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CHRISTOPHER RUSZKOWSKI
SECRETARY-DESIGNATE OF EDUCATION

August 6, 2018

Dear Public Education Commissioners:

Enclosed is the 2018 Charter School Application Final Analysis and Recommendation for Solare Collegiate Charter School applying for a state charter in Albuquerque, NM to serve grades 5 - 8 and represented by founders, Rachael Sowards, Veronica Gonzales-Zamora, Peter Lorenz, and Camille Vasquez. The staff at the Charter Schools Division (CSD) along with a team of independent reviewers gave full consideration to the information gathered in this process.

The CSD has provided evidence and rationale gathered in the team analyses and interviews in this evaluation to fully support the recommendation.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to ensure that New Mexico's Charter Schools provide innovative, quality education to New Mexico's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Katie Poulos", with a checkmark at the end.

Katie Poulos
Assistant Secretary of Education
Options for Parents and Families

I. Recommendation

☒ **APPROVE**

Overall the application is complete and adequate; and during their Capacity Interview, the applicant(s) demonstrated a clear capacity to implement the academic, organizational and financial management plans as described in the application. Nothing was identified that would indicate the applicant(s) do not have the experience, knowledge, and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school.

☐ **APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

Overall the application is complete and adequate; and during their Capacity Interview, the applicant(s) demonstrated a general capacity to implement the academic, organizational and financial management plans as described in the application. However, the CSD has identified some specific concerns that would need to be addressed during the planning year. The CSD has listed the noted concerns and conditions to address the concerns below. If the PEC determines that there are any additional conditions that need to be addressed, those should be noted during the public hearing and all approved conditions negotiated in the final contract.

PROPOSED CONDITIONS

☐ **DENY**

Overall the application is either incomplete or inadequate; or during their Capacity Interview, the applicant(s) did not sufficiently demonstrate the experience, knowledge, and competence to successfully open and operate a charter school.

The Charter Schools Act, in paragraph 1 of Subsection L of Section 22-8B-6 NMSA 1978, states that a chartering authority may approve, approve with conditions or deny an application. A chartering authority may deny an application if:

- (1) the application is incomplete or inadequate;
- (2) the application does not propose to offer an educational program consistent with the requirements and purposes of the Charter Schools Act;
- (3) the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was involved with another charter school whose charter was denied or revoked for fiscal management or the proposed head administrator or other administrative or fiscal staff was discharged from a public school for fiscal mismanagement;
- (4) for a proposed state-chartered charter school, it does not request to have the governing body of the charter school designated as a board of finance or the governing body does not qualify as a board of finance; or
- (5) the application is otherwise contrary to the best interests of the charter school's projected students, the local community or the school district in whose geographic boundaries the charter school applies to operate.

CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION

By: 

Katie Poulos, Assistant Secretary of Education - Options for Parents and Families

I. Overall Score Sheet

Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
Application Overall Score	291*	287*
• Education Plan/Academic Framework	84	84
• Organizational Plan and Governance/Organizational Framework	139*	135
• Business Plan/ Financial Framework	44	44
• Evidence of Support	24	24
Capacity Interview Overall Score	80	80
Overall Score – Application and Capacity Interview	371*	367

*Points earned for the “Organizational Plan” is higher than total points possible because the Food Services points were awarded as “Preference Points”. Preference points are awarded because the applicant school plans to participate in the NSLP.

II. Explanation Regarding Use of the Score Sheet

In the Recommendation and Final Analysis, the PED has considered the overall score in the written application as evaluated by an external team which includes a licensed New Mexico administrator, teacher, and business official; responses provided during the Capacity Interview that was conducted by the external review team; feedback expressed at the Community Input Hearing on July 19, 2018, as well as information obtained from the letters of support or opposition received after the Community Input Hearing; and additional relevant information.

Also please note two additional considerations:

- First, the CSD does not score the community input hearing, but may reference it in this Recommendation and Final Analysis to document any pertinent information offered that contradicts or affirms what was found in the application.
- Second, if the applicant school did not answer any prompt (question) because that prompt did not apply to the applicant school (e.g., the applicant school will be an elementary school and so did not provide responses to graduation-related prompts), then the CSD adjusted the total possible points in the application section where the

non-applicable item(s) is found, as well as in the final score. For this reason, you may see varying possible total points from application to application.

III. Final Analysis

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
EDUCATION PLAN/ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK	84	84
Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section: The application review team found this section to be complete and adequate. The applicant scored "Meets the Criteria" in all areas (except Graduation Requirements which are not applicable) in this section. Specifically, in relation to the first prompt "I.A. Mission" the review team evaluated the response as "Meets Criteria." The review team's evaluation concluded, "the applicant's mission statement and detailed narrative provides a clear overview of how the school intends to implement best practices to achieve high rigorous expectations for its proposed target population." The review team's evaluation does not specifically address the evaluation criteria: "Identify the proposed outcomes and how they will be achieved is innovative and unique." However, the applicant's response does specifically address the applicant's "Unique Approach and Innovations." Specifically, the applicant notes "Based on the academic performance of elementary and middle schools in our target zip code of 87121, a college preparatory mission in and of itself is an innovation", and expands by describing seven (7) innovative elements of its school design which are "informed by best practices and proven results of high-poverty, high-achieving charter schools in New Mexico and nationally." The seven innovative/unique elements are 1) an extended school day and year; 2) a literary focus across content areas; 3) a focus on oral literacy and developing student voice; 4) double blocks and English and math; 5) a heritage Spanish Program and New Mexico Culture Curriculum; 6) a trimester system with a thematic focus on identity during the trimesters; and 6) content specialist teachers beginning in 5 th grade. <u>Overall, this section of the application is adequate as 100% of the responses were rated "Meets the Criteria" and 100% of the possible points were earned for Education Plan/Academic Framework.</u>		

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND GOVERNANCE / ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK	139	135
<p>Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section:</p> <p>The application review team found this section to be complete and adequate. The applicant scored “Meets the Criteria” in all but one (1) area in this section. The Staffing Plan section was scored “Approaches the Criteria” for the reasons described below. The applicant also earned “Preference Points” for planning to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).</p> <p>According to the evaluators, with respect to the application:</p> <p>II.D.(3) Staffing Plan</p> <p>“However, the applicant’s response provides a minimal description of a plan of how the school will adjust the staffing needs to respond to budget shortfalls.”</p> <p>During the Capacity Interview, the three (3) standard questions on finance (questions 12-14) and one (1) school-specific question about potential budget shortfalls (question 18) were scored “Meets the Criteria”.</p> <p>According to the evaluators, “The applicant team described a thorough and detailed recruitment plan that includes what steps the proposed school will take if the target enrollment numbers are not met. First, the team will set monthly goals to review its progress. Second, the team has and will continue to develop multiple budgets to adjust and understand the various scenarios they may encounter as it reviews the enrollment numbers. Lastly the team intends to scrutinize student expenses and would first cut back on furniture and instructional materials before adjusting its staffing. It is clear through the team’s response that all founding members are invested and thoroughly understand the plan in place and actions to address” this concern. Also, “The applicant team, first and foremost, indicated student facing positions take priority....”</p> <p><u>The review team determined that the responses by the school adequately addressed the concern in the written application. The school received the full points (4) on each of these questions. In addition, the applicant received <i>more</i> than 100% of the points available for this section because the applicant received bonus points for school lunch and transportation responses. This section of the application is adequate.</u></p>		

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
BUSINESS PLAN/ FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK	44	44
Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section: The applicant review team found this section to be complete and adequate. The applicant scored "Meets the Criteria" in all areas in this section. <u>Overall, this section of the application is adequate as 100% of the responses were rated "Meets the Criteria" and 100% of the possible points were earned for Business Plan/Financial Framework.</u>		

Application Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT	24	24
Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section: The applicant review team found this section to be complete and adequate. The applicant scored "Meets the Criteria" in all areas in this section. <u>Overall, this section of the application is adequate as 100% of the responses were rated "Meets the Criteria" and 100% of the possible points were earned for Evidence of Support in the application.</u>		

Section	Points Received	Applicant School's Possible Points
CAPACITY INTERVIEW	80	80
Evidence/Statements Supporting Score in this Section: The evaluators asked fifteen standard questions (Questions 1-15) and five school specific questions (Questions 16-20). All responses by the applicant team were scored as "Meets Criteria". This section to be complete and adequate. <u>Overall, this section of the application is adequate as 100% of the responses were rated "Meets the Criteria" and 100% of the possible points were earned for the Capacity Interview.</u>		

COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING

During the July 19th community input hearing in Albuquerque, attendees expressed both support and opposition of the school. No representatives of the school district attended the hearing. Eighteen attendees spoke with 11 in favor and 7 in opposition.

- Raymond Nance, 2012 Charter School Teacher of the Year, spoke in support of Rachael Sowards as a dedicated educator, problem-solver, and her ability to bring a top team together to prepare “a unique solution for students whose needs are not being met in the traditional educational system.”
- Samuel Naranjo, former student of Rachael Sowards, described the help and support he received from Mrs. Sowards and credited her for his accomplishments. He further stated that “I am honored to say Mrs. Sowards has all of these [communication skills, relationship orientation, dedication, support, and organization].” *See Letters of Support below.*
- P. Kim Herrera read a letter of support that was also submitted. *See Letters of Support below.*
- Trey Hammond, Pastor at La Mesa Presbyterian Church and co-chair of Albuquerque Interfaith, expressed his opposition and concerns that “out-of-state for-profit educational companies have been creating platforms to access New Mexico public education dollars”. [Note: Solare is not sponsored by a for-profit organization.] He also stated that charter schools “shouldn’t be recruiting people from the outside, but they should emerge from the residents of the community itself.” [Note: The lead founder for Solare, Rachael Sowards, lives in the South Valley.] And finally, he was concerned that some charter applications may state that there’s more local support than there might be, referencing a school that was approved last year, not this school.
- Julie Radoslovich, Principal and Director of South Valley Academy, represented La Red, an organization of nearly 15 nonprofits and schools serving the South Valley and shared a letter of opposition that was submitted. *See Letters of Support below.*
- Robert Baade, Director of the Robert F. Kennedy Charter School, indicated that Ms. Sowards met with him. He said that “there is a level of community involvement her; it’s clear. But it’s not at a grassroots level.”
- Isaac DeLuna, Political Director for the New Mexico Dream Team, who is opposed and said that as a parent of a 5 year old, he “just can’t wrap my mind around how it is that we keep spending this money into new institutions.”
- Kip Bobroff, Leader with Albuquerque Interfaith and brother of Kara Barbroff – who leads NISN and is affiliated with another charter school applicant, asked those opposed to stand. She said that the name of the “outfit that is sponsoring this school, Building Excellent Schools, had not been mentioned” and urged an inquiry into the funding, the ties to New Mexico and why NM should be turning over our schools “to outside operators”.
- Diane Garcia, heir of the Atrisco Land Grant, born and raised in the South Valley, supports the school and wants people to have a choice.
- Jade Rivera, Founder and Director of Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School, gave strong support of Solare, Ms. Sowards, and the founding team. She responded to comments made previously by the audience by explaining that charter schools are public schools, that the school does NOT have an affiliation with a for-profit entity, and that members of the team are from the community and have been incredibly thoughtful in their application. “With that, it is the highest scoring application that we have ever seen through the PEC authorization process, which I

believe is incredibly rigorous, having gone through this process one year ago.”

- Sharon Tenorio, Chief of Marketing and Outreach for Big Brothers Big Sisters, who stated that her organization is in support because they believe the administration and leadership has the “potential of all the children in the South Valley in mind, and that they are going to work really hard with organizations like our and other nonprofit organizations”.
- Ellen Bernstein, President of the Albuquerque Teachers Federation, stated that “Charter Schools were intended to be a path to innovation, not a bridge to privatization.” She further stated that “This is one of these charter schools. Funded by money that Betsy DeVos sent to the state.....and now the Koch Brothers Latino outreach effort, the LIBRE initiative, along with corporate school moguls, Building Excellent Schools, which is funded by the Waltons.”
- Patricia Baros, lifelong resident of the South Valley, supports the school because communities need more opportunities and more resources.
- Dwayne Norris, Teacher at Bandalier Elementary School and one of the Vice-Presidents of the Albuquerque Teachers Federation, was in opposition. He said that “We know that there is money coming down from the feds, from Betsy DeVos and the Department of Education to start this charter. But it will be the taxpayers who end up paying for this charter.” He further stated that “it takes 15 percent more money to educate a child at a charter school than it does at a public school.” [He did not offer any resources or evidence of where he obtained this information.]
- Peter Sanchez, CEO of the Atrisco Companies, successor organization of the Atrisco Land Grant, stated that he has been working with Rachael Sowards for over a year, that she has a grassroots movement, has representatives from South Valley where “our heirs [30,000 most of which live in the community] have been there for over 400 years. He further stated that “We need a school like this of this caliber, of this ability.”
- Krishna Kandath stated that good intentions do not run charter schools. You need people, ideas and resources. This school has that advantage....they have a board, a group of people with high levels of integrity, they come out of a variety of specializations, backgrounds...” She further stated that “often fiscal mismanagement is what leads to downfall of these schools” yet “this school is so well-positioned” for success.
- Michael Loftin, Executive Director of Homewise, a non-profit organization that helps people buy their first home. Of the 674 families that they helped, 237 were in the South Valley and the west side. The team reached out to him and he “was very impressed. We think this would be a major addition to helping improve the South Valley and West Mesa”.

Of the 100 individual people that signed in, 12 were either undecided or did not indicate support or opposition. Of the remaining 88 people who signed in, 66% (58 individuals) were in support of the school.

Those in support included 41 people representing themselves and/or their families, two (2) from InAccord (the school’s legal counsel), two (2) from NMEducation.org, and two (2) from Teach for America. Of the individuals who signed in as supporters of the school there was also one representative from each of the following: District Attorney’s Office, Abrazo Technologies, ACCESS NM, AMF, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Delta Dental, Excellent Schools NM, Homewise, NACA-Inspired School Network, Pivot Evaluation, the South Valley Business Community and YMCA. One school leader from another charter school in Albuquerque supporting approval of the application pointed out that Solare Collegiate Charter School’s application received the highest score of any state charter school in history.

Of the 33% (30 people) who were opposed to the school, more than three quarters (24 individuals or 80%) were representative of the same four organizations: Albuquerque Interfaith (5), American Federation of Teachers (5), NACA Inspired Schools Network (NISN) (4), and NM Dream Team (10). In addition, five were representing themselves and/or their families, one was from Civic Policy Center, and one from La Red. It is notable that one member of the Albuquerque Interfaith organization is the NACA Inspired Schools Network, the supporting organization of the other new charter school applicant.

The Public Education Commission asked questions regarding:

a) **Uniqueness of the mission and education plan**

According to the applicant review team, “the applicant’s mission statement and detailed narrative provides a clear overview of how the school intends to implement best practices to achieve high rigorous expectations for its proposed target population.” The applicant team clearly stated in the application that “Based on the academic performance of elementary and middles schools in our target zip code of 87121, a college preparatory mission in and of itself is an innovation.” However, the applicant team further explained that there are several innovative elements that the school will implement including:

- (1) extended school day and year,
- (2) literacy focus across the content areas,
- (3) oral literacy,
- (4) double blocks of English and Mathematics,
- (5) Heritage Spanish program and New Mexico Culture Curriculum
(The commission did observe that the school recognizes acquisition of a second language as an important cultural component, not just an academic pursuit.)
- (6) Voice Strengthens Identity, and
- (7) content specialization beginning in Grade 5.

These elements are not currently being offered at schools in the 87121 zip code.

In addition to rigorous, high academic expectations, the school has identified core values of Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community and Kindness which will be explicitly taught and highlighted. Also, by design, the teachers will spend no more than 20 percent of the time per day doing direct instruction to increase student participation and engagement.

b) **Grassroots**

The applicant team responded that the lead founder lives in the community. In addition, she has sought input from, and partnered with, many organizations, businesses and individuals from the area.

c) **Ability for students to express themselves**

The school plan includes a focus on New Mexican Culture, through a curriculum created collaboratively by Solare Collegiate and the National Hispanic Cultural Center. The weekly curriculum will focus on arts, culture, food, and traditions of New Mexico, with a purposeful emphasis on the South Valley and Westside communities.

The narrative stated that “Based on conversations with families and stakeholders in our community, we have determined that Physical Education, Heritage Spanish, and New Mexico Culture to be the enrichment courses that best support our mission.” Students will have 50 minutes of Physical Education every other day, Monday through Thursday, and 50 minutes of

Heritage Spanish on opposite days. Each Friday, students will have an 80-minute New Mexico Culture enrichment class. "Using resources available from our community partners....., we will develop a four-year sequence with a focus on cultural traditions, food, holidays, and art specific to New Mexico. This is described in the application on pages 9 and 23. The applicant team stated that they intend to offer dance, music, sculpture, all art forms within the context of NM culture. Another opportunity for students to have a voice is made available each Friday at weekly "community meetings" focused on the core values.

d) Native American population

The applicant team responded that Community outreach is ongoing. The demographic research showed that the population is primarily Hispanic. However, the team has been working on potential relationships with Isleta pueblo. For example, the Three Blind Mice t-shirt vendor is a partner and the team has plans to do more networking with him. The founder indicated that she had worked in Cochiti over the past several years and has experience working with families there. Her approach has been to avoid being heavy-handed in outreach; not presenting, but rather listening and learning. The team intends to continue these efforts. She reiterated that the team sees community outreach as ongoing and asked any organizations with concerns to please reach out.

e) Relationship with the Community

The applicant team has established partnerships with several groups in the community, including ACCESS NM, Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, Homewise, Instituto Cervantes of the National Hispanic Cultural Center, Presbyterian Healthcare Services, and local small businesses. The team responded to questions about community relations by describing many strategies that they would continue to use to reach out to the community. They indicated that they were unaware of the opposition and offered their contact information to the audience, inviting them to meet and discuss the concerns. The team clearly welcomed the input and want to try to build connections. They expressed a commitment to strengthen relationships and acknowledged that they are ready to listen and learn from those opposed to the school.

f) Funding Sources

One member of the team responded to the funding concerns raised as follows: "I was actually quite concerned about the issue that was raised by the president of the teachers' federation about the funding from the Waltons. And so I did go look because I wanted to be sure, and also because I had read one of the letters that was coordinated by the Center for Civic Policy that quoted the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Turns out the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, in the last year received \$2,928,707 from the Walton Foundation. I also noted, since I know you have another hearing coming up, that the NACA Inspired Schools Network received \$283,650 from the Walton Foundation. And so I do think it's of some concern about out-of-state corporate dollars trying to hijack education in New Mexico. In our case, however, we've chosen to tie ourselves to the Atrisco Land Grant heirs, the Instituto Cervantes, and the National Hispanic Cultural Center."

Letters of Support or in Opposition

Many letters were received by the deadline of three business days after the applicant's PEC hearing (by 5:00 pm on July 24, 2018). **Of the 36 letters received, 30 (83%) expressed support of Solare Collegiate Charter School.**

Letters of support (30) were received. Several organizations expressed support, including the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, Homewise, Instituto Cervantes of the National Hispanic Cultural Center, and Presbyterian Healthcare Services. In addition, at least four former students of one of the founders, many educators, and several parents provided letters/emails of support.

- Mauricia Alarcon Moreno, representing the National Hispanic Cultural Center, wrote a letter supporting the school and citing her organization's commitment to work with the school to "provid[e] high quality Spanish language instruction." She specifically notes that the lead applicant "sought us out to get advice about quality Spanish language instruction."
- Beth Henderson, Danna Allerton, Meena Subramaniam, and Janie Trevino, representing Presbyterian Healthcare Services, all wrote in support. They stated, without citing specific evidence that "there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate." The letters each state that Solare will provide "rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development" which will "help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges." The letters all also state that the applicant team "has firm community roots" without providing specific evidence. Finally the letters cite the proposed "Spanish and New Mexico cultural education."
- Mike Loftin, CEO of Homewise, wrote in support of the school. Homewise is a NM-based non-profit that supports low income families in becoming homeowners. Homewise cites its work in the South Valley, and notes that it "understand[s] the desired and needs of these families well when it comes to education." The letter notes "we too often see families ecstatic to purchase a home in the communities we serve, but disappointed in the public school options for their children." The letter states that they support Solare Collegiate because of its design – "small...focuses on high school and college prep, with a balance of high quality academics and individualized support to make the information accessible." The letter also states that they "foresee strong parent demand for an option like this."
- Kim Herrera, whose family owns Bob's Burgers and who sits on the Atrisco Company Advisory Board of Directors, wrote in support of the applicant. She notes that the school "is desperately needed in the South Valley" because it is an "option that marries high school prep and early college preparatory education with affordability and accessibility." In her letter, she describes Malakai, a rising 2nd grader whose academic needs will not be met in the public schools in the South Valley. The letter praises the Solare approach that is "doubling down on critical core values: Literacy. Data. And Leadership Skills."
- Ernie C'de Baca, President and CEO of the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, wrote in support stating "I recognize the critical need for a high school and college preparatory school option in southwest Albuquerque, particularly at the middle school level." The letter states "[t]he Solare Collegiate Founding Team has dedicated considerable time to partnering with the community in a way that ensures it will have the backing of Albuquerque's stakeholders and best serve the needs of this community." The letter also commits to a partnership with the school. Finally, the letter cites the school's "Spanish language and New Mexico Cultural

programming.”

- Jean and Richard Woodward, parents of one of the founding applicant’s former students, wrote in support. They praised the leader’s approach and commitment and call her “a dedicated educator and professional that believes in all students.”
- Kenny Snyder, a former student of the founding applicant, wrote in support. He praises the applicant and says “any charter school she has such a huge hand in will not only benefit the community but the students who attend it.”
- Christine Sargent, a parent of students in a new charter school, wrote in support. The letter says “[w]e love the idea of there being a truly high quality Middle School option” and cites that the area currently has only D and F schools.
- Pepper Poole, an account executive at KWBQ-TV/KAST-TV, wrote in support of the school. Without citing reasons she states “this school will be the future of NM and will forge a new direction in learning.”
- Pramod Panikkath, who does not identify his role, wrote in support. The letter says, without citing evidence, “there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate.”
- Danielle Plomaritas, a parent, wrote in support. The letter notes that the writer teaches for charter schools and is a “huge advocate for them.” Without citing evidence the letter states “[t]he location where Solare is hoping to be is an area that needs a rigorous and caring charter school aimed at such a critical time developmentally in students.”
- Samuel Naranjo, a former student of the founding applicant, wrote in support. He praises the applicant and says she has “five necessary features that a school leader should have.” The letter says the school leader “will run a great school.”
- Vasudevan Nampoothiri, who does not identify his role, wrote in support. The letter says, without citing evidence, “there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate.”
- Vania Meetze, a former colleague of the founding applicant, wrote in support. The letter praises the lead applicant and says “I believe that her school will be a vital addition to your community.”
- Antoinina Martinez, a parent, wrote in support. She says “I wish they will be able to experience an amazing opportunity to attend this school that will prepare them for their future.”
- Paul Lockhart, a former charter school applicant, wrote in support. The letter praises the lead applicant and cites her collaborative and supportive nature.
- Ashley Leatherman, a “lifelong member of the South Valley”, an educator, and a former UNM student of the lead applicant, wrote in support. The letter states “this school is exactly what the community needs” and cites “smaller classes and a better opportunity for student centered education.” The letter highlights elements of the proposed educational program and specifically cites the traditional public school’s lack of college preparatory focus, which did not set her or her classmates up for success. The letter praises the lead applicant’s “honest and frank conversations” and “ability to connect with students and offer the children of my community more opportunities than we have been able to offer them in the past.”
- Kevin Koppenhaver, an acquaintance of the lead applicant, wrote in support. He praises the lead applicant and states “I have no doubt that the Solare Charter School will be a huge success and pay huge dividends for it [sic] students.”
- Krishna Kandath, who does not identify his role, wrote in support. The letter says, without citing evidence, “there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate.”
- Molly Gurule, a former supervisor of the lead applicant, wrote in support. The letter praises the lead applicant and states “[s]he understand that schools are not a one size fits all model.” The

letter states that Solare “would be an asset to the community of the South Valley.” The letter specifically notes the writers personal struggle with identity as a Native American and her hope “because [the applicant] will include a focus on heritage Spanish and New Mexico Culture.”

- Monica Gonzales, the aunt of a 6th grad student, wrote in support. She states “he’s so smart and ready for college prep yet the schools he’s in district for do not focus on college prep.” The letter states, “[t]he south valley has a huge need for a school like solare [sic]...so kids like my nephew don’t get left behind and on the wrong track.”
- Sonny Gokhale, an adjunct faculty member in the finance department of UNM, wrote in support. The letter states “I believe Solare Collegiate Charter School will be a strong driver in closing the achievement gap faced by many children today.” The letter says the application’s “data clearly demonstrates, there is a great need for Solare Collegiate charter School to bring greater learner opportunities ...to the community.”
- John DuBois, a member of the community, wrote in support. Without citing evidence, the letter says the school will “provide a unique, and much needed educational program in our South Valley.”
- Denise Del Aguila, a native New Mexican, wrote in support. The letter cites “the choice [the applicants] present to students in the South Valley and city of Albuquerque as a whole.”
- Jerome Daye, who does not identify his role, wrote in support. The letter generally praises the proposed school without specific reasons or evidence.
- Marilyn Cope, a former student of the lead applicant, wrote in support. The letter praises the lead applicant.
- Jodi Burshia, an educator and parent, wrote in support. The letter states “[t]he experiences I encounter in the classroom demonstrate the need for programs such as the Solare Collegiate Support program...as the Solare Collegiate Support program works to create relevant spaces and connections for students (indigenous and non-indigenous) to academically flourish.”

Six (6) letters of opposition were also received. The letters that expressed opposition include Albuquerque Interfaith, Albuquerque Public Schools Superintendent, Center for Civic Policy*, one retired public school teacher, one parent/educator, and one other. These letters generally cited the same concerns with the proposed model, and appeared to share misconceptions about the program being proposed.

- Caroyln Baker-Nair, an educator, expressed opposition to charter schools citing concerns regarding “tax dollars for private organizations” and “support [for] public education.” Her opposition appeared to demonstrate a misunderstanding regarding charter schools and their status as public entities.
- Francesca Blueher, a retired teacher, expressed opposition for the model she feels is being proposed by the Solare Collegiate application. The letter talked about the writer’s oppositions to charter organizations that the applicant (a proposed free-standing charter school) is not associated with, zero tolerance behavior policies that are not included in the Solare Collegiate application, test prep curriculum that is not included in the application, and administration of state mandated assessments and interim assessments encouraged by the PEC. The letter also criticizes the applicant’s proposal to work with the Instituto Cervantes. This letter appears to demonstrate a misunderstanding of the applicant’s proposal.
- Chris Sturgis, who does not identify his role, expressed opposition to the program design. He noted that he felt the school did not have a “culturally responsive strategy ...incorporated

throughout the school. Instead he felt the application addressed the students culture “in a stand alone curriculum.” The letter also stated a concern that “the focus on literacy seems to emphasize reading” over writing.

- Albuquerque Interfaith—representing several low performing charter schools in the south valley, NACA and NISN, and other groups—expressed opposition to the application citing a variety of concerns. The letter first opposes the school because it claims the applicant is not transparent about its relationship with Building Excellent schools, despite the applicant clearly describing its relationship with that organization throughout its application. The letter also cites a lack of transparency because of the relationship with Excellent Schools New Mexico – which is also described in the application. The letter erroneously states that the two organizations are “affiliates.” The letter then cites concerns about a “lack of quality community engagement.” The letter argues that the application “gives no evidence that they give no evidence that they conducted individual or group meetings, focus groups, or even focus groups with the families they have targeted to ask with they want from a school for their children.” However, the application directly contradicts this assertion. The letter cites a concern about a “lack of uniqueness” and “lack of innovation” but does not address the applicant’s response on pages 7-9 and 255-263 that speak to its uniqueness and innovation. The letter also expresses concerns regarding the “applicant’s approach to behavior management” referencing “zero tolerance”, which is not cited in the application, and states that it does not mention a “restorative justice” approach. However, the letter does not address the applicant’s description of “community” as an essential part of its behavior management, which is deeply rooted in the “restorative justice” philosophy. Finally, the letter expresses concerns about the applicant’s willingness to embrace state mandated standardized assessments despite the applicant’s description of a holistic education that includes character, art, culture, and language. This letter appears to demonstrate a misunderstanding of the applicant’s proposal and school development process.
- Javier Rojo from the Center for Civic Policy, submitted a letter “on behalf of community residents and several local organizations” which include three of the organizations, low performing charter schools, represented on the Albuquerque Interfaith letter. This letter does not substantively describe any reasons for opposing the school, but instead primarily focuses on misrepresentations regarding the PEC’s charter school authorizing processes. The letter states that “the process for approving charter schools in New Mexico is flawed” and cites criticisms about the PEC’s authorizing processes that have been addressed by the PEC in recent years with its development of improved authorizing processes and policies. The letter also states that, based on their own experiences, the PEC’s processes re “opaque” and unfair; it is unclear whose experiences are being cited considering many of the represented entities are not associated with charter schools and the three cited schools are all authorized by APS, not the PEC.
- Raquel Reedy, Superintendent of APS, writes opposing the school. She cites concerns with “the educational approach put forth.” Without citing evidence the letter generally states that the application “frames the students...using a deficit lens”, the “educational model sacrifices the whole child”, the “discipline plan” “limits’ students abilities to work through behavior challenges using their voice and agency”, “the primary literacy focus in Social Studies and Science restricts students abilities to engage in these content areas as historians and scientists”, and “students will not enter high school prepares...to be college or career ready in the sciences.”

*The email from the Center for Civic Policy indicated that there was “attached a signed letter opposing the approval of Solare Collegiate Charter School” yet the attached letter simply listed 21 organizations and schools, along with 13 named South Valley Residents. These were all typewritten with no signatures. In addition twenty three of the individuals who signed in as

opposing the school at the community input hearing are representatives of the organizations listed as signatories on the letter.

Additional Information

The lead applicant for Solare Collegiate Charter School, a teacher in New Mexico for eight (8) years, applied for acceptance into the Building Excellent Schools (BES) leadership fellowship program in 2017. Building Excellent Schools is a non-profit organization that supports strong leaders in being able to design, found, and lead their own autonomous charter school (not one that's managed by somebody else) by equipping them with the skills and know-how to design, found, lead, and sustain high-performing schools in communities of need.

The fellowship enables participants to receive 100 days of professional development, which includes visits to more than 45 exceptional schools operating in places all across the country and an extended residency in an operating charter school – to learn about the day to day realities facing a charter school leader.

Over its seventeen year history, the organization has worked with individuals who have founded more than 120 schools in 29 cities across 19 states, educating more than 33,000 students. There is currently one other school leader who was supported by BES working in New Mexico; that school is in its first year of operation.

After the completion of the fellowship program, individuals can chose to opt in to additional “follow-on” support, which is completely optional. The support may include continued support for leadership growth and development, support with long term planning and strategy, instructional coaching, and board training.

Building Excellent Schools also provides other support services including “Weekend Warriors” which is a professional development program for school leaders from traditional public schools, charter schools, and private schools who are seeking to share best practices and sharpen their leadership skills.

SUMMARY

Overall, the application is complete and adequate. During both the capacity interview and the community input hearing, the applicant team demonstrated the capacity to implement the education and governance/management plans as described in the application. The team is strong and represented by experts in the finance, legal, and education arenas with strong community support.

The applicant team has clearly demonstrated their preparedness to open a high quality charter school.

Rating

ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK		
I.A.	Mission	Meets
I.B.	Mission Specific Indicators	Meets
I.C.	Curriculum/Ed Program/Student Standards	Meets
I.D.	Graduation Requirements	NA
I.E.(1)	Ed Philosophy/Instructional Methods	Meets
I.E.(2)	Yearly/Daily Calendar Attachment A: Annual	Meets
I.E.(3)	Programs impact for population	Meets
I.F.(1a)	SPED Identification	Meets
I.F.(1b)	SPED Progress	Meets
I.F.(2a)	ELL Identification	Meets
I.F.(2b)	ELL Progress	Meets
I.G.(1)	Assessment Plan	Meets
I.G.(2)	Assessment Data	Meets
I.G.(3)	Assessment Communications	Meets
ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK		
II.A.(1)	Governing Board Outline	Meets
II.A.(2)	Board Qualifications & Profiles	Meets
II.A.(3)	New Member Process	Meets
II.B.(1)	Board Training	Meets
II.B.(2)	Board Evaluation	Meets
II.C.(1)	Board Oversight	Meets
II.C.(2)	Hiring Head Admin	Meets
II.C.(3)	Principal Job Description (Appendix B)	Meets
II.C.(4)	Principal Evaluation	Meets
II.D.(1)	Org Chart & Relationship	Meets
II.D.(2)	Staff Job Descriptions (Appendix C)	Meets
II.D.(3)	Staffing Plan	Approaches
II.D.(4)	PD/Novice Membership	Meets
II.E.	Employment Terms	Meets
II.F.(1)	PTA	Meets
II.F.(2)	Grievance Process: Families	Meets
II.G.(1)	Recruitment Plan	Meets
II.G.(2)	Lottery	Meets
II.H.	Conflict of Interest	Meets
II.I.(1)	3rd Party Relationships	NA
II.I.(2)	3rd Party Contracts (Appendix D)	NA
II.J.	Waivers: class load/instructional materials	Meets
II.K.(1)	Transportation	Meets
II.K.(2)	Food Service (4 additional "preference" points if using NSLP)	Meets
II.L.(1)	PSFA Checklist (Appendix E)	Meets
II.L.(2)	Facility Identification	Meets

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK		
III.A.	School Size	Meets
III.B.(1)	SEG Worksheets (Appendix F (pdf) and #3 (xls))	Meets
III.B.(2)	5 Year Budget (Appendix G in Excel)	Meets
III.B.(3)	Budget Narrative	Meets
III.B.(4)	Budget Adjustments	Meets
III.C.(1)	Financial Oversight (Appendix H)	Meets
III.C.(2)	Financial Staff	Meets
III.C.(3)	Governance Finance	Meets
EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT		
IV.A.(2)	Outreach Activities	Meets
IV.B.	Community Support	Meets
IV.C.	Networking Relationships	Meets
IV.D.	Innovation	Meets
CAPACITY INTERVIEW		
1	Mission	Meets
2	Innovation	Meets
3	Mission Implementation	Meets
4	Leadership & Governance (GB selection & success of school)	Meets
5	Leadership & Governance (HA selection & success of school)	Meets
6	Leadership & Governance (GB and school evaluations & success)	Meets
7	Leadership & Governance (Relationship of founders, GB, and admin & success)	Meets
8	Leadership & Governance (bylaws, implementation, & success)	Meets
9	Leadership & Governance (establish, implement, change policies and procedures)	Meets
10	Facility (plan for facility and educational occupancy; responsible party)	Meets
11	Facility (next step plan if building does not get PSFA approval)	Meets
12	Finance (planning year budget without federal start-up funds)	Meets
13	Finance (enrollment projections)	Meets
14	Finance (plan if actual enrollment is below projections)	Meets
15	Planning Year (organizational steps during planning year)	Meets
School Specific Questions		
16	Funding for Governing Board training	Meets
17	Janitorial service for school	Meets
18	Reduce staff due to budget shortfall, how will HA meet classroom observation goals	Meets
19	Recruitment and selection of Advisory Council members	Meets
20	Accounting software; where in budget	Meets

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:34 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Support of Solare Collegiate

From: Académica Albuquerque <acabq@cervantes.es>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:16 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Cc: Director Albuquerque; rachael.sewards@gmail.com
Subject: Support of Solare Collegiate

Public Education Commissioners,

I am writing in **support** of Solare Collegiate Charter School. The Instituto Cervantes is dedicated to providing high quality Spanish language instruction in the Albuquerque community and we intend to work with Solare Collegiate following their authorization to provide Spanish language instruction in school. We believe in the Solare Collegiate model, as Rachael Sowards sought us out to get advice about quality Spanish language instruction. Again, we are in strong support of Solare Collegiate.

Best regards,

Mauricia Alarcón Moreno

Academic Coordinator



Instituto Cervantes de Albuquerque
National Hispanic Cultural Center
1701, 4th St. SW.
Albuquerque, NM 87102
tel: (505) 724-4777
e-mail: acabq@cervantes.es

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Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:48 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Allerton, Danna <dallerto@phs.org>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:40 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email in **support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,

Danna Allerton

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Woerner, Karen, PED

Subject: FW: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Jodi Lee Burshia <jburshia@unm.edu>

Sent: Friday, July 20, 2018 10:53 AM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Hello and this message is in **support** of the Solare Collegiate Support program. As a parent of child that attends Alice King Community School (AKCS), a charter school part of the Albuquerque Public School (APS) district, I am definitely interested her educational experiences. I am also interested in the types of academic support available to children in New Mexico and the Solare Collegiate Support program provides this type of needed support.

As an educator, I am deeply invested in the educational justice of students. Currently, I serve as an English and Reading Instructor at the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) where I get to work with Indigenous students with their reading, writing, and comprehension skills. I appreciate this opportunity to work with Indigenous students to envision academic success. The experiences I encounter in the classroom demonstrate the need for programs such as the Solare Collegiate Support program. This is especially true as the Solare Collegiate Support program works to create relevant spaces and connections for students (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to academically flourish.

Please contact me at jburshia@unm.edu and/or 520.400.4709 if you need further information.

Sincerely,

Jodi Burshia

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2018 9:10 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED; Archuleta, Dolores, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Marilyn C <copemarilynm@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2018 8:40 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

To whom it may concern,

My name is Marilyn Cope, and I am writing to show my written **support** for Solare Collegiate.

I had been a student of Rachael Sowards for 3 years at The ASK Academy. Rachael was, and is, an excellent educator. At ASK, I was in her English and Creative Writing classes, and was also an in-class aid for her. She prepared me for college, while also working with any issues I had along the way.

Rachael is a caring educator and goes above and beyond to ensure all of her pupils are succeeding. I have seen her take personal time, outside of school hours, to assist with any work that a student may have trouble with. Along with giving up some of her personal time, she also spends class hours breaking down the issues students are having and creating a helpful environment for them to work in.

I am very grateful for the opportunities I was presented because of her and The ASK Academy, and I know not everyone has access to the same ones. Solare Collegiate would help establish and build these opportunities for others, and create successful youth in a community that doesn't have a great school district.

I believe Rachael will succeed in replicating these efforts and outcomes at Solare Collegiate, bringing the opportunities I had to Southwest Albuquerque. I eagerly await the opening of such a wonderful place for education.

Thank you for your time,

Marilyn Cope

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:33 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Jerome Daye <jerome.daye@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:02 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Cc: rsewards@solarecollegiate.org
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Good Morning,

My name is Jerome I reside in the 87121 area.

I whole hardly believe that this school will do nothing but help out this area. A different and a unique way of teaching is not something that should be pushed away from the youth. The world is evolving every day and a fast pace these kids should have the option to try different ways of learning and that can really help and focus on areas unique to each student, which is the main agenda of the school. This school wants to instill a better education not only for the South Valley but I'm sure for New Mexico it's when these kids grow and become our mayors, engineers, doctors, lawyers, farmers, truck drivers, city works. Let's give the next generation something better than what we have, so they can have the tools to make the best of themselves. Like the great Malcom X said "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today"

Thank you!

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 4:22 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Denise Del Aguila <ddelagu@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 3:02 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Committee,

I'm writing in **support of** Solare Collegiate School, and the choice they present to students in the South Valley and city of Albuquerque as a whole. As a native New Mexican, I deeply believe in the power of a quality education and what it means for students and teachers; I am a product of Albuquerque Public Schools and have achieved personal and professional highs because of the teachers who pushed me to reach my potential. What I've seen over the few years is a lack of innovation in our schools because we are tied to what we know, which I've experienced this first hand as a former teacher with APS, where we would do something because it worked five years ago, not necessarily because it was a best practice. I urge the PEC to create additional choices for families – a choice to try something other than the norm, one that I believe will make a difference.

Respectfully,
Denise Del Aguila

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 8:31 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: John DuBois <jdubois85@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 7:44 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Committee Members:

I hope this email finds you well.

I've been out of town, bummed that I could not attend last week's hearing for Solare Collegiate. I've had the pleasure of sitting down with Rachael Sowards to learn more about Excellent Schools and her plans to help our low income community, in hopes to provide a unique, and much needed educational program in our South Valley.

My background is in finance and being committed to my community. I currently work at Bank of the West as an AVP at the downtown location. I will be transitioning to Nusenda Credit Union as a Business Development Officer, providing programs and services to community members, and working with schools doing financial literacy classes. I have sat on the board for Paws and Stripes, current Future Fund Member, and will look to becoming more involved with Solare Collegiate.

I hope you more than consider Solare Collegiate to become a huge part of our community!

I can be reached through email or by cell at 505-235-6521.

Best,

John DuBois

Sent from my iPhone

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2018 8:55 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED; Archuleta, Dolores, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate

From: Sonny Gokhale <sonny@ironoakcapital.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 15, 2018 7:29 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of **support** with great enthusiasm for the Solare Collegiate Charter School. I believe in the mission of Solare to equip students, especially in the 87121 zip code, and give them the ability to succeed as they progress to high school and college. I am also including my support of Rachael Sowards, who will do a tremendous job running the school. We have met several times to discuss her vision for the school and I found her approach truly exciting and revolutionary. I also believe in her genuine concern for the young students of Albuquerque and her dedication to helping each one of them succeed.

I believe Solare Collegiate Charter School will be a strong driver in closing the achievement gap faced by many children today. As an adjunct faculty member in the Finance department at the University of New Mexico as well as a financial professional in the area, I can attest to the need of improving literacy and math skills before students enter college, to improve the chances of their acceptance into quality degree programs and carry them through to graduation and into the professional world.

As Ms. Sowards' data clearly demonstrates, there is a great need for Solare Collegiate Charter School to bring greater learner opportunities and structure to the community. I wholeheartedly believe Solare will be proof that every student can thrive if given the right structure and support regardless of socio-economic standing.

Sincerely,

Sonny Gokhale, CFA
President, Iron Oak Capital Management
Lecturer, University of New Mexico Department of Finance
210.836.9971

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Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 4:58 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare collegiate support.

From: Monica Gonzales <mg11280503@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 4:36 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare collegiate support.

Hi, I am in **support** of solare collegiate charter school, for many reasons but mostly because I have a nephew going into 6th grade this year, he's so smart and ready for college prep yet the schools he's in district for do not focus on college prep. I'm fearful he's going to be left behind and never reach his full potential because he doesn't have the help he should. I wish I would have gone to a school with better college prep, but because I was just an average student with average grade and an average gpa I was push as hard as other student with better grades and gpa to go into college. The south valley has a huge need for a school like solare and I hope you take it into consideration so kids like my nephew don't get left behind and on the wrong track.

Thank you!

M. Gonzales

July 17, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Molly Gurule, and I am the Principal of Cochiti Elementary and Middle School in Pena Blanca. I have worked with Rachael Sowards as she was our Reading Gear Up Middle School teacher and I have seen her passion for teaching and supporting students who come to a school system with varied life experiences. She understands that schools are not a one size fits all model. She and her school would be an asset to the community of the South Valley. Solare Collegiate will be a school that helps prepare students for high school and college preparation. She has gathered a team of people to help develop and plan to make this school and the students who attend successful. I am a Native New Mexican, and I struggled in school for most of my elementary and high school years. I struggled with understanding my heritage and identity in relationship to the school. I have spoken to Mrs. Sowards, and I am hopeful that because she will include a focus on heritage Spanish and New Mexico Culture, this will assist in improving the high school graduation rate along with supporting more first-generation college graduates. Please take this request to heart. I am not able to attend the hearing as I am out of town, but I full heartedly support this endeavor and wish this community well.

If you have any questions I can be reached at mogrule@bps.k12.nm.us or by cell phone at 505-249-3565.

Respectfully,

Molly Gurule

From: Molly Gurule <MoGurule@bps.k12.nm.us>

Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2018 5:25 PM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Letter of Support for Solare Collegiate

To Whom It May Concern,

I will not be able to attend the hearing on July thus I have attached a letter of support. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached by cell phone at 505-249-3565.

Molly Gurule

Woerner, Karen, PED

Subject: FW: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:48 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED <Karen.Woerner@state.nm.us>
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Henderson, Beth <bhenderso2@phs.org>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:37 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Cc: rsewards@solarecollegiate.org
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email in **support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,

Beth Henderson

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Good morning! My name is Kim Herrera. And I'm here to talk about 3 things. Malakai, Solare Collegiate Charter School and trees.

My family has owned and operated the local, comfort-food style restaurant, Bob's Burgers, for over 50 years...55 years, actually. I'm here because I've spent the last 20+ years of my career operating the location on Rio Bravo and Isleta. Over the past 20 years I've employed thousands of south valley natives, and I've had the honor of getting to know their beautiful children. At the end of the 2017 school year one of those kids, Malakai, runs into my office and shows me a certificate. An award. He received an award for "Class Role Model". We celebrated in my office with high fives, dancing (and then I gave him a dollar for good measure). Then his mom comes into my office to tell me that he's also being tested for gifted. When I think about Malakai, I think about how he is so unique, and yet so common, at the same time. He's unique because he is the perfect combination of head and heart. He is common because even though he is the perfect combination of head and heart, his circumstances will limit his potential. I've seen it too many times.

Malakai is a rising 2th grader, and as he approaches 6th grade his mom will have to make a decision about his critical middle school years. Perhaps he will be able to test into one of the private schools...If he is accepted, he might qualify for a partial scholarship. But his mom still wouldn't be able to swing the balance. Let's say he receives a full scholarship. The location of those schools would prevent his mom from driving him there every day. This may seem hard to believe, but it's 100% true. Kids like Malakai, need a more practical option. An option that marries high school prep and early college preparatory education with affordability and accessibility.

Solare Collegiate Charter School meets and exceeds all of these requirements and is desperately needed in the South Valley. As I met with Rachel a few months ago I became more and more intrigued by the possibility of adding a school like Solare Collegiate Charter School into our neighborhood. I was so intrigued and attracted to the concept of this school because it parallels the way our old-style hamburger stand strives to *exist and behave* on the corner of Rio Bravo and Isleta. We, especially at this specific south valley location, know and love who we are—we are a locally owned and operated, unique New Mexican comfort style fast-food, yet we we strive to *exist and behave* like a 5-star restaurant. Solare Collegiate Charter school is striving for the same thing. They are doubling down on critical core values: Literacy. Data. And Leadership Skills. Their curriculum will be rigorous, and I couldn't agree with that method more. People, young and old, will behave up to expectations.

As Rachel and I continued to chat I realized that she, and the Solare group, are really in the landscaping business, just like me. I am also an heir of the Atrisco Land Grant, and I currently sit on the *Atrisco Company Advisory Board of Directors*. So as a native to the Atrisco Land, and as an existing business owner in the south valley, I consider myself not only to be in the burger business, but also in the landscaping business. Landscaping trees. Planting and nurturing and changing trees. Family trees.

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 4:53 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Krishna Kandath <minimiprof@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 3:22 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email in **support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,
Krishna Kandath

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 8:49 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Support to Solare Collegiate Charter School

From: KEVIN KOPPENHAVER <koppybronco@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 18, 2018 8:56 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Support to Solare Collegiate Charter School

My name is Kevin Koppenhaver. I am emailing to recommend my **full support** to Rachel Seward and the Solare Collegiate Charter School.

I have lived in Albuquerque since 1995 where both of my children have graduated high school. During my time here, the New Mexico school system has consistently ranked in the bottom 3 or 4 in the country in public education. For that reason, I sent my son to private school (Hope Christian) where he graduated in 2011. My daughter went to ECA/CEC where she graduated in 2017. My decision to put them in private/charter schools was a direct result of the New Mexico ranking mentioned above.

Coincidentally, I traveled to the Washington DC area for business last week. I had dinner with some friends who moved there from Albuquerque a few years ago. They mentioned the high quality of the school system in that area in comparison to New Mexico. It is part of the reason they have decided to continue to live there. In short, the status quo for New Mexico is not working.

I have known Rachel for several years, and her personal commitment to education is unparalleled. I have no doubt that the Solare Charter School will be a huge success and pay huge dividends for its students. I hope that you give this your full consideration and support. My contact info for any questions is below. Thank you.

Kevin Koppenhaver
817 Ranchitos Rd NW
Albuquerque, NM 87114
505-280-6231

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of Solare Collegiate Charter School. As a lifelong member of the South Valley, this school is exactly what the community needs. I attended the public community schools from preschool until graduation and, while it is clear that the students are supported in the traditional schools in the community, Solare Collegiate will offer what these traditional schools cannot. Having been an educator for the past seven years in the community I grew up in, I can attest to the fact that smaller class sizes and a better opportunity for student centered education are vital for student success.

Solare Collegiate will help to empower students to break down the stereotypes of an underserved community by allowing students to embrace the things that make the South Valley unique. The school will celebrate the community's Heritage Spanish language which, as the district has been learning over the past several years, is different from other Spanish. Solare Collegiate also places an emphasis on growing and celebrating the traditions of a small, collectivistic community. Allowing students to learn in an environment that not only acknowledges the area-specific issues but offers critical thinking and proactive, growth mindsets to prepare students for their future academic and personal endeavours, is the best option for student success.

I graduated from the only (at the time) traditional, public, South Valley community high school in 2007 in one of the largest classes the school had seen. It was accepted as a fact that "not all of us are going to make it." As a result, fewer than 20 students from my graduating class went on to higher education or trade schools. In an ever changing world, it is unfair for students to be written off or not have the skills necessary to be successful in college because "we didn't know any better." I almost missed the UNM application deadline my senior year, had no clue what the ACT was, and then proceeded to sit through most of my classes wondering just how much longer I could handle "faking it" before everyone realize I still had "no clue" what I was meant to be doing or how the world of academia worked.

It was during my time at UNM that I attended a class with Rachel Sowards. At the time, she was teaching in the College of Education and, from what my peers and I could tell, was one of the few teachers who truly understood what it was like to be in the classroom still. Her information wasn't from decades ago before she went into college and stayed there. It was heartfelt anecdotes about what worked for her students in Nashville and how much she missed them. It was the honest, and frank conversations that we were all so desperate to hear but it seemed like other professors were too afraid to acknowledge the need for change.

I am confident in Mrs. Sowards ability to connect with students and offer the children of my community more opportunities than we have been able to offer them in the past. Solare Collegiate would be a beacon of hope for students who need a fresh approach to education and are determined to take what they learn to better the community they came from as is the tradition my peers and I have followed.

Thank you,
Ashley Leatherman

From: Leatherman, Ashley M <ashley.leatherman@aps.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2018 2:09 PM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Solare Collegiate Charter School

Good Afternoon,

Attached is my letter in support of the proposed Solare Collegiate charter school.

Thank you,
Ash Leatherman
West Mesa High School
Librarian Ex 57461

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to state my support for Solare Collegiate Charter School. As a former applicant, I had the opportunity to go through the charter applicant training with the Lead Founder, Rachael Sowards. During my time with Ms. Sowards, I was impressed with how open and supportive she was during the application process. As a long time educator and lifelong New Mexican, I am confident Solare Collegiate Charter School will provide academic opportunities for students that is severely lacking in current educational settings. She was hungry to work collaboratively with the other applicants, and I know that she will have the same energy and desire to work collaboratively with schools in her community.

Paul Lockhart

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 2:40 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Charter School

From: Mike Loftin <mloftin@homewise.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 11:52 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Charter School

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to you to express public comment in **strong support** of Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Homewise is a New Mexico-based nonprofit that has helped families achieve home ownership for over 30 years. We are primarily focused on helping families for whom home ownership may not otherwise be an option and have helped a lot of families purchase their first home in the South Valley/Southwest Mesa of Albuquerque. In fact, we have helped more families purchase homes in this area - the area where Solare Collegiate intends to locate - than any other part of Albuquerque. Most of the families we help are parents with school-aged children, so we believe that we understand the desires and needs of these families well when it comes to education.

Given this knowledge, we believe that Solare Collegiate will provide the families we serve with a school option that is both high-quality and unique, and we foresee strong parent demand for an option like this for several reasons. First, Solare Collegiate is intentionally small in size-- 416 students in total, with class sizes of 26 students. In addition, it is a middle school that focuses on high school and college prep, with a balance of high quality academics and individualized supports to make the information accessible.

When I met with the proposed school leader, she told me "it is disrespectful to expect less from our students with difficult circumstances." Our goal is to assist families in achieving prosperity, and we too often see families ecstatic to purchase a home in the communities we serve, but disappointed in the public school options for their children. We know that rigorous, quality educational opportunities are necessary to help the families we support achieve long-term wellbeing, and therefore Solare Collegiate is an option that we enthusiastically support.

Thank you for your time, and please do not hesitate to contact me with additional questions.

Sincerely,

Mike Loftin
Chief Executive Officer



Office: 505.955.7023
Fax: 505.983.4655
mloftin@homewise.org
1301 Siler Road, Building D
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507
www.homewise.org

Woerner, Karen, PED

Subject: FW: Solare Collegiate Support

From: **Antoinina Martinez** <antoinina.m14@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 18, 2018 11:41 AM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Good Morning,

I send this email to you today to show my **support** for Solare Collegiate. As a mother of two children I wish they will be able to experience an amazing opportunity to attend this school that will prepare them for their future.

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 2:41 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Support of Solare Collegiate

From: Vania Meetze <vaniameetze@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 12:20 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Support of Solare Collegiate

To Whom It May Concern: I am writing in **support** of Solare Collegiate Charter. I have been a science teacher for 11 years in the public school system. I worked with Mrs. Sowards at Cochiti Middle School. She was an asset to our school. Mrs. Sowards is incredibly knowledgeable about students interests. She knew the best authors and genres to provide in her classroom to hook students into reading. Her ability to take student data and create growth plans for those students is impressive. I believe that her school will be a vital addition to your community. She cares about students well being as well as their academic growth. We saw unprecedented growth in struggling readers with her as a teacher. As a public education teacher, I donot feel like Charters are taking away from our public schools. I believe Charter Schools enhance the education system, providing alternatives for students who are not thriving in Public Schools. I urge you to give these students an opportunity to have a place that they feel like they can have a fresh start. Solare would provide that exact opportunity in your community.

With Regards,

Vania Meetze

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 8:37 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Vasudevan Nampoothiri <sriavvn@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 10:13 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email in **support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,

Vasudevan Nampoothiri



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Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Friday, July 20, 2018 8:18 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: In support of Solare Collegiate Charter School

From: Samuel Naranjo <angrybirds201@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 8:26 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: In support of Solare Collegiate Charter School

Good morning Madame Chair and the Commission, my name is Samuel Naranjo. I am a former student of Rachael Sowards. She was my Literacy teacher at Cochiti Middle School. I would like to start off with all the goals she has helped me accomplish. It has been my goal since 6th grade to acquire a 4.0 GPA Mrs. Sowards motivated me to accomplish this goal by encouraging me every quarter of the school year to be the best version of myself I possibly can be. Back when I was in 6th grade I hated reading it was my least favorite class that I would never want to step a foot in, since then she has pushed me to read and I enjoy reading as well as I enjoy the class. If I would list every accomplishment that Mrs. Sowards helped me with we would be here for hours. If it wasn't for her most of my accomplishments would have not been accomplished. Mrs. Sowards is flexible in learning. If you have trouble with something she will make it her priority to help you in every possible way to make sure you understand what was taught. I believe there are 5 necessary features that a school leader should have and they are communication skills, relationship-orientation, dedication, support, and organization. I am honored to say Mrs. Sowards has all of these. Mrs. Sowards has communication skills, she knows how to talk to her students. If there's a problem she will address it in the nicest possible way. She is relationship-oriented, she gets to know her students and that skill can help her find ways to teach her students on more of a personal level. Mrs. Sowards is most definitely dedicated to everything that she puts herself into. She is very supportive to Her students, anything that you bring up to her she will go to the furthest extent to help you achieve your goal with her support. Mrs. Sowards is very organized in everything she does. She is ahead of the game. She knows what's coming up next and how to complete the task. With all these highly impressive skills that she has, she will run a great school. Her students will be the next great generation to continue with furthering innovations. All thanks to Mrs. Sowards for her motivation and support I am a 4.0 student that has the highest reading score in my Class and School and I am now ready to conquer high school.

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2018 9:56 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Cc: Archuleta, Dolores, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Danielle Plomaritas <durg314@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 16, 2018 8:41 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Public Education Commission-

I'm writing my **support** of the proposed charter school, Solare Collegiate. As a parent, I am continually concerned about the status of education in our state, and city of Albuquerque, especially with the dismal ranking we are assigned.

I am also a teacher who moved here from Virginia in 2011. Virginia does not offer charter schools, so I was excited to experience them here in New Mexico. I teach for a charter school now and am a huge advocate for them. I've seen incredible results from students traditionally pushed aside or behind academically, that end up flourishing. This has especially been the case for low SES and minority students. Charter schools allow for extra care and attention, with specialized focuses, that are positive influences on children and their families. Down the road, our investment in their education pours back into the community.

The location where Solare is hoping to be is an area that needs a rigorous and caring charter school aimed at such a critical time developmentally in students, that of middle school. I hope you offer your support in this endeavor that will greatly benefit our children, their future, and our state's future.

Thank you,

Danielle Plomaritas

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 3:18 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Pramod Panikkath <pramod_panikkath@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 2:46 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email to show my **strong support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by having Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,

Pramod Panikkath

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:36 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Pepper Poole <Pepper.Poole@kwbq.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:24 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Hello.

I wanted to write in my **support** for Solare Collegiate Charter School. It is my belief this school will be the future of NM and will forge a new direction in learning.

Please consider approving this school.

Regards,

Pepper Poole

Pepper Poole

Account Executive

KWBQ-TV/KASY-TV

13 Broadcast Plaza SW

Albuquerque, NM 87104

C: 505.301.8909

Pepper.Poole@KWBQ.com

www.KWBQ.com



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Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 8:46 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Cc: Archuleta, Dolores, PED
Subject: Fw: Support for Solare Collegiate

From: Christine Sargent <csargent@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2018 8:51 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Support for Solare Collegiate

Hello,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic **support** for Solare Collegiate! I am unable to attend the community input hearing tomorrow due to a work conflict so thought I'd send a quick note. We are sending our kids to Altura Prep starting in August. We love the idea of there being a truly high quality Middle School option for them and all of their classmates once they graduate from 5th grade in a few years.

It is also really exciting to think about the possibility of showing that a Middle School can be truly high achieving in an area with only D and F schools right now.

Thanks for all you do,

Christine Sargent
Albuquerque, NM
917-405-7786

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Friday, July 20, 2018 8:18 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate support

From: Kenny Snyder <b4773ry3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 10:23 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate support

My name is **Kenneth Snyder** and I am a former student of Rachel Sowards. She was a fantastic educator not only to myself but to my peers and multiple years of students before and after, she made learning engaging and actually worth while, and was always willing to help and spend extra time with students to help the understand the subject matter. In short any charter school she has such a huge hand in will not only benefit the community but the students who attend it and I feel as if you would be depriving those kids of an educator and school that genuinely cares about them and their future if this school isnt able to happen.

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:46 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Subramaniam, Meena <msubraman@phs.org>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:35 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email in **support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,

Meena Subramaniam

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Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Wednesday, July 25, 2018 3:48 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Support

From: Trevino, Janie <jtrevino@phs.org>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:36 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Cc: rsewards@solarecollegiate.org
Subject: Solare Collegiate Support

Dear Public Education Commission,

I am writing this email in **support** of the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School. The charter school will serve the zip code of 87121 where there is a need for charter schools like Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous academics, individualized support, and character development Solare Collegiate will help students in middle school to excel in high schools and colleges. Solare Collegiate has firm community roots. It will also support the students by Spanish and New Mexico cultural education. Overall, I strongly support Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Regards,

Janie Trevino

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July 18, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

This is a testimonial letter in **support** of an amazing teacher and individual, Mrs. Sowards! I am a parent of Chad Woodward, who had the opportunity to have her in 8th grade for both English and US History. Chad struggled in school and needed a teacher that believed in him and Mrs. Sowards was that person. She encouraged him and gave him the support he needed. Chad was hard working and Mrs. Sowards would work with him after school and tutor him in writing. She also gave him extra support during the school day.

We were on an uphill battle with Chad because he was so down on himself. We believed in him as parents but the outside world was so important for his success. The year with Mrs. Sowards gave Chad the strength to persevere in the rest of his education. He struggled in 9th grade at that school but was determined to succeed. We left that charter school which seemed to be designed for the intelligent students and not for all. As we look back we know that it was the teacher that made the difference at that charter school and she would continue to touch the lives of many others that she interacted with. As a parent and also an educator I know that both teachers and schools can make or break a student. We know without a doubt that Mrs. Sowards was the difference we needed for our son! No we can't pick the teachers in today's times but we now have the opportunity to choose the school. After Mrs. Sowards made that difference for Chad we were on a mission to find the right charter school for Chad and we did. Chad graduated this year with National Honors and plans to make it to the 2024 Olympic Games in Recurve Archery! He also wants to attend Culinary School, after the Olympics, and be the sole owner of an Italian restaurant. We know that Chad was changed by Mrs. Sowards and she gave him a new beginning in his education.

Mrs. Sowards attended Chad's graduation, after losing touch with her. It was at that time that she shared with us her plans for a charter school. I know that given the opportunity to open a school Mrs. Sowards will be able to touch so many more lives than just the students in her classroom! She is a dedicated educator and professional that believes in all students and her Charter School, Solare Collegiate will make the difference New Mexico students deserve! Solare Collegiate will be the school we hear about in the media that parents and students want to attend! She is not in this for financial gains, her dream is to open this school because she loves kids and loves watching them succeed!

Sincerely,

Jean & Richard Woodward

From: machrj@aol.com <machrj@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 11:33 AM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Solare Support

Woerner, Karen, PED

Subject: FW: Support for Solare Collegiate Charter School in lieu of Public Hearing participation

From: Tessah Latson <Tessah@ahcnm.org>

Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2018 11:48 AM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Support for Solare Collegiate Charter School in lieu of Public Hearing participation

Hello,

Due to scheduling conflicts, we are not able to be present at the upcoming public hearing, but please accept the attached letter of support signed by our CEO, Ernie'DeBaca, which was included in the original application. We support the establishment of this school with no reservations, and are happy to provide additional comments or support directly to NM PED as requested.

Sincerely,

Tessah Latson

Director, Barelas Economic Opportunity Center (BEOC)

Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce

1309 4th Street SW

Albuquerque, NM 87102

505.842.9003

www.ahcnm.org

My WHY: To create meaningful and sustainable change for a stronger community.

AHCC WHY: We believe in contributing to a greater cause.



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1309 4th Street SW • El Camino Real • Albuquerque, NM 87102 • 505.842.9003 • Fax 505.764.9664
www.ahcnm.org

Ernie C'de Baca
PRESIDENT & CEO

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April 12, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in strong **support** of Solare Collegiate Charter School, a grades 5-8 charter school proposed to open in the 87121 zip code.


As the President & CEO of the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce (AHCC), representing over 1200 local businesses and over 110,000 community members, I recognize the critical need for a high school and college preparatory school option in southwest Albuquerque, particularly at the middle school level. Solare Collegiate satisfies all of those requirements, with a strong emphasis on rigorous academics balanced by individualized supports needed by students, especially for our city's most disadvantaged students. The Solare Collegiate Founding Team has dedicated considerable time to partnering with the community in a way that ensures it will have the backing of Albuquerque's stakeholders and best serve the needs of this community.

Solare Collegiate is committed to prepare students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice; a commitment that is shared by the AHCC and greater membership. After speaking with Rachael Sowards, Lead Founder of Solare Collegiate, the AHCC is excited to partner with/support Solare Collegiate in the future. Through our Education Committee and established community partnerships, AHCC is here to see Solare Collegiate succeed. This partnership is important to our organization as we believe in the potential of the children of Albuquerque and the role Solare Collegiate will play in fostering that potential.

Again, I would like to extend my support and recommendation for the approval of Solare Collegiate Charter School. Southwest Albuquerque is in dire need of a school that prioritizes highly rigorous, college preparatory curriculum, while also offering Spanish language and New Mexico Cultural programming. It is my hope that Solare Collegiate should be granted a charter and open in the fall of 2019, benefiting the students of southwest Albuquerque.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me:
ernie@ahcnm.org, 842-9003.

Sincerely,


Ernie C'de Baca
President & CEO

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 8:49 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Oppose Solare Collegiate Charter School

From: Carolyn Baker-Nair <cnair@gmx.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 8:00 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: **Oppose** Solare Collegiate Charter School

I am a parent, an educator, a member of the Albuquerque community, a citizen of New Mexico and a citizen of the United States.
I oppose the Solare Collegiate Charter School in New Mexico.
I oppose what it would mean for New Mexico's children and our future.
I oppose tax dollars for private organizations.
I support democracy in our nation, especially in education.
I support education standards that are upheld to the highest degree.
I support public education.
Do not approve the Solare Collegiate Charter School.
Make a stand for New Mexico's future.
Represent the people of New Mexico.

Carolyn Baker-Nair

8416 Hilton Ave NE
Albuquerque NM 87111
(505) 322-9318
cnair@gmx.com

July 24, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission
% Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Re: Solare Collegiate Charter School

Dear Public Education Commission:

For many years I have been following the expansion of charter operations that have been making their way around the country in the current era of reform, accountability, and high stakes testing. KIPP, Success Academy, and the Uncommon Schools Network are just several examples of charter operations that have been established over the past two decades. These schools operate under the same playbook: implement a highly regimented test prep curriculum tied with a no-excuses behavior system, target communities of color in high poverty neighborhoods, and embed themselves in areas that have traditional public schools labeled by state mandated high stakes testing as "failing". These charter operations do not reflect needs expressed by the targeted community, but instead reflect the values of organizations outside the neighborhood, city, or even state.

After attending the hearing last Thursday and then reading the 264 pages of the application, it is abundantly clear that Solare Collegiate Charter School is following this playbook. I noticed the absence of community voice in the application, an abundance of resources and time measuring "academic growth" through high stakes tests, a promotion of a zero tolerance behavior policy, and implementation of data analysis around student test scores. In addition, the Spanish Heritage program described in the application and in the hearing is vague, questionable, and fueled by an as yet to be determined relationship with Instituto Cervantes. For this reason, I am strongly opposed to the authorization by the Public Education Commission of Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Zero Tolerance Behavior System

References to the work of Doug Lemov and the Uncommon Schools Network are sprinkled throughout the Solare Collegiate Charter School application. Doug Lemov wrote *Teach Like a Champion* that details a behavior management system that is highly structured, punitive, and unbending in its implementation. This program is often referred to as a Zero Tolerance Behavior Policy. Uncommon Schools and other charter operations have built their entire behavior management system around Lemov's work. Solare is following their lead.

I have included some articles at the end of this letter that highlight some of the damaging effects to students of a zero tolerance management system. If you read the articles and view the videos, you will encounter the term "tracking". Tracking, mentioned throughout the Solare application, is a foundational strategy in many test prep charter operations. This technique requires "scholars" to clasp their hands on top of their desk, sit up straight, and "track" their eyes with the speaker (usually the teacher). Students as early as Kindergarten in elementary charter school operations are taught to track. If students do not conform to tracking, there are specific and punitive consequences for them. Teachers are also monitored by charter school leadership on how well their students track. When I first heard about the tracking strategy, I thought about how I would respond to someone telling me to sit up straight, clasp my hands, and always look at the speaker when I was at meetings, conferences, doing collaborative work, etc. I urge you to consider what you would do if asked to track.

What was not mentioned in the Solare application is what will be done with students who don't comply with this rigid behavior management system. In the Uncommon Schools network, one of the fallouts due to non-compliance is a very high student attrition rate. Most damaging to our children is that zero tolerance behavior programs completely ignore the root causes of student behavior. Today, all our schools, especially schools in neighborhoods of high poverty, are seeing more children coming to school with deep trauma. A zero tolerance system puts a blind eye to the trauma and instead has the potential to re-traumatize children with its consequences. In both the hearing and the application, there was no plan on working with children beyond reaching rigorous academic goals. No counselor for behavioral and mental health, no social worker. This is very worrisome indeed.

Test-Prep Curriculum

Uncommon Schools Network, like Solare charter schools, boasts their ability to raise student "achievement" with "historically under achieving" populations using a "rigorous academic curriculum". How does Solare propose to do this? By using a test prep based, on-line dependent curriculum (Eureka Math and Accelerated Reader) paired with measuring achievement using standardized tests and assessments in Reading and Math. Achievement in the Arts, social justice work, community engagement, ethnic studies, or languages are not measured, valued, nor included in the Solare curriculum.

Measuring student achievement in Reading and Math at Solare will be intense, ongoing, time consuming, expensive, and mostly administered on-line. The assessment and accountability section of the Solare application takes up 20 pages with the testing calendar taking up five pages. Students will be administered the PARCC, NMSBA, and End of Course Exams annually. Next there are the computer based MAP tests in Reading and Math 3 times a year, the STAR computerized test in Reading and Math at least 4 times a year, internally developed interim assessments administered 6 times a year and finally, students must complete an exit ticket after each lesson on a daily basis. For more details

on Solare's student assessment program, please refer to pp. 85-105 on the application.

Teachers will spend a great amount of time analyzing the enormous amount of data they gather at regularly scheduled "Data Days". Through "data dialogues", teachers will identify students who do not meet the expected level of growth on test scores as "triggers". "Triggers" will be referred to the Student Assistance Team, be given targeted interventions, and individualized instruction. No mention is made about what happens if these strategies do not raise the test scores. Solare simply states in its application that it is, "confident that students will reach the ambitious short cycle and summative goals."

Contract with Instituto Cervantes

Solare reported that because of community input, they would adopt a Spanish Heritage program to maintain and strengthen language spoken at home. The Governing Board made the decision to work with Instituto Cervantes in developing the curriculum and teaching the students. The goal of the Instituto Cervantes, established by the Spanish government, is to promote the language and culture of Spain and Latin American cultures. I worry that the rich New Mexican culture in the South Valley that includes Native American and Chicano cultures will be overlooked and ignored. Further information about the Heritage Spanish program was at best vague.

Thank you for listening to my concerns about Solare collegiate charter school. It is my hope that the PEC is thoughtful and considerate as to the impact this charter operation will have on our children, the South Valley community, and our future. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Francesca Blueher

Retired Public School Teacher
1613 Harvard Drive NE 87106
Albuquerque NM
5053661096

Articles

An interview with the founder and CEO of Success Academy. This piece highlights some of the consequences of higher test scores:

Eva Moskowitz's Crusade to Turn Children into 'Little Test Taking Machines'

Success Academy uses a combination of excessive punishment and direct pressure to remove students who win lottery seats at the school.

<https://www.alternet.org/education/eva-moskowitzs-crusade-turn-children-little-test-taking-machines>

This article mentions Uncommon Schools and its "data driven", test prep focused values:

The Disturbing Reason Why Some Charter Schools May Have Higher Test Scores

It's devastating for black students and children with special needs.

<https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/03/charter-schools-suspend-more-black-students-disabilities-test-scores/>

A video that shows how to teach kindergartners how to track:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=155&v=eZqg1ZoNJPQ

This is critique of Lemov's book, *Teach Like a Champion*. Lemov's work is mentioned favorably several times in the Solare application.

The Power of Pedagogy: Why We Shouldn't Teach Like Champions

<https://citiessuburbsschoolchoice.wordpress.com/2016/05/07/the-power-of-pedagogy-why-we-shouldnt-teach-like-champions/>

From: Francesca Blueher <francescablueher@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 1:14 PM

To: Schools, Charter, PED

Subject: Fwd: Public Input **against** Solare Collegiate Charter School

Dear Public Education Commission,

Attached and below are comments against the proposed Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Sincerely,

Francesca Blueher

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Friday, July 20, 2018 8:19 AM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Charter School

From: chris sturgis <sturgis.chris@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 20, 2018 5:41 AM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Subject: Solare Collegiate Charter School

I am writing in regards to the application of the Solare Collegiate Charter School. I am highly concerned that this school claims to be "guided by the belief that voice strengthens identity" yet interprets this as two contained courses. A strong culturally responsive strategy that draws on the assets of students and their family should be incorporated throughout the school not embedded in a stand alone curriculum.

One of the strategic advantages of charter schools is to bring innovation. This application suggests that they are not even drawing from the most developed ideas regarding child and adolescent development and culturally responsive education. Both of these are important to consider as they can help to build intrinsic motivation.

I am also concerned that the focus on literacy seems to emphasize reading whereas writing is equally important, perhaps even more so. Writing is one avenue for students to develop voice and the higher order skills. The focus of the curriculum seems to be only on the basics without opportunity for deeper learning.

I hope that you will encourage the applicant to revisit their design before you approve their model. We want the best for NM and this does not appear to be an application that is drawing from the best practices.

Chris Sturgis
121 Mesa Vista Street
Santa Fe NM 87501

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 4:24 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Solare Collegiate Charter School Application
Attachments: ABQ Interfaith Re SCCS 07242018 Final.pdf

From: Kip Bobroff <kipbobroff@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 3:41 PM
To: Schools, Charter, PED
Cc: Joaquin Sanchez
Subject: Solare Collegiate Charter School Application

Attached as a pdf please find comments from Albuquerque Interfaith in opposition to the application of Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Please contact Joaquin Sanchez at the above email address with any questions.

Thank you.

ALBUQUERQUE INTERFAITH

July 24, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission
% Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Re: Solare Collegiate Charter School Application

Dear Public Education Commission:

Albuquerque Interfaith is a 25-year-old broad-based non-profit organization of fifteen congregations, public schools, and non-profits acting together for the common good. AI has advocated for excellent public schools since our founding. For over a decade, AI has supported charter schools created and controlled by local communities, responding to local needs and accountable to families seeking good educations for their children. AI believes in transparency, innovation, accountability, and communities making their own decisions for their children.

Albuquerque Interfaith opposes approval of the application of Solare Collegiate Charter School because it fails to meet these principles. Its application and public testimony obscure the fact that SCCS has been initiated by entities outside New Mexico seeking to “target” the South Valley for their own larger education reform agenda. The school plan has been developed with little *meaningful* conversation or input from South Valley and Westside families, let alone true local control. As a result, SCCS’s educational plan is neither unique nor innovative. Its near total reliance on excessive standardized testing ignores educational research that using only such measures harms children from the communities it proposes to serve. Its application barely mentions its strategy for behavioral management despite strong research that similar overly punitive “no-excuses” disciplinary approaches fail large numbers of children and, for many, lead to incarceration not graduation.

Transparency. SCCS developed as part of a national effort established and funded by outside organizations through the organization “Building Excellent Schools” that aims to propagate a particular model of education. The New Mexico affiliate, Excellent Schools New Mexico, was established to start 30 new charter schools using that model. Rather than discuss that affiliation openly and transparently, the public presentation on July 19 hardly mentioned it. Indeed, the SCCS application explicitly denies that ESNM is integral to the school’s establishment, despite relying heavily on \$200,000 in startup funding from the organization, particularly if it does not receive Charter School Program funding. The families of the South Valley deserve to know where the strategies and resources come from that are being used to target their communities.

Lack of quality community engagement. According to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (2014), an international leader in defining effective community engagement

practices, public groups define the extent to which the community at large are involved in setting mission, vision and direction for an initiative. The Association defines the quality of community engagement through a six step spectrum that begins with “Inform” and increases incrementally to “Empower”. SCCS’s testimony confirmed that their approach to engaging the South Valley community has been almost through the lens of “Inform”: they provided the public with information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions of their school.

SCCS’s application gives no evidence that they conducted individual or group meetings, focus groups, or even focus groups with the families that they have targeted to ask what they want from a school for their children. This is the lowest level of engagement and embraces the disposition of “We’ll keep you informed.” Conversely, community designed charter schools, the traditional process in New Mexico, requires school founders to embrace the two highest levels of the Public Participation Spectrum: “Collaborate”: partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution and “Empower”: place final decision making in the hands of the public. The absence of collaboration and empowerment, as defined by IAP2, on SCCS’s account, brings into question their readiness in creating sustainable community partnerships within the South Valley community.

Lack of Uniqueness. Not surprisingly, given its outside roots and lack of meaningful community engagement, SCCS’ stated mission could well be the mission of every public school in New Mexico. The applicant’s strategy matches the “Building Excellent Schools” national website’s description almost exactly: “an academically rigorous instructional program, dramatically increased instructional time, and a relentless focus on literacy and mathematics.” Extended time on Math and English/Language Arts instruction is a widely used strategy in most public schools through the Response to Intervention (RTI) protocol. The proposed heritage language and cultural enrichment are a small part of the applicant’s strategy.

Lack of Innovation. The mission statement and application capture little innovation of any sort. In the application itself, there is scant evidence of innovation, beyond requiring staff to work a minimum of 48 hours each week (Application, p.169), a model for attracting inexperienced and less-qualified teachers and then burning them out.

Behavioral Management. The application raises many red flags around the applicant’s approach to behavioral management, most importantly a lack of specificity. We are concerned that the national models the applicant cites such as “Uncommon Schools” have incorporated “zero tolerance” school and “No Excuses” approaches which contribute to pushing out struggling students rather than providing resources and strategies to overcome socio-economic barriers. The application makes no mention of the “restorative justice” approach that has been successfully embraced in many local schools to reduce suspensions and other negative disciplinary outcomes. Because the application provides so little detail on its behavioral management approach, it is impossible to know whether SCCS will support its students adequately or “push out” those who struggle.

Accountability. We are concerned that SCCS's application indicates overwhelming reliance on standardized testing to ensure accountability and student success. While standardized testing should be one part of student and school assessment and accountability, such a near exclusive fails to evaluate and encourage the kind of holistic education that developing future citizens and leaders of our democracy requires.

Conclusion. Albuquerque Interfaith believes in public schools and supports charter schools that are firmly based in our community; initiated, planned, and controlled by and with the deep engagement of the families they serve; and accountable in meaningful ways to those families. While SCCS's founders are no doubt well-intentioned and have spent almost a year "selling" their proposed school, it is not a process or a result that will serve well the families of the South Valley.

Sincerely,

/s/

Albuquerque Interfaith

Reference

Core Values, Ethics, Spectrum – The 3 Pillars of Public Participation. (2014). Retrieved July 22, 2018, from <https://www.iap2.org/page/pillars>

Albuquerque Interfaith is made up of congregations, public schools, and non-profit organizations working to develop the capacity of ordinary people to participate in democracy. Its member institutions include First Congregational Church, UCC First Unitarian Church, Friends Meeting, La Mesa Presbyterian Church PCUSA, NACA/NISN (Native American Community Academy/NACA Inspired School Network), PTEC (Parents and Teachers Educating the Community), Robert F. Kennedy Charter School, St. Andrew Presbyterian Church PCUSA, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, St. Paul Lutheran Church, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus Catholic Church SBMTNA (Santa Barbara/Martineztown Neighborhood Association) Second Presbyterian Church, and South Valley Academy Charter School. It is affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation, the nation's oldest and largest network for broad-based organizing.



July 24, 2018

To the members of the Public Education Commission,

This letter serves to articulate concerns regarding the application for Solare Collegiate Charter School which would be located in the 87121 ZIP code. These concerns arise not from enrollment but from the educational approach put forth by Solare Collegiate.

- The application frames the students from the 87121 ZIP code using a deficit lens, considering only the areas in which they need to grow and not from the developmental assets they bring to the learning community.
- The educational model intended by Solare Collegiate sacrifices the Whole Child in favor of extensive English Language Arts and Mathematics blocks which do not leave more than 50 minutes per Social Studies, Science or specialties class four days per week and New Mexico Culture but once per week for 80 minutes.
- While Solare Collegiate claims to honor student voice, the discipline plan, which utilizes merits and demerits, to support student behavior limits students' abilities to work through behavior challenges using their voice and agency. Systems of power and oppression could be replicated using this approach.
- The primary literacy focus in Social Studies and Science restricts students' abilities to engage in these content areas as historians and scientists. Reading about Social Studies and Science is not the same as doing the work of historians, citizens and scientists.
- Eighty minutes per week in which to engage in a science lab will not develop students true understanding of the cross-cutting concepts and rigorous standards of the newly adopted New Mexico STEM Ready Standards. Students will not enter high school prepared thus limiting their opportunities to be college or career ready in the sciences.

The applicants for Solaire Collegiate want what we all want for the students of Albuquerque: excellent schools for our students to achieve and thrive. The manner in which they are approaching this shared goal are counter to the interests of our students and community.

Sincerely,

Raquel Reedy
Superintendent
Albuquerque Public Schools

Nancy N. Chavez
Executive Administrative Assistant
Office of the Superintendent
505-880-3706 | c: 505-328-7194
Fax 872-8855
chavez_n@aps.edu | www.aps.edu



**ALBUQUERQUE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Woerner, Karen, PED

From: Schools, Charter, PED
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 4:20 PM
To: Woerner, Karen, PED
Subject: Fw: Opposition Letter to Solare Collegiate Charter School
Attachments: PEC Opposition Letter Regarding Solare Application.pdf

From: Javier Rojo <jrojoccp@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 1:12 PM
Cc: Ane Romero; Melanie Aranda; Oriana Sandoval; Kara Bobroff
Subject: Opposition Letter to Solare Collegiate Charter School

Hello,

On behalf of community residents and several local organizations, I have attached a signed letter opposing the approval of Solare Collegiate Charter School.

Thank you for your time.

--

Javier Rojo

CCP Policy Fellow
Master in Public Affairs Candidate '19
Princeton University

Center for Civic Policy
1000 Silver Ave NW | Suite 320
Nashville, TN 37203
Email: jdaniel.ccp@gmail.com
Phone: 505-980-5127 | Fax: 505-242-1231
Website: www.civicpolicy.com

July 18, 2018

Ms. Patricia Gibson, Chair
Mr. Gilbert G. Peralta, Vice Chair
Ms. Karyl Ann Armbruster, Secretary
New Mexico Public Education Commission
300 Don Gaspar Santa Fe, NM 87501

New Mexico's charter school system has historically supported autonomy and innovation, leading to a healthy diversity of educational options available to students and their families. Across the state, many of these schools have served in a way that complements local school districts and meets a unique need. This is imperative to the success of those charter schools which work in collaboration and in a transparent way with existing community and education partners.

Unfortunately, this has not been the full process in which Solare Charter School has operated in submitting their application for the Building Excellent Schools program. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Public Education Commission (PEC) not support the Solare Charter School's application to open a Building Excellent Schools (BES) school. In addition, we also request that the Public Education Commission, take the following steps to improve and ensure that key community partners are at the table when proposed charter school applications are being reviewed and that proper guidelines and performance standards are instituted to ensure the way in which charter schools operate:

- Work with existing charter and district leaders to establish clarity and agreement on how charter schools should be assessed for authorization, replication, and expansion, and establish a clear and transparent approval process including community engagement and public hearings.
- Require that all new charter school applicants demonstrate collaboration and partnership with local schools, school districts, school boards, tribes and non-profits to complement existing services and meet the educational needs of the community and students, versus duplicating and competing for resources, which may have a negative financial impact on surrounding schools.
- Conduct an impact study with the Legislative Finance Committee or Legislative Education Study Committee, including a feasibility assessment of new school locations, an analysis of continued charter school authorizations without sustainable facilities solutions, and the impact of the lack of clarity and agreement on how charter schools should be evaluated for authorization, replication/expansion, and renewal prior to the approval of any new charter schools in New Mexico.

The process for approving charter schools in New Mexico is flawed. The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools gave New Mexico an 8 out of 16 points for a transparent charter application, review, and decision-making process. It was noted that New Mexico lacked application approval criteria. Furthermore, the recent 2018 National Charter School Law Rankings & Scorecard conducted by the Center for Educational Reform, gave New Mexico 8 out of 15 points for authorizing charter schools, noting excessive regulation and providing a case study for the nation in New Mexico's emphasis on compliance with administrative regulations over a focus on student outcomes. Based on our own experiences and observations, the New Mexico Public Education Commission and Public Education Department decision-making processes remain opaque. Some New Mexico charter schools face an especially rigorous approval process, while others are treated with considerable leniency. The Schott Foundation and the Network for Public Education recently assigned the state of New

Mexico an "F," and highlighted that its charter school practices were not aligned or transparent in the democratic processes.

We ask that PEC work with us to develop more transparent, equitable, and community-informed processes for charter school authorizations. It is critical that we hold applicants accountable not only to state regulations, but to the New Mexico schools, students, and families who depend on and deserve an open, fair, and responsive educational system. Adhering to this type of process, truly guarantees that families will indeed be able to make the best school choice for their communities and children.

We hope that this letter is the beginning of a productive dialogue and we look forward to taking the necessary steps towards creating and sustaining a transparent system together. Thank you for your time and attention regarding this matter.

