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**Charter Schools Division
Final Renewal Recommendation
November 4, 2024**

School Name: ACES Technical Charter School

School Address: 4501 Montgomery Blvd NE Albuquerque, NM 87109

Head Administrator: Dr. Jeron Campbell

Governing Board Chair: Dr. Warren Wilhelm

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

The Charter Schools Division (CSD) recommends renewal for five years with the following conditions:

1. The school expands Special Education support by hiring at least one licensed Special Education teacher and comply with Office of Special Ed monitoring and technical assistance to make improvements in serving students with disabilities.
2. The school identifies and serves English learners appropriately, correcting all issues identified in the August 13, 2024, Technical Assistance and Focused Monitoring (TAFM) letter from the PED Language and Culture Division (LCD).
3. The school provides a needs assessment, systemic framework and affirmation of tribal consultation.

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 | Demonstrates Substantial Progress* |
| 1.b. Mission-Specific Goals | Meets the Standards |
| Organizational Performance | Rating |
| 2.a. Educational Program | Meets the Standards |
| 2.b. Financial Compliance | Demonstrates Substantial Progress |
| 2.c. Governance Responsibilities | Demonstrates Substantial Progress |
| 2.d. Equity and Identity | Failing to Demonstrate Progress |
| 2.e. Tribal Consultation | Failing to Demonstrate Progress |
| 2.f. Other Performance Framework Indicators | Failing to Demonstrate 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 ESSA Accountability System, NM Vistas, has designated ACES Technical as Traditional for school years 2021-22 and 2022-23. Reading proficiency rates appeared to be similar or slightly lower compared to the district and state levels; however, among hispanics, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged, they appeared to perform significantly better. Math proficiency rates appeared to be lower compared to the district and state levels; however, among students with disabilities, they appeared to perform significantly better. Further interim

assessment data in Part B demonstrates consistent growth from fall to spring and year-over-year in all subjects, across grade levels, with exception of a slight dip in grades 7 to 8 in Reading and Language from school years 2022-23 to 2023-24. ACES staff routinely utilizes assessments to track growth, such as iStation and the interim iMSSA. The application Part B pointed out the limited usefulness of some data, nonetheless, they are committed to using data to inform instruction. The application Part B highlights impressive strategies the school implemented for overcoming covid challenges in first year. They also cited the challenge of rapid student population growth during the charter term, especially growth of economically disadvantaged students and students enrolling with low proficiencies.

The rating of Demonstrates Substantial Progress reflects the upward trend of student outcomes revealed in ACES Technical's interim assessment data. While we would like to see in the application further explanation of adult actions taken, it has been evident during CSD's renewal and monitoring visits that the administration and staff are making a tremendous effort to improve outcomes for students, especially through data-driven instruction, SEL programming, and equitable tutoring offered during the school day.

1.b. Mission-specific Goals

ACES Technical met or exceeded the standards for their Mission-specific Goals during every year of the charter term. The rating for this category Meets the Standards.

2.a. Educational Program

The application adequately addresses all parts of the Educational Program, and those aspects have been verified during site visits over the course of the charter term. The school uses data to inform instruction, and makes changes as needed to better serve the students' learning needs. ACES offers engaging STEM programming, including robotics and computer programming. ACES offers enriching, high-quality music instruction that complements and balances the STEM focus, as evidenced by our visits and student and parent focus groups. Tutoring support is built into the school day, and students confirmed that the tutoring is extremely helpful. At the core of ACES' health and wellness programming is their Advisory class; the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum has evolved over the course of the charter term, and this year they are implementing "RULER", a program from Yale. The Professional Advisory Committee has also changed over the course of the charter term: it now exists in the form of STEM Days, where students are exposed to different STEM genres each month, with the support of community professionals. For example, the theme in November is Engineering, and in December: Healthcare. The Core Beliefs come through in the caring way that the administration and staff support and engage the students.

The Educational Program rating Meets the Standards.

