

**APS Superintendent**

Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**

Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**

Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CHARTERS

Grade Levels to be offered	Projected Total Enrollment
9 <sup>th</sup>	80 (first year of opening)
10 <sup>th</sup>	80 (second year of opening)
11 <sup>th</sup>	80 (third of opening)
12 <sup>th</sup>	80 (fourth year of opening)
	We will begin by enrolling only 9th-grade students in our first year, gradually adding one grade level each subsequent year until reaching 12th grade. Our objective is to achieve a total enrollment of 400 students by the fourth year to ensure financial sustainability.

- The school, if approved, anticipates opening August, 2025?  No
  - If yes, provide a timeline that includes benchmarks demonstrating 18-24 months of application development.

The school is projected to open its doors to students in August 2026, with the 2024-2025 academic year dedicated to planning and preparation. In its inaugural year, the school will welcome 9th-grade students, offering core subjects such as English, math, science, and social studies, along with two elective classes.

- Primary Point of Contact

Name	Radi Abouelhassan				
Mailing Address	1434 Adams St NE				
City	Albuquerque	State	NM	Zip	87110
Phone	505-302-4048				
Email	rmoustaf@unm.edu				

- Names, roles, and current employment of all persons on the applicant team, and qualifications of the team members to establish a high-quality charter school

Names	Role on Team	Qualifications: Education, Employment, and Experience
Radi Abouelhassan	Lead Founder Proposed Head of school	<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PhD, Education with focus on Language Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, UNM 2014.</li> <li>➤ M. A, Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies, UNM 2009.</li> <li>➤ B.A. Education with focus on Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Egypt 2003.</li> </ul> <p><b>Employment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Resource Teacher, Albuquerque Public Schools</li> </ul>

**APS Superintendent**  
Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**  
Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**  
Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



## **2024 NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT CHARTER APPLICATION**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

According to NMSA § 22-8B-6(B) the Notice of Intent to Submit a Charter Application (“NOI”) must be filed by the organizers of a proposed charter school to the Public Education Commission at the address below **AND** to the superintendent of the school district in which the charter school is proposed to be located. *Failure to notify may result in your application being rejected.*

The NOI must be submitted by 5:00 PM Mountain Time on January 10, 2025, **the second Thursday of January**. Notices of Intent that are not received by the Public Education Commission and the superintendent of the local school district by the deadline may result in the application being rejected.

Notice to the Public Education Commission should be delivered by one of the following methods:

- Electronically to: [charter.schools@state.nm.us](mailto:charter.schools@state.nm.us)
- By mail or personal delivery: PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
c/o New Mexico Public Education Department  
Attn: Options for Parents and Families/Charter Schools Division  
300 Don Gaspar, Room 301  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Notice to the Superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools should be delivered electronically to the APS Office of Innovation and School Choice through the Senior Director, Dr. Joseph Escobedo at [Escobedo\\_j@aps.edu](mailto:Escobedo_j@aps.edu)

The NOI is intended to provide the Public Education Commission and the APS Office of Innovation and School Choice with the primary point of contact among the charter developers and preliminary information about the charter proposal, such as the school’s mission statement, the school’s focus, the representative student population in the intended location, enrollment projections, key innovations, etc. (not to exceed 7 pages).

#### 1. General Information

- Name of Proposed School

Andalusia Natural Sciences Academy (ANSA)

- Grade levels to be offered and enrollment projections
  - The school will include grade level configurations that include grades 6-8. No

**APS Superintendent**

Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**

Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**

Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CHARTERS

		<p><b>Education Experience (20 years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Resource Teacher, and teacher Albuquerque Public Schools</li> <li>➤ Adjunct faculty, College of Education, UNM</li> <li>➤ Assistant Professor, Community College of Qatar, Qatar</li> <li>➤ Arabic Language Instructor, Central New Mexico Community College.</li> <li>➤ Graduate School Teaching Assistant and Instructor, UNM.</li> </ul>
Ahmed Hasan	Founding Member	<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PhD, Ain Shams University, Chemistry, Egypt 2005.</li> <li>➤ M.Sc., Ain Shams University, Chemistry, Egypt (1991-1993).</li> <li>➤ B.Sc., Ain Shams University, Geochemistry, Egypt (1983-1987).</li> </ul> <p><b>Employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Lecturer and</i> Research Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, University of New Mexico</li> <li>➤ President of the Board, Salam Academy School</li> </ul> <p><b>Education Experience (37 years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>2012 – Present:</b> <i>Lecturer and</i> Research Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, University of New Mexico</li> <li>➤ <b>2011 – Present:</b> President of the Board, Salam Academy School</li> <li>➤ <b>2009 – 2012:</b> Adjunct Professor, Chemical Engineering Department, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology</li> <li>➤ <b>2017 – 2019:</b> Senior Research Analyst, Central New Mexico Community College</li> <li>➤ <b>2009 – 2012:</b> Director of International Programs, Institute for Engineering Research and Applications, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology</li> <li>➤ <b>2005 – 2009:</b> Senior Research Scientist, Institute for Engineering Research and Applications, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology</li> <li>➤ <b>2002 – 2005:</b> Technical Staff, Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, New Mexico</li> <li>➤ <b>1999 – 2002:</b> Senior Research Scientist II, New Mexico Engineering Research Institute (NMERI), University of New Mexico (UNM)</li> <li>➤ <b>1995-1999:</b> Research Scientist I, Institute for Space and Nuclear Power Studies (ISNPS), University of New Mexico</li> <li>➤ <b>1994-1995:</b> IAEA Fellow, Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM</li> </ul>



