



New Mexico Public Education Commission (PEC)

Charter School Enrollment Cap Amendment Instructions

Purpose: To request a change in the number of students served as described in the charter contract. An enrollment cap is not effective until approved by the PEC.

Submission Deadline: The form must be approved prior to the change being implemented. Amendments completed 28 days prior to the next PEC meeting will be placed on the next agenda.

PEC Direction: Unless provided in a Grade Level Change request submitted at the same time, when requesting an enrollment cap increase of more than 20% of the school's present enrollment cap or more than 20 seats, whichever number is lower, the school must provide:

1. Current year academic performance data demonstrating that the school's educational model is working and is effective in the school and/or in schools throughout the state or nationally and
2. Data demonstrating a need for increased enrollment in the community, e.g., results of a community input hearing, petition signed by prospective students' families, wait list data.

A school should be in operation for three years prior to seeking an enrollment cap other than requested in the original application. A school requesting an enrollment cap prior to the end of the third year in operation must provide sufficient data demonstrating effectiveness and need as set forth in 1 and 2 above, identify why the enrollment cap was not requested in the original application, and why the enrollment cap is needed at this point.

CSD will provide performance data (academic, organizational, and financial) for the contract term through the most recent annual report, including any outstanding compliance or investigations, and highlight information relevant to the amendment request.

The school must provide:

- Fully completed form including rationale for the change
- Approved board minutes or certification of the vote taken by the board
- Concise narrative addressing how the proposed changes may affect: (1) staffing; (2) enrollment targets; (3) advertising and marketing; (4) the curriculum, assessment, and instruction; (5) resources and budget; (6) the community; and (7) the capacity of the facility (unless provided in accompanying Grade Level Change request)
- Additional Square Footage Amendment request, if needed

Contact charter.schools@ped.nm.gov with questions about completing or submitting documents.

Enrollment Cap Amendment Request Form

Submit this form and all supporting documents to charter.schools@ped.nm.gov

The Charter Contract was entered into by and between the New Mexico Public Education Commission (PEC) and Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School, hereafter "the school," effective on July 1, 2023.

The school requests consideration from the PEC to change the terms of its contract as follows: Increase enrollment from 1000 students to 1500 students.

The Charter School Contract Enrollment Cap currently reads: Section 3.6: The School shall serve no more than 1000 students in grades 6-12.

Current Enrollment and Demographics:

As of September 25, 2024, the current enrollment at Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School is 852. The school's most recent validated subgroup demographics are as follows:

Demographics	Percentage
Hispanic	52%
White/Caucasian	37%
Asian	4%
Black	2%
Native American	1%
Two or More Categories	2%
Special Education	16%
EL	<1%

The amendment requests that the PEC approve Section 3.6 of the school's contract so that the Enrollment Cap reads: The School shall serve no more than 1500 students in grades 6-12.

The school is submitting an Additional Square Footage Amendment: Yes Not needed

Effective Date: November 30, 2024

If the school is also submitting a Grade Level Change Amendment Request and the information below is provided there, check N/A and do not complete the sections below.

Sections below are completed

N/A (provided in the accompanying Grade Level Change request)

Rationale for the requested amendment/change:

Cottonwood Classical Charter School (CCCS) is seeking to increase its enrollment cap from 1,000 to 1,500 students in response to the growing community demand given the school's 500-student waitlist for SY2024-25. While the school's current e-occupancy allows for up to 1,140 students, CCCS has determined that in order to maintain the quality and integrity of its educational model, it must limit enrollment to 900 students in the current layout of its facility structure.

The school's governing council fully supports this expansion, and in October, unanimously approved this request to be submitted to its authorizer. CCPS is actively engaged with funders to enhance the facilities on its existing campus, but in order to move forward, the school must obtain formal approval to increase enrollment. Without this authorization, the school cannot demonstrate the capacity required to unlock provisionally approved funding to support its facility expansion. This increase is not only essential to meet current demand as evidenced by the school's waitlist, but also to ensure that CCPS can continue providing its high-quality, student-centered education to a larger, more diverse student population.

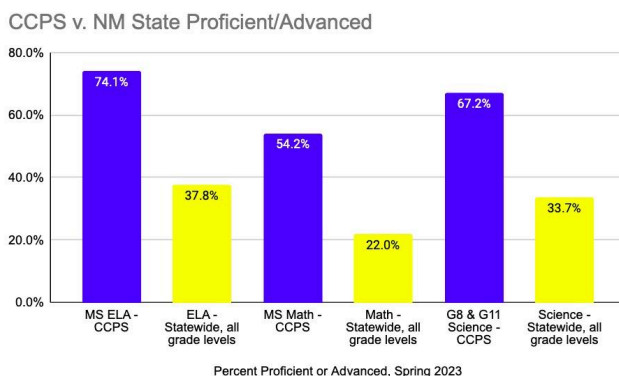
This request reflects CCPS's commitment to serving the educational needs of Albuquerque while upholding the excellence that has made the school a pillar in the community.