Respectfully,

New Mexico American Federation of Teachers
Enlace Comunitario
New Mexico Dream Team
OLE: Organizers in the Land of Enchantment
Center for Civic Policy
NM Voices for Children
Progress Now NM
Partnership for Community Action
Agri-Cultura Network
Encuentro New Mexico
Prosperity Works
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty
South Valley Economic Development Center
Rio Grande Community Development Cooperation
La Plazita
National Immigration Law Center
Centro Savila
El Centro
South Valley Academy, local charter school

Robert F. Kennedy Charter School, local charter school
Native American Community Academy, local charter school
Melanie Aranda, South Valley resident
James Aranda, South Valley resident
Alysia Maldonado, South Valley resident
Pamela M. Baca, South Valley Resident
Ana M. Guadian, South Valley Resident
Mario R. Lara, South Valley Resident
Leobardo S. Maldonado, South Valley Resident
Laura J. Sauameda De Fernandez, South Valley Resident
Rosalinda A. Torres, South Valley Resident
Teresa M. Roskos Payne, South Valley Resident
Julio C. Rivas, South Valley Resident
Manuel Ornelas Dominguez, South Valley Resident
Gloria G. Rodriguez, South Valley Resident

19 speakers
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STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
300 DON GASPAR
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786
Telephone (505) 827-5800
www.ped.state.nm.us

CHRISTOPHER RUSZKOWSKI
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

VISITORS ATTENDING PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION – COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING
for Solare Collegiate Charter School
THURSDAY JULY 19, 2018 from 8:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

NAME (print)	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTING	IN SUPPORT OF APPROVAL OR OPPOSED TO APPROVAL	WISH TO SPEAK (Yes or Blank)
Jane Doe		Orange State Education Center	Opposed	
John Doe		Pluto Public Schools	In Support	YES
Peter Doe		Self	In support	
Ernesto Garcia Ernesto Garcia		—	—	NO
Mary Catherine Baca MCB		—	—	no
Travis Miller				NO
David Binder				NO
Raymond Nance		self	Support	yes
Domen Fuentes		self	support	no
Glenna Voigt		SELF		
Measman Stern		Self	Support	no
Jerome Baye		Self	Support	no
Melissa Wauneka		Teach For America	In Support	No
Denise Del Aguila		Teach For America	Support	No



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Jane Doe		Orange State Education Center	Opposed	
John Doe		Pluto Public Schools	In Support	YES
Peter Doe		Self	In support	
TERESA NARANJO	<i>Teresa Naranjo</i>	Self	IN Support	NO
Samuel Naranjo	<i>Samuel Naranjo</i>	Self	IN support	Yes
Tom Genne	<i>Tom Genne</i>	NISN	in support	NO
Mark Sowards	<i>Mark Sowards</i>	Self	IN support	NO
Adam Garcia	<i>Adam Garcia</i>	Self	In Support	NO
Sita Subramony	<i>Sita</i>	Self	In support	
Pranav Venkit	<i>Pranav</i>	Self	In support	NO
Debra, Au	<i>Debra Au</i>	Self	In Support	No
P. Kim Herrera	<i>P. Kim Herrera</i>	South Valley Buss Community BOBS BARRON ARIZO COMUNITES	IN support	yes
Janie Blais	<i>Janie Blais</i>	Self NMAFCS	Support	
Rev. Trey Hammond	<i>Rev. Trey Hammond</i>	Albuquerque Interfaith	Oppose	Yes
Wendy Dietz	<i>Wendy Dietz</i>	Albuquerque Ymca	Support	NO



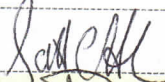

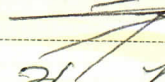

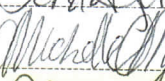
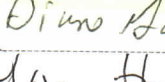

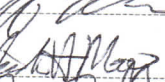



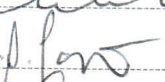
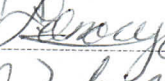
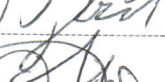
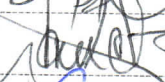
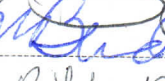
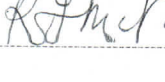




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Troy H		visn	opposed	no
B. DEL ROSARIO		PED-		
Julie Radoslovich		La Red	Opposed	Yes Yes
Kase		NKA	opposed	N
JOAQUIN SANCHEZ		Community Mem	Opposed	Yes
CHRIS NARILAN			Support	No
JOAQUIN SANCHEZ		ALBUQUERQUE INTERMEDIATE	OPPOSED	No
Reinette Archibald		Solare Collegiate	Support	NO
Lynette Garcia		Solare Collegiate	Support	NO

NAME (print)	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTING	IN SUPPORT OF APPROVAL OR OPPOSED TO APPROVAL	WISH TO SPEAK (Yes or Blank)
Scott Hindman		Excellent Schools NM	Support	No
Robert Baade		South Valle	OPPOSED	YES
Isaac Deluna		NM DreamTeam	Opposed	Yes
Kip Boboff		Ang Interfaith	Opposed	Yes
Fonda Kirchmeyer		ABS Interf + ATF	opposed	NO
Michelle Murgio		NMDT	Opposed	NO
Diane Garcia		Self/ Family	Support	Yes
Clarencett Hoge		NISN	Opposed	NO
Jeff Keas		Students	Support	No
Miranda Mesquez		students	Support	no
Rafael Reyes		XXXX		No
Matthew Pahl		NM Coalition		No
Anna Delgado		Community	Opposed	No
Chet Charleston		Community	opposed	no
Michelle Poiani		ATF-TEACHER	opposed	no
Lilliamayo				no
Teron Campbell		Self	Support	No
Thomas Outler		District Attorney	Support	No
ANNETTE LAMICHE		SELF		NO
Norma Binder		Soire Collegiate	Support	NO
Kathy McMahon		" "	"	NO



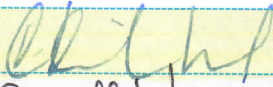
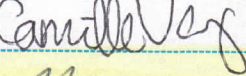
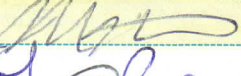



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CHRISTOPHER RUSZKOWSKI
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

VISITORS ATTENDING PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION – COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING
for Solare Collegiate Charter School
THURSDAY JULY 19, 2018 from 8:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

NAME (print)	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTING	IN SUPPORT OF APPROVAL OR OPPOSED TO APPROVAL	WISH TO SPEAK (Yes or Blank)
Jane Doe		Orange State Education Center	Opposed	
John Doe		Pluto Public Schools	In Support	YES
Peter Doe		Self	In support	
Dawn Lay Lara		self	In Support	yes
Jeremy Nelson		Self	IN Support	NO
Jessica Lopez		NISN		NO
Luis C. Garcia		self	undecided	NO
Bridget McKenney	Bridget McKenney	Self	In Support	No
Danielle Montoya	D Montoya	Self	in support	NO
Alan Braver		Albuquerque Inter Faith	opposed	NO
Ellen Bernstein		albuquerque Teachers Federation	Opposed	Yes
Marianna Anaya		albq. Teachers Federation	Opposed	NO

NAME (print)	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTING	IN SUPPORT OF APPROVAL OR OPPOSED TO APPROVAL	WISH TO SPEAK (Yes or Blank)
KRISHNA KANDATH		SOLARE-Community	IN SUPPORT	Yes
Camille Vasquez		solare Collegiate	In support	—
Michael L. H.		Homecare	In support	yes
LYMAN PAUL			In Support	—
GERASIM			In Support	—
Mandyter		private citizen	OPPOSED	no



New Mexico Public Education Commission

300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

August 17, 2018

Madame Chair and Commissioners,

The Founding Team of Solare Collegiate would like to thank the Public Education Commission for thoroughly reviewing our charter school application. Over the last 12 months, we have focused our energy on designing a school that meets the needs of the Southwest Mesa through deep community engagement and the application of local and national best practices employed by high-performing schools serving low-income students. This focus is reflected in the scoring of both our application and our capacity interview, as well as in the great show of support we have received from the community that we intend to serve. Organizations located in the Southwest Mesa and South Valley cumulatively wrote 27 letters of support for our school, while parents in these communities wrote an additional 17 letters of support. Each of these letters can be found in Attachments S and T of our charter application. Close to 60 supporters – spanning a range of community, business and personal affiliations – attended our Community Input Hearing, 197 individuals signed our online petition supporting our school, and an additional 30 supporters submitted written comment to the Public Education Commission.

Innovation

During our Community Input Hearing, concern was expressed as to whether or not what we are proposing is innovative enough to fulfill the promise of charter schools. The Solare Collegiate mission may share the language of missions of other educational institutions, because our desired result is not innovative in the traditional sense-- preparing our students to excel in high school and college. However, the implementation of our mission is innovative, particularly in the 87121's Southwest Mesa, where 2017 graduation rates hovered around 65%¹.

New Mexico Statutes Annotated Section 22-8B-3 defines one of the purposes of the Charter Schools Act is to enable individual schools to *"encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods that are based on reliable research and effective practices or have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics."* Solare Collegiate is proposing to meet this regulatory purpose of combining a different approach with successful replication of effective practices in the following ways:

- **Middle School-Only Model-** Solare Collegiate is proposing as an extended middle school (see bullet point below for further information on our 5th grade start), and the middle school-only model (including the traditional grade levels of 6-8) is unique among charter schools in New Mexico. Of the 94 charter schools listed on the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools website, as well as the three charter schools opening in August 2018, only six schools across the state focus exclusively on middle school grades, four of which are in Albuquerque. Less than 4% of the state's charters are middle-school only models. More commonly, middle schools is enveloped in a K-8, 6-12, or K-12 model. The Solare Collegiate founding team deeply believes in the importance of middle school in shaping students' high school, college, and professional success, and believes in the importance of a school dedicated exclusively to the unique academic and developmental needs of middle school students. Students in southwest Albuquerque currently do not have easy access to a middle school-only charter school, as

¹ <http://www.aps.edu/news/aps-continues-to-make-gains-in-graduation-rates>



the closest option, South Valley Preparatory, recently moved to a new location each of the Rio Grande, approximately six miles away from our proposed community and do not offer student transportation. South Valley Prep was the highest performing middle school in the southwest quadrant. The other three middle school-only charter schools are located even further east of the Rio Grande. Currently, the six middle school-only models serve a total of 906 students- we are proposing to serve 416 students at full enrollment, increasing the number of seats at middle school-only models by 45%. Inherent to our school design is focusing exclusively on middle school, where the closing of academic gaps will enable our students to successfully attend the high schools of their choice. By closing academic gaps during the middle school years, we will be able to send our students to district high schools, as well as charter high schools, where they will be successful, because of their strong foundational skills developed at Solare Collegiate. Our team will focus on developing relationships with the schools in our community, as well as the schools in which our students express interest in attending, and support our students in their transition to high school.

- **5th Grade Start-** Solare Collegiate is proposed as an extended middle school, with a grades 5-8 model. The unique 5th grade start for middle school is used with great success at high poverty, high achieving charter schools across the country. In New Mexico, two schools utilize an extended middle school model, however both schools follow a semi-self-contained model. Solare Collegiate proposes to have teacher content specialization beginning in 5th grade, enabling our teachers to not only be experts in their content area, but also to be experts in supporting student needs each content area. Additionally, our school design includes all teachers receiving two 50 minute preparatory blocks per day, ensuring teachers have substantial time for intellectual preparation and personalized professional development. With the adoption of the highly rigorous NM STEM Ready content standards, and their daily 50 minute block of science class and a dedicated weekly science lab, Solare Collegiate 5th graders will be poised to gain high levels of content knowledge and experience in science. Similarly, our 5th grade students will benefit from a middle school model with 50 minutes of daily Social Studies instruction.
- **Teachers Transition Classes-** Solare Collegiate is proposing that our teachers transition across classrooms, as opposed to our students moving from classroom to classroom. This innovative element serves two purposes: first it transitions classroom ownership to the students, as opposed to the classroom being a teacher's space. We believe that students need to identify a space as their own, which provides a sense of comfort and security while at school. Second, teacher transitions reduce the number of minutes within a school day that students are transitioning in the hallways. Solare Collegiate students will have dedicated extended AM and PM breaks, as well as in-class movement breaks while the teachers are transitioning. Because our teachers have two preparatory periods each day, we are able to seamlessly transition teachers from room-to-room, while also ensuring each classroom has adult supervision at all times. Our school will include dedicated teacher office space outside of the classroom, fostering professionalism and collaboration between teachers working in a common office space. Our research of middle schools in New Mexico did not reveal any schools that utilized this innovative component.
- **Extended School Day and Year-** The Solare Collegiate school day and school year will be extended from that of other schools in the 87121-zip code. Our school year will be 183 days, compared to the 178 day calendar at APS. Students who wish to access school breakfast may begin arriving at 7:20am, with the regular school day beginning at 7:40am. The school day concludes at 4:15pm on Monday through Thursday, and at 2:00pm on Fridays. In the typical week, students at Solare Collegiate receive 465 minutes of daily instruction between 7:40am and 4:15pm, not including 50 minutes for breakfast and lunch. On Fridays, Solare Collegiate operates on an abbreviated schedule. During abbreviated days, our students receive 370 minutes of daily instruction, as well as 50 minutes for breakfast and lunch. After student dismissal on Fridays, teachers have two hours of weekly



professional development focused on instructional practice, student achievement, and data analysis. In total, students at Solare Collegiate receive 2230 minutes (37 hours, 10 minutes) of academic instruction in an average week. In contrast, middle schools in the 87121-zip code average approximately 1,995 minutes (31 hours, 15 minutes) receiving academic instruction each week. Solare Collegiate students will spend 247.8 more hours in school each year, equaling an additional 36.7 Albuquerque Public Schools days of academic instruction per year. Over four years at Solare Collegiate, students will receive an additional 147 days of school- nearly an entire extra year of instruction when compared to Albuquerque Public Schools. When compared to the state minimums outlined in NMSA 22-2-8.1 our schedule results in 46.7 more days per year than the minimum requirements.

- **Double Blocks of Literacy and Math for ALL Students--** Solare Collegiate believes that our students need a strong literacy and mathematics foundations, in order for them to be successful in high school and college. For that reason, as part of our regular academic programming, all students will have double blocks of English/Language Arts and Mathematics each day. Our double blocks are not just more time in class, but intentionally divided into specific points of focus, including a traditional English/Language Arts block and a Textual Analysis block, which is framed around the skill of using textual evidence, as well as the instructional component for oral literacy skills, supporting our focus on student voice. For mathematics in 5th and 6th grades, one math block will focus on foundational mathematics skills, including mental math, with the second block focusing on conceptual skills. In 7th and 8th grades, the two math courses will be combined into a 100 minute block focusing on pre-algebra in 7th grade and algebra in 8th grade. These blocks are not intervention, special education, or English Language pull out supports: all students will benefit from the additional time dedicated to the core content. For students with special needs needing additional support or English learners, our special education and EL team will push-in to classrooms during core instructional time, as well as provide pull-out support during the FOCUS block, the independent reading block, or during our advisory times. Students who have not been identified with a special need but that need additional support overall or specific to an individual concept or subject area will be able to utilize our daily FOCUS block for individualized support and instruction. Similarly, our gifted students will receive specialized advisory time and support during our FOCUS block, as well as during the Advisory periods.

The Charter School Act describes an additional purpose for charter schools to be “to address the needs of all students, including those determined to be at risk.” Solare Collegiate addresses this regulatory purpose in the following way:

- **Daily FOCUS Block--** The Solare Collegiate team recognizes that middle school is a point in a child’s academic career when they often decide their long-term academic path. While we prioritize highly rigorous academics, we also value providing our students with purposeful and predictable individualized support. Included within our regular school day is the FOCUS period. The purpose behind the FOCUS period is to prioritize student support - reteaching of concepts not grasped during regular class time, review of previously taught concepts, and extension of knowledge. Our daily FOCUS block will be 50 minutes, Monday through Thursday. During this time, all teachers will be charged with providing student support, ranging from small group tutoring or reteaching of a concept, exploratory extension for gifted or high achieving students, or structured work time for students who need a quiet space to work or read. This time will be utilized to provide our students with special needs (including gifted) and English language supports with the resources they need to be successful in the classroom, including reteaching, small group instruction, and homework support. However, our FOCUS block will also benefit our students who are not identified as special needs or English learners, providing teachers the time to give students additional support, for reteaching, practicing, or extending the lessons in the classroom. Student groupings will be fluid, to ensure that students have their most immediate needs met each day. The academic



performance data for upper elementary and middle school in the 87121 zip code suggests that the majority of our students will enter Solare Collegiate behind academically, and our FOCUS block will ensure that we have additional time to address the needs of all of our students.

The Charter School Act of New Mexico states that an additional purpose for charter schools is “to allow the development of different and innovative forms of measuring student learning and achievement.” The Solare Collegiate design fulfills this regulatory element in the following ways:

- **Oral Literacy-** Solare Collegiate will have a purposeful focus on the development of student voice. Across all content areas, student voice will be emphasized and encouraged during instruction. By that we mean a strong sense of self, described in further in the bullet below, as well as being comfortable speaking in a variety of situations. During instructional planning, our teachers will be encouraged to incorporate student voice into the daily lessons - through discussions, presentations, and partner-sharing. In fact, our teachers will be expected to spend no more than 30% of the class time doing “teacher talk,” such as direct instruction or teacher-led conversations. We believe that students should do the “intellectual heavy lifting” in every class, which includes struggling to find a solution or make a connection through academic conversation. Our instructional practice for oral literacy will be based in *Great Habits, Great Readers* Habits of Discussion.² Oral literacy skills will be taught explicitly in our Textual Analysis Class, in alignment with the New Mexico Common Core Speaking and Listening standards, and then applied in each of the academic courses. Speaking and listening skills will be assessed using a rubric aligned to the New Mexico Common Core Speaking and Listening standards, with the oral literacy skills purposefully aligned to the complimentary reading and writing skills focused upon in the two English courses. Additionally, it is our goal that students will run our weekly Community Circle, putting their oral literacy skills to practice. In our research of schools in New Mexico, we did not encounter any schools with an explicit focus on oral literacy and student voice.
- **Voice strengthens identity-** One of our core values is that voice strengthens identity, and that belief will be integrated into all Solare Collegiate classes and activities. Every six weeks, our identity theme focus will shift, beginning with self, school community, local community (Southwest Mesa, South Valley, West Side, etc.), New Mexico, United States or country of origin, and the world. Each theme will be used to frame the unit planning in each class. We believe that as students are approaching their English, Math, Science, and Social Studies coursework from the lens of their specific identities, they will have a clearer understanding of how each course contributes to the further development of their identity. As our students examine their identity from each of these lenses, they will become more confident in themselves, developing the figurative voice to couple with the physical voice Solare Collegiate will support students in developing. While there are several schools in the community that focus on student identity, most of these focus on the cultural identity of the students. Our focus on identity begins with the self and purposefully expands to many of the different identities a student holds. Additionally, we integrate our focus on oral literacy with voice and identity, creating a school community that fosters student autonomy.
- **Literacy Focus in Content Area Classes-** At Solare Collegiate, we believe that literacy is foundational; therefore, literacy is at the foundation of each of our core content classes. Our middle school students will receive 130 minutes of literacy-based instruction each day, with a traditional Language Arts course, a course focusing on textual analysis, and 30 minutes of accountable independent reading of self-selected texts. In addition, our

² Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. (2013). *Great Habits, Great Readers: A Practical Guide for K-4 Reading in the Light of Common Core*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.



Social Studies classes and our Monday through Thursday Science classes will be taught from a non-fiction literacy perspective. Our students will use the reading and writing skills studied in their textual analysis classes and apply them during their Social Studies and Science classes. Finally, we will include integrated literacy skills in math courses, ensuring our students not only are computing math but are able to articulate the steps taken to get to the solution, in written and oral form. Our intensive focus on literacy differs from the district and charter schools in the 87121-zip code, with intensive study of text and analytical writing skills being infused in all content area classes, putting the intellectual heavy lifting on the students, in a fashion that is similar to college level courses.

Another purpose for charter schools in New Mexico is “to encourage parental and community involvement in the public school system,” which has been demonstrated through the following element of our school design:

- **Heritage Spanish and New Mexico Culture Curriculum**-- As the founding team began its community outreach, it became clear that the community wanted a college preparatory option, which also recognized the uniqueness of the Southwest Mesa and the Atrisco Land Grant. Additionally, community members spoke to the importance of Spanish language programming being included in the school design. Through these conversations with community stakeholders, Solare Collegiate came to form an intended partnership with the Instituto Cervantes to develop an individualized Heritage Spanish program. With more than 50% of families in the 87121-zip code identifying Spanish as the primary language spoken at home, we believe it is important to include Spanish as a part of our academic programming. With that, the Heritage Spanish program will take into the consideration the unique needs of students with a range of Spanish language proficiency. Priorities for the Heritage Spanish program include developing reading and writing Spanish proficiency, in addition to speaking and listening proficiency. It is our goal that Solare Collegiate students will develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening proficiencies that will allow them to successfully take the DELE Spanish Diploma at levels A1, A2, and B1 for school children (ages 11-17).³ The Instituto Cervantes is not currently working with any other schools in the 87121-zip code. Our unique focus on a balanced literacy of Spanish, while taking current levels of language proficiency into consideration for each student, ensures that we will meet the needs of each students personally. Each Friday, Solare Collegiate students will study New Mexican Culture, through a curriculum created collaboratively by Solare Collegiate and the National Hispanic Cultural Center. The weekly curriculum will focus on hands-on study of arts, culture, food, and traditions of New Mexico, with a particular emphasis on the Southwest Mesa community. A New Mexico Cultural studies program at the middle school level, spanning all four years, is a programmatic element that is completely unique to Solare Collegiate. While the New Mexico Culture enrichment is a self-contained enrichment, all content area classes will be designed with a focus on student voice and identity, pulling in components of New Mexico culture throughout the school day. In addition, our Advisory periods and Community Circle will integrate our New Mexico Culture program into the planning and design.

Need

Our proposed community, the 87121 zip code, is in similar size to the City of Santa Fe, but families in our community have significantly fewer school options available to them in their own community. For middle school students, Santa Fe offers two traditional middle schools, five K-8 community schools, and four charter schools. In contrast, the 87121 zip code has two traditional middle schools, one K-8 community school, and two charter schools serving middle school students. Within those options, both RFK and La Academia de Esperanza are focused on “at risk” student populations

³ <https://exámenes.cervantes.es/es/dele/que-es>.



and offer a limited number of seats, each less than 60 in total for grades 6-8.⁴ The closest college preparatory focused charter school, South Valley Academy, has a waitlist that is double the number of their enrollment cap, making the school inaccessible to the majority of students who wish to access a smaller, college preparatory option. The majority of middle school seats in the southwest quadrant are provided by South Valley Academy, in total of 283 seats in grades 6-8. Within the entire southwest quadrant of the city, only 545 seats were available for middle school students at five charter schools⁵. Based on the extensive waitlist at South Valley Academy, at least 500 middle school students in the southwest quadrant are seeking a college preparatory focused middle school but are unable to secure a seat. The highest performing charter school in the area during the 2017-2018 school year, South Valley Prep, recently relocated to a location across the Rio Grande, without provided transportation options for families. The approval of Solare Collegiate will help ensure that families in the Southwest Mesa have a college preparatory option in their own community. If approved, Solare Collegiate would be the only middle school-only charter option west of the Rio Grande. Demand for Solare Collegiate is further outlined in our charter application.

Community Outreach

During our Community Input Hearing, the Commission asked our team how we intended to address expressed concern during the Community Input Hearing. The Solare Collegiate Founding Team reached out to every organization that expressed opposition or concern at the Community Input Hearing, as well as to all of those who submitted written concern to the PEC. At the time of this letter submission, Lead Founder, Rachael Sowards has met with two individuals who expressed concern, and is currently utilizing their feedback and advice, including recommendations for further connections in the community and resources to consider for school implementation. Chris Sturgis, who submitted written feedback, explained via email that "I wrote that email as a concern not as a strong opposition to the charter," and we have a meeting set up to further discuss her concerns. We are also in communication with Ane Romero, Policy Director of Center for Civic Policy and Joaquin Sanchez, the Lead Organizer for Albuquerque Interfaith, and have scheduled a roundtable discussion with the organizations that expressed concern during our Community Input Hearing and in writing. In addition, the Solare Collegiate team has continued outreach to the Isleta Pueblo community, in order to ascertain community interest in our school.

Clarification and Assurances Regarding the Relationship Between Building Excellent Schools and Excellent Schools New Mexico

The Founder of the proposed school, Solare Collegiate Charter School, applied for and received a competitive fellowship from Building Excellent Schools (BES). This Fellowship provided the Founder with skills and information beneficial to open a New Mexico charter school, as well as to learn best practices by spending significant time on site in other charter schools, both locally and nationally. Apart from the Fellowship the proposed school has not received any funding, directly or indirectly, from BES. The proposed school applied for a start-up grant from the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED), as well as has secured private funding from Excellent Schools New Mexico (ESNM). Neither of these start up grants are contingent upon the purchase of any goods or services from either the NMPED or ESNM. Additionally:

- Solare does not expect to nor intend to purchase anything from either BES or ESNM.
- Solare does not nor intend to utilize any charter management services; either in state or out.

⁴ Based on 2017-2018 enrollment

⁵ Based on 2017-2018 enrollment and including La Promesa Early Learning Center and El Camino Real Academy, in addition to the previously mentioned charter schools.



- Solare does not and will not be purchasing a pre-packaged curriculum from any source; BES, ESNM, or otherwise.
- All Solare board members are local to New Mexico. They do not report to and are not responsible to either BES or ESNM. Their only loyalty and legal obligation is to the best interests of the proposed school and the children it seeks to serve.

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team thanks the Public Education Commission for their thoughtful consideration of our charter application. If there are any questions, please reach out to our Lead Founder, Rachael Sowards at 505.917.6442 or rsowards@solarecollegiate.org. We look forward to the PEC Meeting on August 24, 2018.

Warm Regards,

Rachael Sowards

Rachael Sowards



New Mexico Public Education Commission

2018 New Charter School Application Kit Part C. Application & Rubric



School Information:

Name of Proposed Charter School: Solare Collegiate Charter School

School Address (if known): 87121

School Location (City/Town): Albuquerque, New Mexico

School District within which the proposed school will be located: Albuquerque Public Schools

Grades to be served: 5-8

Requested Enrollment Cap: 416

Contact Information:

Primary Contact Person: Rachael Sowards

Address: 1623 La Vega Dr SW

City: Albuquerque State: New Mexico Zip: 87105

Daytime Tel: 505-917-6442 Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: rsowards@solarecollegiate.org

Secondary Contact Person: Veronica Gonzales-Zamora

Address: 201 3rd St NW, Suite 1800

City: Albuquerque State: New Mexico Zip: 87102

Daytime Tel: 505-244-0770 Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: vgonzales-zamora@bhfs.com

Founder (if different from above): Peter Lorenz

Address: 1411 Broadway Blvd NE

City: Albuquerque State: New Mexico Zip: 87102

Daytime Tel: 505-462-2140 Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: peter.lorenz@unirac.com

Founder (if different from above): Camille Vasquez

Address: 8416 Vista Serena Lane SW

City: Albuquerque State: New Mexico Zip: 87121

Daytime Tel: 505-718-5631 Fax: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Alternate Tel: [Click here to enter text.](#) E-Mail: cvasquez@accessnm.org

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Directions: Please answer each and every prompt, if applicable (e.g., if you are an elementary school, you will not answer questions about graduation), where indicated below. Use the rubrics following the prompts to guide your responses.

Please note: The Public Education Commission (PEC) has determined which questions are of greater importance than others. Therefore, certain scores are increased as indicated in the scoring rubrics as set forth below.

Scoring: Along with each prompt, the application identifies the elements that must be present for a response to be evaluated as “Meets the Criteria.” The rubrics below govern general scoring practices.

Meets the Criteria 100% of total points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All required elements present • Sufficient detail present, enabling the proposal to be implemented without requiring further proposal development • The proposal is reasonable and realistic • Fully consistent with other sections, including budget and mission • Fully consistent with all requirements of law • Coherent and easily understood
Approaches the Criteria 50% of total points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not clearly meet all criteria identified above to be rated “Meets the Criteria” • The majority of required elements are present, but not all • Insufficient detail; further proposal development will be required before the applicant can begin to implement the concept • Minor inconsistencies with other sections • May raise questions about legal compliance, but does not demonstrate non-compliance • May raise questions about reasonableness or viability of the proposal
Falls Far Below the Criteria 0 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None or less than a majority of the required elements are present • Contradicts other sections, or substantially inconsistent with other sections • Insufficient detail to understand the proposal, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copying responses from a prior applicant’s application ○ Copying statutory, regulatory, or policy/guidance language ○ Plagiarizing information from other publicly available material • Includes statements that violate or conflict with the requirements of law • Incoherent or cannot be understood • The proposal is patently unreasonable or unrealistic • Does not clearly meet criteria identified above to be rated “Approaches the Criteria”

Minimum Scoring Expectations—

- No response is evaluated as “Falls Far Below the Criteria”;
- No more than three responses may be evaluated as “Approaches the Criteria” in any one section of the application; and
- The applicant must earn 95 percent of the available points or more.

I. Academic Framework

A. Mission.

Note: The proposed school shall report each year on implementation of its mission as set forth in the mission-specific indicator(s), as set forth in the Performance Framework, Academic Framework (see glossary in Part A).

A. (1) State the mission, or the driving force, that guides this school proposal. The mission should answer questions such as: 1) what student outcomes does the proposed school seek to accomplish; 2) how will it accomplish that; and 3) what is innovative and unique about the proposed school? The best mission statements are clear, cohesive, comprehensive, reasonable, and innovative, and have a focus on outcomes rather than inputs.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Our Mission

Through academic rigor, individualized supports, and character development, Solare Collegiate Charter School equips all students in grades five through eight with the academic and personal skills to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice.

Solare Collegiate Charter School (“Solare Collegiate”) will accomplish the following outcomes, and in turn fulfill our mission outlined above.

- Significant academic growth in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Internally, we define significant academic growth as double the anticipated value-added growth on the PARCC assessment, until students are on grade level in English/Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Equip students with the academic skills they need to perform in the upper quartile of performance by the end of eighth grade, preparing them for success at the high school and college levels. We will determine fulfillment of this outcome based on absolute and growth scores as measured by students’ annual norm-referenced performance on the NWEA MAP assessment in Reading and Mathematics.

Solare Collegiate will demonstrate significant academic growth through our schedule of internal and standardized assessments, which are further outlined in the following sections of the application: **I.B. (1) Mission Specific Indicators** and **I.G. (1) Assessment and Accountability**. Beginning in Year 1 of operation and continuing in all years, we will be able to collect data on individual, grade level, and whole school academic growth and proficiency in all content areas. Beginning in Year 3 of operation, we will be able to collect qualitative and quantitative data on the success of our programming in preparing students to excel at the high schools of their choice, through student proficiency on state-mandated assessments, enrollment in local high schools, and through student performance in those high schools. Internally collected data will inform how well Solare Collegiate is supporting students in the development of their interpersonal skills and professional habits, including preparation for class, completion of assignments, and written and verbal communication with their peers and their teachers.

Our Approach

We intend to fulfill our mission and accompanying outcomes through the development of a small school community that is highly structured, with students receiving highly rigorous academic instruction, coupled with individualized academic supports, ensuring that students have access to grade level work, while also receiving support to fill in any academic gaps that may be present. Through the study of over 30 high achieving charter schools, specifically those serving students in poverty living in urban areas, and

research on best practices for high achievement¹, Solare Collegiate is guided by six core beliefs.

Belief 1: Literacy is foundational. At Solare Collegiate, we believe that educational attainment begins with literacy. To best equip our students with the academic skills they need to access the high schools and colleges of their choice, our students must develop a solid literacy foundation. Research indicates that “[a]dolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imagination so that they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read will be crucial. Continual instruction beyond the early grades is needed.”² Within this 21st century reality, we recognize that our target community consists of students from low-income households, whom research also shows are exposed to approximately 30 million fewer words when compared to their more affluent peers, by the time they are three-years-old.³ With a language gap this significant in early childhood, economically disadvantaged students have a challenging time competing academically with their more affluent peers. With the goal of being 21st century-ready and targeting the unique needs of our students, we will provide daily targeted interventions to ensure the literacy development of our students. We take full responsibility for identifying and addressing all academic skill gaps students bring when matriculating into our school, and therefore students at Solare Collegiate will always be provided double the amount of literacy instruction typically provided by neighboring schools. Additionally, students will receive daily individualized instruction, based on their reading level and skill needs, to swiftly equip them to complete rigorous, grade-level work across subjects while also addressing their individual literacy needs. Finally, all students, teachers, and school staff will participate in daily accountable reading time, living the idea that one’s literacy is foundational. With the increased focus on literacy, students at Solare Collegiate will demonstrate reading growth each year and will read on or above grade level by the time they complete the eighth grade, as demonstrated by the English Language Arts PARCC, and will be life-long lovers of reading.

Belief 2: Data drives decisions. We believe strongly that high levels of student achievement are realized with a close analysis of academic performance data. Solare Collegiate will collect, analyze, and respond to data frequently and systematically. Through this oversight, analysis, action planning, and response to data, the Governing Board, Leadership Team, and Teaching Staff will ensure student success and mission execution. Daily, weekly, monthly, trimester-based, and annual evaluation of student performance, aligned professional development cycles to the data, and data-informed action plans adjusted throughout the year together ensure that students are continuously reaching their individualized and grade-level academic goals. Regular collection and analysis of student data together ensure that the work we are doing at Solare Collegiate is aligned to state and national content standards, which will support our goal of preparing our students to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice. Our aligned professional development cycle of targeted professional development informed by student data and dedicated annual Data Days during which the Leadership Team guides the Teaching Staff in analysis and action planning support our goal of continuous growth towards ambitious outcomes. Our teachers will actively collect and analyze data on student performance, which we believe will enable us to better support student learning during the 100 minutes of daily prep time - immediately identifying learning objectives mastered, common group misconceptions, and high leverage areas of skill growth for all students. Teachers will use data collected in their classroom as well as data from standardized testing to

¹ Through the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, Lead Founder and proposed Head of School Rachael Sowards visited more than 30 high-achieving charter schools throughout the country and within the State of New Mexico.

² Moore, David et al. “Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement.” The Commission on Adolescent Literacy of the International Reading Association, March 18, 1999, p. 3. http://www.reading.org/downloads/positions/ps1036_adolescent.pdf.

³ Hart, Betty and Risley, Todd. “The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3.” *American Educator*, Spring 2003.

plan their lessons specific to the needs of Solare Collegiate students. Weekly professional development and our six embedded Data Days to provide further opportunity to analyze student performance data. Additionally, data on student performance will guide the placement of student in individualized learning groups, which will meet for one 50-minute block each day, so that we best support the needs of each student. In addition to looking at data at the school level, we will use nationally norm-referenced testing, administered at the beginning, middle and end-of-year, to determine how our students are performing in comparison to their peers nationally; the results of those assessments will guide our annual academic planning. Our focus on data will ensure that all Solare Collegiate students have their academic needs addressed, supporting our goal of preparing students for high school and college attendance.

Belief 3: Character is critical. We believe that to be productive citizens in their classrooms, communities, and world, students not only need to have strong academic skills, but also the skills and habits to effectively interact with peers and adults and successfully navigate the world around them. To be prepared for success inside and outside of the classroom, our students need to develop a “growth mindset,” where they can identify personal difficulties and failures as opportunities for growth.⁴ At Solare Collegiate, we believe in the explicit teaching of our character traits of Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness in every grade. Using school-wide, character-specific language, accountability for student actions being aligned to values, and strategic focus on connecting and applying our core values in the school environment, we will equip students with the personal skills to excel in high school and college. Character education at Solare Collegiate will equip our students with skills and habits that will support their academics, as well as their personal goals while a student at our school, throughout their high school and college studies, and in their personal lives.

Belief 4: Instruction is rigorous. At Solare Collegiate, we are a community of learners. To ensure that all students are provided rigorous instruction and high expectations for engagement and learning, a robust program of professional development for staff (30 annual days, 2 weekly hours) is an integral part of our school design and intentionally incorporated into the school year, week, and day. Continued development of professional educators ensures that the Solare Collegiate team stays mission-aligned and can deliver instruction of the highest levels of rigor, preparing our students for the demands and opportunities of a college-preparatory course of study in high school. An extended school day (7:40am - 4:15pm) and school year (183 days), as well as double time dedicated to literacy and math allows students to access grade level content within an environment meeting individual student needs through targeted interventions. We believe that our students can master the expectations of the New Mexico Common Core Standards, preparing them for success at the high schools and colleges of their choice. The balance of rigorous classroom instruction and individualized academic supports at Solare Collegiate will produce outcomes that rewrite the narrative of what is possible for all students, regardless of background, in New Mexico.

Belief 5: Structure supports learning. We believe that an environment that is structured, safe, and predictable is the only kind of environment in which the results for which we strive are attainable. As a result, at Solare Collegiate we will have consistent, school-wide systems of behavior, organization, and culture. These systems will support student learning, maximize instructional time, and hold students to a high standard of expectations. With these structured systems of support in place, the focus of the school will be on learning and celebrating our achievements, as opposed to managing behavior. Coupled with the intentional teaching of the school-wide character values of Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness and the development of a Growth Mindset, the Solare Collegiate structured learning environment supports the academic and personal success of our students.

⁴ Dweck, Carol S. *Mindset*. London: Robinson, 2017. Print.

Belief 6: Voice strengthens identity. We believe that to prepare our students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice, we need to support our students in developing their individual voice. Solare Collegiate will have a purposeful focus on oral literacy across each of the subject areas, as well as the purposeful integration of the study and celebration of the cultures and communities of our students. For that reason, Solare Collegiate will include a Heritage Spanish program - an individualized program of Spanish language study that includes spoken Spanish, as well as the reading and writing of Spanish. Students also will have a weekly New Mexico Culture enrichment course, highlighting the cultural components of New Mexico, building pride in what unique experiences our students bring to the table.

Our Unique Approach and Innovations

Solare Collegiate's mission is to prepare our students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. We will do this by implementing rigorous academics aligned to the New Mexico Common Core State Standards for each grade level and simultaneously supporting anticipated academic gaps with targeted intervention through our daily 50-minute tutoring block. Based on the academic performance of elementary and middle schools in our target zip code of 87121, a college preparatory mission in and of itself is an innovation. In addition to our ambitious mission which informs all elements of our school design, the following components of the Solare Collegiate academic program will provide the students of southwest Albuquerque with a school option unique to the 87121 community. Each of these innovative elements is informed by the best practices and proven results of high-poverty, high-achieving charter schools in New Mexico and nationally.

Innovative Element 1: Extended School Day and Year. The Solare Collegiate school day and school year will be extended beyond that of other schools in the 87121-zip code. Our school year will be 183 days as compared to 178 in local schools. Students who wish to access school breakfast may arrive starting at 7:20am, with the regular school day beginning at 7:40am. The school day concludes at 4:15pm Monday through Thursday, and at 2:00pm on Fridays. This compares to the local school day of 8:15am - 3:00pm. In the typical week, students at Solare Collegiate will receive 465 minutes of daily instruction between 7:40am and 4:15pm, not including 50 minutes for breakfast and lunch. On Fridays, Solare Collegiate will operate on an abbreviated schedule. During abbreviated days, students will receive 360 minutes of daily instruction, as well as 50 minutes for breakfast and lunch. After student dismissal, teachers will have two hours of weekly professional development focused on instructional practice, planning, and data analysis. In total, students at Solare Collegiate will receive 2,230 minutes (37 hours, 10 minutes) of academic instruction in an average week. In contrast, middle schools in the 87121-zip code average approximately 1,995 minutes (31 hours, 15 minutes) academic instruction each week. Cumulatively, our extended day and week means that students in 5th and 6th grade receive 62 additional days of instruction per year and our seventh and eighth graders receive an additional 42 days of instruction per year beyond Albuquerque Public Schools instructional day, and 67 and 47 additional days of instruction when compared to the state mandated minimums and over the course of their four years with us, a total 208 additional days of learning during the four years at Solare Collegiate.

Innovative Element 2: Literacy Focus Across the Content Areas. At Solare Collegiate, we believe that literacy is foundational. Nonfiction texts serve as anchors for the English/Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science content classes, with purposeful integration of literacy skills in our two 50-minute blocks of math. Our middle school students will receive 130 minutes of literacy-based instruction each day, with a traditional 50-minute Language Arts course, a 50-minute course focused on Textual analysis, and 30 minutes of accountable independent reading of self-selected texts each day. In addition, our Social Studies classes and our Monday through Thursday Science classes will be taught from a literacy-based perspective. Our students will use the reading and writing skills studied in their textual analysis classes

and apply them during their Social Studies and Science classes. Finally, we will integrate literacy skills into our mathematics courses, ensuring our students not only are computing mathematics, but are able to articulate the steps taken to get to the solution, in written and oral form. The intensive focus on literacy differs from the district and charter schools in the 87121-zip code, where students take one English/Language Arts course per day, with some students receiving additional remediation coursework.

Innovative Element 3: Oral Literacy. A priority of Solare Collegiate is for students to develop a strong voice – the ability to communicate with confidence, clarity, and conviction to a variety of audiences. During instructional planning, our teachers will incorporate opportunities for student voice through group discussion, oral presentations, and partner-sharing. Teachers will be coached to dedicate 30% or less of class time to direct instruction, as we believe that students should do as much intellectual heavy lifting as possible in every class, which includes struggling to find a solution or make a connection through academic conversation. Our instructional practice for oral literacy will be based in *Great Habits, Great Readers Habits of Discussion*.⁵ In preparing students for success in high school and college, we recognize the importance of oral literacy and the ability to speak confidently about academic topics. Our focus on oral literacy is directly influenced by high-poverty, high-performing charter schools, including Uncommon North Star schools in Newark, NJ and BES Excel Academy schools in East Boston and Chelsea, MA.⁶

Innovative Element 4: Double Blocks of English and Mathematics. We anticipate a significant number of students will enroll with us reading and computing math below grade level. Therefore, we have built an academic schedule that include two English/Language Arts classes and two Mathematics classes each day. With our ambitious goal of students being on grade level by the conclusion of 8th grade, we believe that these double blocks are necessary to achieve the goal. Unlike other schools in the 87121-zip code, our double blocks of English/Language Arts and Mathematics are regular classes, not intervention classes. For students needing additional intervention, they will receive supplemental specialized instruction during our tutorial period in the afternoon. At Solare Collegiate, each student will take a traditional English/Language Arts class, with a purposeful emphasis on oral literacy. Each student will also take a Textual Analysis course which focuses on Common Core Standard 1 - Citing Textual Evidence. In the Lower Academy (grades 5 and 6), students will take two Mathematics courses, one a foundational course focused on mental math and number sense, and the other a conceptual math class focused on grade level Common Core State Standards. In the Upper Academy (grades 7 and 8), students will have a double block of Mathematics, 100 minutes total (or two class blocks) focused on Pre-algebra in 7th grade and Algebra in 8th grade. These double blocks are fundamental to achieving our goal of students being on grade level by the conclusion of 8th grade.

Innovative Element 5: Heritage Spanish Program and New Mexico Culture Curriculum. Solare Collegiate will implement an individualized Heritage Spanish program as part of our regular academic programming. With more than 50% of families residing in 87121 identifying Spanish as the primary language spoken at home, we recognize the importance of including Spanish as a part of our academic programming. Our Heritage Spanish program will take into consideration the unique needs of students with a range of Spanish language proficiency. Priorities for the Heritage Spanish program include developing reading and writing Spanish proficiency, in addition to ensuring speaking and listening

⁵ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul, (2013). *Great Habits, Great Readers: A Practical Guide for K-4 Reading in the Light of Common Core*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

⁶ Through the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, Lead Founder and Head of School Rachael Sowards visited more than 30 high-achieving charter schools throughout the country and within the State of New Mexico. She completed two Leadership Residencies at BES school Excel Academy - Chelsea, a high-poverty, high-performing charter school in Chelsea, MA. Excel Chelsea has similar student demographics to those of our proposed community and is in the top 15 performing middle schools in Massachusetts.

proficiency. Our Heritage Spanish program will utilize the instructional programming developed by the Instituto Cervantes. It is our goal that Solare Collegiate students will develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening proficiencies that will allow them to successfully take the DELE Spanish Diploma at levels A1, A2, and B1 for school children (ages 11-17).⁷ Each Friday, Solare Collegiate students will study New Mexican Culture, through a curriculum created collaboratively by Solare Collegiate and the National Hispanic Cultural Center. The weekly curriculum will focus on arts, culture, food, and traditions of New Mexico, with a purposeful emphasis on the South Valley and Westside communities.

Innovative Element 6: Voice Strengthens Identity. Solare Collegiate will use the trimester system, and within each trimester there will be a thematic focus on identity. Each year, the thematic focuses will follow the sequence outlined in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1 - Identity Thematic Focuses, Grades 5-8

Trimester	Focus
1st Half Trimester 1	Self
2nd Half Trimester 1	Solare Collegiate (school community)
1st Half Trimester 2	South Valley & Westside
2nd Half Trimester 2	New Mexico
1st Half Trimester 3	United States
2nd Half Trimester 3	World

As our students examine their identity from each of these lenses, they will utilize their own experiences, traditions, and culture to understand and apply academic content to their own lives. With a purposeful focus on oral literacy across all the content areas along with the integration of student experience to support understanding of content, Solare Collegiate will support students in developing will prepare our students to excel in highly rigorous high school and college environments, as well as in their future professional capacity.

Innovative Element 7: Content Specialization Beginning in Grade 5. Unlike other 5th grade students attending school in the 87121-zip code, our 5th grade students will have content-specialist teachers, like the traditional middle school model. We believe that the rigor of content area courses in 5th grade necessitates having teachers who are specialists in a specific content area, resulting in a more rigorous academic programming in all the content areas.

⁷ <https://exámenes.cervantes.es/es/dele/que-es>.

Total Points Available	Expectations
16	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the student <u>outcomes</u> the proposed school seeks to accomplish; • Described how it will achieve the identified student outcomes (inputs/program); and • Identify the proposed outcomes and how they will be achieved is innovative and unique.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's mission statement clearly articulates the student outcomes the school seeks to accomplish and fully describes the programs and elements the school will implement to achieve them. The applicant's narrative identifies "academic rigor, individualized supports, and character development" as the programs that will equip "all students in grades five through eight with the academic and personal skills to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice."</p> <p>In this narrative, the applicant describes how Rachael Sowards, (Building Excellent Schools fellow), "Through the study of over 30 high achieving charter schools, specifically those serving students in poverty living in urban areas, and research on best practices for high achievement, Solare Collegiate is guided by six core beliefs." The applicant clearly summarizes each of those core beliefs as the best practices to achieve the proposed outcomes and those beliefs are supported by the seven "innovative elements" described in the narrative that are "informed by the best practices and proven results of high-poverty, high-achieving charter schools in New Mexico and nationally." Some of these include teaching literacy in math classes to enhance a student's reading and understanding of math word problems and integration of the History of New Mexico and Spanish and Hispanic Culture into the curriculum to achieve an understanding of the background and culture.</p> <p>In conclusion, the applicant's mission statement and detailed narrative provides a clear overview of how the school intends to implement best practices to achieve high rigorous expectations for its proposed target population.</p>	

B. Indicators/Goal(s) Related to the Proposed School's Mission.

The Amended Charter School Act **requires schools to identify at least two mission-specific indicators/goals in the application** that set targets for the implementation of the proposed school mission. Mission-specific indicators/goals **MUST BE** provided within the application. If the application is approved, these indicators/goals will be used as the initial draft indicators during the negotiations with the Authorizer.

For the purposes of this application, the indicators/goals will show the capacity of the applicant to identify appropriate indicators/goals aligned with the mission of the proposed school. During the later contracting process after approval, the indicators/goals that are finally negotiated and put into the Performance Framework allow an approved school to demonstrate its achievements related to an approved mission. The Performance Framework is assessed on an annual basis and may be revised yearly.

Mission-specific indicators/goals put into the application should

- (1) demonstrate the proposed school's ability to implement the proposed school's mission;
- (2) be in the format set forth below, which is a SMART goal format (specific, measurable, attainable, rigorous, and time-bound); and finally,
- (3) include metrics and measures using the following criteria: "Exceeds standards," "Meets standards," "Does not meet standards," and "Falls far below standards."

For instance, if a school's mission focuses on language acquisition, then a school may choose a mission-specific indicator/goal that measures student progress and performance in this special area. These indicators/goals are monitored on an annual basis.

Again, please note that **these indicators/goals are subject to change through the negotiation process as an approved school works with their Authorizer in the contract negotiation process during the planning year.**

Please note: The criteria for the SMART format is as follows:

- **Specific.** A well-defined goal must be specific, clearly and concisely stated, and easily understood. Educational goals should be tied to learning standards or outcomes that specify what students should know and be able to do, for each subject or content area and for each grade, age, or other grouping level.
- **Measurable.** A goal should be tied to measurable results to be achieved. Measurement is then simply an assessment of success or failure in achieving the goal.
- **Attainable.** A goal should be attainable and realistic. The applicant should identify why the goal is attainable.
- **Rigorous.** A goal should present the challenge of rigor. The applicant should identify why the goal is rigorous.
- **Time-Bound with Target Dates.** A well-conceived goal should specify a timeframe or target date for achievement.

B.(1) Mission-Specific Indicators/goals

Identify and provide at least one mission-specific indicator/goal in the following section. Include the following key elements:

- First, ensure that the annual indicator/goal provided shows the implementation of the proposed school's mission.
- Second, for each indicator provided, use the SMART format (specific, measurable, attainable, rigorous, and time-bound—see glossary). Your indicator should include all of these key SMART elements, be clear, comprehensive, and cohesive.
- Third, include measures and metrics in your mission-specific indicator/goal. Specifically, determine what percentage constitutes “exceeds standards,” what constitutes “meets standards,” what falls under “does not meet standards,” and what it means to “fall far below standards.” NOTE: **Please see examples in the glossary or in Part A of this application.**

APPLICANT RESPONSE:**Mission Specific Indicator**

After attending Solare Collegiate for one year, at least 35% of all students will score Level 4 (Met Expectations) or Level 5 (Exceeding Expectations) on the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. After attending Solare Collegiate for two consecutive years, at least 50% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5 on the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. After attending Solare Collegiate for three consecutive years, at least 65% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5. After attending Solare Collegiate for four consecutive years, at least 80% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5 on the PARCC in English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

Aligned to this goal are the following mission-specific outcomes:

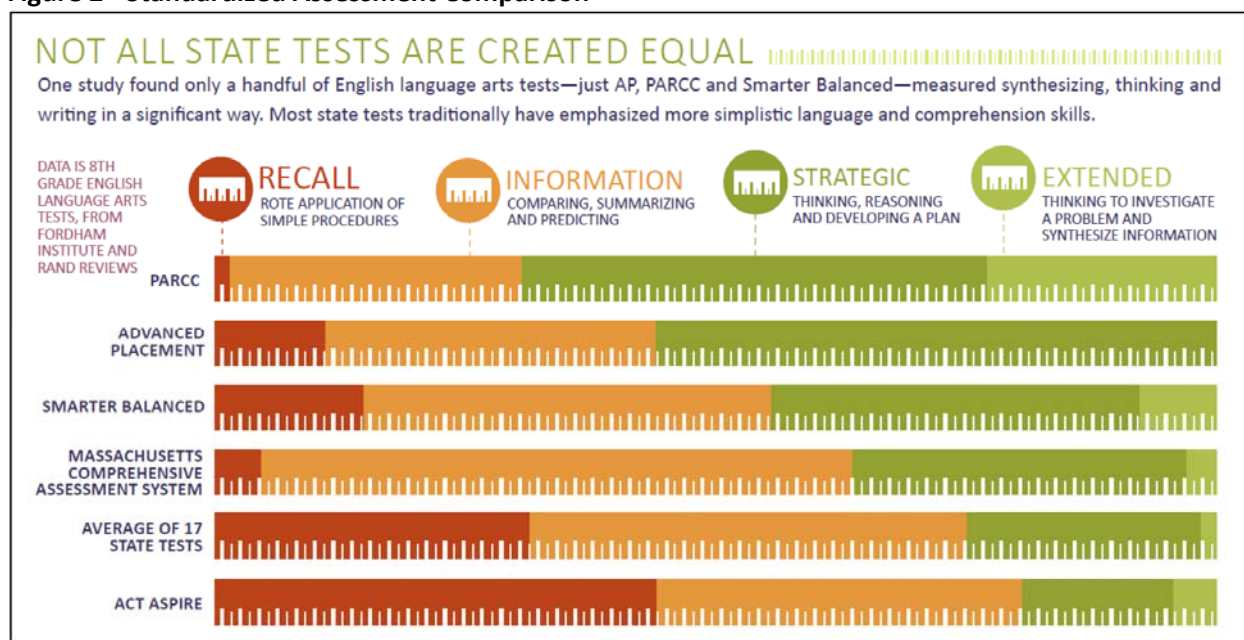
- Make significant academic growth in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. For the purposes of our work, we define significant academic growth as two years of academic growth in a single school year, until students are on grade level in English/Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Equip students with the academic skills they need to perform in the upper quartile of performance by the end of eighth grade, preparing them for success at the high school and college level. We will determine fulfillment of this outcome based on absolute and growth scores as measured by students' annual norm-referenced performance on the NWEA MAP assessment in Reading and Mathematics.

Solare Collegiate is fully committed to ensuring all students are equipped to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. For that to be realized, it is vital that our students receive high-quality, rigorous instruction, supported with individualized academic supports and purposeful development of interpersonal and professional habits. Creating a mission-specific indicator that uses the PARCC evaluation as our metric for student success ensures that we are aligning our mission to a metric that supports our desired outcomes. One national Mathematics study found that the PARCC evaluation was as effective as the SAT and other highly respected standardized assessments in predicting college grades, and outperforms the previously mentioned assessments in predicting the likelihood of a student needing remedial math in college.⁸ Additionally, the PARCC is significantly more focused on higher-order

⁸ <https://www.mathematica-mpr.com/news/parcc-and-mcas-exams-comparable-in-predicting-college-outcomes>.

thinking skills, such as strategic and extended thinking, than other assessments,⁹ ensuring that the our metric is a true reflection of student knowledge and skill, as opposed to low level recall skills. **Figure 2** compares PARCC to other standardized assessments in terms of rigor of assessment items. To fulfill our outcomes of our students excelling in high school and college, high-order thinking skills and application are necessary, and the PARCC evaluation supports those skills.

Figure 2 - Standardized Assessment Comparison¹⁰



To reach our ambitious goals, Solare Collegiate will balance rigorous academics, individualized supports, and intentional development of interpersonal skills and professional habits. By using the PARCC assessment as the tool to measure our mission-specific indicator, we will ensure that our expectations are at a high, nationally competitive level. Through the development of a mission-aligned indicator that uses PARCC as our metric and is aligned to the SMART format, we will be able to fulfill the outcomes identified in our school's mission.

Specific. The mission-specific indicator we have developed is intentionally clear and aligned to the levels of proficiency we desire, as well as reflects the growth we expect to see in students over the course of their four years at Solare Collegiate. Our specific elements within the mission-specific indicator supports our desired outcomes of significant growth and preparation for excellence in high school and college.

Measurable. Our mission-specific indicator is an absolute goal, making it measurable, based on the results of the annual PARCC assessment. If Solare Collegiate shows 35% proficiency in English/Language Arts and Mathematics with students who have been at Solare Collegiate for one year, 50% for students who have been at Solare Collegiate for two years, 65% for students who have been at Solare Collegiate for three years, and 80% for students who have been at our school for all four years, we have met our mission-specific indicator. If our percentages of proficiency fall below these numbers, then we have fallen short in achieving our goal.

Attainable. The Solare Collegiate Founding Team is confident that our mission-specific indicator is attainable, while also being highly rigorous. Our mission-specific indicator was informed by the

⁹ <https://education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Education-First-What-Happened-To-State-Tests-Feb-2018-2.pdf>.

¹⁰ <https://education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Education-First-What-Happened-To-State-Tests-Feb-2018-2.pdf>.

performance of Uncommon Schools' North Star middle schools in Newark, NJ. New Jersey is also a PARCC state, and Uncommon: North Star schools share similar student demographics with New Mexico. North Star 5th graders average 56% of students proficient in Mathematics and 63% proficient in English/Language Arts, 6th graders average 53% of students proficient in Mathematics and 76% proficient in English/Language Arts, 7th graders average 64% of students proficient in Mathematics and 80% proficient in English/Language Arts, and 8th graders average 73% of students proficient in Mathematics and 85% proficient in English/Language Arts.¹¹ Additionally, local schools, specifically Mission: Achievement and Success Charter School, utilizing similar school models¹² have shown great strides and growth in PARCC proficiency during its short time being opened, including 40% of students proficient in English/Language Arts and 29% of students proficient in Mathematics, each of which are 10% higher than the state average performance on PARCC¹³ and significantly outperforming the schools in south Albuquerque.

The Founding Team believes that our mission-specific indicator is attainable because we are using a growth-based goal: our expectations for proficiency levels increase annually and align with the added value of longer enrollment at Solare Collegiate. Attaining the targets outlined in our mission-specific indicator will support our desired outcomes of significant growth, as indicated in the increase in student proficiency, as well as our outcome of students excelling in high school and college, through increased levels of academic mastery at Solare Collegiate.

Rigorous. The PARCC assessment is an evaluation used across New Mexico, as well as in nine additional states, including those using PARCC/state created hybrid models, the Department of Defense schools, and the Bureau of Indian Education.¹⁴ The Solare Collegiate Founding Team believes that linking our mission specific indicator to a standardized assessment with such wide distribution ensures that our goal is rigorous, as it is an assessment that was developed specifically to measure proficiency of the Common Core State Standards. Currently, 8th grade students in the 87121-zip code average 11% proficiency on the English/Language Arts PARCC assessment and 6% on the Mathematics PARCC assessment.¹⁵ Our Year 1 goal of 35% of our students demonstrating proficiency on both the English/Language Arts and Mathematic assessments are highly rigorous, more than tripling the current rate of proficiency on the English/Language Arts assessment and more than quadrupling the current rate of proficiency on the Mathematics PARCC in 87121. Additionally, achievement of this goal in Year 1 would result in Solare Collegiate outperforming the New Mexico state average in both English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Our mission specific indicator grows in expectation for each year that our students study at Solare Collegiate, beginning with a goal that dramatically outperforms levels of proficiency in our target zip code and growing to be a goal that puts our students on equal playing ground as their peers across the country.

Timebound. Solare Collegiate's mission specific indicator is time-bound, in that we identify annual goals for levels of proficiency for our students, with proficiency expectations increasing the longer the time that students at Solare Collegiate. Levels of proficiency on the PARCC assessment will be measured annually for all Solare Collegiate students. Our goal's attention to time ensures that our focus is on students experiencing significant growth after their first year at Solare Collegiate, as well as continuing to significantly increase the number of students who are proficient year over year, firmly putting our students on the path for excelling in high school and college in alignment with our outcomes described

¹¹ <http://northstar.uncommonschoools.org/nsa/results>.

¹² <http://missionachievementandsuccess.com/our-approach/>.

¹³ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

¹⁴ <http://www.parcconline.org/about-parcc>.

¹⁵ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

in **Section I.A.(1)**.

Solare Collegiate will use the metrics outlined in **Figure 3** to describe the performance levels and how they align to the standards outlined in our mission-specific indicators.

Figure 3 - Rating Categories

	1 Year at SCCS	2 Years at SCCS	3 Years at SCCS	4 Years at SCCS
Exceeds Standards	50% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	65% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	80% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	90% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5
Meets Standards	35% to 49% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	50% to 64% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	65% to 79% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	80% to 89% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5
Does Not Meet Standards	20% to 34% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	35% to 49% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	50% to 64% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	65% to 79% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5
Fall Far Below Standards	Less than 20% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	Less than 35% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	Less than 50% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	Less than 65% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5

Total Points Available	Expectations
12	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include one mission-specific indicator/goal; • Align to the student outcomes identified in the mission response (A.1.); • Include all elements of the SMART format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific ○ Measurable ○ Attainable ○ Rigorous ○ Time bound; • Include the following rating categories—Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, Does Not Meet Standards, and Falls Far Below Standards; • Include measures and metrics, including percentages for each rating category; • Explain why the established goals are rigorous; and • Explain why the established goals are attainable.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria	
The applicant's response provides a rigorous and attainable mission-specific goal that aligns with the student outcomes identified in its mission. The narrative states, "After attending Solare Collegiate for	

one year, at least 35% of all students will score Level 4 (Met Expectations) or Level 5 (Exceeding Expectations) on the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments.” In the narrative, the applicant provides the metrics and measures used in determining the rating categories.

Furthermore, the applicant provides an additional three-year projection of growth based on the initial goal. The narrative states, “After attending Solare Collegiate for two consecutive years, at least 50% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5 on the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. After attending Solare Collegiate for three consecutive years, at least 65% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5. After attending Solare Collegiate for four consecutive years, at least 80% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5 on the PARCC in English/Language Arts and Mathematics.” The applicant’s mission-specific goal is clear and transparent and the applicant has clearly described how the achievement of the mission-specific “goal in Year 1 would result in Solare Collegiate outperforming the New Mexico state average in both English Language Arts and Mathematics.”

C. Curriculum, Educational Program, Student Performance Standards.

C. (1) Provide a description of the proposed school's curriculum. The proposed curriculum must be research-based, reasonable, and clearly align with the New Mexico Common Core State Standards and the proposed school's mission.

Provide and describe a detailed, clear, comprehensive, and reasonable timeline and plan for the development of the entire proposed curriculum, including identification of responsible staff, action steps, and deadlines that will ensure alignment with CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the proposed school's mission. If approved, the PEC requires one semester's curriculum to be fully completed by the charter school during the planning year before commencement of operations is approved.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The mission of Solare Collegiate is to equip our students to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice through a rigorous curriculum, individualized supports, and character development. Advancing this mission requires that students master rigorous curriculum delivered by teachers who use evidence-based instructional practices and frequent collection of data regarding student performance. This in turn will enable teachers to provide students with robust, supportive, individualized supports, all of which ensures students will be successful in their academic studies. In selecting and developing our curricula, we have ensured that the curriculum is (1) research-based, (2) reasonable, (3) aligned to the New Mexico Common Core State Standards, and (4) aligned to our mission. Our curricular design uses time-tested commercial resources, such as Accelerated Reader and Eureka Math, as well as internally created curriculum modeled on the frameworks of high performing charter schools across the country and aligned with New Mexico and national curricular standards.

During the implementation year, Solare Collegiate curriculum will be developed by the Head of School, which will be broken into a Scope and Sequence for our two founding grade levels (5th and 6th grade), prior to the summer teacher training. In succeeding years, the Head of School will lead the development of the curriculum with the support of grade level teachers, as well as oversee the building out of the scope and sequence and curriculum development for additional grades. In Year 5, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will facilitate the modifications to the curriculum, as needed. Centralized development of the curriculum enables the school to have vertical alignment across the middle school content strands, with a clear progression from one grade level to the next, all of which is directly aligned to students completing 8th grade on grade level and prepared to attend the high schools of their choice. Additionally, our standards are horizontally aligned at each grade level, with an overarching guiding question for each grade level, attached to our values of **Professionalism, Perseverance, Integrity, Community, and Kindness**. Within our scope and sequence, each unit in all subject areas will be aligned to Thematic Identity Focuses outlined in **Figure 1** in **Section I.A.(1)**.

Curriculum Development

The development of units plans and assessments will be completed by the Head of School during the implementation year. Development of the unit plans, lessons, and assessments are directly informed by the curriculum used in high-performing, urban charter schools from around the country, including: BES schools Excel Academy in East Boston and Chelsea, MA; Uncommon Schools North Star in Newark, NJ, and BES schools Democracy Prep in New York City, NY.¹⁶ New Mexico school Mission: Achievement and

¹⁶ Through the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, Lead Founder Rachael Sowards visited more than 30 high-achieving charter schools throughout the country, as well as studied high performing charter schools in New Mexico, include The ASK Academy and Mission: Achievement and Success.

Success is inspired by the Uncommon Schools curriculum and instructional practices, and has earned an A on the New Mexico School Report Card for the last three years.¹⁷ Having these resources provided allows for instructional staff to intellectually prepare more thoroughly and practice priority moves for live execution of lessons. All course materials will be aligned to national and state standards, including New Mexico Common Core State Standards (NMCCSS) for English Language Arts, Math, and Content Area teaching approaches, Next Generation Science Standards for Science, and New Mexico Content Standards for Social Studies and Physical Education. The Scope and Sequence and curriculum development for each subject area and grade level are informed by the work of the Uncommon Schools network in NJ and NY, as well as best practices outlined in *Reading Reconsidered*¹⁸ and in the Accelerated Reader program. For each course, the curriculum will be backwards planned from the national and state content standards and standardized assessments, to a rigorous Scope and Sequence, to units of instruction, and finally to daily lesson plans, ensuring that each lesson is highly aligned to the national and state content standards.

Curriculum Choices

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to preparing our students to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice and will do so by aligning our curriculum to the national and state content standards for each of the core subject areas. Solare Collegiate will use external curriculum resources as a framework and supplement to any extent necessary to meet the needs of students and the high academic bar we know students can achieve. During Year 1, the Head of School will select the outside curriculum to be adopted, and in subsequent years the Head of School and the Leadership Team at the school will evaluate currently used outside curriculum, as well as determine additional outside curriculum to be purchased. Outside and internally created curriculum will be evaluated for its alignment to the New Mexico Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and New Mexico State Standards, the effectiveness of the curriculum at other high-performing urban schools, and the success of the curriculum with students with specialized needs (i.e. special education, English Language Learner, gifted, etc.). The curriculum choices for each subject are outlined in **Figure 4**.

Internally created curriculum will be the foundation of academics at Solare Collegiate. By creating curriculum internally, we can ensure that each minute spent in class is aligned to the national and state content standards, as well as supports the focus on literacy-based social studies and science curriculum. Inspired by the curriculum of high-achieving, urban school curriculums created at BES schools Democracy Prep and Excel Academy Charter Schools, as well as Uncommon Schools, our curriculum will be highly rigorous, while also supporting the individual student needs, through purposeful scaffolding of instruction—leading to successful mastery of grade level curriculum.

Figure 4 - Proposed Curriculum for Core Content Areas

	Literacy	Math	Science	Social Studies
Grade 5	Internally-Created Accelerated Reader Lucy Caulkins Units of Study Writing	Eureka Math Internally-Created	Full Options Science Systems (FOSS) Internally-Created	Internally-Created
Grade 6	Internally-Created Accelerated Reader Lucy Caulkins Units of Study Writing	Eureka Math Internally-Created	Full Options Science Systems (FOSS) Internally-Created	Internally-Created

¹⁷

http://aae.ped.state.nm.us/docs/1617/SchoolGrading/542_001_STATE_CHARTER_MISSION_ACHIEVEMENT_AND_SUCC_ESS

¹⁸ Lemov, Doug, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway. (2016). *Reading Reconsidered*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Grade 7	Internally-Created Accelerated Reader Lucy Caulkins Units of Study Writing	Eureka Math Internally-Created	Full Options Science Systems (FOSS) Internally-Created	Internally-Created
Grade 8	Internally-Created Accelerated Reader Lucy Caulkins Units of Study Writing	Eureka Math Internally-Created	Full Options Science Systems (FOSS) Internally-Created	Internally-Created

All curriculum, externally sourced and internally created, will be internally vetted annually by instructional leadership to ensure quality. During the implementation year, this responsibility will belong to the Head of School with the support of the Student Supports Coordinator beginning in Year 1 and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5 participating in the vetting once the school is operational. Student performance on national norm-referenced, state-mandated, and end-of-year assessments will be used to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum used for each class. Additionally, the student performance and instructional tools used will be compared to those of high-performing charter schools around the country. If the Leadership Team, led by the Head of School, deems any curriculum to no longer be effective, based on the data collected from interim assessments and state mandated testing, the team will enact improvements to the curriculum or identify appropriate replacements. Purposeful and regularly study and reflection of the curriculum will ensure that Solare Collegiate is achieving measurable outcomes in student achievement preparing them to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice.

Literacy is Fundamental

We will maintain a relentless focus on literacy across all of our classes. Literacy proficiency rates in the 87121-zip code are lower than district and state averages, with 11% of students in grades 3-8 proficient in ELA.¹⁹ With the goal of 80% of our students proficient in reading by the conclusion of 8th grade, it is vital that our students receive daily targeted literacy instruction, as well as interact daily with literature and informational texts through formal instruction during the two traditional literacy blocks and more informally during our dedicated daily 30-minute independent reading block. Economically disadvantaged students are either “launched on the path of high school graduation or knocked off track,” in middle school, with high quality literacy instruction and increasing literacy proficiency being the most reliable way in which to increase high school graduation rates.²⁰

Economically disadvantaged students are increasing their rates of college attendance, but their levels of college completion are significantly lower than those of their more affluent peers. Research from the Brookings Institute indicates that while other factors may impact a low-income student’s persistence through college, “the most important factor explaining the lack of completion is inadequate preparation for college in the K-12 years.”²¹ In order to prepare our students for success in the 21st century, with the advanced literacy skills needed to meaningfully participate in the economy literacy instruction needs to focus on four components: academic standards addressing highly sophisticated literacy expectations, highly rigorous assessments, standards-aligned curriculum, and high quality teaching.²²

¹⁹ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

²⁰ Balfanz, Robert. (2009) “Putting Middle Grade Students on the Graduation Path: A Policy and Practice Brief.” Association for Middle Level Education. https://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/articles/Policy_Brief_Balfanz.pdf.

²¹ Sawhill, Isabel. (2013). *Higher Education and the Opportunity Gap*. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/higher-education-and-the-opportunity-gap/>.

²² Haskins, Ron, Richard Murnane, and Catherine Snow. (2012) “Can Academic Standards Boost Literacy and Close the Achievement Gap?” <https://www.brookings.edu/research/can-academic-standards-boost-literacy-and-close-the-achievement-gap/>.

With this goal in mind, our students will spend 230 minutes per day in literacy-focused classes, including the Social Studies and Science classes, which will be taught from a literacy-based approach. Traditional Language Arts/Literacy classes will make up 130 of the 230 literacy minutes. Literacy instruction will be broken into three classes, a traditional 50-minute English Language Arts class, a 50-minute Textual Analysis class, and a 30-minute independent reading block, as outlined in **Figure 5**. The English/Language Arts course will use internally created curriculum, aligned to the New Mexico Common Core State Standards, and inspired by the curriculums of Uncommon Schools. The Uncommon Schools: North Star campuses serve high-poverty student with nearly 85% of 8th graders testing proficient on the PARCC assessment.²³ Textual Analysis will explicitly teach the skills of close reading and annotation of texts, using literature and informational texts. Skills taught in Textual Analysis will be used in the Social Studies and Science courses. Independent reading is a core component of our literacy instruction, with a dedicated 30 minutes to accountable independent reading each day. The Accelerated Reader program will be used as a tracking and data collection tool for accountable independent reading. An individualized intervention class also will target deficits or misunderstandings in individual, small group, and independent groupings.

Figure 5 - English Language Arts

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
English Language Arts 5 (50 minutes)	English Language Arts 6 (50 minutes)	English Language Arts 7 (50 minutes)	English Language Arts 8 (50 minutes)
Textual Analysis 5 (50 minutes)	Textual Analysis 6 (50 minutes)	Textual Analysis 7 (50 minutes)	Textual Analysis 8 (50 minutes)
Independent Reading (30 minutes)	Independent Reading (30 minutes)	Independent Reading (30 minutes)	Independent Reading (30 minutes)

Solare Collegiate will be divided into two academies: 5th and 6th grades constitute the Lower Academy and 7th and 8th grades constitute the Upper Academy. Both academies are focused on providing students with a highly rigorous and supportive educational experience. We anticipate that the focus of our Lower Academy will be on remediation and filling in of skill gaps in literacy, while our Upper Academy will be focused on preparing for high school and college preparatory curriculum, while still offering the individualized supports students may need.

English/Language Arts. Solare Collegiate students will attend a daily 50-minute English/Language Arts course. The course will be guided by the Reading: Literature, Reading: Informational Text, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language Common Core Standards, and will include direct instruction, small group instruction, and independent student work.

Textual Analysis. Solare Collegiate recognizes the profound literacy skills our students will need to be able to excel in high school and college. Of those skills, we believe the **Common Core State Standard 1 - Citing Textual Evidence** is one of the most important skills that students need to be successful in high school and college. Our Textual Analysis class will focus on students interacting with literature and informational texts, including being able to make an argument about a text and supporting it with text-based evidence. Additionally, the course will focus on Habits of Discussion, with a weekly Socratic Seminar, giving students the opportunity to lead text-based academic conversations about literature and informational text. The skills reinforced in the Textual Analysis course will be utilized in the Historical Literacy and Science Literacy courses.

Independent Reading. Solare Collegiate prizes literacy, and we strive to be a school of readers. We believe that to internalize the identity of readers in our school, we must purposefully build that culture into our community. During our weekly Community Meetings held each Friday, we will celebrate

²³ <http://northstar.uncommonschoools.org/nsa/results>.

independent reading accomplishments, including numbers of words read by individual students and/or classes, completion of individual Accelerated Reader goals, and numbers of books read. To support students' independent reading, all classrooms will be stocked with genre-rich classroom libraries, with popular contemporary and canon titles spanning the reading levels of our students. Additionally, a 30-minute block of Accountable Independent Reading will occur Monday through Thursday. This time is a dedicated time for students to read books within their independent reading level and are texts that are independently chosen by the student. The intention of this time is to foster the joy of reading with our students and creating an environment that supports their blossoming independent reading habit. Additionally, independent reading time helps to build confidence and endurance. Sustained reading time is of importance for students who are below grade level in reading and increases in importance the further students move in their academic career. By 7th grade, silent reading has been found to be a better model for comprehension of material, when compared to oral reading.²⁴

Social Studies and Science. Social Studies and Science instruction will be approached from the lens of literacy, with a significant focus on applying the annotation skills taught in the Textual Analysis course to other content area readings. As outlined in **Figures 6 and 7**, Social Studies and Science courses include the word "literacy." The intention behind this naming is to reinforce the focus on integrating literacy skills into courses that are traditionally content-focused. In *Reading Reconsidered*, Doug Lemov and colleagues explain that for our students to be prepared for college success they need to encounter more nonfiction text, specifically nonfiction text that is informational as opposed to narrative: "[S]uccess in middle and high school demands that students 'read to learn.' They must glean knowledge from articles, textbooks, research summaries, and the like to thrive in both social and hard sciences."²⁵ By using a literacy-based approach in Social Studies and Science, we will explicitly teach students to "read to learn" and to interact with informational texts using their literacy skills. Skillfully reading and comprehending nonfiction texts will enable students to take ownership of their learning, recognizing reading to gather knowledge. Skillfully reading nonfiction texts also will support stronger comprehension of rigorous fiction texts, as students internalize the practice of reading to learn further information. A purposeful focus on using textual evidence and oral literacy will be a foundation for each course. The Scientific Literacy course will include a dedicated science lab period each Friday. The Social Studies courses will be aligned to the New Mexico Standards and Common Core State Standards for Content Areas; the Science courses will be aligned to Next Generation Science Standards and the Common Core State Standards for Content Areas.

Figure 6 - Social Studies

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Early American Literacy	Ancient World Literacy	New Mexico Literacy	American Literacy

The Social Studies curriculum for our founding grades (5th and 6th) will be internally developed by the Head of School during the implementation year, ensuring that the course content aligns with the New Mexico State Standards for Social Studies, as well as integrates the College and Career Readiness standards and Standards 1, 2, and 3 of the Reading: Informational Text New Mexico Common Core State Standards. The Head of School will lead the creation of the scope and sequence for 7th and 8th grade prior to Years 2 through 4, with input from the Social Studies content teachers. Beginning in Year 5, our Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will lead any adaptations to our Social Studies curriculum. Our internally created curriculum will be informed by the curriculum of other high-performing charter schools, including Uncommon Schools and Achievement First, but will be modified to ensure that the

²⁴ Suzanne M. Prior, et al. (2011). "Comprehension After Oral and Silent Reading: Does Grade Level Matter?" *Literacy Research and Instruction*. 50:3, 183-194.

²⁵ Lemov, Doug, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway. (2016). *Reading Reconsidered*. San Francisco, CA; Jossey-Bass.

New Mexico-specific focused are addressed in each of the Social Studies courses.

Figure 7 - Science

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Science Literacy & Lab 5	Science Literacy & Lab 6	Science Literacy & Lab 7	Science Literacy & Lab 8

Like the Social Studies curriculum, Science curriculum will be approached from the lens of Science instruction supporting literacy goals. Science coursework will pull from internally created curriculum for the literacy portion of the course content, while the lab portion of the class will utilize the Full Option Science System (FOSS) curriculum. The Head of School will create the scope and sequence for the founding year courses (5th and 6th grade), ensuring that internally created curriculum and commercially purchased curriculum work together to align with the Next Generation Science Standards and the College and Career Readiness standards, as well as Standards 1, 2, and 3 of the Reading: Informational Text New Mexico Common Core State Standards. The Head of School will lead the creation of the scope and sequence for 7th and 8th grade prior to Years 2 and 3, with input from the Science content teachers. Beginning in Year 5, our Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will lead any adaptations to our Science curriculum, along with the support of subject areas teachers and with oversight from the Head of School. The internally created curriculum will be largely influenced by the curriculum of other high-performing charter schools, including Uncommon Schools and Achievement First, but will be modified to ensure that the New Mexico adoption of Next Generation Science Standards are addressed adequately.

Mathematics Curriculum

The National Research Council has determined that schools in the United States have focused for decades on mathematical procedures and rote memorization, when what students really need, according to their 2001 math analysis is “an understanding of math concepts.”²⁶ We believe that to build a strong foundation for understanding and applying mathematical concepts and procedures, our students need to develop grade appropriate number sense and fluency. It is not a choice between foundational skills *or* conceptual skills: rigorous mathematics instruction needs to include both. Currently, data from students attending school from the 87121-zip code shows that at the end of 3rd grade, 16% of students demonstrate proficiency compared with 23% at the district level and 27% at the state level. This number decreases to 6% of students in the 87121-zip code proficient by the end of 8th grade.²⁷ For that reason, students at Solare Collegiate will receive 100 minutes of mathematics instruction each day (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8 - Mathematics

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Mathematical Foundations 5	Mathematical Foundations 6	Pre-algebra	Algebra I
Conceptual Mathematics 5	Conceptual Mathematics 6		

Lower Academy students will have two distinct Mathematics classes. The first will be Foundational Math, which focuses on mastery of number sense and basic mathematical skills. Computational math and mental math skills will be prioritized within this course. Additionally, the course will include a dedicated teacher read aloud, with fiction and nonfiction texts selected to support number sense, mental math, and oral literacy from the context of a math course. The inclusion of a teacher read aloud with student discussion encourages critical thinking and inquisitiveness.²⁸ The second math course in the

²⁶ Tessie, Rose, and Perry Zirkel. “Orton-Gillingham Methodology for Students with Reading Disabilities.” *The Journal of Special Education*, https://www.files.eric.ed.gov/full_text/EJ785952.pdf.

²⁷ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

²⁸ <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/50640>.

Lower Academy is Conceptual Math, which focuses upon the grade level, New Mexico Common Core State Standards, applied in a conceptual fashion, with real world applications. We believe that by filling the number sense and skill gaps in our Lower Academy Foundational Math classes, we will prepare our students for rigorous, advanced math courses in our Upper Academy.

Upper Academy students will continue to receive 100 minutes of mathematics instruction daily, but as a single class. We expect that we will be able to phase out the Foundational Math class at the end of the 6th grade, with the entire focus of the 100 minutes being on rigorous, conceptual mathematics. Our 7th grade students will take Pre-algebra, an advanced course for 7th grade students, and our 8th grade students will complete Algebra I, a course commonly taken in high school.

FOCUS

Included within our regular school day is the FOCUS period. The purpose behind the FOCUS period is to prioritize student support - reteaching of concepts not grasped during regular class time, review of previously taught concepts, and extension of knowledge. Our daily FOCUS block will be 50 minutes, Monday through Thursday. During this time, all teachers will be charged with providing student support, ranging from small group tutoring or reteaching of a concept, exploratory extension for gifted or high achieving students, or structured work time for students who need a quiet space to work or read.

Enrichment

In addition to rigorous academics and individualized support, Solare Collegiate believes that students need to engage in enrichment for a fully rounded education. Based on conversations with families and stakeholders in our community, we have determined that Physical Education, Heritage Spanish, and New Mexico Culture to be the enrichment courses that best support our mission. Students will receive 50 minutes of enrichment Monday through Thursday, with 80 minutes of enrichment on Friday.

Physical Education. Every other day, Monday through Thursday, Solare Collegiate students will have a 50-minute block of physical education, aligned to the New Mexico State Standards for Physical Education.

Heritage Spanish. On opposite days, Monday through Thursday, students will have a 50-minute block of Heritage Spanish Language instruction. We are working with the Instituto Cervantes to develop a robust Heritage Spanish curriculum, using a balanced Spanish language literacy approach, as well as focus on differentiating instruction based on a student's current Spanish language proficiency. With our intentional focus on literacy, a purposeful focus on speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Spanish language instruction is mission-aligned and addresses our students' needs. In Years 1 and 2, the language will be taught by instructors from the Instituto Cervantes, with oversight of a licensed Solare Collegiate teacher. Beginning in Year 3, we will have a full-time Spanish teacher on staff, who will use the Instituto Cervantes training and curriculum. Beginning in 7th grade, students will be eligible to take the DELE Spanish diploma exam.²⁹ Students also will have an 80-minute block of Spanish Language class every other Friday; this course will integrate Spanish language instruction with the New Mexico Culture class.

New Mexico Culture. Each Friday, students will have an 80-minute New Mexico Culture enrichment class. Using resources available from our community partners, including the National Hispanic Cultural Center and ACCESS NM, we will develop a four-year sequence with a focus on cultural traditions, food, holidays, and art specific to New Mexico, with emphasis on the South Valley and West Side communities. Every other Friday, the course will integrate the Heritage Spanish course with the New Mexico Culture Class.

²⁹ http://albuquerque.cervantes.es/en/about_us_spanish.htm.

Curriculum Development

Solare Collegiate provides students with a highly rigorous, engaging curriculum that spans our core subjects and enrichment courses. Through aligning our English/Language Arts and Mathematics curriculum to the New Mexico Common Core State Standards, our Social Studies courses to the New Mexico Standards and the Common Core State Standards for Content Areas, and our Science curriculum to the Next Generation Science Standards and the Common Core State Standards for Content Areas, we will ensure that our curriculum is rigorous, and thus preparing our students for success in high school and college in alignment with our mission. The process by which we will develop the curriculum for each subject area is outlined in **Figure 9**.

Figure 9 - Standards and Curriculum Alignment

Action	Process
Study PARCC released assessment items for each grade level. Review and break down national and state content standards for each subject area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study assessment items and align to content standards • Review content standards • Break down standards into measurable skills and actions • Create content standards breakdown map for each content area
Develop and adapt the Scope and Sequence for each content area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use content standards breakdown to create scope and sequence • Chunk content standards based on complementary skills and standards
Review exemplars for each of the content standards, including released test items for the PARCC, NMSBA, and EOCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review exemplars and released items for each content standard • Review content standard groupings on Scope and Sequence • Create interim assessments for each content area
Develop and adapt Unit Plans and Calendar for each content area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine order in which to teach each objective for unit, including power standards and supporting standards • Chunk content standard skills, based on student development of skill • Calendar out teaching of objectives • Outline activities for each unit, including progression in rigor of assignments
Develop a system for tracking student mastery of standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create tracking document for student mastery • Upload objectives into tracking document • Share tracking document with Leadership Team and teachers • Norm expectations for collecting and inputting data

Develop daily lesson plans aligned to measurable objectives, activities aligned to school priorities, and an exit ticket

- Develop daily exit tickets aligned to objective being taught
- Develop activities aligned to objective being taught, with focus on student autonomy
- Review rigor of objectives, assessment, and activities
- Determine materials needed for lesson; prepare materials
- Create exemplar for each task
- Connect lesson to real-world application, school core value, and identity thematic focus

The Head of School will take primary responsibility for creating the scope and sequence for the core academic coursework for each grade, with the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction supporting the Head of School in the evaluation of our curriculum and scope and sequence beginning in Year 5. We will utilize the New Mexico Common Core State Standards, the New Mexico Standards, and the New Generation Science Standards to develop our scope and sequence framework for each of the content areas. Our curriculum mapping will ensure that all foundational skills and knowledge, along with the appropriate grade-level rigorous academic content and skills are purposefully mapped out. During the implementation year, the Head of School will create the scope and sequence for 5th and 6th grade content areas. During Year 1, the Head of School will develop the scope and sequence for the 7th grade content areas, as well as revise the 5th and 6th grade scope and sequences as needed, with input from grade level and subject area teachers. Revision of the scope and sequence will be informed by short cycle and summative assessment data from the previous academic year. During Year 2, the Head of School will develop the scope and sequence for the 8th grade content areas, as well as revise the scopes and sequences for 5th through 7th grades as needed, collaboratively with the appropriate grade level and content area teachers. Beginning in Year 5, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will take the lead in the revision of scope and sequences, with oversight from the Head of School and with input from teachers. Our scope and sequence documents will be reviewed annually, informed by the short cycle and summative assessment data collected during the most recent academic year. We believe our plan for the development of the scope and sequences, including the continual review and revision of the scopes and sequences, will ensure that all subject areas are vertically aligned, pushing the level of rigor to a much higher level and preventing redundancy. With thorough review of short cycle and summative data, we also will ensure that skill gaps are purposefully integrated into general classroom instruction.