**APS Superintendent**

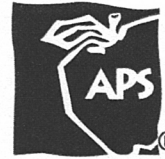
Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**

Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**

Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CHARTERS

		➤ <b>1987-1994:</b> Research Scientist —Egyptian Atomic Energy Authority's Hot Laboratories and Waste Management Center (EAEA-HLWMC).

3. Describe the non-traditional or innovative model of promise of the proposed school:

Andalusia Natural Sciences Academy is a project-based high school where students collaborate with peers and teachers on research-driven interdisciplinary projects that emulate real-world STEAM experiences. By exploring and appreciating New Mexico's rich heritage and history—shaped by Spanish colonization and the cultural, social, and architectural influence of the Moors—the school integrates literature, math, science, social studies, and engineering into its curriculum. Through these interdisciplinary projects, students investigate and design artifacts or models that reflect and celebrate New Mexico’s unique cultural legacy.

**Historical Background:**

While the Moors who ruled in today’s Spain and Portugal from 711 AD to 1492 AD did not directly interact with New Mexico, their cultural legacy, transmitted through Spain, profoundly shaped the region's development. New Mexico’s history is a tapestry woven from Indigenous traditions, Spanish colonial influences (including those shaped by Moorish rule), and later contributions from other cultures.

In Europe, The Moors left a legacy in architecture (e.g., the Alhambra), science, agriculture, and culture that continues to influence Spain and Europe today. In New Mexico, the distinctive adobe-style architecture seen in homes, churches, and public buildings reflects Spanish and Moorish influences, blending with Indigenous building techniques. Iconic structures like the San Miguel Mission demonstrate this fusion. Furthermore, Spanish settlers brought customs such as flamenco dancing, traditional foods (e.g., tamales, tortillas), and celebrations like Las Posadas. These traditions have merged with Native American and Mexican influences to create a unique cultural tapestry. Spanish settlers introduced religious art forms, such as retablos (painted panels) and bultos (carved figures), which continue to be prominent in New Mexican folk art.

**Our Innovative School Model**

Drawing from the rich historical, cultural, and architectural legacy of the Moors and the Spanish conquest in both modern-day Spain and New Mexico, our students will engage in hands-on, thematic projects while exploring history, geography, languages, literature, math, and science. Unlike traditional schools, our students will study languages such as Spanish and Arabic in meaningful contexts, using them to analyze artifacts and primary sources. They will apply math and engineering skills to investigate the architectural designs of historic structures, such as those found in Córdoba and New Mexico.

With a focus on project-based learning, our school model is designed to meet the needs of students pursuing college education as well as those seeking hands-on skills for professional careers. Additionally, our model supports students with special needs by emphasizing inclusive projects that provide opportunities for every student to succeed.

4. Does the school expect to contract with another entity for either management, or substantial oversight or direction in the school’s operation? No

If YES, describe the entity and the role it will have in the school’s operational plan.



**APS Superintendent**

Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**

Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**

Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



5. Does the applicant team or any members of the team currently operate any other schools? Yes

6. Mission/Vision statement (2-3 sentences)

Our mission is to empower Albuquerque’s diverse high school students through a rigorous, inclusive educational experience that emphasizes project-based learning in science and the humanities. We are dedicated to cultivating critical thinkers, compassionate leaders, and lifelong learners with a deep awareness of New Mexico's rich historical heritage. By fostering academic excellence and personal growth, we prepare students to contribute meaningfully to their communities and achieve success in college, careers, and beyond.

7. Student population and geographical setting of the school

- Define the targeted geographical area of the proposed school from which you expect to draw a significant number of your students and describe why this setting is being proposed.

The school is designed to appeal to students across Albuquerque, including those pursuing college education and those seeking hands-on, real-world skills for professional careers. Located near Albuquerque’s Midtown area, the school aims to attract students who might otherwise attend Albuquerque High School, Sandia High School, Eldorado High School, Rio Grande High School, Highland High School, and others. With a focus on Middle Eastern history, the school will also draw students from Middle Eastern families, as it will be the only charter school in the state that connects to their cultural heritage. Additionally, Andalusia will be the only charter school in New Mexico to offer Arabic dual credit classes as electives, alongside Spanish.

- Describe the student population including key demographic data (academic performance, home languages, English Learners (ELs), and special education populations) in the location in which the school intends to locate.