If requesting an increase of more than 20 seats or 20% of current enrollment cap, data demonstrating that the school's educational model is working and is effective in the school and/or in schools throughout the state:

The educational data highlights Cottonwood Classical's highly effective educational model, which consistently benefits students and has earned the school a reputation for academic excellence within the community.

The school's International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program (DP) provides students with the opportunity to cultivate robust academic, social, and emotional skills that set them up for success in a competitive global landscape.

Moreover, students at Cottonwood Classical consistently outperform both the district and the state, as demonstrated by the following academic performance data, further proving the success of its educational approach:



SAT scores from Spring 2023 illustrate the academic strength of Cottonwood Classical, with 61% of test takers meeting both benchmarks in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (ERW) and Math. This far exceeds the comparison rates of 17% for Albuquerque Public Schools (APS), 14% for the state, and 28% nationwide. Additionally, the school's Math MAP growth percentiles from Spring 2023-2024 demonstrate impressive progress, with all grade levels scoring above 50%, and all but 8th grade achieving growth rates over 60%. These results highlight not only exceptional summative outcomes but also the school's ability to drive above-average growth for students, regardless of their starting point.

Furthermore, Cottonwood Classical achieved a 93.5% graduation rate in the 2023-24 school year, underscoring its commitment to student success. The school has been recognized by the

New Mexico Public Education Department as being in the top 25% of high schools in the state, and it holds prestigious rankings, including #3 Best Charter High School in New Mexico according to niche.com, #1 among Albuquerque Public Schools high schools, and #2 in the state according to U.S. News and World Report.

CCPS's academic data is reflective of the school's commitment to support students to achieve academic excellence, and increasing enrollment would enable even more students in the community to benefit from the exceptional educational model the school provides.

If requesting an increase of more than 20 seats or 20% of current enrollment cap, data demonstrating a need for the enrollment cap increase in the community:

With a waitlist of 500 students, the demand for Cottonwood Classical's education model is undeniable. Increasing the enrollment cap would address the needs of the community because it will give the school the support it needs to move forward with funding to increase its facilities, providing more students with access to the school's proven academic success. In light of its strong student outcomes, expanding enrollment would allow even more students the opportunity to thrive academically and socially.

Cottonwood Classical is committed to expanding its reach across Albuquerque, particularly in areas south of Lomas, to ensure a broader range of students has the opportunity to attend. The school already offers bus transportation and, as part of its strategic planning for the expansion, will budget for increased transportation services to accommodate the growth of increasing student enrollment numbers in the future.

If the school has been in operation fewer than three years, justification for increase being requested at this time, an explanation for why it was not requested in the original application:

While the CCPS has been open since 2008, the school changed authorizers from Albuquerque Public Schools to the Public Education Commission effective July 1, 2023. During its recharter process, the school did not anticipate the level of increased interest in enrollment from the Albuquerque community. The extensive waitlist for this year's lottery demonstrates that the community needs and wants the enrollment cap increase.

Please describe how the proposed change will affect key aspects of the school (see instructions for "narrative"):

Staffing:

Cottonwood Classical is financially equipped to increase staffing to accommodate the increase in enrollment. The school's model shows greater revenue than expenses at a steady enrollment, which would allow a sustainable model to increase staff as needed with increased student enrollment.

Enrollment Targets:

The school's current enrollment is approximately 850 students, or two students more than its projected enrollment count in its SY2024-25 budget. The current enrollment cap is at 1000; however, as stated above, the current infrastructure cannot comfortably accommodate 1000 students. With the approved enrollment increase, the school can move forward with

provisionally-approved funding to build the infrastructure necessary to accommodate up to 1500 students while maintaining the school's student-to-teacher ratio of 16:1.

Advertising and Marketing:

Cottonwood Classical is working with consultants to spread advertisements to underrepresented areas, particularly zip codes South of Lomas using targeted mailers and advertisements. The school leadership has been working with a new community liaison to design and implement a new marketing plan. The school is hopeful that its first Open House event, which will take place on November 11, 2024, will attract families from these targeted areas.

The Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

The increased enrollment cap would have no impact on the curriculum, assessment, and instruction at Cottonwood Classical.

Resources and Budget:

The 10-year model at Cottonwood Classical shows that the school is fiscally sound with steady-state enrollment. In addition, the school is already provisionally approved to receive funding to expand its infrastructure pending approval of its enrollment cap increase. Additionally, the school is seeking out several other grants to further support its enrollment cap increase.