While the Head of School will take the instructional lead on the development of the scope and sequence in each content areas, we will still ensure that our Leadership Team, consisting of our Student Supports Coordinator beginning in Year 1, Dean of Culture beginning in Year 2, and the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5, and teachers have a strong understanding of the content standards from which their courses are designed, as well as the process by which a content standard is broken down into measurable objectives, including the skills, knowledge, and vocabulary necessary to show mastery of the skill. One of our core beliefs is that data drives decisions; to function based on that belief, our teachers need to approach their teaching from the perspective of data collection. The skill of breaking down a content standard into measurable objectives will ensure that teachers are continually able to collect quantitative, qualitative, measurable data that will inform their instructional practice during the next block, next day, and next week.

After the scope and sequence has been developed for each of the content areas, we will then create interim assessments that determine mastery of each of the learning objectives covered within a unit. Following the seminal curricular-planning framework outlined by Wiggins and McTighe³⁰, we will utilize backwards planning in the creation of each of our content curriculums. By planning our assessments prior to the unit and daily lesson plans, we will ensure that our priorities are student outcomes directly aligned to the content standards. To create our interim assessments, the Leadership Team, consisting of the Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator beginning in Year 1, Dean of Culture beginning in Year 2, and the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5 will research PARCC-released items, as well as released test items and examples from the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment and the End-of-Course exams, for each of the appropriate subject areas.

For Year 1 of operation, the Head of School will develop the first four units of instruction (or two trimesters) for each of the subject areas. These units will be developed during the implementation year. During the second trimester, the Head of School will work with teachers to develop the unit plans for the remaining trimester. It is our intent that teachers will become instructional leaders in our building, lead the development of unit plans, based on the scopes and sequences developed by the Leadership Team, with revisions and feedback provided by the Head of School and beginning in Year 5 the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. After Year 1, returning teachers will develop their own unit plans with oversight from the Leadership Team, while teachers new to Solare Collegiate will work collaboratively with the Leadership Team to develop unit plans. **Figure 10** outlines the timeline for the development of the scopes and sequences and unit plans.

Figure 10 - Timeline for Scope and Sequence and Unit Plan Development

Implementation Year and Year 1 of Operation (2019-2020)		
Resource	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Content Standards Breakdown (Grades 5-8)	Head of School	April 2018 - September 2018
Scope and Sequence (Grades 5 and 6)	Head of School	September 2018 - October 2018
Trimester 1 Unit Plans and Lesson Plans (Grades 5 and 6)	Head of School	November 2018 - February 2019
Trimester 2 Unit Plans (Grades 5 and 6)	Head of School	March 2019 - May 2019
Trimester 3 Unit Plans (Grades 5 and 6)	Head of School Subject Area Teachers	October 2019 - December 2019

³⁰ Wiggins, Grant, and Jay McTighe. (1998). *Understanding by Design*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Year 2 of Operation (2020-2021)		
Resource	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Review and Update Content Standards Breakdown (Grades 5-8)	Head of School Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	March 2020
Review and Update Scope and Sequence (Grades 5 and 6); Create Scope and Sequence (Grade 7)	Head of School Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	April 2020
Review Trimester 1 Unit Plans (Grades 5 and 6); Create Trimester 1 Unit Plans (Grade 7)	Head of School Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	May 2020
Review Trimester 2 Unit Plans (Grades 5 and 6); Create Trimester 2 Unit Plans (Grade 7)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	August 2020 - September 2020
Review and Update Trimester 3 Unit Plans (Grades 5 and 6); Create Trimester 3 Unit Plans (Grade 7)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	October 2020 - November 2020
Year 3 of Operation (2021-2022)		
Resource	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Review and Update Content Standards Breakdown (Grades 5-8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	March 2021
Review and Update Scope and Sequence (Grades 5-7); Create Scope and Sequence (Grade 8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	April 2021
Review and Update Trimester 1 Unit Plans (Grades 5-7); Create Trimester 1 Unit Plans (Grade 8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	May 2021
Review and Update Trimester 2 Unit Plans (Grades 5-7); Create Trimester 2 Unit Plans (Grade 8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	August 2021 - September 2021

Review and Update Trimester 3 Unit Plans (Grades 5-7); Create Trimester 3 Unit Plans (Grade 8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	October 2021 - November 2021
Annually (after Year 3)		
Resource	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Review and Update Content Standards Breakdown (Grades 5-8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Dean of Curriculum and Instruction Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	March of prior school year
Review and Update Scope and Sequence (Grades 5-8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Dean of Curriculum and Instruction Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	April of prior school year
Review and Update Trimester 1 Unit Plans (Grades 5-8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Dean of Curriculum and Instruction Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	May of prior school year
Review and Update Trimester 2 Unit Plans (Grades 5-8)	Head of School Dean of Culture Dean of Curriculum and Instruction Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	August - September of current school year
Review and Update Trimester 3 Unit Plans (Grades 5-7)	Head of School Dean of Culture Dean of Curriculum and Instruction Student Supports Coordinator Subject Area Teachers	October - November of current school year

For the first two units of instruction, teachers will be given lesson plans in the Solare Collegiate format, with the day's learning objectives, content standard(s) with which the objective is aligned, the scope of the lesson, and the exit ticket after the lesson. We believe it is important to provide our teachers with a strong skeleton for the lessons, while also believing it is imperative for teachers to take ownership of the lessons they teach. For that reason, teachers will be responsible for developing their own examples and exemplars to be used during the lesson. Once the examples and exemplars are planned, teachers will

submit weekly lesson plans to their instructional leadership (Head of School during Years 1 through 4) for feedback. The lesson plan feedback cycle is detailed in **Figure 11**. After the first two units, teachers will then be responsible for creating their own lesson plans, which will follow the same submission schedule outlined below. Teachers needing more instructional support may work more closely with the Head of School for the development of strong lesson plans.

Figure 11 - Lesson Plan Feedback Cycle

Timeline	Action
Thursday by 6:00pm	Teacher submits weekly outline and daily lesson plans to Head of School and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5.
Monday by 8:00am	Head of School or Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5 provides specific feedback for revisions to the teacher.
Wednesday by 8:00am	Teacher applies feedback and resubmits to Head of School or Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5.
Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday	Teacher meets with Head of School or Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 5 for targeted practice of key moves or instructional practices, to internalize lesson.
Day of Lesson Implementation	Teacher posts lesson plans near door inside classroom and has copy of lesson plan on clipboard, with notes and possible questions annotated.

Review and Evaluation of Curriculum

The intended commercial curriculum was chosen based on research-supported results and informed by the experience of high-performing charter schools across the country. Additionally, our internally created curriculum is based on internally created curriculum from the Uncommon Schools and Achievement First charter school networks, both with proven record of academic results and adapted to meet the specifications of New Mexico-specific content standards and priorities. We are confident that our curriculum design will set a solid foundation for teacher and student success across subject areas; we will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of our commercially created and internally created curriculum, based on results of our short-cycle and standardized assessments. Teachers and the Leadership Team will be encouraged to make recommendations on the curriculum based on student performance data, our primary measure of fulfilling our mission. The Leadership Team will conduct ongoing review of the curriculum for each subject area, led by the Head of School in Years 1 through 4, with the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction taking on the responsibility, with oversight from the Head of School in Year 5, and with formal review of the curriculum conducted by the Leadership Team annually.

Total Points Available	Expectations
12	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the proposed school's curriculum; Identify information that demonstrates the curriculum is research-based; Describe a curriculum that is reasonable, based on the professional judgment of experienced educators; Identify information that demonstrates how the curriculum will align with the New Mexico Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and New Mexico Content Standards;

- Identify information that demonstrates how the curriculum will align with the proposed school’s mission; and
- Include a reasonable (as based on the professional judgment of experienced educators) timeline and plan for the development of the entire proposed curriculum—including scope and sequence, unit plans, daily lesson plans, project plans and rubrics, and unit and course assessments.
 - The timeline must identify the following:
 - responsible staff
 - action steps
 - deadlines
 - The timeline must include specific action steps that will ensure alignment with the CCSS, NM Content Standards, and the proposed school’s mission.
 - The timeline must demonstrate that the scope and sequence and unit plans for one semester’s curriculum will be fully completed before June 1st of the planning year—the deadline for having the commencement of operations approved.
 - If the applicant is proposing to adopt a fully developed or standardized curriculum, the timeline must include specific action steps to adapt the curriculum to the needs of the local community and the State of New Mexico.

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The curriculum proposed aligns with the mission of the school, the focus on literacy across the curriculum, and the use of data-driven decision-making. The applicant has provided a clear and concise response that includes a curriculum overview that is sound, research-based, and meets CCSS and NM Content standards, even though the curriculum is still in the design phase. The curriculum takes into account PARCC by developing the scope and sequence off PARCC standards and aligning to test developed questions. With the concentration on fluency including math fluency, the curriculum is developed to raise PARCC scores and to create the building blocks needed in other content areas and future grades.

The proposed plan and timeline allows for thoughtful curriculum development prior to implementation. The design is well laid out with a timeline and specific responsibilities for staff involved that will ensure the school is ready for the application phase

D. Graduation Requirements.

D. (1) Identify the proposed school's proposed requirements for graduation, if applicable, and explain any changes or additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirements. Provide high school graduation requirements that clearly articulate and meet state requirements. If you provide additional requirements that vary from state minimum requirements, ensure they are clearly explained. For further information please see the following link:

<http://ped.state.nm.us/GradReqs/Graduation%20and%20Course%20Offering%20Requirements.pdf>.

If you are seeking any change from mandated minimum graduation requirements, identify the change and explain why you are seeking it. Clearly explain how the change supports the mission and ensures student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Not applicable. Solare Collegiate is proposing to be a grades 5-8 middle school.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all of the proposed school's graduation requirements; • Align to state graduation requirements OR explicitly identify all requirements that vary from state minimum requirements; and • If there are variances from state minimum requirements explain the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ why the proposed school believes the change is important ○ how the change supports the mission ○ how the change ensures student readiness for college, career, or other post-secondary opportunities.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Not Applicable	

E. Instruction.

E. (1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** overview of the educational philosophy and instructional methods to be implemented that **clearly** supports and aligns with the proposed school's mission, and curriculum.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:**Educational Philosophy**

At Solare Collegiate Charter School, our school sits on the core beliefs that (1) literacy is foundational, (2) instruction is rigorous, (3) character is critical, (4) data drives decisions, (5) structure supports learning, and (6) voice strengthens identity. Through academic rigor, individualized supports, and character development, we propose a 5th through 8th grade charter school that will equip students with the academic and personal skills to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. We believe that southwest Albuquerque demonstrates a significant and measurable need for a middle school that will support students in the attainment of skills that will prepare them for the high schools and colleges of their choice.

Literacy is Foundational

At Solare Collegiate Charter School, we believe that literacy is the foundational skill set for all acquisition of academic content. According to educational researcher Robert Balfanz, for students in high-poverty environments, middle school is the point at which students are “either launched on the path to high school graduation or knocked off track.”³¹ Indeed, Balfanz argues that reading proficiency in middle school is the most reliable way to ensure graduation from high school.³² For our students to thrive in academic environments from 5th grade through higher education, as well as to continue to be life-long learners and active participants in the world, their literacy foundation needs to be strong. Solare Collegiate is dedicated to ensuring that students complete eighth grade on grade level in reading and writing—preparing them to thrive in high school, as well as at the colleges of their choosing.

As a result of this research and in response to our students' needs and ambitious mission, literacy is the driving force behind all of our instruction decisions. We know that 11% of middle school students in the 87121-zip code leave middle school proficient³³, an indicator that most of our students are currently not entering high school prepared for the rigor of the curriculum that will be introduced.

Following the best practice models of some of the highest performing, high-poverty charter schools across the country, Solare Collegiate will use double blocks of literacy instruction daily.³⁴ Our model is informed heavily by the design of BES school Liberty Collegiate Academy, a 5th grade through 8th grade charter school in Nashville, TN. Liberty Collegiate Academy uses double literacy blocks with great success: on average, Liberty Collegiate Academy students enter high school above grade level, reading at the 10th-grade reading level. In comparison, the average Nashville Metro Schools student enters high school reading at the 6th-grade level.³⁵ Similarly, BES school network Excel Academy Charter Schools utilizes double literacy blocks. Excel Chelsea and Excel East Boston consistently rank within the top 15 public schools in the State of Massachusetts on the 8th grade PARCC assessment. Excel Academy's

³¹ Balfanz, Robert. “Putting Middle Grade Students on the Graduation Path.” Association for Middle Level Education. June 2009. https://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/articles/Policy_Brief_Balfanz.pdf.

³² Ibid.

³³ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

³⁴ Our two-class model of ELA and Textual Analysis is modeled on the schedule used at South Bronx Classical Charter School, a BES charter school that significantly outperforms other NYC schools (<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2017/10/prweb14819504.htm>) and the schedules of other high achieving charter schools, including BES schools Excel Academy in Boston, MA and Liberty Collegiate Academy in Nashville, TN, as well as North Star Academy in Newark, NJ.

³⁵ <https://republiccharterschools.org/our-impact/>.

special education and English Language Learners significantly outperform state average in their subgroups, with 37% and 31% proficient or advanced on the PARCC³⁶ which are rates that outperform New Mexico state proficiency averages for all students.³⁷ Within classes, Solare Collegiate students will interact with grade-level reading texts, while utilizing research-proven reading strategies for interacting with the text. In addition, classroom instruction across the content areas will integrate oral literacy skills, using Socratic Seminars for high-level, student-directed discussion requiring intensive study of reading materials and preparation prior to discussion. The skill required to read and interact with a grade-level text, as well as discuss that text in a professional way, without direct teacher guidance, will prepare students for long-term success in high school, college, and the professional world.

As literacy is the driving force for all instruction at Solare Collegiate, we will approach math instruction as a form of literacy. Students need to have number sense, a concrete understanding of what a number means, and the ability to automatically “see” the solution to simple addition or division problems, much like how we see a whole word, as opposed to its individual letters. Similarly, an equation is a sentence, and students need the skill set to read a paragraph within a word problem. Therefore, literacy will be consistently woven within our math curriculum and instruction.

Students in 3rd grade in the 87121-zip code have a 16% rate of proficiency in mathematics; this number drops down to 6% by the conclusion of 8th grade.³⁸ Because of this, we will provide two daily 50-minute blocks of mathematics instruction. The first block will focus on number sense and basic computation skills in the Lower Academy (grades 5 and 6), while the second block of mathematics instruction will focus on grade-level content standards for each grade. As students develop their mathematics literacy, the second mathematics class will be used to accelerate the pace of mastery of middle school concepts, enabling our 8th grade students to complete high school algebra in middle school. Beginning in 7th grade, our mathematics classes will be combined into one single 100-minute block, with Pre-algebra for 7th grade students and Algebra for 8th grade students.

At Solare Collegiate we recognize the importance of the content-area courses of Science and Social Studies. Our respect for these subject areas, as well as our focus on a foundation of literacy, has led us to develop Science and Social Studies courses that integrate literacy skills into the daily courses. In *Reading Reconsidered*, Lemov explains the importance of our students being able to “read to learn,” with the skills necessary to discern the important information from a text that is not narrative in organization.³⁹ Our students are not simply memorizing facts about the American Revolution; our students are studying texts, where they identify the facts relevant to the focus of the day’s instruction, with support of the content area teacher. Educational research indicates that the use of informational text provides significant benefit in supporting literacy development for all students, but may particularly assist at-risk students, English language learners, and students with special needs by addressing gaps in comprehension and vocabulary.”⁴⁰

With a current 11% student proficiency rate on the ELA PARCC assessment in 4th grade, we anticipate that most students will come to us significantly below grade level in reading.⁴¹ Each student also will enroll with unique academic and personal needs. As such, Solare Collegiate is committed to delivering daily individualized supports at a high level, based on the needs of individual students. Through rigorous data collection and analysis, we will pinpoint the needs of individual students, grouping them with peers who share the same needs. We will collect data on student performance frequently, through daily class

³⁶ <http://www.excelacademy.org/impact/>.

³⁷ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

³⁸ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

³⁹ Lemov, Doug, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway. (2016). *Reading Reconsidered*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

⁴⁰ <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/every-learner/6554>.

⁴¹ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

exit tickets, weekly quizzes, and six-week interim assessments; we will also collect national norm-referenced data three times per year and state-mandated standardized testing each year. Teachers will have time within their 100 minutes of preparatory time to grade, review, and analyze individual and class performance. Following interim assessments, our teachers will have a full professional development time to review student results and to create individualized student groupings, based on academic need. This practice will be modeled after the practices of other high achieving charter schools around the country, including BES schools Liberty Collegiate Academy and Memphis RISE Academy in Nashville and Memphis, TN, respectively.⁴²

Through small group instruction or one-on-one instruction, students will receive specialized support to (a) ensure their success in regular classes and (b) accelerate their progression towards proficiency. Student groupings and support foci will be fluid, based on students' need within a specific week or month, and informed by an analysis of student work and testing. As is the mission of Solare Collegiate, the use of individualized supports balancing our rigorous classroom instruction will allow our students to leave Solare Collegiate on grade level, in preparation for attending the high schools and colleges of their choice.

As the foundation of literacy is built, with it comes our focus on the development of a love of literacy across the school environment. Each classroom will have a fully stocked library of fiction and nonfiction texts. Classroom libraries will include fiction and non-fiction texts that relate to the topics and time periods being studied in Science and Social Studies classes. Student reviews of books will be accessible to all students and staff in each classroom, as well as a place for students to make requests for books of a specific title or topic. Each day, all community members, students, teachers, and staff will participate in an accountable Independent Reading block, reinforcing the importance of independent reading at all ages. The Independent Reading block will utilize the Accelerated Reader program, to develop independent reading goals and to utilize book comprehension quizzes, as a means for extrinsic accountability. During FOCUS, the English/Language Arts and Textual Analysis teachers will conduct brief conferences with their students to discuss their progress on their current text. Additionally, each teacher and staff member will have posted outside their classroom or office the title and author of the book they are currently reading. Finally, two times per year, the entire school will read the same book and engage in a school-wide literature circle. The texts used for the school-wide literature circles will be high-interest, low-level texts to be engaging enough to interest students at all ability levels, while also being accessible for independent reading by our more struggling readings. For our students with the most significant literacy challenges, Solare Collegiate will make audio texts accessible. Titles might include *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* or *Brown Girl Dreaming* are examples of high interest, low reading level texts we may use for our whole school literature circles.

The foundation of literacy will be reinforced by the value and joy of reading being demonstrated in the daily lessons and activities of Solare Collegiate. In alignment with our mission, we will maintain rigorous academic expectations for our students, which includes regular independent reading. The ability to read challenging texts independently will support students as they transition to high school, as well as when they attend college. We believe that the skill of reading independently needs to be taught explicitly, through regular inclusion of independent reading in the school day.

Instruction is Rigorous

We believe that with strong instruction and daily supports, our students can achieve excellence in all they set out to do. We know that excellence is not an accident; therefore, rigor of instruction will be developed in a strategic and thoughtful way. For our students will have the power of choice, regarding

⁴² As part of the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, Lead Founder Rachael Sowards visited more than 30 charter schools during the 2017-2018 school year, around the country and in New Mexico, including the ASK Academy and Mission: Achievement and Success.

their high school and college seats, we will ensure that our students are completing work that is academically rigorous, on par with the work being done at the more affluent public and private schools in Albuquerque and nationally.

To ensure our students are receiving the most rigorous instruction, unpacked in a way that supports student learning, we will be intentional and urgent about how teachers and leaders approach instructional planning and execution. At Solare Collegiate, teachers are learners. When hiring teachers, we will seek out the best and brightest, and particularly those who are continually seeking out opportunities for learning and improvement of their practice. At Solare Collegiate we believe that the best teachers are not those who walk into the classroom with all the answers, but those who walk into the classroom with the greatest hunger for closing academic learning gaps. Teachers with that hunger will approach teaching with a desire to get frequent and ample feedback, to continually improve their craft, and to seek out opportunities to provide students with more rigorous curriculum. The New Teacher Project (TNP) suggested in their 2015 report that we need to reimagine how schools do professional development. As TNP points out, there is not a shortage of professional development opportunities in public schools, but there is a lack of professional development that impacts teacher performance and student outcomes. TNP recommends that we redefine what it means to improve teaching practice, reevaluate current professional development opportunities and plans, and reinvent how we support effective teachers.⁴³

Informed by such research and the practices of high-achieving, high-poverty schools, opportunities for teacher learning will begin before the first day of school. Teachers will participate in summer professional development for 20 days over the summer, which will focus on backwards design of curriculum design and presentation, school and classroom systems of organization and behavior, and targeted data analysis of student work. High-performing, high-poverty charter schools, like BES school Nashville Classical Charter School in Nashville, TN has 25 days of professional development each year, in addition to the coaching and feedback cycles that occur during the regular school days.⁴⁴ Nashville Classical Charter School students perform better than 91% of their peers on the STEP assessment, with 70% of students identified as economically disadvantaged.⁴⁵ This focus on summer professional development ensures that all teachers are aligned with the mission and vision of the school, as well as have a common standard of academic rigor for classroom instruction and student work.

During the school year, teachers will be observed and given feedback at least once per week. Live coaching of teachers, through which the Head of School gives teachers in-the-moment feedback through modeling, whisper coaching, or verbal prompting, will occur regularly. It is our belief that good teachers can become great teachers with targeted feedback and support. By creating a community where teachers receive regular, purposeful feedback and professional development, we will create an environment of supporting and keeping teachers at Solare Collegiate, ensuring that the mission of our school lives within teachers, in addition to the founding staff.

Teachers will submit lesson plans one week prior to lesson presentation, giving the Head of School time to review and give feedback on the lessons, and returning plans in time for teachers to prepare for execution of lessons. The cycle of teacher feedback and coaching will ensure that the level of academic rigor is kept to the highest standards every day. Monitoring of preparation and implementation of classroom instruction will further keep the rigor of classroom instruction high, aligning to our mission of students being prepared to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice.

⁴³ TNP (2015) *The Mirage*. https://tnp.org/assets/documents/TNP-Mirage_2015.pdf.

⁴⁴ <http://www.nashvilleclassical.org/our-model/>.

⁴⁵ <https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/tn/2017/07/19/how-one-nashville-school-uses-classic-novels-to-get-young-students-ahead-in-reading/>.

In addition to individualized professional development, whole staff professional development will occur weekly. During this time, teachers will study strategies to support rigor in the classroom, as well as other strategies to support student learning, including managing behavioral expectations and supporting character development, feedback on student work, and the purposeful transition of teacher management of academics and behavior to student management of both as maturing students prepare for the increasing independence of high school and college. Teachers will also review classroom practices observed in the school during the previous week. Supporting the further development of strong teachers is vital to the success of our students. Indeed, “[s]tudents with great teachers learn three times as much material in one year as students with ineffective teachers.”⁴⁶ Rigorous instruction not only includes the difficulty of the materials presented to the students, but also the amount of material our students need to master during their time at Solare Collegiate.

The strong focus on teacher as a learner will ensure that our students as learners are exposed to the highest levels of academic rigor in their classes, which will then prepare them for high school and college instruction. With literacy being the foundation at Solare Collegiate, the foundation of our academic instruction will be embedded in the study of text, including the use of textual evidence when formulating an oral or written response in Literacy, Social Studies, Science, and Math classes. In addition to identifying evidence within a text, students will be responsible for analyzing why the evidence supports their argument and why it is the best evidence to support an argument, requiring students to take on the cognitive heavy lifting. Using instructional methods like these has been connected to greater levels of proficiency across the subject areas for English Language Learners⁴⁷, as well as for students with special needs.⁴⁸

Teacher talk time, or direct instruction, will be limited to no more than 30% of the class, ensuring that the majority of every instructional block is focused on partner, group, or independent practice. In addition to ensuring that most of class time is focused on students interacting with rigorous work, it also will require teachers to chunk the instructional components of the class into smaller pieces, which can be introduced into a class, reinforced, and then practiced within a class period. While students are working with partners, in groups, or independently, the teacher will circulate around the classroom, providing feedback to the individuals, groups, and whole class as appropriate. Clear and specific feedback to students will challenge students to continue to analyze the work at the highest levels and to produce quality work samples.

At Solare Collegiate, our students will read high quality seminal texts in Literacy classes, as well as in their Social Studies and Science classes. From those texts, students will write comparative essays, incorporating developed arguments using textual evidence as support. In math classes, students will develop a foundational understanding of numbers and mathematical basics, while also engaging in complex mathematical concepts and being able to articulate verbally and in written form what they are doing and why they did it in that fashion.

To support high levels of rigor in academic classes, Solare Collegiate will have an extended school day and extended school year. Students in 5th and 6th grade will spend 370.3 more hours in school each year, or the equivalent of an additional 67.3 Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) days of academic instruction per year. Our 7th and 8th grade students will spend 280.3 more hours in school each year, or the equivalent of an additional 46.7 APS days of academic instruction per year. Over four years of study

⁴⁶ Gates, Bill. “National Urban League Remarks.” 2011. <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/speeches-commentary/Pages/bill-gates-2011-urban-league.aspx>.

⁴⁷ Amaral, Olga, Leslie Harrison, and Michael Klentschy. (2002). “Helping English learners increase achievement through inquiry-based science instruction.” *Bilingual Research Journal* 26 (2): 225-234.

⁴⁸ Scruggs, T.E. and M.A. Mastropieri. (1993). “Reading versus doing: The relative effects of textbook based and inquiry-oriented approaches to science learning in special education classrooms”. *Journal of Special Education* 27 (1): 1-15.

at Solare Collegiate, students will receive an additional 228 days of school, nearly 1.3 additional years of instruction. Our school design includes daily double blocks of reading and math instruction, as well as a daily accountable Independent Reading block. We will provide our students with additional academic support through our daily individualized intervention classes. Each of these elements ensure that our students have the tools necessary to handle the high levels of rigorous material presented to them in their classes.

Character is Critical

At Solare Collegiate, we believe that by creating a culture infused with the love of literacy and the value of student voice, we are setting students up to be successful in high school and college, aligned with our school mission. Through a warm and clearly structured educational environment we will support students across the social and academic spectrums to be successful in highly rigorous and intellectual environments. This is achievable because students will: (1) have a thorough understanding of explicitly outlined rules and expectations, including a rationale and concrete connection to each rule; (2) receive clear and consistent feedback on their positive and negative behavior; (3) have staff who build clear relationships with the student, which includes feedback that is warm, clear, and honest; (4) are developing academic and character skills through Solare Collegiate academic and community programming; (5) have staff who sweat details; and (6) are part of a school community that has fun while doing each of these items.

To support our culture of literacy and student voice, we will use our Core Values to build and sustain the Solare Collegiate Culture. Our Core Values of **Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness** are outlined further in **Figure 12**.

Figure 12 - Solare Collegiate Charter School Core Values

Core Value	How it Shines at Solare Collegiate
Perseverance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asking for help 2. Working through challenges 3. Recognizing failures as opportunities for growth 4. Achievement of goals
Professionalism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional dress/ school uniform 2. Sitting tall and walking with professional posture 3. Tracking the speaker 4. Speaking with a confident voice 5. Dedication to academics
Integrity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doing what is right, even when it is difficult 2. Taking responsibility for one's actions 3. Speaking with honesty 4. Helping others grow and be successful
Community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking others into consideration 2. Making decisions considering the needs and wants of others 3. Celebrating the successes of others 4. Displaying sympathy/empathy 5. Being stewards of our school and community spaces

Kindness

1. Treating others with dignity and respect
2. Positively influencing others
3. Sharing resources whenever able
4. Supporting others through difficult circumstances

At Solare Collegiate, **Perseverance** is the first of our core values. Students and staff will recognize the importance of asking for help, particularly when a task feels overwhelming. In addition, the core value of **Perseverance** means that students will continually work through challenges, inside and outside of the classroom. The core value of **Perseverance** will also help our students to recognize that failures are not bad, but that failures are opportunities for a person to grow.

Our second core value is **Professionalism**. Our students and staff will come to school in professional dress. For students, that includes the Solare Collegiate uniform. Solare Collegiate staff adhere to a business professional dress code. In addition to dress, the core value of **Professionalism** includes how one carries his or her body - students and staff have professional posture and when a person is speaking to the group, the Solare Collegiate community actively tracks the speaker. Finally, the core value of **Professionalism** includes using a confident voice. A confident voice includes speaking loudly when addressing an audience, as well as using complete sentences.

Integrity is the third core value at Solare Collegiate. We believe that part of being a learner, particularly a middle school-aged learner, means making mistakes. We anticipate that our students will make mistakes in their academic endeavors, as well as in their character growth. With those mistakes, we believe the value of **Integrity** is important to teach explicitly—valuing the act of taking responsibility for one's actions, over punishing the mistake being made. While supporting the mistakes that students will make, we also want to reinforce the importance of doing what is right, even when it is difficult.

Part of being a Solare Collegiate student is being a member of our **Community**, which means that students need to learn that at times we value the needs of a whole group over the need of an individual. Similarly, when making decisions, we teach students to think about how that decision will impact the group. This is particularly important when a student behavior significantly interrupts the learning environment at Solare Collegiate. After taking responsibility for the behavior, it will be up to the **Community** to determine if the student is welcome back to the classroom community.

The last of the Solare Collegiate core values is **Kindness**. Students and staff at Solare Collegiate treat one another with respect and dignity. That means students encourage one another, celebrating successes and encouraging students who struggle. Solare Collegiate students and staff positively encourage one another, and support those who may be having challenges.

Our core values will be explicitly taught and highlighted throughout the core classes, advisory groups, and weekly Community Meetings. Within the core classes, core values will be reinforced through exemplifying models in literature, history, and science who demonstrate our core values, and how those values supported their achievements. An intentional focus will be placed on figures of varied gender, racial, and ethnic backgrounds, particularly those representing our student population.

Students will demonstrate core values as individuals and as a team. At the end of each block, the teacher will review the core values and guide the cohort in providing feedback on how well the team has demonstrated each of the core values. When the group shows strength in a specific value, they will be rewarded a point. If classes do not earn a point for a specific value, the teachers will give the group feedback on how they can improve their practice of that specific value. During each block (ELA, Textual Analysis, Foundational Math, Conceptual Math, Historical Literacy, Scientific Literacy, Independent Reading, and Spanish/Physical Education), students can earn a total of five points, for a total of 40 points

per day. Points will be tracked in the classroom, and the teacher will ask students to discuss how the cohort is doing - what are their strengths, as well as areas of improvement, based on each of our core values. Running classroom totals are also displayed in the hallways, for cohorts to compare their running scores against the other cohorts. Each Friday at the Community Meeting, the cohort with the most **Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness (PPICK)** points for the week will be recognized. Monthly, cohorts will compete to earn the most points, to earn prizes including dress down days, books, or other cohort awards. Solare Collegiate **PPICK** points will help students to understand the importance of building and working together as a community, through supporting and challenging peers in a supportive fashion, as well as setting goals and collaborating.

Students can earn merits for demonstrating core values during classroom time, as well as demerits when they act in ways that are incongruent with the values of the Solare Collegiate community and/or take away from precious learning time. An electronic record of merits and demerits earned by students will be kept, with teachers submitting their daily merits and demerits into the electronic database. In Year 1, the Manager of Operations will manage the merit/demerit system, with the duty being assumed by the Dean of Culture in Year 2. The digital record will enable Head of Schools to look for patterns across the school, grade levels, and classes, regarding student behavior, as well as a mechanism to understand the behavioral patterns of individual students. We believe that as a school community, paying attention to minor student behavior and explicitly addressing those behaviors will prevent larger behavioral issues from occurring. In addition, by evaluating patterns of student behavior, the Head of School can better support teachers and students in the classrooms, by identifying times or classrooms where students are struggling to adhere to the behavior expectations of the school. From there, the Head of School can either support the teacher in building culture and managing the classroom or in addressing behavioral challenges with students individually. Parents will have access to their child's reports, and a weekly printed report will go home with students after each academic week.

At Solare Collegiate, we value student voice, and we believe in incorporating student voice into our school culture. On each student desk will be a clear envelope affixed to the desk, where students will insert their **WOOP Cards** ("Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan"), a guided plan for personal goal-setting related to character development. Our WOOP Cards will be implemented during advisory periods with the support of the advisory teacher at the beginning of each week. Teachers will check in with the students to determine how they are progressing with their weekly goal, as well as provide feedback and guidance for students to accomplish their goals.

Each grade levels will participate in a weekly Community Meeting at Solare Collegiate. During Community Meetings, cultural expectations are reinforced and celebrated as a grade level. During this time, a specific focus on the application of core values to the world outside the school building will be emphasized. Specifically, during Community Meetings, students will share with our community their individual and team-based goals, aligning them to our school's core values. Daily advisory periods will be used to reinforce the school's core values, as well as our school's cultural expectations. BES school Memphis RISE Academy,⁴⁹ a 6th through 12th grade charter school in Memphis, TN uses advisory periods to reinforce the school's core values and cultural expectations, as well as to address challenges students encounter. Within the advisory period, teachers will support students in crafting individual and team-based goals, as well as supporting them in the process of achieving those goals.

Data Drives Decisions

At Solare Collegiate we are explicitly and consistently data-driven. To get our students to the high schools and colleges of their choice, we know that we need to collect and analyze data daily, weekly, per unit, per trimester, and annually. We believe with purposeful analysis of student academic performance,

⁴⁹ www.memphisrise.org.

we can fulfill our mission of preparing our students to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. After each six-week cycle, students will take an Interim Assessment in each academic course, and their reading level will be tested using the STAR Reading assessment. Teachers then will meet for a full professional development day, during which they will analyze student performance on the Interim Assessments, including performance trends and performance outliers. From the data collected from Interim Assessments, each teacher will develop new goals and plans of action, to ensure that all students are showing continued growth towards mastery of grade level concepts, as well as developing the skills that will enable them to be successful in the high schools and colleges of their choice.

Every other week, students will be given a quiz in Literacy and Mathematics that reflects the rigor and structure that students will see on the PARCC assessment. Quizzes will be graded on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating that a student is not proficient, 2 is beginning proficiency, 3 is nearing proficiency, 4 is proficient, and 5 is advanced. The data from weekly assessments will be used to target individual students during work time in during regular classes, determine the individualized daily intervention needs and groupings, and build a culture focused on growth and mastery of content each week. Using this system of grading will directly align to the PARCC assessment grading, familiarizing teachers and students with the levels on the PARCC. Transitioning the focus from passing grades to mastery on all assignments will reframe how students approach learning. Mastery of content at the middle school level is directly connected to the success of Solare Collegiate students in high school and college.

Time for analysis of student work will be woven into the daily schedule for teachers. Each teacher has time dedicated to analysis of student work during their 100 minutes of preparatory time. This time will be dedicated exclusively to grading daily assessments (i.e. exit tickets), for teachers to give students detailed feedback, as well as identify whole class trends and to plan to further support individual students or groups who are not nearing mastery of the daily objective. This time will be separate from regular teacher planning time, during which teachers will write and edit lesson plans, conduct co-observations, or meet with leadership team members. The first 20 minutes of teacher preparatory time will be dedicated to analysis of student work and communication of the results via a shared google drive document. Teachers working intimately with data will enables them to know the specific needs of students, and how to support students in their individual growth.

Data on non-academic issues will be collected and analyzed at Solare Collegiate. In the same fashion that we look for academic trends or students needing individualized support, the number of merits and demerits will be analyzed, the times in which the most student behavior issues happen will be analyzed, and opportunities for supporting those issues will be identified. In Year 1 of operation, the Manager of Operations will be responsible for this task, with the Dean of Culture taking over the responsibility in Year 2, when the role is added to our Organizational Chart.

We will collect data for the purposes of ensuring our students are learning and that we are on track to achieving our mission of getting students to the high schools and colleges of their choice. To do this, we will study our data and be transparent as to how well our school is completing our mission. Data will be displayed throughout our school, and teachers, students, and staff will speak about it regularly. Within the classrooms, bulletin boards will display the number of books students have read, the percentage of mastery of objectives, and amount of reading growth per individual student. In addition, students and teachers will work together to determine individual students' academic and character goals and the students will know tangible things they can do to accomplish their academic and character goals.

Structure Supports Learning

Students perform best when the expectations are clear and consistent. At Solare Collegiate, we believe that creating systems of organization and behavior maximize efficiency and allows us to dedicate more time to instruction. The more time dedicated to high-level teaching and learning, the more prepared our students will be to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. At Solare Collegiate, there will be

a specific way to walk into the building, transition from room to room, complete homework and classroom, work in groups, and behave at lunch and recess. Expectations for student behavior will be clearly outlined and demonstrated to the students during new student orientation, giving students and parents a clear picture of school-wide expectations. Behavioral expectations will be scaffolded to ensure that the expectations are developmentally appropriate, preparing students to attend high school and college. High expectations for students, academically and behaviorally, are shown to be a strong indicator of success for students coming from high-poverty communities.⁵⁰

At Solare Collegiate, we will have a school-wide behavior system that focuses on students as individuals, as well as classrooms as a community. Students will earn merits for displaying Solare core values, and demerits when behavior does not align with our core values. After each class block, the teacher and students will evaluate how well the classroom community adhered to the core values as a team.

High expectations for student behavior will be communicated to students clearly through whole school systems and actions. Teachers will tally student merits and demerits through Kickboard, an online tracking system used by many high-achieving, high-poverty schools. Parents and school administrators will have access constant access to Kickboard data, to be able to study patterns of student behavior as a school and to be able to access individual student data as a family. Immediate access to student behavioral issues will allow school us to efficiently deescalate potential behavior issues at the individual and class levels and to effectively communicate between home and school.

Before students enter the classroom to engage in academics, all new students will attend three days of Student Orientation, which are regular school days, and during which students will learn the expectations for Solare Collegiate. Students will learn and practice school-wide procedures, to ensure every minute of instructional time is used for its intended purpose. In addition, students will begin building community with their teachers and classmates, with opportunities to collaborate as a team.

Classrooms at Solare Collegiate will be consistent in their organization and accessibility of materials, ensuring that teacher time in front of the students as well as during prep periods will be focused on student achievement. Each classroom will be stocked with teacher and student supplies, replenished on a weekly or as-needed basis, a robust student library, designated and organized space for storage of student belongings, and a board outlining the daily objectives and assignments for the specific class day.

Voice Strengthens Identity

At Solare Collegiate, we value and will support the development of student voice, and we will incorporate this focus into our instructional practice. We will place an increased priority on the development of oral literacy skills, as well as the placing on the intellectual heavy lifting of our students. Additionally, we will emphasize the role that student identity plays in the development of student voice.

As part of our oral literacy focus and the development of student voice, we will purposefully include instruction on academic conversation across the content areas. Within the Textual Analysis block, students will receive instruction on the Speaking and Listening New Mexico Common Core State Standards. This instruction will be supported across each of the content areas, where oral literacy practice will purposefully be included in daily lessons.

In addition to developing the physical voice of our students, we will purposefully work with students to demonstrate how their identity shapes and informs their perspective on their learning and the world around them. For that purpose, each unit of instruction will be organized around an element of the student's identity, with thematic implications and guiding questions being integrated into each of the content areas' unit plans. **Figure 13** outlines the thematic focus for each unit.

⁵⁰ Lemov, Doug. (2015). *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Figure 13 - Identity Thematic Focuses

Trimester	Identity Focus
1st Half Trimester 1	Self
2nd Half Trimester 1	Solare Collegiate (school community)
1st Half Trimester 2	South Valley/Atrisco Heritage Land Grant
2nd Half Trimester 2	New Mexico
1st Half Trimester 3	United States or Country of Origin
2nd Half Trimester 3	World

With the purposeful inclusion of instruction that focuses on developing oral literacy and a curriculum that pulls in elements of individual student identity, we believe that we will support students in the development of their strong sense of self. We believe that this will build confidence in the students, as well as support their academic development. By finding commonality in students' academics and their identity, we will advance our mission of preparing our students to excel in high school and college, with the academic and personal skills needed to be successful.

Instructional Methods

At Solare Collegiate, high quality instruction and individualized supports will be the key to getting our students to the high schools and colleges of their choice. To fulfill our mission, our students must be critical readers and thinkers, as well as persistent problem-solvers. Schoolwide instructional methods and strategies will be implemented to ensure that we deliver the highest levels of academics and are inspired by the publications and curriculums from the Uncommon Schools network. Our instructional practices also pull from high-performing, urban charter schools serving similar student demographics, including BES schools Liberty Collegiate Academy, Excel Academy, and Democracy Prep.

Instructional Taxonomies

Instructional professional development will focus on Doug Lemov's *Teach Like A Champion* taxonomies.⁵¹ Informed by the success of multiple high-poverty, high-achieving schools, we believe that using these strategies well and consistently in the classroom will lead students to fulfilling their academic goals. We will focus explicitly on the taxonomy outlined in **Figure 14**. Taxonomies will be introduced and studied during summer professional development, with a more thorough focus on one or two of the taxonomies at a time throughout the school year.

Figure 14 - Teach Like a Champion Instructional Techniques

Taxonomy	Criteria for Success
What to Do Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific, concrete, sequential, and observable directions. • Consistent language for specific behaviors. • Nonverbal gestures to accompany verbal instructions.
Do it Again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of high expectations created through consistently having students repeat routine, answer, etc. until perfected. • Quick, in-the-moment feedback to improve student behavior, response, etc. followed by repeating the action.

⁵¹ Lemov, Doug. "Teach Like a Champion 2.0." San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015.

Strong Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers use warm, formal register when speaking to class. • Squared up and still posture when giving instructions, denoting importance. • Speak slowly and quietly, when maintaining classroom behavior. • Economy of language when sharing directions. • Speak only when class is silent. • In case of misbehavior, only re-engage with students once behavior is resolved.
Positive Narration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 30 seconds of giving clear directions, teacher highlights 2-3 students meeting behavior or academic expectations. • Removes emotion from narration (not “I like,” instead “I see”).
100% Cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers deliver specific, sequential, observable directions. • Teachers use strong radar to scan for 100% student compliance with directions. • Use least invasive intervention to correct student not meeting expectations, i.e. non-verbal, proximity, anonymous reminder. • Firm and calm demeanor when redirecting individuals or class. • Consequences without emotion and immediate acknowledgement when behavior is corrected.
Cold Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher routinely calls on students with/without hands raised. • Establishes culture of high “think ratio.” All students think deeply, prepared to give best response to any questions posed. • Purposeful use of wait time, to allow students to develop an answer in their head or in writing prior to sharing out loud.
Turn and Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye contact and facing partner, using “2-foot voice.” • Partners determined by desk setup. • Students take turns speaking to one another. • Practice of listening to each other.
No Opt Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I don’t know” or silence is never accepted by teacher. • Other students are utilized to help a struggling student. • Teacher returns to struggling student to ensure that the student can provide a correct answer.

Extended School Day and Time on Task

Low-income, minority students benefit significantly from extended school days and school years.⁵² Solare Collegiate will have 183 days of instructions, from 7:40am - 4:15pm (doors open at 7:20am for breakfast). Because we believe that every minute counts, students in our Lower Academy (grades 5 and 6) will not transition classrooms. Instead, their content-specialized teachers will transition from room-to-room. If a typical passing period is four minutes in length, this returns more than 35 minutes per day to instructional time. Students in our Upper Academy (grades 7 and 8) will transition between classrooms, beginning in the third trimester of 7th grade. Students will be instructed on how to transition from classes the “Solare way”—calmly, quietly, and with urgency. We believe this gradual release of transitioning from class to class independently will reinforce the importance of time on academic tasks, and we believe this impression will stay with our students throughout high school and into college.

⁵² Hoxby, Caroline M, et al. “How New York City’s Charter Schools Affect Achievement, August 2009 Report.” *NYC Charter Schools Evaluation Project*. Sept 2009.

Classroom Physical Space

We believe that teachers and students should work in a physical space that is clean, organized, and equipped with all the tools needed for teacher and student success. Classrooms will share a common room configuration, ensuring that classroom space is used in the most efficient and effective ways possible. Each classroom will be equipped with student desks, a teacher station (from which the digital presenter will sit for direct instruction and review of work), a supply station, a classroom library, and an area for small group instruction. Within each of these spaces materials will be labeled (including the baskets in which library books will be organized), and the Manager of Operations, with the support of the Office Manager, will ensure that all class spaces have ample supplies which are refilled with regularity. This will be particularly important for teachers in 5th and 6th grades, as teachers will move across classrooms throughout the day.

Common Blackboard Configuration

Each classroom will share a common configuration for the blackboard. Each board will include a daily schedule, daily objectives, daily agenda, and daily homework. This will ensure consistency in the messaging to students of what are valuable organizational details about their school day. Additionally, in the Lower Academy (grades 5 and 6), a common board configuration will ensure that there is a space available for each of the core subjects to include the homework for that evening. Each core subject will have a clearly labeled area for writing homework assignments, and homework assignments will be written in the same color as the paper on which the homework is printed (i.e. math in blue, ELA in green). In the Upper Academy (grades 7 and 8), while subject areas will be housed in their own classrooms, a common configuration will ensure that students have access to the same information for each of their classes.

Cognitively Guided Instruction

Based upon local academic data, we anticipate that 9 of every 10 of enrolled students will enter Solare Collegiate below grade level,⁵³ and we will need to take full responsibility for their swift growth to grade level proficiency in all subjects. We know that our students will need time to build foundation math skills, such as number sense and operational fluency. However, we also believe that students need to be exposed to rigorous, Common Core inspired instructional practices that put the intellectual responsibility on the students to use math to solve real world problems.⁵⁴ Therefore, we will use both instruction practices in two distinct math courses. Cognitively Guided Instruction will support the development of student voice, as one of the benchmarks of Cognitively Guided Instruction is integrating what students already know and any questions they may have into the daily instruction of the mathematical concepts. Cognitively Guided Instruction will examine word problems, using paper, pencil, and manipulatives, in addition to incorporating the mathematical algorithms appropriate for solving the problem. This method has a proven record of effectiveness, by increasing students' conceptual understanding of mathematical concepts and raising standardized test scores in mathematics.⁵⁵

Close Reading

Close reading strategies, including using a focus question to guide students as they read a longer passage, annotating a text, citing textual evidence, and crafting a written response are skills that will be explicitly taught and used within the Textual Analysis course. The Social Studies and Science Literacy courses will also use close reading strategies as the frame by which they study content-specific texts. Close reading strategies are the same skills that students will need to successfully complete rigorous

⁵³ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

⁵⁴ Key Shifts in Mathematics: <http://www.corestandards.org/other-resources/key-shifts-in-mathematics/>.

⁵⁵ Carpenter, Thomas P., et al. "Using Knowledge of Children's Mathematics Thinking in Classroom Teaching: An Experimental Study." *American Educational Research Journal*. 1989.

college preparatory coursework in high school and be successful in college courses.

Instructional Ratio

We will utilize a variety of instructional methods, most commonly direct-instruction and inquiry-based learning. Direct instruction is when the teacher explicitly presents the academic content using planning teaching techniques, usually when introducing new material or reviewing previously learned content. Direct instruction will be limited to 10 to 15 minutes per instructional block, as research suggests that this is the maximum time that can be spent on direct instruction, while also keeping students engaged.⁵⁶ With direct instruction being limited to 10 to 15 minutes, the remainder of the class time will be dedicated to student inquiry and independent practice. Students will be taught and supported to do the intellectual heavy lifting in classes, shifting the responsibility of the teachers to a position of providing feedback. Through purposefully planned monitoring and feedback, teachers will collect individual and whole class data on student learning and then provide clarification, as needed, to the whole group.

Flexible Ability Groups

We know that our students will come to Solare Collegiate significantly behind in reading and math. To support students' individualized needs, we will provide a daily intervention period with flexible ability groups. The FOCUS intervention period will be used to support more pervasive needs (i.e. decoding skills), as well as more recently occurring needs (i.e. misunderstanding of most recent concept in mathematics). Student groupings will change frequently to target specific skills and deficits aligned to the performance in their core classes.

Habits of Discussion

Oral literacy will be a vital part of Solare Collegiate classrooms, and we believe in teaching our students explicitly how to hold discussions with one another. Habits of Discussion will be explicitly taught within the each of our core classes, across all grades levels. Academically appropriate sentence stems will be introduced at each grade level, scaffolded to have students prepared for student-led, Socratic discussion weekly in their Textual Analysis class. **Figure 15** displays sample sentence stems and the grade level at which they are introduced.

Figure 15 - Scaffolded Sentence Stems⁵⁷

Habit	Grade Level	Sentence Starter
Paraphrase or Clarify	5	"Are you saying that...?"
	6	"I think what _____ meant was..."
	7	"I agree with ____ about _____ because..."
	8	"What _____ is saying is ..., and I agree/disagree because..."
Elaborate or Expand	5	"I want to build on that idea..."
	6	"I have a question based on what _____ said..."
	7	"I think I can elaborate on _____'s idea..."

⁵⁶ "The Science of Attention: How to Capture and Hold the Attention of Easily Distracted Students." InformED. 27 May 2016. www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/30-tricks-for-capturing-students-attention/.

⁵⁷ Lemov, Doug, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway. (2016). *Reading Reconsidered*. San Francisco, CA; Jossey-Bass.

	8	"_____, your evidence that _____ is compelling, but there is other evidence that shows..."
Evaluate	5	"I agree/disagree because..."
	6	"Do you think the evidence supports that?"
	7	"I understand what _____ is saying, but..."
	8	"I think there is contrary evidence on page..."
Synthesize	5	"What are you thinking now?"
	6	"Based on what _____ said, I think..."
	7	"I used to think..., but now I think... because..."
	8	"To summarize the points that _____ and _____ made, ..."

Purposeful Monitoring

At Solare Collegiate, we believe that when students are working independently that our teachers should actively be collecting data, and providing students with immediate and targeted feedback. Because of these beliefs, all teachers will be trained and expected to purposefully monitor students during independent practice. Purposeful monitoring is practiced at many of high-performing schools across the country, most notably the Uncommon Schools Network. During independent practice, teachers will have a specific, pre-identified success point they should observe in student work as they quickly circulate the room. The success points of each rotation will be determined during the lesson planning process. Grade level and content-specific feedback codes will be used by the teacher and posted in classrooms, allowing for immediate teacher feedback to be given to students, as well as opportunities to self-monitor and correct within the independent work time. During the monitoring rotations, teachers can collect data on student mastery and identify misunderstandings needing immediate clarification inside of the current lesson objective, while also identifying student work exemplars to highlight for the class.

Infused Character Education

As previously outlined in the school's philosophy, we believe that the purposeful infusion of character education and expectations in the classroom and across the school community will equip our students with the skills needed to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice. As a school community, we have identified our **PPICK** core values of **Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness**. The attributes of each of these core values will be introduced to students during three days of student orientation at the start of each school year, as well as focused on more explicitly throughout the school year. Our school behavior expectations are built around our values and reinforced with a check-in with the class at the end of each period. Developing the core values within our school community will build life-long skills and habits, enabling students to effectively interact with peers and adults in our school and outside our school walls.

Total Points Available	Expectations
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4

A complete response must

- Describe the educational philosophy of the proposed school;
- Identify primary instructional methods to be implemented that align to the educational philosophy;
- Identify information that demonstrates the instructional methods are research-based; and
- Describe how the educational philosophy and instructional methods support and align to the mission and curriculum.

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant's narrative clearly communicates the school's educational philosophy and provides a high-degree of detail not only to the instructional practices, but also to the logistics that affect classroom instruction such as materials and transition time. A perfect example is its structure for breaking down instruction time with direct instruction vs. inquiry based time, flexible grouping, and others. The methods are high yield strategies that have been proven to work with similar populations. These methods directly align with achieving the SMART goals and mission and follow the characteristics of foundational literacy, rigor, character, data driven, structure, and voice.

Another example of methods for implementing the applicant's education philosophy is PPICK (Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness). The applicant states, "The attributes of each of these core values will be introduced to students during three days of student orientation at the start of each school year, as well as focused on more explicitly throughout the school year."

In conclusion, the applicant's response sufficiently supports how the educational philosophy and instructional methods align to the mission and curriculum.

E.(2) Provide a yearly calendar and daily schedule (length of school day, instructional blocks, and breaks) that **completely comply** with **all** state requirements and ensure **effective, successful** implementation of the academic program/curriculum. Describe in detail how this schedule supports the proposed school's educational program and how the calendar is optimal for achieving high outcomes for your anticipated student population.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Our annual calendar and daily schedule are in direct alignment with our mission of preparing our students to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice. To make the significant academic gains we propose in **Section I.B.(1)**, our annual calendar and daily schedule extend the school year and school day, and within that calendar and schedule we prioritize every minute of instructional time.

Annual School Calendar

Based on the data of academic performance of students in the 87121-zip code, 11% of 4th graders tested proficient in English/Language Arts and 9% tested proficient in Mathematics.⁵⁸ One of the ways in which we will support our students in reaching grade level proficiency by the end of 8th grade is by extending the time that we spend with students through our extended school year calendar, found in **Attachment A**. We are proposing starting school on August 5, 2019 and concluding the school year on May 29, 2020, with a total of 183 instructional days. This is an additional five (5) days of school, when compared to the surrounding district calendar. Farbman and Kaplan explain that “demanding that students learn more in the same amount of time is especially counterproductive for students who are behind in grade level, have limited English proficiency, or have special needs.”⁵⁹ Extending the amount of time we spend at school will support the academic needs of our students, as well as the professional development needs of our teachers. To maximize the learning opportunities for our students, the following components are incorporated into our annual school calendar.

- Data-Driven Professional Development.** Each year, our teachers will receive 30 days of professional development (PD), including 20 summer PD days before the start of the school year, eight (8) days during the school year, and two (2) days at the end of the school year. Because we hold our teachers to high expectation, we are committed to supporting our teachers in reaching those expectations. We will provide ample professional support in building adult culture and instructional skills through our summer PD, as well as ongoing support throughout the school year. We will support our teachers in building student culture, the analysis of student data, implementation of instructional best practices, and other areas pertinent to providing students with a rigorous, supportive school environment. PD will include modeling of best practices, review of classroom videos, and peer coaching. Full-day PD will occur inside of the standard work day. PD days are indicated on the calendar in marigold.
- School-Wide Assessments.** Our calendar includes time dedicated to standardized assessments, as well as internal interim and diagnostic assessments. Specifically, we have dedicated time for our internal interim assessments at the midpoint and endpoint of each trimester. These dates are indicated in light blue. Additionally, we have calendared three windows for the norm-referenced NWEA MAP assessment (August, January, and May). These days are indicated on the calendar in yellow. We have estimated when the New Mexico SBA Science assessment and PARCC English/Language Arts and Math assessments would be administered, based on previous years' testing windows. We anticipate that the SBA Science testing window will be in March, as it has been previously, with the PARCC testing window at the end of April. The SBA is indicated

⁵⁸ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

⁵⁹ Farbman, David, and Cairy Kaplan. “Time for Change.” 2020 Education Opportunity. Fall 2005.

in dark red and PARCC in light green. The SBA Science assessment will be administered to 7th grade students, and that will begin occurring annually in our second year of operation. Each of these assessments are indicated with a window of testing time, but the time is inclusive of the time available for testing, not the actual time in which

- School Days, Holidays, and Partial Days.** The Solare Collegiate annual calendar includes 183 instructional days. Our calendar breaks down the days by month, including the number of instructional days per month. Holidays and breaks are indicated on the calendar in dark green. Vacation choices in the calendar are primarily aligned to that of the surrounding district, anticipating that our families may have other children enrolled in surrounding district schools. We do not intend to have partial school days, with the exception of our weekly abbreviated day when we dismiss students at 2:00pm; this abbreviated instructional day is a full school day per New Mexico State Statute.
- Family Involvement and Parent Teacher Conferences.** Parental involvement at school is directly correlated to higher test scores, improved student attendance, and attending college.⁶⁰ At Solare Collegiate, we want our parents to be active participants in our school community, so we will provide monthly opportunities for parent engagement. In August, our annual Back to School Night introduces our parents to the teachers and classrooms of Solare Collegiate. In September, and during the following alternating months, we will host a monthly Cafecito with the Head of School. Our Parent University evening sessions will begin in October and the following alternating months, sharing information pertinent to our students' academic needs. By alternating our parent events, we anticipate that the maximal number of parents can become active participants in our school community. Solare Collegiate will hold parent-teacher conferences after the conclusion of the first and second trimesters, occurring in November and March, respectively. The conferences, as well as other parent engagement events, are indicated on the calendar in pink. Solare Collegiate will schedule conferences with families during these blocks, as well as outside the reserved conference time, as needed by families.
- Extended Day and Year.** To achieve our mission of equipping our students with the skills necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice, we have an extended school year of 183 days of learning, extended school day of 8 hours and 35 minutes between 7:40am-4:15pm, and multiple reading and math instructional blocks within our school day. All Solare staff arrive to school by 7:00am, with the school doors opening at 7:20am for students to begin eating breakfast. All students must arrive to school by 7:40am for advisory and the formal beginning of the school day. Monday through Thursday, Solare Collegiate students will receive 465 minutes of daily instruction between 7:40am and 4:15pm, not including 30 minutes for lunch, and a total of 20 minutes for AM and PM break. On Fridays, Solare Collegiate will operate on an abbreviated schedule for which students will be dismissed at 2:00pm. After student dismissal, teachers will have two hours of weekly professional development focused on instructional practice, student achievement, and data analysis. During abbreviated days, students will receive 360 minutes of daily instruction, excluding 20 minutes allocated for breakfast and 30 minutes allocated for lunch.
- Trimesters.** The Solare Collegiate school year is divided into three trimesters. Within each trimester, we will have two academic units, each approximately six weeks in length. For each trimester, students will take two interim assessments, one for each of the academic units,

⁶⁰ "Research Spotlight on Parental Involvement in Education." National Education Association, n.d.
<http://www.nea.org/tools/17360.htm>.

totaling six interim assessments during the academic school year. Breaking our academic year into trimesters, as opposed to semesters, will give our parents more feedback on their students' academic performance. Additionally, the trimester will enable us to collect more frequent data on individual academic performance, through the administration of interim assessments at the trimester midpoints and ends and from which we can continuously inform instruction, supports, and professional development needs.

- **Abbreviated Fridays.** We will use an abbreviated Friday schedule to provide for weekly staff professional development after student dismissal. Our abbreviated Friday schedule will enable teachers to consistently study the academic achievement of students and classes during weekly professional development time. As a school community, we value giving our staff structured time for the analysis of student data, as well as time to focus on instructional methods to increase student mastery of academic content. Our Friday schedule will incorporate our weekly Community Meeting, a time to focus on community-building as a school. During our whole school Community Meeting, where our school values will be discussed and celebrated, we will focus on the successes of students during the school week. Our abbreviated Fridays are described in further detail in the Daily Schedule part of this section.

Daily Schedule

Our daily schedule was created to align to the mission of Solare Collegiate to equip our students with the skills necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. One way that we can support our mission is by creating an extended school day and year. Our students attend school from 7:40am until 4:15pm Monday through Thursday, with an abbreviated Friday schedule dismissing at 2:00pm. Every day our doors will open at 7:20am for breakfast. Monday through Thursday, Solare Collegiate students will receive 465 minutes of instruction, including 230 minutes of English/Language Arts and 100 minutes of Mathematics instruction. These instructional minutes do not include breakfast, AM break, lunch, or PM break, which are included in the school day. Each Friday, students are dismissed at 2:00pm for teacher professional development, and students still receive 360 minutes of instructional time on these days. With our extended school day and school year, Solare Collegiate students will receive 81,618 instructional minutes per year, or 1,360.3 hours per year. This number exceeds the New Mexico instructional hours requirement of 990 for grades 1-6 and 1,080 for grades 7-12 by 370.3 hours and 280.3 hours, respectively (New Mexico State Statute 22-2.8.1 "School Year; length of school day; minimum). This difference means that Solare Collegiate students in the Lower Academy (5th and 6th grades) receive approximately 67.3 additional days of school each year when compared to schools with the traditional 5.5 instructional hour day and 180-day school calendar. Our Upper Academy students (grades 7 and 8) receive approximately 46.7 additional days of school each year when compared to schools with the traditional 6 instructional hours per day and 180-day school calendar. The full Year 1 Schedule is outlined in **Figure 15**.

Figure 15 - Solare Collegiate Year 1 Monday through Thursday Schedule

Solare Collegiate Year 1 Daily Schedule Monday-Thursday								
Start	End	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Instructional Minutes
Time		5th Grade		6th Grade				Totals
7:20	7:40	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	n/a
7:40	8:00	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	20
8:00	8:50	ELA	Fundamental Math	Historical Literacy	Scientific Literacy	Textual Analysis	ELA	50
8:50	9:40	Textual Analysis	Conceptual Math	Scientific Literacy	FOCUS	Fundamental Math	Textual Analysis	50
9:40	9:50	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	n/a
9:50	10:40	Historical Literacy	Scientific Literacy	ELA	Textual Analysis	Conceptual Math	Fundamental Math	50
10:40	11:30	FOCUS	Historical Literacy	Textual Analysis	ELA	FOCUS	Conceptual Math	50
11:30	12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Accountable Independent Reading	Accountable Independent Reading	Accountable Independent Reading	Accountable Independent Reading	n/a (grade 5) 30 (grade 6)
12:00	12:30	Accountable Independent Reading	Accountable Independent Reading	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	30 (grade 5) n/a (grade 6)
12:30	1:20	Fundamental Math	ELA	FOCUS	Fundamental Math	Scientific Literacy	Historical Literacy	50
1:20	2:10	Conceptual Math	Textual Analysis	PE (M/W) Spanish (T/R)	Spanish (M/W)/PE (T/R)	ELA	Scientific Literacy	50
2:10	2:20	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	n/a
2:20	3:10	PE (M/W) Spanish (T/R)	FOCUS	Fundamental Math	Conceptual Math	Historical Literacy	Spanish (M/W) PE (T/R)	50
3:10	4:00	Scientific Literacy	PE (M/W) Spanish (T/R)	Conceptual Math	Historical Literacy	Spanish (M/W) PE (T/R)	FOCUS	50
4:00	4:15	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	15
Total								465

Outlined below are elements of our daily schedule that align to our mission of preparing students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice, as well as differentiates us from other schools in

our proposed area.

- **Advisory.** Our 20-minute morning advisory period is the official start of the school day, and our 15-minute afternoon advisory period ends our school day. During advisory, students set themselves up for academic success through developing organization skills and a purposeful focus on character development. Attendance and tracking of meals is also taken care of during morning Advisory. The focus of afternoon Advisory is to ensure that students are prepared to conclude the school day, including recording of homework assignments and to ensure that all homework is prepared to take home for the day.
- **Core Subjects.** In our class schedule, each student receives eight, 50-minute class periods during the regular instructional day, with the following core classes.
 - **English Language Arts.** This block will focus on teaching the English/Language Arts New Mexico Common Core State Standards, utilizing direct instruction and small group instruction for reading and writing.
 - **Textual Analysis.** This block will focus on the skills of citing textual evidence, close reading, and annotation for literature and informational texts. This course will teach the Speaking and Listening content standards, which will then be reinforced in all classes.
 - **Accountable Independent Reading.** Each day, including Friday, all students and staff will participate in accountable independent reading for 30 minutes immediately preceding or following lunch.
 - **Foundational Math.** This block will be dedicated to developing number sense and building foundational math skills.
 - **Conceptual Math.** This block will be dedicated to grade-level, conceptual math, supporting students in attaining grade level math proficiency.
 - **Historical Literacy.** Each day, our Historical Literacy block will use the close reading and annotation skills learned in the Textual Analysis block to study topics in social studies.
 - **Scientific Literacy.** Monday through Thursday, our Scientific Literacy block will use the close reading and annotation skills learned in the Textual Analysis block to study topics in science. Each Friday will be a dedicated lab day for the class.
- **FOCUS.** Each day, Monday through Thursday, students will attend a 50-minute FOCUS block. The intention of the FOCUS block is to support students through individualized intervention and enrichment in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students will be placed in small groups or one-on-one teacher-led instructional groups based on their academic needs in reading and math. Student groupings will be determined by diagnostic and interim assessment data, with permanent groupings shifting every six weeks. However, the groupings are not set in stone; even during each six-week unit if individual misunderstandings on daily content are identified by core content teachers, then students can be pulled into a small group or one-on-one instruction with the individual teacher to overcome the misunderstanding in the course content.
- **Physical Education.** Students will have a 50-minute Physical Education (PE) class every other day, Monday through Thursday. The inclusion of PE ensures that students have the opportunity for structured physical exercise, keeping their bodies healthy and their minds focused.
- **Heritage Spanish.** Students will have a Heritage Spanish 50-minute class every other day, Monday through Thursday, and every other Friday, combined with our New Mexico Culture class, for 80 minutes. The inclusion of the Heritage Spanish program is based on community

feedback we received: a want of a Spanish language program that recognized the students' current levels of Spanish proficiency and focused on a balanced literacy approach.

- **Nutrition and Breaks.** Solare Collegiate offers breakfast to students prior to the formal beginning of the school day. School doors open at 7:20am, before the AM Advisory period begins at 7:40am, which is the formal beginning of the school day. Students will receive two break periods during the school day, an AM break at 9:40am and PM break at 2:10pm. Our daily lunch break runs from 11:30am until 12:00pm. Please note that passing periods are not included in the daily schedule for our 5th, 6th, or 7th grade. Our Lower Academy students will remain in the same classroom throughout the day and teachers will transition from classroom to classroom. School staff members will step into classrooms while teachers transition to their next class period. In the middle school, we anticipate that teacher transitions will be a minute or less between each classroom. By having teachers transition between classrooms, as opposed to students, we will optimize additional instructional time. Beginning in the last trimester of 7th grade, students will transition from classroom to classroom.

Abbreviated Schedule

On Friday, Solare Collegiate has an abbreviated schedule, with the day concluding at 2:00pm for students. Our Friday schedule includes a shortened morning advisory period, with our weekly, whole school Community Meeting following. A 50-minute block for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and Historical Literacy happens on Friday, as well as an 80-minute Science Lab and an 80-minute New Mexico Culture enrichment class. The day concludes with the afternoon advisory period. The complete schedule is in **Figure 16**.

Figure 16 - Solare Collegiate Year 1 Friday Abbreviated Schedule

Solare Collegiate Year 1 Daily Schedule Friday								
Start	End	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Instructional Minutes
Time		5th Grade		6th Grade				
7:20	7:40	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	n/a
7:40	7:50	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	15
7:50	8:10	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	20
8:10	9:00	ELA	Historical Literacy	ELA	Historical Literacy	Math	Historical Literacy	50
9:00	9:50	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Historical Literacy	ELA	50
9:50	10:40	Historical Literacy	Math	Historical Literacy	Math	ELA	Math	50
10:40	12:00	New Mexico Culture	Science Lab	New Mexico Culture	Science Lab	New Mexico Culture	Science Lab	80
12:00	12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	n/a
12:30	1:50	Science Lab	New Mexico Culture	Science Lab	New Mexico Culture	Science Lab	New Mexico Culture	80
1:50	2:00	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	PM Advisory	15
Total								360

Our Friday, abbreviated schedule includes several components that are unique to the Friday schedule.

- Community Meeting.** Each Friday, we dedicate 20 minutes to our Solare Collegiate Community Meeting. During Community Meeting, we do a deeper study of our **PPICK (Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness)** core values, and review academic school wide goals, and ways in which students can achieve them. Additionally, we celebrate student successes with teacher and staff shout outs.
- Science Lab.** Each Friday, students will have an 80-minute science lab, utilizing the Full Option Science System (FOSS) program. Science labs will be led by the science teachers, with support from the math teachers, integrating the two subject areas with real-life applications.
- New Mexico Culture Enrichment.** Each Friday, students will have an 80-minute New Mexico Culture enrichment class, focused on elements of New Mexican culture, specifically that of the South Valley and Atrisco Land Grant area of Albuquerque, including a focus on art, farming, holidays, and language.

Teacher Schedule

Full-time teachers at Solare Collegiate begin their school day at 7:00am each day with a Staff Huddle from 7:10am to 7:20 am. The teacher day ends at 4:45pm. While the school day for Solare Collegiate teachers is significantly longer than the traditional school day, during that day each teacher is allotted 100 minutes of planning time within the school day. Teachers lead six classes daily (a total of 300 minutes), as well as oversee an Advisory group, an Accountable Independent Reading group, and work with small groups of students during FOCUS period. All teachers will participate in arrival and dismissal duty, with breakfast and lunch duties being rotated among teachers. Non-instructional staff, including leaders, will also oversee breakfast and lunch, minimizing the number of teachers needed during these times. **Attachment B** outlines the schedule for each of our teachers during Year 1. On Fridays, teachers will arrive to school at the same time, but have two hours for of professional development after student dismissal. Our Friday teacher schedule is displayed in **Attachment C**.

Education Programming and Outcomes for Anticipated Population

Solare Collegiate Charter School will prepare students to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice, through rigorous academics, individualized supports, and character development, including the development of “interpersonal skills and professional habits.” To achieve this ambitious mission, we intend to utilize the opportunity to have an extended school day and a school year, giving us more time and opportunity to support students in their areas of growth, as well as to extend their knowledge. Our annual calendar and daily schedule were developed with the fulfillment of our mission in mind. Through our use of time, we will build a community of students, families, and school staff dedicated to our mission, building a culture of high expectations for the southwest Albuquerque community.

Solare Collegiate is proposing an extended school day and extended school year calendar, utilizing a trimester model. Our students will attend school 183 days each year, a full week more than that offered by the surrounding school district. Additionally, our students will attend school from 7:40am to 4:15pm, while the district middle schools run from 8:15am to 3:00pm.⁶¹ The proposed Solare Collegiate school day is 27% longer than the day at surrounding districts. The trimester model, as opposed to the traditionally used quarter model, ensures that students, teachers, and families have more time for the mastery of concepts, development of thorough report cards, and opportunities to attend conferences after each report card is received. Additionally, we have calendared family engagement events monthly, including both morning and evening events, to engage with families regularly. As with everything we do, our annual calendar and daily schedule were developed in alignment with our mission, specifically achieving rigorous academics, individualized supports, and character development.

- **Rigorous Academics.** The extended school day and school year give us the opportunity to ensure that our students are receiving rigorous academics. Our extended school day model allows us to include two 50-minute blocks of Mathematics instruction Monday through Thursday and one 50-minute block each Friday (equaling 450 minutes of Mathematics instruction each week), as well as two 50-minute blocks of English/Language Arts instruction (Monday through Thursday, with one 50-minute block on Friday) and a 30-minute Accountable Independent Reading block Monday through Thursday. Solare Collegiate students will receive 570 minutes of English/Language Arts instruction each week. Additionally, our extended school day enables us to offer 200 minutes of science instruction each week, as well as an additional 80-minute dedicated science lab block each week. Our students also will receive 250 minutes of Social Studies instruction each week. Additionally, our students will receive 100 minutes of Spanish language instruction, 100 minutes of physical education, and 80 minutes of New Mexico Culture Enrichment each week. Our staffing design enables our teachers to have two

⁶¹ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/middle-school-bell-schedules>.

preparatory periods each day, totaling 100 minutes per day. With the additional preparatory time, we believe that our teachers will have more time for the analysis of student performance and data, giving them better opportunity to support students in the mastery of highly rigorous academics.

- Individualized Supports.** We recognize the ambitious goals that we have set for Solare Collegiate, and we believe that the fulfillment of our mission and goals are dependent on the individualized supports that we offer to all students. In our targeted community, 11% of 4th grade students are proficient in English/Language Arts and 9% in Mathematics.⁶² With that information, we anticipate the many of our students will come to Solare Collegiate below grade level proficiency in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Our extended day schedule allows us to include a daily FOCUS period for small group, leveled academic instruction, including reteaching of previously missed skills, targeting misunderstandings that occurred in class, opportunities for students to extend their knowledge through enrichment, or a structured opportunity for students to do independent reading or complete their homework assignments. This time will also be used to support English Learners and students with special needs, through targeted small group or one-on-one instruction, as needed. Additionally, with our extended school day, we will be able to offer two distinct mathematics courses, one of which focuses on the mastery of foundational mathematics skills and mental mathematics skills. This course is intended to support students in filling any skill gaps that developed during elementary school.
- Character Development.** In conversations with community members, including the Associate Dean of Students at the University of New Mexico, students are not only entering the university unprepared for the academic rigor of college education, but also lacking the “interpersonal skills and professional habits” that one needs to be successful in college and the professional world. For that reason, Solare Collegiate has dedicated structured daily and weekly time focused on the character development of our students. Our **PPICK** core values of **Perseverance, Professionalism, Integrity, Community, and Kindness** will frame the Solare Collegiate school culture. In our daily schedule, we have included an AM and PM Advisory, which will utilize the Advisory curriculum frameworks of high-poverty, high-achieving charter schools, such as BES school Excel Academy in Chelsea, MA. These frameworks will focus on supporting students in the development of their organizational skills, as well as short, developmentally appropriate lessons on our school’s core values. The integration of the Solare Collegiate core values will include all academic classes, as well as a weekly Community Meeting. Initially, the Leadership Team will plan and lead our Community Meetings, however we intend for our students to plan and lead these meetings, with the support of adults in the school, as needed, as our school culture develops.

Budget Support

The 5-Year Budget plan (**Appendix G**) includes numerous line items to support the Solare Collegiate Yearly Calendar and Daily Schedule. Specific line items that support our Yearly Calendar and Daily Schedule include summer professional development, weekly professional development, and Data Days (Function:1000, Object:53330), Assessment (Function:2200, Object:56113), and the school nutrition program (Function:3100, Object:53414).

Total	Expectations
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⁶² New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

Points Available	
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a yearly calendar that identifies the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual start date and end date ○ Teacher professional development days and times ○ School-wide assessment periods ○ School days, holidays, and partial days ○ Teacher parent conferences; • Include a daily schedule that identifies the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructional times ○ Break times ○ Start and end times ○ Differences in the daily schedule for full and partial days; • Meet all minimum hour (total instructional time) requirements laid out in NMSA 22-2-8.1; • Describe how the calendar and schedule support the proposed school's educational program; • Describe how the calendar and schedule are optimal for achieving high outcomes for the anticipated student population; and • Be supported by the proposed budget found in the Financial Framework section of the application.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The proposed yearly calendar and daily schedule align with the school's mission and philosophy, as well as meeting all state requirements. They both designate a longer day of instruction and additional instructional days. The applicant indicates that the calendar and schedule take into account the "academic performance of the school's targeted population students in the 87121-zip code" and its goal to support its students in reaching grade level proficiency by the end of 8th grade by extending the time spent at school.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to have 183 days of instruction which exceeds state requirements and is five more days compared to the local district. Teachers are provided thirty professional development days, which includes twenty days before the school year starts, eight during the school year and two after the school year ends. More professional development days for teachers aligns with the mission of the school to assist teachers along the way and give them constant feedback on instruction.</p> <p>In conclusion, the applicant's response provides a complete picture of the times and days allotted to its students and supports the proposed budget and mission.</p>	

E. (3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** explanation of how the educational philosophy, instructional methods, and yearly calendar and daily schedule will be effective with the anticipated student population.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate Charter School's target community of the 87121-zip code is one of the lowest performing communities in the Albuquerque Public Schools district. We are dedicated to serving a

community that has a great need for a high-quality school that can balance rigorous academics with individualized supports and the purposeful development of character and interpersonal skills and professional habits. Additionally, of the 17 zip codes in Albuquerque, 87121 has the 6th highest rate of families living below the poverty level and is the fastest growing zip code in the greater Albuquerque area. From 2000 to 2015, the population within this zip code doubled in size to 78,626⁶³, with significant additional growth anticipated over the next 10 years with the 4,000-acre Santolina affordable housing development approved by Bernalillo County.⁶⁴ Currently, 76.85% of local residents identify as Hispanic and 50.4% of residents report that Spanish is the primary language spoken at home.

Figure 17 compares the demographics of the 87121-zip code to those of the City of Albuquerque as a whole, as well as to those of the 87120-zip code which is immediately north of 87121. Our target zip code has significantly higher numbers of families that fall below the poverty level, as well as lower percentages of adults with high school diplomas and college degrees. The number of families living below the poverty level in 87121 is triple that of the 87120-zip code and more than double the percentage of Albuquerque as a whole. While 87121's median income is only slightly less than the median income for the city average, it is 35% less than that of the neighboring zip code.

Figure 17 – Comparative Demographics

Demographics	Target Community 87121 ⁶⁵	Nearby Community 87120 ⁶⁶	City of Albuquerque ⁶⁷
Median Income	\$34,359	\$53,029	\$39,997
% of Families Below Poverty Level	24.89%	8.18%	10.32%
% of High School Diplomas or Higher for Adults 25+	70.72%	93.40%	84.24%
% of Bachelor's Degrees or Higher for Adults 25+	8.28%	33.85%	30.28%
Unemployment Level	7.07%	5.22%	5.81%

Middle schools in the 87121-zip code have higher percentages of students identified as economically disadvantaged, English Learners, and students with special needs than Albuquerque Public Schools as a whole, as outlined in **Figure 18**. In the 87121-zip code, there are two district middle schools, Truman and Jimmy Carter, and there are two APS-authorized charter schools that serve middle school students, La Academia de Esperanza and RFK Middle School.

Figure 18 - Student Demographics in 87121

⁶³ <http://www.city-data.com/zip/87121.html>.

⁶⁴ <http://www.bernco.gov/planning/proposed-santolina-level-a-master-plan.aspx>.

⁶⁵ Zip Atlas. (2017). 87121 Zip Code Map & Detailed Profile. Retrieved from zipatlas.com: <http://zipatlas.com/us/nm/albuquerque/zip-87121.htm>.

⁶⁶ Zip Atlas. (2017). 87120 Zip Code Map & Detailed Profile. Retrieved from zipatlas.com: <http://zipatlas.com/us/nm/albuquerque/zip-87120.htm>.

⁶⁷ Zip Atlas. (2017). Albuquerque, New Mexico Zip Code Map & Detailed Profile. Retrieved from zipatlas.com: <http://zipatlas.com/us/nm/albuquerque.htm>.

Demographics	87121 Middle Schools ⁶⁸	Albuquerque Public Schools
Economically Disadvantaged	90%	70%
English Learners	25%	15%
Students with Special Needs	24%	16%
Truancy	15%	15%

According to the most recent School Report Cards (2016-2017), all middle schools in 87121 earned D or F grades. Students and families in 87121 have limited options for sending their children to high-performing public schools in their home communities. **Figure 19** outlines the current rates of proficiency in English/Language Arts and Math, according to the most recent PARCC evaluations.

Figure 19 - District and Charter Middle Schools in 87121⁶⁹

Schools	6th Grade ELA Proficient or Above	6th Grade Math Proficient or Above	7th Grade ELA Proficient or Above	7th Grade Math Proficient or Above	8th Grade ELA Proficient or Above	8th Grade Math Proficient or Above
Jimmy Carter MS	13%	7%	12%	6%	7%	3%
Truman MS	12%	4%	11%	4%	14%	8%
RFK	<20%	<20%	<10%	<20%	<20%	<10%
La Academia de Esperanza	NA	NA	<20%	<20%	<10%	<5%

Students in the 87121-zip code perform significantly below the proficiency averages in Albuquerque Public Schools and the State of New Mexico. **Figure 20** outlines this, as well as the levels of proficiency for students identified as students with special needs and English Learners, both groups performing at a rate of proficiency lower than the 87121 averages.

Figure 20 - 2017 Middle School PARCC Proficiency Rates⁷⁰

Locations	Proficient or Higher in ELA	Proficient or Higher in Math
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⁶⁸ Data received from a IPRA request to the PED, received 12/28/17.

⁶⁹ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

⁷⁰ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

State	29%	21%
Albuquerque Public Schools	27%	19%
87121 (APS)	11%	6%
Economically Disadvantaged in 87121	11%	5%
Students with Special Needs in 87121	7%	6%
English Learners in 87121	7%	3%

Special Factors

Solare Collegiate Charter School anticipates that our student demographics will closely reflect those of the Albuquerque Public Schools middle schools in the 87121-zip code, which is our targeted location for a facility. Our recruitment efforts will focus on the 87121-zip code and surrounding areas. However, if chartered through the Public Education Commission, we recognize that any New Mexico student can apply for our lottery and receive a seat.

Educational Philosophy

The Founding Team of Solare Collegiate believes that all children are capable of excelling in college and in life, and we believe that our students will demonstrate significant academic growth through the combination of (1) rigorous academics, (2) individualized supports, and (3) character development. We believe that a significant factor in the actualization of our mission is recruiting a team of teachers who believe in the potential of all students, regardless of their challenging circumstances. While we anticipate that a significant majority of our students will enter Solare Collegiate below grade level, we also believe that our rigorous academic programming will support significant growth, resulting in our students being at or above grade level by the conclusion of 8th grade. The rigorous academics will be coupled with daily, individualized supports, enabling all students, especially our students with special needs and English Learners, to master grade level material. Finally, through purposeful development of a structured and supportive school community, Solare Collegiate will support our students in the development of their character and interpersonal skills and professional habits, setting them up for success in high school, college, and beyond.

Instructional Methods

Solare Collegiate anticipates that 78% of our students will be identified as a minority, and 90% of our students coming from low-income families. These demographics have directly impacted the instructional design of Solare Collegiate. Our proposed instructional design is informed by high-poverty, high achieving charter schools across the country and in New Mexico, including BES school Excel Academy in Chelsea, MA⁷¹ and Mission: Achievement and Success in Albuquerque, NM, both of which serve high levels of economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, and students with special needs. Our proposed instructional design is based on the data-driven and research-based work of Doug

⁷¹ Building Excellent Schools Fellow, Lead Founder, and proposed Head of School Rachael Sowards completed two leadership residencies at BES school Excel Academy in Chelsea, MA, where she studied the instructional design and implementation. Excel Chelsea has been identified as one of the top performing middle schools in Massachusetts, with high economically disadvantaged, English Learner, and Special Education populations.

Lemov and Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, as well as the practices of high performing charter schools across the country. This instructional design includes purposeful and predictable evaluation of student performance across the student subgroups, as well as adaptations to the instructional delivery based on student performance. Regular classroom instruction will be supported through our daily 50-minute FOCUS block, where individualized independent, small group, or one-on-one instruction will occur, based on the needs of students with IEPs, English language needs, or any student in need of reteaching or remediation. Our teachers and Leadership Team will review student performance and teacher delivery in the classrooms, in order to ensure that the most effective instructional methods are being executed with fidelity, resulting in substantial academic growth across the content areas.

Yearly Calendar and Daily Schedule

In the 87121-zip code, most students are entering middle school below grade level in English/Language Arts and in Mathematics. The number of students falling below grade level increases throughout the middle school, as referenced in **Figure 19** above. Because of the low levels of student proficiency, Solare Collegiate is utilizing an extended school year and extended school day model, resulting in an additional 1.3 years of instruction in the four years a student studies at Solare Collegiate. The extended school day enables us to offer double the amount of time for English/Language Arts instruction, as well as double the amount of time for Mathematics instruction, while maintaining the opportunity for enrichment classes and individualized tutoring through our FOCUS block. Additionally, we anticipate that 24% of our students will be identified as English Learners and 25% of our students will be identified as having special needs. We believe our academic programming, including the daily FOCUS period and the daily independent reading block will support our English Learners and students with special needs, through the opportunity for small group and one-on-one instruction balanced with inclusion support during the core content classes. Our entire academic model is designed on meeting the needs of all individual students, including gifted, English Learners, students with special needs. Annually, the Leadership Team, led by the Head of School, will review our annual calendar and daily schedules, to review how well our calendar and schedule are meeting the needs of our students, and make any adaptations that are necessary to support student learning, particularly the learning of our economically disadvantaged students, students with special needs, and our English learners.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the anticipated student population, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demographic information based on the local community population ○ Educational proficiency based upon enrollment at the school ○ Attendance and truancy trends ○ English language proficiency ○ Other special educational needs; • Explain any special factors influencing the makeup of the anticipated student population; • Explain how the educational philosophy has been designed to meet students' needs; • Explain how the instructional methods have been designed to meet students' needs; and • Explain how the yearly calendar and daily schedule have been designed to meet

	students' needs.
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REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant's response provides clear and comprehensive information on the demographics of the target population located in the zip code area, 87121. The applicant states, "...of the 17 zip codes in Albuquerque, 87121 has the 6th highest rate of families living below the poverty level and is the fastest growing zip code in the greater Albuquerque area." The applicant has researched middle schools in the targeted area and project its population to be:

- 90% Economically disadvantaged
- 25% English learners
- 24% Students with special needs
- 15% Truancy

The applicant provides a compelling narrative which supports the educational model by providing an extended day and calendar to promote significant growth in its students. Additionally, the applicant states, "Our proposed instructional design is informed by high-poverty, high achieving charter schools across the country and in New Mexico, including BES school Excel Academy in Chelsea, MA and Mission: Achievement and Success in Albuquerque, NM, both of which serve high levels of economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, and students with special needs

F. Special Populations.

This includes those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and English language learners (ELLs).

