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**Charter Schools Division
Final Renewal Recommendation
November 28, 2023**

School Name: Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School

School Address: 2211 N. Valley Drive Las Cruces, NM 88007

Head Administrator: Dr. Maria Artiaga

Governing Board Chair: Raul Aldair Marquez

Contract Term: 2019–2024

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.

CSD Renewal Recommendation

The Charter Schools Division (CSD) recommends that Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School be renewed for a term of five years without conditions.

Part B: Progress Report

The schools' 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	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
Organizational Performance	Rating
2.a. Educational Program	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.b. Financial Compliance	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.c. Governance Responsibilities	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.d. Equity and Identity	Meets the Standards
2.e. Tribal Consultation	N/A
2.f. Other Performance Framework Indicators	Demonstrates Substantial Progress

1.a. Student Outcomes

Proficiency rates for all students are masked due to small N sizes, but the school outperformed 38.6% of elementary and middle schools for a Vistas designation of Traditional in 2021-22. Istation assessment results in Reading, Lectura (Spanish), and Mathematics over the contract term, including 2022-23, show uneven progress. The school's renewal application described adult actions to improve student outcomes, including instructional coaching, more frequent and intentional teacher observation and feedback, and improved use of data in teacher professional learning communities (PLCs). Moreover, Raices has submitted a current Literacy Plan to the PED. The renewal site visit team did observe evidence of these adult actions at the site visit. Progress in ELA is evident, however the school's Math performance is not demonstrating the same level of proficiency or growth.

The PED released 2022-23 [Vistas](#) data publicly in November 2023. The overall Vistas score is provided below, as well as the school's 2022-23 proficiency and growth rates compared with the district where the school is located and statewide data.

2022-23 NMVistas Score: 52

Designation: Traditional

2021-22 NMVistas Score: 30

Designation: Traditional

2022-23 PED Accountability Data	Proficiency			Growth	
	ELA	Math	Science	ELA	Math
Raíces del Saber Xinachtli	40%	11%	*	11%	-3%
Las Cruces Public Schools	38%	23%	35%	5%	1%
New Mexico Statewide	38%	24%	34%	4%	0%

* The school did not have students in grade 5 in 2022-23.

1.b. Mission-specific Goals

The school’s original goal was based on the IPT assessment of Spanish proficiency, which was one of several assessments in use at the time. During the contract term, the PED made the Avant assessment a requirement for bilingual programs, and Raíces had to switch to that assessment. During the Covid years and subsequent changes in school leadership, the new assessment was not implemented with fidelity, leading to a failure of the school to meet its goal. The school is now implementing the assessment and can effectively measure student proficiency.

While on site, the CSD team observed a robust bilingual program in the school, observing instruction in both Spanish and English (mostly Spanish) and students who clearly understood Spanish, even when they responded to Spanish questions in English, with English responses demonstrating comprehension of Spanish questions.

2.a. Educational Program

Raices is working toward achieving full implementation of their educational program as described in their contract and application [Part B](#). Both parents and students in focus groups were happy with the school and the direction it is going. Families are pleased with the bilingual program currently being offered. They appreciate the communication between the school and families. Family involvement at the school is robust and participation is strong in the “Concilio de padres” (PTA) where families see monthly reports and presentations from the school and their input is sought by the head administrator and the governing board.

A primary component of the educational program is to “empower students to become biliterate/multilingual citizens.” There is abundant evidence that the school has been working toward achieving this goal for the duration of their charter term. The CSD annual site visits, classroom observations, student/parent focus groups, and teacher focus groups confirm the

great effort Raices is making. It is clear that the school embraces their multicultural/multilingual model and students appear to be actively engaged in the process.

The first subcategory of the educational program is focused on Xinachtli curriculum: the school is clearly utilizing the Xinachtli “engagement calendar, lesson plans, dialogue circles, and school schedule,” as evidenced by the site visits, classroom observations, Part B of the renewal application, and the focus groups.

Subsection 2 of the educational plan, the Mathematics Block, has not been implemented fully. According to the contract, the block is “organized in four sections offered daily: Number Talks, whole-group mathematics lessons, learning stations/centers, and whole-class dialogue/lesson summary.” During class visits and the teacher focus groups, the CSD saw evidence of mathematics instruction; however, it did not match the intended plan. The leadership confirmed during the exit interview that they have not been implementing mathematics according to the educational plan; however, teachers are starting to use a new curriculum, “Bridges”, but it has not yet been utilized consistently.

