



## APS Charter Schools' Continuous Learning Plans - Executive Summary

### Introduction

In March of 2020 New Mexico closed schools due to the novel Coronavirus pandemic. All thirty-one of the APS Charter Schools created Continuous Learning Plans (CLP) in early April. APS' Office of Innovation and School Choice reviewed all of these plans. The key themes that emerged are agility, comprehensive support and spirit of collaboration. These were the characteristics that APS charter schools exhibited while transitioning quickly to providing continuous learning and support in a virtual environment. They also maintained hope as they ventured into a new way of providing teaching and learning.

### ***Agility***

Schools reported that their operational flexibility promoted a somewhat seamless transition to a new learning model and student support system. Charter schools demonstrated agility, through immediate planning and making a quick transition to a new way of operating and engaging learners in online learning while schools building remained close.

### ***Comprehensive support***

Charter schools were able to build on practices that they already had in place as they shifted to a new way of teaching and learning. In their effort to provide comprehensive support in a new mode of delivery, all of the charter schools implemented video conferencing software in order to hold virtual staff meetings, conduct professional development, provide synchronous sessions of instruction for students, provide person to person targeted instruction, social emotional support, and/or provide communication to families and individual students during this time of social distancing. Charter high schools extended individualized attention to their seniors working closely with them in support of their progress toward graduation.

All of the charter schools recognized the importance of maintaining a focus on wellness and the emotional health of their students and have put supports in place going up and beyond in maintaining contact with families. In addition, many charter schools provided extensive support to parents, ensuring they had access to the appropriate resources related to; computers, internet, how to use technology, continuous learning plan expectations, schedules, Tele-health support, access to food, access to rental assistance, as well as connecting them to services available within Albuquerque (for example, unemployment).

## ***Spirit of Collaboration***

As the proverb states, “it takes a village to raise a child.” Charter Schools recognize this to be true and they seek out ways to leverage collaboration as an integral part of developing learners in the greater Albuquerque area. It is evident that charter schools realize that collaboration is the key to success during these trying times. Most school staffs collaborate internally as well as externally with the APS Charter School team, other schools, their families as well as the community.

Charter schools have taken this tremendous opportunity to model relationship building, by collaborating within the community, providing continuous contact with students and families, and in some cases looking nationally and globally to create learning partnerships. It is this spirit of collaboration and these interactions that support hope and make everything feel possible during these extreme circumstances.

## **Summary**

Charter schools have gathered feedback and reflected on what they have learned from implementing their Continuous Learning Plan. Schools have embraced what teachers and student have learned during this time and what to design a system that best supports teaching and learning for their students by allowing the place of learning to be wherever the student is at that point in time.

Charter schools will need a certain tolerance of ambiguity as the pandemic unfolds. They will need to conduct scenario planning in order to be prepared for what may or may not occur. As charter schools plan for the upcoming year it will be integral for the schools to continue with agility, their spirit of collaboration and focus on social emotional supports in providing comprehensive support for their students. Returning to school after this global pandemic will call for transformational leadership in education.



## APS Charter Schools' Continuous Learning Plans Full Report – Spring 2020

### Introduction

On March 13, 2020 the Governor of New Mexico issued an Executive Order directing the closure of all public schools in an effort to minimize the spread of Coronavirus. Two weeks later the New Mexico Public Education Department (NM PED) announced that public schools in NM would remain closed for the remainder of the school year. At this time the Deputy Secretary of Teaching, Learning and Assessment set the expectation that every school district would create and submit a Continuous Learning Plan (CLP) to outline how they planned to support students in learning for the remainder of the school year. All of these CLPs were due to the NM PED on April 8, 2020.

