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**Charter Schools Division
Preliminary Renewal Analysis and Recommendation
November 1, 2023**

School Name: Dream Diné Charter School
School Address: Shiprock, NM 87420
Head Administrator: Nadine Chatto
Governing Board Chair: Donna Fernandez (acting)
Contract Term: 2019–2024
Authorizer: Central Consolidated School District

Statutory Renewal Requirements

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

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

Preliminary Renewal Recommendation

The Charter Schools Division (CSD) recommends renewal with the following conditions: 1) the school needs to submit a Literacy Plan to the PED as action plan for demonstrating substantial literacy growth; 2) before the end of the 2023-24 SY, the governing board must have full membership (5 members) and all members must complete governance training in alignment with 6.80.5 NMAC.

Part B: Progress Report

The school's narratives in Part B are rated Meets Standard, Demonstrates Substantial Progress, or Failing to Demonstrate Progress according to the rubric on pages 6-7 of the 2023 Charter School Renewal Application.

Part B: Progress Report	
Academic Performance	Rating
1.a. Student Outcomes	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
1.b. Mission-Specific Goals	N/A
Organizational Performance	Rating
2.a. Educational Program	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.b. Financial Compliance	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.c. Governance Responsibilities	Failing to Demonstrate Progress
2.d. Equity and Identity	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.e. Tribal Consultation	Meets the Standards
2.f. Other Performance Framework Indicators	N/A

1.a. Student Outcomes

Limited data is available for the charter term due to Covid and the school being district-authorized. However, during 2021-22, data from NMVistas indicates that Dream Diné performed only better than .9% of New Mexico schools. The school received a designation of CSI – Low Performing, meaning schools scoring in the bottom 5% of all Title I schools. In 2021-22, the school's proficiency rates were masked on NMVistas due to small sample sizes.

The PED is releasing 2022-23 [Vistas](#) data publicly at 5:00 PM on November 1, 2023. The data were provided to CSD the morning of November 1 so it could be incorporated into this report. Overall Vistas score was not available prior to the public release, but the school's 2022-23 proficiency and growth rates, compared with the district where the school is located and statewide data, are:

2022-23 PED Accountability Data	Proficiency			Growth	
	ELA	Math	Science	ELA	Math
Dream Diné Charter School	12%	18%	33%	-1%	11%
Central Consolidated School District	23%	13%	17%	4%	0%
New Mexico Statewide	38%	24%	34%	4%	0%

While the NMVistas proficiency and growth rates in ELA are concerning, the school has taken appropriate adult actions to improve outcomes for students. For example, they have hired a new reading interventionist who is conducting professional development with teachers in literacy instruction. Moreover, in Part B, the school was able to show progress on iStation and NWEA in reading over the past year. The growth is encouraging, but more will be needed. Plus, Dream Diné needs to submit a Literacy Plan to the PED.

1.b. Mission-specific Goals

Not applicable as the school is a district-authorized charter school and not under the PEC Performance Framework.

2.a. Educational Program

The educational program outlined in the contract and described in [Part B](#) of the renewal application has been met to a large degree, with room for growth in some areas. The first component of the educational program addresses the Dine language and culture. The school’s goal was to have a bilingual program of 50% Dine and 50% English. While the leaders and teachers acknowledge that they are not exactly following a 50/50 blend, it is clear that the language and culture are being taught. Students set positive intentions in Dine at the beginning of each school day, and they learn Diné during a designated class period daily. Some teachers also sprinkle in Dine while they teach other subjects.

The second component of Dream Diné’s educational program is about “place-based learning: using stories, history, geography, environment, science, and arts of the local community to enrich learning.” This was most evident in their teaching of Diné culture, as well as in science class. The garden program (outdoor/indoor) is at the center of their place-based and experiential learning. Engagement with the local community could be stronger, as the staff admitted there is not much participation from the community.

The third element of the educational program states that they have a teacher with bilingual endorsement or Native American language certificate. While the teachers integrate Dine culture and language into the curriculum, the school does not have a bilingual endorsed teacher at this time. The school leadership shared that this has been a difficult process lately, and they are actively working on solutions.

The fourth component of the educational program is about connecting with the local community and Diné language. While the school is clearly embracing the language, as mentioned, they would like to connect with the local community more.

The fifth aim of Dream Diné's educational program is to integrate music and arts in the curriculum. Teachers indicated that they do not do much music; however, they incorporate art in the curriculum by having students do drawings in connection with lessons. They also produce artwork in conjunction with cultural holidays and festivals.

The educational program also calls for "wellness and healthy living, emphasized through daily morning walks with voiced positive intentions for learning." This was definitely observed, a beautiful ritual that students start their day with in the Navajo tradition. Focus groups verified that the students do these daily morning walks consistently, and positive intentions are expressed in Navajo/Dine.

The final component of the educational plan pertains to the campus garden, and emphasizing nutrition and healthy eating. The CSD team observed students going to the garden, studying it, making notes, and planning the next phase of gardening. The focus groups confirmed that students visit the garden daily, and it is an important part of the educational plan.

2.b. Financial Compliance

The school had an increase in total number of audit findings in the most recent fiscal year, with five findings (compared with 4, 0 and 2) in the years preceding. Still, the school has had only one material weakness finding, one significant deficiency finding, and one repeat finding over the course of the contract term.

The school prioritizes resources based on its mission and vision, to create a world-class Diné-centered educational program to ensure that the children and communities thrive. The school hired a reading interventionist and used grants to teach native languages, implementing them into the curriculum. There is ongoing training for staff.

The school follows consistent procedures and has financial policies in place. It ensures budget availability for hiring, seeking grants when needed. Savings are set aside for future building or technology upgrades/needs, as well as reading and math programs. The business manager meets with the head administrator to review enrollment data, especially Special Education (SPED) numbers. The school recently hired an assistant business manager.

CSD would recommend as a best practice of segregation of duties that two different individuals be the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) and business manager.

2.c. Governance Responsibilities

The governing board did not meet training requirements for any year of the contract term; at least one or two members did not meet required training hours for each year of the term. Governance notifications are not applicable as the school is a district-authorized charter school. However, the school has not met governance requirements according to statute, as the school does not have a full board of 5 members (they have 4 members at this time).

2.d. Equity and Identity

Dream Diné incorporates Diné language and culture into the daily lessons, honoring the predominant culture of the students who attend. Parents and teachers feel good about keeping the Diné language alive at the school, as it has been lost by some community members. Dream Diné has met all equity guidelines in the renewal application, except they do not currently have an Equity Council. However, Dream Diné does comply with the Martinez-Yazzie mandate “to provide culturally and linguistically relevant instruction and to support and validate students’ cultures, identities, and sense of belonging.” Furthermore, Dream Diné has worked to protect the rights of all students, fostering a supportive environment where small-group and one-on-one instruction are the norm.

2.e. Tribal Consultation

The school has met the requirements of the Indian Education Act (NMSA 22-23A) and 6.35.2 NMAC.

2.f. Other Performance Indicators

Not applicable as the school is a district-authorized charter school and not under the PEC Performance Framework.

Unrated Sections of Application	
Part D: Petitions of Support	Partially Complete*
Part E: Facilities	Submitted as Required
Part F: Change in Authorizer	N/A

*Staff petitions submitted as required. Family petitions fell short of the required percentage in part because the school decided to apply for renewal with PEC after the end of the 2022-23 school year and it was difficult to locate some families whose children no longer attended. Due to the extremely small enrollment size of the school, the inability to locate even one or two families has a large effect on the overall percentage. After conducting the family focus group, CSD is satisfied with the community support for the school.