



Dream Diné Charter School

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Dream Diné Charter School provides an experiential education rooted in Diné philosophy and language, empowering students to achieve academic success and contribute to their communities.

Dream Diné Charter School Update on Short-Cycle Assessments and Ongoing Progress

Date: June 18, 2025

Reporting Period: School Year 2024–2025

Overview

As of July 1, 2024, Dream Diné Charter School officially transitioned to state charter status. In accordance with the terms outlined in our state charter contract, the school is required to develop, monitor, and report short-cycle assessment outcomes as part of our academic performance obligations. While we continue to demonstrate academic and operational progress, several challenges have emerged throughout the school year. Nonetheless, our staff, leadership, and community remain committed to advancing student achievement and strengthening school operations.

Short-Cycle Assessment Outcomes: NWEA

The most recent [NWEA assessment results](#) fulfill the reporting requirements described in Section 1.A.2 of our charter contract. Based on current performance data:

- **Mathematics Proficiency:** 50% of students met or exceeded growth targets.
- **Reading Proficiency:** 66.7% of students met or exceeded growth targets.

These results provide an early indication of academic progress and will serve as baseline data for further instructional planning and intervention.

Challenges and Successes

1. Attendance and Early Check-Outs

During the first quarter of the academic year, consistent challenges with student attendance and frequent early check-outs were observed. Given the direct correlation between consistent attendance and academic achievement, school leadership prioritized this issue. Targeted outreach strategies were implemented, including scheduled parent meetings, expanded communication efforts, and the launch of attendance awareness campaigns. These initiatives have yielded measurable improvements in daily attendance rates, and increased parent cooperation in understanding the importance of instructional time and school consistency.

2. Enrollment Trends

Enrollment has stabilized at 17 students following a period of disruption linked to changes in school governance. The resignation of former governing board members, individuals who had long standing community influence, resulted in the withdrawal of several students. In response, the leadership team has focused on restoring trust through transparent communication, consistent community outreach, and the re-establishment of a stable school climate. These efforts are laying the foundation for future enrollment growth.

3. Family and Parent Involvement

Family and parent involvement remains a foundational pillar of student success. At the start of the year, the school faced difficulties in encouraging active family participation. Many families were hesitant to engage in school-based events or academic planning discussions. To reverse this trend, the school adopted a multi-pronged approach that included broadening communication methods, hosting culturally responsive family engagement nights, and increasing the visibility of leadership and staff. These efforts have begun to show positive results. Parent participation is gradually increasing, and the ongoing development of an active Parent Advisory Committee is strengthening the home-school partnership.

4. Professional Development (PD) Constraints

High-quality, sustained professional development is essential for instructional growth and staff retention. However, time constraints and limited financial resources have posed significant barriers. Efforts to schedule weekend PD sessions were not feasible, as staff could not be compensated beyond their contractual obligations. Compounding

this issue was a delay in CSI funding, which further hindered the school's ability to offer necessary training during the first half of the year. Despite these limitations, staff have expressed a strong desire for continued learning. The leadership team is actively exploring alternative funding options, scheduling solutions, and partnerships to ensure that professional development remains a school priority.

5. Staff Turnover

Staffing instability has been another area of concern. A teacher and instructional assistant were hired to support the Kindergarten–2nd grade multi-grade classroom at the start of the year. However, both resigned shortly thereafter, citing the challenges of teaching across multiple grade levels. This situation has underscored the importance of hiring individuals who are not only highly qualified, but also adaptable and mission-driven. Some current staff members are working toward required credentialing, and while this reflects a commitment to professional growth, it also impacts long-term stability and instructional consistency. Recruitment efforts are ongoing, with an emphasis on identifying educators prepared for the distinctive demands of a multi-grade, culturally centered learning environment.

6. Lack of Student Transportation Services

The absence of student transportation has emerged as a notable barrier to consistent attendance and enrollment. A recent parent survey revealed that families would be more inclined to enroll or consistently send their children if bus services were provided. This feedback is being taken seriously, and school leadership is assessing the feasibility of offering transportation services in alignment with available funding and logistical capacity.

7. Re-Establishment of a Strong Governing Council

A stable and engaged governing council is essential for the sustainability and governance of the school. Following the departure of previous board members, efforts have been made to re-establish a committed and knowledgeable governing body. The recruitment of new council members with diverse expertise and a shared commitment to the school's mission has been a priority. This process is well underway, with initial signs of strengthened leadership and improved alignment between governance and school operations.