As soon as the APS authorized charter schools closed, the Office of Innovation and School Choice took immediate action by;

- Providing timely communications to charters related to state directives
- Sharing information from the district with charter leaders
- Quickly engaging the charter school leaders in virtual meetings (Charter Leader Design Team and Charter Leader weekly meetings for the first month) which allowed for collaboration
- Engaging with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). Dr. Joseph Escobedo national presenter for NACSA Authorizer Community Conversation on COVID-19 topics included District Support to Charter Schools, Virtual Site Visits, and Vulnerability among Leaders
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers names Dr. Joseph Escobedo as a member of the National Authorizing Advisory Board. 12 members selected from across the country.
- Providing charter schools with regular updates on Special Education
- Continuing with annual Spring Site Visits with all 31 Charter Schools through virtual meetings and a revised protocol. This included review of charter schools Financial Corrective Action Plans (CAPs)
- Providing charter schools with regular budget/finance updates, including support of multiple budget scenarios for FY 21
- Providing support to the 10 charter schools that are due for Charter Renewal
- Providing any necessary support to Charter Leaders related to creating CLPs

## Charter School Continuous Learning Plans

All thirty-one of the APS Charter Schools submitted Continuous Learning Plans along with signed Assurances Documents to the NM Public Education Department the second week of April 2020. Each plan outlines what the school will be doing to ensure continuous learning and support for all students, while schools remain closed due to the novel Coronavirus. This report provides a summary of the key themes identified in the review of the thirty-one Continuous Learning Plans. It also highlights some of the innovative practices that charter schools are able to implement and provide within the framework their educational autonomy.

*“Our world as we know it has completely changed and we are all in uncharted territory but the staff at Siembra has what we need in order to make this successful for our students.” – Siembra Leadership High School*

### Themes

In reviewing all of the APS Charter School Continuous Learning Plans several themes emerged. The key themes include agility, comprehensive support and spirit of collaboration. The charter schools leveraged these characteristics when they first learned of school closure and as they prepared and planned for the transition of engaging students in a meaningful way using different modes during this global pandemic. They also maintained hope and the sense of possibility as they ventured into a new way of teaching and learning.

*“Through all of this, our hope is to minimize the stressors and provide tools to support a new way of learning.” – International School at Mesa del Sol*

### Agility

Charter schools demonstrated agility, through immediate planning and making a quick transition to a new way of operating and providing continuous learning while school buildings remained close. Schools reported that their operational flexibility promoted a somewhat seamless transition to a new learning model and student support system.

*“Remaining flexible and ready to adjust as this situation continues to evolve is paramount.” – El Camino Real Academy*

Most charter schools reported that they were able to survey parents/students on their technology and social emotional needs prior to closure and several charters began creating learning plans in the second week of March 2020, completing professional development with teachers and staff by the week of March 16<sup>th</sup> (Examples include: East Mountain, El Camino Real Academy, Albuquerque Academy Charter). East Mountain High School received feedback in their family survey that their quick response to continue learning was greatly appreciated by families as their students stayed engaged in their learning.

*“Our intense effort to move the school online quickly was to intentionally address the social emotional needs of our students by reconnecting them with their teacher and classrooms as quickly as possible.” – El Camino Real Academy*

Several secondary charter schools had previously utilized online platforms or learning management systems (for example: Google Classroom) allowing for a smoother transition to fully online learning for teachers and students. (Examples: 21<sup>st</sup> Century, ABQ Charter Academy, Alice King (Grades 6-8), Cottonwood Classical, Health Leadership, PAPA, Siembra Leadership, Technology Leadership).

ABQ Academy Charter is a blended-learning school with online learning already a cornerstone of their model, which supported a smoother transition to fully online learning. Building on their existing model allowed they created a Continuous Learning Plan for the short term and have already reflected on how the current closures dovetail into their plan to add a virtual school option for their students in the Fall. The current situation has sped up their plan as they have already delivered professional development for online delivery to all of their teachers. In April they registered new scholars and will on-boarded them through a virtual orientation and gradual integration into the curriculum.

The characteristic of autonomy allowed charter schools to quickly launch continuous learning plans, provide professional development, disseminate devices and communicate to their students and families prior to when their CLP was due to the NM PED. Many schools reported that their quick response to the pandemic and immediate leadership action has helped them to engage students and families early which has increased the number of students who are engaged and retained through this drastic shift.

Every charter school immediately surveyed students and families to understand their technology needs and quickly identified those who needed computer devices, internet access, or both in an effort to support equity by providing accessibility to online learning. Every charter school disseminated computer devices that they had to students who had the greatest need. In addition to computers, Robert F. Kennedy Charter was able to provide their welding students with a loaner welding kit if they filled out an equipment authorization form. Similarly they provided learning kits and materials for their Paint & Bodyshop and Culinary Arts classes. Students would use their kits to complete a project after watching a video. Upon completion of their project they would submit pictures or a video of their completed work.