F. (1) Special Education.

F. (1) (a) Provide a **clear, cohesive, and comprehensive** description of how the proposed school will provide required instructional services/supports to students with IEPs. Ensure you address both students with disabilities and students classified as gifted.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to our mission and to the students we educate, including students with special needs, by providing a rigorous curriculum with purposeful, individualized supports that equips all students with the academic and social skills necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. Specific to the needs of students with special needs, including those identified as Gifted and Talented and those with 504 plans, we will meet the students' individualized needs for them to be able to actively engage with the rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum. Elements of our academic programming, including our double blocks of literacy instruction, Accountable Independent Reading at individual students' reading levels, and double math blocks including a focused course dedicated to developing number sense are all part of our regular school environment, which will also support the needs of students with special needs. In addition, each day all students will have individualized supports, specific to their areas of need, which will be taught in whole group, small groups, or one-on-one during our FOCUS block. For students with special needs, this instructional block will be aligned to the goals outlined in their IEP or 504 plans. Finally, our special education teachers will be in general education classrooms regularly to provide appropriate supports to ensure student success. With a structured learning environment, with clear routines and expectations, Solare Collegiate will be a school environment that will effectively teach and support students that are academically at risk.⁷²

To achieve the Solare Collegiate mission of ensuring all students are prepared to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice, we will establish a school community that supports every student in meeting the rigorous academic expectations of our school. A Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) will be provided to all Solare Collegiate students who have been identified with disabilities under the law, as well as those who we may suspect have special needs, including those who have a disability or are identified as Gifted and Talented. We will adhere to all applicable state and federal statutes, including Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974 (504), and New Mexico State Statute and Administrative Code (NMAC.6.31.2).

Solare Collegiate students with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and with their peers without disabilities at the level which is appropriate for student success and required by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Only when the general education classroom environment is inhibiting student success will the student's LRE be adjusted from 100% of time spent in a general classroom setting to a balance of settings that best suit the individual student's learning. Students will not be screened during the admission and enrollment process, and we will make the accommodations to our organization and staffing plan as needed to serve students with disabilities. At no point will students be denied enrollment, based on their special needs. At no point will the enrollment process become a barrier to a seat at Solare Collegiate.

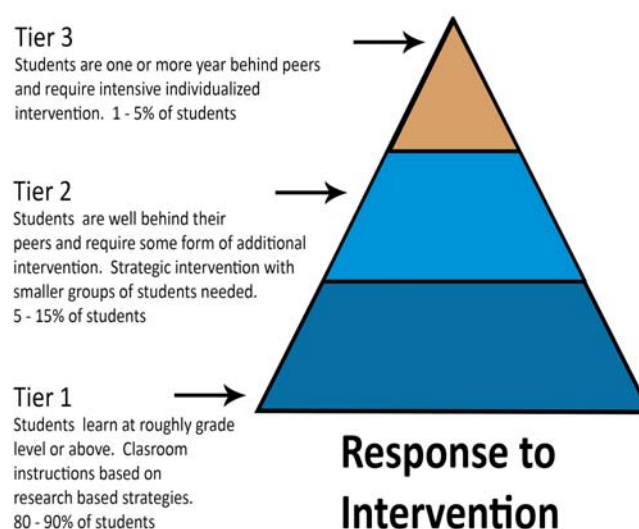
⁷² <http://www.sanmarcos.net/ana/bestpractices.html>.

Identification of Students with Special Needs

Upon accepting a seat at Solare Collegiate, the enrollment process will include collecting pertinent information about the student from the family, including the existence of an IEP or if the student had previously received any special services. If the student does have an existing IEP, the team will work with the family to secure a copy of the IEP from the student's previous school prior to the beginning of the school year, ensuring that the required accommodations and modifications can start on the first day of academic programming. If we have trouble in obtaining these records, we will work with the student's families and contact the New Mexico Public Education Department for assistance. If the preexisting IEP is still not made available within 30 days of the student's enrollment, an IEP meeting will be held to review the needs of the student and decide on further steps concerning evaluation and development of a new IEP.

For students who may have special needs but do not have an existing IEP or students with special needs that need adjustments made to their IEP, the Solare Collegiate team will follow the guidelines outlined by the *Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework* developed by the New Mexico Public Education Department.⁷³ Student performance will be evaluated via the three-tiered RtI framework; **Figure 21** outlines this three-tiered process. Student response to interventions and progress (or lack thereof) will be evaluated, through the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, and be used to determine appropriate supports for behavior and academic success. The Solare Collegiate RtI process will be in compliance with NMAC 6.29.1.9(D). The Student Assistance Team (SAT), made up of a school administrator, teacher in the subject(s) where the student is struggling, specialists (as appropriate), the student, and parents/guardians will meet to review data collected on the student's academic performance, develop ideas on causes of the challenges, and develop an SAT plan following the RtI process.

Figure 21 - Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework



Tier 1 instruction includes regular classroom instruction, as well as in-class differentiated academic supports. Within the regular education classroom, all students will be assessed on their ability in each of the content areas; we will also provide universal health and academic screenings within the school

⁷³ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2014). Response to Intervention Framework.

environment. Tier 1 supports will also include the in-depth analysis of academic performance on short cycle and interim assessments, as a means of data collection for each student. If the student does not demonstrate progress to a degree considered adequate after two rounds of Tier 1 interventions, then the student will transition into Tier 2 of the RtI process. If it is suspected that a student may have a learning disability or giftedness, based on the universal screening, that student may be referred immediately to Tier 2, at the discretion of Solare Collegiate.

The focus of Tier 2 interventions is to provide strategic, in-class supports, including but not limited to, small group instruction or guided notes for students that are significantly behind or those who are significantly advanced. A student continues to receive Tier 1 instruction, while also receiving the targeted Tier 2 interventions outlined in the SAT plan. Tier 2 also includes frequent and targeted progress monitoring of the interventions provided and the outputs garnered, as well as the flexibility to adjust and better support the student's academic and behavioral success.

While receiving Tier 2 intervention supports, if the student does not demonstrate progress to a degree considered adequate, then that student will be referred for a special education or gifted evaluation. The evaluation is multidisciplinary, conducted by qualified professionals, contracted as needed, after receiving signed documentation from the parent/guardian and a prior written notice form. After testing is completed, the professionals will meet to determine if the student meets the eligibility requirements for special education or gifted education. If a child has demonstrated need, but does not qualify for special education services, the child will receive Tier 2 interventions. If a child is determined eligible, but does not show a need for specially-designed curriculum for special needs or giftedness, then the student will remain a general education student, but be considered for their 504 eligibilities by SAT. Finally, if a student is determined to be eligible and in need of special education or gifted services, the IEP team will develop, implement, and revise an IEP annually, or as needed, for the student. This is our Tier 3 intervention step.

Tier 3 supports are those that fall under the umbrella of special education services, including students with an identified disability or students identified as being gifted. The definition of students with special education services are outlined by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In New Mexico, Gifted Education falls under the umbrella of Special Education, as defined in the New Mexico Public Education Department's Technical Evaluation and Assessment Manual.

An SAT meeting can be requested at any time by a parent or guardian, and it is up to the SAT team to determine if the student meets the criteria to be moved into the Tier 2 RtI process. If the team believes that the student would benefit from Tier 2 interventions, the parent/guardian will be informed and invited to participate in the process. However, parental involvement is not required for RtI referral, services, or screenings. However, parental consent is required for Tier 3 screenings and interventions. Alternatively, a parent or guardian can request an initial special education evaluation for their child at any time, inside or outside of the RtI process. If the school agrees that a special education evaluation is needed, then the student will be evaluated. However, if the school disagrees with the parent/guardian, it may decline to test the student, in accordance with New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC 6.31.2.10.C(1)(d)), the school will issue prior written notice, which a parent/guardian can challenge by requesting a due process hearing.

The Solare Collegiate SAT process is outlined as follows:

Step 1: Referral to SAT Coordinator. A classroom teacher will submit a completed SAT referral packet to the SAT Chair.

Step 2: Review of SAT Referral Pack and Certification of Completion. The SAT Chair, along with the referring teacher, will collect meaningful data on the student, including records of interventions

attempted in class, contact with parents, work samples, assessment scores, attendance records, and other materials considered pertinent, to determine certification of the SAT referral.

Step 3: SAT Meeting. After the referral packet is completed and certified, the SAT Chair will schedule an SAT meeting, with invitations extended to the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), classroom teachers, and other relevant team members. The SAT will make one of the following decisions after thoroughly reviewing the data in the referral packet: (a) if the student appears to not need additional interventions, the team will refer the student back to Tier 1; (b) if the student appears to need additional interventions, the team will develop a SAT intervention plan utilizing Tier 2 interventions; (c) if the data is insufficient, the team will request additional information; or (d) if there is an obvious disability refer the student for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Step 4: Implement and Monitor Interventions. The SAT Chair will schedule a follow-up meeting after eight weeks of Tier 2 interventions. Within the eight-week time frame, data points will be collected in two-week intervals. During the follow-up meeting, the team will make one of the following determinations: (a) improvements made, no further action needed, return to Tier 1; (b) improvements made, continue Tier 2 interventions for a specific period of time; (c) no improvement, create a new or revise the current SAT plan; (d) no improvement, refer student to 504 plan; or (e) no improvement, refer student to special education testing to determine if Tier 3 services are appropriate.

Instructional Programming

Solare Collegiate will create an education model that is supportive of and inclusive to all students, including those with identified special needs. To the greatest extent possible, our students will spend their time in general education classrooms, maximizing student academic potential and exposure to academic rigor. Through studying high-performing, urban charter schools with demographics like those we anticipate in our target community, including the high percentage of students with special needs, we have replicated their instructional practices in general, as well as specific to meeting the needs of students with identified special needs. Our primary objective is to provide an academic program with a foundation of full inclusion to the greatest extent possible and a program that utilizes accommodations while minimizing modifications.⁷⁴

Following the parameters of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Solare Collegiate will create a general education environment inclusive to all students, across the spectrum of needs. Students identified as gifted as well as students diagnosed with mild, moderate, or severe disabilities will receive an education that maximizes their academic potential while also focusing on their personal growth. We recognize that LRE is about the student's ability to learn, and sometimes that means for a student to reach their academic potential they need a learning environment other than the general education classroom. If this is the case for a student, we will adhere to the IEP. It is our mission to equip all our students with the academic and social skills necessary to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice, and we recognize that some students may need small group or one-on-one academic support to demonstrate their true academic abilities.

Solare Collegiate will ensure that students with IEPs have individualized education programs with rigorous and attainable goals suitable for each student. We will ensure that each of our general education teachers is educated on the best practices for inclusion special education programming, as well as modifications and accommodations specific to individual students, while also giving students access to highly rigorous college preparatory curriculum. During the first year of operation, our Head of School and Student Supports Coordinator will be responsible for supporting teachers on specifics related

⁷⁴ Hehir, Thomas. (2005). *The Changing Role of Intervention for Children with Disabilities*. National Association of Elementary School Head of Schools.

to special education services for individual students, as well as the push-in model of instruction for students with special needs. Special education professional development will occur during our summer professional development, as well as throughout the school year.

Solare Collegiate will prepare all our students to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice, and that includes our special education students as well as other subgroups. We believe that with our highly structured school and classrooms, high-quality, research-based instructional practices, and individualized supports, all of our students, particularly our students with special needs, will make significant academic growth each year they attend our school. Specifically, individualized FOCUS classes (ranging from small group instruction, computer-based learning, and one-on-one instruction, based on students' academic needs) and the 130 minutes of reading instruction and 100 minutes of mathematics instruction each day are systems within our general education program that will support students with special needs. In addition, qualified, licensed Special Education teachers will be available to support students with special needs in their general education classroom, in pull-out small groups, or individual pull-outs, per the IEP and individual student needs. For any services that our full-time staffing does not cover, we will contact services with outside organizations.

English Learners Considerations

At Solare Collegiate, we anticipate that a significant number of students who are English Learners (EL), and we are dedicated to ensuring that our EL students are not overly identified as needing special education services because of their limited English proficiency. Solare Collegiate will utilize the New Mexico Technical Evaluation and Assessment Manual to ensure that the student's language proficiency is not a cause of an EL being identified as having special education needs.

We will use the Three-Tiered Response to Intervention approach for our EL students, separate from that of our RtI process for identifying special needs. Within the classroom, teachers will provide language supports for ELs to support the development of their academic English proficiency and to support students in the mastery of their academic content. For our EL students who receive Tier 1 supports and continue to struggle with academic content, a teacher may refer a student to the SAT team. However, it will be necessary that all appropriate Tier 1 supports are provided to the student before meeting to institute Tier 2 supports. During Step 2 of the SAT process, data points will include the language usage survey, results from language assessments, including ACCESS and WIDA. If it is determined that language is not the reason for a lack of progress, then the students may enter the SAT process to receive Tier 2 academic supports. Interventions will be in both English and the student's home language, to ensure that academic English proficiency continues to develop, as well as maintaining fluency in the home language. After following the SAT process listed above for Tier 2 interventions, if an EL student is still not showing adequate improvement, the student can then be referred to Tier 3 for evaluation, with the consent of the parents/guardians and prior written notice. The IEP team will take the unique learning needs of the EL student into consideration when assessing the student and writing the IEP if the student qualifies. Special education services do not replace or override the support services that EL students receive.

Identification and Instruction of Gifted and Talented Students

The Solare Collegiate team recognizes that giftedness falls under the umbrella of special education per New Mexico special education statute, and therefore we will follow the same process of identification via the RtI and SAT process. As the RtI process identifies students who are performing beyond the expected level of proficiency, students who may be gifted will process through the tiered intervention system. After Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions are put into place without impact, a student will then be given an initial evaluation specific to giftedness by a qualified individual and a determination for

eligibility will be made. Per the *Gifted Education in New Mexico Technical Assistance Manual*, provided by the Public Education Department⁷⁵, instructional supports for students identified as gifted will be individualized and specific to student interests.

Instruction that is individualized and specific to the individual student is core to the Solare Collegiate mission; we believe in balancing rigorous academics with individualized supports. This combination is especially important for students identified as gifted. In alignment with the *Gifted Education in New Mexico Technical Assistance Manual*, Solare Collegiate will ensure that our gifted students get daily support in their general education classes, meaning that they have daily opportunities for engaging and challenging curriculum. These engaging and challenging opportunities in the general education classroom will be vital, as our gifted students will spend most of their school day in the general education setting. The technical assistance manual advocates for the integration of gifted best practices in the general education classroom, in lieu of pull-out gifted services.

Our gifted, special education, and general education students need access to high quality instructional materials and strategies, which is the primary focus of Solare Collegiate. Through rigorous, Common Core-aligned curriculum, differentiation of instruction is enveloped in the general education classroom. Additionally, our core value of “voice strengthens identity” adds levels of differentiation and sophistication of the curriculum, by encouraging students to actively develop their oral literacy and purposefully use their personal experience as a lens by which to study elements of the curriculum. Finally, Solare Collegiate teachers will limit teacher-talk and direct instruction to no more than 30% of each class period, shifting the intellectual responsibility onto the students.

In addition to regular classroom instruction, our gifted students will participate in a weekly seminar with other gifted students. The focus of the seminar will be for the gifted students to develop independent projects aligned to their academic interests, with a structured time to dedicate to the project.

Spectrum of Student Needs

Core to the mission of Solare Collegiate is the combination of rigorous academics and individualized supports. We believe that the individualized supports are the key to all our students being successful, but especially our students with special needs. As we are intentionally a small school, with 416 students at full capacity, we realize this may present challenges of scale, in terms of special education services. However, any child enrolled at Solare Collegiate will receive the supports outlined in their IEP. We anticipate having 3% of our student population identified in the C Level category and 5% of our student population identified as D Level special needs. When a student with more significant special needs enroll in our school, the Solare Collegiate Leadership Team will develop a plan to provide the student with the supports identified in their IEP in collaboration with the student and his or her family. Our small school model will allow for this level of personalization for our students with the most significant needs.

Based on demographic data of Albuquerque Public Schools, we anticipate that most of our special education students will be identified as A and B Level and would be most successful within the general education setting with small group supports during FOCUS and Accountable Independent Reading blocks, as needed. Our special education teachers will push-in to the classrooms or utilize a co-teaching model with the general education teacher, ensuring specialized supports are provided to our A and B level students.

For our gifted students, we anticipate that the focus on oral literacy and Habits of Discussion will add opportunity for high levels of academic rigor and analysis in classrooms, which may not be present otherwise. In addition, our Accountable Independent Reading and FOCUS blocks will serve as daily

⁷⁵ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2011). *Gifted Education in New Mexico Technical Assistance Manual*. Santa Fe, NM. <http://ped.state.nm.us/gifted/Gifted%20TA%20manual.pdf>.

opportunities for our gifted students to choose readings and projects that align with their passions. Our gifted students will receive support in the classroom from the general education teachers, as well as our gifted-endorsed teacher, and they will also receive a weekly, small group gifted seminar during FOCUS.

Responsibilities of Special Education Staff, General Education Teachers, and Leadership

At Solare Collegiate, all teachers will provide modifications and accommodations as outlined within individual IEPs to support the success of our special education students. With an anticipated special needs population of 24%, a significant percentage of our students will come into our classrooms with special needs, and general education and enrichment teachers hold the responsibility to support our students with special needs, as outlined in their IEPs. Our special education teachers will provide the specialized instruction needed by students, through push-in services and co-teaching in the general education classroom, to targeted small group instruction during FOCUS, to case management and implementation of the IEP. Solare Collegiate will contract with an external services provider, to ensure that our students with special needs get the ancillary support services outlined in their IEPs, including speech therapy, recreational therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work and counseling services, and health screenings. Additionally, Solare Collegiate will contract with Educational Diagnosticians to ensure that initial eligibility and three-year re-evaluations are completed in a thorough and timely manner, as outlined in IDEA, unless a parent requests a re-evaluation prior to that date.

The Head of School will work closely with the Student Supports Coordinator to coordinate all ancillary services, as well as additional resources to support student success at Solare Collegiate. The Student Supports Coordinator will be responsible for maintaining the documentation of student records, coaching and supporting the special education teachers, and conducting family outreach. Each student with an IEP will have an assigned IEP team, which will consist of the Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator the child, the parent/guardian, a special education teacher, and a general education teacher. Each year, the IEP team will review the special education plan of the student and adjust as the team deems fit. Reevaluations will include the contract diagnostician, who will conduct the testing appropriate to determine student's requalification status.

Solare Collegiate will ensure that all students are in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and will receive their special education and ancillary services in their LRE whenever possible. If the general education classroom environment restricts the student from maximizing their learning, then our special education teachers and ancillary staff will utilize small group or one-on-one instruction. By design, Solare Collegiate includes a daily 50-minute FOCUS period, in which all students can receive individualized support by their teachers. For our students who are gifted or have special needs, this block will be an opportune time for specialized small group or one-on-one instruction with peers performing at the same academic levels or needing the same type of interventions and supports. Like all Solare Collegiate students, our students with special needs will have regular classroom and standardized data collected by our teachers, which will be analyzed and used to inform individualized instruction, and our special education teachers will complete more frequent data collection and analysis on our students with special needs. Our teachers and administrators will keep regular, open lines of communication with the parents of our children with special needs and all families will receive written reports on academic progress on IEPs at least as frequently as students without IEPs.

Staffing and Training

Solare Collegiate staff have an unrelenting belief in the potential of all students, including our students with identified special needs - gifted and with an identified disability. Included in our Year One staffing plan is a team dedicated to special education services, according to the projected numbers of students with special needs. In Year 1, Solare Collegiate expects to hire two special education teachers, one full-time and one half-time. Additionally, Solare Collegiate will hire a Student Supports Coordinator in Year 1, to support our special education teachers and to facilitate the special education and English Language

programming. The role of Student Supports Coordinator transitions to the Dean of Student Supports in Year 3. **Figure 22** outlines the projected staffing plan, based on Albuquerque Public Schools special education data for our targeted community.⁷⁶ Services will be arranged with contract services, specific to individual student needs, as outlined in their IEP. The Student Supports Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating and monitoring the Solare Collegiate special education programming, including student services and academic outcomes. Specifically, this role coordinates with special education teachers and contracted ancillary service providers, including the training and supporting of said staff. The Student Supports Coordinator will also be responsible for: (a) leading the identification process, including organizing the special education assessments and evaluations, both at the initial and reevaluation stage; (b) ensuring that services are provided and aligned with the individual's IEP; (c) monitoring timelines for annual reviews and reevaluations of IEPs; (d) complying with state and federal reporting guidelines; (e) providing professional development and support to general education staff; and (f) ensuring that special education data is stored in a confidential manner.

Figure 22 - Special Education Staffing

Operational Year	Anticipated SPED Population ⁷⁷	Projected Staffing Needs
2019-2020	38	1.5 SPED Teachers ⁷⁸ 1 Student Supports Coordinator
2020-2021	63	2 SPED Teachers 1 Student Supports Coordinator
2021-2022 2022-2023	88	3 SPED Teachers 1 Dean of Student Supports
2023-2024	100	4 SPED Teachers 1 Dean of Student Supports

All staff participating in the education of students with disabilities will receive summer and ongoing training focusing on the following special education topics:

- Mindset and high expectations for students with special needs
- Referral process to the Student Supports Coordinator
- IEP Team process
- Goal setting specific to individual needs
- Implementation of a student's IEP
- Differences between accommodations and modifications
- Evaluation of data aligned to individual IEP goals
- Specific reporting and communication requirements between school and home.
- Discipline of students with disabilities

Total Points Available	Expectations
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⁷⁶ In 87121, middle schools have an average of 24% of students with IEPs, slightly higher than 21% average for the full district.

⁷⁷ Special Education caseloads include gifted students, and gifted students are weighted differently than other SPED students.

⁷⁸ If CSP funding is received, Year 1 staffing will include a Student Supports Coordinator in addition to 1.5 full time special education teacher.

4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the proposed school will identify and provide instructional supports and services to students with disabilities, who have IEPs or are eligible for an IEP; • Describe how the proposed school will ensure that students who are ELs are not over-identified as students with disabilities; • Describe how the proposed school will identify and provide instructional supports and services to gifted students who have IEPs or are eligible for an IEP; • Describe how the school will address the spectrum of needs that students with IEPs may present; • Identify specific responsibilities for school staff, classroom teachers, and special education staff; and • Identify specific training and support that will be provided to teachers and school staff to ensure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant provides a comprehensive and detailed plan that makes explicit and appropriate connections between the chosen curriculum and its appropriateness for special education populations. Additionally, the spectrum of needs is addressed to include a detailed plan for Gifted student support.</p> <p>The narrative provides a complete protocol for a three tier system that identifies whether a student is in need of special education services with the consideration of ruling out language as a cause of potential disability. Additionally, if the process only identifies a student is behind but does not qualify for special education services, the process allows for instructional time to be set aside.</p> <p>All levels of special education are addressed including pull-out and inclusion as described in the FOCUS block. This block is implemented in either a group setting, small group, or one-on-one. For gifted students, the applicant states, "...we anticipate that the focus on oral literacy and Habits of Discussion will add opportunity for high levels of academic rigor and analysis in classrooms, which may not be present otherwise. In addition, our Accountable Independent Reading and FOCUS blocks will serve as daily opportunities for our gifted students to choose readings and projects that align with their passions. Our gifted students will receive support in the classroom from the general education teachers, as well as our gifted-endorsed teacher, and they will also receive a weekly, small group gifted seminar during FOCUS."</p>	

F. (1) (b) Provide a **clear, cohesive, and comprehensive** description of how the proposed school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of special education students to ensure attainment of IEP goals.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Regular Interval Progress Monitoring

At Solare Collegiate, we strongly believe in the equipping our students with the skills that will enable them to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. This is especially true with our students receiving special education services. In addition to our foundational services offered to all students, our students with special needs will receive additional supports, including the monitoring of student progress in regular intervals, as required by state and federal law.

Aligned with state and federal special education laws, student IEPs will be reviewed annually at minimum, but as often as the IEP team deems appropriate in addition to that. Annual review of IEPs will include an evaluation of the student's IEP goal(s), including determining if the student has made progress on or mastered the goal(s), and then revise or rewrite the individual goal(s) as needed. Every third year, or as needed prior to the third year, each student with an IEP will be reevaluated to determine eligibility for special education services. At the end of the reevaluation the IEP team, including the student and the parents, will convene to discuss the results of the reevaluation and how it impacts the services the student currently receives and the services that are needed. The Student Supports Coordinator will provide the Solare Collegiate staff, as well as the families of students with special needs, with trainings on the IEP process, the IEP document, and modifications and accommodations.

Students receiving special education services will receive regular progress monitoring in their special needs. During the annual IEP review, the team will determine the frequency of the progress monitoring, specific to any monitoring beyond the use of school-wide performance indicators, including daily exit tickets, weekly quizzes, interim assessments, nationally norm-referenced tests, and state mandated testing. Any additional monitoring should bring value to the student's educational progress, and it will be documented in the student's IEP. At minimum, formal progress monitoring will occur every six weeks, through our internally-created interim assessments, which will be aligned to the NMCCSS and the PARCC assessment. The New Mexico Public Education Department advises monitoring for students with special needs can occur as frequently as weekly or once every nine weeks. For students whose IEP team determines more progress monitoring is necessary, STAR Reading and STAR Math assessments may be used. The progress monitoring of students with IEPs will be recorded, including the current level of proficiency, individual growth, and progress towards the IEP goals. Parents will receive a monthly report on the progress of the student.

School Staff Responsibilities

Solare Collegiate teachers and staff members believe, without reservation, in the ability and capacity of all students, including our students with special needs, both those with a disability or a gifted identification. As stated in the previous section of the application, we are responsible for all steps in the Special Education process, from the identification process, including the RtI framework, referral process, and special education evaluation, as well as ongoing services for students with special needs, according to the IEP accommodations and modifications. During the IEP process, the IEP team, which is made up of the Student Supports Coordinator (holding a New Mexico Special Education Teacher's license), School Director, and teachers, will write student IEPs. The Student Supports Coordinator and the special education teacher will monitor student caseloads, services related to assessments, progress of IEP goals, and annual reviews of the IEP. All teachers are responsible for implementing the IEP accommodations and modifications in the classroom, as well as monitoring of student success in the classroom and their

IEP goals. The Manager of Operations will coordinate and contract the ancillary services that Solare Collegiate staff cannot provide (i.e. speech, OT).

Progress Monitoring Intervals

Solare Collegiate students with special needs will have their progress monitored monthly by their case manager, in addition to the whole school progress monitoring that occurs after each interim assessment. The monthly progress monitoring will focus on the fulfillment of the IEP goals, as well as the student growth and mastery of grade level materials. Formal and informal assessments will be used to determine the student's progress towards fulfilling the student's IEP goals.

General education teachers, with the support of the special education teachers, will share the average classroom assessment scores, including the grade level average, cohort average, and the average of subgroups, including special education students and English Learners. This information will be used to inform the effectiveness of our special education programming, as well as to monitor the growth of individual students.

If a case manager sees a stagnation of student growth or fulfillment of the IEP goal, then the case manager will review the student's general classroom supports, small group instruction, and other supports aligned to the student's IEP. The case manager may suggest modifications to the special education supports, to better support the student. Any adjustments to the student programming will first be presented to the student and their family, to solicit input and feedback from the student and their family.

If the student is making continued progress towards their IEP goal(s) and mastery of grade level content, the case manager may adapt the special education supports to be more focused on general education in-class supports as opposed to pull out supports. As stated above, any adjustments to the student programming will first be presented to the student and their family, to solicit input and feedback from the student and their family.

Formal reports of student progress, in relation to the student's IEP goals, will be sent to families at each mid-trimester and end-of-trimester, with the midterm and trimester report cards. Within the communication, the special education team will report out student progress towards the mastery of academic and ancillary support goals.

Student and Family Engagement and Communication

We believe in robust communication between Solare Collegiate and the families of our students. The lines of communication are of increased importance with the families of students with identified special needs. Our staff will communicate regularly with families about their student's progress in classes, as well as their progress towards achieving their IEP goal(s), proficiency levels, and the special education programming for their student. Written communication will include monthly reports of progress and documentation of services. In addition, regular school-wide communication, such as progress reports and report cards will continue the lines of communication between Solare Collegiate and our families. Parents of students with special needs will also receive a monthly phone call from the Student Supports Coordinator or the Special Education teacher. Families will be active in the review of the annual IEP. Solare Collegiate will adhere to all communication and consent requirements outlined in state and federal law. Additionally, communication with parents will be conducted in the parent's preferred language.

In addition, we strong believe in the importance of investing our students in their own education. As such, our students with special needs will receive regular feedback on their academic performance, as well as have a weekly conference with their special education case manager, to discuss academic and social successes and areas of growth spanning from daily to the whole academic year. Students will be actively involved in the creation of their IEP goals, as well as suggested modifications or

accommodations.

Program Evaluation

To provide our students with special needs an academic program that is both supportive of their identified exceptionalities and rigorous in its academic programming, we need to regularly assess the quality and the effectiveness of our program, including our Response to Intervention process, our special education project management and implementation of services, and our contracted services. It is of greatest importance to the Solare Collegiate team that we are critical of the successes of our special education programming, therefore we will collect and analyze data for each of the following:

- Percentage of students in special education in relation to neighboring schools.
- Number of referrals to the Student Assistance Team for Tier 2 interventions, and the outcomes from those meetings.
- Number of referrals to Tier 3, and the outcomes from those referrals.
- Trends in the number of students in the RtI process across the school year.
- Referrals of EL students and other subgroups.
- Growth of students receiving special services, in comparison to those who are not receiving special services.
- Types of interventions provided and the effectiveness of the interventions.
- Behavior trends of students with special needs.
- Comparison data of our special education and gifted students, between neighboring schools, APS, state, and national, across all students and special education subgroups.
- Percentage of students meeting IEP goals.
- Number of students exited from special education programming.

In addition to the data outlined above, the case manager for each of our students with special needs will review the student's performance at each mid-term and trimester point, as well as at the end of the school year for a comprehensive overview, totaling six formal reviews each academic year. The case manager will review the student's academic performance based on the grade level content standards, as well as their performance in alignment with their IEP goals. If a student is not on track to meet their IEP goals or are not making growth on their mastery of grade level content, the special education team may reevaluate the supports being provided to the student and adapt them to better support the student. Additionally, if a significant proportion of our students with special needs are not on track to meet their IEP or academic growth goals, the Leadership Team may make recommendations to alter the design of our special education programming.

The success and areas of growth determined for our special education programming, based on individual student performance and school-wide programming performance, will be used to determine the professional development needs for our special education staff specifically, as well as professional development needs in special education for our general education teachers. The Head of School, with the support of the Student Supports Coordinator, will use the data outlined above to revise and inform the continued growth and development of our special education program, including programmatic elements, curriculum selection, and instructional design, regularly and annually. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will review disaggregated academic data, including the performance of our students with special needs, monthly and annually, focusing on holding the management team responsible for high expectations and results.

Total Points Available	Expectations
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4

A complete response must

- Describe how the proposed school will monitor the progress toward special education students' attainment of IEP goals;
- Identify specific responsibilities for school staff, classroom teachers, and special education staff;
- Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored and success will be evaluated;
- Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and or families; and
- Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its special education program and services.

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant provides a thorough explanation of the school's plan for progress monitoring expectations that include timelines, staff responsibilities and how data is communicated to families.

The applicant states, "Students receiving special education services will receive regular progress monitoring in their special needs. During the annual IEP review, the team will determine the frequency of the progress monitoring, specific to any monitoring beyond the use of school-wide performance indicators, including daily exit tickets, weekly quizzes, interim assessments, nationally norm-referenced tests, and state mandated testing."

Additionally, the applicant has developed a robust communication plan that includes frequent communications with families regarding the student's progress in classes and progress towards achieving the student's IEP goal(s), proficiency levels, and the special education programming.

Finally, the applicant's response clearly details how data will be used to analyze the program for adjustments and to hold the program accountable through several criteria identified in the narrative.

F. (2) English Language Learner (ELLs).

F.(2)(a) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of how the proposed school will provide required curriculum, and instructional services/supports to students identified as ELs.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team recognizes that many of our students will come from multi-language homes. With that, we anticipate that a significant number of our students will be identified as English Learners (ELs). Currently, 15% of students in Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) and 25% of middle school students in the 87121-zip code are identified as ELs.

We will prepare our staff to support our EL students, including being able to effectively identify students who are EL and support them with research-proven instructional practices for ELs, thus preparing them to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. In addition, we will follow the guidelines for identification and instructional support for English Learners, outlined by the New Mexico Public Education Department's Bilingual Multicultural Education Bureau.

Identification of English Learner Students

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title III, Section 3111(b)(2)(A), and New Mexico Administrative Code (6.29.5.11), Solare Collegiate will follow state and national statutes for identification of EL students. Per New Mexico Administrative Code, all students must complete a New Mexico Language Usage Survey (LUS) survey at initial enrollment into public school. As Solare Collegiate begins with 5th grade, we will attempt to collect the Language Usage Survey from the school the student most recently attended. We will make three attempts to collect the survey from the former school, and if the document is not received, then the family will need to complete a new home language survey. In the case of any student who has not previously attended a public New Mexico school, the family will complete the survey as part of their enrollment package. The New Mexico Language Usage Survey can be found at **Attachment D**, and it is available in English, Spanish, and Navajo.

As we are proposing to be a middle school, we anticipate that the majority of our ELs will be identified as being ELs prior to attending Solare Collegiate. However, if we enroll a student new to the State of New Mexico or if we suspect a student has English language needs, we will follow the process of identification outlined below. Per the New Mexico Administrative Code, if a language other than English is named on the language usage survey, then those students must be screened with the PED-approved English language proficiency screening assessment. A response of "yes" to any of the questions 1 through 6 and/or 7 on the language usage survey also will indicate that a student will be given the PED approved screening tool. Solare Collegiate students will take the WIDA Screener Online, per the NMPED Bilingual Multicultural Education Bureau. After the WIDA Screener Online is administered, students will either be identified as English Learners or non-English Learners, based on PED determined cut scores. After the determination of EL status, a letter will be sent home to the parents/guardians, indicating the student's EL status, as well as the program and services to which the status entitles the students. Parents/guardians may choose to consent or opt out of EL programming; if a parent/guardian opts out, they will need to do so annually, and the paperwork will remain in the student's cumulative file.

Students placed in the EL programming will be annually assessed using the ACCESS for ELLS 2.0 assessment. Scores of 4.9 or below indicate that students will continue to maintain their EL status and continue to receive services. Students who earn a score of 5.0 or higher on ACCESS will be exited from EL status and will be designated as "reclassified fluent English proficient" (RFEF) and will be monitored for progress over the next two years.

Instructional Programming

Per Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, federal law requires that ELs have equal access to rigorous, high quality education and the opportunity to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. We will ensure that our ELs have a program that supports students in developing academic English proficiency, as designated on the ACCESS for ELLS 2.0 assessment, while also providing students support within the rigorous general classroom instruction. To provide the necessary EL supports while also providing a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, Solare Collegiate will use a Structured English Immersion (SEI) program. Our students will benefit from the SEI supports within the classroom, as well as benefit from the school's overarching literacy focus and individualized intervention groupings.

At Solare Collegiate, we will have a strong emphasis on literacy instruction, including a purposeful focus on oral literacy. Each day, students will attend a 50-minute English Language Arts class, 50-minute Textual Analysis Block, 30-minute Accountable Independent Reading block, and 50-minute FOCUS block, each of which will have English Language supports embedded within the general classroom instruction. Additionally, each day students will attend a 50-minute Foundational Math block, 50-minute Conceptual Math block, 50-minute Historical Literacy block, and 50-minute Scientific Literacy block. Our content area classes also will emphasize the development of oral literacy as well as prioritize students doing the active, intellectual work during class. We believe that these areas of focus will support our students with English proficiency needs.

For each grade, the WIDA English Language Development Standards will be aligned by grade level and within each of the content area classes, ensuring that English language development is purposefully considered and embedded into all areas of instruction. Additionally, our daily FOCUS block will be designed to support all students with additional independent, small group, or one-on-one work time, based on student need. We intend to utilize this time to support our EL students, as well as using our Independent Reading block to provide additional English literacy supports.

Spectrum of Student Needs

Within our Structured English Immersion (SEI) program, Solare Collegiate is committed to providing EL students with rigorous, grade level instruction in each of the core subject areas in the general education classroom. Within the regular education classroom, individualized supports for all students as well as supports specific to the needs of our EL students will be embedded into classroom instruction. Small group instruction during our FOCUS block will ensure that EL students are receiving language proficiency support and remediation of classroom content, as needed. For students that have more profound needs, small group and one-on-one supports are available daily during the intervention classes. With systems focused on research-based instructional practices, a structured school environment, and individualized supports specific to general need and the specific EL needs of a student, we will be able to meet the individual needs of each of our EL students, while also providing highly rigorous, college preparatory instruction.

Based on the demographic data of Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) in the 87121-zip code, we anticipate that 25% of our student population will be identified as ELs. With such a significant percentage of students with English language needs, supportive techniques will be embedded within regular classroom instruction. With an intentional focus on providing supports in the general education classroom, the majority of our ELs will be successful in the general education classroom, supplemented with small groups and one-on-one instructional support, as needed. We will prioritize hiring teachers with the TESOL endorsement or the willingness to earn the credentials.

For our students with limited English proficiency, we will adjust our staffing plan to suit the needs of individual students, balancing general classroom instruction and small group or a one-on-one setting to best suit students' access to grade level content and increasing their English language proficiency. For our ELs who are near exiting or recently exited from EL services, our Student Supports Coordinator will

continue to monitor the students' academic and social performances, to ensure that the exiting from EL services is not a disruption to their academic success.

Responsibilities of General Education Teachers and Administration

Solare Collegiate anticipates an English Learner population of 25%, based on the demographics of the middle schools in our targeted community. We will work as a team to support our EL students in their English language development, making that a responsibility of all members of our team. Our Head of School will take the primary responsibility for the student identification process, while the instructional strategies, including but not limited to accessing grade level content, as well as support and intervention services, will be the responsibility of classroom teachers and the Student Supports Coordinator, with support from the Leadership Team. Our entire staff will be familiar with the Language Usage Survey and the accompanying process map and be able to articulate the process to family and community members. All Solare Collegiate teachers will have the responsibility to provide support and services to our students who are identified as English Learners and at all levels of English proficiency. General education teachers will provide rigorous, grade level curriculum with supports individualized to the needs of our English Learners. Based on student need and levels of English proficiency, the general education teachers will provide our ELs with small group instruction during the daily FOCUS period. The Student Supports Coordinator will be responsible for the case management of our ELs. Solare Collegiate will reconfigure our staffing structure, if the needs of our ELs is more significant than we originally anticipated.

The Head of School will work with the Student Supports Coordinator to develop a service plan for each of our ELs, specific to their current levels of English language proficiency and academic need. The Student Supports Coordinator will be responsible for maintaining the documentation and student records of our EL students, as well as coaching and supporting the general education teachers. Additionally, the Student Supports Coordinator will conduct regular family outreach. Each year, a team consisting of the Student Support Coordinator, Head of School, general education teacher, student, and family will review the most recent performance on the ACCESS test, along with the student's academic performance in class and on standardized assessments. Using these data points, the team will determine if the current supports in place are effective, making adjustments as necessary. The same process will be followed for students recently exited from EL services.

Solare Collegiate will ensure that all our EL students maximize general education classroom time, with focused small group support, as needed, during the daily 50-minute FOCUS block. If current levels of English proficiency limits the accessibility to instruction in the general education classroom, our staffing plan will be restructured to support the student with limited English proficiency, primarily through small group or one-on-one instruction, with the emphasis on maximizing productive opportunities to be in the general education classroom. By design, Solare Collegiate includes a daily 50-minute FOCUS period, in which all students can receive individualized support by their teachers. For our students with limited English proficiency, this block is an opportune time for specialized small group or one-on-one instruction with peers with similar levels of English proficiency. Like all Solare Collegiate students, our students identified as ELs will have regular classroom and standardized data collected by our teachers, which will be analyzed and used to inform individualized instruction specialized for ELs. Our teachers and administrators will keep regular, open lines of communication with the families of our EL students.

Staff Responsibilities and Training

At Solare Collegiate we are firm in our beliefs that when given rigorous academics and individualized supports, all students can access the high schools and colleges of their choice, including our English Learner students. We will prioritize hiring teachers who currently have TESOL endorsements or are willing to complete the coursework necessary to have the endorsement added to their credentials, via

the summer program offered by the University of New Mexico.

The Solare Collegiate team will access professional development and training offered by the Public Education Department, as it is relevant to our EL programming. In addition, teachers and staff will receive regular and ongoing training specific to EL programming during our four-week summer professional development and ongoing training during the school year, facilitated by the Head of School and Student Supports Coordinator, with external presenters as necessary. Topics of training during the summer professional development will include the EL identification process, interventions and supports for EL students in class, and avoiding overidentification of ELs in Special Education programming.

All staff participating in the education of English Learners will receive summer and ongoing training focusing on the following special education topics:

- Mindset and high expectations for students identified as ELs
- Identification and Exiting Process
- Goal setting specific to language proficiency needs
- Inclusion of English Development Standards
- Evaluation of data aligned to English proficiency goals
- Specific reporting and communication requirements between school and home.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how the proposed school will identify English learners (ELs) and provide the required curriculum and instructional services/supports to students identified as ELs; ● Identify how the school will implement the English Language Development Standards for ELs in its school; ● Identify how the school will provide ELs with instruction and support to develop English language proficiency; ● Identify how the school will provide ELs with access to grade-level content; ● Describe how the school will address the spectrum of needs that ELs may present; ● Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers; and ● Identify specific training and support that will be provided to teachers and school staff to ensure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant provides a concise plan for identifying English Learners (ELs) and describes what daily instruction looks like for an EL. The narrative states, “Each day, students will attend a 50-minute English Language Arts class, 50-minute Textual Analysis Block, 30-minute Accountable Independent Reading block, and 50-minute FOCUS block, each of which will have English Language supports embedded within the general classroom instruction. Additionally, each day students will attend a 50-minute Foundational Math block, 50-minute Conceptual Math block, 50-minute Historical Literacy block, and 50-minute Scientific Literacy block. Our content area classes also will emphasize the development of oral literacy as well as prioritize students doing the active, intellectual work during class.”</p> <p>It is evident in the narrative that the applicant fully describes the responsibilities of staff and leadership and how training is provided. For example, the Head of School intends to work with the Student</p>	

Supports Coordinator to develop a service plan for each of their ELs. In regards to professional development, the school intends to provide summer and ongoing training dedicated to specific topics such as: “Mindset and high expectations for students identified as ELs” and “Evaluation of data aligned to English proficiency goals”.

F. (2) (b) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** to regularly evaluate and monitor the progress of English learners.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Regular Interval Progress Monitoring

As our teachers provide our EL students with individualized supports to successfully access their rigorous classroom instruction, our leadership team will also focus on purposeful progress monitoring during regular intervals, as well as on an annual basis, as required by law.

Each year, students classified as EL will take the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Students who earn a composite score of 5.0 or higher will meet the criteria for exiting from the program, and those who score below the cut score will remain in the EL program and continue to receive services and supports. Parents will be notified annually of their students' status and services to be received. Those students with a composite score of 5.0 or higher will exit EL status and be designated as "Reclassified Fluent English Proficient" (RFEP) and will continue to receive monitoring services for the next two years.

Solare Collegiate will use our interim assessments, as well as the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) assessments given at the start, mid-point, and end-point of the year to monitor our EL students in regular intervals. Interim assessments will be administered six times per year, while the NWEA MAP will be administered three times per year. The interim assessments will be aligned to grade level content standards in each of the content areas. The NWEA MAP will provide us with data to determine how our EL students are performing compared to the average student in their grade level and the average EL student and non-EL student at the national level.

When working with EL students, monitoring student progress and adapting the instructional strategies to support individual student needs will be vital.⁷⁹ In addition to EL programming, students in EL programs benefit from research-based best practices, a structured environment for learning, and tiered systems like RtI. We will use the New Mexico RtI Framework to support and monitor student success with our EL students, ensuring that we are supporting their academic needs and not over-identifying language proficiency as a learning disability.

School Staff Responsibilities

The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team and teachers emphatically believe in the potential of all our students, including our students with developing English proficiency. As referenced in section **I.F.(2)(a)**, the Leadership Team holds the primary responsibility of student identification for EL services, with daily instruction, support, and interventions being the responsibility of the teachers and Student Supports Coordinator. All teachers and staff should be able to describe the Language Usage Survey and the process by which students are tested for English language proficiency and be comfortable describing the process to parents/guardians. Teachers and the Student Supports Coordinator will be responsible for tracking of supports and monitoring of services.

Student and Family Engagement and Communication

We believe in robust communication between Solare Collegiate and our families. The lines of communication are of increased importance with the families of students identified as English Learners. Our staff will communicate regularly with families about their student's progress in classes, as well as their progress towards achieving their English language proficiency goals, proficiency levels, and the EL programming for their student. Written communication will include monthly reports of progress and documentation of services. In addition, regular school-wide communication, such as progress reports

⁷⁹ U.S. Department of Education. (2016). English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies (SEAs and LEAs). <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap8.pdf>.

and report cards, will continue the lines of communication between Solare Collegiate and our families. Parents of students with special needs will also receive a monthly phone call from the Student Supports Coordinator or a general education classroom teacher. Solare Collegiate will adhere to all communication and consent requirements outlined in state and federal law, including the required annual notification to families outlined in the Language Usage Survey Process Map. Additionally, communication with parents will be conducted in the parent's preferred language.

In addition, we believe in the importance of investing our students in their own education. As such, our EL students will receive regular feedback on their academic performance, as well as have the opportunity to have a weekly conference with a general education teacher assigned to provide the EL student with specialized coaching and support, to discuss academic and social successes and areas of growth spanning from daily to the whole academic year. Students will be actively involved in the creation of their English proficiency goals, as well as suggested methods to support their English proficiency development.

Program Evaluation

To provide our students with special needs a program that is both supportive of their identified exceptionalities and rigorous in its academic programming, we will need to regularly assess the quality and the effectiveness of our EL program, as suggested in the *Serving English Learners Technical Assistance Manual* from the NM PED's Bilingual Multicultural Education Bureau. Specific areas of evaluation will include our Response to Intervention process, our EL programming and implementation of services, and our contract services. It is of greatest importance to the Solare Collegiate team that we are critical of the successes of our EL programming; therefore, we will collect and analyze data for each of the following, to maintain compliance with the Office of Civil Rights requirements:

- Percentage of students in EL in relation to neighboring schools
- Number of referrals to the Student Assistance Team for Tier 2 interventions, and outcomes from those meetings
- Number of referrals to Tier 3, and outcomes from those referrals
- Trends in the number of students in the RtI process across the school year
- Referrals of EL students to special education
- Percentage of EL students in Special Education
- Percentage of EL students in the gifted program
- Growth of students receiving EL services, in comparison to those who are not receiving EL services
- Types of interventions provided and the effectiveness of the interventions
- Behavior trends of EL students
- Comparison data of our EL, between neighboring schools, APS, state, and national, across all students and EL subgroups
- Percentage of students mastering English Development Standards
- Number of students exited from EL services
- School rating (achievement gaps and/or different educational outcomes for ELs compared to non-ELs)
- Staff turnover for those serving ELs
- Data accuracy and reporting
- Parent and community concerns
- Any other issues that would negatively impact ELs

Solare Collegiate will also use the program evaluation tools provided by the PED Bilingual Multicultural Education Bureau, including the Monitoring Checklist and the Parents of ELs Interview Form. In addition to the data outlined above, the Student Supports Coordinator will review the students' performance at

the end of the school year for a comprehensive overview. The Student Supports Coordinator will review the student's academic performance based on the grade level content standards, as well as their performance in alignment with their WIDA English Development Standards. If a student is not on track to meet their proficiency goals or is not making growth on his/her mastery of grade level content, the Student Supports Coordinator may reevaluate the supports being provided to the student and adapt them to better support the student. Additionally, if a significant proportion of our students with English Language needs are not on track to meet their language proficiency goals or academic growth goals, the Leadership Team may make recommendations to alter the design of our EL programming.

The success and areas of growth determined for our English Learners supports, based on individual student performance and school-wide programming performance, will be used to determine the professional development needs for our entire staff. The Head of School will review the findings of our annual program evaluation, and use the information to inform programmatic, curricular, and instructional decisions for Solare Collegiate, ensuring we are providing the most rigorous and supportive program for our English Learners. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will review disaggregated academic data, including the performance of our English Learners, focusing on holding the management team responsible for high expectations and results for all students.

Monitoring Exited EL Students

When an EL student earns a composite score of 5.0 or higher on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 English proficiency assessment, the student will be considered proficient in English. After being reclassified as "Reclassified Fluent English Proficient" (RFEP), the student will continue to receive monitoring for two years, per New Mexico Administrative Code (6.29.5.12). Monitoring does not include ACCESS testing, but it does include regular monitoring by classroom teachers. For all classroom and standardized assessments, teachers and leadership will disaggregate performance data by subgroups, including English Learners. For the purposes of monitoring our RFEP students, we will also disaggregate their data, to ensure their academics are not suffering after their reclassification.

If a student who is in the monitoring stage and is not showing academic success and still may need English language supports, the SAT team will review student data and design an intervention plan. If the intervention plan does not work and the student is still not progressing, the English language proficiency screener may be administered to the student again.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the proposed school will monitor the progress of ELs toward English language proficiency, both annually and within the school year; Identify specific responsibilities for school staff and classroom teachers; Identify the regular intervals at which progress will be monitored; Identify specific actions/reporting that will engage students and/or families; Describe how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of its EL program and services; and Describe how the school will monitor exited EL students (reclassified fluent English proficient students—RFEPs) for two years for academic progress.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response provides a strong and comprehensive plan to monitor the progress and</p>	

language acquisition of ELs as well as measuring the degree to which these students are able to access and engage in grade-level content. The applicant explains how both teachers and leadership are responsible for the achievement of an EL. The narrative states, "As our teachers provide our EL students with individualized supports to successfully access their rigorous classroom instruction, our leadership team will also focus on purposeful progress monitoring during regular intervals, as well as on an annual basis, as required by law." The applicant's plan not only includes the use of interim assessments but also intends to use NWEA MAP to monitor progress. Data from these assessments are used by teachers to "analyze overall student performance on the assessments, as well as isolate student subgroups, including English Learners, to identify any performance gaps. If performance gaps are present, the Student Supports Coordinator, with the support of classroom teachers, will determine what additional supports the EL students need, in class or through small group or one-on-one support."

Included in this plan are clear descriptions that explain how the school will communicate to and engage families in their students' progress and how the program will be evaluated. Overall, the strength of this response is how clearly the information is organized and articulated to address all key elements of a plan for monitoring the progress of an EL.

G. Assessment and Accountability.

A charter school application should include a clear plan for evaluating student performance across the curriculum. This plan should align with state performance standards, as well as with the proposed school's student performance indicators/goals, and should be presented, along with a clear timeline for achieving these standards/indicators/goals. A clear explanation of the types of assessments and frequency of administration should be included, reflecting thoughtfulness given to tracking student progress. A plan for the use of data gathered through assessments should include procedures for taking corrective action (both individually and collectively) if pupil performance falls below expected standards.

A quality assessment plan will include summative (end-of-year) assessments as well as formative (more frequent) assessments to track student skill and knowledge development and to inform instruction. The plan will include how this data will be used to guide professional development of teachers, as well as how this data will be used to guide refinement of the curriculum and instruction.

When developing the assessment plan, you should consider: 1) the appropriateness of assessments to the curriculum; 2) what will serve as baseline for student progress comparisons; 3) the inclusion of school, state, and other assessments to demonstrate appropriate student growth (e.g., PARCC, SBA, Discovery, DRA, DIBELS, NWEA MAP, AP, IB, SAT, ACT); 4) the ability of the assessment plan to provide for the early detection of students struggling with curriculum content; and 5) the ability of assessments to reflect the use of basic skills at grade-appropriate levels (e.g., reading, writing, problem-solving).

Note: Be aware that all New Mexico public schools, including charter schools, are subject to a variety of testing requirements, including the PARCC Assessments (for English language arts—ELA and math), which are aligned with CCSS and the Standards Based Assessment Program (SBA) (for science), which is aligned with state and federal content standards. For more information on NM assessment requirements, please see:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AssessmentEvaluation/2015/Test%20Graph%202016.pdf>

G.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive assessment plan** that identifies what measures will be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, frequency of assessing, and how the assessments will be used to inform instruction. Please provide **clear** evidence that the applicant has considered the common core standards, the state-mandated PARCC and SBA, all federally and state required assessments, and the proposed school's projected student population.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Community demographics indicate that the majority of students who will attend Solare Collegiate will matriculate below proficient in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. The demographics also indicate that the majority of students will come from high poverty households. Neither of these statistics will deter Solare Collegiate from fulfilling our mission and the mission-specific indicators outlined in **Section I.A.(1)** and **Section I.B.(1)**. Schools across the country with similar student demographics are achieving high levels of student proficiency. Researcher Douglas Reeves identifies the commonalities that these high-achieving, high-poverty schools share, one of which is frequent use of a variety of student assessments and purposeful opportunities for academic improvement.⁸⁰ Solare Collegiate will use a variety of rigorous assessments to collect regular data on student mastery of learning objectives, including daily exit tickets, weekly classroom assessments, frequent interim assessments, cyclical norm-referenced assessments, and annual state-mandated standardized assessments. Data collected from our battery of assessments will guide our instructional decisions at each grade level, as well as be used to determine individualized student supports for all students, especially our students with special needs and those identified as English Learners.

Our annual assessment plan is outlined more fully in **Attachment E- Assessment Calendar and Schedule**, including the approximate windows of administration for each of the assessments. The plan includes all state-mandated assessments, as well as the anticipated times in which each assessment will occur, as well as time in which the Leadership Team and teachers will analyze the student data to inform future instructional practice. **Figure 24** outlines the annual assessment plan for Solare Collegiate in grades five through eight. The plan includes state mandated assessments, including the PARCC English Language Arts and Math, the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA) for science,⁸¹ and the End-of-Course exams for social studies, science, and physical education. The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team will create internal 5th grade End-of-Course exams in the same subject areas. Additionally, we will use the NWEA MAP norm-referenced assessment for Reading and Mathematics, internally created interim assessments, and STAR Reading and STAR Math assessments throughout the school year. Classroom teachers will utilize daily exit tickets and classroom assessments to collect further data to improve instructional practice and to provide individualized supports for students.

Figure 24 - Assessment Overview

Type	Timing and Frequency	Purpose & Rationale	Teacher Analysis & Use of Data
PARCC	Annually, all grades, in the spring of each year	The PARCC test is a criterion-based test aligned to NM Common Core State Standards, measuring student proficiency levels on specific grade level content, in	When available, teacher analysis and use of data will occur during summer Professional Development (PD) sessions. If PARCC data is not available

⁸⁰ Reeves, Douglas (2003). *High Performance in High Poverty Schools: 90/90/90 and Beyond*. Center for Performance Assessment.

⁸¹ Or whatever assessment is developed for the newly adopted NGSS.

		<p>both English Language Arts and Mathematics.</p> <p>Solare Collegiate will participate in all standardized state testing as required by the State of New Mexico and US Department of Education. Additionally, it allows us to evaluate levels of proficiency within our school and as a tool to compare our performance across the city, state, and states participating in PARCC testing.</p>	<p>during summer PD, the data analysis will be conducted during Friday PD.</p> <p>Teachers will review PARCC performance with students individually during the FOCUS period, with students creating personalized goals aligned to their PARCC performance.</p>
New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (SBA) Science⁸²	Annually, grade 7, spring of each school year.	<p>The NMSBA Science is a criterion-based test aligned to NM State Standards⁸³, measuring student proficiency levels on specific grade level content in Science.</p> <p>Solare Collegiate will participate in standardized state testing as required by the State of New Mexico and US Department of Education. Additionally, it allows us to evaluate the levels of proficiency within our school and as a tool to compare our performance across the city and state.</p>	<p>Teacher analysis and use of data will occur during summer PD session.</p> <p>Science teachers will review SBA Science performance with students individually during the FOCUS period, with students creating personalized goals aligned to their SBA Science performance.</p>
New Mexico End-of-Course (EOC) Exams	Annually, grades 6-8, usually in May of each year.	<p>The New Mexico End-of-Course Exams are criterion-based tests aligned to grade level content standards in Social Studies and Science, measuring student proficiency levels on specific grade level content.</p> <p>Solare Collegiate will opt into this state-based testing for the purposes of evaluating the levels of proficiency within our school and as a tool to compare our performance with others in state.</p>	<p>Teacher analysis and use of data will occur during the summer PD session.</p> <p>Teachers will review EOC performance with students individually during the FOCUS period, with students creating personalized goals aligned to their EOC performance.</p>
Internally Created End-	Annually, grade 5,	The Internally-Created End-of-Course Exams will be criterion-	Teacher analysis and use of data will occur during the summer PD

⁸² At the time of the submission of this charter, the NM SBA was still the assessment of record for science. If a new standardized assessment is developed with the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards, we will use that assessment in place of the NM SBA.

⁸³ New Mexico is in the process of adopting the New Generation Science Standards, and we will adopt those standards and the state-mandated evaluation that goes along with the new standards.

of-Course (EOC) Exams	usually in May of each year (aligned to the administration of the state EOC).	<p>based tests aligned to grade level content standards in Social Studies and Science, measuring student proficiency levels on specific grade level content.</p> <p>Solare Collegiate leadership will create these assessment in alignment with the New Mexico End-of-Course Exams to measure our grade 5 proficiency in Social Studies and Science.</p>	<p>session.</p> <p>Teachers will review EOC performance with students individually during the FOCUS period, with students creating personalized goals aligned to their EOC performance.</p>
NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	Three times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring), all grades.	<p>The NWEA-MAP test is a nationally norm-referenced test for both Reading and Math, measuring student proficiency per single test, as well as growth across testing cycles. Proficiency and growth are measured independent of the grade level of the student.</p> <p>Solare Collegiate participates in national norm-referenced testing to give us the opportunity to compare our students to other students across the country, giving us a more comprehensive snapshot of student achievement.</p>	<p>Teacher analysis and the use of data will occur at the Data Day Professional Development immediately following administration of the assessment. The data will be used to adapt future daily lesson and unit plans, as well as to inform the groupings for our individualized supports (FOCUS) and professional development needs for teachers.</p>
STAR Reading and Math Assessments	Minimum of four times per year (BOY, end of T1, end of T2, and EOY), all grades.	<p>STAR Reading and Math assessments are online, adaptive tests aligned to the Common Core State Standards, assessing grade level equivalents and Lexile scores in Reading and Math.</p> <p>Solare Collegiate will use STAR Reading and Math adaptive testing to gauge reading and math growth throughout the school year. For our students with more urgent reading and math needs, this quick assessment can be given as frequently as once per week.</p>	<p>Teacher analysis and use of the data will occur during teacher preparatory periods and during Grade Level Team and Content Area Team meetings occurring during each Friday professional development. The data collected on STAR Assessments will be used to plan for FOCUS small group instruction, as well as for Accelerated Reader goals for the Accountable Independent Reading block.</p>
Interim Assessments	Six cycles annually	<p>Internally-created interim assessments, written to closely reflect the format and rigor of the PARCC assessment, aligned to the content standards taught during the current learning period, as well as spiraling previously studied content standards.</p>	<p>Teacher analysis and the use of data will occur at the Data Day Professional Development immediately following administration of the assessment. The data will be used to adapt future daily lesson and unit plans, as well as to</p>

		Solare Collegiate will use interim assessments to test the current mastery levels of students and grade levels. Results will be used to guide lesson planning and intervention groupings.	inform the groupings for our individualized supports (FOCUS).
Classroom Assessments	Weekly	<p>Teachers will create assessments aligned to the weekly objectives, to assess student mastery of objectives.</p> <p>Analysis of classroom assessments continues to bring to light the individual and whole class understandings and misunderstandings, as well as the effectiveness of the execution of the unit.</p>	Teacher analysis and use of the data will occur during teacher preparatory periods and during Grade Level Team and Content Area Team meetings occurring during each Friday professional development. The data collected on classroom assessments will be used to plan the following week's need for FOCUS small group instruction.
Daily Exit Tickets	End of lesson, daily	<p>Teachers will create daily exit tickets to measure the impact of daily lesson plans and execution. These will serve as our most immediate data and opportunity for analysis of student learning.</p> <p>Analysis of daily student assessments will bring to light potential misconceptions and skill gaps from individuals or across the whole group, which can then be addressed to the whole class or during individualized intervention.</p>	Teacher analysis and use of the data will occur during teacher preparatory periods and during Grade Level Team and Content Area Team meetings occurring during each Friday professional development. Data collected on exit tickets will be used to plan the following day's need for FOCUS small group instruction.

Figure 24 outlines each of the assessments to be used by Solare Collegiate, spanning 5th through 8th grade. **Figure 25** outlines the state mandated assessments by grade level.

Figure 25 - State Mandated Assessments By Grade

Grade	Assessment	Test Window
5th Grade	PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics	April – May
	Physical Education EOC	May
6th Grade	PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics	April – May
	Social Studies, Science, and Physical Education EOC	May

7th Grade	PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics	April – May
	Science NM SBA	March
	Social Studies, Science, and Physical Education EOC	May
8th Grade	PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics	April – May
	Social Studies, Science, and Physical Education EOC	May

In addition to the assessments outlined above, Solare Collegiate has built an annual schedule for assessments for our students with special needs and English Learners. Annual assessments for students with special needs and those identified as English Learners are outlined in **Figure 26**.

Figure 26 - Annual Assessments for Special Education and English Learners⁸⁴

Type	Timing and Frequency	Reason and Rationale	Teacher Analysis and Use of Data
W-APT	One-time diagnostic, within the first 30 days of the school year	W-APT is a diagnostic assessment given to students whose <i>Home Language Survey</i> indicates a language other than English being used at home. This assessment is only administered once, usually in elementary school. Solare Collegiate will be prepared to administer the assessment to students who have not previously submitted a <i>Home Language Survey</i> .	Teacher analysis and use of the data will occur within two weeks of receiving the results of the W-APT, ensuring identified students begin receiving English Language services as soon as possible.
ACCESS for ELLs	Annually, typically in January	ACCESS will determine current levels of English proficiency for students who have been identified as English Learners. The assessment evaluates a student's spoken, written, and reading of English competency.	Teacher analysis and use of data will occur on the Data Day Professional Development immediately following the receipt of the student results. Data will be used to plan push-in support and small group instruction.

⁸⁴ We anticipate that most of our students with special needs will take the assessments outlined in **Table 24** with any accommodations outlined in their IEP. That data will be used to plan instructional support in the general education classroom, as well as small group support during the FOCUS period.

NMAPA	Annually, typically in March	The New Mexico Alternative Performance Assessment is for students who have been identified as having significant cognitive disabilities. The NMAPA is a standardized assessment that will provide data on students who would not take other standardized assessments, ensuring we have an accountability plan in place for all students.	Teacher analysis and use of data will occur on the Data Day Professional Development immediately following the receipt of the student results. Data will be used to plan instruction specific to student need, outlined in IEPs.
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Data Analysis, Analysis, Reporting, Evaluation, and Use

At Solare Collegiate, we are dedicated to the purposeful use of assessments, including data analysis of assessments to provide students with supports necessary in the classroom leading to improved performance on mandated assessments. Our data-driven approach to instruction is vital to ensure that we are staying true to our mission of equipping all students with the skill necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. We will inform all educational stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, board members, etc.) on our annual assessment plan, the intention behind each assessment, and the analysis of our performance on each of the assessments. Our focus on student growth and mastery of grade level content necessitates a culture of assessment, so we can continually collect data points on individual student and group performance. Regular collection of data ensures that we can identify struggles we as an institution or individual students may be experiencing, and make immediate adaptations to our educational programming. Individual teachers will proactively engage in data collection and analysis in their classrooms, including but not limited to, daily exit tickets, weekly quizzes, etc. Teachers will have a comprehensive understanding of students' current levels of mastery and skill gaps, and they will use that data to better inform their instructional planning for classes. Regular formative and summative assessments will support our dedication to identifying and addressing individual and whole class needs with immediacy.

Our annual assessment plan will include a variety of assessments including internally-created, state-mandated, and nationally-normed assessments. All interim and end-of-year assessment will be created by the Head of School, aligned with the Scope and Sequence for each course. The Head of School in Year 1, and with the support of Leadership Team in future years, will work closely with grade level teachers to create in-class assessments, including exit tickets, quizzes, and unit exams. True to the Understanding by Design approach of backwards planning,⁸⁵ after creating our Scope and Sequence for each course, we will write our assessments and student exemplars. With the development of assessments through the course of the year, as well as examples of exemplary student work, a clear picture of what needs to be mastered within the course is established, as well as the benchmark for high quality student work.

Solare Collegiate will incorporate the following state-mandated assessments into our annual assessment plan. As part of our evaluation of our academic program effectiveness, we will analyze the information provided by each of these assessments, and use the data collected to inform the instructional practice of the school for the school and grade levels, as well as to support individual student needs.

- **PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics.** The PARCC assessment will be given to all students in all grades at Solare Collegiate in the areas of English/Language Arts and Mathematics. The data provided from the PARCC assessment will provide us with overall

⁸⁵ Wiggins, Grant P., and Jay McTighe. 2005. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

proficiency levels as well as value-added metrics of student growth from year-to-year. The data received from these assessments will inform the development and adaptation of the English/Language Arts and Mathematics curricula, as well as be the basis by which FOCUS groupings are formed. During summer professional development, the Solare Collegiate team will analyze the PARCC results, identifying areas of strength and weakness in the school's curriculum design and instructional implementation. The team will then use that information to strengthen the curriculum and instructional design for the upcoming school year.

- **NM SBA Science.** The NM SBA Science assessment will be given to all 7th grade students at Solare Collegiate. The SBA assessment will inform Solare Collegiate of the levels of student proficiency in the areas of Life Science, Earth Science, Physical Science, and the Nature of Science. Solare Collegiate will use the whole grade and individual student break down of results to inform the development and adaptation of our Science curriculum in fifth through eighth grade. The data will inform the need for small group science instruction during our FOCUS blocks, as well as any adjustments to science instruction at Solare Collegiate.
- **EOCs in Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education.** Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education EOCs will be given to all students in the following grade levels: science in 6th and 8th grade, social studies in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, and physical education in 5th through 8th grade. The EOCs will serve as a summative evaluation for each of these courses, with the assessments being aligned to the grade level content standards. The data collected from these assessments will be used to develop and adapt the curriculum in each of the subject areas, as well as inform instructional practice.
- **W-APT.** The W-APT assessment will be taken by any student that had not previously completed a *Home Language Survey* through a New Mexico public school and a language other than English is spoken in the home. The assessment is used to determine if a student is proficient in English or if the student qualifies for English Learner services. Results of this assessment will inform the level of English Learner services a student will receive.
- **ACCESS for ELLs.** The ACCESS assessment will be taken by all students identified as English Learners, until they have scored high enough on the assessment to transition into monitoring of English Learner services. The assessment will provide the Solare Collegiate team with specific data about individual student needs and will serve as the foundation by which the English Learner services are provided to students in the general education classroom and during FOCUS.
- **NMAPA.** The NMAPA assessment will be taken by any student who is identified with a significant cognitive disability. This assessment ensures that all students are meaningfully included in the school's assessment and accountability plan. Data from this assessment will help to inform the Solare Collegiate team on areas of strength for individual students, as well as area of growth, based on the New Mexico and the Common Core Extended Grade Band Expectations.

Proposed Assessments for Performance Framework and Contract

Per the requirements of the Public Education Commission's Performance Framework contract, all state-chartered schools must administer short cycle assessments as part of the assessment plan for English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Solare Collegiate is proposing the use of a norm-referenced assessments for short cycle assessments - the NWEA MAP. Additionally, our mission-specific indicator is attached to the English Language Arts and Math PARCC assessment.

- **NWEA MAP.** The NWEA MAP assessment, outlined above, will be administered three times per year (fall, winter, and spring) to all Solare Collegiate students, in all grades 5-8.

- **PARCC.** The PARCC assessment in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics will be administered to all Solare Collegiate students during the annual administration window of April through early May. The PARCC is an assessment that is mandated by the New Mexico Public Education Department.

Alignment to Mission and Anticipated Population of Needs

Solare Collegiate's mission is for our students to have the academic and personal skills to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice. We believe that this can be achieved through rigorous academics, individualized supports, and character development. The Solare Collegiate annual assessment plan includes state-mandated assessments, as well as norm-referenced and internal assessments proposed to be included our PED Performance Framework contract, each of which will provide us with the data necessary to fulfill our mission-aligned indicators of success.

We believe that with a strong emphasis on rigorous academics, coupled with individualized supports, our students will be able to demonstrate high levels of proficiency on the PARCC, NM SBA, and EOC assessments. In addition, the NWEA MAP assessment will enable us to determine how our students are performing when compared to students all over the country, even those who are outside the PARCC consortium.

A robust schedule of assessments alone will not ensure academic success, which is why we have also planned into our calendar time for deep analysis of each of the high-stakes assessments in order to use the data to inform our planning, instruction, and supports. Each of the assessments outlined in **Figures 24, 25, and 26** will be used to adjust the academic programming on a systemic level, as well as on an individual student basis. Trends demonstrated on the PARCC, NM SBA, the EOCs will be used to adjust long-term planning for grade levels, as well as to plan content-specific professional development topics. These assessments will also be used to plan for individualized supports for each of our students during the daily FOCUS block. Assessments including the NWEA MAP and our internally created interim assessments will be analyzed and used to make more immediate adjustments to our academic plan, including instructional techniques, daily lesson plans, and unit plan focuses. We believe that thorough analysis of summative and short cycle assessments will ensure we are meeting the needs of each individual student and will support the fulfillment of our school mission.

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team anticipates that most of our students will live in and currently attend schools in the 87121-zip code. Therefore, we expect that our student demographics will be like that of the middle schools located in the 87121-zip code. We are researching facilities options in the 87121-zip code and intend to focus our recruitment efforts in the 87121-zip code. Based on demographic data of schools in 87121, we anticipate that 70% of our students will be Hispanic, 90.2% economically disadvantaged, 25% English Learners, and 24% students with special needs.⁸⁶ Our assessment plan ensures that we are able to support students from our anticipated demographic, including students who have previously attended schools in the 87121 zip code, students with special needs, and English Learners.

Our assessment plan and calendar will not only support the fulfillment of our mission, as well as our mission-specific indicators, but it will also ensure that we are making substantial growth with our students with special needs and those identified as English Learners. Regular, short cycle assessments as well as informal classroom assessments will allow frequent progress monitoring for all students. The frequent progress monitoring, and the accompanying adjustments to general classroom instruction and individualized supports during our FOCUS block, will be particularly impactful to our students with special needs and English Learners. We will provide our students with the individualized supports needed to demonstrate academic mastery, and detailed analysis of our assessment data ensures we can

⁸⁶ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). Inspection of Public Records Request.

fulfill that element of our mission. Additionally, we will purposefully use the W-APT and ACCESS assessments to identify and support the needs of our English Learners, as well as the NMAPA for students that have significant cognitive impairments.

Total Points Available	Expectations
6	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include an assessment calendar that identifies all state or district mandated assessment periods and dates related to teacher analysis/use of assessment data to inform instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Include assessments/progress monitoring for special populations; • Identify, for all state or district mandated assessment periods, the grade levels at which the assessments will be administered; • Describe, for all state or district mandated assessment periods, the specific data that will be collected, reported, analyzed, evaluated, and utilized to inform instruction; • Describe how the data identified will be used to inform instruction; • Align with all state assessment and data reporting requirements; • Describe how the assessment plan meets the specific needs of the proposed school's projected student population; • Describe how the assessment plan aligns to the proposed school's mission; and • Include any assessments that may be negotiated as part of the performance framework and contract.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant has developed a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan that aligns with the assessments identified, and the proposed school's mission and target student population. The proposed assessment calendar aligns to the proposed school year calendar, particularly with the July professional development days. The assessment tools included distinguish the various categories of student populations and accounts for all NM state mandated tests.</p> <p>Of particular strength is the concise organization of the assessments used within the school year and providing for each the timeline when data will be used and how it will be analyzed. For example, the school plans to administer the NM SBA Science assessment and indicates, "Solare Collegiate will use the whole grade and individual student break down of results to inform the development and adaptation of our Science curriculum in fifth through eighth grade. The data will inform the need for small group science instruction during our FOCUS blocks, as well as any adjustments to science instruction at Solare Collegiate."</p>	

G.(2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of the how assessment data will be analyzed and what corrective actions will be taken if the proposed school falls short of achieving student academic achievement, or growth expectations, or goals at the individual (remediation/at-risk student) **and** school-wide levels. Provide a complete explanation of what would trigger such corrective actions, who would be responsible for implementing them, and how the proposed school will assess effectiveness.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team will proactively analyze assessment data, using the information to inform classroom practice and planning, as well as take corrective action as is necessary. Our analysis of student data, on the average, across subgroups, and with individual students, will inform how we make whole school, grade, or cohort corrective action, as well as how we implement individualized student supports. We believe that our varied assessment plan, which includes frequent formalized assessments of our students, will keep us informed of whole group, subgroup, and individual student performance. That information will ensure that we support students in the ways they most need to make significant academic gains. Our overarching assessment plan includes short cycle assessments and summative assessments across the subject areas and in each grade level, both of which will inform the need for any corrective action at the school, grade, cohort, subgroup, or individual student level.

Whole School Performance Monitoring and Corrective Action

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team has developed an academic program based in research and utilized at some of the highest performing, high-poverty charter schools in the United States. While we are confident that our academic programming will support the fulfillment of our school mission and our mission-specific indicators, in that case that Solare Collegiate earns a school grade of D or F, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will allocate additional resources towards academic programming with a record of proven results, as outlined in NMSA 22-2E-4(E).

Interim Assessments. Solare Collegiate will regularly monitor the progress of our students and our academic programming with short cycle assessments. Specifically, Solare Collegiate will give six interim assessment each year, and each assessment will be aligned in content and format to the summative assessment for each content area. In addition, pending the approval of the Public Education Commission, Solare Collegiate will utilize the NWEA MAP assessment to gather norm-referenced data on our students' performance in grade level Reading and Math for the Performance Framework contract. Solare Collegiate is proposing the benchmark rating categories for our short cycle assessment goals, further outlined in **Figure 27**.

Figure 27 - Short Cycle Assessment Goals, NWEA MAP, First Year at Solare Collegiate

Category	Measure
Exceeds Standards	More than 85% of students score at the 50th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment
Meets Standards	70%-85% of students score at the 50th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment
Does Not Meet Standards	50% to 69% of students score at the 50th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 50% of students score at the 50th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment

The NWEA MAP Reading and Mathematics assessments will be administered three times over the course of the school year, Fall (August), Winter (January), and Spring (May). When the Leadership Team receives the results from the Fall assessment, they will determine a long-term goal, to be achieved by the Spring assessment. The long-term goal will include a goal for the Winter NWEA MAP assessment, based on the performance on the Fall assessment. Our short cycle goals outlined above may not appear to be ambitious, but the goal is based on current student performance in the 87121-zip code. We intend for these short cycle goals to be fulfilled by Spring assessment. In addition, we expect to see continued growth on the short cycle assessments the longer students attend Solare Collegiate. Outlined in **Figure 28** are our short cycle goals for students who have attended Solare Collegiate for all four years.

Figure 28 - Short Cycle Assessment Goals, NWEA MAP, 4 Years at Solare Collegiate

Category	
Exceeds Standards	More than 85% of students score at or above the 75th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment
Meets Standards	70%-85% of students score at or above the 75th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment
Does Not Meet Standards	50% to 69% of students score at or above the 75th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment
Falls Far Below Standards	Less than 50% of students score at or above the 75th percentile on the NWEA MAP Assessment

As described in the previous paragraph, our goals are aligned to the Spring NWEA MAP assessment. After the Fall assessment, the Leadership Team will develop a plan for achieving our short cycle goals, through whole class instructional planning and small group support during our daily FOCUS period. Based on the goals outlined above and the Fall assessment scores, the Leadership Team will develop a performance goal for the Winter assessment. Triggers for corrective action are outlined below.

- **Trigger.** In their first year at Solare Collegiate, less than 70% of students are on track to scoring at the 50th percentile on the Spring NWEA MAP assessment, based on the Winter assessment performance.
- **Trigger.** In their fourth year at Solare Collegiate, less than 70% of students are on track to scoring at the 75th percentile on the Spring NWEA MAP assessment, based on the Winter assessment performance.

Following receipt of the Winter NWEA MAP assessment results, the Solare Collegiate team will dedicate the next scheduled Data Day professional development session to reviewing the results of the Winter assessment, as well as developing a corrective action plan for the remainder of the school year. The results of the Winter assessment will be studied at the school, grade, subgroup, and individual student levels. Prior to the Data Day, the Leadership Team will have thoroughly evaluated the assessment results, and have identified targeted areas of growth for teachers, as well as plans for adjusting the general classroom instruction, as well as targeted interventions for small groups and individual students.

After the targeted areas of growth and instructional adjustments are introduced, content area and grade level teams will meet to continue to unpack the assessment results and accompanying reports, enabling teachers to have a greater depth of understanding of the successes of their instruction, as well as the areas of growth. The content area and grade level teams will determine how to best incorporate

adjustments to the instructional practice, whether through whole class instruction in the content area blocks or targeted small group intervention during the FOCUS block. As the team codifies their plans for ensuring the school is on track to achieve our short cycle goal, the Leadership Team will provide the teachers with overview and support. The plans will be implemented after the Data Day and through the Spring NWEA MAP assessment.

- **Trigger.** In their first year at Solare Collegiate, less than 70% of students score at the 50th percentile on the Spring NWEA MAP assessment.
- **Trigger.** In their fourth year at Solare Collegiate, less than 70% of students score at the 75th percentile on the Spring NWEA MAP assessment.

After the Spring NWEA MAP assessment is scored and less than 70% of Solare Collegiate students fulfill our short cycle assessment goal, the Leadership Team and teachers will meet during the next Data Day to review results of the Spring assessments. The corrective action plan will follow the same process as identified for the Winter corrective action plan, however the implementation of the plan will occur during the following school year. In addition to adapting the curriculum and instructional practices, the teachers will begin the new school year with information regarding the entire grade level, as well as individual students. Year-long, unit, and lesson plans will reflect areas of weakness that were previously identified on the NWEA MAP reports. Additionally, the Leadership Team will review areas of poor performance and provide the teacher of record with targeted professional development to support the specific content and instructional practice.

Solare Collegiate will internally use the Public Education Commission's Improvement Plan template to guide any corrective action plans put into place. In the case that Solare Collegiate earns a letter grade of C or lower, the Improvement Plan will be completed in its entirety and distributed to school stakeholders.

The expenses attached to the use of the NWEA Assessment, as well as professional development training, are reflected in the **Appendix G -5 Year Budget Plan** in Function 2200/ Object:56113 and Function 1000/ Object: 53330.

Summative Assessments. Solare Collegiate's mission-specific indicator of success are aligned to the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. Our purpose as a proposed school is to make a significant impact on student outcomes; the PARCC assessment is a strong indicator of college success. Our mission specific indicator is as follows:

"After attending Solare Collegiate for one year, at least 35% of all students will score Level 4 (Met Expectations) or Level 5 (Exceeding Expectations) on the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. After two consecutive years, at least 50% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5 on the PARCC English/Language Arts and Mathematics assessments. After three consecutive years, at least 65% of all students will score Level 4 or Level 5. After four years, at least 80% of students will score Level 4 or Level 5 on the PARCC in English Language Arts and Math."

While our initial goals of 35% proficiency may not seem ambitious, based on current student performance in the 87121-zip code, this would represent significantly higher levels of proficiency than the average performance in the zip code. Additionally, after four years of attendance at Solare Collegiate, our goal is that 80% of students will score proficient on the PARCC assessment, more than double the statewide levels of proficiency in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. **Figure 29** outlines the benchmarks for success for our summative evaluations, including the PARCC and NM SBA.

Figure 29 - Summative Assessment Benchmarks

Measure	1 Year at SCCS	2 Years at SCCS	3 Years at SCCS	4 Years at SCCS
Exceeds Standards	50% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	65% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	80% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	90% or more of students earning Level 4 or Level 5
Meets Standards	35% to 49% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	50% to 64% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	65% to 79% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	80% to 89% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5
Does Not Meet Standards	20% to 34% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	35% to 49% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	50% to 64% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	65% to 79% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5
Fall Far Below Standards	Less than 20% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	Less than 35% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	Less than 50% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5	Less than 64% of students earning Level 4 or Level 5

The Solare Collegiate team will use results from our short cycle assessments, including interim assessments and the NWEA MAP, to determine if we are on track to meet our benchmarks of success. The short cycle assessment plans outlined above will directly support the fulfillment of our summative assessment goals. However, after the PARCC and NM SBA assessment results are released, the Leadership Team will do an intensive review of the student results. If the summative assessment results do not align to the “Meeting Standards” level outlined above, then the Leadership Team will prepare to adapt long term plans and instructional strategies to support teachers in supporting the areas of growth for students. During the summer professional development, teachers will receive significant professional development on the analysis of summative data, including data from the previous school year, as well as the identified adaptations to the curriculum and instruction. In grade level and content area groups, teachers will develop a plan on how to implement the Leadership Team’s adaptations in the day to day classrooms. This process will be like that outlined for the short cycle assessments.

Individual Student Performance Monitoring and Corrective Action

Core to the mission of Solare Collegiate is the balance of rigorous academics and individualized supports. Finding the balance between these two will require regular and purposeful analysis of individual student academic performance. Individual student performance will be analyzed during the systematic analysis of short cycle and summative evaluations. Through that process, individual students will receive targeted interventions through the FOCUS block.

In addition, Solare Collegiate will utilize the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework, as outlined in the Special Education section of this application. Through thoughtful application of the RtI framework, we are confident that the individualized supports provided in Tier I (i.e. in-class supports and FOCUS block) will support most of our students needing targeted intervention. For those who are not responding to Tier I interventions, we will continue to work through the RtI process, until the appropriate levels of supports are determined.

In alignment with NMSA 22-2C-6(A), the program and promotion policies of Solare Collegiate will be in line with the district-determined assessment results, as well as the state mandated assessment and accountability program. In both instances, this is specific to the PARCC assessment for English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Students who are not making anticipated growth on the NWEA MAP assessment will be identified as a trigger.

- **Trigger.** Individual student does not make the anticipated growth on the NWEA MAP, based on the goal developed after the Fall assessment.

If a student scores significantly below the goal score for the Winter NWEA MAP assessment, the Leadership Team will conduct an evaluation of the student's overarching academic performance. If it is determined that there is a pervasive need, the student will be referred to the Student Assistance Team (SAT) for the development of an Intervention Plan, including Tier I interventions. The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team will ensure that students who are identified as English Learners or students with special needs are not referred to SAT, but that their unique needs are met through their individualized plans.

The Solare Collegiate Team is confident in the ability of our students to reach our ambitious short cycle and summative goals, with our focus on individualized supports for all students. Our plan for supporting students' individualized needs includes regular and robust review of assessments, ranging from daily class exit tickets to short cycle and summative assessments. All students will have a daily FOCUS period dedicated to supporting students' individual needs, whether it be areas of growth or extension of knowledge, with a purposeful focus on small group instruction for student skill gaps determined by our short cycle assessments.

Evaluation of Academic Programming and Corrective Action

The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team will constantly be evaluating the effectiveness of our academic programming, as well as the effectiveness of any corrective action programming implemented. We will incorporate multiple data points to determine the effectiveness of our academic programming, including student academic performance on short cycle and summative assessments and the annual School Grade Report Card provided by the Public Education Department. If applicable, the Public Education Commission Improvement Plan will be included.