The Community

The large waitlist (over 500 students) demonstrates community interest and support for an enrollment cap increase. The successful outcomes of students and overall educational growth that attend Cottonwood Classical has increased community interest in the expansion of the enrollment.

The Capacity of the Facility

The school's e-occupancy is 1140, but given the layout of its current facilities, feels it can realistically only accommodate 850-900 students while maintaining fidelity to its education model. The e-occupancy certificate assumes all classrooms are being used at the same time, which doesn't work for the Cottonwood Classical program model (nor most school's models). In addition, there are several hallway intersections that can be crowded during scheduled transition periods.

The school's contract amendment is hereby submitted by:

Signature of School Representative:  **Date: 10/03/2024**
John J Binnert (Oct 3, 2024 14:22 MDT)

Signature of Governing Board Chair:  **Date: 10/03/2024**

For PEC/CSD use only

PEC Meeting Date:

Agenda: Regular required

The school's contract amendment was: Approved Denied (see transcript)

Electronic signature of PEC Chair: _____ **Date:** _____

Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School
Governing Council Meeting Minutes
October 15th, 2024
Location: Hybrid Meeting

I. Call to Order, Confirmation of Quorum, and Roll Call

Start time: 5:11pm
Quorum established

Voting members present:

Kadeem Ladoo
Holly Seibert
Ray Campos
Tyrell Gaines
Dee Sanders
Phillip Walk

Non-voting members present:

John Binnert
Kai Frick
Jennifer Boyd
Louis griego
Keith Jordan

Members of the public present:

Jonathan Rodriguez
Mike Vigil
Jennifer Garcia

II. Approval of Minutes:

Action: Motion to approve meeting minutes for September minutes 2024 by Tyrell Gaines and Ray Campos.

Votes For:

Tyrell
Ray
Kadeem
Holly

Votes Against: None

III. Public Comments

No public comments

IV. Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Reports 5:15 PM

Finance Committee (Mike Vigil)

Reconciled reports indicate a positive cash flow of \$328,000 over expenditures for the first quarter.

Year-to-date revenues reached approximately \$3.2 million, while expenditures totaled around \$2.9 million.

\$328,000 revenues over expenditures

This surplus suggests effective financial management and a balanced budget approach, allowing for potential reinvestment in programs or services.

The figure reflects a significant improvement compared to the previous year's negative balance at the same time, highlighting growth and stability.

\$3.2 million revenues, \$2.9 million expenditures

The \$3.2 million in revenues represents a positive cash flow for the organization, indicating financial health in the first quarter.

The \$2.9 million in expenditures reflects operational costs and spending aligned with the budgetary plan.

The difference of \$328,000 between revenues and expenditures suggests effective financial management and potential for future investments or savings.

Intentional fund building for expansion

Intentional fund building is a strategic approach to ensure financial resources are available for future growth and expansion initiatives.

This process involves actively seeking out and securing funding sources that align with the organization's goals for scaling operations.

By prioritizing fund building, organizations can create a sustainable financial foundation that supports long-term development and enhances their capacity to serve more students or clients.

Transportation fund not solvent, needs operational fund supplementation

The transportation fund is currently facing a deficit and is not self-sustaining.

Supplementation from the operational fund will be necessary to cover transportation costs.

Monitoring and adjustments will be required as the fiscal year progresses to ensure financial stability.

Federal funds (IDEA B) increased from \$65,000 to \$177,000

Federal funds under IDEA B increased significantly from \$65,000 to \$177,000. This increase is attributed to a change in funding structure directly from the federal government rather than through a local education agency (LEA).

The additional funding allows for better support and resources for students with disabilities without increasing the special education population.

Vendor totals report discussed to avoid audit findings

The vendor totals report is designed to track expenditures and ensure compliance with procurement regulations.

It helps identify any potential audit findings by monitoring spending thresholds and ensuring proper documentation is in place.

The report emphasizes the importance of obtaining multiple quotes for services and adhering to established procurement processes to mitigate risks.

Bank reconciliation: \$9.9 thousand in bank, \$138,000 in outstanding checks

Bank reconciliation indicates the difference between the bank's records and the school's financial records.

There are \$138,000 in outstanding checks that have not yet cleared the bank.

Finance Votes:

Motion 1 - IB Training in New Orleans (Dec 14-16)

Account: Title II grant (pending allocation, Operational PD as backup)

Staff member(s) participating overnight: Meghan Lowe, Rebecca Youngman

Location: New Orleans, LA (likely the Sheraton)

Core purpose/reason: Meghan will attend a workshop on completing requirements for IB programme evaluation, and Rebecca will attend a workshop on Equitable & Inclusive IB Education, which we hope will improve our advocacy for accommodating students with learning differences and assessment needs.