At Cien Aguas, the relationships that teachers previously built with students at the school supports them now, resulting in a high percentage of student engagement during the implementation of their CLP. Cien Aguas' Instructional Leadership Team actively monitors all of their classes and supports teachers with discipline and engagement.

Charter schools maintain a focus on building relationships and working with students on developing this skill. They have embraced this tremendous opportunity to model relationship building in difficult times, by reaching out to students as well as parents and maintaining contact. Their quick response to the pandemic and immediate leadership action designed to create plans with comprehensive, flexible support has helped them to engage students and families early, reducing the number of students who are disengaged.

## Comprehensive Support

All of the charter schools implemented video conferencing software in order to: hold virtual staff meetings, conduct professional development, provide synchronous sessions of instruction for students, provide person to person targeted instruction, social emotional support, and/or provide communication to families and individual students during this time of social distancing.

Charter schools were able to build on practices that they already had in place as they shifted to a new way of teaching and learning. For example, charter schools that had already integrated social emotional learning into their curriculum were now able to build on what the students already knew to better support them during these unprecedented times. Most of the charter schools had wellness programs that could transition to a virtual mode of support during closure.

*“Health Leadership High School has developed a comprehensive online learning plan as well as a modified schedule to meet the needs of our students and community. We took the approach of learning through a lens of equity and authenticity.” – Health Leadership*

All of the charter high schools quickly put plans in place to continue supporting their seniors as the shift to virtual school occurred. For example: each charter high school continued to create individual learning plans for their seniors, outlining exactly what each student needs to complete and met with each senior and their parent(s) to review the plan and provide continuous support towards earning their high school diploma.

ACE Leadership’s curriculum is universally designed to support their student in everything they do, and that commitment continued while implementing their CLP. The foundation their supportive learning model provides individual attention to every student. ACE’s schedule is designed to provide every student with individual communication with a least three adults (one with Advisor/Support Staff and two with Project Teachers) each week.

To diversify modes of learning several charter schools have vendor purchased online curriculum that they have made available to students/families, allowing for self-paced learning. For example Mountain Mahogany Community School (MMCS) has been using iReady as their interim assessment given at the beginning, middle and end of year. In response to coronavirus Curriculum and Associates has made their online instruction product available for free allowing MMCS to incorporate into their model. Based on students’ interim assessment results they will be provided with a customized learning path in iReady instruction to support any gaps to the standards. While a state summative assessment waiver has been approved by the US Department of Education due to coronavirus, MMCS want to ensure they have information on their students’ end of year academic achievement in Reading and Math. MMCS was the only charter school that plans to administer the end of year iReady interim assessment online in May 2020 to students.

All of the charter schools recognized the importance of maintaining a focus on wellness and the emotional health of their students and have put supports in place going up and beyond in maintaining contact with families.

Native American Community Academic charter has focused on continuing to provide culturally relevant teaching and learning as they shifted to Google classrooms online with the option for their families to pick up paper learning packets along with weekly work plans. During this time of closure they feel fortunate to have received some rapid response funding provided to their foundation. They are partnering with non-profits and using the funding to support the basic needs of families such as food and supplies. They reported the importance of meeting these basic needs coupled with social emotional supports in order for learning to continue. NACA is looking at what they can provide related to summer enrichment to support the continuation of academic engagement for students.

In addition, many charter schools provided extensive support to parents, ensuring they had access to the appropriate resources related to; computers, internet, how to use technology, continuous learning plan expectations, schedules, Tele-health support, access to food, access to rental assistance, as well as connecting them to services available within Albuquerque (for example, unemployment).

Many charter schools reported that they were very appreciative of the APS' Grab-and-Go meals that are provided at many of the APS school sites within their community. This has allowed charter schools to direct students and families in need of food to pick-up meals at sites within their community. Several charter schools also shared Title 1's information for families who needed food boxes or snack backpacks.

### **Spirit of Collaboration**

As the proverb states, "it takes a village to raise a child." Charter Schools recognize this to be true and they seek out ways to leverage collaboration as an integral part of developing learners in the greater Albuquerque area. It is evident that charter schools realize that collaboration is the key to success during these trying times. Most school staffs collaborate internally as well as externally with the APS Charter School team, other schools, their families as well as the community.