The School Grade Report Card will include school ranking, school growth, growth for the highest and lowest student quartiles, and the opportunity to learn results. The Solare Collegiate Team will thoroughly analyze each of these elements of the school report card and identify targeted areas of improvement. Additional determinants of the effectiveness of our educational program will include our ability to meet the expectations for our short cycle and summative evaluation goals, outlined in **Figures 28 and 29**. Each element will be analyzed and discussed to determine the effectiveness of our educational program. **Figure 30** provides an overview of the evaluation of the effectiveness of our education program from year-to-year.

Figure 30 - Evaluation of Effectiveness of Education Program

	School Letter Grade	Short Cycle Assessment Goal	Summative Assessment Goal
Exceeds Expectations	A	More than 85% of students meet the short cycle assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics	More than 85% of students meet the summative assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics
Meets Expectations	B	70% to 85% of students meet the short cycle assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics	70% to 85% of students meet the summative assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics
Does Not Meet Expectations	C	50% to 69% of students meet the short cycle assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics	50% to 69% of students meet the summative assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics
Falls Far Below Expectations	D	Less than 50% of students meet the short cycle assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics	Less than 50% of students meet the summative assessment goals in Reading and Mathematics

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the processes the school will use, including specific action steps, triggers that would prompt action steps, responsible parties, timelines, and associated costs, to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitor academic performance and take appropriate corrective action if the school is not on track to or does not meet academic performance expectations; Address specific responsibilities related to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meeting student academic achievement or growth expectations <u>at the school-wide level</u> and meeting student academic achievement goals <u>at the individual student level</u> (remediation/at-risk student); Describe how the school will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its academic program generally and the effectiveness of specific corrective actions or interventions; and

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe how the proposed school's processes meet the requirements of NMSA 1978 § 22-2C-6(A) and(B) and 22-2E-4(E). |
|--|---|

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant's plan details a complete process for how assessment data will be used and fully addresses the steps and triggers for corrective actions. The plan outlines the corrective actions at the school, curricular, cohort, and individual level. For example the applicant indicates, "If a student scores significantly below the goal score for the Winter NWEA MAP assessment, the Leadership Team will conduct an evaluation of the student's overarching academic performance. If it is determined that there is a pervasive need, the student will be referred to the Student Assistance Team (SAT) for the development of an Intervention Plan, including Tier I interventions. The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team will ensure that students who are identified as English Learners or students with special needs are not referred to SAT, but that their unique needs are met through their individualized plans." In this statement, the applicant has considered the appropriate growth for the student from the Fall to Winter benchmark and addresses necessary steps for ELs and students with special needs within its process.

Additionally, the plan demonstrates a high level of understanding about both accountability for charter schools to their students and a commitment to growth and proficiency on a formative and summative level as evidenced in this narrative.

G.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan that explains how student assessment and progress will be appropriately communicated to students, parents, the proposed school's Governing Body, the proposed school's Authorizer, and the broader community. Please consider your selected community, their accessibility and communication options when answering this question.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

As a data-driven school, we believe in transparency with all of our stakeholders. Thus, we will consistently and systematically share academic and behavioral data with all stakeholders. Our students and parents will receive regular communication on the academic and behavioral performance of their child. Academic and behavioral performance of students will be shared with our governing Board through Academic and Behavioral Dashboards. Overarching academic performance data will be posted on our website, for the general public. Solare Collegiate believes in putting the needs of our students first, and that means a focus on continued professional growth and honest conversation about student performance data. **Figure 31** outlines the information and the method by which the information is communicated to our community stakeholders.

Figure 31 - Data Reporting to Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Means of Reporting
Students and Families	Parents will receive daily communication in the form of student agendas and homework folders, as well as weekly reports on student behavior. Academic results will be communicated to families after interim assessments, as well as after each trimester. Student-led conferences will occur after each trimester.
Teachers and Administrators	Teachers will use dedicated Data Analysis time during their prep periods to analyze daily data and post data points within the classroom and school. A school data room will have the most current school data posted on the walls, so that teachers are familiar with all the performance data across the school. The Leadership Team will hold weekly meetings to discuss progress across the school and identify next steps for continuing the progress within the school. Grade level teams will meet monthly in the data room to review academic progress as a grade and to identify next step goals for continued progress.
Governing Board	The Head of School will prepare a monthly Academic Dashboard for the Governing Board highlighting all the academic data points, as well as factors contributing to academic success (enrollment, attendance, interim test data, behavior, etc.). The Academic Committee will review the data and then report out to the full Board and provide oversight of the academic health of the school, ensuring we are aligned to meeting our ambitious goals.
Community and State	We will post our average performance on all state and nationally-normed assessments, as well as progress on other non-academic measures, on the school website and within our Annual Report (available in hard copy and online).

Students and Families

One of Solare Collegiate's core beliefs is that voice strengthens identity; to foster that belief we will actively include our students in discussions about their student achievement data. Each student will meet one-on-one with their Advisory teachers to review their short cycle, norm-referenced, and

summative assessment data, in addition to their trimester report cards. These formal meetings will occur during Advisory and FOCUS periods in the two weeks prior to the Report Card Conferences. Students will use this information to create their own short-term and long-term academic goals. Students will also receive daily and weekly feedback, in the form of written communication via student agendas and weekly reports, intended for both the student and their families to review.

Additionally, Solare Collegiate will actively engage our families through formal report card conferences twice a year at the end of the first two trimesters, which are organized and led by the students. Additionally, families will receive mid-term progress reports, weekly behavior reports, and a monthly school newsletter with pertinent school information. Our school website, social media accounts, and phone blasts will keep families aware of upcoming school events. Finally, each month, the school will host cafecitos and Parent University events, to support Solare Collegiate families. Cafecitos and Parent University events will occur on opposite months, providing family engagement opportunities at varied times, to be more accessible for families. All family communication will be available in English and Spanish, as well as any other language a family requests at enrollment.

In addition to regular family communication, Solare Collegiate will follow all communication and consent requirements specific to promotion and retention, English Learner testing and services (**Section I.F.(2)(a)**) and **Section I.F.(2)(b)**), and Special Education referral, evaluation, IEP creation and review, and related services (**Section I.F.(1)(a)** and **Section I.F.(1)(b)**).

Teachers and Administrators

Data drives decisions is one of the core beliefs of Solare Collegiate, and with that belief in mind we will have a professional culture where teachers and administrators are productively engaged with academic achievement data in a predictable and meaningful way. Teachers will have dedicated time during their daily 100 minutes of preparatory time to review class exit tickets to determine potential student misunderstandings and patterns in academic performance. Each Friday during professional development, the teachers and members of the Leadership Team will review academic data, with a strong focus on academic subgroups. Additionally, after each interim assessment and during the summer professional development, teachers and leaders will do in depth analysis of the academic performance of students at Solare Collegiate. Additionally, the Leadership Team will study academic performance during weekly administrative team meetings.

Governing Board

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is responsible for the oversight of the school, including the academic oversight of the school and the creation of policy related to academic matters. The Head of School will be responsible for reporting the academic progress of the school at the Academic Committee meetings each month. Additionally, the Head of School reports the academic progress of the school at the full Governing Board monthly meeting. Information related to the school's academic progress will be reported via an Academic Dashboard (**Attachment E**), which will include data on the most recent interim assessment and NWEA MAP results, divided by grade levels, individual cohorts, and subgroups. In addition to breaking down the information presented in the Academic Dashboard, the Head of School will also be responsible for outlining any adaptations to the academic programming, based on the short cycle performances, in addition to answering any questions the Governing Board has about the academic performance of the school.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is responsible for the adaptation and adoptions of academic policies, which can be found in **Attachment F: Governing Board Policies**. This includes academic policies, including our policy regarding student promotion and retention. Our promotion and retention policies will meet all requirements outlined in NMSA 22-2C-2 "Remediation programs; promotion policies;

restrictions.”

Public Education Commission and Public Education Department

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to maintaining a strong relationship with the PEC and the PED, through the completion of all required communications and reporting. We will ensure that we have appropriate staffing to support the reporting requirements including but not limited to student achievement and student attendance, in a thorough and timely manner. Additionally, Solare Collegiate will ensure that the Public Education Commission and the Public Education Department have direct access to all information and materials shared with the broader community.

Broader Community

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team is proud of the strong community connections it has built during the application process, and we want to maintain those relationships already built, while also establishing new community relationships. We believe that accessibility and transparency of our academic performance will be the key to continue to have a strong connection with our community. For information to be accessible to our broader community, we will have information available via our social media platforms, our school website, printed material, through our school and community events, and through targeted recruitment efforts. Information will be communicated to the community after each interim assessment cycle, administration of norm-referenced assessments, and receiving the results of summative evaluations. Additionally, Solare Collegiate will create and disseminate an annual report highlighting the academic performance of Solare Collegiate and across subgroups.

Communication Plan for Specific Assessment Data

Solare Collegiate will share academic performance data with our stakeholders on all assessments outlined in our assessment plan, in a manner that respects the privacy of our individual students. Average performance of the school, by grade levels, and by subgroups will be communicated to our stakeholders.

Data from our short cycle assessments, including our subject area interim assessments and the NWEA MAP in Reading and Math, and from our summative assessments, including the PARCC in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, NM SBA Science, and EOCs in Social Studies, Science, and Physical Education, will be communicated to our stakeholders in multiple ways. The broader community will receive a summary of the results via our website, social media accounts, monthly newsletter, and our annual report. Families and students will receive individual reports for each of the assessments during conferences, where teachers will outline what the results mean and how the school is using the data to further support the individual student. Reports will be available in English and Spanish, or the language in which the family is most comfortable.

Data from assessments specific to English Learners and students with special needs, including the W-APT, ACCESS, and NMAPA will only be shared with stakeholders as it is appropriate. Students and their families will receive individual reports for these assessments, with the appropriate school staff member available to explain the reports and how it is impacting the student’s academic programming.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will have access to all student data, with specific identifying information redacted.

Total Points Available	Expectations
6	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how student achievement and progress will be communicated to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students Parents The governing body The authorizer The broader community; Identify the communication plan for each of the specific sources of student achievement data identified in H.(1) and any other relevant sources of student achievement data; Provide information that demonstrates the plan is effective in reaching the targeted population and the specific community in which the school plans to locate; and For elementary level students, ensure to address how the school will meet the requirements of NMSA 1978 § 22-2C-6 (E)-(I).
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant provides a comprehensive plan of regular communication of student assessment and progress. The plan directs communications to the students up through the New Mexico Public Education Department and the broader community. The communication efforts include: daily communications to students via student agendas and homework folders; weekly behavior reports; and monthly reports to the governance council.</p> <p>Additionally, families will be engaged through parent-teacher conference, parent events, and social media.</p> <p>All family communications will be made available in English and Spanish or other languages as needed by the families.</p>	

II. Organizational Framework

A. Governing Body Creation/Capacity.

A.(1) Summarize and incorporate **all** key components of your governance structure, **specifically** outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body members (number of members, length of terms, offices to be created, committees, grounds for removal from office, and relationship with the proposed school's administration). Provide comprehensive "bylaws", attach bylaws as **Appendix A**.

APPLICANTS RESPONSE:

Roles and Responsibilities of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board

The Solare Collegiate Charter School ("Solare Collegiate") Governing Board will be the authority responsible for the ultimate success of the charter school, in alignment with our school mission, and will do so through holding school management accountable to the goals outlined in our charter application. The Governing Board is responsible for all matters related to governance and oversight of the school, as well as oversight of the Head of School. Upon authorization from the Public Education Commission, the Solare Collegiate Founding Board will transition to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. First action items for the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will be electing officers, adopting the Bylaws and Conflict of Interest policy found in **Appendix A**, and complying with all sections of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act (NMSA 10-15-1). As recipient of the charter, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will be responsible for the organizational, academic, and financial health of the school, and will oversee school management in a legally and ethically responsible way. The primary responsibilities of the Board include the following:

- **Alignment to the Mission.** The Governing Board will ensure that all long-term plans and decisions align with the school's mission, as well as to the school's vision and educational philosophy. The mission will be the guiding force in the evaluation of school goals and progress.
- **Financial Oversight.** To ensure the short- and long-term fiscal health of the school, the Governing Board will conduct monthly reviews of the management of the funds and the overall financial standing of the school and will approve the annual budget yearly.
- **Academic Oversight.** Review academic performance of students and student subgroups on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis, ensuring that Solare Collegiate is on the path towards fulfilling the mission of the school.
- **Legal Compliance.** To ensure that Solare Collegiate follows all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, the Governing Board will regularly and consistently review the school's compliance to all requirements.
- **Evaluation of Head of School.** The Governing Board will establish the job description for, select the best candidate for, and set compensation for, hire, support, and annually evaluate the Head of School, to whom it will delegate management for the daily operations of the school.
- **Public Accountability.** Using the Solare Collegiate mission as our guide, the Governing Board will engage with community stakeholders, including promoting and addressing any concerns about the school as they may arise, and will publish all academic results as aligned to our goals.
- **Strategic Planning.** The Governing Board will be responsible for developing long-term strategic goals related to longer term financial planning, acquisition of a permanent facility, and other goal-setting endeavors that would not be accomplished in a single year.

Solare Collegiate Board Membership Structure

The proposed Solare Collegiate Governing Board is composed of members of the community that are professionally qualified, mission-aligned, and bring diverse skill sets and perspectives to provide academic, financial, and organizational oversight of the school. Per the Solare Collegiate Charter School Governing Board Bylaws, the Board will consist of at least seven (7) members, with a maximum of fifteen (15) members. Expectations and responsibilities for members of the Governing Board are the same for each member. Each fiscal year, the Governing Board will determine the number of members for the upcoming fiscal year. If the number of Board members needed is higher than the current number of sitting Board members, the Governance Committee will begin the process for recruitment of new members.

The Governing Board will approve and individually sign the Bylaws, as well as sign a written Governing Board Job Description and Board Conflict of Interest Policy. A sample of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board Job Description is included in **Attachment H**. The Conflict of Interest Policy is included in **Attachment I**.

A term of service for a Solare Collegiate Governing Board member is three (3) years, from the date of their appointment, or until a successor is seated. A full three (3) year term is completed after the attendance of three annual meetings of the July Retreat. After the election of a Board member, the term of service may not be reduced, except for reasons identified in the Solare Collegiate Bylaws. Members are limited to two (2) consecutive, three-year terms.

To preserve the institutional memory of and ensure continuity over time for the Solare Collegiate Governing Board, as well as to infuse new perspectives, our initial Board will serve staggered terms. The initial Solare Collegiate Governing Board will have at least one member who will serve a one-year term (ending in the Summer of 2019), at least two members who will serve two-year terms (ending in the Summer of 2020), and at least two members who will serve three-year terms (ending in the Summer of 2021). Upon completion of the first term, a Board member may choose to complete a second three-year term. The staggering of the inaugural Board member terms will ensure that we maintain institutional memory, as well as reduce the workload for the recruitment of new Governing Board Members. No other Board members will serve staggered terms.

Officer Structure

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is organized into the following officer positions and detailed more thoroughly in **Attachment H**.

- **Board Chair.** The Board Chair is responsible for presiding over and leading all Board meetings, as well as guiding the Board in the implementation of Solare Collegiate policies and regulations. The Board Chair will work closely with the school administration and be an intermediary between the Board and the school administration. The Board Chair will distribute vital information and review operational and organizational strategies of the Governing Board to the other members. The Board Chair is responsible for appointing chairs for the various committees, as well as supporting the development of various committees, and overseeing the effectiveness of the various committee chairs, individual Board members, and the group as a collective. The Board Chair will sit as Chair of the Governance Committee.
- **Vice Chair.** The Board Vice Chair is primarily responsible for stepping into the role of the Board Chair, if the Board Chair is unable to attend a meeting. If the Board Chair position becomes vacant, the Vice Chair will step into the role of the Board Chair for the remainder of the term. The Vice Chair will support the work of the Board Chair, as needed.

- **Treasurer.** The Board Treasurer will serve as the lead for the financial oversight of Solare Collegiate, as well as serve as the chair of the Finance Committee. Included within those duties will be to work closely with the Head of School to develop the school's annual budget and to ensure that the school follows all state and federal mandated reporting. The Board Treasurer is responsible for reporting on the financial health of the school during all monthly Board Meetings, as well as ensuring the Board thoroughly understands the current financial status of the school and well as the financial reports used.
- **Secretary.** The Board Secretary is charged with maintaining all records for the Governing Board, including the Bylaws, meeting agendas, minutes, current and former Board membership, and Board policies and procedures. The Secretary is also responsible for adhering to the New Mexico Open Meetings Act (NMSA 10-15-1), including recording official minutes for all meetings and distributing all notices and documents of meetings, as designated by the Bylaws or required by law.

The election of Board officers will occur annually during a Governing Board meeting. Each officer must receive the majority of votes to assume the officer position. The Governing Board will present the Board officer position and take nominations for each of the roles. Newly elected officers will take office immediately following the July monthly Board meeting, during which they were elected and where voting took place. Elected terms are one year in length, or until a successor assumes the office. A member may serve more than one term in the same officer position, but not more than three consecutive terms in the same officer position.

Committees Structure

Within the structure of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board, there will be several standing committees, dedicated to oversight of the school. Each committee will include at least three people but should not include so many members that quorum is established. The standing committees, apart from the Governing Board, may include Board and community members, as deemed necessary, except for the Governing Board which will be constituted only with Board members. Governing Board members will be assigned to committees based on their professional qualifications and their skills that align to the needs of each committee. Committee members shall serve terms of two years, and the terms of the inaugural members will be staggered, to ensure institutional memory within each committee. The Chair of each committee will be appointed by the Board Chair and must be a current Governing Board member. Other committees or task forces may be developed as needed, utilizing the formal resolution process by the Governing Board.

Based on state requirements and Solare Collegiate-specific needs, the standing committees of the school include:

- **Governance Committee.** The Governance Committee is charged with development, maintenance, and evaluation of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. The Governance Committee will lead recruitment, nomination, and selection of new Board members, in addition to the nomination of Board officers. Onboarding of new Board members and the continued training and professional development of current Board members will be led by the Governance Committee. The members of the Governance Committee will ideally have expertise in management, human resources, and prior membership on nonprofit boards. The Board Chair will serve as the Chair of the Governance Committee.
- **Finance Committee.** The Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the financial health of the school. The Finance Committee will work closely with the Board Chair and the school administration to review the school's cash flow and budget statements. The committee is also

charged with ensuring that the whole Governing Board understands the financial reports and materials, as well as the overall financial health of the school. The members of the Finance Committee will ideally have expertise in finance, accounting, consulting, or business ownership. Per NMSA 22-8-12.3, the Finance Committee is a standing committee required by the State of New Mexico. The Board Treasurer will serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee.

- Academic Committee.** The Academic Committee has the duty to examine student academic performance with regularity, to be familiar with the student academic outcomes, ensuring they are aligned to the academic goals outlined in the charter. The committee will determine the degree to which the school is on track to meet the academic accountability and benchmark goals outlined in the charter. The Academic Committee will ensure that the full Governing Board reviews and discusses the academic progress dashboards and performance metrics for whole school and specific subgroups each month and cumulatively each year. The members of the Academic Committee will ideally have expertise in educational leadership and data analysis.
- Audit Committee.** The Audit Committee is responsible for preparing Solare Collegiate for its annual audit and for supporting the outside auditor during the annual audit process. The Audit Committee will be responsible for selecting an outside auditor via the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, as well as presenting the auditor proposals to the full Board, with their recommendations. The Audit Committee will be responsible for communicating with the selected auditing service, track the audit findings, and share out the audit process and findings with the Governing Board and school management. If needed, members of the Audit Committee will meet with the external auditor. Outside of the financial audit season, the Audit Committee will focus on the internal audit of the organizational performance of the Governing Board. Members of the Audit Committee will ideally have finance or accounting experience but be made up of members who are not a part of the Finance Committee. Per NMSA 22-8-12.3, the Audit Committee is a standing committee required by the State of New Mexico and will include two Governing Board members, the Head of School, a representative from our back office provider, a parent of a currently enrolled student, and a community member (preferably with accounting or financial experience).⁸⁷

Solare Collegiate Governing Board Member Selection, Discipline, and Removal

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will seek out potential members who believe in the mission of Solare Collegiate, as well as hold the personal and professional skills needed to make the Solare Collegiate Governing Board the most effective. The process by which potential Board Members will be recruited and selected is further outlined in **Section II.A.3** in this application, including action steps and timelines.

If a member of the Governing Board commits an act meriting discipline, the disciplinary process includes meeting with the Board Chair to discuss the behavior meriting concern, including action steps needed to rectify the behavior and what is needed to avoid the issue in the future. If the action steps are not completed adequately, the member may be asked to resign or be formally removed by the Board. These processes are outlined below.

A Board member may resign from the Board at any time by submitting a written resignation to the Chair of the Governing Board as outlined within the Bylaws. The Governing Board may remove a Board member by completing the following steps: Via Registered Mail provide the Board member with a statement of reason or reasons for removal at least thirty (30) days before any action is taken by the Governing Board, with information outlining when and where the Governing Board plans to take action

⁸⁷ The parent or community member may be a member of the Advisory Council.

for removal; Said board member will have the opportunity to speak directly to the Board on the matter. The decision for removal is made by a majority vote of the Governing Board in a regular or special Board meeting.

Members of the Governing Board may be removed for, but not limited to, the following reasons: violation of the Conflict of Interest policy, violation of the Governing Board Code of Ethics, absence from three consecutive Board meetings without prior approval, illegal behavior, or other actions deemed worthy for removal by the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. **Attachment G** includes the Governing Board Policies and Code of Ethics.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include governing body bylaws in Appendix A; and • Summarize <u>key</u> governance components in the application response as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership structure (number, roles, length of terms) ○ Officer structure (roles, election process, responsibilities, length of terms) ○ Committee structure that includes both legally required committees and school-specific committees (selection process, responsibilities, membership, length of service terms) ○ Member selection, discipline, and removal processes.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant provided a set of comprehensive bylaws that described the key components of its governance structure. The applicant's response includes a thorough description of the membership structure, election and selection process for board members, and the process by which a member may be removed or resign from the position. The narrative explains how the Governing Board intends to have at least 7 members and no more than 15 members, where each member serves a term of 3 years for no more than up to two terms.</p> <p>Additionally, subcommittees were identified along with the descriptions of skillsets for each committee. The Governing Board will consist of: Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasure and Secretary as officer positions and include the following committees: Governance Committee, Finance Committee, Academic Committee, and Audit Committee.</p> <p>Members of the Governing Board can resign by submitting a written resingation to the Board Chair. A member may be removed based on a of conflict of interest, voliating Governing Code of Ethics, frequent absences without prior approval, illegal behavior or other actions deemed worthy for removal.</p>	

A. (2) Enumerate the qualifications desired for governing body members that will ensure the proposed school's governance is competent to operate a public school. Provide a **list** of all proposed, initial Governing Body members along with their experience, skills, and qualifications. Ensure that the **membership reflects** the diverse experiences and skills necessary to oversee all aspects of the proposed school. In your list of proposed initial governing body members, describe the expertise represented in order to demonstrate their capacity to initiate the opening of the charter school (e.g., ensure student success, develop, implement, oversee the management of public funds, and oversee the proposed school's compliance with legal obligations).

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team is dedicated to providing a strong governance, oversight, and organizational structure to ensure the academic, financial, and organizational success of the school and the school and life success of our students. When building our Governing Board, we considered the Charter School Governing Board best practices outlined by the National Charter School Resource Center. In its 2013 webinar *Finding, Recruiting, and Retaining Outstanding Board Members*, the National Charter School Resource Center encouraged schools to seek out Board members that have a diversity of skills, as well as a Board with diverse personal characteristics and experiences.⁸⁸ With that information, the Solare Collegiate founding team sought out initial Governing Board members using the following criteria:

- Individuals with experience and skills in the areas of accounting or finance, law, education, governance, senior management, strategic planning, community engagement, fundraising, and facilities.
- Individuals aligned to the mission of charter schools in general and the specific mission of Solare Collegiate specifically.
- Individuals with a commitment to the children and community of Albuquerque, particularly those growing up in the southwest region of Albuquerque.
- Individuals with the time and availability to participate in an initial Governing Board.
- Individuals willing to use and share their personal network for the development of the Solare Collegiate community.
- Individuals committed to the development of Solare Collegiate, and not using Board participation for personal gain.
- Individuals who would add to the diversity of the board by age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background, gender, skillset, nationality, etc.
- Individuals who have a demonstrated track record of serving successfully on nonprofit boards.

By using the above criteria for choosing our initial Governing Board, we have ensured that the Solare Collegiate Governing Board is made up of people with diverse personal and professional skill sets. In addition to examining individual skill sets, proposed initial Governing Board members were evaluated based on how the individuals would complement one another, to create a Board strong enough to ensure the success of Solare Collegiate as an institution, and our students as individuals. Financial oversight is another significant responsibility of the Governing Board. As such, in our recruitment of an initial Governing Board we focused on the finance, accounting, and fundraising areas of expertise. To ensure that we comply with local, state, and federal statutes and regulations, we prioritized finding

⁸⁸ National Charter School Resource Center. U.S. Department of Education, 23 May 2013.

www.charterschoolcenter.org/webinar/board-governance-finding-recruiting-and-retaining-outstanding-charterschool-board-members.

candidates with law experience. While we have sought out lawyers for our Governing Board, it is pertinent to note that lawyers on our Governing Board will not serve as formal counsel for the school. As a charter school, it is vital that our Governing Board includes members with experience in education, ranging from elementary through higher education, from traditional classroom, alternative learning communities, and administrative experience. Experience in education will serve to guide the other Board members in the effective oversight of academic achievement and outcomes. We have also sought out individuals with previous non-profit governance experience, to support our Governing Board in the procedures and best practices of effective governance. We have sought out potential Governing Board members who have high-level management experience, as a significant role of the Governing Board will be to hire, evaluate, and hold accountable the Head of School of the school. Governance of a charter school requires the ability to oversee and strategically plan multiple things at any given time, so we have sought out individuals with success in strategic planning. Solare Collegiate highly values the community where we intend to locate, as a result we place high value on recruiting Governing Board members that are from or work in our targeted community. We are continuing to recruit board members with facilities and real estate experience who will provide Solare Collegiate with knowledge as we begin to seek out possible locations and/or building of a facility which will become more important deeper into the school's planning year post-authorization.

Proposed Initial Governing Board Members

After authorization by the Public Education Commission, members of the Solare Collegiate Founding Team, apart from Rachael Sowards, will transition into the roles of initial Governing Board Members. The Governing Board intends to hire Ms. Sowards as the founding Head of School. Members of the initial Governing Board were selected based on their passion and commitment to public education in southwest Albuquerque, as well as their alignment to the Solare Collegiate mission. Their personal commitment and their varied professional skill sets builds the foundation for a strong Governing Board for a high-performing charter school. Listed in **Figure 32** are the names of each of our proposed initial Governing Board members, as well as their specialized skills, followed by a brief biography of each of our proposed initial Governing Board members.

Figure 32 - Proposed Initial Governing Board Members

Name	Board Title	Skills
Norma Binder	Board Member	Education Governance Finance
Veronica Gonzales-Zamora	Proposed Chair Board Member	Law Governance
Subramanian Lyer	Proposed Treasurer Board Member	Finance Education
Peter Lorenz	Proposed Vice Chair Board Member	Senior Management Strategic Planning Governance
Amber Macias-Mayo	Board Member	Law Governance
Luis Olivas	Board Member	Human Resources

		Governance
Camille Vasquez	Proposed Secretary Board Member	Community Engagement
Michael Wallace	Board Member	Senior Management Strategic Planning Governance

Norma Binder is a recently retired educator. Most recently, she served as the Deputy Superintendent of Bernalillo Public Schools. Ms. Binder has extensive experience in charter schools, district administration, school principalship, and teaching. Transitioning into education after a career in the private sector, Ms. Binder holds a BA in Linguistics, MBA, and MA in Educational Administration and Policy from the University of Denver. She believes that “charter schools can serve students by applying the best practices in public education. A new charter school is also an opportunity for founders to study and implement innovations in education that bridge proven educational practices with the charge to truly prepare students for the world they will enter as 21st century adults.”

Veronica Gonzales-Zamora is an Attorney at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP and part-time instructor at the University of New Mexico (UNM) School of Law. Ms. Gonzales-Zamora grew up in the South Valley of Albuquerque and attended Valley High School as an out-of-district student, eventually becoming a first-generation college graduate of UNM. She attributes her success to her family and teachers who held her to high academic standards. She has experience in governance as Executive Member of the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association and NM chapter of the Federal Bar Association, for which she chairs a law student mentorship program. Her past employers include Bernalillo County Youth Services Center, Rape Crisis Center of Central New Mexico, Hogares, Inc., and Los Puentes Charter School.

Subramanian Iyer is an Assistant Professor of Finance at the University of New Mexico’s Anderson School of Management. A native of India, Dr. Iyer attended a federal government school, similar to the US charter school system. He earned his doctoral degree from Oklahoma State University and MBA in Marketing and Finance from the University of Kerala. Dr. Iyer is a parent, and his children attend Albuquerque Public Schools. As a school student, he witnessed wide disparity in achievement levels at his schools and other state-run schools. He believes that resources and motivated teachers, combined with a focused curriculum, will help students achieve higher. Given his background and experience as student and educator, Dr. Iyer intends to help the students of New Mexico through his oversight of Solare Collegiate.

Peter Lorenz is the CEO and President of UNIRAC, Inc., the leading solar racking manufacturer in North America, headquartered in Albuquerque, with over \$100M in revenues and over 100 employees. He is also an Executive Committee member of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce’s Board of Directors. Mr. Lorenz received his MBA from Harvard, and he was born and raised in Germany. Mr. Lorenz believes that for a community to have a robust economic sector, that poverty, education, and health need to be addressed in a meaningful way. The development of strong, public school opportunities, such as Solare Collegiate, paves the path towards building a stronger economic sector in Albuquerque.

Amber Macias-Mayo is Partner at Walther Bennett Mayo Honeycutt P.C., a firm focused on Family Law. Ms. Macias-Mayo is active with the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association, currently serving as its Vice President and has previously served as Deputy Regional President for the Hispanic National Bar

Association. In 2017, Ms. Macias-Mayo was honored by *Albuquerque Business Magazine* as one of its 40 Under Forty recipients. She earned her BA and JD at the University of New Mexico; she has two children who attended Albuquerque Public Schools. Ms. Macias-Mayo's concern for and dedication to New Mexico's children is what inspired her to become part of the solution to what she views as an education crisis. Participating as a Solare Governing Board member is how she has chosen to be part of the solution.

Luis Olivas works as a Human Resources Consultant. He brings previous classroom experience, having taught first grade in Albuquerque Public Schools, as well as having led gang prevention outreach with local middle school students. Mr. Olivas is a graduate from the University of New Mexico with a degree in Sociology, and he is currently a student at the Anderson School of Management at UNM, where he is completing his MBA. He attended Albuquerque Public Schools and grew up near Downtown Albuquerque. Mr. Olivas's interest in equal access to education as an agent of social change is what motivates his involvement with our organization.

Camille Vasquez is the Program Coordinator for ACCESS NM, a grassroots community organization that engages with children and families in the South Valley through Arts, Community, Culture, Education, Sports & Science. Ms. Vasquez speaks with and interacts with more than 50 families in the South Valley each week. A first-generation college graduate, she attended the University of New Mexico where she graduated with a BA in Spanish, focusing on Chicano/a studies. Currently, she is completing her Registered Nurse credentials and plans to work in a community health center in the South Valley. Ms. Vasquez lives in our target zip code, 87121 and joined the founding team because she believes "it is up to us as a community, to educate and provide an environment full of opportunities that prepare our kids more than enough to set forth and accomplish any dream or dreams they have."

Michael Wallace is the Director of Special Projects at DaVita Medical Group. He was previously the Vice President of Business Development and Corporate Affairs at Delta Dental. Mr. Wallace has a Master's in Health Administration from UNM and a BA from the University of Southern California in Communications. He is also a Board Member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central New Mexico and the New Mexico Philharmonic, a Leadership New Mexico graduate, Chairman of the NM Health Insurance Exchange Stakeholders' Committee, and NM Association of Commerce and Industry Health Care Committee. Mr. Wallace was raised in Albuquerque and sees education as the foundation for New Mexico's economic development, specifically related to healthcare jobs and improved healthcare access in our state.

The Solare Collegiate founding team has depth and breadth of experience in the areas of finance, law, education, governance, management, strategic planning, and community engagement. With these diversified skill sets, the proposed initial Governing Board is poised to provide strong governance over Solare Collegiate, ensuring the success of the school and the students who will attend.

The proposed initial Solare Collegiate Governing Board takes the financial oversight of the school very seriously, and we demonstrate this by having selected individuals with extensive financial experience. Our proposed initial Governing Board includes members with a doctoral degree in finance, a member with education finance experience, and small business-owners with experience in managing a budget. This financial expertise will guide the work of the Governing Board's Finance Committee, as well as support the full Board in understanding the finances of Solare Collegiate and the expectations for ensuring financial viability.

Several of our Board members are practicing lawyers, and others have ample experience with statutes and fulfilling obligations to governmental organizations and public schools. This experience will ensure that our Governing Board and the school has the expertise necessary to successfully comply with all our

legal obligations to the local, state, federal government.

Our proposed Governing Board has extensive experience in the field of education, ranging from district-level administration, policy work, community engagement with youth, university-level teaching, and former classroom teachers. This wide range of educational experience positions them to provide strong leadership and oversight for academic outcomes, fidelity to the mission and vision, and student success.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Governing Board is to hire, evaluate, and oversee the Head of School, along with overseeing the academic and financial health of the school. Nonprofit Governing Board experience was an attribute we sought when recruiting for our initial Governing Board. We sought out proposed initial Governing Board members with senior level management experience, ensuring that we have a team that holds high expectations and accountability for the Head of School, which will directly correlate to the fulfillment of our mission. The majority of our proposed Governing Board members have experience on other nonprofit boards, and several bring senior management experience.

Solare Collegiate understands the importance of a team that is strong in strategic planning experience. If authorized, the initial Governing Board and the Leadership Team will need the skills to take the charter application plan and transition it to action during the Implementation Year. The depth of knowledge and specificity that this endeavor needs requires individuals who are strong in strategic planning. Several of our proposed initial Governing Board members were selected because of their experience and success with strategic planning.

Lastly, being a school that reflects the needs of the community is one of our biggest priorities. Our Board members have strong connections to our proposed communities, ranging from growing up in our proposed community, to currently working and living in the community. Each of these connections to our proposed community ensures that our board has an innate understanding of the needs of our community and will govern with that perspective.

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team is actively recruiting additional candidates to join our initial Governing Board. Specifically, we are seeking individuals who have substantive experience with fundraising and facilities. While student recruitment and school operations will be our primary focus early on, we recognize the need to acquire additional funding through fundraising and will recruit candidates with a record of fundraising success to join our team. We are currently working with Commercial Real Estate Services (CBRE) to support our facilities acquisition process. Our proposed initial Governing Board includes members with extensive financial experience, including public school specific finances and management of finances at the small business to the international global company level. We believe that with the level of experience in finance on our proposed Governing Board, our financial health is strongly supported. We also have the support of EdTec, a back-office provider, in our financial and budget development.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all qualifications and skill sets that the governing body will require and ensure those are represented within its regular membership; Explain why and how the identified qualifications and skills will ensure the governing body has the required capacity and enable the governing body to

operate a successful, high-quality public school;

- Include a list of all proposed initial governing body members, describe each proposed member's specific qualifications and skill sets through verifiable prior experience, and ensure the represented qualifications and skill sets align with the previously identified qualifications and skill sets that the governing body will require; and
- Specifically address how the governing body will have the skills to
 - Ensure student success and academic achievement;
 - Oversee the stewardship and management of public funds and responsible government accounting;
 - Ensure compliance with legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools;
 - Select and oversee a qualified and highly effective school leader; and
 - Support the applicant team in moving from an application to a fully operational school.

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant has sought expertise in legal, financial, educational and cultural expertise that will assist in moving from the proposal phase into a fully functioning school. This membership also takes into account the needs of the community by recruiting members with strong connections to proposed communities, ranging from growing up in the proposed community, to currently working and living in the community. The applicant states, "Each of these connections to our proposed community ensures that our board has an innate understanding of the needs of our community and will govern with that perspective." Additionally, the board has chosen Ms. Stewards as Head of School. She has been a teacher and is classified as a highly effective teacher in New Mexico.

A.(3) Provide a **clear and appropriate process or plan** for selecting new Governing Body members that is focused on selecting **quality leaders** who have the identified skills necessary to govern the proposed school. Describe how governing body members will be recruited, evaluated, and selected as vacancies arise.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate will continually hold itself to the highest of expectations, and the highest capacity individuals are needed to fulfill this expectation. As a result, the Solare Collegiate team has developed an extensive plan for the recruitment, evaluation, and selection of Board Members, for when vacancies arise. Our plan includes a short-term, transitional plan for our founding team, as well as a long-term plan for filling positions as they are vacated and recruitment strategies specific to needed skill sets.

The proposed Governing Board and proposed Head of School of Solare Collegiate each have strong personal and professional connections in the greater Albuquerque community. Our connections cross a variety of sectors, including K-12 education, business, higher education, law, and government relations. Through the utilization of our personal and professional contacts, we will be able to continually recruit highly engaged, high capacity candidates for our Governing Board.

After Solare Collegiate is authorized, all members of our current founding team, apart from Ms. Sowards, will transition to members of our Governing Board. The Governing Board intends to hire Ms. Sowards as our founding Head of School. Prior to and after the transition, the Governing Board will work on the short-term plan of identifying skill set gaps on the current Board and begin to recruit mission-aligned individuals with the desired skill sets to consider for Board membership. Long-term plans include identifying individuals ideal for future Board membership, ensuring the long-term success of Solare Collegiate and the strength of our Governing Board. The Governance Committee will hold the responsibility for recruitment, evaluation, and recommendation of new Board Members; the full Board will be responsible for selection of any new Board members through a formal vote held within a public meeting.

Identification and recruitment of individuals who are aligned to the mission of Solare Collegiate will be an ongoing process. The Solare Collegiate Governance Committee, along with the whole Governing Board, will use the following steps for the recruitment, evaluation, and selection of new board members.

Step 1: Review. The Solare Collegiate Governance Committee will begin by reviewing the current skills of the Governing Board, as well as areas in which the Governing Board is lacking. After reviewing the current Governing Board's present skills, the Governance Committee will generate a list of skill sets desired during the recruitment of future Board Members. The Governance Committee will keep track of the remaining terms for each of the current Board Members, enabling the committee to anticipate the upcoming recruitment needs for the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. In addition to the skills of the current Board Members and prospective Board Members, the Governance will keep record of other demographic data of current and prospective board members, including gender, age, race, ethnicity, and community to build a Governing Board reflective of the Solare Collegiate community. The Governance Committee will ensure that the process of recruiting, evaluation, and selection of Governing Board Members aligns with the Solare Collegiate Bylaws (**Appendix A**), as well as aligns to the Governing Board Member Job Description and Agreement (**Attachment H**) to ensure that our process complies with state requirements for Governing Board Members.

Step 2: Working List. Once the Governance Committee has a strong command of the comprehensive skill sets of the Governing Board, as well as the areas of need for the Governing Board, the Committee will then be charged with identifying community members who may be good fits as future members of the Governing Board. The Governance Committee will seek out prospective candidates through recommendations or referrals, as well as online advertisement of the positions, and online resources, such as the United Way's Center for Nonprofit Excellence.⁸⁹ Members of the Governing Board will utilize their personal and professional connections, as well as the school's community-based relationships for recommendations for individuals who are aligned to the Solare Collegiate mission and may be interested in being considered for Governing Board Membership. In addition, the Governance Committee will utilize the Solare Collegiate website, newsletter, and social media accounts to communicate to the public that we are always searching for high quality candidates to be considered for a seat on our Governing Board. Finally, the Solare Collegiate Governance Committee will utilize other online resources for identifying individuals interested in board membership, including posting on search boards such as those on the Center for Nonprofit Excellence web page, the New Mexico Coalition for Charter Schools page, and other reputable sources for seeking out potential Board members. By utilizing various sources for seeking out high quality candidates for future board membership, the Governing Committee will develop a substantial working list of candidates, ensuring the continued viability of Solare Collegiate.

Step 3: Initial Contact. After the working list of candidates is developed, the Solare Collegiate Governing Committee will reach out to candidates, based on needed skill sets, inquiring about the candidate's interest in discussing potential Board membership. Included in the inquiry will be a request for the prospective Board member's resume. A meeting with the Governance Committee and Head of School will be scheduled with a prospective Board member. During this initial meeting, the Governance Committee and Head of School will determine if the candidate is a mission-fit with Solare Collegiate, based on their responses to information presented about Solare Collegiate's mission, vision, and academic programming, as well as responses to follow-up questions and scenario responses. In addition, the Governance Committee will give a detailed overview of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board structure and expectations and give the prospective Board member(s) time to share about themselves and their interest in being a member of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board, as well as to ask any questions they may have about the process or the commitment. After the conversation, if a candidate is interested in continuing the application process, they will complete a background check form. At this point, candidates will also be invited to meet with individual Governing Board Members, as well as invited to volunteer at Solare Collegiate events. We believe these extra steps will enable the candidates to develop a more thorough understanding of Solare Collegiate and the responsibilities of Governing Board Members, as well as give the current Governing Board Members to ascertain how the prospective candidate fits with the current Governing Board.

Step 4: Attend a Board Meeting. Prospective Board Members that demonstrate alignment to the Solare Collegiate mission and vision will be invited to attend a Solare Collegiate Governing Board meeting. As part of the new business during the meeting, the Board will pose questions to the candidate, and the candidate can observe how the Solare Collegiate Governing Board manages business at its monthly meetings. Governing Board Member questions may include (with the question rationale in parentheses):

⁸⁹ <https://www.centerfornonprofitexcellence.org/volunteer-connection>.

- How would your professional skills add value to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board? (Skills)
- Why are you interested in being a member of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board? Are you prepared to be a member of an active governing board? (Commitment)
- How does Solare Collegiate contribute to Albuquerque's educational landscape? (Mission-fit)
- If a friend came to you complaining about something happening at Solare Collegiate, how would you handle the situation? (Governance vs. management)

At the end of the Governing Board meeting, all Board members will fill out an evaluation of the prospective Governing Board Member, to determine how well the prospective candidate will fit on the Board. The Governance Committee will take the full Board's evaluations into consideration as they are making the final decisions.

Step 5: Evaluation. After the prospective candidate attends a Solare Collegiate Governing Board meeting, the Governance Committee will gather to review the candidate using an internally created evaluation rubric, which will evaluate the candidate's resume, alignment to the Solare Collegiate mission and vision, and the evaluations made by each of the Governing Board members. After the evaluation rubric is completed, the Governance Committee will then determine the prospective board member's ability to devote the necessary time to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board, as well as the current skills needs to round out the Governing Board. Finally, the Governance Committee will anticipate any potential issues that may arise with the prospective board member, including considering any possible conflicts of interest (**Attachment I: Conflict of Interest Policy**). Finally, we will contact the prospective Governing Board Member's references for further information on their background.

6. Selection of New Board Member. After the Governance Committee completes the comprehensive evaluation of the prospective Board member, if determined to be a strong fit, the Governance Committee will recommend the candidate or candidates to the full Governing Board for its consideration. The Governing Board will review the candidate or candidates, and then hold a formal vote held within a regularly schedule monthly public Board meeting. Per the Solare Collegiate Governing Board Bylaws (**Appendix A**) candidates must receive a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote for the prospective candidate to be invited on as a Governing Board Member. If the prospective Board candidate earns a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority, the candidate will be notified by being given a formal offer of board membership. The candidate then will sign a Board Member Agreement and Conflict of Interest form before officially joining the Solare Collegiate Governing Board.

Candidates who are not selected to fill a seat on the Governing Board will be considered as candidates for future Governing Board seats, if appropriate, ensuring efficient filling of an unoccupied seats on the Governing Board. The Governance Committee will maintain contact with these candidates.

After authorization by the Public Education Commission, the Founding Team (except for Rachael Sowards) will transition to the Governing Board. At that time, the Governing Board will begin its robust recruitment efforts to add to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. The focus will be on recruiting the highest capacity, highest quality candidates to our team, adding value through their alignment to the Solare Collegiate mission and vision, and bringing necessary skills to develop a diverse, well-rounded Governing Board. Our recruitment and selection efforts will be in alignment with NMSA 22-8-12.3, ensuring that we have at least two Board Members who are qualified to participate on the Finance Committee and at least two Board Members (distinct from the Finance Committee) who are qualified to participate on the Audit Committee. With a clear plan of recruitment, the process of vetting and selecting new Board members will be efficient. The Governance Committee will continually do steps one and two (review and working list), to ensure that the Governance Committee is always equipped with strong candidates for the Governing Board.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board shall consist of between 7 and 15 members, as outlined in our Bylaws. If a seat needs to be filled, the Governance Committee will begin the six-step recruitment process, with steps one and two being regularly performed, even during times when there is not currently a vacancy. We will institute a specific process to develop an operating rhythm to ensure the Governing Board fills any vacancies within the required 45 days. This would include the Governance Committee participating in weekly check-in calls to review potential members and any meetings or events related to their recruitment and vetting. When a seat on the Board needs to be filled, the Governance Committee will utilize organization tools, such as a Trello Board,⁹⁰ to ensure that recruitment and vetting efforts are done in a transparent fashion, with the ability for the Governance Committee to adjust priorities and schedules as warranted. With an ongoing search of candidates and systematic review of candidates in the event of an opening, the Governance Committee will be able to fill the empty seat within the required 45 days. The Governance Committee will prioritize finding candidates with a similar set of skills as the person who was previously in that seat. Included within the vetting process for prospective board members, the Governance Committee will ensure that the prospective Board member is able to fulfill the legal obligations required of charter school Governing Board members in the State of New Mexico

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board recognizes the importance of establishing a strong Governing Board to assure the school's overall success. The composition of our proposed Governing Board, as well as the processes by which we will seek out additional board members, reflects this importance. As stewards of public funds, we are dedicated to developing and maintaining the highest capacity Governing Board, who are aligned to the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate and individuals that are dedicated to fulfilling the agreements made in this charter. Additionally, our recruitment and selection of Governing Board Members will be in compliance with NMSA 22-8-12.3, including Finance and Audit Committees with the requisite membership, preparing the Solare Collegiate Governing Board to be prepared for the financial responsibilities of a charter school Governing Board. Our detailed recruitment and evaluation process is reflective of the seriousness with which we take our duties.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a regular and on-going governing body recruitment process, including identification of action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Identify a formalized governing body potential member evaluation and selection process, including identification of action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Describe how the processes will ensure that all governing body vacancies are filled within 45 days; • Describe how the processes will ensure the regular governing body membership will have all of the required qualifications and skill sets identified in question A.(2); and • Describe how the processes will ensure that governing body members are vetted appropriately to ensure they are able to meet the obligations and fulfill the responsibilities of governing body service.

⁹⁰ <https://trello.com>.

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant's response clearly and thoroughly outlines the process for recruiting, vetting and selecting board members. In summary, the Governing Board will continuously advertise the recruitment for high-quality candidates in the school's newsletter, website, and social media accounts. The Governance Council will also take recommendations and referrals and look for potential members through online resources such as the *United Way's Center for Nonprofit Excellence*. Potential members will meet with the board and Head of School. After vetting a candidate, the board will evaluate each candidate and make recommendations. The applicant's narrative describes a six step process to ensure that vacancies are filled within the 45 day period.

B. Governing Body Training and Evaluation.

B.(1) Provide an **ongoing, clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for annual Governing Body training that complies with state requirements, meets your governing body training needs, includes training on the Open Meetings Act, and is **completely supported** by the budget you propose.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

A strong Governing Board is the foundation for a charter school that fulfills the promises outlined in the charter document. Training and continued development of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will be key to our success, including training provided by the Public Education Department and our own internal training. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will adhere to New Mexico State Statute (NMSA 22-8B-5.1) and the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC 6.80.5.8) to complete all required charter school Governing Board trainings. Per the New Mexico Administrative Code, all members of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will complete a seven-hour training, provided by the Public Education Department. Members may not vote in Governing Board meetings until this seven-hour training is completed. Within the same fiscal year, all members of the Governing Board must complete an additional three hours of training approved by the Public Education Department. With the Public Education Department's approval, this training may be internal, such as a Solare Collegiate onboarding meeting or retreat.⁹¹

Governing Board Members with a year or more of service must complete eight hours of training approved by the Public Education Department annually (NMAC 6.80.5.9). Annual training will fall into specific requirements: one hour of ethics, three hours of fiscal requirements, two hours on academic data, one hour on open governance, and one hour dedicated to organizational goals. These trainings may be completed with the Public Education Department or other approved agencies, including the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools or New Mexico School Boards Association.⁹²

New Board Members

New Governing Board Members, including our Founding Team after they transition into a Governing Board, will receive external and internal training as part of their onboarding process. Internal training is based on best practices highlighted in the text *Charter School Board University*⁹³ and the United Way of Central New Mexico's Center for Nonprofit Excellence.⁹⁴

External Training

Per the newly adopted New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC 6.80.5.8), new Governing Board members will complete seven hours of training with the Public Education Department prior to being able to be a voting member on the Governing Board. In addition, new Governing Board members will complete an additional three hours of training within the first twelve months of Board service. The last three hours can be internal training approved by the Public Education Department (see below), or training provided by any other Public Education Department-approved training. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will attend the first Governing Board Introduction training available after authorization. The initial seven-hour training focuses upon Governing Board ethics and responsibilities (2 hours), fiscal requirements for charter schools (2 hours), evaluation of academic data (1 hour), Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act (1 hour), and legal and organizational performance (1 hour). As these trainings are offered throughout the year, new Board Members who join the Board after the

⁹¹ <http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/New-GB-Member-Form.pdf>.

⁹² <http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Continuing-Member.pdf>.

⁹³ Carpenter, Brian. *Charter School Board University*. 2nd ed. National Charter Schools Institute. 2007.

⁹⁴ <https://www.centerfornonprofitexcellence.org/resources/board-development>.

beginning of the school year will be able to attend the required Public Education Department training prior to having voting rights on the Board.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board intends to complete the remaining three hours of required training internally, pending approval from the Public Education Department. However, in the case that a Board Member misses our internal training, or individual Board Members need additional training in a specific governance area, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will utilize the training provided by the Public Education Department. Any additional training done by Governing Board members will be reported to the Secretary, who will keep a record of the trainings attended by our Governing Board, included the date, times, instructors, and the course code assigned by the Public Education Department. Board Members who join the Board after the beginning of the fiscal year will attend the Public Education Department trainings to complete their remaining three hours of required training.

Internal Training

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board intends to complete the additional three hours of required training internally, pending approval from the Public Education Department. The Department suggests that Governing Boards develop a three-hour onboarding training that includes the following topics: governance structure and requirements, other governing body status, financial status, history, contract, goals, model, staff, strength and challenges, and current academic, organizational, and financial performance. Training outside of the onboarding process can include ethics and responsibilities, evaluating and understanding academic data, open government, or organizational performance requirements.⁹⁵ After authorization, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will submit an Application for Approval to Provide Governing Body Training,⁹⁶ in order to get our onboard, initial Governing Board Retreat approved for our last three hours of required training.

Our initial Governing Board will be onboarded during our inaugural Governing Board Retreat, which will occur shortly after authorization and attendance of the Public Education Department seven-hour training. The Solare Collegiate Inaugural Retreat will consist of a review and vote on the Solare Collegiate Governing Board Bylaws and Policies, as well as the nomination and voting of the Board's executive roles and committees. After establishment of the Governing Board's leadership structure and adoption of Bylaws and Policies, the Governing Board retreat will focus on the training topics approved by the Public Education Department.

Board Members who join the Governing Board after the inaugural retreat will be onboarded individually with the Board Chair, member of the Governance Committee, and member of the school Leadership Team. The Governance Committee member will mentor the new member. During this individual training, the new Board Member will review and sign the Board Member Agreement (**Attachment J**) with a member of the Governance Committee. The new member will also review the Board Handbook, which will include the following topics: member responsibilities; school mission, vision, and core beliefs; school organization; school calendar; academic performance and data; Board Bylaws; review of Board Committees and Task Forces; finance and audit overview; and all Board policies. A member of the Governance Committee will review the handbook with the new Board Member, but the Board Member will be expected to review the document with more depth independently. The rest of the independent onboarding will reflect the internal onboarding training approved by the Public Education Department.

Our budget includes \$1,100 annually for the costs associated with training of Board Members (see **Appendix G**, Function:2300, Object: 55812), including external training opportunities offered by the Public Education Department or other approved training. Within the budget, costs associated with

⁹⁵ <http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/New-GB-Member-Form.pdf>.

⁹⁶ <http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/charter-schools/governance-training-providers/>.

mileage reimbursement for trainings outside of Albuquerque are included. Based on the trainings offered by the Public Education Department, most of the trainings are available in Albuquerque or Rio Rancho. In addition, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board plans to submit internal training to be approved by the Public Education Department, which can be offered at little or no cost to the Governing Board.

Experienced Board Members

Board Members who have served on the Governing Board for more than a year must complete eight hours of Public Education Department-approved training annually. This includes training provided by the Public Education Department, the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools, or the New Mexico School Board Association.

External Training

The Public Education Department outlines the focuses of the eight hours of annual training: one hour of Governing Board ethics and responsibility, three hours of fiscal requirements, two hours on academic data, one hour on open governance, and an hour dedicated to organizational goals.⁹⁷ The Public Education Department training is offered locally in the greater Albuquerque area, and at no cost to the Governing Board members. Training completed by Governing Board members will be reported to the Secretary, who will keep a record of the trainings attended by our Governing Board, included the date, times, instructors, and the course code assigned by the Public Education Department.

Internal Training

In addition to the Public Education Department-required eight hours of training, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will conduct an annual Governing Board Retreat at the end of each fiscal year. During this retreat, the Governing Board Bylaws and Policies will be reviewed. In addition, the academic, organizational, and financial priorities and goals will be reviewed and assessed.

Our budget includes \$1,100 annually for the costs associated with training of Board Members (see **Appendix G**, Function:2300, Object: 55812), including external training opportunities offered by the Public Education Department or other approved training. Within the budget, costs associated with mileage reimbursement for trainings outside of Albuquerque are included. However, based on trainings offered by the Public Education Department, most of the trainings are available in Albuquerque or Rio Rancho. In addition, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board plans to submit internal training to be approved by the Public Education Department, which can be offered at little or no cost to the Governing Board.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will complete the required training each year, as well as determine any further training needs individuals or the Board as a whole need to be most effective. As part of our process of self-evaluation, the Board as a whole and individual members will identify areas of strength and areas of growth. The Governance Committee will seek out opportunities for further training, for the whole Board or for individuals, as needed. If the Public Education Department does not offer training on the specific topic needed, the Governance Committee will seek out training with the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools, the New Mexico School Board Association, or other sources of training suggested by the Public Education Department.

The training of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board is based on the requirements outlined by the Public Education Department, as well as best practices for non-profit and charter school Governing Boards. The budget for Governing Board training is outlined in **Appendix G**, Function:2300, Object: 55812. The Governing Board Secretary will maintain a training log for each of the Governing Board

⁹⁷ <http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Continuing-Member.pdf>.

Members, which outlines the all completed training, identifies required and targeted training with due dates, and a system for reminding individual Board Members of upcoming training obligations.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a process for governing body member onboarding to ensure new members are properly trained and able to meet the meet the obligations and fulfill the responsibilities of governing body service, include action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Identify a plan for annual governing body training, including action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Describe how the plan will identify governing body training needs, meet governing body training needs, and comply with state requirements, including any requirements that may change from year to year; • Identify any costs required to support the training plan or onboarding process and describe how those costs are supported in the budget; and • Ensure the onboarding process and training plan address training on the open meetings act and responsibilities.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response provides a clear description of the requirements for training the board members. The plan describes internal and external trainings and differentiates between those for new and continuing board members. The response identifies who is conducting the trainings and identifies the potential costs of these trainings. The school's budget has set aside a limited amount of \$1,100 to the train the board annually since it intends to take advantage of free training sessions provided by NMCCS and NM PED.</p>	

B. (2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for an annual self-evaluation of the Governing Body that reflects that body's effectiveness and focuses on continuous improvement.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team recognizes the importance of a healthy Governing Board and believes that reflection on our performance, through self-evaluation, is the key to ensuring our effectiveness and continued improvement. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will conduct an annual assessment of the Board's effectiveness, as well as conduct more informal evaluations at the end of each Governing Board meeting. As part of our effort to continuously improve our Board practices and effectiveness, the Board will identify improvement areas at the beginning of each term, develop specific objectives, and put a review process into place to track progress for each of the improvement objectives on a quarterly basis. The self-evaluation process for the Board of Solare Collegiate will include a whole Board evaluation, as well as a focus on individual Governing Board member's individual self-evaluation and be informed by the best practices presented in *Charter School Board University*,⁹⁸ and the resources available at the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.⁹⁹

Immediately following each Governing Board meeting, the Governing Board Secretary will send out a digital survey, such as Survey Monkey or Google Forms, to assess the effectiveness and satisfaction associated with each of the monthly Governing Board meetings. We believe that seeking regular feedback from our team will help to identify strengths and weaknesses within the Board, prior to the annual review. Monthly feedback will ensure that the Solare Collegiate Governing Board acknowledges and problem-solves potential concerns, and keeps the Governing Board focused on the fulfillment of our mission. The digital survey will include the following questions:

1. On a 1-10 likert scale, rate how effective the Governing Board meeting was today.
2. In what areas were we particularly effective, and what made those effective?
3. In what areas were we particularly ineffective, and what made those ineffective?
4. On a 1-10 likert scale, rate how effective we were in staying focused on the mission of the school and the achievement of the school goals (i.e. oversight).
5. What suggestions do you have for improving our effectiveness and efficiency?
6. Any other comments or concerns?

The monthly survey will serve as a culture check of our Board, through individual assessment of satisfaction, as well as the perception of how effectively and efficiently the Governing Board is operating. We believe that a highly engaged and proactive Board will be key to our organizational success, we will take all opportunities to assess our satisfaction and effectiveness, and we will use this information to further develop as a Governing Board.

The annual Governing Board self-assessment will be conducted during the April Governing Board of the fiscal year, prior to the July Annual Board Retreat that will start off the new fiscal year. The data collected through the self-assessment will be used to identify priorities for the following year and to create goals for the Governing Board. The Governing Board will complete the self-assessment as a cohesive unit, as well as complete a section as an individual Governing Board Member.

The self-evaluation will examine the Board from a holistic perspective, as well as explicitly evaluate

⁹⁸ Carpenter, Brian. *Charter School Board University*. 2nd ed., National Charter Schools Institute, 2007.

⁹⁹ <https://www.centerfornonprofitexcellence.org/resources/board-development>.

subcategories of Board performance. Those categories include the following:

- **Fulfillment of the Solare Collegiate Mission and Academic Achievement.** Ensuring that the school is making progress towards the fulfillment of our mission, demonstrated through academic results. Active focus on evaluation of data, mission-specific indicators, and the development of an accountability plan and oversight.
- **Financial Oversight.** Ensuring that a fiscally responsible budget is developed and approved, oversight of the budget, review of financial reports, preparation for the annual audit, reporting and accounting records and the management of public funds, and fund development.
- **Leadership Oversight.** Ensuring that a high capacity Head of School is identified, hired, and monitored by the Governing Board, including developing plans for evaluation and accountability, transition plans, and personnel policies.
- **Board Structure.** Ensuring the Governing Board is well-developed, including the requisite number of Board Members, variety of skill sets, functionality of committees, and onboarding practices for new members, following the expectations and skills outlined in **Section II.A.(2)**.
- **Board Function and Legal Oversight.** Ensuring that the Governing Board is following the Solare Collegiate Bylaws and are following all legal and ethical standards of a strong Board. Analysis of Board attendance, duties of officers, obligations to the state and federal government, and integrity of the application of the Open Meetings Act. In addition, the Governing Board will examine how often parental and community grievances are presented to the Governing Board and the process by which the Board responds. Ensuring that the Board is in compliance with all statute and laws for government organizations and public schools.

The Governing Board will rank themselves on a 1-10 Likert scale overall in each subcategory, as well as on the individual elements outlined for each subcategory. The team will review each element and subcategory, discuss the Governing Board's overall performance, and come to consensus on a ranking. The full self-evaluation tool for the full Governing Board, as well as individual members, can be found as **Attachment K**.

The Governing Board will also review their individual performance and growth trajectory as a Board Member. Individual members will review their attendance, contributions to the creation on Board policy, contribution on the oversight of the school, and the strategic contributions to the creation of a wider Solare Collegiate community. The individual self-assessment will ask Board Members to identify their most meaningful contributions to the Governing Board, as well as the areas where they need support to grow. Individual Governing Board Members will be encouraged to make recommendations for maintenance of organizational strengths, as well as ideas for supporting the Board's areas of growth.

External Outreach and Feedback

As a Governing Board that oversees a public entity, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board recognizes the importance of soliciting feedback from students, families, community members, and Solare Collegiate staff, to ensure our governance is reflective of the community we serve, as well as to ensure transparency in our governance. Each year, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will seek out feedback from the community, via a community input survey. That survey will be available to families, community members, and Solare Collegiate staff in electronic and paper form, in both English and Spanish. The community input survey will be distributed to the Solare Collegiate community during the month of April, through the school website, social media pages, our digital newsletter, and in paper copy form at the school and within paper communication distributed to families. Additionally, the Governing Board will work with the Advisory Council, to ensure that the Governing Board meetings, agendas, and

notes are accessible to families and community members.

The Governance Committee will review and analyze the data collected from the Board self-assessments and community input survey. During the May Governing Board meeting, the data collected from the Board self-assessments and the community input survey will be presented to the whole Board, along with any recommendations for improvements for the functionality of the Governing Board. These recommendations and the discussions around the recommendations will inform the goal-setting during the July Board Retreat. The results, recommendations, and discussion will be presented in an open meeting, and reflected in the Governing Board Meeting minutes, available for public access and review.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board aims for staff and families to resolve conflict with Solare Collegiate at the school level. However, in the case that a conflict cannot be resolved through the methods outlined in **Section II.E.(1)** and in the Governing Board Policies in **Attachment G** for Solare Collegiate staff or the process outlined in **Section II.F.(2)** for families and community members, then the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will act to resolve the conflict between the school and the staff or community member. The Governing Board will first ensure that the complainant followed the method outlined in the previously mentioned sections. If the complaint is about the Head of School, or if the Head of School is unable to resolve the complaint, then it should be presented to the Governing Board. The Governing Board will review the complaint and respond in writing within 15 days of originally receiving the complaint. The decision of the Governing Board shall be considered final.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is a Board with a growth mindset, and our monthly electronic surveys, community input survey, and our more comprehensive annual self-assessment are tools we will use to determine our focuses for professional growth and how we will align our professional development priorities. In addition, the results of each of these surveys will inform our priorities for the following year, determined at our annual Governing Board Retreat. We believe that the pointed focus on our development as a Governing Board will strengthen our oversight capabilities and further support the fulfillment of the Solare Collegiate mission.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a plan for annual governing body self-evaluation, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; • include action steps to obtain feedback from, at a minimum, parents and families and all willing staff; • The plan must include action steps to evaluate the effectiveness of the governing body in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maintaining regular membership that has all of the required qualifications and skill sets identified in question A.(2) ○ ensuring student success and academic achievement ○ ensuring fulfillment to the school's mission ○ overseeing the stewardship and management of public funds and responsible government accounting ○ ensuring compliance with legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ selecting and overseeing a qualified and highly effective school leader○ addressing grievances received from staff and parents and families; and● Describe how the identified plan will focus on and support continuous improvement. |
|--|--|

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant has developed a thorough plan for annually evaluating the governing board. The plan includes conducting an online survey after each meeting to assess the effectiveness of the meeting. Additionally, an annual self-assessment will take place in April before the board retreat in July and surveys will be distributed in April to receive feedback from the community. After feedback is provided, all the data is gathered and analyzed to inform priorities for the following year as determined at the board retreat.

C. Leadership and Management.

C.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan** for how the governing body will monitor organizational, financial, and academic outcomes on an ongoing basis to ensure that the proposed school is successfully meeting its mission and providing a quality education.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Founding Team of Solare Collegiate recognizes the importance of strong Board oversight for the prosperity of our school, as well as the legal obligations which a New Mexico charter school Governing Board is responsible for fulfilling. Solare Collegiate will fulfill each of the requirements outlined in the New Mexico State Statute (Public School Code 22-1-1 and Local School Boards; Powers; Duties 22-5-4) and the New Mexico Administrative Code (Procedural Requirements 6.29.1.9), including the training required by the Governing Board and the delegations of duties outlined in that statute. The oversight plan for Solare Collegiate includes the previously mentioned statute and code, as well as best practices outlined in the New Mexico Public Education Commission Charter School Performance Framework and the National Charter School Resource Center.

The oversight plan for the Solare Collegiate Governing Board includes deep and detailed work of specific committees, as well as the discussions and decisions made by the full Governing Board. Additionally, the Head of School will be an intermediary between the oversight work done by the Governing Board and the management and implementation at the school. The Head of School will be responsible for providing organizational, financial, and academic data to the Board and committees, as the Head of School will bring the strongest knowledge of day-to-day operations, finances, and academic performance at Solare Collegiate. The Governing Board of Solare Collegiate recognizes the importance of having a clear delineation between governance and management, with the Board's role being oversight of the school, and the Leadership Team's role being management and implementation. The Head of School is responsible for reporting to the Governing Board and the Committees. A clear differentiation between the governance and the management ensures that Solare Collegiate is effective in the fulfillment of our mission.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that the school is successful organizationally, fiscally, and academically annually, as well as throughout the term of the charter. Fulfillment of the Solare Collegiate mission, vision, and our academic and organizational goals, as well as ensuring the use of public dollars is done in an ethical and financially sound way are the primary commitments of the Governing Board. Each of these duties will be done in compliance with state and national requirements.

Organizational Outcomes

The Governing Board of Solare Collegiate will monitor and evaluate the organizational performance of the school, as the Performance Framework outlines organizational components as part of the Governing Board responsibilities. The Governing Board will need to work closely with the Solare Collegiate Leadership Team, specifically with the Head of School, so it is vital that the Governing Board have a strong command of the role of the school management and the role of the governance team, in relation to organizational performance. Per the administrative code (NMAC 6.29.1.9), the Governing Board will refrain from involving themselves in administrative functions of the school.

Solare Collegiate will use the PEC Performance Framework¹⁰⁰ to define the criteria and standards for organizational success. Areas including attendance, enrollment, and the performance of the governing

¹⁰⁰ Based on the draft framework that is anticipated to be adopted prior to Solare Collegiate's authorization:
https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/DRAFT-PEC-Accountability-Plan_2-23-18_APPX.pdf.

body, including compliance with all laws, rules, and charter terms with the Public Education Commission, are elements of the organizational performance framework. The organizational performance framework includes five sections: (1) educational plan, (2) financial management and oversight, (3) governance and reporting, (4) students and employees, and the (5) school environment. The Academic Committee of the Governing Board will be responsible for monitoring six criteria of the educational plan each month. The Finance Committee will oversee five criteria of the financial management and oversight section each month. Each month, the Governance Committee will be responsible for three components of the governance and reporting section. The Audit Committee will review the section on students and employees, which has five criteria, and the second on school environment, including four components, to support the annual audit. During monthly committee meetings, the committees will examine their assigned components, and then update the full Board on the organizational performance of their specific elements during the monthly board meeting. The Head of School will support each of the committees in their review of the Performance Framework, as needed.

Financial Outcomes

The Solare Collegiate Finance Committee, chaired by the Board Treasurer, will closely monitor the financial performance of the school, and report to the full Governing Board at all monthly Board meetings. The full Board will receive a Financial Dashboard (see **Attachment L: Sample Monthly Dashboard**), a balance sheet, cash flow statement, income and expense statements, and budget versus actual report. In alignment with school governance best practices, the Board will receive these reports each month, and can expect that each of these documents are timely, accurate, and comprehensive.¹⁰¹

The Finance Committee will work with the Solare Collegiate Leadership Team, specifically the Head of School and the Manager of Operations when necessary, as well as with the back-office provider, to ensure that each of the financial reports are prepared for upcoming committee reviews, contain the pertinent and correct information, and are accessible by all members of the Board.

The Finance Committee will also be responsible for the monthly oversight of the PEC's Financial Performance Framework. This includes multiple facets, including operating budgets, audits, periodic reports, expenditures, reimbursements, audit reviews, meals, and general information, each of which will be reviewed during Finance Committee meetings. During each of the monthly Board meetings, the Finance Committee will update the full Board on the financial performance framework. When the Finance Committee updates the Board, its members will also discuss the overall financial standing of the school, the projected status, how expenditures impact the school operations and overarching mission, and define action steps for activities related to the school budget.

Academic Outcomes

The Academic Committee of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will oversee and monitor the academic performance of the school regularly. The Solare Leadership Team, primarily the Head of School, will report regular academic data to the Academic Committee, as well as share the monthly Academic Dashboard (see **Attachment F: Sample Monthly Academic Dashboard**) for the full Board to review and discuss at the full Board meeting. The Dashboard will report NWEA MAP, interim assessment, and state-mandated assessment data by classrooms and grade level. The Academic Committee will meet to review and monitor subgroup performance, including students by ethnicity, economic standing, special education status, and English Learners. The Academic Dashboards were inspired by the research from the National Charter School Resource Center, which outlines the most

¹⁰¹ Carpenter, Brian. *Charter School Board University*. 2nd ed., National Charter Schools Institute, 2007.
New Mexico Public Education Commission, Approved 2/9/2018

important items to which Governing Boards should have access, for the Board to assess past, present, and future academic outcomes, and to make informed oversight decisions.¹⁰² Our Academic Dashboard will ensure that our Governing Board is able to objectively evaluate the academic effectiveness of Solare Collegiate, including how successful we are in the fulfillment of our mission and our mission-specific academic goals for all of our students, and across student subgroups.

The Academic Committee will also review the academic components of the PEC's Performance Framework at least four times per year. The Performance Framework includes meeting the standards of the state's A-F grading systems, as well as identifying and evaluating mission-specific indicators demonstrating implementation of the Solare Collegiate mission. The Academic Committee specifically and the Governing Board in general will be strongly versed in the New Mexico A-F grading system, as well as the Performance Framework academic performance indicators. Each month, the Academic Committee will lead a review and discussion of the progress towards the fulfillment of the school's mission and the mission-specific indicators during the full Board meeting.

During the full Board and Academic Committee meetings, the members will review and discuss the trends in the academic data, including but not limited to: short cycle assessment data, standardized testing data, and performance of student subgroups. The data and discussion will be used to create actionable steps to ensure that the school is on track to fulfill the mission of Solare Collegiate for each of our students.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board has a strong commitment to the fulfillment of our mission and goals, and we believe that strong oversight of the organizational, financial, and academic outcomes of the school will support Solare Collegiate in the fulfillment of our mission. Our goals are ambitious, and the only way in which we can be successful is by ensuring that we are organizationally, financially, and academically healthy and effective. The Solare Collegiate Founding Team knows that our Governing Board must act as an accountable public entity, ensuring that our students are provided a high-quality education, in alignment with our mission.

Total Points Available	Expectations
12	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor academic performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; • Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor organizational performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; • Identify a plan for how the governing body will monitor financial performance on an ongoing basis, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; and • Describe how each of the monitoring plans will focus on ensuring the school is meeting its mission, providing a quality education, and acting as a responsible public entity.

¹⁰² Colorado League of Charter Schools. "Webinar: Charter School Board's Role in Oversight." National Charter School Resource Center, 23 Feb. 2017, <https://www.charterschoolcenter.org/webinar/charter-schoolboard%E2%80%99s-role-oversight>.
New Mexico Public Education Commission, Approved 2/9/2018

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant presented a clear plan for how the governing body will monitor academic, financial and operational performance to ensure the school is a success and aligned with the mission. The applicant states, "The oversight plan for the Solare Collegiate Governing Board includes deep and detailed work of specific committees, as well as the discussions and decisions made by the full Governing Board. Additionally, the Head of School will be an intermediary between the oversight work done by the Governing Board and the management and implementation at the school."

C. (2) Identify and provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan for hiring a head administrator. Include a clear, comprehensive, and cohesive description of the leadership characteristics and qualifications for the head administrator needed to run the proposed school. In your description, take **into account the mission of the proposed school**. Include **evidence of a clear plan** (e.g., job search process, timelines) to hire and evaluate a highly qualified administrator no later than July 1.

If the proposed head administrator is a founder or already identified, provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of his/her leadership characteristics and qualifications for running the proposed school and delivering its unique mission.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Strong school leadership is vital for Solare Collegiate to be successful in the fulfillment of our mission and our commitments to the Public Education Commission. As such, the selection and hiring of the Head of School is integral for our success as an organization. While Solare Collegiate has identified one of our founders as the proposed Head of School, we have outlined a process for hiring highly-qualified candidates as well.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will hire or re-hire a licensed Head Administrator, or “Head of School,” annually. The Head of School hired will receive an annual, renewable contract, with renewal based on an annual evaluation of performance. To be hired as a Head Administrator at Solare Collegiate, an applicant must hold a Level IIIB Administrator License, or qualify to apply and receive a Level IIIB Administrator License and pass a state-required fingerprinting and background check (NMSA 22-10A-5), as well as meet the minimum requirements listed in the Head Administrator Job Description (**Appendix B**). The Head of School will be accountable to the Governing Board regarding the organizational management, financial health, and fulfillment of the academic mission of Solare Collegiate. The Head of School will be responsible for advancing the Solare Collegiate mission, ensuring the financial health of the school, and fulfilling the academic goals determined in the Public Education Commission’s Performance Framework contract with Solare Collegiate. The Head of School will work with the Solare Collegiate Governing Board to determine ensure all activities are aligned to the school’s mission and to set the long and short-term goals for the school. The Head of School will be responsible for managing the school staff and the contributions that they make towards fulfilling the mission of the school and the sustainability of the school as an organization. In addition to the skills and mindset listed above, ideal candidates for the Head of School position at Solare Collegiate will have the following qualifications:

- Minimum of Master’s Degree or Advanced Degree
- NM Level IIIB Administrative License, or qualified to apply for a Level IIIB Administrative License
- State-required fingerprinting and background check
- Demonstrated record of academic achievement in the classroom or in the leadership capacity
- Experience in the management of students and adults

Our timeline for hiring our Founding Head Administrator begins after the Public Education Commission announces the final decision on the authorization recommendation for Solare Collegiate. Post-authorization, the Governing Board will post the role and job description for Head Administrator, with the collection of resumes and applications slotted for Fall 2018. The timeline described above ensures that our Head Administrator position is hired well before the July 1, 2019 the date required per the charter application.

Solare Collegiate has identified a proposed Founding Head Administrator, and the process by which we will review and hire the candidate is outlined below. However, the Solare Collegiate Founding Team has

also developed a plan for identifying and hiring a Head Administrator for any future hiring needs. If the Head of School does not plan to return to Solare Collegiate, they will communicate this to the Governing Board prior to the February Governing Board Meeting. Similarly, the Governing Board will make the decision to invite the Head of School back for the following school year annually by the February meeting. The process by which the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will hire a new Head Administrator is outlined in **Figure 33**. It is our goal to have a new Head of School hired by early May of the previous school year, to ensure the new leader has adequate time to transition into the Head of School role.

Figure 33 - Head Administrator Timeline

Proposed Timeline	Action Steps	Responsible Party
February	Post advertisement for position opening through a variety of online and paper resources (NMREAP, LinkedIn, school website).	Solare Collegiate Head of School Search Committee (ad hoc committee created by Governing Board for purposes of hiring, including community and staff members, in addition to Board Members)
March	Collect application packets, including comprehensive resume, cover letter, constructed response, and references.	Solare Collegiate Head of School Selection Committee
March/April	Candidates who pass initial screening of application packets will be invited for initial phone interview.	Solare Collegiate Head of School Selection Committee
April	Candidates will be invited to a ½ day interview event, which includes observing school, completing series of Leadership Scenarios, and attending open Special Meeting of Governing Board, with community stakeholders invited to attend.	Solare Collegiate Head of School Selection Committee Solare Collegiate Governing Board Community Stakeholders
April	Head of School Selection Committee will present report and recommendation to full Governing Board.	Solare Collegiate Head of School Selection Committee
May	Governing Board will approve or reject candidate, extending offer letter if approved.	Solare Collegiate Governing Board

Proposed Founding Head Administrator

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board began its preliminary search for a leader that encompasses the desired leadership traits to support a high-achieving, mission-driven school, with the qualifications,

experience, and leadership skills described above, and believe they have found the best candidate for the job. The Governing Board and the proposed Head Administrator are keenly aware of importance of the skills and qualifications of a strong founding leader and have outlined a plan to have the Head of School hired by July 2019. The potential Head Administrator has been actively involved in the application process, as well as worked collaboratively with the proposed Governing Board in the skill building necessary to be effective in the oversight of Solare Collegiate.

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team believes that for a school to be successful, a strong leader must be mission-aligned, data-driven, and a strong liaison of Solare Collegiate with the greater community and our Governing Board. During the process of writing the charter application, the Founding Board has had the opportunity to assess the proposed Founding Head Administrator and her alignment to the school mission and vision. The Founding Board is confident in the capacity of Rachael Sowards, the proposed Founding Head Administrator.

Rachael Sowards is a member of the Solare Collegiate Founding Team bringing deep, extensive experience and knowledge as an educator in the State of New Mexico. She has taught English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Gifted Education, Special Education, and education coursework in grades ranging from the 5th grade through the graduate school level. Ms. Sowards has served 11 years as a teacher leader, with the last eight years in New Mexico. She has taught in New Mexico private, charter, and traditional district schools. Most recently, Ms. Sowards was rated Exemplary on the highly rigorous NMTEACH Teacher Evaluation System, for her work in a high-poverty school, with significant numbers of English Learners and students with special needs.

Ms. Sowards served as a founding middle school teacher at the ASK Academy, which expanded down to a middle school in 2013. She has also been on the Founding Team of KIPP Journey Academy in Columbus, OH. In addition, she has previously facilitated whole district middle school English professional development during her time at Bernalillo Public School.

While Ms. Sowards' experience has been primarily as a teacher, the Founding Team of Solare Collegiate is confident in her ability to successfully lead Solare Collegiate. She currently holds an interim Level IIIB Administrative License and will qualify to apply for the full license in December of 2018. She is currently enrolled in CES' Head of School Leadership Development program and is finishing a leadership fellowship. As part of the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, she has completed three separate leadership residencies at Excel Academy in Chelsea, MA, as part of her preparation for leading Solare Collegiate. She will complete a summer leadership residency at Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School during July 2018.

Total Points Available	Expectations
12	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an ongoing process for hiring a head administrator, both for the initial hiring and for any time the position becomes vacant, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and identified criteria or standards; Identify all leadership characteristics and all qualifications the head administrator must possess; Explain why and how the identified leadership characteristics and qualifications will ensure the head administrator has the required capacity and enable the head administrator to operate the proposed school as a successful, high-quality public

	<p>school;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain how the identified leadership characteristics and qualifications take into account the mission of the proposed school;• Describe how the identified process will ensure the school is able to identify and hire a highly qualified, licensed administrator no later than July 1, 2018; and• If a potential head administrator has already been identified and/or is a founder, include an assurance that the individual understands they must be selected and hired by an independent governing body and identify the individual's specific leadership skills and qualifications, through verifiable prior experience, that makes them qualified for the position, including holding the required licensure.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response provides a clear and comprehensive plan for hiring the head administrator by May and includes action steps and a complete job description that aligns with the mission and state requirements. In this narrative, the applicant describes its preliminary search for "a leader that encompasses the desired leadership traits to support a high-achieving, mission-driven school, with qualifications, experience, and leadership skills, and has identified Ms. Sowards as the proposed Founding Head Administrator.</p>	

C. (3) Describe how the governing body will convey and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the proposed school's head administrator. Provide a proposed job description for the head administrator including responsibilities that are significant and unique to charter school leaders and the proposed school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy. Attach the job description as **Appendix B**.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The role of Head Administrator, or Head of School, is a position that is annually reviewed by the Solare Collegiate Governing Board in accordance with NMAC 6.29.1.9 requirements and sitting Head of Schools will be rehired annually contingent on performance each year. The Governing Board will outline the expectations and the duties of the Head of School through the annual contract, which will be signed by both the Head of School and the Board Chair, representing the full Board, prior to the start date on the contract. In addition to the job description, the contract will include the compensation, benefits, confirmation of a cleared background check and fingerprints, and the evaluation process and criteria for success for the Head of School's annual evaluation. The job description will be reviewed and adjusted annually by the Governing Board, with the compensation and benefits being reflected in the annual budget. If the Head of School is being rehired from the previous school year, the background check and fingerprints do not need to be resubmitted. The personnel file of the Head of School will suffice as proof of the requirement being completed. The responsibilities and qualifications for the Head Administrator of Solare Collegiate can be found in **Appendix B: Head Administrator Job Description**. The Governing Board will review the Head Administrator Job Description annually, adjusting the description as is needed to adequately reflect the responsibilities of the position.

In addition to the outlined requirements above, the Head of School must demonstrate a clear understanding of the commitment the school has made to the Public Education Commission via the charter contract and parameters of the charter application. In the case that the Head of School is a new hire, part of the application process will include the review and evaluation of the Solare Collegiate charter contract, to ensure that the prospective Head of School is clear of the promises he or she is committing to by accepting the position. During the in-person interview event, the candidate will be asked questions about the charter application, in addition to completing Leadership Scenarios, demonstrating how the candidate would ensure that the promises of the charter are being fulfilled. At the time of accepting the position, the candidate will indicate that they understand the expectations and goals of the charter and that it is their role to ensure that Solare Collegiate is successful in fulfilling the expectations and goals.

For a Head of School who is continuing employment at Solare Collegiate, the Head of School will review the promises outlined in the charter contract, and develop targeted goals aligned to the charter contract, during their annual review with the Governing Board. The Founding Team of Solare Collegiate recognizes that as a Local Educational Agency (LEA), the Head of School of Solare Collegiate will be responsible for the duties of a Superintendent, as outlined in NMSA 22-5-14, as well as that of a Head of School, as outlined in NMSA 22-10A-18. As our proposed Head of School has been active in the process of writing the charter application, we are confident that she has a strong understanding of the content of the charter application and how it aligns to the duties she must fulfill in her capacity as Head of School. Rachael Sowards, the proposed Head of School, was an active writer of the charter application and will be a participant in the Capacity Interview, demonstrating her understanding of the promises being outlined in the charter application.

Total Points	Expectations
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Available	
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the process the governing body will use for annually conveying and delineating the roles and responsibilities of the head administrator;• Include specific actions the governing body will take to ensure the head administrator understands the obligations of the charter contract and the requirements of all elements of the plan contained in this application; and• Attach a job description in Appendix B that includes the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lists all major responsibilities of the head administrator○ Includes responsibilities that are unique to charter school leaders○ Includes responsibilities that specifically relate to the school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy○ Identifies all hiring requirements including all previously identified requirements related to characteristics and qualifications.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>In Appendix B of the application, the applicant details a clear job description for the Head Administrator describing the roles and responsibilities of the position. The job description outlines responsibilities within: the whole school and governing body, for staff, with budget and finance, and curriculum/instruction. The responsibilities align with the structures developed with the governing body, the educational model and the mission.</p> <p>An additional requirement in the hiring process is demonstrating a clear understanding of the commitment made through the sponsorship of the authorizer “via the charter contract and parameters of the charter application.”</p>	

C. (4) Identify and provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan for annually evaluating the head administrator. In your description, take into account the mission and goals of the proposed school.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate identifies as an organization that is focused on transformational growth, and that growth is not limited to our students. We also are dedicated to supporting and evaluating the growth of our teachers and our leadership team. We believe that frequent authentic evaluation is one of the tools that we can use to better support the growth of our Head Administrator. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will evaluate the Head of School at the midpoint and the conclusion of each academic year. Our focus in our Head of School evaluation is deeply rooted in the mission of Solare Collegiate and the goals we set in our charter application. Additionally, our Head of School evaluation incorporates the NMTEACH Summative Head of School Evaluation System and the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSSE), as is the standard of practice in New Mexico. The Solare Collegiate internal evaluation will mimic the NMTEACH scoring format and weighting of individual categories, ensuring our internal evaluations are, at minimum, as rigorous as the NMTEACH evaluations.