2.b. Financial Compliance

ACES Technical had the misfortune to open in 2020-21, the year Covid federal funds were first awarded to schools, and because those funds were allocated based on prior year Title I funding, and ACES was not open the prior year, the school received none of the additional funds that

other schools did. This placed the school at a disadvantage relative to other schools, which were better funded during the pandemic years.

The head administrator and business manager set a high standard for financial compliance, which is evident in the school's record over the charter term. There have been only two Working to Meet financial ratings during the charter term, and while they have had a small number of audit findings, none of them were repeat findings, material weaknesses, or significant deficiencies.

The rating for Financial Compliance Demonstrates Substantial Progress, as CSD's evaluation of the data and evidence supports observable and reported successes.

2.c. Governance Responsibilities

Over the course of the charter term, ACES Technical has maintained a full board. While they had a few late notifications, and some members fell short of meeting their training hours, especially in the second year of the charter term, the last two years show significant improvement and all training hours were met last year.

The Governance Responsibilities rating Demonstrates Substantial Progress.

2.d. Equity and Identity

The head administrator shared that equity and identity elements are embedded in the programs of the school, which CSD has observed during site visits. However, ACES has not met compliance requirements related to this section. Although the Head Administrator hired a Native American teacher with an Indian Education grant who meets with all students identified as Native American, offering culturally responsive intervention to support their needs, the school does not have an Equity Council, nor have they completed the requirements of the Indian Education Act or the Black Education Act. However, the school has conducted restorative justice training, and anti-racism is part of the advisory curriculum. This section is rated Failing to Demonstrate Progress.

2.e. Tribal Consultation

The school falls under the Indian Education Act (NMSA 22-23A) or the 6.35.2 NMAC definition of a "historically defined Indian-impacted" school, as the school enrolls a Native American student population above 10% of its overall membership. The school has received a grant from the Indian Education Division, and currently employs a native staff member whose responsibilities include working with native students to ensure additional support and engagement. However, the school has not conducted all components of an Indian-impacted LEA including efforts to engage in tribal consultation yet. The school leader was planning to attend the CSD conference, where a session on tribal consultation was planned, however it was canceled at the last minute. The school asked for technical assistance and met with the Indian Education Division and Charter Schools Division on 11.4.24 to discuss requirements and process. The rating for this section is Failing to Demonstrate Progress as the school has not yet fulfilled this responsibility.

2.f. Other Performance Indicators

The application Part B did not provide detailed explanation of improvement actions the school has performed to correct performance framework findings; in particular, for indicators 1.c. Rights of Students with Disabilities and 1.d. Rights of English Learners. In addition, CSD has been made aware of recent issues that need attention:

1.d. The school received a letter from the Language and Culture Division indicating that they have not been identifying or serving English Learners correctly after a site visit review April 30, 2024.

1.c. After Part A of the school's renewal application was completed, CSD was made aware that the school does not have a Special Education teacher on staff, rather, they have a contract with a Special Education coordinator two days per week, who updates IEPs and communicates accommodations for the classroom teacher to implement. Additionally, the school did not complete the Office of Special Ed (OSE) Tier III Self-Monitoring for school year 2023-24, which was not captured in Part A. To date, the school has not complied with the requirement that would result in the OSE providing the technical assistance they school may need.

3.c. The school needs to submit notification paperwork to CSD for the business manager, Seth Mendor, who was hired in May of 2023.

Rating: Failing to Demonstrate Progress

| 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 |

***Note:** The school is reporting the capacity of the entire building, not the portion rented by ACES Tech. The school needs an assessment of the capacity of the portion they occupy so we know if they are at/over capacity for enrollment.

Renewal Site Visit Attendees

September 24, 2024

CSD Team: Cheryl Rowe (lead), Director Corina Chavez, Lucy Valenzuela, Kristen LaVolpa

NMPED Associates: Director Mayra Valtierrez, LCD; Anne Chavez, LCD

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

School Leadership: Dr. Jeron Campbell

Governing Board: Dr. Warren Wilhelm, Judy Labovitz, Jeff Moore