Next Steps: Strategic Planning

In response to the challenges and insights gained throughout the current academic year, Dream Diné Charter School is moving forward with the implementation of a revised Strategic Plan. Following the school's designation as a Comprehensive Support

and Improvement (CSI) site, a School Improvement Team (SIT) conducted an onsite visit and met with school leadership to review academic progress and overall performance. This collaborative dialogue served as a catalyst for critical reflection and prompted the decision to revisit and refine our existing strategic priorities.

The outcome of this process was a more focused and responsive Strategic Plan, grounded in evidence-based practices and aligned with the school's mission. As part of this effort, the leadership team systematically reviewed school data, identified areas of growth and concern, and re-evaluated the alignment of goals with current needs. This progression led to the formal revision of the school's SMART goals, ensuring they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound; designed to drive instructional improvement, increase student achievement, and strengthen organizational capacity.

Dream Dine' Charter School Mission

Dream Dine' Charter School provides an experiential education rooted in Dine' philosophy and language, empowering students to achieve academic success and contribute to their communities.

Team:

Nadine Chatto

Andrea Thomas

Veronica D. Tso

Dr. Marlena Shepard

Zhoni Nells

Marla Lansing

Kerby Johnson

Resources

The Navajo Nation

Johnson O'Malley funds

NISN

North Star Goal (overall)

Dream Dine' students will excel in western academics, Dine' academics, and in their personal lives using the **Naay'ee' K'ehgo Nainitin and Hozhooji K'ehgo Na'nitin.** (Navajo keyboard)

Long-Term Objectives (3-5 years)

- ★ Students are aware of who they are, where they come from, and know where they want to go
- ★ Families will strive to become engaged and be involved with their students throughout their school experience, including planning for their child's

★ Our teachers are culturally responsive and build relationships with students and families and strive for professional excellence

* Note: A quarter in this plan is based on a quarter of the school year (9 weeks or 45 days) and is designed to support the school's 90-day planning process.

One-Year Goals	SMART Goals (objectives)	Timeline	Tactics/Actions	Budget Allocation
Teachers will become more proficiency in using high quality instructional strategies	<p>Charter Performance Framework: ≥ 50th but < 75th percentile on the state accountability system AND, based on the school's assessment and growth measure, as defined in the charter contract and meets the terms defined by the testing company, at least 60% of students meet one or more of the following proficiency or growth criteria (these apply to Meets and Working to Meet criteria below) in both reading and math:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At or above grade level (or grade level equivalent) • Meet their growth target 	<p>Summer 2025</p> <p>Quarter 1 2025 semester*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated curriculum (resources) for reading and science • Differentiated instruction/strategies: What is this? How do we do this? Grade level academic expectations • Review CCSS • Teacher differentiated instructional strategies. • Formative assessment: understand, application, data analysis • Learning objectives: How to create, what do I use to help create one. • Elevate NM: understanding, application • Develop the curriculum map • Decide on a lesson planning template • PD Walkthroughs: discuss, reflect, improve • Develop norms • Develop a schedule for PLCs • Heggerty (phonics) PD 	CSI Grant

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the equivalent of one year's worth of growth <p>By the 80th day, 75% of instructors will use formative assessments to explicitly support the instructional outcomes in both western academics (as specified by the CCSS), as reported during PLC time and bi-weekly leadership team reviews.</p> <p>By December 2025, 50% of teachers will design effective lesson plans as measured by the Elevate NM Domain 1 rubric, with plans demonstrating clear learning objectives, appropriate scaffolding, a clear use of literacy-based protocols, and differentiated instructional strategies</p>	<p>Quarter 2 2025 semester</p> <p>Quarter 3 2026 semester</p> <p>Quarter 4 2026 semester</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate NM Domain 1 lesson plan analysis and feedback • How to analyze data • PDs: lesson planning, phonics, differentiation strategies, flexible grouping <p>Dream Dine' has applied to become an IB (PYP) school (?)</p>	
Enhance the Dine' language and culture program to increase student proficiency in	By EOY, 80% of students will meet benchmarks for learning the Dine' language as measured by the ODLA.	<p>Summer 2025</p> <p>Quarter 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with parents and students to indicate: Begin the binders, help their children with Dine' language and learn alongside their children, fill out clan (kinship) sheet 	Indian Education Grant