*"Staff will work collaboratively with families, staff and community resources/agencies to help get all families what they need in the support and motivation of getting student to progress towards the completion of each of their courses." – Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School*

It is this spirit of collaboration and these interactions that support hope and make everything feel possible during these extreme circumstances. The Leadership network charters schools (ACE, Health, Siembra, and Technology Leadership) have created the space for their social workers to collaborate with each other, within the network, to best support individual school crises in this time.

Several schools reported experiencing a time of creative collaboration internally with teachers and support staff. Albuquerque Talent Development felt they were stronger now as a school with how the staff had to come together to serve their students.

Charter schools have taken this tremendous opportunity to model relationship building, by collaborating within the community, providing continuous contact with students and families, and in some cases looking nationally and globally to create learning partnerships. Mark Armijo charter school has partnered with Youth Development, Inc. to add to the services they can provide to families during this time.

Technology Leadership is in collaboration with Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions to virtually continue to offer service learning. This local non-profit outdoor education partner has been able to deliver materials to students to create small community gardens, enabling them to connect to their community. They have been able to deliver virtual workshops to students on safety, wilderness, composting, cooking, and self-defense during physical closures. RFK charter was able to run their youth conservation program following social distancing with five or less students at the farm.

Native American Community Academy (NACA) social workers collaborate with their Student Support Team to continue to reach out to students and families regarding holistic needs, including any concerns regarding housing, food security and social emotional supports.

### ***High School Senior Continuous Learning Plan***

Sixty-eight percent (or 22 of the 31) of APS Charter Schools serve high school students and therefore have created Senior Continuous Learning Plans to monitor status to completion and provide support to their seniors in meeting all requirements for high school graduation. These activities for seniors include; completing required coursework for credits, meeting the state's assessment requirements, completing alternative demonstrations of competency, if needed, and maintaining contact with seniors in order to complete their Next Step Plans.

All of the high schools reported that they have been monitoring senior credits all year and are in communication with seniors and are in communication with those who need additional credits. In general advisors, counselors, deans of students and/or senior teachers communicate regularly with students in support of them having a plan to graduate on time. All of the charters individualized plans to meet the course and assessment requirements in Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies for their seniors. Many of the charter schools do this by offering vendor purchased online curriculum for student credit recovery. Several charter high schools mentioned their individualized recovery plans for any seniors who did not meet the requirements by the end of the spring semester. They will continue to work with these students to support them in meeting the requirements and achieving their diploma, albeit at a later date.



For students who are currently enrolled in dual credit courses, high schools are working with CNM and UNM to ensure that students complete their distance learning credits.

*“The Associate Director and Senior Advocacy teachers will remain in contact with students and their families who are taking [Dual Credit] courses outside of Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School to support students and ensure they remain on track.” – Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School*

All charter schools followed the guidance of the NM PED and shifted to a fourth quarter PASS/NO PASS grading system. One of the charters, Performing Arts Public Academy (PAPA), a college-prep school that has many students who compete for acceptance to colleges outside of NM chose to create a hybrid grading system for their high school students. For students who are earning A’s and B’s in courses, they will post these grades on their transcripts. For students with C’s and D’s will post a P for Pass and student not passing will receive and N for did not pass. If a student is taking an honors or AP courses with weighted grading and they earn a C they will be given the option to request the letter grade.

### ***Alternative Demonstrations of Competency***

Several high schools implemented summative projects within courses for seniors to support their demonstration of competency and complete the necessary credit(s).

#### **Senior Portfolios, Projects or Exhibitions**

Many charter schools previously required a senior portfolio, senior project, or an exhibition for graduation and will keep the process for their seniors within their Continuous Learning Plan and shift to electronic methods of development and presentation. Schools that noted this in their CLP include: ACE Leadership, DATA, El Camino Real Academy, Health Leadership, Gordon Bernell, Siembra Leadership, Mark Armijo, Technology Leadership, Robert F. Kennedy).

For example, at Robert F. Kennedy seniors attend a capstone class to prepare quality presentations and portfolios to support them in their Senior project. They are provided with expectations, guidance and the rubric that will be used to evaluate their work.