Our Head of School evaluation reflects Solare Collegiate's dedication to our mission and the goals we have outlined for the school. As a result, our evaluation heavily weighs students' achievement, as it is quantitative evidence that the leader is successfully leading the school in the fulfillment of our mission. As a result, 50% of the Head of School's evaluation is tied to student achievement, including the performance on standardized testing, short cycle assessments, and the mission-specific indicators outlined in the charter application.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process for Head of School at Solare Collegiate fulfills the requirements of New Mexico Administrative Code 6.69.7.8 and 6.69.7.9. Our process requires that all Head of Schools create a professional development plan within the first 40 days of the school year. Within this professional development plan are mid-year and end-of-year evaluations. The evaluations are aligned with the four HOUSSSE competencies: instructional leadership, communication, professional development, and operations management. Expectations for the Board-approved evaluation and its process will be included with the annual contract, including any updates made to the evaluation process for returning Head of Schools.

The annual evaluation cycle will begin with the Head of School completing a self-assessment and the creation of a personalized professional development plan. The self-assessment will be aligned to the HOUSSSE competencies and indicators and it is accessible on the New Mexico Public Education Department's website.¹⁰³ Completion of the self-assessment will inform the Head of School of their current strengths and areas of growth within the four HOUSSSE competencies. This information will inform the Head of School in the development of their annual professional development plan. The plan will include competencies of focus, a developed action plan, a timeline, and evidence of completion. Each year, this professional development plan will be created by the 40th day of school. **Attachment M: Head Administrator Evaluation** includes the Head of School Self-Assessment and Professional Development Plan.

The Governing Board will conduct a mid-year review of the Head of School in early January each year. This mid-year evaluation will be instrumental in determining if the Governing Board will offer the

¹⁰³ New Mexico Public Education Department. Head of School Self-Assessment (Form A).
http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/NMTeachDocs/Toolbox/housse_a.pdf.

current Head of School an extension of their contract. The mid-year and end-of-year evaluations will be similar in format and scope, however the academic achievement section focuses will differ, as our mission-specific goals are aligned to the end-of-year assessment cycles and cannot be objectively determined at the mid-year. Instead, student growth on short cycle evaluations will be used to inform the mid-year evaluation, with the understanding that academic gains may not be predictable based on mid-year reviews of academic progress. The end-of-year evaluation will be conducted after the last day of school and before the close of our fiscal year.

Structure of the Summative Evaluation

The structure of the Summative Evaluation is aligned to the NMTEACH Summative Head of School Evaluation¹⁰⁴ and include scoring for academic achievement (proficiency and growth based), the quality of the administrator's teacher observations and feedback, and multiple measures (including the HOUSSE competencies and teacher surveys), coupled with a 360-degree feedback from stakeholders at Solare Collegiate. The NMTEACH Summative Evaluation includes space for qualitative feedback from the Governing Board, as well as suggestions for professional development or professional reading. In addition to elements included on the NMTEACH Summative Evaluation, the Solare Summative Evaluation also includes effectiveness ratings, suggested goals/areas of growth, strengths, and next steps. Aligned with NMTEACH, the Solare Collegiate evaluation will allocate 50% of the evaluation to student achievement, 25% to teacher observations, and 25% to multiple measures. These subsections are described below.

- Student Achievement.** The Head of School will be evaluated on their ability to meet the mission-aligned long term and short-cycle academic goals for the school. For the mid-year evaluation, the student achievement goals will be adjusted to reflect the timing within the school year, as the goals are written as year-long goals. The Solare Collegiate believes that student achievement is the clearest indicator that we are on track to fulfill our mission. Student achievement, both growth based and proficiency based, is an objective bar by which we can hold our Head of Schools accountable, and it is a critical component to a Head of School's success.
- Teacher Observations.** The second component of the Summative Evaluation comprises the completion and quality of teacher evaluations. Per NMTEACH, a Head of School is evaluated on the completion of the state-required teacher evaluations. Solare Collegiate's dedication to developing teachers requires more frequent observations and coaching of all teachers regardless of experience. The mid-year evaluation will focus upon the Head of School's ability to complete the weekly internal observation cycles, while the end-of-year evaluation will also include the completion of the state-required evaluations, in the required timeframes. Within this section, there is also a focus on the quality of the feedback given after the teacher observations.
- Multiple Measures.** The Multiple Measures section of the Summative Evaluation includes the HOUSSE competencies and teacher surveys. Using the Form D Scoring Rubric¹⁰⁵, the Governing Board will rank the Head of School on each of the HOUSSE competencies at the mid-year and end-of-year evaluation. The HOUSSE competencies are outlined in **Figure 34** and will be used to inform the Governing Board's evaluation process. Teacher surveys are also included in the Multiple Measures section and will be used to inform teacher satisfaction and for future management goals.

¹⁰⁴ New Mexico Public Education Department. NMTEACH Educator Effectiveness Plan: Final Summative Report. <http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/NMTeachDocs/3.%20%20intro2.%20SL%20Summative%20Eval%20FINAL.pdf>.

¹⁰⁵ New Mexico Public Education Department. HOUSSE Form D Guidance. <http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/NMTeachDocs/Toolbox/HOUSSE%20Form%20D%20Guidance.pdf>.

Figure 34 - HOUSSE Competency Domains

Domain	Samples of Effectiveness
Instructional Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expectations for all teachers and students • Proven instructional practice • Continuous monitoring of SPED and EL academic growth and performance
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, professional communication with staff, families, and the community at the school-based level
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of teacher growth based on career goals and current needs
Organizational Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with all local, state, and federal requirements • Maintains fiscally responsible budget standards

Additionally, Solare Collegiate strives to be an organization that approaches evaluation from a 360-degree perspective. To that end, as a part of the Head of School's annual evaluation, the Governing Board will seek out feedback from students, teachers, members of the Leadership Team, families, and community members. We believe that feedback from each of the school's stakeholders will ensure that we have the most thorough review of the Head of School, providing thorough feedback of the strengths and areas of growth for the leader of the school.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the plan for annually evaluating the head administrator, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and standards or criteria; • Include action steps to evaluate the effectiveness of the head administrator in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensuring student success and academic achievement ○ ensuring fulfillment to the school's mission ○ overseeing the stewardship and management of public funds and responsible government accounting ○ ensuring compliance with legal obligations related to government organizations and public schools ○ addressing grievances received from staff and parents and families; • Describe how the plan specifically takes into account the mission and goals of the proposed school; and • Ensure the plan meets the requirements identified in NMAC 6.69.7.8 and 6.69.7.9.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria	
The applicant presents a clear plan for the evaluation of the Head Administrator and meets state	

requirements. The evaluation is scheduled for January in order to provide an extension of the contract by February. The evaluation consists of 50% tied to student achievement data, 25% towards teacher observations and the remaining 25% to multiple measures.

D. Organizational Structure of the Proposed School.

D.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable** organizational chart and narrative that **aligns structures with the mission of the proposed school** and demonstrates a **clear** understanding of appropriate relationships between governance, administration, teaching, support staff, and external agencies that are essential to the proposed school.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The organization charts for Solare Collegiate from our Founding Year through Year 5 of operation are outlined in this section, with the titles of each position and reporting relationships for all the staff. By Year 5 of the school's operation, the school will be at full buildout. Each of the positions outlined in the Organizational Charts are essential to the fulfillment of the Solare Collegiate mission, in the day-to-day operations as well as the long-term development of the school. Apart from the role of Head of School, per NMSA 22-10A-18, all hiring, evaluation, and accountability is the responsibility of the Head of School, as is stated in NMSA 22-8B-10. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is responsible for the hiring, evaluation, and accountability for the Head of School position. Solare Collegiate will follow the delineation of duties between the Head of School and the Governing Board, as outlined in NMAC 6.29.1.9.

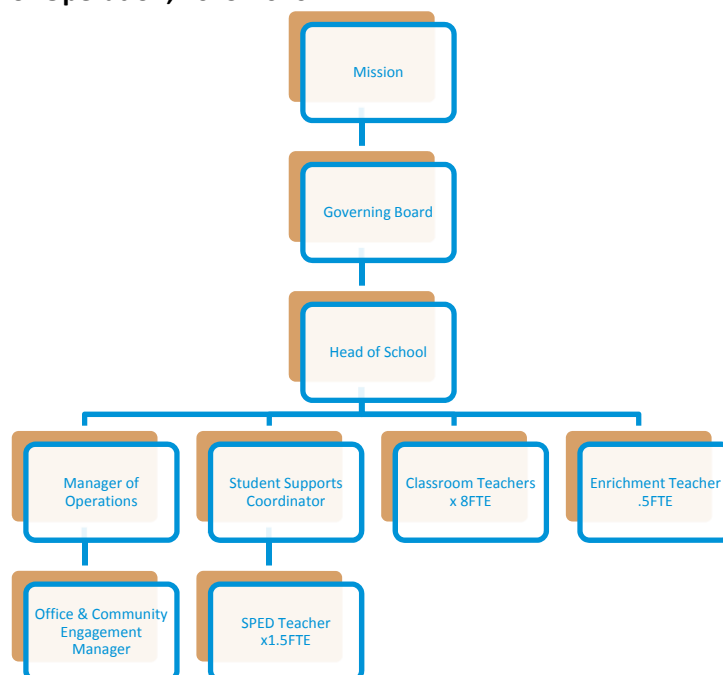
Inherent to our success as a charter school are the roles that are less prominent in the organizational chart, including the Governing Board, the PEC and PED, and the Advisory Council. With the exception of the Governing Board, these integral positions are not reflected on our organization charters, so we will take this opportunity to outline their roles at this time.

- **Solare Collegiate Governing Board.** The Solare Collegiate Governing Board is the public organization responsible for the fulfillment of the mission outlined in our charter application and is responsible for ensuring and reporting the organizational, financial, and academic health to the Public Education Commission and the Public Education Department. All decisions made by the Solare Collegiate Governing Board are accessible to the public through attendance of the monthly Board Meetings or review of the minutes from said meetings, per the New Mexico Open Meetings Act. The Governing Board will annually hire, evaluate, and hold accountable the Head of School. The Governing Board does not hire any of the other staff, but it is the responsibility of the Governing Board to approve the salary schedules and approve the annual schedules, which directly impacts the organizational structure of Solare Collegiate. Additionally, the Governing Board approves all policies, including those that directly impact the Solare Collegiate staff. The Governing Board will include four committees: Governance, Academic, Finance, and Audit, and will report out the work done within each of these committees to the full Governing Board at the monthly Board Meetings. NMSA 22-8-12.3 requires Finance and Audit subcommittees, with the additional committees developed to support our organizational success.
- **PEC/PED.** The Governing Board, along with the Head of School, will be responsible for the required reporting and regular communication with the Public Education Commission and the Public Education Department. The Public Education Commission and the Public Education Department will hold Solare Collegiate to the promises made in our charter application, through annual site visits and organizational oversight, as outlined in NMSA 22-8B-12.
- **Advisory Council.** Guided by NMSA 22-5-16, the Advisory Council, which will be chaired by the Head of School, is a group made up of Solare Collegiate families, community members, and school staff. The purpose of this group is support the Head of School in making mission-aligned,

school-focused decisions, which will further support the success of our students, informed by the perspective outside of the Governing Board and Leadership Team. During each Governing Board meeting, the Advisory Council will have a standing block of time to give the Board updates and input.

- Contracted Services.** Contracted services will be coordinated by the Manager of Operations, with oversight and approval by the Head of School. Contracted services related to operational services, such as facilities management or janitorial services, will be managed by the Manager of Operations independently, while instructional services will be managed by the Manager of Operations with input by the Head of School. The logistics of contracted services is managed by the Manager of Operations.

Figure 35 - Year 1 of Operation, 2019-2020



The Governing Board will be responsible for ensuring the fulfillment of our mission each year. The Head of School will report directly to the Governing Board, in compliance with the mission and the policies set by the Governing Board. In Year 1, the Head of School will manage all general education and enrichment teachers as well. The Leadership Team made up of the Head of School, Manager of Operations, and Student Supports Coordinator. The Manager of Operations will manage the Office and Engagement Manager, with oversight from the Head of School. As outlined in the table above, the Leadership Team and Instructional Talent will grow through Year 5, in response to the enrollment growth and student needs. The Student Supports Coordinator will manage the special education teachers, with oversight from the Head of School, as well as facilitate the relationships with contracted services for ancillary services. Our Instructional Talent will include 10 FTE teachers (including 1.5FTE Special Education teachers). This staff will accommodate our 156 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 16:1 and a student-staff ratio, inclusive of all adults on our staff, of approximately 11:1. Each position introduced in Year 1 is outlined below, with a focus on how the position supports our mission and aligns the relationship dynamics of each role.

The **Head of School** is the one employee that the Governing Board is responsible for managing and evaluating. The Head of School will attend all Governing Board Meetings, including the committee

meetings. The Head of School is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the school, including the instructional leadership, oversight of the educational program of the school, the student culture of the school, and the management of the school staff. The process of hiring, evaluating, and holding employees accountable is that of the Head of School. Any corrective action or firing of employees is also the responsibility of the Head of School. The Head of School will conduct classroom observations and coaching of all teachers, with the assistance of the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, beginning in Year 5. All direct reports will be managed and evaluated by the Head of School, with the Head of School being responsible for the oversight of the staff managed by other members of the Leadership Team. The Head of School will support the Manager of Operations in the management of the day-to-day operations of the school, as well as contracted services.

The **Manager of Operations** will report directly to the Head of School. The Manager of Operations will be a member of the Leadership Team and will manage the Office and Community Engagement Manager. This role will manage the day-to-day operations of the school, with the supervision of the Head of School. Additionally, the Manager of Operations is charged with management of the school's financial and programmatic records, as well as the management of contracted services. The Manager of Operations will be evaluated annually by the Head of School, using an internally created evaluation.

The **Student Supports Coordinator** will report directly to the Head of School. The Student Supports Coordinator is a member of the Leadership Team and will manage the Special Education teachers jointly with the Head of School. The Student Supports Coordinator will support teachers in providing support to special education students and English Learners. The Student Supports Coordinator will chair the Student Assistance Team (SAT) and manage the SAT process. The Student Supports Coordinator will be evaluated annually by the Head of School, using an internally created evaluation. If Solare Collegiate does not secure CSP funding, this position will not be added until Year 2 of operation.

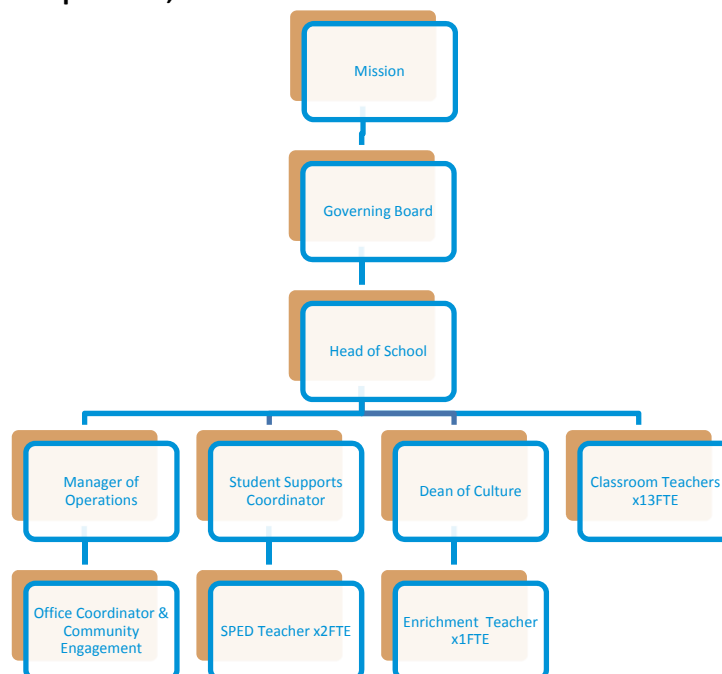
Special Education Teachers in Year 1 will report directly to the Student Supports Coordinator, with oversight from the Head of School. Matters related directly to special education services and IEP caseloads will be managed by the teachers, with support from the Student Supports Coordinator, as needed, while matters related to classroom practice will be managed by the Student Supports Coordinator. The Head of School will use the NMTEACH evaluation system to annually assess the Special Education teachers.

General Education Teachers will report directly to the Head of School. Beginning in Year 3, the Dean of Curriculum and Development will support the Head of School in the coaching and observations of the General Education Teachers. The Head of School will use the NMTEACH evaluation system to annually assess the General Education Teachers.

Enrichment Teachers will report directly to the Head of School. Beginning in Year 2, the Dean of Culture will manage the Enrichment Teachers, with the Head of School supporting in the coaching and observation of the Enrichment Teachers. The Head of School will use the NMTEACH evaluation system to annually assess the Enrichment Teachers.

Office and Community Engagement Manager will report directly to the Manager of Operations, with oversight from the Head of School. The Office and Community Engagement Manager will be hired by the Head of School, with direct input from the Manager of Operations. The Office and Community Engagement Manager will be evaluated annually by the Manager of Operations, using an internally created evaluation.

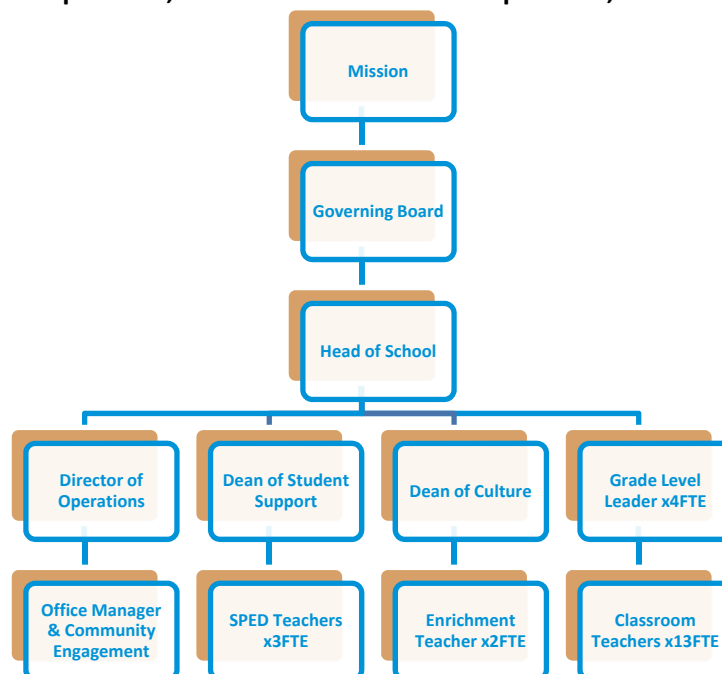
Figure 35 - Year 2 of Operation, 2020-2021



During Year 2 of operation, our Leadership Team will include the Head of School, Manager of Operations, Student Support Coordinator, Dean of Culture, and Manager of High School and College Enrichment, with continued support of the Office and Community Engagement Manager. Our Instructional Talent will include 16 FTE teachers including 2 Special Education teachers and 1 Enrichment teacher. This staff will accommodate 260 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 16:1 and a student-staff ratio, inclusive of all adults in the building, of approximately 12:1. Each position introduced in Year 2 is outlined below, with a focus on how the position supports our mission and aligns the relationship dynamics of each role.

The **Dean of Culture** will report directly to the Head of School. The Dean of Culture is a member of the Leadership Team and will manage the Enrichment teachers jointly with the Head of School. The Dean of Culture will support all staff and maintenance of the school culture and will lead the building of the school culture with students. The Dean of Culture will be evaluated annually by the Head of School, using an internally created evaluation. This position will begin in Year 1, if Solare Collegiate secures CSP funding.

Figure 36 - Year 3 of Operation, 2021-2022 and Year 4 of Operation, 2022-2023



During Year 3 of operation, the role of Manager of Operations transitioning to Director of Operations and the Student Supports Coordinator transitioning to the Dean of Student Supports. Our Instructional Talent will include 17FTE general education teachers (including 4 of whom will take on a grade-level leadership role in addition to their teaching responsibility). Our Instructional Talent also includes 2 Enrichment Teachers and 3 Special Education Teachers. This staff will accommodate 364 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 16:1 and a student-staff ratio of approximately 14:1. Each position introduced in Year 3 is outlined below, with a focus on how the position supports our mission and aligns the relationship dynamics of each role. Year 4 of operation will have the same staffing model, as our enrollment numbers stay at 364. As such, no new positions are added during 2022-2023.

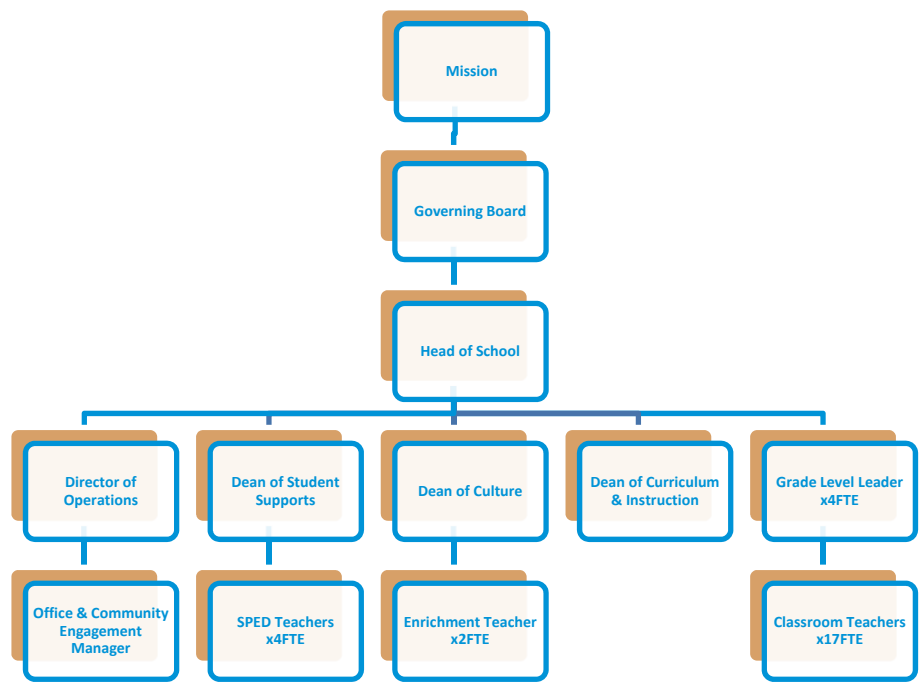
Director of Operations. As the student and staff populations increase, so do the responsibilities of the leader of the Operations team. For this reason, the position of Manager of Operations elevates to a Director of Operations in Year 3.

Dean of Student Supports. As the population of students and teachers increase, the depth of the responsibilities of the Student Supports Coordinators also increase. Therefore, in Year 3 of operation, the Student Supports Coordinator position transitions to a Dean of Student Supports.

Beginning in Year 3, the Head of School will offer one teacher per grade level the role of **Grade Level**

Leader. The Grade Level Leader will report directly to the Head of School. The Grade Level Leader will be responsible for developing the lessons for the AM Advisory period, assisting in the planning of Community Circle, and planning and facilitating weekly Grade Level Meetings. This role is an addition to the responsibilities of teachers and will follow the same evaluation standards as other teachers, with an additional focus on the effectiveness of their grade level leadership.

Figure 37 - Year 5 of Operation, 2023-2024



During Year 5 of operation, we will reach our full enrollment and our full projected staffing. Our Leadership Team will add a Dean of Curriculum and Instruction in Year 5. Our Instructional Talent will include 27FTE teachers (including 4 Special Education Teachers and 2 Enrichment Teachers). Four teachers will take on a grade-level leadership role in addition to their teaching responsibility. This staff will accommodate 416 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 16:1 and a student-staff ratio of approximately 14:1. For Year 5, the only positions added to our staffing model are general education teachers.

Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will report directly to the Head of School. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction is a member of the Leadership Team and will support the Head of School in the management and coaching of the general education teachers. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will also lead and support the staff in the cultivation and adaptation of the Solare Collegiate school curriculum. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will be evaluated annually by the Head of School, using an internally created evaluation.

Total Points Available	Expectations
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8

A complete response must

- Include an organizational chart;
- Include a narrative that describes the structures and relationships represented in the organizational chart;
- Include all entities essential to the operation and success of the proposed school; and
- Reflect an understanding of the appropriate relationship between each of the relevant entities.

REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The organizational chart and narrative provided by the applicant, clearly delineates the reporting structure for each position listed for the first five years of operation. The narrative describes that each year the school will add teachers and support staff that aligns with its mission statement of a rigorous curriculum and add grades to develop smaller class sizes for a ratio of 16:1. It is clear that the applicant has clearly defined the vision for the operations of the school and those that will be involved.

D. (2) Provide **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** job descriptions for all certified and licensed staff and any other key staff (if your charter requires non-traditional roles or positions, identify and describe here). In the job descriptions, clearly outline necessary qualifications and **appropriate** reporting lines that are consistent with the organizational chart. In your descriptions, take into account the mission of the proposed school. Attach staff job descriptions as **Appendix C**.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Staff job descriptions are in **Appendix C**.

Solare Collegiate provides an organizational structure that will support the fulfillment of our mission - preparing students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. Inherent to that goal is creating an environment that supports the professional growth of our teachers and leadership team. Using a slow-growth model, our organizational structure will grow in tandem with our enrollment, which tops out at 416 students in Year 5. While we have developed a staffing structure to suit the student enrollment through Year 5, we recognize that we will need to continually reevaluate the needs of the students and if the structure continues to support the fulfillment of our mission. **Figure 38** outlines the certified and licensed staff in Years 1 through 5 and follows with a description of how each role is in alignment with our mission. Pursuant to School Personnel Act (NMSA 22-10A-3), the following positions will hold the required certifications and licensure.

Figure 38 - Certified and Licensed Solare Collegiate Staff

Position	2019-2020 156 Students	2020-2021 260 Students	2021-2022 364 Students	2022-2023 364 ¹⁰⁶ Students	2023-2024 416 ¹⁰⁷ Students
Head of School	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total
Dean of Curriculum & Instruction					1 total
Student Supports Coordinator ¹⁰⁸	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total
Teachers	8 total	13 total	17 total	17 total	19 total
Special Education Teachers	1.5 total	2 total	3 total	3 total	4 total
Enrichment Teachers	.5 total	1 total	2 total	2 total	2 total

Beginning in Year 5, a **Dean of Curriculum and Instruction** will be added to the Solare Collegiate staff. This position will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School. The primary role of the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will be to support the Head of School in the observation and coaching of teachers, as well as lead the continued development of curriculum and instructional practices at the school. This will decrease the number of direct reports that the Head of School is responsible for managing day-to-day. This role will support the Solare Collegiate mission through the

¹⁰⁶ Solare Collegiate begins at an atypical starting point, 5th grade. Because of the atypical start, we planned into our enrollment plan a smaller inaugural 5th grade class. Our enrollment numbers do not increase in Year 4, as that smaller 5th grade class transitions from 7th to 8th grade.

¹⁰⁷ The increase in enrollment from 364 to 416 in Years 4 to 5 is a result of transitioning our smaller inaugural 5th grade class out and is our first year at full enrollment of 104 students per grade level.

¹⁰⁸ In Year 3 of operation, the Student Supports Coordinator will transition into the role of Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, as the responsibilities of the role increases.

development, maintenance, and improvement of the curriculum and instruction of Solare Collegiate, including assessments, scope and sequences, unit plans, and lesson plans. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will work directly with the Head of School regarding teacher observation and coaching. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will collaborate with the Student Supports Coordinator to ensure the curriculum and instruction is accessible to students with special needs and needing English language support, as well as collaborate with the Dean of Culture to weave school culture focuses within the classroom curriculum. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will hold a New Mexico Public Education Department license in teaching, with preference that the individual also has an administrative license, or able to apply for one. This position reports directly to the Head of School.

Based on data collected from the school in our targeted community, we anticipate that approximately 24% of our students will be identified as having special needs, and 25% will be identified as English Learners. To ensure that students with special learning needs are given the specialized support they need, as well as the specialized support that our special education and general education teachers need to best support these students, we are prioritizing have a **Student Supports Coordinator**. This individual will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School. The Student Supports Coordinator will hold a New Mexico Special Education License, as well as have significant experience in the management of special education caseloads. The Student Supports Coordinator will be charged with fulfilling the Solare Collegiate mission, leading the development of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for our students with special needs and implementation of the English Learner (EL) program at Solare Collegiate. Because Solare Collegiate uses an inclusion model, the role of Student Supports Coordinator is vital for ensuring that general education and special education teachers have the support they need to effectively support students with special education and English language services. The Student Supports Coordinator will manage the direct services and any pull-out services deemed necessary by IEPs. The Student Supports Coordinator will hold a New Mexico Public Education Department license in Special Education and a TESOL endorsement, with preference that the individual also has an administrative license, or able to apply for one. This position reports directly to the Head of School.

General Education Teachers hold the greatest responsibility in advancing the mission of Solare Collegiate, as they are directly interacting with the students most of their day. The teachers will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School. Teachers will be accountable for developing and delivering highly rigorous, CCSS-aligned curriculum, working with teachers on their team, and be responsive to feedback from the Leadership Team, all to support the mission of preparing students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. Through our staffing plan, teachers will receive two full preparatory periods each day to analyze student performance and proactively problem solve, in addition to the typical unstructured preparation time. Ultimately, teachers will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School, with oversight and input by the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction beginning in Year 3, Dean of Culture beginning in Year 2, and Grade-Level Leaders beginning in Year 3. All Solare Collegiate teachers will hold New Mexico Public Education teacher licensure in the content area and grade band in which they are hired to teach. These position report directly to the Head of School in Years 1 and 2, and to the Grade Level Leaders beginning in Year 3.

Special Education Teachers are responsible for supporting the mission of Solare Collegiate by providing individualized support, allowing students will identified special needs to access rigorous academics provided by Solare Collegiate. Special Education teachers will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Student Supports Coordinator, with support from the Head of School. Special Education teachers will work with General Education Teachers to develop and deliver highly rigorous, CCSS-aligned curriculum, with attention dedicated to the individualized supports to ensure the curriculum is accessible to students with special needs, as well as collaborate with General Education Teachers for

effective co-teaching. Special Education Teachers are responsible for the development, implementation, and management of IEPs for students with special needs on their caseloads. All Special Education Teachers will hold New Mexico Public Education Department teacher licensure in Special Education. These position report directly to the Student Supports Coordinator.

Enrichment Teachers are responsible for supporting the mission of Solare Collegiate by teaching the non-core courses of physical education, Spanish, and New Mexico Culture, ensuring students have a well-rounded education aligned to the Solare Collegiate core beliefs. Enrichment Teachers will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School, with support from the Dean of Culture. All Enrichment Teachers will hold New Mexico Public Education Department teacher licensure in the content area in which they are hired to teach. These positions reports directly to the Dean of Culture.

In addition to certified staff, non-certified staff play an integral role in the fulfillment of the Solare Collegiate mission. **Figure 39** outlines the non-certified staff in Years 1 through 5 and follows with a description of how each role is in alignment with our mission. As with our certified staff, we have estimated our staffing needs from Year 1, when we are at 156 students, through Year 5 when we are at full enrollment. Throughout our growth phase, we will continually reevaluate the needs of our school and if the non-certified staffing structure suits the fulfillment of the mission.

Figure 39 - Non-Certified Solare Collegiate Staff

Position	2019-2020 156 Students	2020-2021 260 Students	2021-2022 364 Students	2022-2023 364 Students ¹⁰⁹	2023-2024 416 Students ¹¹⁰
Manager of Operations	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total
Dean of Culture		1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total
Office & Community Engagement Manager	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total	1 total

High performing charter schools across the country have transitioned to separating the operational management from the academic responsibilities, with two distinct roles. Solare Collegiate is following the best practice, as supported by multiple research studies, including *Creating New Schools: The Strategic Management of Charter Schools*¹¹¹ by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. With the Head of School and Manager of Operations model, the Head of School is the Head Administrator having the final say in all decisions, but will supervise operational management, as opposed to managing the operations of the school. The **Manager of Operations** will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School. The Manager of Operations will advance the mission of the school through the management of the internal and external school operations, as well as the management of the school budget and the fundraising and grant writing. The Manager of Operations will handle matters related to vendor relationships, facilities management, the day-to-day operations of the school and supervising the Office and Community Engagement Manager. This position reports directly to the Head of School.

¹⁰⁹ Solare Collegiate begins at an atypical starting point, 5th grade. Because of the atypical start, we planned into our enrollment plan a smaller inaugural 5th grade class. Our enrollment numbers do not increase in Year 4, as that smaller 5th grade class transitions from 7th to 8th grade.

¹¹⁰ The increase in enrollment from 364 to 416 in Years 4 to 5 is a result of transitioning our smaller inaugural 5th grade class out and is our first year at full enrollment of 104 students per grade level.

¹¹¹ Frumkin, Peter. (2003). *Creating New Schools: The Strategic Management of Charter Schools*. Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The **Dean of Culture** will be hired, evaluated, and held accountable by the Head of School. The Dean of Culture will advance the mission of the school through the development and management of school culture for the students and adults, creating a culture focused on highly rigorous academics, development of student voice and identity, and management of student behavior. The Dean of Culture will observe teachers to support their use of the school culture and behavior management systems within the classrooms. The Dean of Culture will work closely with the Student Supports Coordinator, ensuring that behavior issues are not a manifestation of their special needs. The Dean of Culture will work closely with the Manager of High School and College Engagement to build the culture of high school and college success. The Dean of Culture will work with the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, to purposefully weave elements of the school culture into instructional practice. This position reports directly to the Head of School.

The **Office and Community Engagement Manager** will be hired by the Head of School and will be evaluated and held accountable by the Manager of Operations, with oversight by the Head of School. The Office and Community Engagement Manager will ensure that office operations run efficiently, as well as work with the Leadership Team to ensure the school's overall success. The Office and Community Engagement Manager will be responsible for community outreach, including recruitment and the annual public lottery. This position reports directly to the Manager of Operations.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all certified and licensed staff identified in the application ○ all non-certified or unlicensed staff identified in the application who could be considered essential to the operation and success of the proposed school ○ any non-traditional roles or positions; • Describe why the identified roles are key to the operation and success of the proposed school; and • Attach staff job descriptions as Appendix C for all of the positions identified in the application response and include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ List all major responsibilities of the positions ○ Include responsibilities that specifically relate to the school's mission, goals, and educational philosophy ○ Identify all hiring requirements including qualifications and licensure or certification ○ Identify reporting lines ("reports to") that aligns to the organizational chart.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response describes all key staff positions, including the required qualifications for certified/licensed and non-certified/unlicensed staff. In the response, the applicant provides a rationale for the selection of staff positions and explains how it aligns with the mission and targeted student population.</p>	

D.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** staffing plan that demonstrates an understanding of the proposed school's staffing needs, is **reasonable and adequate** to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/curriculum, and is aligned with the budget and projected enrollment. Include evidence of a clear plan (job search process, timelines etc.) to hire and evaluate highly qualified staff no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to developing the strongest teachers with a growth mindset and aligned to the Solare Collegiate mission. The majority of staffing needs are teaching positions and we intend to recruit and hiring the teachers with the greatest potential for making transformational growth in our students. Each staff member hired as Solare Collegiate team member must demonstrate a profound belief that all students can learn and be aligned to the mission of Solare Collegiate and be willing to work tirelessly to support Solare Collegiate in fulfilling that goal. To find these individuals, the Solare Collegiate Founding Team will implement a wide-reaching and exhaustive recruitment plan. To fill all positions prior to the beginning of the Solare Collegiate summer professional development in July 2019, our recruitment and selection process for staffing will be largely informed by high-performing charter schools in New Mexico and across the country.

Solare Collegiate will grow using a slow growth model, with full student enrollment occurring during our fifth year in operation. **Figure 40** outlines our projected staffing plan for the first five years of operation, based on our anticipated staffing needs. Each role at Solare Collegiate is in alignment to our mission of preparing students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. While our staffing model seems generous at this point in the planning, we recognize that anticipating our staffing needs is challenging. Each year, in conjunction with creating our annual budget, we will reevaluate our staffing needs, ensuring that we have the staffing needed to fulfill our mission.

Figure 40 - Staffing Plan Years 1-5

	Year 1 156 Students	Year 2 260 Students	Year 3 364 Students	Year 4 364 Students ¹¹²	Year 5 416 Students ¹¹³
Leadership					
Head of School	1	1	1	1	1
Manager of Operations	1	1	1	1	1
Dean of Culture		1	1	1	1
Student Supports Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Dean of Curriculum and Instruction					1
Office Manager & Community Engagement	1	1	1	1	1
Instructional Talent					
Classroom Teachers	8	13	17	17	21
SPED Teachers	1.5	2	3	3	4
Enrichment	0.5	1	2	2	2
Total					
Total Teachers	10	16	22	22	27
Total Staff	13	21	27	27	33
Student to Teacher Ratio	1:16	1:16	1:16	1:16	1:16
Student to Staff Ratio	1:12	1:12	1:14	1:14	1:13

Hiring Plan

After authorization, the first hire will be that of the Head of School, a responsibility that lies with the Governing Board. We anticipate that this hire will occur at the first Governing Board meeting after authorization in September, as we have already identified a proposed Head of School. Once the Head of School is officially hired, she can begin the active recruitment process for the positions needed for Year 1. The timeline for staff hiring during the planning year is outlined in **Figure 41**.

¹¹² Solare Collegiate begins at an atypical starting point, 5th grade. Because of the atypical start, we planned into our enrollment plan a smaller inaugural 5th grade class. Our enrollment numbers do not increase in Year 4, as that smaller 5th grade class transitions from 7th to 8th grade.

¹¹³ The increase in enrollment from 364 to 416 in Years 4 to 5 is a result of transitioning our smaller inaugural 5th grade class out and is our first year at full enrollment of 104 students per grade level.

Figure 41 - Staff Hiring Timeline- Year 1

Event	Date
Recruitment and Submission of Interest	October 2018 and ongoing
Job Posting and Acceptance of Applications	December 2018 and ongoing
Application Review/Phone Interviews with Head of School	February 2019 and ongoing
Half-Day Interview Event with Head of School	March 2019 and ongoing
Decision and Offer	March 2019 and ongoing

Prior to Solare Collegiate developing its reputation as a community focused on student and staff growth, we anticipate that our recruitment efforts will require significant effort to find the strongest, most mission-aligned candidates for our open positions. Therefore, our recruitment for candidates will begin early in our planning year, and will be conducted on an ongoing basis, until all roles are filled. We believe that a robust recruitment strategy will ensure that we find mission-aligned candidates with the tenacity to be a member of a founding staff.

Beginning in early October, staff positions available during Year 1 of operations will be advertised. Our outreach will focus on local resources, as well as national education and career websites. Locally, Solare Collegiate will advertise positions at the University of New Mexico, Central New Mexico Community College, and at other colleges and universities in New Mexico. Other local sources for the recruitment of staff will include the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Teach for America New Mexico's monthly alumni newsletter, and the New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools. Our recruitment strategy early on will focus upon online recruitment sources. Beginning in January 2019, positions will also be advertised in a variety of local print resources, including the *Albuquerque Journal* (print and online), as well as other local print sources. Nationally, recruitment sources will include monster.com, schoolspring.com, and LinkedIn. Additionally, our staff openings will be posted on our school website, in our monthly newsletter, and posted on our social network pages. As our recruitment campaign progresses, we will evaluate the effectiveness of each of these sources and retool our recruitment campaign as necessary. Finally, we will actively seek out recommendations from our personal and professional networks.

Candidates interested in being considered for a position at Solare Collegiate will be asked to submit a resume, cover letter, three professional references, and respond to a series of short-answer questions. The Head of School will review the applications of candidates, screening the candidate's experience and expertise. Additionally, the Head of School will review and assess the four short answer responses included in the application packet. Responses will be scored on a 0-5 scale, with applicants who earn a score of 11 points or higher will be invited to participate in a phone interview with the Head of School. **Figure 42** outlines the short answer questions included in the application packet.

Figure 42 - Short Answer Questions and Response for Staff Applications

Question 1: Why are you applying for a teaching position at Solare Collegiate?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment working with urban youth • Desire for professional development and growth • Desire to close the achievement gap

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to work in a startup school environment
Question 2: What is needed to ensure success when working with predominantly low-income students in a community with low rates of academic proficiency?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must set high standards for all students, regardless of race or socioeconomic status • Students from low-income communities are just as capable of achieving as their wealthier peers • Students that come in far behind academically will need a great deal of support to catch up, but just because they are behind does not mean we can lower the standard • Urban schools are failing because of low expectations on behalf of the leadership and teachers and because of ineffective teachers who have not been held accountable for their students' results
Question 3: What information do you use to set goals for a class in a given year?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes responsibility for student achievement or growth • Uses formative and summative assessment to plan • Believes in state assessments and has students take tests and quizzes with questions from state exams to assess progress throughout the year • Goal for students should be 1-2 years of growth (i.e. from 3rd to 5th grade level in reading) or 100% passing of state exam • Describes analyzing student data for patterns (i.e. looks at data and pulls out which students are struggling and what standards or sub-standards are challenges for the entire class) • Uses data throughout unit so that s/he can predict what how students will do on final assessment
Question 4: Have you received feedback from a manager or supervisor about an improvement that they wanted you to make in your work? If so, what was the feedback and how did you respond to it?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, have received feedback for area of improve; describes a systematic approach to making the improvement, not just "I tried harder" • Describes ways in which s/he enlisted others to help her improve (asked for feedback, observed a teacher, bought Lemov's book, etc., worked with other TFA people)

The Head of School will begin conducting phone interviews with qualifying candidates in February of 2019. The primary focus during the phone interview will be to determine if the candidate is a mission-fit for the school. While some of the short answer questions in the application packet align to mission-fit, the phone interview will allow the Head of School to probe deeper into the candidate's alignment to the school mission. Additionally, the phone interview will be used to determine the leadership potential of the candidate, including their record of achievement, commitment to the community, passion, and humility. **Figure 43** outlines the four primary questions asked during the phone interview, along with the responses that indicate strong mission alignment. Each response will be scored on a scale of 0-5, with candidates who score 14 out of 20 being invited to continue to the in-person interview event.

Figure 43 - Staff Screening Interview Questions and Scoring Rubric

Question 1: If I walked in to your classroom on any given day, tell me what I would see.	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly structured classroom setting; procedures-oriented • Clearly defined expectations that maximize efficiency and time on task • Mix of direct instruction and student facilitated learning • High level of student engagement • Ongoing use of data to assess students' mastery of content and inform programmatic changes • Rigorous learning objectives (high level of specificity) that are frequently assessed (i.e. Exit quizzes, etc.)
Question 2: Why are you the right person for a founding role? How do you think a founding role might be different than an established position?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocalizes alignment to the Solare Collegiate mission and vision • Willingness to do the jobs that need to get done • Growth mindset and desire to be coached • Team mentality, as opposed to individual • Willingness to standardize actions and teaching processes
Question 3: If you were asked to evaluate one of your teaching colleagues, how would you determine his/her effectiveness as a teacher?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission-aligned in action • Thorough preparation of lesson and content • Depth of knowledge in content area • Growth focused, for self and students • Data driven; uses data to adjust instructional practice • Student growth and proficiency performance on

	standardized assessments
Question 4: How would you go about building a strong classroom community? How about a strong school community?	
Strongly Aligned Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured classroom with organized physical appearance • Clear expectations outlined for students and teachers • Team mentality with a growth mindset • High expectations
<p>Candidates who have scored 14 out of 20 on the phone interview will be invited to attend a half-day interview event. In preparation, the candidate will be provided with a content standard and learning objectives from the subject they are applying to teach and will prepare a 15-minute lesson aligned to the content standard and objective. During Year 1, the candidate will present the lesson plan in a situation that most closely mimics the future Solare Collegiate classroom. That may be to members of the Solare Collegiate Leadership Team, in the candidate's own classroom, or in another classroom environment. We expect to develop a relationship with another school or afterschool program that would allow us to complete the demonstration lesson. In subsequent years, the demonstration lesson will be done in a Solare Collegiate classroom, during non-instructional time.</p> <p>In addition to the demonstration lesson, the interview event will include a tour of a charter school with a similar mission, either in person or virtually, observations of classroom instruction in a school with a similar mission, completion of a series of scenarios, and a debrief conversation with the Head of School. The primary purpose is for the candidates to see a school with a similar mission in action, in addition to the candidate teaching a demonstration lesson. The debrief session with the Head of School is the most important element of the interview event, where the Head of School will probe the candidate to further measure capacity and mission alignment, while also testing the candidate's openness to being coached. The candidate will receive positive feedback, as well as critical feedback on their demonstration lesson, with the Head of School observing how the candidate responds to feedback. Additionally, the Head of School will ask the candidate to present their responses to the scenarios, as well as takeaways from their classroom observations. The Head of School will continue to give the candidate feedback on their scenario exercises and their observation takeaways, both positive and challenging, to get a clear picture of the applicants coachability.</p> <p>If the applicant demonstrates strong teaching skill or potential, in addition to an ability to be coached, they will be offered a position at Solare Collegiate within three days of the interview event. Candidates will have one week to accept or decline the offer. Per NMSA 22-10A-5, employment is contingent on completing and passing a background check.</p> <p>Midyear Openings and Subsequent Year Hiring</p> <p>If an opening occurs during the school year, the Head of School will expedite a plan for filling the vacancy. While filling a vacancy on our team will be a priority, we believe that the process for filling that position cannot be compromised. Therefore, the process for hiring midyear will follow the same progression: application packet, phone interview, and the ½ day interview event. We plan to continuously solicit the application packets throughout the school year, which should expedite the process.</p> <p>After Year 1 of operation, our hiring timeline and process will follow the same organization as Year 1,</p>	

with the ½ day interview event occurring at the school, with the demonstration lesson taught to Solare Collegiate students. During the first five years of operation, significant hiring will occur, as we will continue our growth into full enrollment. After full enrollment numbers are reached, we aspire to have high levels of teacher retention, by creating a culture of teacher support and coaching. Mid-year evaluations of teachers, informed by the components of the NMTEACH Summative Evaluation, along with data from the weekly observation cycles, will be used to determine if current teachers will be offered a position for the following school year. The Head of School will meet with each staff member individually to review their mid-year evaluations, as well as their growth trajectory, and whether they are being offered a contract for the following school year. Staff members will have one week after the meeting to accept or decline the contract extension, for the Head of School to determine the number of teaching positions that need to be filled for the following school year. Interviews for teaching positions will begin in February annually, with the goal of offers being extended during March.

Solare Collegiate will accept applications on a rolling basis, with the review of the applications occurring as the applications are received. For particularly strong candidates expressing interest at a time outside of the traditional hiring windows, the Head of School will reach out to the candidate to initiate and maintain contact until the staffing needs for the following year are determined. It is our goal that our hiring process is completed by May 1st of the previous school year, allowing the Leadership Team to be able to individualize the summer professional development to the needs of new and continuing staff. The recruitment and interview strategies are based on that of BES school Excel Academy in Chelsea, MA and other high-performing charter schools in New Mexico and across the country.

Staffing Plan Alignment to the Budget

The single largest expenditures for Solare Collegiate Charter School are the salary and benefits of our staff. The staffing plan for Solare Collegiate is aligned to our budget, reflected in multiple places throughout the budget. The staffing structure of the school is in direct alignment to our mission, while still enabling us to keep a fiscally responsible budget. Within the budget (see **Appendix G: 5 Year Budget Plan**) are line items for teacher recruitment (\$500 per new staff member for the proceeding school year, Function: 2500, Object: 55400) and personnel including compensation and benefits (Function: 1000 Instruction- Personnel Services Compensation and Employee Benefits, Function: 2100 Support Services Students- Personnel Services Compensation and Employee Benefits, Function: 2300 General Administration- Personnel Services Compensation and Employee Benefits, Function: 2400 School Administration- Personnel Services Compensation and Employee Benefits, and Function: 2500 Central Services- Personnel Services Compensation and Employee Benefits) including our growing staffing structure in Years 1 through 5, which is full enrollment and full staffing. Our staffing structure is approved by our Governing Board each year and will be adjusted based on fluctuations in the funding sources, if needed. Our budget and the allocation of costs related to staffing supports our instructional model, which includes providing teachers with at least 100 minutes of preparatory time each day, within the regular school day. Additionally, our salary schedule pays 10% above the new minimum salary requirements for teachers, as well as reflects the minimum administrative salaries outlined in NMSA 22-10A-11.4.

Unforeseen Budget Challenges

In the case of an unforeseen budget challenge, Solare Collegiate will immediately identify ways in which to balance the budget. The most likely reason for a budget shortfall would be under-enrollment, a common risk with newly opened charter schools. If this is the case, Solare Collegiate will first look to cut costs in areas that are dependent of student numbers. This includes the costs associated with instructional materials or other line items driven by the number of students enrolled. If these areas are not enough to balance the budget, staff adjustments may be considered. If a reduction in staffing, based

on student enrollment numbers, is necessary, the Head of School would reduce the number of teachers. In the early years, Solare Collegiate may delay securing teaching staff until enrollment demonstrates the need for the proposed staffing structure. Budget items aligned to the Solare Collegiate mission will be prioritized if a reduction to the budget is necessary.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an ongoing staffing plan and process for hiring all necessary staff, both for the initial hiring and for any time a position becomes vacant, include action steps, timelines, responsible parties; • Describe how the staffing plan and process will ensure the school is able to hire highly qualified staff, no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year, on an annual basis, and fill all vacancies within a reasonable time; • Describe how the staffing plan and process is reasonable and adequate to support effective and timely implementation of the academic program/curriculum during the planning year and for all subsequent years; • Describe how the staffing plan and process is aligned with the budget and the school's projected enrollment; and • Describe how the school will make adjustments to the staffing plan in the case that there are differences in projected and actual enrollment.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Approaches the Criteria</p> <p>The proposed staffing plan outlines growth over time based on projected enrollment and the hiring plan for new teachers includes a rigorous recruitment and interview process. Sample written and spoken questions are included in the narrative and align with the mission and goals of the school. The applicant's staff hiring plan includes action steps and timeframes to ensure teachers are hired by late March. In addition, the narrative describes a plan for hiring midyear and in subsequent years. However, the applicant's response provides a minimal description of a plan of how the school will adjust the staffing needs to respond to budget shortfalls.</p>	

D.(4) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and compelling** plan for Professional Development that meets state requirements and supports the implementation of the proposed school's educational plan, mission, and performance goals. Ensure that the plan is supported by the budget.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Professional Development

At Solare Collegiate, we have a steadfast dedication to growing teachers through intensive professional development in line with the professional development objectives outlined in NMSA 22-10A-19.1, which states that profession development's purpose is to improve teachers' subject knowledge, improve student achievement, make learning more accessible to all students, and support the development of an effective classroom. Within our extended academic calendar, we include 30 days of structured professional development, in addition to our weekly staff development. Our professional development focuses on the building of culture of Solare Collegiate through our onboarding and orientation process, targeted supports for team performance, grade level and content area focus, a robust data analysis professional development program, and individualized observation, coaching, and feedback cycles. All professional development at Solare Collegiate will support our mission of equipping students with the skills necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. All professional development is aligned with the purposes and goals outlined in NMAC 6.65.2.8, as well as the program evaluation requirements outlined in NMAC 6.65.2.9. Further, our professional development will be in line with the New Mexico professional development framework and fulfill any funding stream requirements, as outlined in NMAC 6.65.2.10.

Each Solare Collegiate staff member will create a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in alignment with NMSA 22.10A-19, specifically parts B and D, which will be utilized by teachers to create individualized annual goals and by the Leadership Team to determine individualized professional development needs, along with the annual NMTEACH teacher evaluations and regular classroom observations and coaching.

Onboarding and Orientation

In creating a community of high expectations and exceptional results, it is imperative that we build a community of adults who are fully aligned to the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate. For that reason, we will dedicate 20 days to the Onboarding and Orientation of our staff in the month before our first days with students. Our expectations for our teachers are high, and we work diligently to ensure they are prepared with the skills and knowledge needed to execute at a high level prior to the start of school.

During our Onboarding and Orientation, we will focus first on unpacking the mission and the vision of Solare Collegiate and ensure that all staff are dedicated to our mission of equipping all students with the skills necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. After unpacking the mission and vision, our summer professional development will focus on unpacking the Solare Collegiate way—classroom and school-wide systems of organization, culture, behavior, and instruction. During this time, our teachers will practice calibrating language, nonverbals, and instructional moves, to ensure that all staff communicate the same expectations in similar language and signals. Time will also be allocated to introduce curriculum to teachers including the Scope and Sequences, Interim Assessments, the first units of instructions and lesson plans, and all corresponding expectations for submission, revision, and delivery. Whole school organization, including Academic and Assessment calendars, will be unpacked during our Onboarding and Orientation. After Year 1, content focuses for Onboarding and Orientation will be further delineated, with culture and calibrating of teacher moves being the primary focus of the Onboarding for new staff members.

In Year 1 of operation, Onboarding and Orientation will be combined into an integrated four-week

period, occurring from the second week of July through the beginning of August, in preparation for student orientation during the following week. The facilitation of the Onboarding and Orientation will be owned by the Head of School and the Manager of Operations, both of whom will have worked diligently during Year 0 of the school to plan sessions that are calibrated to the Solare Collegiate vision.

After the first year of operation, Onboarding and Orientation will become separate, with staff new to Solare Collegiate attending one week of Onboarding, prior to a three-week Orientation, which all the Solare Collegiate staff will attend. After the first year of operation, our Leadership Team and Master Teachers will take a more active role in the Onboarding and Orientation sessions.

Whole Group

Whole group professional development is intended to support the entire Solare Collegiate staff, ensuring that we stay aligned to our mission to equip students with the skill to be successful in the high schools and colleges of their choice. These professional development days will vary in scope, based on the needs of the staff. Most commonly, these days will align with the end of school breaks, as a method to realign the staff with the mission and expectation of the school. The content of Whole Group professional development will vary, based on the needs of the professional community at Solare Collegiate. Possible topics include a culture recharge, organizational systems recharge, *Teach Like a Champion* taxonomies, and other areas of focus which will benefit the Solare Collegiate staff.

These professional development sessions will typically come after a break, such as the day following Winter Break, to refresh the Solare Collegiate staff on the school wide expectations, prior to students returning to school. These professional development sessions may also occur on an as-needed basis, to maintain the culture of the school. In Year 1, the facilitation of the Whole Group Professional Development will be owned by the Head of School and the Manager of Operations, both of whom will have worked diligently during Year 0 of the school to plan sessions that are calibrated to the Solare Collegiate vision. In proceeding years, our Leadership Team and Master Teachers will take a more active role in the Onboarding and Orientation sessions.

The entire school will receive professional development on the support of students identified as English Learners, in fulfillment of NMSA 22-23-5(E), as well as students with identified special needs. This professional development will ensure that we are in compliance with requirements related to the education of these students, as well as to ensure that our instructional practice is that which will best support our students' learning.

Content and Grade Level

At Solare Collegiate, we recognize that across content areas and grade levels, professional development needs are going to vary. As such, we plan time during which content area teachers can meet to further unpack academic content and instructional practices, as required by NMSA 22-131.6. Likewise, grade level groups need dedicated time to review cultural and academic patterns within their grades, required by the same statute. At the Grade Level professional development, we will focus on managing culture as a team—if there is a breakdown of class culture, the fixes begin at the grade level. Because of the high expectations that we have for our teachers and students, we also place high priority on dedicating time for our teachers to plan and discuss students with their colleagues.

The focus of our Content Area professional development will be best practices for planning and execution of lessons, as well as the analysis of student data specific to the core content areas. In addition to studying academic content and instructional practices, content area teachers will do a weekly study of student performance specific to the content area courses. The Grade Level professional development will focus upon the grade level community—identifying strengths and weaknesses, deeper study and unpacking of individual students and their performances in the various classes, as well as

strategic study of students with special needs.

Content and Grade Level professional development will occur weekly during the teacher planning periods or during our early dismissal professional development days. In Year 1, the facilitation of the Content and Grade Level Professional Development will be owned by the Head of School. In proceeding years, our Leadership Team and Master Teachers will take a more active role in the Content and Grade Level sessions.

Data Analysis

After our first five (of six total) interim assessments, Solare Collegiate will have a professional development data dedicated to data analysis of our interim assessments and other pertinent student data. These days are vital to the accomplishment of our mission, as it gives teachers the opportunity to dive deeply into the results of the interim assessments, and to use the data to inform the placement of students during intervention groups and well as any adaptations to instructional practices. Additionally, at Solare Collegiate, our teachers will have multiple periods for planning and preparation within the school day. Within those periods, a dedicated time is focused upon data analysis of daily exit tickets in each of the classes taught, which is then entered into our school tracking system. Daily analysis of student exit tickets reinforces our focus on individualized supports, as we have performance-based data on our students, in each subject area daily.

Data Analysis days will follow the administering of our Interim Assessments, which will occur six times during the school year. We will not meet for a Data Analysis day after our sixth Interim Assessment. By dedicating full in-service days to data analysis of interim assessment, we are ensured that there is consistency and immediacy in the analysis of student data, and then there is dedicated time to focus on the implications of student performance (i.e. how intervention groups may change). Data Analysis days will be facilitated by the Head of School and the Manager of Operations in Year 1. The Head of School will own portions of the professional development that speak specifically to student results, as well as how it will impact instructional practice. The Manager of Operations will own portions of the staff development that focus upon the technical and organizational components of data analysis, for example how and when is data is displayed around the school, schedules related to interim, norm-referenced, and state-mandated testing, or expectations for reporting of daily, weekly, and interim data.

Individual

At Solare Collegiate, we believe that all of us are learners. Effective coaching is at the pinnacle of driving the growth of great teaching practice. As a result, we are dedicated to a robust program of teacher observations and feedback within the school week. With a combination of informal walk-through observations, formal observations with a debrief and feedback meeting, and scheduled live coaching occurring within a single week by the Head of School in Year 1, and the Head of School or a member of the leadership team (in proceeding years), we ensure that our teachers consistently receive feedback on their instructional practice.

Each week, our teachers will receive two 5-minute walkthroughs, one 30-minute observation, one 30-minute debrief session, and one 60-minute live coaching session by the Head of School. The walkthroughs will be unscheduled and will focus on tangible, quickly applicable feedback (referred to as “quick hits”) that can be applied to instructional practice immediately. The 30-minute observation will be scripted out or recorded by the Head of School, with the focus of overall teaching and cultural taxonomies, as well as the teaching moves that are specific goals for that specific week. Within 24 hours of the observation, the Head of School will meet with the observed teacher to share out observations and thoughts on the execution of the lesson. During that time, the teacher will practice targeted instructional moves outlined in the Head of School’s observation with coaching. Finally, each week, the

Head of School will schedule a 60-minute block of live coaching in the classroom. Depending on the needs of the teacher, this may be Head of School modeling, co-teaching, or the Head of School coaching from the back of the room with non-verbals or whispers.

Each week, teachers can expect the Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator, or Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (beginning in Year 5) to spend two hours and 10 minutes in their classroom, with a minimum of two 5-minute walk-throughs, a formal observation and debrief for approximately 60-minutes in total, and a 60-minute live coaching session. In Year 1, we estimate that a total of 8 general education teachers, 1.5 special education teachers, and a half-time Enrichment teacher, resulting in 1300 minutes, or approximately 22 hours, of the Head of School's week dedicated to teacher development. In Year 1 of the school, the Head of School will take the responsibility for observing teachers and leading the cycle of feedback, while also training the Student Supports Coordinator in the process for observation and live coaching. As the Solare Collegiate leadership team expands in proceeding years, supporting Leadership Team will support the Head of School in the observation cycle, with purposeful planning to ensure the Head of School regularly observes all teachers.

In addition to our internal professional development programming, Solare Collegiate will ensure that we have a teacher mentoring program for new teachers, as well as teachers new to Solare Collegiate, which complies with NMAC 6.60.10.8, including but not limited to classroom and curricular support, teacher development, and the study of the competencies needed to transition to Level II licensure.

All staff will participate in annual professional training related to the detection and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including physical and sexual abuse, as well as training related to the detection and reporting of substance abuse, as stipulated in NMSA 22-10A-32.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an annual professional development plan with action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe how the plan meets state requirements found in NMAC 6.65.2.8, 6.65.2.9, 6.19.8.10 ○ Describe how the school will ensure professional development time is not used for routine staff meetings; • Identify a mentorship plan for novice teachers, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs that meets the requirements of NMAC 6.60.10.8; and • Describe how the annual professional development plan and the mentorship plan for novice teachers ensure the following occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are supported by the budget ○ support the implementation of the proposed school's educational plan, mission, and performance goals ○ not only address required annual trainings, but are also tailored to address school- and teacher-specific professional development needs.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The proposed school's professional development plan meets state requirements and ensures high quality professional learning on both the schoolwide and individual levels. The applicant has outlined a</p>	

robust professional development plan that includes summer and weekly focused professional development. The applicant states, "Our professional development focuses on the building of culture of Solare Collegiate through our onboarding and orientation process, targeted supports for team performance, grade level and content area focus, a robust data analysis professional development program, and individualized observation, coaching, and feedback cycles. All professional development at Solare Collegiate will support our mission of equipping students with the skills necessary to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice."

E. Employees.

E. (1) **Clearly describe** the employer/employee relationship and provide **clear terms** and conditions of employment for all classes of employees (administration, professional staff, and administrative staff). Include benefits, work schedules, annual number of contract days, pay terms. Please offer a **complete and appropriate explanation** of how you will address employees' recognized representatives.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

At the core of every decision that we make is the mission of Solare Collegiate to prepare students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. Building a staff that shares that same mission is integral for the fulfillment of that mission. As such, we have developed a set of employee terms that we believe will maximize a student's academic growth, ensure steady organizational growth, and manage a financial prudent organization. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will approve a comprehensive Personnel Handbook prior to the Head of School hiring the first employee. Within the Personnel Handbook, matters related to the hiring of employees, classifications of employees, work schedules, leave (including vacation, sick, and personal) and holidays, payroll, pay scale and benefits, policies and procedures related to evaluations, workplace safety, and the discipline and grievance resolution process will be outlined. The terms of employment at Solare Collegiate will be in compliance with New Mexico State Statute and the New Mexico Administrative Code, specifically including the School Personnel Act.

Employment Classes

All employees at Solare Collegiate will be classified as either part-time or full-time, certified or non-certified, and exempt or non-exempt. Other individuals, including contracted employees, temporary employees, or consultants may also be employed by Solare Collegiate, as needed.

- **Full-Time Employees** work the entirety of the school year, at least 32 hours per week. Full-Time Employees qualify for the Solare Collegiate benefits program.
- **Part-Time Employees** work less than 32 hours per week. Part-Time Employees do not qualify for the Solare Collegiate benefits program.
- **Certified Employees** are those who must hold the requisite educator's license in the specific content and grade level area, as outlined by the New Mexico Public Education Department Professional Licensure Bureau.
- **Non-Certified Employees** are those who do not need to hold a license to complete the requirements of their job.
- **Exempt Employees** are those who do not qualify for overtime pay, per the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). FLSA will be used to determine whether an employee is exempt or non-exempt.
- **Non-Exempt Employees** are those who do qualify for overtime pay, per the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). FLSA will be used to determine whether an employee is exempt or non-exempt.
- **Consultant or Contract Employees** are independent contractors who work under the terms of an agreement made between them and Solare Collegiate. Consultants are not considered employees and do not qualify for the Solare Collegiate Benefits program.
- **Temporary Employees** work at Solare Collegiate for a short period of time, typically not spanning more than two trimesters in an academic year. Temporary Employees do not qualify for the Solare Collegiate benefits program.

Pay and Benefits

Solare Collegiate staff members will be paid semi-monthly, with paychecks being distributed twice per month, once at the midpoint and once at the end of the month. In total, 24 paychecks will be distributed each year. The full proposed pay terms and salary schedule for instructional staff can be found as **Attachment N**, with the bachelor's and master's degree levels for each of the three levels of licenses outlined in **Figure 44**. We are proposing a pay scale that is 10% higher than the Albuquerque Public Schools pay scale. All staff holding a teaching license, except for the Student Supports Coordinator, will be paid based on the instructional staff pay scale. The Student Supports Coordinator is considered a member of the Leadership Team and will be paid as such.

Figure 44 - Instructional Staff Pay Scale

Years of Experience	Level I License		Level II License		License III
	Bachelor's	Master's	Bachelor's	Master's	Master's
0	\$39,600	\$40,000	--	--	--
1	\$39,996	\$40,396	--	--	--
2	\$40,396	\$40,796	--	--	--
3	\$40,800	\$41,200	\$48,400	\$49,000	--
4	\$41,298	\$41,608	\$48,884	\$49,484	--
5	\$41,629	\$42,020	\$49,373	\$49,973	--
6	\$42,036	\$42,436	\$49,867	\$50,467	\$59,400
7	\$42,457	\$42,857	\$50,365	\$50,965	\$59,994
8	\$42,881	\$42,281	\$50,869	\$51,469	\$60,594
9	\$43,310	\$43,710	\$51,378	\$51,978	\$61,200
10	\$43,743	\$44,143	\$51,891	\$52,491	\$61,812

The proposed salary schedule for the Leadership Team is presented in **Figure 45**. The Leadership Team includes the Head of School and the Manager of Operations in Year 1. If we receive CSP funding, we will reallocate operational funds and have a Dean of Culture and Student Supports Coordinator in Year 1, therefore these positions are reflected in the Leadership Team salary schedule.

Figure 45 - Leadership Team Salary Schedule

Years at Solare Collegiate	Head of School	Leadership Team (Including Operations, Culture*, Curriculum & Instruction**, and Student Supports***) ¹¹⁴	Student Supports Coordinator ¹¹⁵
Year 1	\$80,000	\$60,000	\$55,000
Year 2	\$81,600	\$61,200	\$56,100
Year 3	\$83,232	\$62,424	\$57,222
Year 4	\$84,897	\$63,672	\$58,366
Year 5	\$86,595	\$64,946	\$59,544
Year 6	\$88,327	\$66,245	\$60,724
Year 7	\$90,093	\$67,570	\$61,939
Year 8	\$91,895	\$68,921	\$63,178
Year 9	\$93,733	\$70,300	\$64,441
Year 10	\$95,608	\$71,706	\$65,730

The proposed salary scale for the Office and Community Engagement Manager is listed in **Figure 46**.

¹¹⁴ Dean of Culture is added in Y2 (Y1, if CSP funds are earned), Dean of Curriculum and Instruction in Y3, and Dean of Student Supports in Y3.

¹¹⁵ Student Supports Coordinator transitions to Dean of Student Supports in Y3.

Figure 46 - Office and Community Engagement Manager Salary Scale

Years at Solare Collegiate	Office and Community Engagement Manager
Year 1	\$30,000
Year 2	\$30,600
Year 3	\$31,212
Year 4	\$31,836
Year 5	\$32,473
Year 6	\$33,122
Year 7	\$33,785
Year 8	\$34,461
Year 9	\$35,150
Year 10	\$35,853

Any Solare Collegiate employee that is considered full-time will be qualified to receive all benefits, including health and life insurance, disability coverage, unemployment and worker's compensation. Written into our annual budget is the assumption that Solare Collegiate will pay \$5,000 annually per employee towards medical, dental, and vision benefits, with a plan of a 10% increase year over year. We have also budgeted a 13.9% employer contribution to the New Mexico Educator Retirement Board, 6.2% for Social Security, 1.45% towards Medicare, \$2 per fiscal quarter per person for state disability, and 1.37% on the first \$24,100 per person per calendar year for state unemployment insurance. Solare Collegiate will regularly reevaluate our compensation and benefits, to ensure we are remaining highly competitive in the job market.

Annual and Daily Schedules

All staff members of the Solare Collegiate team will be required to report to work by 7:00am each day. Monday through Thursday the staff schedule concluded at 4:45pm. Each Friday, our early dismissal days for students, the staff concludes their day at 4:00pm. Staff are required to report to work for the number of days outlined below:

- 213 days for the Instructional Staff
- 220 days for the Operations Staff
- 225 days for the Leadership Team

Leave

While we place high value on having the Instructional Talent and our Leadership Team present at school, we also recognize that our staff will have circumstances that necessitate missing school. Our leave days are outlined below:

- **Sick Days.** Each full-time staff member will earn one sick day per month that school is in session, with the day being added at the beginning of each calendar month, for 10 days in total.
- **Personal Days.** Each full-time staff member will earn two personal days per academic year. Advanced written notice should be submitted to the Head of School at least a week prior to the Personal Day.
- **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).** Each full-time staff member who has worked at least 90 days of continuous employment at Solare Collegiate are entitled to unpaid leave for up to 12 weeks. Family care, maternity, or adoption are circumstances that fall under the umbrella of FMLA. A staff member may apply for family care leave to care for an immediate family member, which include parents, spouses, domestic partners, children, siblings, or grandparents, with a serious health condition. FMLA also applies to the care of a newborn or newly adopted child, including maternity, paternity, or adoption leave.
- **Bereavement.** Full-time staff members are entitled to three consecutive days of paid bereavement leave to attend the death of an immediate family member. For additional time off related to a family member's death, staff members may use personal time or take unpaid leave. For bereavement leave, the definition of an immediate family member aligned to the FMLA definition (parents, spouses, domestic partners, children, siblings, or grandparents).
- **Military Leave.** Staff members who are members of the military are eligible of up to five years (cumulatively) of leave, with their job protected, per the Unified Services Employment and Re-employment Act (USERRA). Employees must be honorably discharged to qualify. This leave will be qualified whether the deployment was voluntary or involuntary.
- **Jury Duty.** All staff members who are summoned for jury duty will be granted leave. When an employee receives a jury duty summons, they should inform the Head of School, to prepare the staffing accommodations necessary. Staff members will receive up to two weeks of paid leave for jury duty, thereafter the time is unpaid. Staff members are expected to return to work on any day or part of a day when released from jury duty.

Requirements for Employment

Each employee at Solare Collegiate will be required to complete a background check, fingerprints, signature on their contract, and proof of any licensure requirements for their position. These expectations align to the following New Mexico Administrative Codes:

- NMSA 22-10A-5 "Background checks; known convictions; alleged ethical misconduct; reporting required; limited immunity; penalty for failure to report,"
- NMSA 28-2-3 "Employment eligibility determination,"
- NMSA 28-2-4 "Power to refuse, renew, suspend or revoke public employment or license,"
- NMSA 22-10A-21 "Employment contracts; duration,"
- NMAC 6.66.2.8 "Licensed School Instructor Contract Requirements."

Grievances

The official Solare Collegiate grievance policy and procedure will be outlined in the Personnel Handbook, as well as in the Governing Board Policies (**Attachment G**).

Solare Collegiate recognizes that our team is our greatest asset, and we strive to create a work environment is safe, reflective, and productive. If any issues arise that prevents Solare Collegiate from being safe, reflective, and productive, we want to have a clear process by which employees can report any issues. We believe the development and implementation of a clear grievance review process is the

way in which to best support our employees.

A grievance is defined as an employee's concern about any violation of personnel practices, and they can occur between an employee and their co-worker, or between an employer and an employee. The Solare Collegiate grievance procedure was established to give employees a vehicle for reporting misconduct in a way that protects the employee from any discrimination or retaliation.

Prior to formally reporting a grievance, employees are encouraged to take their concerns directly to the co-worker with whom they have concerns. If the employees are not able to resolve their differences, then they may request a supervisor provide mediation to work through the conflict. The resolution that is determined through this meeting should be considered final. The mediation process is one that is intended to be used to settle disputes between employees at Solare Collegiate and is in alignment with our vision of a productive and proactive community.

In the case that a conflict is between a staff member and a supervisor, the employee may follow the outlined grievance procedure.

1. If an employee feels s/he has been treated unfairly, the employee should reach out directly to their supervisor to discuss the situation.
2. If the discussion does not render the desired results, the employee should report the issue in written form, within two business days of receiving the initial response. The employee should inform the supervisor of the report.
3. The Head of School shall respond to the employee and the supervisor within two business days of receiving the complaint, in person and in writing.
4. If the complaint is about the Head of School, or if the Head of School is unable to resolve the complaint, then it should be presented to the Governing Board. The Governing Board will review the complaint and respond in writing within 15 days of originally receiving the complaint. The decision of the Governing Board shall be considered final.
5. Any form of retaliation against an employee posing a complaint is unacceptable.
6. An employee may choose to seek outside support to communicate a complaint.

Re-contracting, Termination, and Discharge

Contracts for employees are based on a fiscal year, and the contracts should be signed prior to the first day of the new school year. In accordance with NMSA 22-10A-22, employees will be informed of their reemployment or termination prior to the last day of the contracted school year. Per NMSA 22-10A-23, employees who are being offered reemployment must accept the offer within 15 days of the offer, or within 15 day prior to the last day of school. Our staff recruitment strategy for ensuring we have a full staff hired prior to the first day of school is further outlined in **Section II.D.(3)**.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board and Head of School will follow all laws related to the termination of an employee, which includes giving notice prior to the last day of the school year or last day of the existing contract. The non-renewal of a contract for the following school year is defined as "termination." An employee with less than three years at Solare Collegiate may have their contract terminated for any sufficient reason and are entitled to written reasoning within 10 days of a request. For an employee who has been employed at Solare Collegiate for more than three years, just cause must be provided with the termination. Just cause could include insufficient performance or lack of follow through with outlined duties. Rationale for termination cannot be in violation of an employee's civil or constitutional rights. If an employee wishes to dispute their termination to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board, it is within their rights to do so, and the timelines found in NMSA 22-10A-24 and 22-10A-25 must be followed.

Solare Collegiate may discharge an employee, which is defined as ending the employment relationship

with a certified employee prior to the end of the current contract, so long as the discharge is in compliance with NMSA 22-10A-27. In this case, just cause must be given, meaning insufficient performance or lack of follow-through with outlined duties, and for reasons that are not in violation of an employee's civil or constitutional rights. Additionally, written notice of intent must be provided to the employee. The discharged employee may request a hearing before the Governing Board, which shall happen within 20-40 days after the request, with at least 10 days' notice. Within 20 days of the hearing, the Governing Board shall provide a final decision. The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team will attempt to avoid any discharges, through the development of improvement plans, however if satisfactory improvements are not made (as outlined by the process in NMAC 6.69.2.8), an employee may be discharged, following the discharge hearing procedures described above.

Teacher Unions

Solare Collegiate does not anticipate having an employee bargaining unit at its opening in 2019. However, if an employee bargaining unit is certified, then the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will negotiate a collective bargaining agreement, as guided by the Public Employees Labor Relations Act. Solare Collegiate and the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will act in compliance with all pertinent statute, including the following statutes:

- "Rights of Public Employees" (NMSA 10-7E-5)
- "Rights of Public Employers" (NMSA 10-7E-6)
- "Appropriate Governing Body; Public Employer" (NMSA 10-7E-7)
- "Local board; created" (NMSA 10-7E-10)
- "Local board; powers and duties" (NMSA 10-7E-11)
- "Hearing procedures" (NMSA 10-7E-12)
- "Appropriate bargaining units" (NMSA 10-7E-13)
- "Elections" (NMSA 10-7E-14)
- "Exclusive representation" (NMSA 10-7E-15)
- "Scope of bargaining" (NMSA 10-7E-17)
- "Public Employers; Prohibited Practices" (NMSA 10-7E-19)
- "Public employees; labor organizations; prohibited practices" (NMSA 10-7E-20)

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all primary classes of employees the school will employ (e.g., administrative, professional, term, contract); • Identify the primary conditions of employment for each class of employees, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benefits and pay terms ○ Daily work schedules and annual work calendars ○ Major conditions of employment ○ Employee conflict and grievance resolution processes ○ Employee discipline, re-contracting, and contract termination processes; and • Explain how the school, through the governing body and head administrator, will address employee unions and other school-specific employee representatives.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria	

The applicant's response addresses all the components of this section. It clearly presents all classes of employees, including full-time, part-time, certified or non-certified, and exempt or non-exempt. Benefits, pay terms and salaries are outlined and in accordance with state statute. The applicant plans to renew contracts annually and employees will be notified of reemployment or termination prior to the last day of the contracted school year. Annual work days for employees range from 213 to 225 days based on the position. Included in the response are the major conditions of employment which align with state mandates. They include background checks, fingerprinting, employment contracts, and license requirements. Additionally, protocols have been developed to address employee grievance, employee discipline, re-contracting, and discharge. Lastly, the narrative addresses employee unions.

F. Community/Parent/Employee Involvement in Governance.

F. (1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan that describes school structures that will provide meaningful parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the proposed school. The plan includes structures to facilitate **parental involvement that will help to advance** the proposed school's mission.

Please note that charter schools *may not require* community or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting or not accepting a student.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate Charter School intends to be a school that is a reflection of the community where we are located, and we will seek out opportunities to include our wider community in the operations and governance of the school. Solare Collegiate will create an Advisory Council to include our wider community in the oversight and management of the school, as outlined in NM SA 22-5-16. We believe that our wider community can provide support and guidance in fulfilling our ambitious mission.

The Solare Collegiate Advisory Council will consist of families, community members, members of the business community, and school staff, with equal representation of each of these groups. The Head of School will serve as the Chair of the Advisory Council. The primary goals of the Advisory Council will be to support the Leadership Team in making decisions about the school that are reflective of the Solare Collegiate mission and vision and developing a plan of action to further engage families and the wider community. When appropriate, members of the Advisory Committee may be invited to sit on the Governing Board Committees, including a representative on the Audit Committee, in compliance with NMSA 22-8-12-.3.

The Solare Collegiate Advisory Council will meet monthly and will also receive standing time during the monthly Governing Board meeting for Council updates and feedback. Members of the Advisory Council will be encouraged to attend Solare Collegiate Governing Board Meetings, which are open to an audience, in alignment with the Open Meetings Act. The Advisory Council's monthly meetings will focus on strategies for further family and community engagements, in addition to crafting feedback to the Leadership Team and Governing Board of Solare Collegiate, as it is relevant to do so.

The Advisory Council will provide the Governing Board with feedback on policies and how they impact the day-to-day experiences of students, teachers, and the wider community. The Advisory Council may also offer feedback on the school's annual budget. Additionally, a member of the Advisory Council will sit on the Audit Committee. The Advisory Council will take the lead on endeavors to further engage families and community members, including but not limited to our bi-monthly Coffee Hour with the Head of School and our bi-monthly Parent University. The most important work the Advisory Council will focus upon is that of building relationships between Solare Collegiate and the wider community. Like all stakeholders in the Solare Collegiate community, the Advisory Council's work will be aligned to the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, and all endeavors will be done to further support the fulfillment of our mission. The Solare Collegiate Advisory Council will be in adherence with all local, state, and federal law.

Families, community members, business community members, and school staff will be invited to provide the Governing Board with feedback through our annual community input survey, which will be distributed online and in paper form. The survey information collected from these stakeholders will be used in crafting Governing Board priorities and goals for the following academic year. It is our goal that we can provide our Governing Board with a 360-degree review of their work and effectiveness each year, which means that our larger community needs to opportunity to interact with our Governing

Board, through attendance and standing presentation time during the monthly Governing Board meetings, as well as provide valuable feedback via an annual survey.

As a charter school, Solare Collegiate will invite parents and community members to be active participants in our school. However, per NMSA 22-8B-4-K, Solare Collegiate will never require families to participate in activities or support the school in any way, as part of the obligation for student admission, enrollment, or treatment of a specific student. Solare Collegiate will welcome any family involvement and create a community that is welcoming to all families, but we will not pressure families to participate in events or to feel pressured to do so. We believe in building relationships with our families, so we will ensure that there are regular events for families, as well as opportunities for interested family members to volunteer at Solare Collegiate. As outlined in NMSA 22-8B-3 ("Charter Schools Act; Purpose"), one of the rationales for the development of charter schools includes "to encourage parental and community involvement in the public school system." Solare Collegiate will actively encourage, but not require, family involvement in the academic functions, operational needs, and oversight of the school.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify school operation and governance structures that will provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A meaningful opportunity for parental input and participation A meaningful opportunity for professional educator input and participation A meaningful opportunity for community input and participation; Describe how the structures will facilitate parental involvement that will help advance the proposed school's mission; Include assurances that the school understands it may not require family or parental support or involvement as grounds for accepting, not accepting, enrolling, disenrolling, or otherwise differentiating treatment of a student; and If the school plans to have a suggested amount of parent service or contribution, explain the process of opting out for parents who are unwilling or unable to meet the proposed school's suggested service or support commitment.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>In accordance with state statute, the applicant will develop an Advisory Council that will meet monthly and also have standing time during the monthly governing board meetings to provide updates and feedback. The applicant's response outlines a plan of the roles and responsibilities of this council, which will include parents and community members. The applicant explains the role of the Advisory Council is to assist the school leadership team "in making decisions about the school that are reflective of the Solare Collegiate mission and vision and developing a plan of action to further engage families and the wider community."</p>	

F. (2) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community and parents. The plan is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and ensures a timely and meaningful response from school administration and the governing body.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate will be an organization that is open to feedback and uses feedback to further strengthen our school and community. Part of that process is developing a thorough and efficient process for receiving and handling grievances from students, families, and community members. The process outlined below will ensure that any student, families, or community members wishing to file a grievance with the Solare Collegiate Leadership Team or staff has a process that is efficient, transparent, fair, and meaningful. Our process for addressing family and community complaints is in compliance with NMAC 6.10.3.

Initiation

If a community member has a grievance with a member of the Solare Collegiate team, the community member should first reach out directly to the specific staff member and express their concerns. Most of grievances should be able to be resolved at this level.

Formal Complaint

If the grievance is not resolved by reaching out to the staff member directly, then the community member may wish to file a formal complaint. Formal complaints regarding discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, health, or age at Solare Collegiate by a staff member should file a written complaint to the Manager of Operations. If the Manager of Operations is the person who the complaint is being filed against, the complaint may be filed with the Head of School. The written complaint should include the following elements:

- The name of the person filing the complaint. If the person who files the complaint is doing so for a student, both the person filing the complaint and the student's name should be included.
- Contact information for the person filing the complaint, including address, phone number, and email address.
- The name of the person with whom the grievance is being filed.
- A detailed description of the discrimination and/or harassment.
- The date(s) of the discrimination and/or harassment.
- Names of any witnesses or individuals who may have additional information about the incident.
- Description of how the person filing the complaint wants the issue to be resolved.

Timeline for Formal Complaint

Any complaints filed using this procedure must be filed within 30 days of the original incident.

Review of the Complaint

Upon receiving the formal complaint, the Manager of Operations will conduct a formal review of the complaint, investigate the complaint, and attempt to resolve the complaint. During this time, information gathering, including interviews and the collection of evidence, will be conducted. This step shall be completed within 10 school days. After a review of the complaint and collected evidence, the Manager of Operations will meet with the complainant to present a resolution to the complainant. This may include actions for correcting a situation, as well as action to prevent the situation from occurring in the future. This meeting will happen within 15 school days of the complaint being submitted. The complainant will be provided with a written summary of the filed complaint and the resolution within 20 days of the original complaint.

Solare Collegiate anticipates that the timeline outlined above will be followed in most grievances, but acknowledges that some grievances may require additional time to be researched and resolved.

Final Step & Appeal to the Governing Board

If the family is not satisfied with the decision made by the Manager of Operations, then the family may appeal to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. The Governing Board will review the appeal and provide the family with a written response within 30 days of receiving the grievance appeal.

Transparency and Accessibility of Grievance Process

Solare Collegiate will maintain the confidentiality of the person filing the grievance, as well as those who participated as witnesses or providers of information, to the greatest extent possible. Retaliation against a family member or staff member posing a complaint is strictly prohibited and can result in disciplinary action.

McKinney Vento and Special Education Grievance Process

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to ensuring that special circumstances, including homelessness or special needs do not result in disputes between the school and our families. The McKinney Vento act requires that schools develop policies that ensure that students experiencing homelessness are able to access enrollment and attendance of schools without barriers. Per the Act, schools shall regularly review and update their policies to support students experiencing homelessness. Solare Collegiate intends to avoid McKinney Vento grievances through reflective review of our policies and practices through the lens of youth homelessness. However, if there is a grievance, we will first attempt to resolve the grievance through our standard process outlined above. If the grievance is not resolved by that means, Solare Collegiate will follow the protocol outlined in NMAC 6.10.3, as outlined by the New Mexico Public Education Department. This process entails completion of the NMPED dispute resolution paperwork and a write-up of the school's response submitted to the NMPED Homeless Liaison within five days of the school's formal decision.

Solare Collegiate will ensure that we maintain regular, two-way contact with the families of our students with special needs. We believe the regular contact with families of students with special needs will prevent most grievances. In the case of a grievance that cannot be resolved through our standard grievance process, our special education grievance process will be based on the NMPED *Parent and Child Rights in Special Education: Procedural Safeguards Notice*.¹¹⁶ Families should first follow the school's standard grievance procedure, or the school and the family may elect to seek out mediation from a trained mediator via the NMPED Special Education Bureau. If the conflict is not resolved with either of these means, the family may seek out local support organizations or advocacy groups, including a Parent Liaison from the NMPED. Finally, families may elect to file a formal complaint or request a due process hearing with the state. This process will follow the deadlines and requirements outlined in NMAC 6.31.2.13.