Subsection 3 of the educational plan outlined their intention to implement the Balanced Literacy Framework. While the framework has been discontinued, it has not been replaced at Raices with a balanced literacy program that resembles the educational plan: “Readers Workshop, Interactive Read-Aloud (accountable talk), Shared Reading (focus poetry, big book, close reading), Writers Workshop, Word Study.” While reading and writing were observed in class visits, teachers have not been doing readers/writers workshop, nor have they been using the new NM Literacy Framework with fidelity. Teachers and school leadership confirmed this in subsequent conversations. Furthermore, the school has adopted *Benchmark* for literacy instruction, but most teachers are not using it yet as they are awaiting more professional development on the program.

The fourth and final section of the educational plan indicates that the school aims to implement a 90/10 dual language biliteracy model (Spanish and English). The CSD renewal team observed during visits that students were mostly speaking in Spanish with some English; however, it is unclear if the 90/10 model is being implemented with fidelity. In the teacher focus group, it was shared that during/after Covid, the school has struggled to keep the 90/10 bilingual model, but they are making an effort to keep it.

As of this school year, teachers are working with instructional coaches and in PLCs to fully implement the educational program. The school is working toward getting back on track and improving their academic data, revitalizing their 90/10 model, providing more professional development, and clarifying what subjects are taught in which language in which grade level as originally described in the school’s articulation plan.

2.b. Financial Compliance

The school has had no more than one repeat or significant deficiency audit finding in any fiscal year of the contract term, and no material weakness findings.

At Raices the school business manager is integral to the student and financial success of the school by ensuring that financial resources are effectively managed and strategically allocated

to support the educational needs of students, efficient financial processes, budget alignment with educational goals. Processes are in place for timely processing of financial transactions, transparency and accountability, budget alignment and student needs, response to audit findings, grant funding and student programs, enrollment, requests for reimbursement timeliness.

2.c. Governance Responsibilities

The governing board has been at full membership for the entirety of the contract term. There were untimely board vacancy notifications in FY 2021 but not since then, and the majority of board members have completed their required training hours.

2.d. Equity and Identity

Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School is truly an exemplar in this area. The school’s trilingual (English, Spanish, Nahuatl) interdisciplinary program is well designed and implemented with fidelity and a clearly demonstrated concern for student learning and the well-being of the whole child. The school provides a welcoming, nurturing environment with attention to social emotional learning.

The school has an active Equity Council, and does an excellent job of 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.” Furthermore, Raices has worked to protect the rights of all students, earning “Meets Standard” on Performance Framework indicator 4.a. for each year of the contract term, except for the first year of the term (2019-20) when they received a “Working to Meet Standard,” demonstrating that they have made improvement.

2.e. Tribal Consultation

The school does not fall under the Indian Education Act (NMSA 22-23A) or the 6.35.2 NMAC definition of a “historically defined Indian-impacted” school.

2.f. Other Performance Indicators

The school provided satisfactory explanations for all indicators in Part B of the application. The school is providing increased English language development (ELD) instruction to meet the needs of English learners.

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

Multi-Year Performance Framework Ratings

Raíces del Saber Xinachtli	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Organizational and Financial Performance				
1a Mission and Educational Program	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1b State Assessment Requirements	Not Reviewed	Not Reviewed	Working to Meet Standard	Pending
1c Rights of Students with Disabilities	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1d Rights of English Learners	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1e Meeting Program Requirements	Meets Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
1f NM DASH Plan	N/A	Not Reviewed	Meets Standard	Not Rated
2a Financial Reporting and Compliance	N/A	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard
2b Accounting Principles	N/A	Does Not Meet Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard
2c Responsive to Audit Findings	N/A	N/A	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard
2d Managing Grant Funds	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard
2e Staffing for Fiscal Management	Not Reviewed	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
2f Internal Controls	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard
3a Governance Requirements	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard
3b Nepotism, Conflict of Interest	Meets Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
3c Reporting Requirements	Meets Standard	Assurances	Working to Meet Standard	Working to Meet Standard
4a Rights of All Students	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
4b Attendance and Retention	Working to Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Working to Meet Standard
4c Staff Credentialing	Not Reviewed	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
4d Employee Rights	Not Reviewed	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
4e Background Checks, Ethics	Not Reviewed	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5a Facilities	Not Reviewed	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5b Transportation	Not Reviewed	Assurances	N/A	N/A
5c Health and Safety	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
5d Handling Information	Working to Meet Standard	Assurances	Meets Standard	Meets Standard

Source: CSD Internal Monitoring

Site Visit Participants

CSD (in person): Lucy Valenzuela (lead), Corina Chavez, Cheryl Rowe, Dr. Brigette Russell; **CSD (remote):** Kimberly Gonzalez

School Administration: Dr. Maria Artiaga, Head Administrator; Carlos Aceves, Teacher & Xinachtli Coordinator; Lucia Carmona, Director of Operations & Community Engagement; Terrance Hester, Business Manager

School Governing Board: Patricia Minjarez, Vice-Chair