the connections it has with the larger community outside of the school	<p>board members can articulate the mission and strategy of the school and can understand how the program is monitored to make claims about the impact of the program.</p> <p>By April 2026, 80% of community members will report understanding the mission of DDCCS as a public school equally focused on western academics and Dine' language and culture education.</p>	<p>Quarter 1 2025 semester</p> <p>Quarter 2 2025 semester</p> <p>Quarter 3 2026 semester</p> <p>Quarter 4 2026 semester</p>	<p>for staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government to government with the education department outreach book for local events. Open house <p>Notes from SMART goals chart paper discussion to possibly include here: GC internal onboarding Partnership with Navajo Nation government Outreach and marketing for enrollment NISN Connect with other districts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community/parent/governing board year-end assessment. 	Grant Outdoor Equity Grant
Increase student enrollment and family engagement	By May 2026, DDCCS will have full enrollment and a waiting list of 10% of enrolled students (5-10 families).	<p>Summer 2025</p> <p>Quarter 1 2025 school year</p> <p>Quarter 2 2025 school year</p> <p>Quarter 3 2025 school year</p>	<p>Enrollment initiatives, continued recruitment</p> <p>Enrollment Fairs</p> <p>Family surveys</p> <p>Revisiting the student handbook</p>	Other Grants

Dream Dine' Charter School - Revised SMART Goals

Goal 1: Western Academic Excellence

SMART Goal (Revised)

By May 2026, at least 70% of Dream Dine' students will achieve proficiency or above on state assessments in both reading and mathematics, with 80% of students meeting their individual growth targets as measured by NWEA MAP assessments.

Key Performance Indicators

- Quarterly Benchmark: 75% of teachers will use formative assessments weekly to track student progress toward learning objectives
- Mid-Year Milestone: By December 2025, 60% of students will be on track to meet year-end proficiency goals based on winter NWEA scores
- Lesson Planning Quality: By December 2025, 80% of teachers will score "Effective" or higher on Elevate NM Domain 1 rubric for lesson planning

Quarterly Action Steps

Quarter 1 (Summer/Fall 2025)

- Implement updated curriculum resources for reading and science
- Establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with bi-weekly meetings
- Conduct Heggerty phonics professional development
- Develop curriculum maps and standardized lesson planning template

Quarter 2 (Winter 2025)

- Analyze NWEA fall data to identify students needing intervention
- Implement differentiated instruction strategies across all classrooms
- Conduct monthly classroom walkthroughs with feedback
- Begin IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) preparation

Quarter 3 (Spring 2026)

- Intensify intervention support for students below grade level
- Implement flexible grouping strategies
- Conduct practice state assessments
- Refine curriculum based on mid-year data

Quarter 4 (Spring 2026)

- Prepare students for state assessments
 - Analyze year-end data and plan for following year
 - Celebrate student achievements and growth
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Goal 2: Diné Language and Cultural Proficiency

SMART Goal (Revised)

By May 2026, 80% of students will demonstrate measurable progress in Diné language proficiency as assessed by the Oral Diné Language Assessment (ODLA), with 90% of 5th graders able to introduce themselves in Diné and hold a 3-minute conversation about their clan identity.

Key Performance Indicators

- Quarterly Language Assessments: Students will be assessed quarterly using ODLA benchmarks
- Cultural Knowledge Milestones:
 - 70% of K-2 students will know their maternal clan
 - 60% of 3-5 students will know both maternal and paternal clans
 - 50% of 4-5 students will understand basic Diné creation stories

Quarterly Action Steps

Quarter 1 (Summer/Fall 2025)

- Establish parent-student contracts for Diné language learning support at home
- Begin daily morning circle with Hózhóójí nitsáhákees (positive thinking)
- Implement clan identity learning activities
- Start kinship (K'é) curriculum

Quarter 2 (Winter 2025)

- 60% of students will understand basic Diné commands
- Integrate Diné historical figures and stories into curriculum
- Begin emergence story curriculum (First through Fourth Worlds)
- Family heritage projects

Quarter 3 (Spring 2026)

- 80% of students will demonstrate command comprehension
- Explore Diné WWII history and Fort Sumner
- Advanced clan relationship understanding
- Plan cultural field trips

Quarter 4 (Spring 2026)

- Conduct final ODLA assessments
- Student presentations on clan identity and cultural knowledge
- Community cultural showcase
- Celebrate language learning achievements

Goal 3: Community Engagement and Awareness

SMART Goal (Revised)

By April 2026, 85% of surveyed community members will demonstrate understanding of DDCCS's dual mission of western academics and Diné culture, with 90% of governing board members able to articulate the school's mission, strategy, and impact measures.