*“Senior Capstone Exhibitions had previous been scheduled for the week of May 11th. Our demonstration of competency is public exhibition through project-based learning using rubrics anchored in entrepreneurial framework and appropriate content standards. This will continue virtually for seniors and all students.” – Siembra Leadership*

#### **Standards-based Course Exams**

ABQ Charter Academy uses their locally-created course exams that are standards-aligned and will be used as demonstrations of competency in the five core subject areas for those scholars who do not already have passing scores on the required primary demonstrations of competency (for example the state summative assessment). High schools that utilized

standards-based course exams made them available remotely within their learning management system as well as paper-based for those who did not have internet access.

It is clear that every charter school with a high school is doing everything possible to support their seniors in achieving the credits needed, alternative demonstrations of competencies required so they can graduate. In addition, for seniors meeting the graduation requirements having them complete Next Step plans to plan for their future, whether it be to attend college or enter the workforce.

## Academic Support

Every APS Charter School implemented a virtual learning environment with a system of supports for students and families during Coronavirus. 84% of the charter schools reported using Google Classroom to create and manage online learning coupled with video conferencing software. A few schools used other learning management systems such as; Blackboard, Canvas, or Planbook.com. One school reported they did not want to overwhelm parents with a learning management system so they were only using Google Meet to provide direct instruction and support. Christine Duncan shared that many of their teachers did not previously use technology and video conferencing software. While they had a steep learning curve, they rose to the task. Their teachers showed commitment to their students by learning how to use technology and develop materials for a learning management system and learning how to use a video conferencing software.

Many charter high schools utilize Edgenuity or Acellus for credit recovery courses for their high school students. In addition several charter schools reported using Content Delivery Systems that they purchased for their students to access. These software include: ALEKS, Benchmark Advanced, iReady instruction, Reading Plus, Pearson Realize, Common Lit, NewsELA, Read 180 and Work Key Remote. Several schools reported supplementing with Khan Academy which is available for free. A full table with the predominant software used by charter schools for online instruction is included in Appendix in Table 1.

In cases where families are not able to access computers and the internet or if it online learning did not meet the individual needs of the student or family, schools provided an alternative paper-based learning packets coupled with check-ins and weekly support via phone calls. For example, William W. & Josephine Dorn Charter Community School did not have many computer devices to disseminate and they had approximately 92% of their families who needed them for online learning so the school developed multiple methods of providing learning packets. Teachers provide bi-weekly learning packets by pickup at a grab and go site, US mail delivery to the household and/or via email. The school utilized whichever method was preferred by each family. In addition, Dorn charter is also utilizing their gardener who is sending out seeds with lessons for students/families to grow while learning at home.

In order to best support all families and learners many charter schools reassigned staff members to be a part of a school support team, contacting families and checking in with students who did not return when the shift to online learning occurred.

On April 1, 2020 when the Continuous Learning Plan template was finalized and released many of the charter schools had already implemented the initial phase of their professional development plans to ensure their staff was prepared for the shift to delivering instruction online and how to use online learning platforms to engage students in learning. In essence Charter Schools did not wait for the NM PED's request for a plan, but immediately surveyed families/students, distributed technology, and began staff professional development on utilizing online systems to continue learning at their schools.

While several secondary charter schools already used an online platform for homework assignments, there were still other charter schools with a steeper learning curve, requiring staff professional development related to; utilizing technology, social emotional learning in a virtual setting, how to use a learning management system for online teaching and learning, using video conferencing software for direct instruction, tutoring and targeted support as well as using Google voice to make phone calls to students/families. For every charter school there was an aspect of learning by doing that took place as none of the schools was previously fully online.

*“Individualization is already at the heart of GBCS content delivery and such practices embedded in a mastery based, individualized curriculum are best practices for all students.” – Gordon Bernell Charter School*

At Coral Community Charter they learned that some of their families did not value computers, internet, nor did they want their children to participate in online learning. For these families they created paper learning packets that they send out weekly. They had a few Native American families who live in the city during the year, but who returned to the reservation when school closures occurred. These families cited cultural reasons as to why they did not value learning through a computer device.

Some schools like Montessori of the Rio Grande reported that it was difficult to provide their model of Montessori teaching in an online environment to elementary students. In order to do so they had to put together lessons with Montessori kits to send home (for example; letter tiles with a Montessori activity). They also sent home science lessons with seeds for growing at home. Their teachers created some YouTube videos to try to weave in Montessori elements into their online curriculum.

