



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
300 DON GASPAR
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786
Telephone (505) 827-5800
www.ped.state.nm.us

MARIANA D. PADILLA
SECRETARY DESIGNATE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

**Charter Schools Division
Renewal Analysis and Recommendation
November 1, 2024**

School Name: Tierra Encantada Charter School

School Address: 4601 B Mission Bend Santa Fe, NM 87507

Head Administrator: Daniel Peña

Governing Board Chair: Joseph Salazar

Contract Term: 2020–2025

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

Tierra Encantada Charter School “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,” as academic performance has underperformed over the contract term in math, reading, and science. Therefore, the Charter Schools Division (CSD) recommends renewal for five years with the following condition:

- (1) That the school’s record of performance demonstrates improved student academic growth beginning with specific immediate action to offer students two semesters of ELA and Math each year; and
- (2) That the school identifies a robust strategic educational plan to improve student outcomes with appropriate staff professional development related to content instruction, including plans to strengthen the bilingual program.

Part B: Progress Report

The school’s narratives in Part B are rated **Meets the Standards, Demonstrates Substantial Progress**, or **Failing to Demonstrate Progress** according to the rubric on pages 6-7 of the 2024 Charter School Renewal Application.

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

** Results from 2023-24 Vistas data, scheduled to be released in November 2024, could change this rating in the final recommendation.*

1.a. Student Outcomes

The CSD has concerns about Tierra Encantada’s academic outcomes. While the application highlights 5% growth in math and 10% in reading, the school’s math and science proficiency rates are still far below the district and state averages (which have fairly low averages, as well). Science proficiencies decreased 11%, going from 26% in 2021-22 to 15% in 2022-23, a significant drop, also placing them far below district and state averages. CSD learned during the

renewal visit this fall and the annual visit last spring that the school only offers math and English Language Arts for one semester instead of the whole school year.

The application does not adequately address the low proficiencies and what adult actions they are taking to improve outcomes for students. It is unclear from the application how much the school is reviewing data to inform instruction/interventions. However, in the leadership focus group during CSD's renewal visit, the administration stated that teachers work together in PLCs and analyze data from MAP assessments, which was confirmed by teachers.

This section is rated Failing to Demonstrate Progress.

1.b. Mission-specific Goals

Tierra Encantada had challenges meeting their Mission-specific goals over the charter term, and met the goals less than half of the time. The first goal around earning dual credit was a struggle to meet largely due to students not being ready for college-level classes. During CSD's renewal visit, the leadership expressed that the school has collaborated with SFCC and added intervention classes across subject areas in order to remediate this. In addition, they offer a period of Dual Credit Hours where students can receive support with their college classes. The second Mission goal pertaining Spanish language proficiency was met only once, but leadership is proud that a growing number of students are earning their Bilingual Seal every year.

This section is rated Failing to Demonstrate Progress. School leadership is considering making changes to their Mission-specific goals for the next contract term.

2.a. Educational Program

According to Tierra Encantada's Educational Program, they offer a Dual Language immersion program, project-based learning, and college and career pathways. Out of the three main educational program components, the strongest is clearly the college and career pathways through their dual credit program. Over the course of the term, the school has collaborated with SFCC to expand upon enriching pathways, as outlined in their course catalog. Students and parents appreciate the options, flexibility, and opportunities provided by the pathways.

The Dual Language immersion program has been a challenge to implement, as they have had difficulty staffing and retaining bilingual teachers over the course of the term. When the CSD and Language and Culture Division (LCD) visited the school, it was observed that students were receiving Spanish instruction for less than half of the school day. According to LCD, in order to be defined as a Dual Language program, half of instruction should be in Spanish, and the Spanish Language Arts classes should be fully immersive in Spanish. LCD leadership shared that Tierra Encantada's program more closely fits a Spanish Heritage model and suggests switching to that for the next charter term.

While projects have been sprinkled into the curriculum over the charter term, true project-based learning has not been implemented and was not observed during CSD visits. School leadership shared that restoring project-based learning has been slow since covid, as they have needed to retrain teachers, but thematic planning is happening. For example, the

social studies and science teachers have collaborated on a cross-curricular garden project for students this year.

The rating for this section is Failing to Demonstrate Progress. However, school leadership expressed that in the upcoming charter renewal, they plan to make changes to the Educational Program that will reflect their programs more closely (such as changing from “Dual Language Immersion” to a “Spanish Heritage” model), highlight their strengths (whole-child/Social-Emotional Learning, discussed in 2.d. Equity and Identity), and retain successful Dual Credit programming.

2.b. Financial Compliance

Overall, the school has very strong financial compliance, as evidenced by a clean financial record for most of the of the charter term, with the exception of one Working to Meet rating the first year, and one Does Not Meet performance framework indicator rating last year. The business manager took full responsibility for last year’s mistake and has taken actions to resolve the issue. The business manager has set up clear financial processes and internal controls, and anticipates better outcomes moving forward.

This section is rated Demonstrates Substantial Progress.

2.c. Governance Responsibilities

The Tierra Encantada governing board has maintained a full board for the duration of the contract. They had only one rating of Working to Meet in 2022-23 when board members did not complete all training hours. The board corrected this by arranging to have required on-site training, and therefore has met all requirements since then.

This section is rated Demonstrates Substantial Progress.

2.d. Equity and Identity

Tierra Encantada has created a model program to address equity and identity issues, called the Empathy Project. This schoolwide project faces equity and identity issues head-on, and ensures that students feel seen, respected, supported, and included. The inspiration for the project began a little over a year ago when staff recognized a serious need to educate students who were liberally using racial slurs and hate speech. All students and staff have been involved in the project, which has included education on the history of racism/discrimination, a trip to the Holocaust & Intolerance Museum in Albuquerque, a Holocaust survivor guest speaker, TECS staff discussing personal experiences with intolerance, and more. Students have taken ownership of the project and become empathy activists, leading the Empathy Take a Stand Rally and other community events. The Empathy Project has created a movement across the campus of kindness and tolerance, and deepened the culture of caring that already existed at the school.

This very powerful program meets most PED equity requirements. The school has completed anti-racism training through the Black Education Act, and they are working toward creating an

Equity Council that meets PED definitions/requirements. This section is rated Demonstrates Substantial Progress.

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 adequately addressed any ratings of Does not Meet, or repeated Working to Meet and explained adult actions being taken to remedy any issues. For 1.d. Rights of English Learners, TECS has implemented an internal Corrective Action Plan to resolve Language and Culture Division concerns from the Technical Assistance and Monitoring (TAFM) letter. To address attendance rates (4.b.), the school has put in place a Student Success Coordinator who actively monitors attendance and works directly with parents to address concerns, provide support, and ensure students remain engaged and regularly attend school. For credentialing issues (4.c.), teachers lacking proper credentials are no longer at TECS, and all licenses have been addressed since then.

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

Renewal Site Visit Attendees

October 23, 2024

CSD Team: Cheryl Rowe (Lead), Lucy Valenzuela and Kristen LaVolpa

Remote CSD Team: Martica Davis, Kenneth Norris and Dr. Brigette Russell

School Leadership: Daniel Peña, Steve Alarid, Kevin Honald, Eva Andres, Paul Abundes, Joseph Heitzmann and Angela Esquibel Martinez

Governing Board: Melarie Gonzales, Jamie Stevens and Joseph Salazar