



New Mexico Public Education Commission (PEC)

Governing Body Member Change Notification Instructions

Purpose: To notify the Public Education Commission (PEC) of a change in a member or members of the school's Governing Body. The school may report multiple member resignations/removals and designations on the same form.

Submission Deadline: Changes to the Governing Body membership do not require prior approval of the PEC; however, notice must be received within 30 calendar days of the change. Vacancies must be filled within 45 days; one 30-day extension may be requested.

Notifications completed 14 days prior to the next PEC meeting will be placed on the next agenda. Notifications of this type are typically placed on the consent agenda; however, any notification may be removed from the consent agenda and moved to the regular agenda for full discussion and possible action by the PEC.

Meeting minutes of the governing board of the school and the PEC will serve as an amendment to, or compliance with, the charter contract regarding this membership change. The documentation will be added to the board of finance documentation on file with CSD.

The school must provide:

X Fully completed form

☐ Approved board minutes or certification of the board's vote accepting the new member

X Resignation Letter or board meeting minutes removing the previous member

☐ Statement of Governing Body Member to Consult with PED

☐ Affidavit of Governing Body Member

☐ Assurances of Governing Body Member

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

Governing Body Member Change Notification 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 Explore Academy – Las Cruces (581-001), hereafter "the school," effective on 7/1/2021.

Current Governing Body Members and Positions: Dr. Christine Reyes, Chair; Lanell Pahe, Secretary; Gabriela Graham; Terry Moore, and Angel Rivera

Governing Body Member(s) Resigning or Removed: Co-Chair Clara Raley and Anna Emerick-Biad

New Governing Body Member(s) and Position(s): TBD; Board will keep 5 members for now

Contact information for New Governing Body Member(s) (phone, email): Click or tap here to enter text.

Is the school requesting an extension to fill a vacancy: ☐ yes ☒ no
If so, provide date of vacancy:

Number of personnel changes (Head Administrator/Business Manager/Procurement Officer, Governing Board Member), including this change, submitted to PEC in the last 12 months: Three changes in last 12 months:

August 14, 2024: Governing Board Member (Jenifer Lichtenfels to Dr. Christine Reyes)

April 1, 2025: Governing Board Member (Claren Mulhall) resigned

May 15, 2025: Three new board members were designated (Anna Emerick-Biad, Terry Moore, and Angel Rivera)

Effective Date: 6/11/2025 (Anna Emerick-Biad) and 6/12/2025 (Clara Raley)

The school's notification is hereby submitted by:

Signature of School Representative:  **Date:** June 12, 2025

Signature of Governing Board Chair:  **Date:** June 25, 2025

For PEC/CSD use only

PEC Meeting Date:

Agenda: ☐ Consent (typical) ☐ Regular (unusual circumstance)

The school's notification was: ☐ Accepted ☐ Rejected (provide reason)

Electronic signature of CSD Director: _____ **Date:** _____

Resignation from EA - LC Board

1 message

Clara Raley [REDACTED]

Sun, Jun 1, 2025 at 12:41 PM

To: Christine Reyes <Christine.Reyes.LCSBoard@explore.academy>

Cc: Dustin Sparks <dustin@dustinsparkslaw.com>, Toni Hull <toni.hull@explore.academy>, Karen Woerner <karen.woerner@explore.academy>

Dear Explore Academy Governing Council Members,


Please find attached my formal resignation letter from my role as Co-Chair of the Explore Academy Las Cruces Governing Council, effective June 12, 2025.

This decision was not made lightly. I've deeply valued my time serving our school community and am proud of what we've accomplished together. However, as outlined in the letter, there are serious ethical concerns that I can no longer overlook—specifically regarding the school's continued relationship with ELS/ALLY OP and the troubling misuse of my digital signature on a high-stakes financial agreement.

I remain hopeful for the future of Explore Academy Las Cruces and am available to support a smooth transition in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Clara Raley

 **Resignation Letter_Clara_Raley.pdf**
51K

Clara Raley

Co-Chair



Date: June 1, 2025

To the Explore Academy Las Cruces Governing Council and Public Education Commission,

I am writing to formally resign from my position on the Explore Academy Las Cruces Governing Council, effective June 12, 2025. This has been a deeply considered decision and not one made lightly.

Serving on the board as Co-Chair since the school's inception has been a profoundly meaningful experience. My fellow board members and the school personnel I have had the privilege to work alongside have helped shape me personally and professionally. I am grateful for the experiences, insights, and relationships I have gained during my tenure, and I remain committed to the success of our charter school.

However, I feel it is important to share one of the primary factors influencing my resignation. Since becoming aware in the spring of 2024 of the troubling business practices of the school's third-party contractor, ELS/ALLY OP, under the leadership of Justin Baiardo, I have worked diligently to raise concerns and advocate for transparency. These efforts are rooted in my deep belief in the ethical stewardship of public resources and the prioritization of students' best interests.

It is especially distressing that my digital signature was used—without my knowledge or consent—on the Tenant Improvement Agreement, which committed the school to covering over \$3 million in construction overages. This matter is currently the subject of an active police investigation. Regardless of the outcome, I cannot in good conscience continue to serve on a governing council that maintains a contractual relationship with a vendor facing such serious allegations.

While I understand the board may choose to extend this relationship for one additional year to begin the process of disengagement, I sincerely hope that this timeline is honored, and that the Public Education Commission ensures accountability throughout the transition.

I remain available to assist with a smooth transition and support the board during this period. I continue to wish Explore Academy Las Cruces great success, and I hope to see its governance remain rooted in integrity, transparency, and a steadfast focus on students.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Sincerely,

Clara Raley

Board Resignation – Explore Academy Las Cruces

1 message

Anna E Emerick-Biad [REDACTED]

Wed, Jun 11, 2025 at 6:24 PM

To: Clara Raley <Clara.Raley.LCSBoard@explore.academy>, Christine Reyes
<Christine.Reyes.LCSBoard@explore.academy>
Bcc: karen.woerner@explore.academy

Dear Co-Chairs Clara and Christine,
bcc: Board

Good evening. Please accept this letter as my formal resignation from the governing board of Explore Academy Las Cruces, effective immediately. This has not been an easy decision, but after thoughtful reflection over the past several weeks, I have come to realize that this is not the right fit for me at this time.

When I joined the board, I did so with genuine hopes of supporting a school grounded in strong governance, financial stability, and guided by a long-term plan to become a top-tier Project-Based Learning (PBL) academy. However, I was not fully aware of the many challenges the school was facing or the significant time commitment required to serve in this capacity. My experience has felt less like an opportunity for strategic leadership and more like stepping into a crisis management role—where multiple issues unfold simultaneously, and no clear path forward has yet been established. What I have observed so far does not align with my personal beliefs and values regarding how effective school governance should be conducted. I was particularly saddened to discover the school's condition, especially the limited financial oversight regarding the Del Rey expansion.

That said, I remain hopeful for Explore Academy's future. I care about the school's mission and sincerely wish to see it thrive with strong leadership, unity, and stability. The students, families, and staff deserve nothing less.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served, even briefly, and I wish you all strength, focus, and clarity as you move forward.

Warmly,
Anna Emerick-Biad