Motion to approve a hotel stay above the 215 for two staff members for three nights each to attend the IB workshop in New Orleans in December of this year. The room is not to exceed \$300, including all applicable taxes and fees motioned by Dee Sanders and Tyrell Gaines

Votes for:

Dee

Tyrell

Kadeem

Phill

Ray

Holly

Votes against:

None

Motion 2 - IB Training in North Charleston, SC (March 15-17)

Account: Title II grant (pending allocation, Operational PD as backup)

Staff member(s) participating: Samantha Hawley, Lisa Wallhagen

Location: North Charleston, SC (likely Embassy Suites Conference Center)

Core purpose/reason: IB Visual Arts (Samantha) and IB Psychology (Lisa) are undergoing curriculum changes, which requires the teacher to attend a workshop. These are "Category 3" training, which are best for veteran teachers so they can really drill down on the changes.

Motion to approve the night stay above the 215 for two staff members for three nights each for the workshops in north Charleston in March of next year. And each night shall not exceed the \$300, including all taxes and fees motioned by Tyrell Gaines and Phill Walk

Votes for:

Tyrell

Phill

Ray
Dee
Holly

Votes against:
None

Policy (Kathy Alexander)

No Report
A lot to review in november and votes in december.

ED Outcomes (Kadeen Ladoo)

No Report
Meeting quarterly late October or early November

Academics (DeeDee Sanders)

Consensus reached on 26 total credit hours, 6 credits for IBDB courses, and one IB exam

Consensus indicates a unified agreement among stakeholders on the academic requirements for the IB diploma pathway.

The decision includes a total of 26 credit hours, which aligns with the expectations for graduation and IB diploma attainment.

The inclusion of 6 credits specifically for IBDB courses and one IB exam emphasizes the importance of the IB curriculum in the school's academic framework.

Staff discussions on credit recovery and IB Scholars pathway.

Next steps: Equity council and policy committee review (October 22 and 31)
Goal to present to GC for discussion in November, vote in December.

Strategic Planning (Tyrell Gaines)

No Report

Equity Council (Ray Campos)

No Report

Facilities (John Binnert)

Bid lot 4, classrooms aren't finished yet.

Three new classrooms awaiting electrical inspection and certificate of occupancy
Library (Dr. G Learning Commons) phased opening: Staff and seniors access from
November 6, circulation begins December 2
Ribbon cutting for new space on November 25 at 3 PM
Sprinkler system installed in grass and future grass areas

Executive Director Report (John Binnert)

Francine went to Chicago for diversity and inclusion workshops to implement. CLR
training 10/14 to help VAAB students for cultural behavior.

40-day enrollment count: 852 students (projected 850)

Enrollment numbers officially for 40 day count:

Total: 852

Funding will increase because of this. Trying to maintain these for the other counts. 80
and 120 day counts are for our funds next year. Check for licensure from teachers and degrees.

-

V!! Stakeholder Reports

Foundation Report (Keith Jordan)

Gravel grinder fundraiser, organizations to support.
Still need some help for that event.

PTO Report (Jenny Boyd)

Parent prom canceled lack of interest.
Increase of membership, PTO drive.
Involved in trunk or treat.
Nov 1st middle school dance.
Coyotes cares instead of make a wish, planning winter stroll.
Provided pizza for teachers 10/14.

PAC Report (Louis Griego)

No report (no meeting)
Parent advocacy activity, meeting on Friday to strategize to partner with admin to talk to
legislators.

Staff Input (Kai Frick)

Seminars are going on throughout the school.

Teachers are letting other staff members observe their classes to reflect and strategize. CAS projects, part of IB core class, are really involved in their projects so far, senior camping trip, staff vs seniors volleyball game, parking spot painting, OMAN open mic night, soccer coach, guitar ensemble, leading affinity groups, animal welfare drive, and donation drive. Initiate a concept and collaborate to make it come to life.

Student Rep Report (Shane Yara)

None

VII. New Business 6:13 PM

Enrollment Cap Increase - VOTE

Current enrollment cap 1,000

Proposed enrollment cap 1,500

Previously discussed at June 2024 GC Meeting

Motion to formally approve the enrollment cap from 1000 to 1500 motion to approve by Tyrell Gaines and Dee Sanders

Votes:

Tyrelle

Dee

Kadeem

Phill

Ray

Holly

Votes Against:

None

VIII. Unfinished Business

None

X. Board Development 6:45 pm

Reminder for governing council members about the requirement to complete development hours for the year. Members are encouraged to track their hours and ensure compliance with the established guidelines. Any questions regarding the

development hours can be addressed during the meeting or through direct communication.

Board Development

Training hours must be complete by June 30, 2025

XIII. Next Governing Council Meeting: November 19th, 2024

XIV. Official Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm by Kadeem, seconded Phill.

Votes For:

Tyrelle

Dee

Kadeem

Phill

Ray

Holly

Votes Against: None