**APS Superintendent**  
Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**  
Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**  
Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



District Name	Grade 09	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total Enrollment
21ST CENTURY PUBLIC ACADEMY	0	0	0	0	377
ABQ SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	77	45	39	38	930
ACES TECHNICAL CHARTER SCHOOL	15	0	0	0	158
ALBUQUERQUE	7329	7022	6095	5948	76099
ALBUQUERQUE BILINGUAL ACADEMY	0	0	0	0	410
ALBUQUERQUE COLLEGIATE CHARTER SCHOOL	0	0	0	0	187
ALBUQUERQUE INSTITUTE OF MATH & SCIENCE	35	36	39	35	308

Figure 1: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/information-technology/stars/>

School Name	Perc ent Mal es	Perc ent Fema les	Percent American Indian AlaskanNativ e	Perc ent Asia n	Percent Black Or African American	Perce nt Cauc asian	Percent Native Hawaiian Or Other Pacific Islander	Percent Hispanic Latino Ethnicity	Perce nt Multir acial	Per cen t ELL	Perce nt Disab ility	Percent Economicall y Disadvantag ed	Perc ent gifte d	Total Enrol lment
ALBUQUERQUE HIGH	0.477	0.5194	0.0303	≤ 1%	0.0303	0.1253	≤ 1%	0.7633	0.0369	0.3644	0.1864	0.3795	0.0545	1652
ABQ CHARTER ACADEMY	0.442	0.558	0.062	≤ 1%	0.0512	0.0755	0.0108	0.7412	0.0296	0.2129	0.2507	0.3288	≤ 1%	371
SANDIA HIGH	0.4931	0.5069	0.0525	0.0356	0.035	0.248	≤ 1%	0.5769	0.0519	0.7278	0.175	0.2686	0.0392	1657

Figure 2: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/information-technology/stars/>

- Identify where these students are most likely being educated currently and why they are expected to choose the proposed charter school for their future educational needs.

Most of the students will be currently attending 8<sup>th</sup> grade in middle schools in Albuquerque, such as, Jefferson middle school and Washington middle school. They will choose our school instead of schools such as Albuquerque high school, El Dorado high school, Sandia, high school, Highland high school, and Rio Grande High school.

**APS Superintendent**  
Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**  
Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**  
Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



8. Provide evidence that the applicant team has assessed community need for a school of the nature that will be proposed in the application (e.g., objective surveys or other measures of local demand for the proposed educational program).

We held several meetings with an experienced educator in New Mexico who has supported the establishment of successful charter schools such as South Valley Academy and ACE High School. During our discussions, we presented the framework and vision for our school and sought his insights regarding the need for such a model in Albuquerque. The expert confirmed that our school would address a significant gap in the local educational landscape. He also reviewed the school’s design, curriculum, and proposed location, affirming that it would be a valuable addition to Albuquerque’s educational community.

Additionally, we engaged with parents of public-school students to share our school’s framework and course offerings. Families expressed strong enthusiasm for the school’s mission, vision, and innovative approach. We also surveyed families from Middle Eastern and Hispanic backgrounds, and all respondents expressed gratitude and confirmed their willingness to enroll their children in our school once it is established.

9. Identify significant innovative features that the school will implement in order to help it realize its vision/mission (e.g., non-traditional school year, longer school day, partner organizations, etc.).

1. The school will focus on project-based learning to do academic work that involves rigorous reading, writing, and design. This project will involve math and science, in addition to reading writing and planning.
  2. The school will partner with local institution, such Dar Al Islam in Abiquiu to study a great example of the adobe structure that was built in New Mexico by design and designers from the Middle East. So students will be immersed in STEAM leaning activities.
  3. History and geography will be studied in a manner that relates to actual architectural designs that still exist in New Mexico and Europe Spain, in a manner that connects students’ cultures to their histories.
  4. Students will do field trips to local institutions that relate to their history of New Mexico, Europe, North Africa where a significant part of cultural traditions and architectural designs New Mexico come from.



**APS Superintendent**

Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**

Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**

Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools



ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CHARTERS

10. Describe how the school will be more effective than the schools currently serving the targeted student population, and/or plans to improve student achievement and exceed the academic performance of existing public schools in the targeted service area and any data you have to support this assumption.

There is significant evidence that suggest the effectiveness of project based learning in motivating students to do academic work and to help them internalize academic concepts, while building academic rigor and conceptual understandings.

11. Describe how the school will be in alignment with the economic needs of Albuquerque.

Focusing on project-based learning, our school will equip students with practical skills such as designing, planning, and utilizing technology to create artifacts and tools that benefit the New Mexico community. Students will gain both technical and life skills that are applicable not only in academic settings but also throughout their personal and professional lives.

12. Describe how the school will support increasing access to choice in Albuquerque.

With its distinctive emphasis on Middle Eastern, North African, European, and local history and geography integrated with math and science activities, our school offers an excellent option for students and families seeking to explore their cultural heritage. Students will have the opportunity to study and investigate their traditions while engaging in academic work that benefits both themselves and the broader community.

*Please Note: Should your charter be awarded, the founding governing body could undergo a background check to determine if it qualifies to be a board of public finance in the state of New Mexico.*

Signature of founder(s):

**APS Superintendent**  
Dr. Gabriella Blakey

**Chief of Staff**  
Johanna King

**APS Charter Schools Authorizing Team**  
Dr. Joseph Escobedo, Sr. Director of Charter Schools





Date: 1/10/2025

*Radi Abouelhasan*

[PRINT NAME]