Related to staff professional development NACA will continue with it PD practices with grade clusters (K-4, 6-8, 9-12) on Fridays.

*“The focus will be on our restorative circle PDs designed to check in on the SEL of our students and staff and after that, staff business to convey important universal practices in disseminating learning to students, communicating with families, the use of technology, etc.” – Native American Community Academy*

For most schools there remains a learning curve related to differentiating learning online, providing social emotional learning and supports online, as well as providing individualized, targeted support for teaching and learning in a virtual environment.

It should be noted that three of the APS Charter Schools had begun the process of School Turnaround in January of 2020 as a stipulation of their charter renewal. These schools are La Academia de Esperanza, Los Puentes and William W. & Josephine Dorn. Each of these schools have continued with their strategic planning for School Turnaround while implementing their CLPs. Their strategic plans are aimed at improving student achievement over the next five years while maintaining social emotional supports for their at-risk or underserved students.

Several charter school leaders reported having to work with teachers on the concept of critical standards as they felt everything was critical and needed to be included in their online teaching and learning for the remainder of this school year.

### ***Supporting Students with Disabilities***

During these unprecedented times, charter schools recognize that many of their students and families require individualized supports to meet their specific needs. Charter Schools have outlined various methods they will use to continue supporting students with disabilities during the time of school closure. Schools have plans in place to continue to meet all federal timelines related to IEPs, conducting in-process and new evaluations, as well as reevaluations, to the best of our ability in a new virtual manner. In the future when schools re-open they will discuss each individual student and determine if compensatory services are required.

To support students with disabilities, NMIS' special education and related services staff sent a survey to all families of children with IEPs to solicit information regarding the needs of the child and family. This information will be used to identify appropriate supports for each child on an individualized basis. The special education teacher will collaborate with the general education teacher to identify modifications and/or accommodations that need to be made to the learning opportunities provided to all students to meet the needs of individual students with disabilities. All evaluations that are in-process will be completed and new evaluations will be conducted, if appropriate. We will continue to meet all federal timelines related to IEPs, evaluations, and reevaluations, to the best of our ability. When school reopens, each IEP team will discuss the need for compensatory services, if any, based on a decline in skills or lack of progress (recognizing that amount of progress expected in the approximately 6 weeks that learning opportunities were provided through the CLP).

Cien Aguas International School uses google hangouts to hold Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings and reports that parents' attendance rate in IEP meetings has increased and parents are more engaged in the virtual meetings.

Corrales International remained focused on providing their special education students with pull out services and their special education coordinator attended general education classes to

support students with IEPs. The school took APS' special education guidance early on and created their method of creating and communicating Prior Written Notices to parents.

South Valley Academy provides targeted support for both students with IEPs as well as any students who are struggling with the shift to online learning. They meet one on one with these students via video conferencing software and provide the individualized support.

*“South Valley Academy values serving all students, including students with disabilities or other learning differences and emerging bilinguals. In our Continuous Learning Plan, we have kept in mind the provision of FAPE [Free Appropriate Public Education] and are being thoughtful about how to provide access to all students as well as providing individualized supports and services.” – South Valley Academy*

As an example, South Valley Academy (SVA) strategically created a schedule that allows general and special educators, educational assistants, and ancillary providers to be available at a variety of times each day in order best meet the scheduling needs of students and families. At SVA special education services will continue to be delivered in a variety of ways, including; consultation and monitoring, collaboration, co-teaching, and direct services. Alternative learning tasks may be assigned to address IEP goals, as needed. Special education staff will also be in direct contact with families to ensure their participation and understanding in this new and different model for education.

Digital Arts Technology Academy (DATA) Charter built “flex” time into their schedule to allow for small group or 1:1 instruction, enrichment, Special Education Support, EL support and office hours with teachers. This flexible time in the schedule allows teachers a uniform block of time in which they can schedule their meetings for small group and individual instructional supports.

### ***Supporting At-Risk Students***

Most charter schools reported creating a collaborative process in which diverse team members from the school work together to reach out to students in need and to provide essential supports to them.