¹¹⁶ New Mexico Public Education Special Education Bureau. Parent and Child Rights in Special Education: Procedural Safeguards Notice. Mar. 2014. <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Parent-and-Child-Rights-Procedural-Safeguard-Notice-March-2014.pdf>

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify a grievance process to receive and process concerns and complaints from the community, parents and families, and students that includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties;• Include a final step in the process that provides grievants a meaningful opportunity to be heard by, and receive a response from, the governing body; if they are unable to obtain resolution from the head administrator;• Describe how the process is transparent, fair, accessible to the community, and ensure a timely and meaningful response; and• Provide assurances that the school will additionally meet the specific legal requirements of the McKinney Vento and special education grievance processes.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant has developed a clear and concise grievance process for community members and parents. The plan articulates the directed roles, timelines, and possible avenues for further problem solving. The plan specifies how specific populations with grievances will be dealt with, including special education and homeless students. Major elements of the plan describe the initial communication, filing a formal complaint, and the appeals/final step.</p>	

G. Student Recruitment and Enrollment.

G.(1) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** outreach and recruitment plan that ensures equal access to the proposed school and is likely to be effective in attracting a representative student body from the targeted community. The recruitment/enrollment timelines presented are **reasonable**.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Post authorization, Solare Collegiate will amplify our community outreach efforts with the specific goal of ensuring that our recruitment strategy reaches students and families in our targeted community of 87121, ensuring we reach full enrollment for Year 1 during our enrollment window referenced in **Section II.G.2**. During the first year of operation, Solare Collegiate aims to fill 52 seats in the 5th grade and 104 seats in the 6th grade. In subsequent years, recruitment strategies will be focused upon filling 104 seats in the 5th grade, as well as any vacant seats in the upper grades. Solare Collegiate will comply with all statute and administrative code specific to the requirements of enrollment, the lottery process, advertising and recruitment, tuition and admission requirements, sibling preference for enrollment, and information asked for on enrollment paperwork (see NMAC 6.80.4.12-D “Initial Requirements and Review Process for Start-Up Schools” for specific language). Solare Collegiate will be an institution which welcomes all students and will not discriminate against students or families based on race, gender, sex, nation of origin, race, disability, or age.

Upon authorization through December 31, Solare Collegiate will have a strong focus on community outreach and student recruitment, with enrollment for the lottery spanning January 1 through March 31. Our public lottery will occur during the first week of April. If we do not have enrollment applications in excess of the numbers of seats available, then all students will be offered a seat at Solare Collegiate, otherwise the public lottery will determine the students receiving seats, as well as ordering the waitlist. Students completing enrollment applications after the public lottery will be placed on our waitlist in the order in which the applications are received, in the event that all seats were filled, or if the school is under enrolled, the student will be offered a seat at Solare Collegiate immediately. **Section II.G.2** outlines this process more thoroughly.

Upon authorization, Solare Collegiate will be a state-authorized charter, meaning that any student in the State of New Mexico may enroll at Solare Collegiate. However, our targeted community outreach and student recruitment strategy will focus on the 87121-zip code and surrounding communities in the South Valley and the West Side. Since September 2017, the founding team of Solare Collegiate has developed deep connections with community organizations and stakeholders, as well as engaged with parents in our targeted community. We will continue our focused outreach and recruitment in the 87121-zip code and surrounding communities. Our outreach and recruitment efforts will include the following:

- **Outreach Events.** Solare Collegiate will continue to hold outreach events throughout the 87121-zip code and in the surrounding communities, including events at local community centers, libraries, and popular eateries. Our outreach events will occur twice a month during out outreach and recruitment phase, as well as during our active enrollment period, spanning from authorization through the end of March 2019. These events are intended to be an informal opportunity for the Solare Collegiate Founding Team to introduce the school to families in our target community. Families will be able to learn about the Solare Collegiate mission and vision, as well as specifics about the academic programming. In addition, the Solare Collegiate team will be prepared to explain to families what a charter school is and what it is not, the enrollment process, and the fact that Solare Collegiate is an open enrollment, non-selective, public school for any child in New Mexico. All material related to the outreach events will be available in

English and Spanish, and we will have Solare Collegiate team members fluent in English and Spanish at the outreach events. Costs associated with these events, including promotional materials and light refreshments are included in Object:2300, Function: 55400 in the implementation year budget.

- **Community Events.** Solare Collegiate will continue to participate in community events in the 87121-zip code and the surrounding communities, as a method for sharing Solare Collegiate with our targeted community. Solare Collegiate will set up a booth at these community events, where our founding team can interact with families, informing them of the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, as well as giving families specific information about our academic programming, as well as supporting families on the process by which students enroll at our school. Community events that we have attended and plan to attend during our outreach and recruitment phase include but are not limited to: South Valley Grower's Market, Festival de Suenos- Cultivando Semillas, Annual South Valley Dia De Los Muertos Parade and Celebration, Westside Summerfest, Route 66 West Fest, and the various neighborhood association meetings in our target community. All material related to the community events will be available in English and Spanish, and we will also have Solare Collegiate team members fluent in English and Spanish at the community events. Costs associated with these events, including promotional materials and light refreshments are included in Object: 2300, Function: 55400 in the implementation year budget.
- **Feet-on-the-Street.** The Solare Collegiate Founding Team will reach out to families in targeted neighborhoods through our "feet-on-the-street" program. Going door-to-door, the team will engage with families and community members to share the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, as well as to distribute promotional materials. During our outreach and recruitment period, the Solare Collegiate team will conduct one feet-on-the-street event per month. During our enrollment period, the team will conduct monthly feet-on-the-street events, with the possibility of increasing the number of feet-on-the-street, based on the number of enrollment forms completed. Solare Collegiate team members fluent in English and Spanish will participate in our feet-on-the-street events, ensuring we can reach the majority of families in our target community. Costs associated with promotional materials for feet-on-the-street are included in Object: 2300, Function: 55400 in the implementation year budget.
- **Social Media.** Solare Collegiate will continue to use our active social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) to reach out to families and community members. The Solare Collegiate team will post to social media accounts a minimum of three days per week, seeking to engage families with probing questions regarding education, information about charter schools, and guidance for submitting enrollment forms. There is no cost associated with the use of our social media platforms.
- **Advertisements.** Solare Collegiate will use advertisement methods, including newspaper advertisements, as well as advertisement near public transportation and high trafficked locations in our targeted community. We will focus on print advertisements during the active enrollment period (January 1 through March 31). Advertisements will focus on demonstrating Solare Collegiate's college preparatory focus, as well as the process by which students can enroll at the school. Costs associated with advertisements are included in Object: 2300, Function: 55400 in the implementation year budget.
- **Home Visits.** Members of the Solare Collegiate team will visit the homes of prospective students, if invited by the family. Members of the Founding Team will introduce the family to

the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, as well as give the family an overview of the academic programming. There is no cost associated with home visits.

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to maintaining the deep community bonds we developed during the application process and will continue to build those relationships post-authorization. After authorization, our focus will shift to more strongly reaching out to families in our targeted community, with the goal of communicating the mission, vision, and academic programming of Solare Collegiate. As illustrated above, our family outreach and recruitment will increase in depth and frequency following authorization, through our proposed opening in August 2019. Our social media accounts and our website (www.solarecollegiate.org) includes information regarding our academic programming and an enrollment interest form. Beginning in January 2019, an enrollment form will be available in hard copy and on our website, with links shared on our social media platforms.

As a state charter school, Solare Collegiate will be open to any child in the State of New Mexico, however inherent to our school mission is providing a high quality, college preparatory education to middle school students who may not currently have a local opportunity for accessing a college preparatory education. We believe seeking out a physical location in the 87121-zip code, an area that does not currently have a high performing middle school option, will set us up for success in recruiting our targeted student demographic. Additionally, our transportation plan outlines our focus on providing transportation to students who may not be able to access our school otherwise. Our transportation route will prioritize communities in the southern part of Albuquerque, where there is a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students, students with special needs, and English Learners.

Solare Collegiate will ensure that all families have access to Solare Collegiate through our recruitment efforts and throughout the lottery process. Specifically, we will ensure that our materials are available in the languages in which the families are most comfortable, as well as in the format (digital or hard copy) in which is most accessible. Additionally, we will make a pointed effort to ensure the inclusion of homeless or transient families, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act. Following the annual student enrollment period, the Leadership Team will disseminate a survey to collect information on the ease of the enrollment process for families. Additionally, the Leadership Team will seek out guidance from the Solare Collegiate Advisory Council, to glean ideas for more effective enrollment strategies, as well as to identify any limitations our enrollment process may present for families in our target demographic.

After each enrollment period, the Solare Collegiate Leadership team will disaggregate data on students who enrolled or expressed interest in enrolling at Solare Collegiate. We will review the demographics of our current and incoming student populations, ensuring that it is reflective of the student demographics in the 87121-zip code. If our student demographics are significantly different than that of our targeted community, including a significantly lower population of Economically Disadvantaged students, students with special needs, or English Learners, we will use that data to inform our recruitment strategies for the following school year. Specific actions may include reaching out to families of current students who fall into one of the subgroups and identifying elements of our school programming that drew them to Solare Collegiate, to inform future recruitment strategies. In addition, the Solare Collegiate Leadership team and Governing Board will regularly review student disenrollment data, to identify any patterns in student disenrollment. If student subgroups are disenrollment at a higher rate than our general population, the Leadership Team will examine our classroom specific and whole school practices, to ensure we are adequately supporting our students with the highest needs.

The Solare Collegiate Founding Team, including our proposed Head of School and proposed Governing Board, will take responsibility for the outreach and recruitment prior to our opening in August 2019. After our inaugural year, the Leadership Team will take responsibility for the outreach and recruitment

efforts. In Year 1, our Office Manager will also take responsibility for being our Community Outreach Manager and will play a significant role in our recruitment efforts. Oversight for student recruitment efforts is the responsibility of the Governing Board. Informed by other start-up, high performing charter schools, Solare Collegiate has budgeted \$20 per new student each year for recruitment costs (see Function: 2300, Object: 53711 in [Appendix G, 5 Year Budget Plan](#)).

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a prospective student outreach and recruitment plan, including action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and associated costs; • Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ how the plan is tailored to ensure equal access to the school ○ why the plan is likely to attract a student body that is demographically reflective of the local community and school district; • Describe how the school will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach and recruitment efforts in ensuring equal access to the school and attracting a student body that is demographically reflective of the local community and school district and how the school will use that information to make adjustments to the outreach and recruitment plan; and • Explain why the recruitment and enrollment timelines are reasonable.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's outreach and recruitment plan include action steps/timelines/responsible parties and aligns to the budget. A reasonable amount of funds has been set aside in the budget for outreach and recruitment. The plan is developed to ensure equal access from all groups in the zip code area and open to all based on open enrollment. These events are scheduled locally to attract families that live in the 87121 area.</p> <p>The school's leadership team intends to review data collected through outreach and recruitment to assess if the student population is reflective of the student demographics in the 87121 zip code and will review student disenrollment data to identify patterns.</p>	

G. (2) Provide a **complete, comprehensive, and cohesive** plan to implement a lottery process. Ensure all proposed procedures and policies comply with state statutes and **support equal access** to the proposed school; include how a wait list will be maintained. Please provide tentative timeframes or dates.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate has created an enrollment system in alignment with New Mexico State Statute and requirements regarding an annual school lottery process. Solare Collegiate will not discriminate based on race, gender, nationality, color, age, disability, or any other determining factor, and will use the lottery process to ensure equitable access to enrollment at Solare Collegiate. Specifically, the school lottery process will comply with all applicable state statute, including NMSA 22-1-4(C), which states that any individual has a right to free public school education and may enroll or reenroll at a public school at any time. Solare Collegiate will accept any student and provide them with a quality education, enrolling them at any time within the school year. As a public charter school, Solare Collegiate will not charge tuition or have any requirements for admission, as outlined in NMSA 22-8B-4(K).

NMSA 22-8B-4.1(B) states that charter schools may enroll students on a first-come, first-serve basis or via a lottery system, if enrollment exceeds the number of seat available. In addition, this statute also states that students who were previously enrolled into the charter school through the traditional enrollment process and remain enrolled in the charter school are given preference, along with siblings of students who are already admitted or attending a specific charter school. Solare Collegiate will give students who were previously enrolled at Solare Collegiate enrollment preference for the following year, as well as give siblings of students already enrolled at Solare Collegiate enrollment preference during our lottery process.

Lottery Process

Solare Collegiate will actively pursue applications for enrollment from January 1 through March 31 each year, as outlined in **Section II.G.1**. The application for enrollment includes basic contact information, including name of the prospective student, parent or guardian's name, phone number, address, email address, and the grade in which the student wishes to enroll at Solare Collegiate. After authorization and prior to the enrollment period beginning on January 1, Solare Collegiate will actively recruit students and continue to conduct community outreach, through in-person events and via our social media platforms. Enrollment forms will be available in hard copies at our community events, as well as in soft copy form on our school website. Families can also request hard copies of the application to be sent to them via mail. Enrollment applications will be accepted in either hard copy or soft copy form. During the inaugural year, enrollment applications will be managed by the Head of School; in subsequent years the enrollment applications will be managed by the Manager of Operations, with Head of School supervision.

Solare Collegiate aims to solicit 1.5 times the number of enrollment forms the number of seat available in each grade. We aim for this excess of applications because we do not expect each family who expresses interest in attending Solare Collegiate to complete the registration process and formally enroll the student. By aiming for an excess number of applications, we expect that we will be able to fill all available seats at Solare Collegiate. If the number of applications received by March 31 is less than the number of seats available, then all students who submitted enrollment forms will be invited to complete the registration packet and be formally admitted to Solare Collegiate. Any applications received after March 31 will be admitted in the order in which they are received, until all the seats are filled. Once the seats are filled, a waitlist will be created, based on the order in which the excess applications are received.

Our annual enrollment lottery will be held during the first week of April, if the number of applications for each grade level exceeds the number of seats available. The lottery will be public, with applicants invited to attend, though attendance is not required to receive a seat in the lottery. During our inaugural year, the lottery will be managed by the Head of School and managed by the Manager of Operations in preceding years. An impartial third party will draw the names for the lottery. Each student will be divided by grade and numbered in the order in which their applications were received. Beginning with the lowest grade level, numbers will be drawn until the seats in the grade level are filled - during our inaugural year 52 seats in the 5th grade and 104 seats in the 6th grade. After our inaugural 5th grade class, each grade level will include 104 seats. If a student selected has a sibling also in the admission lottery, it will be noted, and that student will automatically receive a seat in their grade level, as outlined in NMSA 22-8B-4.1(B). After the seats are filled for an individual grade level, the rest of the names will be drawn, creating a waitlist for the grade level.

Families who attend the public lottery and receive a seat at Solare Collegiate, will receive the necessary information for completing the registration process. If a student who received a seat was not in attendance at the public lottery, Solare Collegiate will reach out to the family first by telephone, and if not able to be reached by phone the school will attempt to contact the family by mail. Solare Collegiate will provide the family with directions for completing the registration packet. Students who receive a seat at Solare Collegiate will have two weeks to complete their registration paperwork, and the paperwork can be completed in hard copy or soft copy form. Solare Collegiate will attempt to contact a family three times during the two-week enrollment period to solicit registration paperwork or to inquire about the enrollment plans for the selected student. If the family declines to enroll their student or fails to complete the enrollment packet during the two-week window, the seat will be offered to the person at the top of the waitlist.

Students who attend the public lottery, but do not receive a seat during the lottery will be informed of their ranking on the waitlist, as well as be given information about the registration process if a seat opens up and is offered to the student. For families who did not attend the lottery and did not receive a seat, the Solare Collegiate team will contact the family by phone or by mail to let them know their rank on the waitlist, as well as the next steps if a seat opens up and their number is next on the list. Students on the waitlist who are offered an open seat will follow the same registration process as outlined above, including the two weeks to complete the registration paperwork. The process for enrolling students will follow this process until all the seats at Solare Collegiate are filled and students have completed the registration process.

If a student does not attend the first three days of school, the Solare Collegiate team will make three attempts to reach out to the family to determine if the student intends on attending Solare Collegiate. If there is no response after three attempts or the student declines to attend the school, the seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist. If a student leaves at any time during the school year, their seat will be offered to the student at the top of the waitlist.

Solare Collegiate will continue its enrollment process throughout the school year. Students who are interested in attending Solare Collegiate may submit an enrollment form, and their name will be added to the waitlist. If there is not a waitlist, the student will be invited to complete the registration immediately.

During the third trimester, families will be asked to indicate whether their students are re-enrolling for the following school year. Families that indicate their students are enrolling for the following school year, will complete the required re-enrollment paperwork, including indication if a younger sibling is applying for the following school year. As stated previously, NMSA 22-8B-4(K) gives a sibling preference

during the public lottery. For students who indicate that they do not plan on re-enrolling at Solare Collegiate, their seat will be up for consideration for the following school year.

The public lottery process will be repeated in April of each year, with the enrollment period from January 1 through March 31. Waitlist seats do not “roll over” from academic year to academic year. Students must reapply for the lottery each year.

Solare Collegiate will make sure that all families have access to Solare Collegiate through our recruitment efforts and throughout the lottery process. Specifically, we will ensure that our materials are available in the languages in which the families are most comfortable, as well as in the format (digital or hard copy) in which is most accessible. Additionally, we will make a pointed effort to ensure the inclusion of homeless or transient families, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a plan to implement a lottery admission process if necessary, include action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Describe each of the steps of the process to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-lottery entry ○ Lottery ○ Post-lottery registration ○ Waitlist maintenance and entry; and • Describe how the lottery process supports equal access to the school.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant’s response provides a clear and concise plan for the lottery admission process that includes action steps, timelines, and identifies the responsible parties that comply with state mandates. The applicant intends to accept applications from January through March, with a lottery occurring in April. After the seats are filled, the waitlist order goes into effect. With a detailed plan and comprehensive recruitment outreach plan, potential students in the zip code area will have ample opportunity for applying to the proposed school.</p>	

H. Legal Compliance.

H. (1) Provide a **current, clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** Conflict of Interest Policy that demonstrates an understanding of, **and capacity** to, meet the requirements of the law (NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5.2(2011)). Provide a sample disclosure statement of any real or potential conflict of interest.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:**Conflict of Interest**

The Conflict of Interest Policy and Disclosure Statement are included within the Governing Board Policies, found in **Attachment I**. The Conflict of Interest Policy will be used as a guide for the Solare Collegiate Governing Board and Governing Board Members, and it includes timelines, action steps, and parties responsible if a member has a Conflict of Interest. This policy outlines includes a guide for the signing and reviewing of the Conflict of Interest Policy, as well as steps for dealing with a violation or perceived violation of the policy.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board Conflict of Interest Policy is in alignment with NMSA 22-8B-5.2 ("Governing body conflicts of interest") and meets all statutory requirements. The policy presented below is in **Section III-Procedures** of the Conflict of Interest Policy.

- A.** A person shall not serve on the Solare Collegiate Charter School Governing Board if the person and/or immediate family member of the person is an owner, agent of, contractor with or otherwise has a financial interest in a for-profit or nonprofit entity with which the charter school contracts directly for professional services, goods, or facilities. If this subsection is knowingly violated through the development of a contract between Solare Collegiate and the person or the person's immediate family member, then the contract becomes voidable at the will of the Public Education Commission, the Public Education Department, or the Solare Collegiate Governing Board. Individuals who knowingly violate the subsection may be liable as an individual by Solare Collegiate for any financial damages caused by the conflict.
- B.** No member of the Solare Collegiate Governing Board or employee of Solare Collegiate shall participate in selecting, awarding, or administering a contract with Solare Collegiate if a conflict of interest exists. A conflict of interest is present when a member or employee, or an immediate family member of a member of employee has a financial interest in a group with which Solare Collegiate is considering contracting. If this conflict of interest is present, any contracts are voidable.
- C.** Members of the Public Education Commission are not eligible for membership on the Solare Collegiate Governing Board.

The Conflict of Interest Policy defines an immediate family member as one of the following individuals: significant other, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter, son, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, sister, brother, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, or any other relative who is financially supported by the Governing Board member.

Within the Conflict of Interest Policy, Solare Collegiate includes a disclosure statement, which Board Members will sign annually to acknowledge their reading of the Conflict of Interest Policy, as well as an opportunity for the Governing Board Member to identify and report any potential conflict of interest. The disclosure statement within the Conflict of Interest Policy is stated below:

Describe any relationships, circumstances, or positions in which you or any immediate family members have that may be in conflict with the Solare Collegiate Charter School Conflict of Interest Policy or result in a conflict of interest, as defined by the Solare Collegiate Conflict of Interest Policy.

I ensure that the information stated above is true, to the best of my knowledge, and that I have reviewed and will follow the most current Solare Collegiate Conflict of Interest Policy.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will review and vote to accept the Conflict of Interest Policy during the first official Governing Board meeting after authorization and will review the policy at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Nepotism

The Nepotism Policy is included within the Governing Board Policies, found in **Attachment O**. The Nepotism Policy will be used to ensure that candidates for positions at Solare Collegiate are not benefitting from nepotism over other highly qualified candidates. The Nepotism Policy is in alignment with NMSA 22-8B-10 ("Charter Schools; Employees") and meets all statutory requirements. Per statute, the Head Administrator shall not employ immediate family members of the Head Administrator or Governing Board Members. However, the Governing Board may waive this nepotism rule. As a best practice, Solare Collegiate is dedicated to employing the strongest candidates for teaching, leadership, and support positions at the school and will avoid hiring immediate family members of the Head Administrator and members of the Governing Board.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a governing body conflict of interest policy that includes action steps, timelines, and responsible parties; • Describe how the policy meets the requirements of NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5.2(2011); and • Include all forms the governing body will or may be required to submit pursuant to the policy.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The conflict of interest policy provided by the applicant includes action steps, timelines, and identifies the responsible parties. This policy complies with the requirement of state statutes. A disclosure statement provided by the applicant requires the signer to acknowledge any conflict of interest.</p>	

I. Evidence of Partnership/Contractor relationship. (If Applicable.)

I.(1) If there is /are third party relationship(s) (partner organization, a contractor, etc.) that are essential to the existence of your charter school, governance, key instructional staff, or management functions, identify them (entity, person, contact information etc.). Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** description of all of those third-party relationships that are considered integral to accomplishing the mission of the proposed school. In your description, please demonstrate that you have a **complete understanding** of the legal implication of the relationship to the proposed school.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate Charter School does not have any third-party relationships that are necessary for the fulfillment of the mission or functioning of the school, including the daily operations or curriculum and instruction, therefore there is not any evidence of a relationship, partnerships, or contract included in this section.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify any third party relationships with specific, identified organizations that control or influence essential elements—including the existence, operation, curriculum, or instruction of the proposed charter school—that are required by a partner organization or any part of the application; • Describe, in detail, the relationships; • Describe why the relationships are essential or required, or how they control essential elements of the proposed charter school; • If any such relationships exist identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The specific, identified organizations ○ Contact information for that organization ○ Specific individuals in the organization that will be associated with the proposed school; and • Describe all legal implications of the essential/required relationships, including the legal benefits and responsibilities of each party.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Not Applicable	

I.(2) If applicable, provide and attach as **Appendix D**, a proposed, **signed, clear, formal** agreement between the applicant and each third party relationship **OR** memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the applicant and each prospective third-party, delineating the appropriate responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Not applicable.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A response is only required if relationships were identified in questions I.(1)</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify all MOUs or formal agreements that are attached in Appendix D;• Include proposed formal agreements or MOUs that are signed in Appendix D; and• Identify the responsibilities, activities, and costs of both sides.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Not Applicable	

J. Waivers.

J. (1) Identify all non-discretionary waivers that will be utilized and discretionary waivers that will be requested. For discretionary waivers, specifically identify statutes or state rules for which a waiver is requested. For all, describe how the waiver will support the proposed school's plan; the description should **clearly demonstrate** how requested waivers **align with the proposed school's mission and the educational program and curriculum**. For further information please see the following link:

http://ped.state.nm.us/admin.personnel/waiver_requests.html.

NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-5(C) Waiver	Utilized	Description of how waiver will support school's plan.
Individual class load	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>NMSA 22-10A-20 "Staffing patterns; class load; teaching load"</p> <p>Solare Collegiate will be an extended middle school, beginning with 5th grade. 5th and 6th grade fall under the upper elementary band, which requires class sizes of 24 or fewer. We are proposing class sizes of 26 students, which will continue through the traditional middle school grades. By using a middle school model, with teacher specialization, our student-to-teacher ratio will be 16:1. Each teacher will be responsible for teaching 104 students a single subject - below the maximum number of students for a middle school teacher, and only a single course in which to prepare. The waiver will allow us to create a learning environment that is highly rigorous for our students, with teachers who have exemplary levels of content knowledge, as well as ample preparatory time to better support students. By utilizing a middle school model in grades 5 and 6, our students will have access to a great level of rigorous academics and individualized support, replicating the best practices of high performing charter schools across the country.</p> <p>In exchange for the waiver, Solare Collegiate recognizes that it is committing to demonstrating that our alternative class load plan will support greater academic success for students and is supported by classroom teachers. We will review our class load plan annually, with input from vested parties.</p>
Teaching load	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Length of school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Staffing pattern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Subject areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Purchase of instructional materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>NMSA 22-15-8 "Multiple list; selection; review process"</p> <p>Solare Collegiate Charter School is requesting a waiver for the purchase of instructional materials, to give us further flexibility to select instructional materials that align to our mission of providing rigorous academics, balanced with individualized supports. Solare Collegiate intends to use resources that are being utilized at some of the high-poverty,</p>

		high performing charter schools across the country. We anticipate that many of our chosen resources will be on the approved list, but we do not want to limit our options. Any materials used will be aligned to the NMCCSS, NGSS, and the NMSS.
Evaluation standards for school personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
School principal duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Drivers education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Statute for which Waiver Requested under NMSA 1978 § 22-2-2.1	Description of how waiver will support school's plan.	
Click here to enter text.		Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.		Click here to enter text.

Total Points Available	Expectations
3	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all non-discretionary waivers that will be utilized; Describe how the non-discretionary waiver will support the school's plan, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a specific description of how the waiver will be used and how the school's practice will vary from the standard legal requirement a specific explanation of how the waiver aligns to the school's mission, educational program, and curriculum; Identify all discretionary waivers that will be requested and the specific statutes or state rules for which the waivers will be requested; and Describe how the discretionary waivers will support the school's plan, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a specific description of how the waiver will be used and how the school's practice will vary from the standard legal requirement a specific explanation of how the waiver aligns to the school's mission, educational program, and curriculum how the school will meet the requirements for being granted a discretionary waiver.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria	
<p>The applicant has requested waivers to increase the number of students to 26 in the 5th grade and to request flexibility in the selection of instructional materials that will align with the mission of the school. Both waivers meet the requirements.</p>	

K. Transportation and Food.

K. (1) *If applicable*, state how the proposed school plans to offer transportation to its students. Provide a **clear description** of how student transportation needs will be met that are supported by the proposed budget.

For further information, please see the following link: <http://ped.state.nm.us/div/fin/trans/index.html>.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate seeks to serve students in the Albuquerque community, with a focus on students in our targeted community of the 87121-zip code and surrounding areas. As outlined previously, the 87121 community is growing at a significant rate, with few school options for families. As 100% of the schools in our target community are Title I schools, we anticipate that the majority of our students will come from economically disadvantaged homes. To better support our future families, and to have greater opportunity to recruit families of the most significant need, it is our desire to offer bus transportation in the 87121-zip code. Mission: Achievement and Success, a school with similar student demographics has 25% of their students utilizing school transportation services. Based on this information, we are assuming that between 25%-30% of our students will need transportation services. Below is our plan for offering transportation. Offering transportation in Year 1 is contingent on receiving CSP funding, as we would be able to use CSP funding for the one-time startup costs for transportation, prior to qualifying to receive transportation reimbursements in Year 2. Students with special needs, who require transportation as part of their IEP, will receive transportation services regardless of whether we receive CSP funding.

Per NMSA 22-8B-4(I), charter schools shall negotiate with the local school districts to secure transportation. We will first reach out to Albuquerque Public Schools, to attempt to negotiate transportation services. In the case that a relationship cannot be built, Solare Collegiate will seek out the services of a private transportation service. Preemptively we have reached out to Herrera School Buses and Coaches, Inc., which quoted \$50,000 a year per bus. Following authorization, we will reach out to Albuquerque Public Schools to determine if it is possible to negotiate transportation with the district. We anticipate we will contract services with Herrera School Buses and Coaches, Inc., but will reevaluate this decision during Year 1, once we have more concrete information about the number of students utilizing the school transportation services. If it is most advantageous to purchase our own bus and hire our own drivers, our cash reserves, beginning in Year 2, will make that possible.

After the admissions lottery, families will indicate whether they are interested in transportation to and from school in their enrollment packet. Based on the interest indicated, the Head of School and Manager of Operations will create a bus route. Our bus services will be targeted in the 8712-zip code, but based on enrollment, services may expand into the surrounding zip codes. Our goal is to ensure that Solare Collegiate is a viable option for students in the greater South Valley and Westside communities. The Head of School will be responsible for hiring and/or contracting transportation services, with insight from the Manager of Operations. The Manager of Operations will be responsible for the management of transportation services, including communication with the contracted services and with families, the management of the bus route and schedule, and all other matters related to transportation, with oversight from the Head of School.

The timeline for contracting and implementing transportation services is outlined in **Figure 47**.

Figure 47 - Transportation Timeline

Timeline	Action Step	Responsible Party	Associated Cost
September - November	Negotiate transportation services with APS, Herrera, or other private services	Head of School	N/A
September - March	Recruitment of students; gauge interest in transportation	Head of School Office and Community Engagement Manager	\$20/student (itemized as student recruitment costs)
April - May	Collect enrollment paperwork, including information regarding transportation needs	Head of School Manager of Operations Office and Community Engagement Manager	N/A
June	Plan out bus route	Manager of Operations Contracted Service Provider	N/A
July	Communicate bus route to families, including location and pick-up and drop-off times	Manager of Operations Office and Community Engagement Manager	N/A
August	Day 1, Week 1, and Week 3 review of bus protocol and procedures	Manager of Operations Office and Community Engagement Manager	N/A

Based on our conversation with Herrera School Buses and Coaches, Inc., we are planning for a cost of \$50,000 for one bus providing transportation to and from Solare Collegiate at a total distance of 25 miles one way. Bus Drivers with Herrera are required to hold a current CDL license with a passenger endorsement, pass a school background check, and pass a drug test. Herrera provides drivers with the required training for the operation of the school buses, and Solare Collegiate will provide the bus drivers with training specific to the school culture and behavioral expectations of Solare Collegiate, ensuring that the bus drivers are active members of the Solare Collegiate community. Solare Collegiate will compensate the bus drivers for their participation in Solare Collegiate training.

Specific policies and procedures for student transportation will be developed during the implementation

year, as part of the development of the Student Handbook. The Head of School will review the policies and procedures from charter schools in the Albuquerque area that utilize student transportation and use those policies and procedures to create the Solare Collegiate policies and procedures for transportation. After the draft Student Handbook is developed, it will be presented to the Solare Collegiate Governing Board for review and a vote for approval.

The ability to provide transportation in Year 1 is contingent on receiving CPS funds. In the case that we do not receive CSP funds, we will begin offering transportation in Year 2, when there is an excess in operating income, enabling us to pay the first year of transportation costs, to qualify us for reimbursement from the state. The transportation costs are reflected in Year 1 of the budget, under Function 2700; Object 55112, with the assumption that we will receive CSP funds.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A response is only required if the school plans to offer regular transportation either for daily transportation to/from school OR for transportation to/from school specific activities and events that are a necessary part of the mission.</p> <p>These are awarded as “preference points” if the school plans to provide to and from school transportation to all students.</p> <p>All schools must be prepared to meet IEP transportation requirements.</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a plan for establishing transportation services at the school including specific action steps, timelines responsible parties, and associated costs that address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying equipment purchase or contracting needs ○ Identifying hiring and or contracting needs ○ Hiring or contracting ○ Establishing training needs and inspection process needs ○ Establishing travel routes and pickup/drop off points ○ Establishing transportation policies and practices ○ Identifying student transportation needs; • Identify how the school will fund the transportation plan costs; and • Identify all, but at least one, specific entities or organizations that have been identified as potential partners or vendors for these services and describe all steps that have been taken to create a relationship, establish a relationship, or develop a partnership to provide these services.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant’s response provides a clear plan to obtaining transportation that addresses IDEA requirements. This plan is based on receiving a grant in year 1 with several options addressed pending funding and availability. The contingency plan is to begin offering transportation in year 2.</p>	

K.(2) *If applicable*, provide a plan to offer food services to students (e.g., contracting with approved/appropriate food service vendors, providing free and reduced lunch). Provide a **clear description** of how food services will be provided that is supported by the proposed budget.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Solare Collegiate mission is to prepare our students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. We intend to do that through intensive, rigorous academics and individualized supports. We also recognize that a healthy, nourished body is vital for our students to develop physically as well as intellectually. Solare Collegiate will offer breakfast and lunch to all students, particularly focused on ensuring that our anticipated 90% low-income population has daily access to hot, healthy meals. This decision aligns to our legal and moral obligation to our proposed community and supports our mission, as research supports that the USDA School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program are linked to an increase in standardized test scores, fewer school absences, and overall cognitive performance by students.¹¹⁷

Preparation for Food Services Plan

Preparation for organizing our school breakfast and lunch program falls in alignment with state and federal guidelines regarding the establishment and administration of our food service program. The Head of School, and once hired the Manager of Operations, will work with the Governing Board in creating the Request for Proposals (RFPs) with proposed food service vendors. Our RFP will go out no later than March 1, 2019, with proposals due by April 1, 2019. Solare Collegiate will make out decision regarding our food service vendor by May 1, 2019, in preparation for our August 2019 opening. Within the body of the proposals, vendors must include the costs associated with transportation of the food to and from the school, materials needed for the serving of the meals, and any packaging or items needed for transporting or storing the food. The Governing Board and Management will review the proposals and make a decision factoring in the costs, quality of the meals, compliance with state and federal regulations, and alignment to our needs. While the Governing Board will make the final decision regarding which food service vendor to enter into contract with, their decision will be strongly informed by input by the school management team. Solare Collegiate will also take all the steps necessary to earn the distinction of Local School Food Authority, which would enable us to manage the meal counting and administrative duties of the school breakfast and lunch program.

Solare Collegiate will ensure that our students with specific dietary restrictions (including religious and allergy-based dietary restrictions) receive meals equivalent in quality to our general breakfast and lunch options. We will begin collecting this data during our registration of students, after our public lottery process. The Office Manager will keep a detailed list of running dietary restrictions, of both religious and allergy type, and communicate the needs of these students to all teachers and staff. Dietary restrictions, as well as medical needs, will be input into the PowerSchool Student Information System, which will display icons next to the students' names in the PowerSchool. In addition, a best practices plan will be put into place to ensure that foods are not cross-contaminated with any restricted foods.

Solare Collegiate has already begun the process of identifying possible food vendors for our breakfast and lunch program. We have been in conversation with Jessica Swan of Swan Foods, a food service vendor that provides hot meals to over 900 students in the greater Albuquerque area, with a specific focus on local foods grown in the South Valley.¹¹⁸ Additionally, we have been in contact with John McCarthy at Canteen of Central New Mexico. Both Swan Foods and Canteen of Central New Mexico are on the Student Success and Wellness Bureau-approved vendor list for 2017-2018. Initial conversations

¹¹⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Health and Academic Achievement. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf.

¹¹⁸ <http://nmaces.org/services-view/cafeteriafood-services/>.

with these vendors have allowed us to collect information about the food menus, services provided, and alignment to the Solare Collegiate mission. Between authorization and the Board's release of the RFP, the Solare Collegiate Management Team and Governing Board will continue to seek out other food vendor options, prioritizing those that are New Mexico-local.

Solare Collegiate recognizes that we also need to plan for any needed food service equipment, and that these needs are dependent on our facility, as well as the food vendor we choose. If the Governing Board chooses to contract with Swan Foods, we will need a food warmer, double-door refrigerator and milk cooler, a steam well, and a salad bar. If the Governing Board chooses to contract with Canteen of Central New Mexico, we will need a food warmer and a double-door refrigerator and milk cooler. The costs associated with these needs are included in our **Appendix G 5-Year Budget Plan** (Function: 3100, Object: 55914 and Function: 3100, Object: 55916). We expect to contract with a food vendor service that provides pre-packaged meals, enabling us to efficiently distribute meals to students. If that is not an option, we research serving options available by our chosen vendor. If the vendor service is not financially feasible, our Leadership Team and Operations team will serve meals.

Any individuals who take the responsibility of serving food will be required to complete Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and annual Civil Rights training, as outlined by the New Mexico Student Success and Wellness Bureau. Pertinent staff will attend additional trainings provided or required by the Public Education Department, as necessary. All documentation related to trainings for those serving food will be organized and filed into personnel files. Our Operations team will facilitate two health inspections each year, to be coordinated with the Environmental Health Department.

Food Services Plan

Solare Collegiate anticipates a high percentage of students will qualify for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program, and we will apply to be participants. To be a participant in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, the Manager of Operations, with the supervision of the Head of School, will use the New Mexico Public Education Department's *Checklist for New NSLP Applicants*¹¹⁹ document to guide the process for applying for the breakfast and lunch programs. All students at Solare Collegiate will have access to our breakfast and lunch program, and we will encourage all families to complete the paperwork to qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch programming to collect data on family incomes and the participation in our meal programs. The Manager of Operations will oversee this process, including distribution, collection, and communication about the School Breakfast and School Lunch program and the accompanying paperwork. Additionally, after Year 1 of operation, we will apply for the Community Eligibility Provision program, which will cut down the administrative burden on families and enable all students to receive school meals at no cost.¹²⁰

Solare Collegiate will maintain all records in compliance with the standards set by state and federal regulations. We will keep records on the numbers of breakfasts and lunches distributed each day, the number of meals that fall into the free, reduced, or paid categories, types of meals served, records of Free and Reduced Lunch applications received, description of attempts to determine eligibility, records of revenue, expenditures, and contributions contributing to the sustainability of the meal programs, and documentation required in preparation for the New Mexico Public Education Department's Student Success and Wellness Bureau's five year review.

¹¹⁹ http://ped.state.nm.us/nutrition/na_nb11/NSLP_NewApplicantChecklist.pdf.

¹²⁰ http://ped.state.nm.us/nutrition/2016/NMPED%20CEP%20Guidelines_16_17_FINAL.pdf.

Food Service Costs Prior to Reimbursement

Each student at Solare Collegiate will have access to a school breakfast and lunch every day. Within the annual budget, we have planned for the costs to cover every student's breakfast and lunch, regardless of their Free and Reduced Price Lunch eligibility. Based on research of our targeted community, we expect that approximately 90% of our students will qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch, and we will ensure that every student has access to breakfast and lunch each day. Access to healthy meals supports our mission of preparing our students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice, and the meals are especially important with our extended school day model. Solare Collegiate will take responsibility for any costs not covered through the reimbursement from the federal government.

Solare Collegiate anticipates that we will be responsible for shouldering the costs of the breakfast and lunch program during the first 48 days of the school year. This assumption is based on information provided on the New Mexico Public Education Department's Student Success and Wellness Bureau webpage, which states that reimbursements typically take four to six weeks to after submission of the required paperwork to be received. Based on our Year 1 calendar, with the student start day of August 5, 2019, and requesting reimbursement at the end of each month, we would anticipate receiving our first reimbursement in mid-October of 2019. Between August 5 and October 15, there are 48 instructional days. Solare Collegiate assumes the cost of \$5.22 per student, per day for breakfast and lunch, based on the current reimbursement rates. The costs we will assume upfront are outlined in **Figure 48** for the first five years of operation.

Figure 48 - Yearly Start-Up Costs for Food Service Prior to Reimbursement

School Year	Student Enrollment	Total Costs
Y1- 2019-2020	156	48 days x \$5.22 x 156 students = \$39,087.36
Y2- 2020-2021	260	48 days x \$5.22 x 260 students = \$65,145.60
Y3- 2021-2022	364	48 days x \$5.22 x 364 students = \$91,203.84
Y4- 2022-2023	364	48 days x \$5.22 x 364 students = \$91,203.84
Y5- 2023-2024	416	48 days x \$5.22 x 416 students = \$104,232.96

Per the New Mexico State Statute 22-13-13 ("School lunch program"), gifts or grants may be used to cover the costs of food service, prior to federal reimbursement. Solare Collegiate intends to use contributions and donations from private sources (Code 41920) to cover the initial food service costs for our breakfast and lunch program.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A response is only required if the school plans to offer food services at the school. These are awarded as "preference points" if the school plans to participate in free and reduced lunch programs.</p> <p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a plan for establishing food services at the school, including specific action

	<p>steps, timelines responsible parties, and associated costs that address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identifying equipment purchase or contracting needs○ Identifying hiring and/or contracting needs○ Hiring or contracting○ Establishing training and inspection process needs○ Identifying and completing relevant program application and reporting requirements; <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify all federal and state food service programs the school plans to participate in;● Identify how the school will fund the food service plan costs prior to receiving any applicable reimbursements; and● Identify all, but at least one, specific entities or organizations that have been identified as potential partners or vendors for these services and describe all steps that have been taken to create a relationship, establish a relationship, or develop a partnership to provide these services.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria <p>The applicant's response provides a clear and concise plan for establishing food services that comply with federal and state requirements. The school will be offering breakfast and lunch to all students since it anticipates having a 90% low-income population. Presently, the school has begun to identify possible food vendors. In those conversations, the applicant has been made aware of which vendors will provide the necessary equipment for serving food and those that need to be purchased. The applicant plans to "shoulder" the initial start-up food service costs prior to federal reimbursement.</p>	

L. Facilities/ School Environment.

Applicants must complete the required Facilities Master Plan Ed. Spec. Checklist form, referenced below as III M. (1), and submit it to the Public Schools Facilities Authority **no later than Friday, April 20, 2018**.

The Facilities Master Plan/Ed. Spec. Checklist form can be accessed on the PSFA website at:

http://www.nmpsfa.org/pdf/MasterPlan/Applicant_Charter_School_EdSpec_FMP_Review_Checklist_3_8_2012.pdf.

L.(1) **Complete, submit, and attach as Appendix E**, the Public Schools Facilities Authority (PSFA) approval of the proposed school's Facilities Master Plan Ed / Spec Checklist.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate's New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority approval letter and our Facilities Master Plan Ed. Spec. Checklist are attached as **Appendix E**.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the applicant submitted a Facilities Master Plan to PSFA no later than April 20, 2018; and • Demonstrate the PSFA has approved the applicant's Facilities Master Plan.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria The applicant has provided the Facilities Master Plan and the approval letter sent by the PSFA.	

L. (2) Provide evidence that you have researched potential facilities/properties and **identified at least one appropriate, viable facility/property in the targeted geographic location**. Include evidence of a **clear plan** to prepare the facility/property in time for the proposed school's opening, including a reasonable estimate and description of capital outlay needs and how the project will be funded.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate has focused on a comprehensive search of facilities in the 87121-zip code, our targeted community. Working with Debra Dupes, the Vice President of Advisory and Transaction Services of CB Richard Ellis "CBRE", we have identified several facilities options in our desired community. Ms. Dupes has previously supported multiple charter schools in the acquisition and preparation of facilities in the greater Albuquerque area. CBRE is currently supporting Mission: Achievement and Success Charter School in finding a location for their second site, opening in fall of 2018.

CBRE conducted a search of available public properties in the 87121-zip code in late February of 2018 to determine the availability of properties that would be suitable for our needs. Results from this search indicated that there were no public properties that were currently available and viable for our needs. Additionally, the Solare Collegiate Founding Team reached out to Albuquerque Public Schools to inquire about vacant, semi-vacant, or spaces anticipated to be vacant in 2019. The district responded on April 2, 2018 to say that there were no current or anticipated vacant spaces owned by the school district.

In March of 2018, CBRE researched and identified six properties and facilities in our targeted zip code that were available and met our square footage requirements. These search results are in **Attachment P - Available Facilities in 87121**. Five of the properties are currently industrial properties and do not currently have e-occupancy. The sixth facility is a retail space, and like the other properties, it does not currently have e-occupancy. Each of these facilities would require significant renovations to meet e-occupancy standards and to meet the needs of our academic program. This entails finding an owner or developer willing to take on the costs of a renovation.

After reviewing the currently available options, we believe our best option is the 530 Airport Drive NW facility, which is the facility identified in our PSFA Master Facility Plan. As none of the identified facilities currently have e-occupancy and all would require significant renovations, we chose the 530 Airport Drive NW facility, as it has the most convenient location within our target zip code. We realize that for the location to be a viable school location, renovations will have to ensure that NMSA 22-8B-4.2 "Charter school facilities; standards" is fully met, including standards of occupancy, adequacy, and ownership.

530 Airport Drive NW includes enough square footage to meet our space needs at full capacity. To meet the needs of Solare Collegiate, the industrial space would need to have interior walls added to create classroom, administrative, and common space. All spaces would need to be aligned to NMAC 6.27.30.13 square footage requirements. Our classroom square footage needs are outlined in **Figure 49**. All renovations must be completed by July 8, 2019 for the Solare Collegiate Summer Onboarding and Orientation to begin.

Figure 49 - Total Classroom Square Footage Needs by School Year

School Year and Grade Levels	# of Classrooms Total	Square Footage Per Classroom	Classroom Square Footage Total Needed
2019-2020 5th & 6th grade	6	(2) 5th: 832 sq. ft. (4) 6th: 728 sq. ft.	4,576 sq. ft.
2020-2021 5th-7th grade	10	(4) 5th: 832 sq. ft. (6) 6th-7th: 728 sq. ft. (2) Prep: 80 sq. ft.	7,856 sq. ft.
2021-2022 5th-8th grade	14	(4) 5th: 832 sq. ft. (10) 6th-8th: 728 sq. ft. (4) Prep: 80 sq. ft.	10,928 sq. ft.
2022-2023 5th-8th grade	14	(4) 5th: 832 sq. ft. (10) 6th-8th: 728 sq. ft. (4) Prep: 80 sq. ft.	10,928 sq. ft.
2023-2024 5th-8th grade	16	(4) 5th: 832 sq. ft. (12) 6th-8th: 728 sq. ft. (4) Prep: 80 sq. ft.	12,384 sq. ft.

In addition to the classroom space, administrative and common spaces will need to be built to suit the needs of the school through full capacity. The needed administrative and common spaces are outlined in **Figure 50**. Some of the needed spaces can serve multiple roles, for example the space for physical activity can be the same space that will be used as a cafeteria facility.

Figure 50 - Additional Spaces and Square Footage Needs

Additional Spaces	Approximate Square Footage Needs
Administrative Offices	1000 sq. ft.
Cafeteria	2,100 sq. ft.
Serving Kitchen	200-250 sq. ft.
Special Education Room	450-750 sq. ft.
Physical Education Space	5,200 sq. ft.
Enrichment & Multipurpose	1'000 sq. ft.
Janitorial Space	500 sq. ft.
Teachers Workspace	1,500 sq. ft.
Restrooms	1,200 sq. ft.

Additional Spaces Total Sq. Ft.**13,150-13,500 sq. ft.**

Following authorization, the Solare Collegiate Founding Team will complete the following action steps to secure and renovate the building outlined above or other building that is identified as the most viable option for Solare Collegiate.

- Identify best location for Solare Collegiate.
- Determine the willingness of the owner to take on the cost of renovation, otherwise identify a developer to take on the financial responsibility of renovations.
- Develop final Master Facility Plan with PSFA
- Conduct formal assessment of the renovation needed in Year 1- full capacity
- Develop contracts with necessary parties
- Complete necessary improvements
- Receive E-occupancy

The parties responsible for the process of preparing our facility for occupation include the Public Schools Facilities Authority, building owner, real estate broker and developer, contractor, Solare Collegiate Governing Board, the Head of School, and the Manager of Operations. Based on projects of similar magnitude facilitated by our realtor, we anticipate the cost for renovations would be approximately \$150,000. Per NMSA 22--8B-4.2, the owner of the building is responsible for the renovations necessary for the building to meet e-occupancy and adequacy standards, enabling Solare Collegiate to occupy the building. When seeking out a building, we will ensure that the owner or developer understands that they are responsible for the costs associated with renovation, prior to signing a lease agreement where this responsibility will be stated.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the applicant has done the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conducted outreach and research to understand if there are public facilities that are available, appropriate, and viable ○ Researched multiple facilities or properties in the targeted geographic location to identify all facilities or properties that are available, appropriate, and viable ○ Identified whether or not each potential property will meet the requirements of NMSA 1978 § 22-8B-4.2, including occupancy, adequacy, and ownership; • Identify at least one potential facility or property that is appropriate, viable, and located in the targeted geographic location; • Identify a plan that would enable the applicant to prepare the facility/property to meet the facility needs of the proposed school in time for the proposed school's opening date, include specific action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and capital outlay needs; and • Identify how the project to prepare the facility will be funded.
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria	

The applicant has conducted extensive research on available facilities for its selected zip code area and has identified six properties that will require modifications to obtain e-occupancy. The narrative states, “..we believe our best option is the 530 Airport Drive NW facility, which is the facility identified in our PSFA Master Facility Plan. As none of the identified facilities currently have e-occupancy and all would require significant renovations, we chose the 530 Airport Drive NW facility, as it has the most convenient location within our target zip code.” Funding for the renovations to the building are estimated at \$150,000 and the applicant states that the owner of the building is responsible for the renovations necessary. The timeline for completion of the school facility is scheduled on or before July 8, 2018.

Additionally, the applicant’s response includes detailed information on the layout of space necessary to implement the school’s educational model.

III. Financial Framework

A. School size.

State the requested enrollment, grade levels to be served, and student/teacher ratio.

A.(1) Academic Year	Number of Students	Grade Levels	Student/Teacher Ratio
Year 1	156	5 th & 6 th	16:1
Year 2	260	5 th , 6 th , & 7 th	16:1
Year 3	364	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , & 8 th	16:1
Year 4	364	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , & 8 th	16:1
Year 5	416	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , & 8 th	16:1
At Capacity (Enrollment Cap)	416	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , & 8 th	16:1

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the anticipated number of students for each of the first five years and “at capacity”, based on the long-term strategic plan; Identify the grade levels requested to be served in each of the first five years (phase in plan) and “at capacity”, based on the long term strategic plan; and Identify the student/teacher ratio (not student/staff ratio) that aligns with the number of students served, grade levels, and staffing plan for each of the first five years and “at capacity”, based on the long term strategic plan.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The table clearly defines the enrollment from years 1-5 and at capacity. It includes the number of students, grade levels served, and the student to teacher ratio. These numbers align with the applicant's educational model and provide a progression of grade levels to grow its students in the first two years of operation.</p>	

B. Budgets.

Please note that the PEC will ask the applicants to respond to questions on the budget during the Community Input Hearing. The applicants may have the personnel with the technical expertise with them at the table (and *should* have these people with them if these people were primarily responsible for drafting a section). However, the applicants themselves should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of all areas of the budget.

B.(1) Provide, and attach as **Appendix F**, a completed 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet, using appropriate values and computations for each year of the five-year budget plan (use current unit value and for special education, please budget the state local district's percentage of special education unless the school has a sufficient justification for why it will have a larger population). Ensure that your worksheet **clearly demonstrates your understanding of, and your capacity to implement**, New Mexico public school funding.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheet is attached as **Appendix F**. The worksheet is in compliance with NMSA 22-8-8, which calls for proposed enrollment of more than eight students. In accordance with NMSA 22-8-6.1, our first five years of SEG worksheets were based on the projected enrollment outlined in **Section II.A.(1.)**.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a complete 910B5 Worksheet in Appendix F; • Use appropriate values and computations in each year; • Use current unit value; and • Budget the correct special education percentage based on the local special education population, unless the school has a sufficient justification for why it will have a larger population (provide justification, if applicable).
REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria <p>The applicant has provided a complete 910B5 SEG worksheets for the operations of year 1 through year 5 of the school. Values and computations are appropriate and align to the other parts of the application and the requirement to use the current unit value and budget based on the local population of special education students.</p>	

B.(2) Provide, and attach as **Appendix G**, a proposed five-year budget plan, based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet, that clearly supports the proposed school's mission and aligns with the proposed school's five-year growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, and services. Ensure that your draft budget clearly demonstrates the financial capacity and long-term sustainability of the proposed school (consider your growth plan, including staffing, facilities, educational program, mission etc.).

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The proposed five-year budget plan, based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet with our proposed enrollment, including special education estimates based on the Albuquerque Public Schools district average, is attached as **Appendix G**.

Total Points Available	Expectations
12	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a five-year budget plan in Appendix G that is based on the 910B5 SEG Revenue Worksheet from Appendix F; • Support the proposed school's mission and all elements of the proposed program laid out in the application; and • Align with the proposed school's five-year growth plan.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The five-year budget plan provided by the applicant is based on the 910B SEG worksheets and supports the mission and the elements of the educational model. Specifically, the teachers and support staff needed in the first five years of operation are noted and the mission and all elements of the proposed program laid out in the application are evident in the budget.</p>	

B.(3) Provide a clear, comprehensive, cohesive, and reasonable budget narrative that explains basic assumptions, how those were determined based on reliable sources, and identifies all priorities that are consistent with the proposed school's mission, educational program, staffing, and facility. The budget narrative demonstrates the proposed school's thorough understanding of the budget and of budgeting.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate Charter School ("Solare Collegiate") has developed a five-year budget, with the mission of the school as the guiding force for all budgetary decisions. In preparation for Solare Collegiate to be a financially healthy school, the five-year budget was developed using fiscally responsible annual revenue and expense assumptions and conservative financial forecasting of revenues and expenditures. Our budget was informed by local and national experts, with experience with charter school budgeting and finance. Our five-year budget includes public funds available to charter schools in New Mexico, as well as a start-up grant secured with Excellent Schools New Mexico. At the direction of Katie Poulos, the Director of Options for Parents Division at the Public Education Department, we have included all possible funding sources, including the CSP grant, Title I, Title II, IDEA, and the National School Lunch Program funding.

The financial overview for each of the first five fiscal years is outlined in **Figure 51**. For each year, Solare Collegiate has a budget with a positive operating income and a balance that increases from year-to-year, to account for any financial unpredictability. We project that our operating budget will be in the positive every year, with the fund balance predicted to reach 42% by the fifth year of operation.

Figure 51 - Projected Five-Year Budget Plan

Five-Year Budget	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Revenue	\$1,784,936	\$3,370,687	\$3,952,911	\$3,166,987	\$4,055,443
Total Expenses	\$1,715,376	\$2,710,342	\$3,189,754	\$3,139,743	\$3,888,012
Operating Income (EBIDA)	\$69,560	\$660,346	\$763,156	\$27,245	\$167,431
Beginning Fund Balance	--	\$69,560	\$729,906	\$1,493,062	\$1,520,306
Ending Fund Balance	\$69,560	\$729,906	\$1,493,062	\$1,520,306	\$1,687,737
Operating Income as % of Total Revenues	3.9%	19.6%	19.3%	0.9%	4.1%
Fund Balance as % of Total Revenues	3.9%	21.7%	37.8%	48.0%	41.6%

Total Revenue Per Student	\$11,442	\$12,964	\$10,860	\$8,701	\$9,749
Total Spending Per Student	\$10,996	\$10,424	\$8,763	\$8,626	\$9,346

Revenue Assumptions

The Solare Collegiate five-year budget was created with the conservative assumption that estimated revenues rates would stay the same from year-to-year. Solare Collegiate will begin with a starting enrollment of 156 students (52 fifth grade students and 104 sixth grade students). In succeeding years, one new grade level of 104 students will be added each year, with full enrollment of 416 students in year five of operation. The budget includes a \$200,000 startup grant, secured from Excellent Schools New Mexico, with unrestricted spending expectations. Outlined below are the various streams of revenue included in our 5-Year Budget and the assumptions associated with each. Based on guidance given at the New Applicant Training on April 27, 2018, we have included all revenue streams, including competitive grants. However, it should be noted that in addition to the five-year budget in **Appendix G**, which includes competitive grants, we have created a secondary budget that ensures a fiscally balanced budget without competitive grants.

Student Equalization Guarantee (SEG). The estimated revenue projections are based on the 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Revenue Workbook. Based on New Mexico standards, key assumptions include that the 2017-2018 unit value of \$4,084.23 was used in completing our SEG worksheet, at the instruction of Katie Poulos, the Director of Options for Parents Division of the Public Education Department, during the New Applicant Training on April 27, 2018. At the same training, Solare Collegiate was guided to use the Albuquerque Public Schools T & E index of 1.068 and the At-Risk Index of 0.077. Additionally, the special education population is anticipated to be 23% per year, with Level A and B Level students making up 14%, Level C students at 3%, and Level D students at 6% of total enrollment. This assumption is based on the current Albuquerque Public Schools Special Education averages. On the SEG worksheet, we only included funding generated from Level C and Level D students. For projecting the costs for special education ancillary services, we used the FTE calculation of 0.021, based on the same calculation used by Albuquerque Public Schools. While we anticipate a 24% English Language Learner population, we did not assume bilingual units funding.

In the first year of operation, we anticipate that we will qualify for size adjustment funds, based on having a total projected enrollment of 156 in Year 1. For each year of our projected budget, a 2% administrative fee is withheld from the amount calculated for distribution to Solare Collegiate.

Charter School Program (CSP) Grant. Our 5 Year Budget is written to the assumption that we qualify to apply and are successful in receiving the CSP Grant. Per the CSP Grant Information page on the NMPED website, a new charter school can apply to receive funds based on enrollment at Year 5. The grant allocates \$2,200 per elementary student and \$2,000 per middle school student. Because our school is proposing to serve grades 5-8, with 104 students per grade level, we determine that we would qualify for \$852,800 over three years. Our assumption is that many of the one-time costs associated with school startup will occur in the early years of opening, so we have planned for 40% of our CSP allocation to be distributed in our Implementation Year, with the remaining 60% divided between Year 1 and Year 2 of operation. This funding would be used to make purchases of furniture, curriculum, and contracted services during Y0 of operation.

National School Lunch Program. Solare Collegiate will apply for breakfast, lunch, and snack reimbursement through the USDA National School Lunch program. This revenue assumes that we will be reimbursed \$858 per student each year, based on the reimbursement rate of \$5.22 per student per day qualifying for free lunch. This number is multiplied by our projected enrollment numbers for each year, and then by 183 (the number of school days at Solare Collegiate). Based on knowledge acquired from EdTec, we assume that this will cover approximately 80%-85% of our food service costs each year. Within our 5-Year Budget, we have planned to cover the remaining costs for food service.

Lease Assistance. While the current rate of Lease Assistance is currently \$733 per student, our research has revealed the New Mexico State Legislature is recommending Lease Reimbursement be reduced by 20%, or to \$586.40 per student. In the vein of building a fiscally responsible 5-Year Budget, we have used the \$586.40 per student number to determine our Lease Assistance revenue. Lease Reimbursement is distributed at the end of each quarter. As the lease assistance is a reimbursement program, our Year 1 cash flow projections only include three of the four reimbursements, as the last reimbursement will not occur until the end of the fiscal year. However, in our annual budget the full projected reimbursement is included. To prevent cash flow issues during the first quarter of Year 1, we will negotiate lease payments to begin after our first Lease Reimbursement.

Transportation Funding. The New Mexico Public Education Department offers transportation reimbursement following the first year a school offers transportation. The rate of reimbursement is \$680 per student, based on the number of students utilizing transportation the previous year. Therefore, in Year 1, Solare Collegiate will assume the costs of transportation, including an assumption of \$50,000 per school bus, per year, with the intent on generating reimbursement beginning in Year 2. This cost assumption is based on a quote from Herrera School Bus and Coach, Inc.

Title I. Solare Collegiate is proposing to open in a zip code where 100% of the schools are identified as Title I schools. Based on the demographics and our recruitment focuses, we anticipate that we will also be identified as a Title I school. The Title I Division was reluctant to share the formula by which Title I funding is determined. Therefore, our revenue assumption is based on the per pupil funding of a charter school with comparable student demographics. At Mission: Achievement and Success Charter School, the funding for Title I is \$380 per student. Based on the assumption that we would receive a similar dollar amounts, we anticipate \$29,640 in Year 1, \$49,400 in Year 2, \$69,160 in Years 3 and 4,¹²¹ and \$79,040 in Year 5 for Title I revenue. Title I funds will be allocated to support the funding of an additional math teacher position. Any excess Title I funds will be used to buy additional supplies or materials for ensuring academic rigor at Solare Collegiate.

Title II. Solare Collegiate is dedicated to the development of our teachers and instructional leaders. To achieve significant academic growth, we recognize the need to invest in our teachers in meaningful way, Title II provides funds to support this endeavor at the rate of \$49 per student. This assumption is based on information received from the Title II Bureau at the New Mexico Public Education Department. We anticipate that we will receive \$7,676 in Year 1, \$12,793 in Year 2, \$17,911 in Years 3 and 4, and \$20,469 in Year 5. These funds will be used to support our extended Summer Professional Development, as well as the Data Days and external professional development occurring during the school year.

Instructional Materials. Per the Instructional Bureau, the annual reimbursement for instructional materials is \$33 per currently enrolled student. While we include this funding source in our budget, we recognize that this funding stream is a reimbursement that is allocated in January of each academic

¹²¹ Note that the enrollment dependent revenue streams stays flat in Years 3 and 4, as the calculation is based on the same 364 student enrollment, as our inaugural class of 52 students transition through the school.

year. If earned, CSP funding disbursed during the Implementation Year, Year 1, and Year 2 will be used to cover the cost of purchasing instructional materials. During Year 1, we anticipate \$5,148 in instructional materials funding, with \$8,580 in reimbursements in Year 2, \$12,012 in reimbursements in Year 3 and Year 4, and \$13,728 in reimbursements in Year 5.

IDEA. IDEA provides supplemental funding for special education. Based on information available in STAT books and funding received by schools with similar student demographics, we are making the assumption that funding will be \$300 per student identified as C or D level. Based on the demographics of Albuquerque Public Schools, we anticipate 14 students qualifying for IDEA funding generating \$4,200 in Year 1, 24 students qualifying for IDEA funding generating \$7,200 in Year 2, 33 students qualifying for IDEA funding generating \$9,900 in Years 3 and 4, and 37 students qualifying for IDEA funding generating \$11,100 in Year 5. Our additional funding received from IDEA will use to support the costs of ancillary services, including speech, occupational, physical, or recreational therapy.

Private Funding Sources. Solare Collegiate has secured a private start-up grant from Excellent Schools New Mexico, in the amount of \$200,000. A letter of commitment from Excellent Schools New Mexico is included in **Attachment T**. We also assume that our Governing Board can fundraise at least \$30,000 per year, as similar schools achieve this fundraising goal annually, though it is not reflected in our anticipated revenue.

Expense Assumptions

Solare Collegiate expenses encompass three primary categories: personnel (including salaries and benefits), school operations, and facilities. Our budgetary expenses are aligned with our mission of preparing students to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice, and the way we spend public dollars are reflective of our mission. In **Figure 52** the proposed personnel plan is outlined for the first five years of the school, which is full staffing. The costs of personnel salaries, benefits, and employer liability makes up between 54% to 62% of spending during the first five years of operation. This constitutes an average of \$5,692.17 of the per pupil funding spent on personnel.

Figure 52 - Personnel Expenses

Role	Y1 Total	Y1 FTE	Y2 Total	Y2 FTE	Y3 Total	Y3 FTE	Y4 Total	Y4 FTE	Y5 Total	Y5 FTE
Teachers	\$360,000	8	\$596,700	13	\$795,906	17	\$811,824	17	\$1,022,898	21
SPED Teachers	\$67,500	1.5	\$91,800	2	\$140,454	3	\$143,263	3	\$194,838	4
Enrichment Teachers	\$22,500	.5	\$45,900	1	\$93,636	2	\$95,509	2	\$97,419	2
Student Supports Coordinator	\$55,000	1	\$56,100	1	--		--		--	
Office Manager	\$30,000	1	\$30,600	1	\$31,212	1	\$31,836	1	\$32,473	1
Head of School	\$80,000	1	\$81,600	1	\$83,232	1	\$84,897	1	\$86,595	1
Manager of Operations & Deans	\$60,000	1	\$122,400	2	\$187,272	3	\$191,017	3	\$259,784	4
Total	\$675,000	14	\$1,025,100	21	\$1,331,712	27	\$1,358,346	27	\$1,694,006	33

Salary. Our personnel expenses support the Solare Collegiate mission and our educational programming; 71% of our Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions are dedicated to classroom and special education teacher positions in Year 1; in Year 5 that percentage increases to 82%. For the purposes of budgeting, we assume an average teacher salary of \$45,000, with the assumption that half our teachers will hold Level I licenses (starting at \$39,600 on the Solare Collegiate pay scale) and the other half holding Level II licenses (starting at \$48,400 on the Solare Collegiate pay scale). We anticipate most of our teachers will hold Level I or Level II licensure, because of our intensive focus on teacher coaching and professional development. However, our salary assumption averages Level I and Level II pay with five years of experience to allocate for the pay of more experienced teachers. Our pay scale reflects an anticipated pay increase of 10% above the Albuquerque Public Schools pay scale, as well as an annual pay increase of 2%. In addition to teachers, our FTEs include administrative positions, special education, and elective teachers. The salary and pay scales for administrative leadership and support staff are outlined more thoroughly in **Attachment N**.

In Year 1 of operation, 2019-2020, Solare Collegiate plans to have a staff of 14 FTE, and at full enrollment a staff of 33 FTE in 2022-2023. These initial estimates are based on the minimal needs of the school at the time of application submission. However, the needs of the Solare Collegiate staffing structure will be reevaluated annually to ensure that our staffing structure supports the mission of the school. If additional resources become available, the staffing structure will be revisited, always with the focus of supporting the mission of our school - preparing our students to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice. The salaries of our staff are budgeted to increase 2% each year, starting in 2020-2021 to keep our pay scale competitive and aligned to cost-of-living increases.

Benefits. Regarding employee benefits, we have budgeted an average annual contribution of \$7,225 per employee for medical, dental, vision, and life insurance benefits. This has been budgeted into Object 52311, with the \$7,225 assumption averaging \$540 per month employer contribution for medical, \$53 per month employer contribution for dental, and \$8.60 contribution for vision, which is within the New Mexico Public School Insurance Authority minimum requirements. Each of these employer contributions are based on the current contribution of the New Mexico Public School Insurance Authority (NMPSIA), along with an anticipated 4% premium increase expected in October 2018 and an additional 4% premium increase expected in October 2019, for a total of 8% above the current rates. This is based on conversation with NMPSIA Deputy Director Ernestine Chavez, who also stated that NMPSIA intends to keep insurance rates flat after the two 4% increases. We have factored in a 10% increase year-over-year for benefits to ensure that we are prepared for any unanticipated increases. We will regularly review our benefits, to ensure that both our compensation and benefits are competitive with other schools in the greater Albuquerque area. We have budgeted an assumption of 13.9% of the employee salaries for employer contributions to the state retirement system, based on the FY 2017 employer contribution rate in Object 52111. Additionally, we have budgeted 6.2% for Social Security in Object 52210, 1.45% for Medicare in Object 52220, \$2 per person per fiscal quarter for the worker's comp fee in Object 53720, 3.2% on the first \$24,100 per person per calendar year for state unemployment insurance in Object 52500, and 1.10% of total wages for workers' compensation insurance in Object 22710.

Facilities. We are in the process of identifying a facility. In the budget, we have included our most likely option in the line item for facility costs, though it is not a confirmed location. The facility at 530 Airport NW is currently a manufacturing warehouse space, which can be renovated to our specifications and grow in size, as our needs grow. We have budgeted for 70 square foot per student, at a cost of \$11 per

square foot. Within the budget, janitorial services have been budgeted at a rate of \$1.50 per square foot per year, with a janitorial supplies budget of \$25 per student. Electricity is assumed at \$1.50 per square foot per year, gas is assumed at \$.75 per square foot per year, and maintenance is assumed at a rate of \$.50 per square foot per year. These assumptions for the cost of services associated with the building are based on the knowledge and experience of our intended back-office provider, EdTec, and the costs experienced by local charter school Amy Biehl Charter School. Additionally, within our budget we have assumed the cost of \$17,500 for D & O and liability insurance. With these numbers, the total lease costs are an average of \$777 per student, which averages to 7% of our expenditures in the first five years. To account for the lease assistance funding, \$586.40 per student has been subtracted from this line item. This reimbursement is a conservative assumption, based on the information that Lease Reimbursements may be reduced by 20%, from \$733 per student, to \$586.40. The facility lease and operating expenses are in Function 2600 in the appropriate Object codes in the 54000 series.

School Operations. Within the Solare Collegiate budget are line items for expenditures related to the general operations of the school, including the recruitment of talent and students, materials and supplies for instruction and assessment, transportation, nutrition, and fees for legal services and an annual audit. To budget these categories, we have reached out to vendors to get quotes and estimates for anticipated costs for services and items. When appropriate, we included a 1.75% increase of prices each year to account for inflation.

- **Student Recruitment**

- Student Recruitment: (Function: 2400, Object: 53711) \$20 per new student for the following year. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our student recruitment will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- New Mexico Coalition for Charter Schools membership: (Function 2300, Object 53711) \$12.50 per student.

- **Materials and Supplies for Instruction and Assessment**

- Textbooks: (Function: 1000, Object 56112) \$225 allocation per new student per year. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for textbooks will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- General Supplies and Materials: (Function 1000, Object 56118) \$150 allocation per student per year for classroom materials, \$30 per student for uniforms.
- Special Education Materials (Function 2100, Object 56118) \$125 per special education student for additional materials. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our special education materials will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- Supply Assets: (Function 1000, Object 57332) \$125 allocation per student for new desks, \$2,500 per new classroom. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our student and classroom furniture will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- Telecommunications (Function 2600, Object 54416) \$150 per month for telephone services, \$150 per month for internet services.
- Supply Assets: (Function 2500, Object 57332) \$5,000 for office furniture. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our office furniture will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- Student Technology: (Function 1000, Object 57332) \$315 for every 2 students for chrome books. This assumption is based on a quote from Staples. Our budget assumes

that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for student computers will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.

- General Supplies and Materials: (Function 2500, Object 56118) \$50 per student for copier supplies, \$700 per month for office supplies.
- Copier Lease: (Function 2500, Object 54630) \$400 per month per copier lease, with two copiers in Years 1 & 2, and three copiers in Years 3-5.
- Assessments: (Function 2200, Object 56113) \$10.13 per student for NWEA MAP testing; assumption based on a quote from NWEA MAP. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for additional assessments will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- **Transportation:** (Function 2700, Object 55915) \$50,000 per school bus, per year. This assumption is based on a quote received from Herrera School Bus and Coach, Inc. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our student recruitment will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year, with transportation reimbursement beginning in Year 2 of operations. Based on information received from a school with similar student demographics, we anticipate 85% of transportation costs will be covered by reimbursements, with the rest of the costs being budgeted into our operational funds.
- **Nutrition:** (Function 3100, Object 53414) \$5.22 per student for meals (with an average daily attendance of 95% for an effective cost of \$907.50 per student, less the calculated reimbursement of \$858 per student through NSLP. This assumption takes into account the demographics of the schools in our proposed community, where more than 90% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch programming.
- **Legal Fees:** (Function 2300, Object 53413) \$8,000 in Year 1 for unlimited legal services, increasing to \$24,000 in Year 3 and beyond.
- **Annual Audit:** (Function 2300, Object 53411) \$13,000 for annual cost of audit.

Personnel Budget Expenses. In addition to the salaries and benefits for personnel, we have budgeted for other expenses associated with the recruitment, growth, and retention of our school staff. These expenses include recruitment, supplies, professional development, the Governing Board, technology, and contracted services. To budget these categories, we have estimates for anticipated costs for services and items based on the experience of other charter schools and the experience of our back-office provider. When appropriate, we included a 1.75% increase of prices each year to account for inflation.

- **Recruitment:** (Function: 2500, Object: 55400) \$500 per new staff member for the following year. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our staff recruitment will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- **Professional Development:** (Function: 1000, Object: 53330) Professional development training related to curriculum and materials, \$250 per employee. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for professional development will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2. Years 1 and 2 include an additional \$13,000 and \$18,000 for intensive professional development for the founding team.
- **Governing Board**
 - Board Training: (Function 2300, Object 55812) \$500 per year for annual training.
 - Board Expenses: (Function 2300, Object 56115) \$50 per month for related expenses.

- **Technology**

- Staff Computers: (Function 1000, Object 57332) \$850 per new staff member for computers, assumption based on quote from Staples. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for staff computers will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- Software: (Function 2400, Object 56113) Fixed cost of \$15,000 for Student Information System, \$5 per student for SIS license. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our fixed cost for set up of our Student Information System will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation.
- Software: (Function 2600, Object 53414) \$1500 annually for website hosting. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our website hosting will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during the implementation year and Years 1 and 2.
- Technology Support: (Function 2200, Object 53414), \$900 per month for technology support.

- **Contracted Services**

- Other Professional Services - Educational Diagnostician: (Function 2100, Object 53211) \$2000 per educational diagnostician initial or reevaluation per 2% of student population.
- Other Professional Services - Ancillary Services: (Function 2100, Object 53218) Ancillary using the anticipated percentage of C and D Level Special Education students, assuming one hour of ancillary service per week per student at \$100 per hour. Our budget assumes that we will receive IDEA supplemental funding for special education; this funding will be used for costs associated with contracted ancillary services.
- Other Professional Services: (Function 2100, Object 53414) \$70 per hour per student for contracted nursing support, based on the assumption of a half an hour per student.
- Other Professional Services: (Function 2500, Object 53414) \$12,000 for implementation year and \$59,999 per year thereafter for back office services, based on a quote from EdTech; \$149 per employee for payroll services. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for EdTec support during implementation year will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) and from our operation budget in the years after.
- Other Professional Services: (Function 1000, Object 53414) \$23,000 for Spanish Language instruction services. Our budget assumes that we will receive CSP funding, and in that case the funding for our Spanish enrichment will come out of our CSP funding source (24146) during Years 1 and 2. Beginning in Year 3, we will have a full-time Spanish teacher on staff, which is reflected in our staffing plan.

Implementation Year Budget

Our implementation year budget includes revenues from CSP funding, at the amount of \$346,997.33 and \$25,000 from private funding source Excellent Schools New Mexico. Our implementation year expenditures include the salary and benefits for our Head of School, as well as salary and benefits for the Manager of Operations or Office and Community Engagement Manager beginning in January. With our CSP funding, we intend to do the purchasing of furniture, materials, and classroom curriculum during the implementation year. In addition, we have allocated \$15,500 for professional development during our implementation year.

Fund Balance

It should be noted that Solare Collegiate recognizes that our submitted budget includes a significant fund balance. We do not intend to keep such a significant fund balance once we are in operation. We anticipate that some of our assumptions may be underestimating the costs of specific line items. The fund balance will ensure that these costs are covered. In addition, in the early years of operation, our budget includes significant startup funding, as those funding sources begin to sunset, the cash reserves will be a source from which we can fund unanticipated costs. We recognize that fund balances cannot be used to for paying staff and staff benefits, but it can be used for school operational costs. We also acknowledge that our priority will be to spend our CSP funding dollars during the implementation year and the first two years of operation, as the spending of our CSP funding directly impacts the money that the Public Education Department receive for the administration of the fund.

Solare Collegiate starts at an atypical grade, 5th grade for a middle school. We anticipate that recruitment for 5th grade will be a challenge, until we have built a strong reputation in our targeted community. As a result, we are proposing to begin with a class of 52 5th graders in our inaugural year, with all other classes totaling 104 students per grade. As a result, in Year 4 our enrollment numbers are the same as Year 3, and our budget does not include the dollars that are received for increasing student enrollment. While we have a significant fund balance going into Year 4, it was important for Solare Collegiate to demonstrate that we could run a balanced budget with just our annual operating budget. To balance the budget for Year 4, we budgeted 75% of our classroom materials and supplies in the Year 3 budget. We believe that this demonstrates our ability to look at a budget from year-to-year, as well as to plan in the long term.

Each line item on the 5-Year Budget Plan (**Appendix G**) reflects the mission, vision, and educational program of Solare Collegiate Charter School. Our 5-Year budget includes our overall staffing model, as well as the facility needs, as identified in the PSFA Facilities Checklist. The Solare Collegiate Founding Team believe in the importance of human capital, with most of our expenses going towards personnel costs, ensuring that we recruit and develop the best teachers, which will support our student learning and fulfilling our mission of preparing students to attend the high schools and colleges of their choice.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain basic assumptions; • Identify reliable sources for each assumption; • Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's mission; • Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's educational program; • Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's staffing; and • Include priorities consistent with the proposed school's facility.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's budget narrative completely describes each budget item in its 5-year budget plan. Additionally, the narrative explains the applicant has secured a private grant for \$200,000 that will help with start up costs. The narrative identifies and describes reliable sources for each assumption; and reflects the priorities associated with the mission, educational program, and staffing and facility needs.</p>	

B. (4) Provide a **clear and meaningful** description of what budget adjustments will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges, or to address the failure to receive any anticipated funding sources. Ensure that your explanations provide **clear evidence** that the adjustments are viable and realistic. The suggested budget control strategies demonstrate **capacity** to manage the budget successfully.

Provide a narrative description of how the proposed school will modify the budget when there are students with special education needs currently attending the proposed school, but under the funding formula, the proposed school will only receive additional funding during the next school year.

Provide a narrative description of how the proposed school will address the budget in the event that the proposed school has budgeted for more students, based on early enrollment, than actually enroll in the proposed school at the beginning of the proposed school year.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Budget Process

As part of developing a budget that can navigate unpredicted financial challenges, the Solare Collegiate Founding Team has produced multiple versions of our 5-Year budget to support any budget or cash flow issues. Through a strategic budgeting process, which included multiple versions of the budget, as well as various stakeholders independently reviewing the budget, the Solare Collegiate Charter School will be prepared to adapt to future budget and cashflow challenge if they arise.

Annually, the budget cycle will begin in the early spring, with a working budget developed by school management, EdTec, and the Solare Collegiate Finance Committee. Management will work with EdTec in the strategic planning of the budget to ensure that all budgeting decisions are made with the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate. EdTec will support school management through analysis of the budget, as well as providing knowledge and experience of charter school funding, observed trends in spending, and other benchmarks. EdTec will then be responsible for completing the technical work of constructing the budget pro forma, with clear assumptions and notes, as well as ensuring that the requirement state paperwork is completed. This form of the budget will be reviewed by the Finance Committee, who will then suggest changes and make a recommendation, and then forward the budget to the whole Governing Board for review and approval. In addition to ensuring that the budget is aligned to the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, we will ensure that our budget reflects all compliance requirements for state and federal revenues, and that the budget is a prudent use of public funds.

The budget will be presented at a public Board meeting, open to the public, with the Finance Committee making their recommendations, and at the following Board meeting the Governing Board will vote on whether to approve or deny the budget. The cutoff date for the Board-approved budget to be in place is June 30 of each year. A copy of the approved budget will be provided to the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Public Education Commission by the required deadline. As a public entity and steward of public dollars, the Solare Collegiate approved budget is public record, and the budget will be made available upon request.

Meeting Unforeseen Budget Challenges

To ensure that Solare Collegiate can meet unforeseen challenges to the budget, it is vital that we have timely and regular access to information regarding the budget. Solare Collegiate will create and utilize dashboards to communicate student enrollment leading up to the 40-day count, as well as throughout the school year, to ensure that school spending is in line with the revenues generated. With financial statements produced and distributed in a timely fashion, Solare Collegiate will have the time to make

corrective action in the event of financial difficulties.

If a budget gap occurs, because of financial difficulties, then the Solare Collegiate management team will immediately look for opportunities to re-balance the budget. The likely reason for a budget shortfall would be low enrollment - a common struggle for new charter schools. In this case, Solare Collegiate would look to adjust the budget through line items dependent on enrollment numbers, including instructional materials and other materials dependent on the number of enrolled students. After analyzing the impact of the natural savings from these items, the staffing plan will be reviewed to ensure that it is aligned with the number and types of teachers needed for the enrollment numbers. If the school is significantly overstaffed, Solare Collegiate will realign its staffing plan to fit the number of students enrolled. The priority for the budget would be to ensure that educational programming elements are preserved, while other discretionary or elements not mission-dependent can be scaled back until the enrollment numbers improve.

Other budget balancing options include deferring other costs to succeeding years when the enrollment and finances of the school are more secure. Other options include re-negotiating with vendors per contractual agreements for deferred or delayed payment options when enrollment has recovered or there is more room in the budget to cover those costs. Finally, seeking out opportunities to partner with other schools to share the costs of services and purchasing options is another option for cost saving.

The budget submitted does not include any non-secured fundraising, but Solare Collegiate intends to have a strong development focus as the school gets established, focusing on fundraising initiatives to support the school in case of a budget shortfall. One of the key responsibilities of the Manager of Operations will be to research and apply for grants aligned to the mission and needs of the school. Funds received through grants will help to support any additional budget challenges the school may experience.

Solare Collegiate is dedicated to preventing any unforeseen budget challenges and working with EdTec is one of the strategies employed to prevent unforeseen budget challenges. As a financial back-office provider, EdTec has experience working in New Mexico, as well as with charter schools across the nation. With EdTec's long history of charter school financial management and back office support, we are ensuring that we have the best individuals studying our school financials and identifying any potential issues before they may occur.

Our 5-Year Budget for this application ([Appendix G](#)) is written to the assumption that we will receive \$852,800 in CSP funds spanning the implementation year and Years 1 and 2 of operation, however this is a competitive grant for which we need to apply following authorization. For purposes of being prepared, we have worked with EdTec to draft a budget without CSP funds ([Attachment Q](#)). The budget is balanced, but requires that we restructure our staffing model, including delaying the hiring of some leadership positions. Specifically, in the implementation year we would not be able to bring on the second staff member in January (either the Manager of Operations or Office and Community Engagement Manager) to support the opening of the school. Additionally, we would need to delay the hire of our Students Support Coordinator until Year 2 of operation, relying on the use of contracted services to support the oversight of our special education programming. Additionally, without CSP funding, we cut transportation from our budget, a cost savings of \$50,000, with the plan to introduce transportation beginning in Year 2. Other areas of cost reduction include the annual audit, as we would not need to have an audit for the implementation year, as we would be spending less than \$100,000 and the dollars we will spend are private funds from Excellent Schools New Mexico. Classroom and office furniture budgets for Year 1 were also cut, prioritizing the mission-specific elements of our budget. Materials and services for Special Education were not reduced to balance this our sample budget without the CSP grant. [Attachment Q](#) presents a balanced operational budget for Years 1-3 and Year 5,

with a small shortfall in Year 4, which is covered by our fund balance. We anticipate that a deeper study of the budget will allow us to identify further cost cutting opportunities, shall we need them.

Meeting Unforeseen Cash Flow Challenges

As part of the Solare Collegiate startup plan, we have secured non-public funding to provide a cash flow buffer going into the start of the school year. We have secured a commitment from Excellent Schools New Mexico for \$200,000 to be used for startup expenses. A letter of commitment from Excellent Schools New Mexico is included in **Attachment T**. If Solare Collegiate receives the CSP grant, \$175,000 of the Excellent New Mexico startup funds will be allocated to the Year 1 budget, to balance out cash flow issues in the first five months of operation, as we wait for reimbursements from the state for Lease Reimbursement, special education funding at the state and federal level, Title II, and the National School Lunch Program. After Year 1 of operation, we do not anticipate cash flow challenges to occur, as we will have an active reimbursement cycle.

In the case that we do not receive CSP funding, Solare Collegiate will have more significant cash flow challenges. While we are confident that we will present a compelling application for CSP funding, we are also preparing for the possibility of not receiving the funding. We have created a balanced budget without CSP funding, however it does present short term cash flow challenges. Therefore, Solare Collegiate is structuring its relationships with vendors to take advantage of deferred payment options for periods ranging from 30 to 120 days deferred. Based on communications with vendors, we are confident that we can defer at least \$50,000 worth of spending in the first few months of school. The deferred payments coupled with the starting cash reserve will provide the school with ample cash flow at the beginning of the school year to fund critical components of the instructional components of the school, such as special education services prior to receiving the first installment of per pupil funding, including contracted special education services. Our staffing plan includes a Student Services Coordinator and a special education teacher, who will be tasked with reviewing IEPs of incoming students, as well as proactively obtaining any missing IEPs, to ensure that all students are receiving their ancillary services. Deferred payment plans with contracted services will ensure that ancillary services are received promptly and in alignment with students' IEPs, as well as any special education evaluations needed prior to the 40-day count.