Key Performance Indicators

- Board Readiness: 100% of board members pass mission/strategy assessment by December 2025
- Community Surveys: Quarterly community awareness surveys
- Engagement Events: Host 6 community events annually with 50+ attendees each

Quarterly Action Steps

Quarter 1 (Summer/Fall 2025)

- Conduct governing board strategic planning workshop
- Develop community outreach materials
- Establish government-to-government relationships with Navajo Nation Education Department
- Launch social media and marketing campaign

Quarter 2 (Winter 2025)

- Host community open house events
- Present to local chapter houses
- Develop partnerships with NISN and other districts
- Create parent advisory committee

Quarter 3 (Spring 2026)

- Conduct mid-year community survey
- Host cultural events and student showcases
- Strengthen Navajo Nation partnerships
- Expand community presentations

Quarter 4 (Spring 2026)

- Conduct final community assessment survey
 - Host year-end celebration and cultural showcase
 - Evaluate community engagement strategies
 - Plan for following year outreach
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Goal 4: Enrollment Growth and Retention

SMART Goal (New)

By May 2026, Dream Dine' Charter School will achieve 95% enrollment capacity with a waiting list of 15 students, while maintaining a 90% student retention rate and 85% family satisfaction rate.

Key Performance Indicators

- Enrollment Tracking: Monthly enrollment reports
- Retention Rate: Track student retention quarterly
- Family Satisfaction: Bi-annual family satisfaction surveys (target: 85% satisfaction)
- Attendance Rate: Maintain 95% average daily attendance

Quarterly Action Steps

Quarter 1 (Summer/Fall 2025)

- Implement comprehensive enrollment marketing strategy
- Establish family engagement protocols

- Create student/family support systems
 - Develop transportation solutions
 - Quarter 2 (Winter 2025)
 - Conduct enrollment fairs and community presentations
 - Track and support at-risk students
 - Implement family communication systems
 - Address barriers to enrollment (lunch, transportation)
 - Quarter 3 (Spring 2026)
 - Intensify recruitment for following year
 - Conduct family satisfaction surveys
 - Celebrate student achievements publicly
 - Strengthen family engagement programs
 - Quarter 4 (Spring 2026)
 - Finalize enrollment for following year
 - Evaluate retention strategies
 - Plan summer engagement activities
 - Prepare for new family orientation
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Goal 5: Staff Excellence and Retention

SMART Goal (New)

By May 2026, 90% of teaching staff will be fully certified, with 85% of staff retained year-over-year, and 100% of teachers demonstrating cultural responsiveness as measured by classroom observations and student/family feedback.

Key Performance Indicators

- Certification Progress: Track teacher certification status monthly
- Cultural Competency: Quarterly classroom observations focusing on cultural integration
- Staff Satisfaction: Bi-annual staff satisfaction surveys (target: 80% satisfaction)
- Professional Development: 100% of staff complete 40 hours of professional development annually

Quarterly Action Steps

- Quarter 1 (Summer/Fall 2025)
 - Develop teacher mentorship programs
 - Implement cultural responsiveness training
 - Create professional development calendar
 - Establish teacher collaboration time
- Quarter 2 (Winter 2025)
 - Support teachers working toward certification
 - Conduct peer classroom observations
 - Provide ongoing coaching and feedback
 - Recognize teacher achievements
- Quarter 3 (Spring 2026)
 - Intensify certification support

- Conduct mid-year performance evaluations
- Plan for teacher retention strategies
- Celebrate teaching excellence

Quarter 4 (Spring 2026)

- Conduct final teacher evaluations
 - Plan summer professional development
 - Recruit and hire additional staff as needed
 - Prepare for following year
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Program Impact Tracking Goals

Family Engagement Impact

Track monthly: Family participation in school events, parent-teacher conferences attendance, home language support activities

Student Wellbeing and Identity

Measure quarterly: Student self-assessment surveys on cultural identity, confidence levels, and sense of belonging

Long-term Alumni Success

Track annually: Middle school readiness, high school graduation rates, post-secondary enrollment of DDCS graduates

Community Partnerships

Monitor ongoing: Number of active community partnerships, volunteer hours contributed, local business support

Success Metrics Dashboard

Academic Excellence

- State assessment proficiency rates
- NWEA MAP growth percentiles
- Classroom observation scores
- Student work quality samples

Cultural Proficiency

- ODLA assessment results
- Student cultural knowledge demonstrations
- Family engagement in cultural activities

- Community cultural event participation

School Health

- Enrollment and retention rates
- Staff turnover and satisfaction
- Family satisfaction surveys
- Community awareness metrics

Operational Excellence

- Budget management and sustainability
- Facility improvements and usage
- Technology integration effectiveness
- Safety and wellness indicators

The strategic plan will serve as a guiding framework for the remainder of the academic year and into the next, ensuring that academic excellence, cultural relevance, and operational integrity remain central to our mission.