*“In addition, Special Education, support staff, the school Social Worker and School Counseling Intern will be collaborating with department PLC's on a weekly basis to develop key planning and teaching strategies that embrace universal design.” – Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School*

In spite of heroic efforts to make contact with all students/families each school has reported that there are some students who have gone silent or are unreachable. In general these percentages are small in each school, but it is important to highlight as these students did not return to instruction, which puts them at further risk of not continuing education. Charter high schools reported that they had learned that some of their students had to discontinue school because they were having to work at essential businesses in order to provide income for their families. Knowing this schools have come up with solutions to increase their access by expanding their hours of support, created learning packets as well as recording instructional

videos which can be watched at any time. It is their hope that this flexibility will allow access for these students to continue their learning by removing traditional barriers. It is clear that charter schools are aware of which students are at-risk previously and during the pandemic. Charter school staffs are making heroic efforts with their students to; make contact, provide supports, keep in touch with as well as designing ways for them to access learning opportunities.

Gilbert Sena High School teachers, administration, and counselors collaborate and have a system in place to support their “At – Promise” students. They have built a schedule that allows flexibility for their students, especially those who are having to work during the day. Their teachers have modified to work with students on evening assignments and formative assessment.

Los Puentes serves a high percentage of student at-risk. Most students arrive at the school two to four years behind in Reading and/or Math. Therefore, differentiation is the norm for their teachers. The school continues to provide differentiation in this new format of virtual learning.

La Academia de Esperanza’s Occupational Therapist had previously used assignments which ground students as well as provide them with physical exercise. The school has learned from their ancillary services and continues to provide these during school closure.

At Robert F. Kennedy charter to support their students at risk, SWD and EL students they provided each of them with an assigned educational assistant who provides students with one-on-one instruction and support.

Many charter schools shared what they are doing in order to provide students with social-emotional support, wrap around services as well as linking their at-risk students and families to school and community services to provide comprehensive educational support.

Christine Duncan monitored their student engagement as the shift to online learning occurred and learned that they had 29% of their students that were not engaging for various reasons. The school decided to opt in to the state’s ENGAGE New Mexico program, which ensures that an academic coach will contact students with the goal of providing them coaching and working with them to create a plan to get back on track. In addition to students who have not returned to the learning environment ENGAGE New Mexico will provide a targeted support for students who, for any number of reasons, are struggling in a learning environment that has shifted in profound ways.

The state offered service aims to support students socially and emotionally as they work to meet academic standards.

*“Targeted outreach and support have been proven to make a positive difference in a child’s life, especially under challenging circumstances. Providing a dedicated outreach team to work in support of our educators will ensure that our teachers can focus on*

*teaching, while the ENGAGE team works to re-establish contact with students described as 'missing' from their continuous learning classrooms.” -Dr. Gwen Perea-Warniment, Deputy Secretary of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.*

Some of the other schools who reported “opting in” to Engage NM include: Gilbert Sena, New America and William and Josephine Dorn.

### **Supporting EL Students**

*“Siembra was designed to target young people that have been underserved in traditional settings through our three pillar model. Programming and staffing are already aligned with prioritizing these students. In addition, 40% of our staff are Spanish speaking and able to provide culturally and linguistically responsive communication to students and families.” – Siembra Leadership*

La Academia de Esperanza (LADE) provides support to their English language learners in a variety of ways to reinforce and scaffold their language learning process. They provide weekly online menus offering templates with step-by-step guides as well as opportunities to participate in Reading Plus or Accelus which are both research-based, growth-oriented programs that assess, develop, and measure student skill levels. In addition, EL students at LADE can;

1. Practice all domains of language learning through activities that engage students in writing, speaking, listening and reading,
2. Practice reading and speaking in English by joining the Student Latinx Book Review Committee that will be reading and discussing texts from the culturally relevant book collection.
3. Request materials or instructions in Spanish for further clarification, paper learning packets (in English or Spanish)
4. Request help from their teachers by email Monday-Friday during regular school hours, and virtual meetings can be set up on an individual basis to provide extra learning support

Christine Duncan, Cien Aguas, Corrales International, International School at Mesa del Sol and New Mexico International School (NMIS) all have dual language programs. These schools have had to implement methods to support language development in both Spanish and English.

As an example, NMIS functions with a 90/10 language immersion program. The students at NMIS are provided with the appropriate amount of English instruction for each grade (Kindergarten, 10% of the work in English, first grade 20% of the work in English, etc.). Students are being closely monitored by their teacher to provide extra support for the English learners.