Additionally, Solare Collegiate recognizes that many of our cash flows are reimbursement-based, and we have developed a plan to ensure that our reimbursements do not present a cash flow challenge. The Solare Collegiate team intends to negotiate the terms of our lease to include payments to begin at the end of the first quarter, when our Lease Assistance Reimbursement begins. In addition, following Year 1 of operation, we will have a fund balance, which can be used to cover the costs of services that are funded via reimbursement.

Solare Collegiate will work closely with EdTec to ensure that all federal and state reporting is completed thoroughly and on time, ensuring public funding arrives without delay. This attention to detail will ensure that cash flow issues, because of incomplete documentation, does not impact the school.

Special Education Narrative

Solare Collegiate anticipates that many of our funding sources, particularly those related to special education services at the state and federal level, are reimbursement based and cannot be counted on early in Year 1. Solare Collegiate has worked diligently with EdTec to develop a budget that is not only balanced, but ensures that cash flow issues will not occur in Year 1. To ensure that we have sufficient cash flow to cover special education services in the early months of operation, we have allocated \$175,000 of our \$200,000 in private funding from Excellent Schools New Mexico to our Year 1 budget. **Attachment T** includes a letter from Excellent Schools New Mexico explaining that we may allocate the

funding between the implementation year and Year 1. In addition, we have allocated a significant portion of our implementation year CSP funding to the purchasing of curriculum, furniture, and materials for the first year of operation. These two adaptations to our budget result in a positive cash flow of operational funds in Year 1, prior to the reimbursement-based funding streams.

Under-Enrollment Narrative

Solare Collegiate recognizes that student enrollment will pose a significant challenge, as we are a new, unproven school. We believe our robust enrollment plan and will ensure that we hit our targeted enrollment numbers. However, in the case that we are significantly under-enrolled at the beginning of the school year, we have a plan to ensure that the school is financially viable and does not spend the state dollars that we will need to return. The Solare Collegiate Leadership Team and Governing Board will keep fastidious records of student enrollment numbers after our April lottery. At minimum, the Governing Board will review enrollment targets and actuals each month, working with the Leadership Team to adapt our recruitment plans. Recruitment will continue after the beginning of the school year, if we are under-enrolled or are lacking a waitlist, with the hopes of increasing our enrollment prior to the 40 day counts.

At the same time, the Head of School and our EdTec client manager will review the budget prior to the opening of school, to identify cost-cutting measures that do not impact the mission of the school. Student-driven costs, including instructional materials and supplies will first be considered. After analyzing the impact of the natural savings from these items, the staffing plan will be reviewed to ensure that it is aligned with the number and types of teachers needed for the enrollment numbers. If the school is significantly overstaffed, Solare Collegiate will realign its staffing plan to fit the number of students enrolled. If the student enrollment does not allow for the reduction of a teaching staff member, because of the student distribution, the Solare Collegiate team will delay the hire of a Leadership Team member. The priority for the budget would be to ensure that educational programming elements are preserved, while other discretionary or elements not mission-dependent can be scaled back until the enrollment numbers improve. Additionally, after the April lottery, the Leadership Team will regularly review enrollment numbers and work with EdTec to create budgets based on under-enrollment. We believe that an early focus on enrollment will enable us to have a realistic picture of our budget and staffing needs, enabling us to delay hires preemptively.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe budget control strategies as well as budget adjustments that will be made to meet financial budget and cash-flow challenges; Describe budget control strategies as well as budget adjustments that will be made to address the failure to receive any anticipated funding sources; Include explanations that are viable and realistic, based on the professional judgment of experienced, licensed, school business officials; Address how special education students will receive services before special education funding is provided, based on accurate 40-day counts; and

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address how gaps between budgeted students and actual enrollment will be addressed. |
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REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant has fully described what controls and adjustments may be needed if the enrollment does not reach the projected amount. These adjustments are in line with the mission because the applicant intends to work with vendors for delayed payments rather than decrease staff or the program.

Additionally, the applicant takes into account the timing of reimbursements including special education, food service, and others, which are consistent with the plan and budget.

C. Financial Policies, Oversight, Compliance, and Sustainability

C.(1) Provide a description of the internal control procedures the proposed school will utilize to safeguard assets, segregate its payroll and other check disbursement duties, provide reliable financial information, promote operational efficiency, and ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules relative to the proposed school's procedures.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate has developed a draft of our financial policies and procedures, including internal control procedures, which can be found in **Appendix H**. The policies and procedures were created to ensure that we have an internal framework developed that will safeguard our assets, ensure that our payroll is posted and reconciled in a timely manner, our disbursement responsibilities are segregated from our reconciliation responsibilities, ensure that financial information is approached with high levels of fidelity and reliability, and ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal statutes, rules, and regulations. The Solare Collegiate financial policies and procedures were created after the review of financial policies and procedures of high-performing, financially prudent charter schools across the country. Additionally, our policies and procedures have been reviewed by our Client Manager from our intended back-office provider EdTec.

The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will review our financial policies and procedures annually, led by the Finance Committee and with support from EdTec to ensure that our policies and procedures satisfactorily meeting our needs. Internally, we will regularly audit our documentation and approvals on file. The Finance Committee will review our internal findings and make recommendations for the improvement of our financial policies and procedures. The Audit Committee will solicit feedback from the firm conducting our annual audit, and the Governing Board will use any audit findings or expressed concerns as a gauge of the effectiveness of the internal controls.

Solare Collegiate has been working with our intended back-office provider EdTec to build our budget, and in consultation as we build our financial policies and procedures. EdTec has a Client Manager located in New Mexico, holding the requisite license for New Mexico school business office representatives. Additionally, EdTec employs certified accountants and other staff to support the back-office needs for Solare Collegiate. With EdTec as a back-office provider, Solare Collegiate is guaranteed segregation of cash disbursements, payroll, and cash reconciliations, by the design of EdTec's staffing structure. No single employee has responsibilities that cross into the three areas. Clients, like Solare Collegiate, are guaranteed a system of checks and balances in their management of the back office. Specifically, the practice is divided into cash disbursements - non-payroll, cash disbursements- payroll, and cash reconciliation.

- Cash Disbursements - Non-Payroll.** The Manager of Operations will be responsible for the purchase order and invoice approval process and facilitate all communication with vendors. The Manager of Operations will solicit bids and bring contracts to the Governing Board for approval, under the supervision of the Head of School. Approved invoices, in alignment with the budget priorities and with the approval of the Head of School, will be submitted to EdTec's Accounts Payable Department to be processed. Invoices will be submitted to EdTec with the coding aligned to the adopted budget and chart of accounts that aligns to the state coding standards. EdTec will process transactions, and then generate a report for review and quality assurance by the Manager of Operations. Once the report is reviewed and approved for payment by the Head of School, EdTec will issue a payment to the vendor on the invoices. For invoices over \$5,000, requiring a second signature, EdTec will request approval from the Head of School and the Governing Board Treasurer. EdTec will create a check register, which lists all payments made

and an aging report for any unpaid invoices. For an additional layer of financial oversight, the Manager of Operations will combine the previous month's check registers for all payments made on behalf of the school for the Governing Board to review. If we choose to obtain a line of credit, credit card and debit card transactions will have a process that is separate from that of checks to ensure that all documentation is being entered and properly documented. The Manager of Operations, with support of the Office and Community Engagement Manager and supervised by the Head of School, will maintain copies of all purchases and invoice documentation, organized by vendor, for each fiscal year, with the back-office provider keeping electronic versions. Independent contractor payments will require the Manager of Operations to collect W-9s from the vendor, to be submitted to EdTec. EdTec will complete all the required tax reporting to the IRS for vendors.

- Cash Disbursements - Payroll.** The Manager of Operations will manage the employee files, including employment agreements, certifications, credentials, W-3s, I-9s, as well as additional payroll information, including salaries, wages, deductions, garnishments, and direct deposit information. The Manager of Operations will submit payroll information and changes to an EdTech Payroll Specialist on a twice-per-month basis. The Payroll Specialist will process all information, and ensure that there are not inconsistencies, potential errors, or documentation missing, and then generate a payroll preview through our payroll processor. The Head of School will approve or modify the payroll preview as needed. Once the Payroll Specialist receives the Head of School's approval, the Specialist will process the payroll and facilitate the delivery to employees. Quarterly, EdTec will complete all required tax reporting to the IRS and the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department. EdTec will also manage reporting related to retirement.
- Cash Reconciliation.** The Manager of Operations will turn in bank statements and deposit logs every week. Based on the adopted budget, an EdTec accountant will enter and code all revenues into the accounting system. Financial activity not originating within the accounting system, such as payroll activity as well as other activity not processed through the accounts payable system will be entered by an EdTec accountant. Each week, EdTec will complete cash reconciliations to clear checks issued through accounts payable processings and will temporarily acknowledge banking activity until the appropriate documentation is supplied. Additionally, EdTec will maintain a schedule for fixed assets and ensure that all expenses are capitalized and depreciated, as appropriate. EdTec will also ensure that transactions are added to the balance sheet and correctly recognized. The general ledger will be maintained monthly to ensure all items are coded properly.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all the internal control procedures that have been attached in Appendix H; Attach in Appendix H internal control procedures the proposed school will utilize to assure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> safeguard assets segregate its payroll segregate cash and check disbursement duties

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ provide reliable financial information and promote operational efficiency○ ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules;• Attach procedures that—based on the professional judgment of experienced, licensed, school business officials—successfully ensure appropriate segregation of duties; and• Provide a process the school will use to regularly evaluate compliance with the internal control procedures that have been attached in Appendix H and other internal control procedures that will be developed and implemented by the school. |
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REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant has developed a draft of its financial policies and procedures which include the internal control procedures. Each provides a clear process to safeguard assets, ensure payroll is posted and reconciled in a timely manner, disbursement responsibilities are segregated from reconciliation responsibilities, ensure that financial information is approached with high levels of fidelity and reliability, and ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal statutes, rules, and regulations, as described by the applicant. The Manager of Operations will be the point person for financial matters.

C. (2) Identify the appropriate staff to perform financial tasks and ensure that the staff positions are **completely supported** in the organizational structure/chart and in the budget. Clearly provide the qualifications and responsibilities for those positions. Include evidence of a clear plan (e.g., job search process, timelines) to hire and evaluate highly qualified staff no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate has been working with EdTec, an experienced financial back-office provider for charter schools, in order to develop a fiscally responsible budget and to fulfill the financial management of the school. Per our organizational chart and **Section II.D.(1)** of our application, EdTec is a contracted service. EdTec has supported Solare Collegiate in the development of our budget, as well as the preparation of the 910B5 SEG worksheets, and has provided advisement in the preparation of the Financial Framework section of the charter application. The annual contract for EdTec's services is \$59,999 and is reflected in the annual budget. EdTec's services include that of a business manager, accountant, payroll specialist, and accounts payable specialist to fulfill the functional responsibilities outlined in **Section III.C.(1)**. The staff members work directly for EdTec, and EdTec will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate qualifications and responsibilities for each member of their staff. The EdTec Client Specialist in New Mexico holds a current and required New Mexico licensure to operate as a business manager for a school in New Mexico.

Solare Collegiate has been working with EdTec since November 2017 in preparation for the submission of this charter application. We sought out EdTec because of its stellar reputation in the charter school community, locally and nationally. EdTec has worked with Solare Collegiate on a pro bono basis, because of their belief in the Solare Collegiate mission and its ability to fulfill the mission. After authorization, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will vote on whether to extend a contract to EdTec. Assuming the Board approves the contract, we will begin to work formally with EdTec as our back-office provider in late 2018. EdTec will support Solare Collegiate in the development of the official Year 1 budget during the implementation year, well before the beginning of the July 2019 fiscal year. The Solare Collegiate Governing Board will review the performance of EdTec prior to renewing the contract annually.

The Manager of Operations and Head of School will hold key roles in the day-to-day financial management and operational functions of the school. They will manage the day-to-day relationship with EdTec, as well as ensuring that the staff at EdTec have access to information outlined in **Section II.C.(1)**. The Manager of Operations and Head of School should have familiarity or experience with financial and operational management of high performing charter schools in New Mexico and across the nation.

The proposed Head of School is the Lead Founder of Solare Collegiate and has been actively involved in the writing of the budget, the financial framework of the charter application, the proposed financial policies for the Governing Board, and the Internal Control procedures, with the support of EdTec. After authorization, the Governing Board of Solare Collegiate will following the hiring process for the Head of School, as outlined in **Section II.C.(2)**. The Founding Team anticipates that the Head of School will be hired during the first Board Meeting after authorization, well before the beginning of the 2019 school year.

Our implementation year budget has a line item for hiring the Manager of Operation in January of 2019, six months prior to the beginning of the contracted school year. As described in the Manager of Operations job description in **Appendix C**, ideal candidates will need experience with financial tasks, as well as the capacity to learn about the nuances of school finance from the EdTec team.

The proposed contract with EdTec, as well as the positions for Manager of Operations and Head of

School, including recruitment, identification, and evaluation, are reflected in the budget, in **Sections III.B.(1)** and **III.B.(2)**. The job descriptions for the Manager of Operations and Head of School include specific responsibilities related to financial management and supervision (see **Section II.C.(2)** and **Section II.D.(2)**). **Appendix H** outlines all financial tasks and the staff members responsible for each of the tasks.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the appropriate staff to perform each financial task identified in the response to B(1) and all other required financial tasks; • Align completely with the organizational chart from response to D(1) in the Organizational Framework; • Align completely with the budget in A(1) and A(2) responses in Financial Framework; • Describe appropriate qualifications and responsibilities for each of the identified positions; and • Include a plan that will result in the recruitment, identification, the evaluation of candidates, and the hiring of highly qualified staff for each of the identified positions, no later than two weeks prior to the start of the proposed school year.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response clearly describes the in-house staff and contracted services for the financial management and operational functions of the school and aligns with the budget. The narrative provides a thorough description for the appropriate staff to perform each financial task and the plan for recruitment and hiring. The Manager of Operations and Head of School will hold the key roles as well as working with and maintaining the relationship with EdTec.</p>	

C.(3) Provide a **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive plan for** how the Governing Body will provide proper legal and fiscal oversight, include the responsibilities of the state-required audit and finance committees, and explain how these committees will operate in the proposed school's overall governance and management.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

Solare Collegiate will have a standing Finance Committee, which will include Board Members with significant experience in finance, including accounting, small business finance, and public school finance, with the Treasurer serving as the Chair of Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will meet, at minimum, monthly to review the finances of the school and to assess the overall financial health of the school. The Finance Committee will be guided by a financial dashboard, as well as financial statements and other analytical tools provided by our back-office provider, EdTec. The Head of School and EdTec will provide additional information, as requested by the Finance Committee. Each year, the Finance Committee will lead a review of the Board's financial policies and procedures, sharing recommendations to the Board as needed. The Finance Committee will work collaboratively with the Head of School and back-office provider to develop the annual budget and recommend it to the full Governing Board. The Governing Board will be responsible for approving the annual budget within a public meeting. Additionally, the Governing Board will be responsible for approving contracts that are \$10,000 or more annually. The Finance Committee will ensure that the school is in compliance with financial rules and regulations, with the support of the Head of School and back-office provider. Finally, the Finance Committee may be called to support the Governance Committee in determining if there is an actual or perceived conflict of interest related to finances.

In addition to the Finance Committee, the Solare Collegiate Governing Board will also have an Audit Committee, for the purposes of overseeing the annual audit process and developing a final report to issue out to the full Governing Board. The Audit Committee will include Board Members with experience related to auditing, with most of the members not also members of the Finance Committee, to prevent any potential conflict of interests. If the Audit Committee needs additional experience and expertise, the Committee may recruit non-Board Members to provide the skills needed to function as a strong committee. Within our annual budget, we have budgeted \$13,000 for an audit with a state-selected audit firm. The Audit Committee will meet with the audit firm before the start of the audit process to get an overview of the process as a whole, as well as to ascertain what roles and responsibilities the board can expect to prepare for. The Audit Committee will report out their finding from the initial meeting to the Governing Board.

The school Leadership Team, led by the Manager of Operations and supervised by the Head of School, will make sure that the audit firm has access to all financial and non-financial records and documents, as well as ensuring that the documents are maintained throughout the school year, in preparation for the annual audit. The Leadership Team will ensure that any documentation needed by the auditing firm will be provided in a timely manner. Overall, the Audit Committee will provide oversight during the audit process, as well as ensure that the audit firm has access to anything they need to complete the audit.

After the conclusion of the audit, the Audit Committee will work with the Leadership Team and back-office provider to review the audit report and management letter generated from the audit. If the audit report or management letters demonstrate any findings, the Audit Committee will respond to the issue, through the development and implementation of a strategic plan. If necessary, the Audit Committee will call upon the Finance Committee to review and change policies or procedures to prevent audit findings in the future. After the review of the audit report and management letter, the audit firm will present the findings to the Board and the Audit Committee will share its recommendations.

The final audit report will be shared with the charter school authorizers, the State Public Education Department, and any other agencies with which we are required to share this information. Our annual audit will be aligned with the requirements of all federal, state, and local audit requirements and standards, including those that are specific to charter schools in New Mexico and required by the Public Education Commission. Solare Collegiate will also utilize the audit firm for any of the required reporting, such as the annual 990 return with the IRS and other pertinent tax matters.

Both the Audit Committee and Finance Committee will communicate directly with the Head of School, to keep the lines of communication open. The two Committees will work together to best support the mission of Solare Collegiate, through ensuring strong financial oversight and health. Additionally, the Audit and Finance Committees will work collaboratively to further support the full Governing Board's capacity as a Board responsible for the financial oversight and health of the charter school and its adherence to all regulatory requirements.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the Governing Body audit and finance committees will be formed and how they will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Function generally Ensure proper legal oversight Ensure proper financial oversight; Describe how the proposed school's audit and finance committees will interact with the school's management; and Describe how the audit and finance committees will interact with the full Governing Body.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response provides a clear description outlining how the Governance Council will form a Finance Committee and Audit Committee. The response details the responsibilities of each member on the committee and its relationship with the contracted back-office provider. The response includes an overview of the oversight activities, specifies documents reviewed, and communication lines between the committees, staff and back-office provider.</p>	

IV. Evidence of Support

A. Outreach Activities.

A.(1) Provide **clear, comprehensive, and cohesive** evidence that you have developed an effective and thoughtful outreach program. Provide **sound** evidence that you have addressed a broad audience to develop community support for the proposed school. Provide clear descriptions of outreach activities, demonstrating that the applicant is attempting to reach a broad audience and understand the community's needs.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The mission of Solare Collegiate Charter School ("Solare Collegiate") is to equip students with the academic and personal skills needed to excel at the high schools and colleges of their choice. We believe that this mission demands rigorous academics, individualized supports, and purposeful character development. Our mission has been reaffirmed and informed further by engagement with the greater Albuquerque community, with a strong emphasis on the South Valley and West Side communities, both of which incorporate the 87121-zip code.

The Solare Collegiate team began engaging with the community in September of 2017, through meetings with South Valley and West Side community members, members of the Albuquerque business community, community organizations, and families with upper elementary and middle school-aged children. Our founding team has utilized their professional and personal connections, to reach the widest variety and numbers of people in the community. Our community outreach plan included one-on-one meetings, engagement in community events, interacting with community organizations, informational sessions and presentations, and digital outreach via social media. Through our outreach work, we have learned what the southwest quadrant of Albuquerque wants and needs out of a middle school, and those wants and needs have impacted the design of Solare Collegiate.

One-on-One Meetings

The Solare Collegiate team began its community outreach with one-on-one meetings to develop relationships with individuals throughout the greater Albuquerque community, particularly with community members connected to the South Valley and the West Side. During each of these meetings, a member of the Solare Collegiate team shared information about Solare Collegiate, actively listened to community feedback, and built community support for the school. To date, the Solare Collegiate founding team has had over 130 one-on-one meetings and continues to meet with community stakeholders daily. Initial one-on-one meetings led by Lead Founder and proposed Head of School Rachael Sowards were instrumental in ensuring that the Founding Board was fully established and positioned to transition into a Governing Board if authorized. **Figure 53** outlines the one-on-one meetings conducted to build the Founding Board as well as introduce the vision and mission of Solare Collegiate to members of the community. During these one-on-one meetings, prospective members of our Founding Team were asked a series of questions to determine their professional capacity, alignment to the mission of Solare Collegiate, and their available time to allocate to a volunteer project of this magnitude. For example, each potential Founding Team member was asked if they believed that all children should have the opportunity to attend college, thus assessing the mission-fit of candidates. Other points of conversation included the candidates outlining their professional experiences and how they believed their skill set would support the development of Solare Collegiate.

Figure 53 - One-on-One Meetings with Potential Board Members

Date	Name, Title, and Organization	Purpose
September 5, 2017	Mario Burgos, President & CEO, Burgos Group, LLC	1 st Meeting for potential board membership, connections
September 5, 2017	Jeff Hoehn, Executive Director, Carrie Tingley Foundation	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 5, 2017	John DuBois, Branch Manager, Bank of the West	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 7, 2017	Darrell Garcia, Senior Alumni Relations Officer, University of New Mexico	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 12, 2017	Don Schleisman, Hospitality Consultant, Retail Data Systems	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 13, 2017	Dan Hill, Lawyer, McCoy, Leavitt, Laskey, LLC	1 st Meeting for potential board membership, connections
September 13, 2017	Matthew Doxtator, Audit Manager, BPW&C	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 13, 2017	Matthew Loehman, Development and Special Programs Director, The Loan Fund	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 15, 2017	John DuBois, Branch Manager, Bank of the West	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
September 18, 2017	Jeff Hoehn, Executive Director, Carrie Tingley Foundation	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
September 18, 2017	Darrell Garcia, Senior Alumni Relations Officer, University of New Mexico	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
September 19, 2017	Jennifer Anderson, Shareholder, Modrall Sperling	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 19, 2017	Jared Matts, Tax Director and Business Advisor, Atkinson & Co. LTD	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
September 20, 2017	Stephanie Sample, CEO, Sample Consulting Studio	1 st Meeting for potential board membership

September 22, 2017	Norma Binder, former Deputy Superintendent, Bernalillo Public Schools	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 1, 2017	Rich Brody, Professor, UNM	1 st Meeting for potential board membership, connections
October 2, 2017	Amanda Molina, Vice President, Garrity Group Public Relations	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 2, 2017	Michael Wallace, Director of Special Projects, DiVita Medical Group	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 3, 2017	Ed Larranga, President, The Catholic Foundation of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 3, 2017	Peter Lorenz, President & CEO, Unirac, Inc.	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 4, 2017	Jennifer Riodan, Vice President of Community Relations, Wells Fargo Bank	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 4, 2017	David Silverman, Qualifying Broker, Geltmore, LLC	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 4, 2017	Cristin Heyns, Vice President of Human Resources, Blake's Lotaburger	1 st Meeting for potential board membership, connections
October 4, 2017	Janice Honeycutt, Chairperson, Vistage International	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 5, 2017	Laurel Wycleff, Education and Outreach Manager, KNME	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 5, 2017	Jeannette Bahl, Director of Communication and Marketing, United Way of Central New Mexico	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 6, 2017	Subramanian Iyer, Assistant Professor, UNM	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 6, 2017	Kate Telis, Lawyer, Law Office of Kate Telis	1 st Meeting for potential board membership

October 6, 2017	Ryan Stark, Head of Communication and Special Initiatives, New Mexico Museum of Art	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 9, 2017	Lynzie Rowland, Client Experience Manager, Accion	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 10, 2017	Shannon Steffes, Managing Director, Teach for America	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 11, 2017	Leann Karvitz, Vice President, Public Policy and Affairs, Fidelity Investments	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 12, 2017	Amber Macias-Mayo, Partner, Walther, Bennett, Mayo, Honeycutt, PC	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 12, 2017	Deann O'Connor, Creative Director, DSO Creative	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 16, 2017	Michael Wallace, Director of Special Projects, DiVita Medical Group	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 18, 2017	Sonny Gokhale, President, Iron Oak Capital Management	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 18, 2017	Janice Honeycutt, Chairperson, Vistage International	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 19, 2017	Kristin Rortvedt, Executive Director, Ronald McDonald House of New Mexico	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 19, 2017	June and Bill Sales, Retired	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 20, 2017	Laurie Frappier, Director of Development, Supportive Housing Coalition of New Mexico	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 20, 2017	Cristin Heyns, Vice President of Human Resources, Blake's Lotaburger	2nd Meeting for potential board membership

October 23, 2017	Ryan Stark, Head of Communication and Special Initiatives, New Mexico Museum of Art	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 23, 2017	Subramanian Iyer, Assistant Professor, UNM	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 24, 2017	Amanda Molina, Vice President, Garrity Group Public Relations	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 26, 2017	Luis Olivas, HR Consultant, Independent Contractor	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
October 27, 2017	Amber Macias-Mayo, Partner, Walther, Bennett, Mayo, Honeycutt, PC	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
October 27, 2017	Jeannette Brahl, Director of Communication and Marketing, United Way of Central New Mexico	2nd Meeting for potential board membership
November 1, 2017	Peter Lorenz, President & CEO, Unirac, Inc.	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Norma Binder, former Deputy Superintendent, Bernalillo Public Schools	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Janice Honeycutt, Chairperson, Vistage International	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Bill Sale, Retired	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Mike Wallace, , Director of Special Projects, DiVita Medical Group	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Eryn Patchett, COO, Desert Hills of New Mexico	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Amber Macias-Mayo, Partner, Walther, Bennett, Mayo, Honeycutt, PC	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 1, 2017	Subramanian Iyer, Assistant Professor, UNM	Final Interview for Founding Board

November 1, 2017	Luis Olivas, HR Consultant, Independent Contractor	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 3, 2017	Veronica Gonzales-Zamora, Lawyer, Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, Schreck, LLC	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
November 21, 2017	Camille Vasquez, Program Director, ACCESS New Mexico	1 st Meeting for potential board membership
November 30, 2017	Camille Vasquez, Program Director, ACCESS New Mexico	Final Interview for Founding Board
November 30, 2017	Veronica Gonzales-Zamora, Lawyer, Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, Schreck, LLC	Final Interview for Founding Board
February 9, 2018	Alice Brousseau, CFO, French's Funeral Homes	1 st Meeting for potential board membership

In addition to building a founding team, our one-on-one meetings have enabled us to build a strong network of support, across the community and across professional and community organizations. The Solare Collegiate team has met with representatives from highly regarded community organizations, including the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, French Funerals, Atrisco Heritage Foundation, the Rio Grande Education Cooperative, United Way of Central New Mexico, various departments at the University of New Mexico, Instituto Cervantes, South Valley Economic Development Center, as well as many other community organizations. One-on-one meetings dedicated to building community relationships are outlined in **Figure 54**.

Figure 54 - One-on-One Meetings with Businesses and Community Organizations

Date	Name, Title, and Organization	Purpose
September 12, 2017	Seth Saavedra, Educational Advocate, NMeducation.org	Education sector and connections
September 14, 2017	Peggy Sanchez Mills, CEO, Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails	Community organizations focused on children
September 18, 2017	Wendy Deetz, Executive Director, American Advertising Federation New Mexico	Business sector and connections
September 22, 2017	Paul Aguilar, former Deputy Secretary of Education, Public Education Department	Educator sector and insight on public education finance
October 12, 2017	Melissa McCue, Executive Director, Mandy's Farm	Local community organization

October 17, 2017	Abby Lewis, Lawyer, InAccord, LLC	Education sector and insight on charter school law
October 25, 2017	Tim Nisly, Chief Innovator, 101 Property	Local community stakeholder
November 2, 2017	Peter Sanchez, CEO, Atrisco Heritage Foundation & Companies	Local community stakeholder and connections
November 21, 2017	Fernando Ortega, Executive Director, ACCESS New Mexico	Local community stakeholder
November 28, 2017	Tom Antram, CEO, French's Funeral Homes, President of the ABQ Rotary Club	Business sector and connections
November 30, 2017	Joe Cardillo, Senior Digital Strategist, CNM	Business sector and connections
December 1, 2017	Robert Nelson, Program Manager, The Grants Collective	Business sector and connections
December 15, 2017	Denise Garcia, Evaluator, Pivot Evaluation	Local community organization and education sector
December 15, 2017	Curtis Mearns, Senior Evaluator, Pivot Evaluation	Local community organization and education sector
December 20, 2017	Peter Sanchez, CEO, Atrisco Heritage Foundation and Companies	Local community stakeholder and connections
February 6, 2018	Charles Ashley, President, Cultivating Coders	Local community organization and education sector
February 6, 2018	Steve Schroeder, President and CEO, Real Time Solutions	Business sector and connections
February 7, 2018	Rebecca Avitia, Executive Director, National Hispanic Cultural Center	Local community stakeholder and connections
February 7, 2018	Kim Herrera, COO, Bob's Burgers; Atrisco Heritage Foundation Board	Local community stakeholder and connections
February 8, 2018	Jackie Baca, President and CEO, Bueno Foods	Local community stakeholder and connections

February 12, 2018	Dan Newman and Debbie Dupes, Realtors, Commercial Real Estate Services	Real estate insight
February 16, 2018	Michael Sanchez, Director of Sales and Marketing, Hilton Garden Inn	Local community stakeholder and connections
March 6, 2018	Erin Muffoletto, President, Muffoletto Government Relations	Local community stakeholder and connections
March 7, 2018	Ernie C de Baca, President, Hispano Chamber of Commerce	Local community organization and connections
March 7, 2018	Tessah Latson, Barelas Economic Opportunity Center, Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce	Local community organization
March 19, 2018	Local community organization	Local community organization
March 23, 2018	Jeron Campbell, Harvard School of Education	Local community stakeholder
March 23, 2018	Lauren Frappier, Director of Development, Supportive Housing Coalition of New Mexico	Local community organization
April 19, 2018	Jerry Gallegos, West Central Community Development Group	Local community organization
April 20, 2018	Luis Hernandez, Business and Membership Development Director, Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce	Local community organization
May 1, 2018	Angela Reed Padilla, CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central New Mexico	Local community organization

The Solare Collegiate team is committed to bringing a high quality middle school option to the southwest quadrant of Albuquerque. We believe that to have a thorough understanding of the educational landscape in Albuquerque, and specifically in the southwest part of the city, that insight from effective educators is imperative. As a result, the Solare Collegiate team has engaged with various educational entities in the area, ranging from charter schools, educational nonprofits, and practicing educators. One-on-one meetings specific to education can be found in **Figure 55**.

Figure 55 - One-on-One Meetings with Educators

Date	Name and Title	Additional Information
September 11, 2017	Paul Stephenson, Founder and Director of Curriculum and Instruction	The ASK Academy
September 11, 2017	Virginia Padilla, Dean of Education	New Mexico Highlands University
September 12, 2017	Denise del Aguila, Director of Alumni Engagement	Teach for America
September 12, 2017	Melissa Wauneka, Managing Director of Teacher Leadership Development	Teach for America
September 15, 2017	Hope Morales, New Mexico State Policy Director	Teach Plus
September 18, 2017	Isaac Riveras, Teacher Liaison	New Mexico Public Education Department
September 19, 2017	Scott Hindman, Executive Director	Excellent Schools New Mexico
September 19, 2017	Vicki Gonzalez, School Counselor	Albuquerque Public Schools
September 20, 2017	Jade Rivera, Lead Founder	Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School
September 20, 2017	Rafe Martinez, Executive Director	Albuquerque Sign Language Academy Charter School
September 20, 2017	Matt Pahl, Executive Director	New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools
September 22, 2017	Nate Morrison, Executive Director	Teach for America
October 11, 2017	Greg Golden, Assistant Dean of Students	University of New Mexico
October 16, 2017	Amanda Aragon, Executive Director	NMKidsCAN
October 23, 2017	Catron Allred, Director of Education Department	CNM

October 26, 2017	Robert Baade, Principal	RFK Charter School
October 27, 2017	Dan Gerry, Executive Director	WAVE Foundation
November 3, 2017	JoAnn Mitchell, Principal	Mission: Achievement and Success Charter School
December 15, 2017	Katie Rarick, Client Manager	EdTech
December 19, 2017	Mauricia Alarcon Moreno, Director of Curriculum	Instituto Cervantes
December 20, 2017	Michael Lujan, Executive Director	Rio Grande Educational Cooperative
December 20, 2017	Katie Pereira, Head of School	Excel Academy Charter School-Chelsea
February 6, 2018	Katie Rarick, Client Manager	EdTech
February 7, 2018	Meaghan Stern, Co-Founder	Altura Preparatory Charter School
February 7, 2018	Nate Morrison, Executive Director	Teach for America
March 9, 2018	Monica Aguilar, Principal	Nuestros Valores Charter School

The Solare Collegiate team purposefully sought out opportunities to meet with elected officials in Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and representatives at the state and national level, with the goal of clearly communicating the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate to officials representing and voting upon the wants and needs of tax-paying constituents. **Figure 56** outlines the elected officials with whom the team has met.

Figure 56 - One-on-One Meetings with Elected Officials

Date	Name, Title, & Organization	Purpose
February 12, 2018	Steve Quezada, District 2 Commissioner, Bernalillo County	Share mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, support
February 16, 2018	Sarai Torrez, Field Representative, US Representative Lujan Grisham	Share mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, grant search support
February 16, 2018	Stephanie Kean, Field Representative, US Representative Lujan Grisham	Share mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, grant search support

March 5, 2018	Klarissa Pena, City Councilor for District 3, City of Albuquerque	Share mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, support
March 12, 2018	Alan Armijo, Director of Constituent Services, City of Albuquerque	Share mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, support

Community Meetings and Events

Solare Collegiate intends to be a school that is both reflective and responsive to the needs of the community, therefore we value deep, ongoing engagement with all members of our community. Our team has been active participants and regular attendees at community events in the greater Albuquerque community, with a specific focus on events in the South Valley and West Side communities. In **Figure 57** we have listed meetings and events that members of the Solare Collegiate team have attended as representatives of the school since September 2017. As the team fostered relationships with community organizations, regular attendance to ongoing events, such as TAZA at the South Valley Economic Development Center, resulted in deep seeded community support.

Figure 57 - Community Meetings and Events

Date	Event	Purpose
September 9, 2017	Downtown Grower's Market	Networking
September 18, 2017	Rotary Club of Albuquerque Weekly Luncheon	Networking
September 18, 2017	4.0 Schools/ Excellent Schools New Mexico Mixer	Networking
September 19, 2017	Impact & Coffee	Networking
September 21, 2017	Bilingual Story Hour at the National Hispanic Cultural Center	Community engagement
October 16, 2017	Rotary Club of Albuquerque Weekly Luncheon	Networking
October 17, 2017	Impact & Coffee	Networking
October 19, 2017	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking

October 23, 2017	Rally ABQ	Community engagement
October 23, 2017	Rotary Club of Albuquerque Weekly Luncheon	Networking
October 26, 2017	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
October 28, 2017	Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School Board Retreat	Observation of an active charter school board retreat
October 30, 2017	Rotary Club of Albuquerque Weekly Luncheon	Networking
October 31, 2017	Halloween on Forrester Street	Community engagement
November 2, 2017	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
November 22, 2017	1 Million Cups	Networking
November 30, 2017	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
December 18, 2017	New Mexico Education Coalition	Networking
February 5, 2018	West Side Day at the Legislature Social Event	Community Engagement
February 6, 2018	Allies for Educational Equity	Networking
February 10, 2018	Hispano Chamber of Commerce Annual Gala Fundraiser	Networking
February 12, 2018	Rotary Club of Albuquerque Weekly Luncheon	Networking

February 13, 2018	Impact & Coffee	Networking
February 14, 2018	1 Million Cups	Networking
February 15, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
March 8, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
March 15, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
March 22, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
March 22, 2018	South Valley Network Convening	Community Engagement
March 29, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
April 19, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
April 26, 2018	TAZA Weekly Networking	Networking
April 26, 2018	South Valley Network Convening	Community Engagement
April 27, 2018	I LOVE the South Valley Art Exhibit	Community Engagement
April 29, 2018	South Valley Pride Day	Community Engagement

May 2, 2018

Hispano Chamber's Education
Excellence Ceremony

Community Engagement

Presentations and Informational Sessions

The Solare Collegiate team has participated in numerous community presentations and informational sessions, with the focus of sharing the mission and vision as well as specifics of the academic program to community stakeholders. In these sessions, Solare Collegiate was not only able to present the mission, vision, and elements of our academic programming to the community, but we were also able to solicit feedback, questions, and support in a public forum. The formal presentations conducted by Solare Collegiate are listed below in **Figure 58**.

Figure 58 - Presentations and Informational Sessions

Date	Event	Purpose
February 6, 2018	Impact & Coffee	Presentation and Informational Session to Impact & Coffee attendees
February 8, 2018	TAZA-South Valley Economic Development Corporation	Presentation and Informational Session for TAZA attendees
March 6, 2018	Southwest Alliance of Neighbors Meeting	Presentation and Informational Session for neighborhood associations in SW Albuquerque
March 12, 2018	Alamosa Neighborhood Association Meeting	Presentation and Informational Session for the Alamosa neighborhood
March 16, 2018	Festival de Suenos- Cultivando Semillas	Tabling at community event
May 1, 2018	El Centro's Festival Cumunitario	Tabling at community event
May 17, 2018	Atrisco Heritage Foundation	Present to the Atrisco Heritage Foundation Board

Online Presence

In addition to reaching out to community members through one-on-one meetings, presentations, and community outreach, Solare Collegiate has created an online presence to allow virtual community access to information on the proposed school and our community outreach work. We have successfully launched a website, Facebook page, Instagram account, Twitter handle, and an electronic newsletter sent monthly. A petition in support of our school is accessible on our website, embedded in each

monthly newsletter, and posted to our social media pages. We believe that a robust online presence will enable us to further reach community members, particularly younger families with children who will be of appropriate age to enroll at Solare Collegiate in August of 2019. We use our website, newsletter, and social media pages to communicate the mission and vision of Solare Collegiate, as well as to introduce our online community to elements of our academic programming and news related to Solare Collegiate and our community partners. Our online presence can be accessed by clicking on the links below.

- Website: www.solarecollegiate.org
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/solarecollegiate/>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/solarecollegiate>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SolareCCS>
- Petition: <https://www.change.org/p/new-mexico-public-education-commission-solare-collegiate-bring-a-public-college-preparatory-school-to-southwest-albuquerque>
- Newsletter: Subscribe here

Solare Collegiate is designed to be a school that intentionally addresses the academic needs of the southwest Albuquerque community, and to that end, we have taken each step of our community engagement programming with intentionality and urgency. Through our community engagement endeavors, we have received feedback from the community that was directly integrated into our academic program. For example, multiple community members spoke to the importance of including a Spanish language and New Mexico culture component to our academic program. This inspired the inclusion of our core belief that “voice strengthens identity” into our thematic program, as well as a Heritage Spanish course within the Solare Collegiate academic schedule. Further details on community desires for a school are outlined in the Community Support Section (**Section IV B.(1)**). Community feedback, ranging from families to community organizations and business professionals, support the need for a college preparatory middle school in the 87121-zip code. Evidence of our community outreach efforts can be found in **Attachment R: Community Outreach Materials**. Our outreach materials were tailored to the southwest Albuquerque community, including English and Spanish versions, based on guidance from organizations specific to our community. The Solare Collegiate team was intentional in our outreach efforts, to be certain that our target community of 87121 was truly heard and represented.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe an outreach program to develop community support for the proposed school that has been implemented during the application process; ● Describe specific activities that have been implemented, include evidence of implementation; ● Include evidence that demonstrates the activities reached a broad audience that is representative of the whole community; and ● Describe how this outreach has enabled the applicant team to understand community needs.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant has demonstrated a significant history of outreach and community involvement as visualized in the multiple one-on-one meetings and community events attended. Meetings include visits</p>	

with educators, business and community organizations and elected officials, to name a few. In addition, the applicant has an online presence via its website, Facebook page and other social media accounts. Its outreach efforts have been purposefully tailored to the community the applicant intends to serve which confirm the thoughtfulness and amount of work put into the outreach.

B. Community Support.

B. (1) Provide **sufficient measurable**, quantifiable, and **qualitative** data-based evidence of abundant, broad-based support for the proposed school among residents in the targeted community. (For instance, provide the total number of students interested in the charter by grade level. **DO NOT provide names or specific letters of interest from families or students.** If appropriate to support earlier descriptions of the anticipated demographics of the students who will be served by the proposed school, disaggregate the number of prospective students by zip code, school of attendance (current), gender, type of current school (home, private, public), or other pertinent data.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

As a public institution, Solare Collegiate highly values community input, particularly input from community members and stakeholders in the South Valley community. Our outreach efforts have resulted in interaction with hundreds of community members, including community organizations, businesses, and families in the 87121 community. Through our outreach work, it became clear that there is a strong desire for a high-performing, college preparatory middle school option in the 87121-zip code. Solare Collegiate is dedicated to being an educational institution that is a reflection of the community in which we are located, and input from community stakeholders has informed the design of our school, specifically the Voice and Identity focus woven into the academic and organizational programming of the school.

The Solare Collegiate community outreach narrative is further outlined in **Sections IV. A.(1)** and **IV.C.(1)**, and has ranged from one-on-one meetings, attendance at community events and organizational meetings, presentations and tabling events, a robust social media presence, and strategic network building. Our community outreach efforts span the greater Albuquerque community, with a strong focus on the South Valley community. Our efforts resulted in the building of formal and informal relationships with community organizations in the South Valley and West Side communities, including Instituto Cervantes and the Rio Grande Educational Collaborative. Additionally, sitting on our founding board are former and current residents of the 87121-zip code.

Since September 2017, the Solare Collegiate team has participated in over 130 one-on-one meetings with community members. The Solare Collegiate team has attended over 35 community events and presented Solare Collegiate to the community at seven events. Attendance at our presentations has ranged from vested neighborhood associations to children-centered community events such as Festival de Suenos- Cultivando Semillas and El Centro's Festival Cumunitario. Our presentations were received by audiences of 10 to 30, with our tabling events resulting in informal communication with even more families. In addition, the Solare Collegiate founding team has established strong ties to important community organizations and businesses, including ACCESS New Mexico, the Atrisco Heritage Foundation, the Rio Grande Educational Cooperative, the Instituto Cervantes, and many other organizations. Building relationships with established and active community organizations and businesses is imperative for the academic and organizational goals of Solare Collegiate.

The Solare Collegiate reach has been substantially expanded through our active social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as our website. Currently, the Solare Collegiate Charter School Facebook page has 232 "likes" and our newsletter distribution list includes over 150 people. Our Facebook page averages a weekly reach of 450 viewers, and that number continues to grow as we increase the number of our followers. Additionally, our Instagram page has over 100 followers.

At the time of submission, Solare Collegiate had collected 179 signatures on our change.org petition,¹²² calling for the Public Education Commission to recommend Solare Collegiate's application for approval. Our change.org supporters explain their reason for supporting Solare Collegiate:

- "I believe in the mission of the school and I cannot wait to see the amazing things it is going to be for our families in 87121."
- "All students should have a chance to be successful."
- "I know Rachael Sowards and the passion she brings to serving students. Her vision to bring a rigorous academy to the students of SW Albuquerque is worthy of support."

To further collect input from the community, the Solare Collegiate founding team use multiple methods for collecting qualitative feedback from the 87121 and Albuquerque community. To date, we have received 14 letters of support from community members living in the 87121 and 87105 zip codes, in addition to receiving verbal support and interest from dozens of families at our community events. Below are highlights from these family letters of support; the letters of support in their entirety are located in **Attachment S**.

- "My husband and I recently purchased a home in the Southwest area of Albuquerque. We have a son, [REDACTED], who is heading to kindergarten this year and it would be very promising to us, as parents, if there is an option for schooling that supports higher education in our local area. We have currently been looking into all the options for schooling in our school district, and we have found that we need to seek other options elsewhere for our son to get the best education we see fit. I personally have always been a supporter of high education and would love to see a school like Solare Collegiate develop in our community."
- "I had lived in southwest Albuquerque for approximately three years, when I recently moved to northwest Albuquerque for my teenage daughter to attend the middle school in that location. I recognize the critical need for a high school and college preparatory option in southwest Albuquerque, particularly at the middle school level"
- "I am writing this letter in strong support of Solare Collegiate Charter School, a charter mid-school being proposed in my community. My family and I have lived in the Southwest area of Albuquerque for my whole life. I have four children and two grandchildren, all of whom were educated through Albuquerque Public Schools. I have one child in middle school and one in high school and the two grandchildren are about to start school and I know that this area of Albuquerque really needs more options for schooling."
- "I have lived and raised my three children in the South Valley of Albuquerque, NM. They each attended St. Charles Catholic School - the oldest for seven years, the second for six years and the third for three years. Due to financial reasons, I could not afford to pay for private school education beyond that and they were enrolled in the APS South Valley Schools thereafter. I noticed a significant difference in the material that was taught, the low expectations of the students and the discipline fellow students lacked. The schools had a low rating in comparison with other schools in the city, state and in the nation. Our children deserve to be taught at grade level and above and challenged so that their dreams and expectations can be realized through higher education. We want to raise children that will excel in college and be leaders in their fields."

¹²² <https://www.change.org/p/new-mexico-public-education-commission-solare-collegiate-bring-a-public-college-preparatory-school-to-southwest-albuquerque>.

- “My family and I have lived in the Southwest area of Albuquerque for 10+ years. I have two children, all of whom were/are educated through Private and Charter Schools. My oldest has already graduated and is in college, but my son is barely starting his schooling, as he is in kindergarten. Which is why I have the support I do for this Charter School. I know that this area of Albuquerque really needs more options for schooling.”
- “Southwest Albuquerque is in dire need of a school that prioritizes highly rigorous, college preparatory curriculum, while also offering Spanish language and New Mexico Cultural programming.”
- “We have three children, [REDACTED] who is 12, [REDACTED] who is 7 and [REDACTED] who is 5. As a parent, it is difficult to find an excellent school in the southwest in which we feel confident enough to send our children to. All of the surrounding schools are F grade schools. I attended APS in the southwest and it was great because I met great friends whom I’m still friends with today but the education could have been a lot better.”
- “I have 2 children currently enrolled in Albuquerque Public Schools, one of them will be entering mid-school this coming year. We have looked into several charter schools in a desire to have a lower teacher to child ratio. In my search I have found there is a deep need for a college preparatory middle school in the 87121 area. The schools in our area face severe overcrowding which is putting our children at a disadvantage.”
- “My family and I have lived in the Southwest area of Albuquerque for 19 years. I have three children, all of whom were educated through Albuquerque Public Schools. Although my three children are no longer in middle school, I know that this area of Albuquerque really needs more options for schooling.”
- “Solare Collegiate is committed to prepare students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice, a commitment that is shared by myself.”
- “The Solare Collegiate Founding Team has dedicated considerable time to partnering with the community in a way that ensures it will have the backing of Albuquerque’s stakeholders and best serve the needs of this community. Myself as a parent who is seriously concerned with education and as a former educator feels like Solare and myself can make a better way in education for our future students.”
- “We often discuss where we should send her to school once she becomes of age. Currently, we only have two options, public or private school. So it would be very promising to us, as parents, if there was an option for schooling that supports higher education in our local area. Our oldest daughter, [REDACTED], who is currently finishing her Freshman year of high school, and has attended public school since Kindergarten. Although, she excelled in elementary it wasn't until both her 7th and 8th grade years where she struggled. It is now as she is in with an AP English class, has expressed that she doesn't feel like she was fully prepared to handle such a high stress environment, both socially and academically. I personally have always been a supporter of higher education and would love to see a school like Solare Collegiate Charter develop in our community.”
- “I am writing this letter in strong support of Solare Collegiate Charter School, a charter mid-school being proposed in my community. My family and I have lived in the Southwest area of Albuquerque for my whole life. I have three children, all of whom were educated through Albuquerque Public Schools. Although my three children are no longer in middle school, I know that this area of Albuquerque really needs more options for schooling.”

- “As a product of the Albuquerque Public Schools System and a mother of a current sixth-grader, I am well aware of the obvious need for accessible preparatory education in Albuquerque - especially amongst our middle schoolers, where we lose so many young people due to a mere lack of resources. Solare Collegiate’s focus on rigorous academics and the focused support our students need is something Albuquerque just can’t afford to miss out on, particularly for our city’s most underprivileged students. I am beyond thrilled with the efforts the Solare Collegiate Founding Team has devoted to researching the needs of these young students, along with partnering with the community in a way that ensures that it will have the backing of Albuquerque’s stakeholders and best serve the needs of this community.”

The overwhelmingly positive community support indicates that Solare Collegiate is truly wanted in the southwest Albuquerque community. As indicated in the quotes above, families in southwest Albuquerque want school options, particularly a college preparatory option in their own community. Our supporters acknowledge the lack of rigor in the district elementary and middle schools, and how it has impacted student performance in high school. Finally, several of our supporters identified a desire for a less crowded school environment.

Based on our community engagement work, the Solare Collegiate Founding Team has conducted from September 2017 through submission of our charter application, we believe that we have established strong community support at the city level, as well as passionate support by community members and community organizations in our targeted zip code and surrounding communities. We value the relationships that we have built with our community and take the community feedback seriously, as demonstrated by the integration of our Heritage Spanish and New Mexico Culture programming, which was inspired by conversation with our community stakeholders. We recognize that persisting community support is not only vital for our charter application, but also for the viability of our school. Strong community support will ensure that student enrollment goals and community engagement priorities are achieved.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include quantitative data that demonstrates community support from a broad audience for this proposed school; • Include qualitative data that demonstrates community support from a broad audience for this proposed school; • Ensure the demonstrated support includes support within the community of the specific targeted geographic location; and • Describe why the applicant team believes the evidence demonstrates the school will be embraced and supported as the community’s school and that there is abundant support for this school as a part of the community.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The data provided by the applicant indicates that there is community support for a new educational option in the proposed area. The excerpts from social media testimonials and letters of support are impressive and persuasive, demonstrating connections with the greater community and service of identified need.</p>	

C. Community Relationships

C. (1) Clearly demonstrate that you have developed **meaningful and strategic** networking relationships or resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals. (This differs from the formal partnership agreements that are integral to the proposed school's operations, as described in Section II. I (1) of this application.)

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The Solare Collegiate team has dedicated much of its time towards learning about and engaging with the community in which it proposes to serve and learning about and from the South Valley and West Side communities has influenced the design of Solare Collegiate. We will continue to build relationships with community organizations and individuals in the community if authorized, building a robust Solare Collegiate community prior to our doors opening in August 2019. Community members and stakeholders have responded excitedly to Solare Collegiate and have expressed formal support of the school. We have dedicated most of our outreach to the South Valley and West Side communities; our strongest relationships forged are with community organizations and individuals in the South Valley. Based on the outreach work done and the relationships we have built, we believe Solare Collegiate will be enthusiastically welcomed into the South Valley and West Side communities. We have developed strategic relationships with the following organizations in the South Valley and the West Side, as well as throughout the greater Albuquerque community:

- **ABRAZO Technologies.** ABRAZO Technologies is a home-grown, New Mexican small business supporting schools and libraries in their network set ups and day-to-day management of informational technology. Santiago Delgado, owner of ABRAZO Technologies, explained that he believes in the mission of Solare Collegiate, because his middle school and high school experience did not meet his needs, resulting in him dropping out of high school. He wants to support the technological design of a school that strives to attend to the individualized needs of every student.
- **ACCESS New Mexico.** Solare Collegiate will partner with ACCESS New Mexico ("ACCESS NM"), a community organization focused on enriching the lives of children and families in the South Valley and the Westside, through art, culture, community, education, sports, and science. ACCESS NM has provided Solare Collegiate support in engaging with families in our target community and will continue to offer this support. In the future, Solare Collegiate and ACCESS NM will work together to offer after school opportunities for our students, including soccer leagues and music classes. ACCESS NM's Program Director Camille Vasquez is a Solare Collegiate Founding Team member and proposed Governing Board Member.
- **Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce.** The Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, the largest Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in the country, has offered its support of Solare Collegiate. Specifically, the Chamber's Education Committee has offered their support for networking and future fundraising opportunities. Solare Collegiate anticipates a student population that is more than 90% Hispanic; fostering a relationship with a professional organization that supports Hispanic businesses and entrepreneurs will provide Solare Collegiate with the opportunity to be embraced by the Hispanic community in Albuquerque, as well as the opportunity for building mentorships between our students and the business community.
- **Anderson School of Management at the University of New Mexico.** The Anderson School of Management at the University of New Mexico recognizes the connection between K12 and

higher education—the better prepared students are at the K12 level, the stronger impact the Anderson School can make at the post-secondary level. The Anderson School has supported Solare Collegiate in outreach for potential Governing Board Members, which resulted in Subramanian Iyer joining the Solare Collegiate Founding Team.

- **Atrisco Heritage Foundation.** The Solare Collegiate Founding Team is excited to partner with the Atrisco Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the cultural traditions and providing community support to the 87121 community, as well as manage the Atrisco Land Grant. Specifically, the Atrisco Heritage Foundation focuses on economic development, education, and enrichment of culture. The support of the Atrisco Heritage Foundation will provide Solare Collegiate with strong community connections.
- **Bernalillo County Commissioner Steve Quezada.** Steve Quezada is the Commissioner of District 2 for Bernalillo County, which includes the 87121-zip code. He has committed to supporting Solare Collegiate, because he wants the 87121 community to have a variety of school options, including a charter school focused on college preparation and individualized supports. Commissioner Quezada’s team has offered to support Solare Collegiate in connections with resources available in Bernalillo County.
- **Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central New Mexico.** Solare Collegiate is excited for the future partnership between the school and Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central New Mexico, a seminal organization that provides targeted support and mentorship to students across Albuquerque. Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central New Mexico has a strong presence in charter schools, and Solare Collegiate looks forward to partnering with Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central New Mexico, to provide our students with additional opportunities to develop their voice.
- **Building Excellent Schools.** Building Excellent Schools (“BES”) is a national nonprofit dedicated to training high-capacity leaders, who desire to found and lead high-performing, independent charter schools across the country. Rachael Sowards, Lead Founder and proposed Head of School, completed an intensive year-long Leadership Fellowship, which consisted of targeted professional development and the study of over 30 high-poverty, high-performing charter schools across the country. BES will continue to offer Solare Collegiate professional development opportunities for the Leadership Team and the Governing Board.
- **City of Albuquerque Councilor Klarissa Pena.** Ms. Pena is the City Councilor for District 3, which includes the 87121-zip code. She has committed her support to Solare Collegiate, because she believes students in District 3 need a middle school option that focuses on highly rigorous academics. Councilor Pena’s team has offered Solare Collegiate their support in the process for seeking out a facility or land in 87121.
- **City of Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller.** Mr. Keller is the Mayor of the City of Albuquerque. He has committed to supporting Solare Collegiate by connecting the school with after school programming and services offered by the city of Albuquerque, if our facility is located within the city limits.
- **Damian Lara - Former President of the Hispanic Bar Association and Congressional Candidate.** Mr. Lara is the most recent past president of the Hispanic Bar Association and is currently running for a seat in the US Congress. He has committed his support to Solare Collegiate, because he believes middle school is the pivotal point in a child’s education. Mr. Lara is a voting member of the New Mexico Juvenile Justice Continuum Board. He also works with the UNM Summer Law Camp and College Prep Programs, both of which focus on middle school students.

- **Dr. Diana Valdez, Clinical Psychologist.** Dr. Valdez is a clinical psychologist who currently works for the University of New Mexico at their Atrisco Heritage site. She supports Solare Collegiate, because of our anticipated capacity of 416 students. She believes in the importance of a small school community to “shepherd” students towards personal and professional success.
- **Diane Leon, Questa Independent School District.** Ms. Leon is the Bilingual and Title III Coordinator for Questa Independent School District. She has committed her support to Solare Collegiate because of our Heritage Spanish Language and New Mexico Culture programs. Additionally, Ms. Leon will be a resource in the development of our English Language program development and implementation.
- **EdTec.** The Solare Collegiate Founding Team has been working with EdTec to develop a fiscally responsible 5-year budget and overarching financial oversight plan. EdTec is a nationally recognized back-office provider, with a client specialist in New Mexico, and intends to provide back-office support to Solare Collegiate after authorization.
- **Excel Academy Charter School - Chelsea.** The Solare Collegiate Founding Team has developed a strong relationship with BES school Excel Academy Charter School - Chelsea, a high-poverty, high-performing charter school serving a high immigrant community in Chelsea, MA founded through and continuously supported through BES. Excel Academy Charter School - Chelsea is consistently ranked in the top 15 middle schools in the State of Massachusetts. Additionally, the school’s proficiency rates for their students with special needs and English Learners are higher than those of the State of New Mexico as a whole. As our Lead Founder and proposed Head of School has completed extended leadership residencies with the school and working closely with its leadership team, The Excel Academy Charter School - Chelsea Leadership Team will serve as mentors and thought partners with the Solare Collegiate Leadership Team.
- **Excellent Schools New Mexico.** Excellent Schools New Mexico is an organization dedicated to supporting the development of high-performing charter schools in New Mexico. Excellent Schools New Mexico is providing Solare Collegiate with a start-up grant of at least \$200,000 immediately after authorization. Solare Collegiate intends to partner with Excellent Schools New Mexico for professional development opportunities.
- **Gabrielle Uballez, National Organizing Director, US Department of Arts and Culture.** Ms. Uballez is currently the National Organizing Director of the US Department of Arts and Culture and was the previous Executive Director of Working Classroom. An active member of the New Mexico and Albuquerque community, with a specific focus on public education, Ms. Uballez supports the Solare Collegiate mission of preparing students to excel in college preparatory academics.
- **Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce.** The Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce sees a direct connection between education and a robust business community and has supported that belief through engagement in education through advocating for charter schools, as well as through their community outreach programs such as Albuquerque Reads. The relationship between the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce and Solare Collegiate will enable us to engage with leaders in the business community, sharing the mission of our school and the work we are accomplishing. Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce Executive Board Member Peter Lorez is a Solare Collegiate Founding Team member and proposed Governing Board member.
- **Instituto Cervantes.** The Instituto Cervantes and Solare Collegiate have developed a strong relationship, with the goal of supporting our students in their acquisition of balanced Spanish language, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing proficiency. The Instituto Cervantes

will provide Spanish language instruction to Solare Collegiate students during the first two years of operation, and thereafter will provide training and support for our Spanish language teacher.

- **National Hispanic Cultural Center.** The National Hispanic Cultural Center is a prized community organization in Albuquerque located in the South Valley. Solare Collegiate and the National Hispanic Cultural center will partner to develop our New Mexico Culture curriculum, as well as maintain regular communication to families and community members, regarding the ample cultural event opportunities at the National Hispanic Cultural Center.
- **New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association.** The New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association is dedicated to promoting equitable opportunities for Hispanics in education, the community, and in the law profession. Much of their community work is focused on empowering Hispanic students through experiential learning within the field of law. The New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association supports Solare Collegiate in its efforts to provide a college preparatory curriculum, while also balancing Spanish Language and New Mexico Culture classes. The New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association intends to offer its experiential programming to Solare Collegiate students.
- **New Mexico Kids CAN.** New Mexico Kids CAN is an advocacy organization for children in the State of New Mexico. NMKidsCAN garners support for policy that will support student learning in public education. NMKidsCAN supports Solare Collegiate because of its focus on college preparatory academics, with individualized supports, along with its focus on community-prioritized enrichments of Heritage Spanish and New Mexico Culture.
- **Nuestros Valores Charter School.** Solare Collegiate and Nuestros Valores have developed a relationship, recognizing the importance of communication between neighborhood schools. Nuestros Valores was one of the first charter schools to open in Albuquerque and is located in our targeted zip code of 87121. The school is dedicated to educating students identified as “at-risk,” and recognizes the importance of offering a college preparatory option for children in the community.
- **Pivot Evaluation.** Pivot Evaluation provides organizations with multi-level analyses of the effectiveness of a particular program. Pivot Evaluation has offered its services to Solare Collegiate to ensure that our programming is as effective as possible for our students. Representatives from Pivot were most impressed with the community outreach and understanding of the sociocultural aspects of southwest Albuquerque.
- **Rio Grande Educational Cooperative.** The Rio Grande Educational Cooperative is one of the largest after school programs in the State of New Mexico, and it began in the 87121-zip code. Solare Collegiate plans to partner with the Rio Grande Educational Cooperative to offer after school programming, including a hot dinner, for our students. This after school program will customize their programming to fit the needs of our school.
- **Southwest Alliance of Neighbors (SWAN).** The Southwest Alliance of Neighbors “SWAN” is a community organization that brings together each of the neighborhoods in southwest Albuquerque to connect with one another and public servants, including the emergency services, politicians, and education providers. Solare Collegiate looks forward to utilizing SWAN’s deep knowledge about southwest Albuquerque, to make better informed decisions.
- **West Central Community Development Group (WCCDG).** The West Central Community Development Group “WCCDG” is dedicated to revitalizing the West Side community, through supporting small business development and entrepreneurship. Solare Collegiate will partner with the WCCDG to learn about opportunities to engage with local entrepreneurs and develop a

more informed understanding of the community.

The Solare Collegiate team believes that building strong community relationships is the foundation of an excellent school. As a result, we have spent considerable time establishing relationships with community organizations that are both meaningful and strategic. Formal letters of support, outlining agreements and relationships with Solare Collegiate are included in **Attachment T: Networking Relationship Letters of Support**. Informally, the Solare Collegiate founding team has established networking relationships with the South Valley Economic Development Center, the West Central Community Development Group, and the South West Alliance of Neighbors (SWAN). With the fostering of formal and informal relationships with community organizations and stakeholders, we believe we have demonstrated the strong community support for Solare Collegiate. If chartered, we will continue to establish community relationships the planning year and into the opening of Solare Collegiate.

Total Points Available	Expectations
4	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and describe specific meaningful and strategic networking relationships with local community agencies, groups, or individuals that will support the school. Include evidence of these relationships; • Identify and describe specific meaningful and strategic resource agreements with local community agencies, groups, or individuals that will support the school. Include evidence of these relationships; and • Describe why the applicant team believes the identified relationships demonstrate the school will be embraced and supported as the community's school and that there is abundant support for this school as a part of the community.
<p>REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria</p> <p>The applicant's response clearly demonstrates how it has built networking relationships with local organizations to learn about and engage with the South Valley and West Side communities. These include partnerships with programs dedicated to community support and preserving the cultural traditions. The applicant provided a numerous amount of support letters demonstrating a broad base support.</p>	

D. Uniqueness and Innovation.

D.(1) Provide **clear evidence** demonstrating the **uniqueness, innovation**, and significant contribution of your educational program to public education through meaningful comparisons and contrasts with the educational programs of other public schools that serve the same grade levels in the geographic area in which you plan to locate. Ensure that the evidence establishes a compelling demand for the proposed school's educational program.

APPLICANT RESPONSE:

The mission of Solare Collegiate Charter School ("Solare Collegiate") is to prepare our students to excel in the high schools and colleges of their choice. We will do this by balancing rigorous academics aligned to the New Mexico Common Core State Standards for each grade level and by supporting anticipated academic gaps with targeted intervention through our afternoon tutoring block. Based on the academic performance of the elementary and middle schools in 87121, this mission in and of itself is an innovation. In addition to our mission, the following components of the Solare Collegiate academic program provide the students of southwest Albuquerque with a school option that is unique in the 87121 community. Each of these innovative elements are informed by the best practices and proven results of high-poverty, high-achieving charter schools in New Mexico and nationally.

Extended School Day and Year

Based on the data of academic performance of students in the 87121-zip code, 9% of 3rd graders tested proficient in English Language Arts and 16% of 3rd grade students tested proficient in mathematics.¹²³ We anticipate this. We are prepared for this. One of the ways in which we will support our students in reaching grade level proficiency by the end of eighth grade is by extending the time that we spend with students through our school calendar. Research is clear: "[D]emanding that students learn more in the same amount of time is especially counterproductive for students who are behind in grade level, have limited English proficiency, or have special needs."¹²⁴ We believe that extending the amount of time we spend at school will support the academic needs of our students, as well as the professional development needs of our teachers. To maximize the learning opportunities for our students, the following components are incorporated into our annual school calendar.

The Solare Collegiate school day and school year will be extended from that of other schools in the 87121-zip code. Our school year will be 183 days. Students who wish to access school breakfast may begin arriving at 7:20am, with the regular school day beginning at 7:40am. The school day concludes at 4:15pm on Monday through Thursday, and at 2:00pm on Fridays. In the typical week, students at Solare Collegiate receive 465 minutes of daily instruction between 7:40am and 4:15pm, not including 50 minutes for breakfast and lunch. On Fridays, Solare Collegiate operates on an abbreviated schedule. During abbreviated days, our students receive 370 minutes of daily instruction, as well as 50 minutes for breakfast and lunch. After student dismissal, teachers have two hours of weekly professional development focused on instructional practice, student achievement, and data analysis. In total, students at Solare Collegiate receive 2230 minutes (37 hours, 10 minutes) of academic instruction in an average week. In contrast, middle schools in the 87121-zip code average about 1,995 minutes (31 hours, 15 minutes) receiving academic instruction each week. See **Figure 59** for the breakdown of school schedules. Note 30 minutes was removed from the daily schedule to account for lunch at each of the district and charter schools listed.

¹²³ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

¹²⁴ Farbman, David, and Cairry Kaplan. *Time for Change*. 2020 Education Opportunity. Fall 2005.

Figure 59 - 87121 Instructional Time

School	Daily Schedule	Minutes Per Week	Days Per Year	Hours Per Year
La Academia de Esperanza	8:15am-3:00pm	1,995 (31 hours, 15 minutes)	178	1,112.5
Jimmy Carter Middle ¹²⁵	8:14am-3:00pm	1,995 (31 hours, 15 minutes)	178	1,112.5
RFK Charter School ¹²⁶	8:15am-3:00pm	1,995 (31 hours, 15 minutes)	178	1,112.5
Truman Middle ¹²⁷	8:15am-3:01pm	1,995 (31 hours, 15 minutes)	178	1,112.5
Average		1,995	178	1,112.5
Solare Collegiate	7:40am-4:15pm	2,230 (37 hours, 10 minutes)	183	1,360.3

Solare Collegiate students will spend 247.8 more hours in school each year, equaling an additional 36.7 Albuquerque Public Schools days of academic instruction per year. Over four years at Solare Collegiate, students will receive an additional 147 days of school-- nearly an entire extra year of instruction when compared to Albuquerque Public Schools. When compared to the state minimums outlined in NMSA 22-2-8.1 our schedule results in 46.7 more days per year than the minimum requirements.

Literacy Focus Across the Content Areas

At Solare Collegiate, we believe that literacy is foundational; therefore, literacy is at the foundation of each of our core content classes. Our middle school students will receive 130 minutes of literacy-based instruction each day, with a traditional Language Arts course, a course focusing on textual analysis, and 30 minutes of accountable independent reading of self-selected texts each day. In addition, our Social Studies classes and our Monday through Thursday Science classes are taught from a non-fiction literacy perspective. Our students use the reading and writing skills studied in their textual analysis classes and apply them during their Social Studies and Science classes. Finally, we will include integrated literacy skills in math courses, ensuring our students not only are computing math but are able to articulate the steps taken to get to the solution, in written and oral form. Our intensive focus on literacy differs from the district and charter schools in the 87121-zip code, where students take one English/Language Arts course per day, with some students receiving additional remediation coursework as needed.

¹²⁵ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/middle-school-bell-schedules>.

¹²⁶ <http://www.rfkcharter.com/parents/parent-and-student-handbook>.

¹²⁷ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/middle-school-bell-schedules>.

Oral Literacy

A priority of Solare Collegiate is for our students to develop a strong voice. By that we mean a strong sense of self, described in further detail below, as well as being comfortable speaking in a variety of situations. During instructional planning, our teachers will be encouraged to incorporate student voice - through discussions, presentations, and partner-sharing. In fact, our teachers will be expected to spend no more than 30% of the class time doing “teacher talk,” such as direct instruction or teacher-led conversations. We believe that students should do the “intellectual heavy lifting” in every class, which includes struggling to find a solution or make a connection through academic conversation. Our instructional practice for oral literacy will be based in *Great Habits, Great Readers* Habits of Discussion.¹²⁸

Double Blocks of English/Language Arts and Mathematics

Based on local school performance data, we anticipate that a significant number of students will enroll with us reading below grade level. Thus, we have built an academic schedule that includes two English/Language Arts classes and two Mathematics classes each day. With our ambitious goal of our students being on grade level by the conclusion of 8th grade, we believe that double blocks of English/Language Arts and Mathematics are necessary to achieve the goal. Unlike other schools in the 87121-zip code, our dual blocks of English/Language Arts and Mathematics are regular classes, not intervention classes. For students needing additional intervention, they will receive specialized instruction during our tutorial period in the afternoon as part of our extended day program. Each student will take a traditional English/Language Arts class, with a purposeful emphasis on oral literacy. Additionally, each student will take a Textual Analysis course, which focuses on Common Core Standard 1 - Citing Textual Evidence. In the Lower Academy (grades 5 and 6) our students will take two math courses, one a foundational course focused on mental math and number sense, and the other a conceptual math class focused on the grade level Common Core State Standards. In the Upper Academy (grades 7 and 8), students will have a double block of math, equaling 100 minutes (or two class blocks) focused on Pre-algebra in 7th grade and Algebra in 8th grade. These double blocks are fundamental to achieving our goal of students being on grade level by the conclusion of 8th grade.

Heritage Spanish Program and New Mexico Culture Curriculum

Solare Collegiate will partner with the Instituto Cervantes to develop an individualized Heritage Spanish program. With more than 50% of families in the 87121-zip code identifying Spanish as the primary language spoken at home, we believe it is important to include Spanish as a part of our academic programming. With that, the Heritage Spanish program will take into the consideration the unique needs of students with a range of Spanish language proficiency. Priorities for the Heritage Spanish program include developing reading and writing Spanish proficiency, in addition to speaking and listening proficiency. It is our goal that Solare Collegiate students will develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening proficiencies that will allow them to successfully take the DELE Spanish Diploma at levels A1, A2, and B1 for school children (ages 11-17).¹²⁹ The Instituto Cervantes is not currently working with any other schools in the 87121-zip code.

Each Friday, Solare Collegiate students will study New Mexican Culture, through a curriculum created collaboratively by Solare Collegiate and the National Hispanic Cultural Center. The weekly curriculum will focus on arts, culture, food, and traditions of New Mexico, with a particular emphasis on the South

¹²⁸ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. (2013). *Great Habits, Great Readers: A Practical Guide for K-4 Reading in the Light of Common Core*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

¹²⁹ <https://exámenes.cervantes.es/es/dele/que-es>.

Valley community. A New Mexico Cultural studies program at the middle school level, spanning all four years, is a programmatic element that is completely unique to Solare Collegiate.

Voice Strengthens Identity

Solare Collegiate will use a trimester system, and within each trimester there will be a thematic focus on identity. Each year, the thematic focuses are outlined in **Figure 60**.

Figure 60 - Thematic Identity Focuses

Trimester	Identity Focus
1st Half Trimester 1	Self
2nd Half Trimester 1	Solare Collegiate (school community)
1st Half Trimester 2	South Valley & West Side
2nd Half Trimester 2	New Mexico
1st Half Trimester 3	United States
2nd Half Trimester 3	World

Each theme will be used to frame the unit planning in each class. We believe that as students are approaching their English, Math, Science, and Social Studies coursework from the lens of their specific identities, they will have a clearer understanding of how each course contributes to the further development of their identity. As our students examine their identity from each of these lenses, they will become more confident in themselves, developing the figurative voice to couple with the physical voice Solare Collegiate will support students in developing.

Content Specialization Beginning in 5th Grade

Unlike other 5th grade classes in the 87121-zip code, our 5th grade students will have content-specialist teachers, such as those used in the traditional 6-8 middle school model. We believe that the rigor of content area courses in 5th grade necessitates having teachers who are specialists in a specific content area, resulting in a more rigorous academic programming in all the content areas.

Teachers Transition Classes

Solare Collegiate students will not transition from classroom to classroom, as typically seen in the traditional middle school model. Instead, our subject area teachers will transition from classroom to classroom. Albuquerque Public Schools allows for up to 30 minutes of passing periods during the school day¹³⁰, and at Solare Collegiate we want to use every minute for instructional time. In addition, students will have a sense of ownership and safety, because the classroom belongs to the students, with each student having their own desk and storage cubby at the back of the classroom. Instead of teachers being siloed in their classrooms, Solare Collegiate teachers will have a common professional workspace, with each teacher receiving a desk and storage space and they will have a cart to move their materials from room to room. Basic classroom materials will be available in all classrooms, easily accessible to teachers.

The unique and innovative elements of Solare Collegiate are integral for the achievement of our mission.

¹³⁰ <http://www.aps.edu/about-us/policies-and-procedural-directives/procedural-directives/i.-instruction/school-schedule-guidelines>.

Solare Collegiate's aim is not to be innovative for the sake of being unique; our aim is to demonstrate that proven best-practices are applied in a structured school setting that all students are capable of academic and personal success. We want to be a proof point that all students can and will learn, and want to share our successes with the wider educational community in 87121, in Albuquerque, and across out state.

Compelling Demand

Through numerous conversations with families, community members, and the business community, it is clear that there is a strong desire for Solare Collegiate to open in the 87121-zip code. As one of our supporters explains,

"As a product of the Albuquerque Public Schools System and a mother of a current sixth-grader, I am well aware of the obvious need for accessible preparatory education in Albuquerque--especially amongst our middle schoolers, where we lose so many young people due to a mere lack of resources. Solare Collegiate's focus on rigorous academics and the focused support our students need is something Albuquerque just can't afford to miss out on, particularly for our city's most underprivileged students. I am beyond thrilled with the efforts the Solare Collegiate Founding Team has devoted to researching the needs of these young students, along with partnering with the community in a way that ensures that it will have the backing of Albuquerque's stakeholders and best serve the needs of this community."

In addition to the voices of parents and community members, the quantitative data also supports the need for a rigorous, college preparatory middle school option in the 87121-zip code. Solare Collegiate is needed in 87121 for three primary reasons: (1) The community has experienced substantial growth in the last 20 years; (2) School performance in the zip code is significantly below that of Albuquerque Public Schools and the state; and (3) The community is lacking diversity in school choice options.

Regarding population density, the 87121-zip code is the fastest growing zip code in the greater Albuquerque area. In 2000, 39,006 people lived in 87121; the estimated population of the zip code in 2015 was 78,626.¹³¹ In addition to growing rapidly, the demographics of this zip code differ significantly from the rest of Albuquerque and New Mexico, as well as the United States.

In this zip code, 76.85% of the population is Hispanic, which is significantly higher than the New Mexico (42.16%) and national averages (13.7%)¹³²; 47.5% of residents in 87121 said that they speak English in the home, with 50.4% of residents reporting that Spanish is the primary language spoken at home; 19.1% of the residents were born outside the United States, with 23.9% of that demographic holding naturalized citizen status. The number of foreign born residents is double our state average.¹³³

Within this community, 70.72% of the adults have a high school diploma, which is lower than state and national averages. In the same community, 8.28% of the population has earned a bachelor's degree, which is significantly lower than the state average. Average income in the 87121-zip code is \$34,359, with an unemployment rate of 11.8%.¹³⁴ All schools in the 87121-zip code are Title I schools, indicating the high percentage of low income students attending school in this zip code.¹³⁵

Because of the growth of the zip code, the two middle schools in 87121 are over-crowded. In fact,

¹³¹ <http://www.city-data.com/zips/87121.html>.

¹³² <http://zipatlas.com/us/nm/albuquerque/zip-87121.htm>.

¹³³ <http://www.city-data.com/zips/87121.html>.

¹³⁴ <http://www.city-data.com/zips/87121.html>.

¹³⁵ <http://www.aps.edu/title-i>.

Albuquerque Public Schools cites Truman Middle School as “one of the largest middle schools in the State of New Mexico”¹³⁶ with a student enrollment of 1,437. Jimmy Carter’s enrollment is reported as 1,345.¹³⁷ Solare Collegiate Charter School will introduce to the community an extended middle school that is approximately 1/3 the size of local middle schools. This will give students and parents a middle school option significantly smaller in class size (26 students per class), an option for students who are not comfortable in larger school communities. Additionally, another middle school reduces the number of students enrolled at Jimmy Carter and Truman Middle Schools.

The most recent PARCC assessment data (2017) indicates that a majority of students in New Mexico are below grade level in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics.¹³⁸ In the third grade, students in the 87121-zip code are performing significantly below the state and district average proficiencies¹³⁹ in English Language Arts and Mathematics as illustrated in **Figure 61**.

Figure 61 - 2017 3rd Grade PARCC Proficiency Rates¹⁴⁰

	Percent Proficient or Advanced ELA	Percent Proficient or Advanced Mathematics
State	27%	30%
Albuquerque Public Schools	23%	28%
87121 (APS)	9%	16%

Looking closer, the rate of proficiency for middle school students in Albuquerque Public Schools currently (and chronically) falls lower than the state average, and the average rate of proficiency for middle school students in the 87121 district is lower than the state and district average, as displayed in **Figure 62**.

Figure 62 - 2017 Middle School PARCC Proficiency Rates¹⁴¹

	Percent Proficient or Advanced ELA	Percent Proficient or Advanced Mathematics
State	29%	21%
Albuquerque Public Schools	27%	19%
87121 (APS)	11%	6%

English/Language Arts proficiency rates in 87121 rose slightly from 3rd to 8th grade, however the percentage of students proficient in mathematics declined from the 3rd-grade numbers, as displayed in **Figure 63**. Average proficiency rates increase in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics from 4th

¹³⁶ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/schools/truman>.

¹³⁷ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/schools/jimmy-carter>.

¹³⁸ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

¹³⁹ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

¹⁴⁰ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

¹⁴¹ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

to 5th grade, with both percentages of proficiency dropping in 6th grade, with a continued downward change through the rest of middle school. Because of this observable and pressing need in 87121, Solare Collegiate's proposal of a 5th through 8th grade school is an intentional design decision meant to provide students with strong, intensive instruction with teachers who teaching using similar instructional best practices. As reported by the New Teacher Project, "A few years with effective teachers can put even the most disadvantaged students on the path to college. A few years with ineffective teachers can deal students an academic blow from which they may never recover."¹⁴² For that reason, Solare Collegiate will dedicate great attention to the development and support of our teachers, ensuring our students have truly impactful teachers for each subject area, providing students with an opportunity for transformational educational change, and putting them on the path towards college.

Figure 63 - 2017 PARCC Proficiency Rates in 87121, by Grade Level¹⁴³

87121 Grade Levels	Percent Proficient or Higher ELA	Percent Proficient or Higher Mathematics
3 rd	9%	16%
4 th	11%	9%
5 th	15%	15%
6 th	13%	6%
7 th	12%	5%
8 th	10%	5%

Albuquerque Public Schools graduation rate is 66%, which is below the 71% graduation rate of the state and the national high school graduation rate of 83%.¹⁴⁴ Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, students in New Mexico must earn a score of a 4 or 5 on the eleventh grade PARCC assessment to qualify to graduate from high school.¹⁴⁵ Considering the status of graduation rates of local high schools, if the current rates of proficiency do not improve dramatically, it is reasonable to expect that graduate rates will drop significantly lower, particularly in the 87121-zip code. Students in our zip code already significantly underperform APS and state proficiency averages, which is well below the rate of proficiency needed to pass the 11th grade PARCC assessment with a 4 or 5. For students to show proficiency on the 11th grade PARCC, they need to enter high school with a solid foundation in elementary and middle school level English Language Arts and Mathematics. At Solare Collegiate, our extended school day and year, along with our rigorous academics, including 130 minutes of daily literacy-based instruction and 100 minutes of daily math instruction will support our students in their quest to be proficient on the 11th grade PARCC, and their quest to attend the colleges of their choice. We believe our individualized supports and focus on character development will further support our students in being prepared for academic success.

Within the 87121-zip code, there are six elementary schools (Helen Cordero Primary serves grades K-2), two middle schools, and two high schools. In addition to traditional district schools, there are three

¹⁴² TNT. (2010). Teacher Evaluation 2.0. <https://tntp.org/assets/documents/Teacher-Evaluation-Oct10F.pdf>.

¹⁴³ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.abqjournal.com/928826/gov-announces-record-nm-graduation-rate.html>.

¹⁴⁵ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). Graduation Requirements. http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Graduation_index.html.

charter schools, one high school and two combined middle-high schools. For the 2016-2017 school year, only one school in 87121 earned an A on the New Mexico School Report Card - Helen Cordero Primary.¹⁴⁶ **Figure 64** outlines the 2017 school grades for each school in 87121. The School Report Card, which includes school proficiency rates, student growth rates, student and parent survey results, school improvement, and graduation rates (high schools), results reveal that in addition to low levels of proficiency, students in the 87121-zip code are not proficient in grade level English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

Figure 64 - 2017 School Grades in 87121 Zip Code

School	State School Grade
Elementary Schools	
Alamosa Elementary	D
Carlos Rey Elementary	C
Ed Gonzalez Elementary	F
Helen Cordero Primary ¹⁴⁷	A
Maryann Binford Elementary	F
Rudolfo Anaya Elementary	D
Middle Schools	
Jimmy Carter Middle	F
Truman Middle	D
Middle/High Schools	
La Academia de Esperanza	D
RFK Charter School	F
High Schools	
Atrisco Heritage High	C
Nuestros Valores Charter	D
West Mesa High	C

The 87121-zip code currently has three charter schools - La Academia de Esperanza, Robert F. Kennedy

¹⁴⁶ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). School Grading. <http://aae.ped.state.nm.us/>.

¹⁴⁷ Helen Cordoba Primary is a grades K-3 school.

Charter School, and Nuestros Valores Charter School. La Academia de Esperanza focuses specifically on educating “at risk” student populations, including institutionalized populations.¹⁴⁸ Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Charter School focuses on computer-based, individualized learning for “at risk” student populations.¹⁴⁹ According to the Albuquerque Public Schools website, Nuestros Valores focuses on school-to-career curriculum and is designed for students who have not been successful in traditional classroom settings.¹⁵⁰ Only two of the schools offer middle school options - La Academia de Esperanza and RFK, however all three have consistently performed low on state School Report Cards and have student proficiency rates that are lower than the district schools in the zip code, as displayed in **Figure 65**.

Figure 65 - 87121 Charter School Report Card Grades and Proficiency Levels¹⁵¹

	School Grade	ELA Proficiency	Math Proficiency
La Academia de Esperanza	D	7%	4%
Nuestros Valores Charter School	D	4%	<2%
Robert F. Kennedy Charter School	F	6%	<2%

There is a great need for high performing schools in the Albuquerque area, and especially within the 87121-zip code. While there are schools of choice in 87121, the schools are dedicated to serving “at-risk” student populations. There is not a school of choice option dedicated to preparing students for high school and college success. Solare Collegiate Charter School will provide students with rigorous academics in all of their classes, coupled with individualized supports to attend to any academic gaps of knowledge, ensuring that students can attend high schools and colleges of their choice. Additionally, with our intentional attention to character education, Solare Collegiate prepares students with the “soft skills” needed to be a successful and proactive community member.

Total Points Available	Expectations
8	<p>A complete response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the uniqueness, innovation, and significant contribution of your educational program to the broader or the local NM public education environment; Include meaningful comparisons and contrasts with the educational programs of other public schools that serve the same grade levels in the geographic area in which you plan to locate; and Describe how the applicant team knows there is a compelling demand for the

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/schools/la-academia-de-esperanza>.

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/schools/robert-f-kennedy-high>.

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.aps.edu/schools/schools/nuestros-valores>.

¹⁵¹ New Mexico Public Education Department. (2017). PARCC Proficiencies 2017.

	proposed school's educational program in the geographic area in which the school plans to locate.
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REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION: Meets the Criteria

The applicant retells the unique qualities of the proposed school, including the extended school day and year, literacy focus across the content areas, oral literacy, FOCUS blocks, cultural curriculum, voice and content specialization. The applicant's response used data effectively to compare and contrast it to other educational institutions in the area which demonstrated how the proposed school is set apart from the others.

Appendices and Attachments

Appendix Number	Appendix Description	Attached (Check if Yes)
A	Governing Body Bylaws	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
B	Head Administrator Job Description	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
C	Job Descriptions for Certified, Licensed, and Other Key Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
D	Proposed Agreements Governing Third Party Relationships and Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) (*Required if applicable*)	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	PSFA-Approved Projected Facility Plan Documentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
F	Five Years of 910B5 State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) Computation Revenue Estimate Worksheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
G	Five-year Budget Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
H	Internal Control Procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>