*“Our instructional program for ELs is also available online and all teachers will continue to employ TESOL best practices in their instruction.” – ABQ Charter Academy*

All teachers at Native American Community Academy are taking into consideration EL students' needs through checks for understanding and are prepared to offer supports such as; additional

one-on-one time, tips for using text and audio features in existing platforms as well as by providing additional resources and supports, as needed.

At Robert F. Kennedy Charter they were able to support their bi-lingual students who were pursuing Bilingual Seals. Students were required to create a portfolio and presentation. Students had worked on portfolios prior to closure. Presentations were worked on at home and each student was provided feedback on their presentation. The teacher supporting this effort found the online feedback on sections of the presentation was more focused and resulted in better student presentations. The school plans to use the nine recorded student presentations as exemplars for next year's students working towards a Bilingual Seal.

### ***Social and Emotional Supports***

During these unprecedented times, charters schools recognize that many of their students and families require additional social and emotional supports and they are seeing an increase in need, now more than ever. The charter schools have all put plans in place to utilize their counselors, social workers, and contracted vendors to provide the essential supports to meet the students' social emotional needs. In general the social workers, counselors and key administrators/staff members are identified as the conduit for communication to parents and students by providing website updates, weekly communications, phone calls, text messages, emails, and/or video conferencing. It is clear the charter schools are making it a priority that they contact all students and families and maintain the necessary supports.

As a trauma-informed school, ABQ Charter Academy has a mission specific goal to increase the developmental assets of scholars and focus on social emotional learning. Their normal method is to ensure every interaction between staff and scholar is grounded in SEL best practices. With the shift to online learning they plan to continue to offer their SEL whole-group courses, such as Break Free from Depression, in a virtual format.

*“Our trauma-responsive school recognizes no distinction between social-emotional and academic learning, and we support both simultaneously. We continue this important aspect of our model as we transition to a virtual model. Every interaction between staff and scholar is grounded in SEL best practices.” – ABQ Charter Academy*

In order to support students in their social emotional learning during this time, South Valley Academy has encouraged students to engage in self-reflection and journaling. Students are given an opportunity to share their reflections weekly during their Advisory (Fridays).

*“Mountain Mahogany focuses on social-emotional learning as part of our school's mission and reason for being, and we especially recognize the importance of supporting families and students at this difficult time.” –Mountain Mahogany Community School*

Supporting the social-emotional needs of students and families is a priority for Mark Armijo Academy. Their social worker and counselors collaborate and they offer daily office hours for students while also checking in daily with families of students with the highest social-emotional



needs. Their student wellness team will work with families to help identify areas of need and provide resources, as needed. During school closure, their Principal contacts families by phone and reflected that this is an important way for leadership to remain connected to families throughout the school year.

Alice King Community School is heavily focused on the physical, social, emotional needs of their families, students and staff. They have a wellness team meets weekly to monitor social emotional needs and develop the appropriate response. New America School's teachers, administration and social workers are making weekly calls to ensure they are providing the appropriate social emotional supports.

Several of the APS charter schools integrate an International Baccalaureate (IB) program which works on the development of the IB Learner Profile. This profile is a collection of ten personal attributes that develop a person both socially and emotionally to be a productive member of an international community. IB charter schools include; Corrales International, CCPS, International School at Mesa del Sol, and NMIS. These schools will continue to build on the foundational IB profile through direct interactions with their teacher by either video conferencing or by phone. In most cases these schools increased the number of sessions dedicated to working on social emotional skill development in their continuous learning plan.

At International School at Mesa del Sol teachers are focusing on the social emotional needs of their students as well, providing consistency in their weekly schedules of classes and various opportunities using multiple modalities for students to express their perspectives, challenges and concerns surrounding the current situation. Students are doing this through writing prompts, reflection and journal entries, Zoom chats, meet-and-greets with other students as well as through artistic expression.

Charter schools have remained focused on the social emotional wellness of their students during this time of school closure and have ensured they have a plan to best support students.

## Family & Community Communication

The key ingredient to implementing a solid and successful Continuous Learning Plan is effective communication to multiple stakeholders as well as support for families and caregivers as they facilitate learning at home. It is particularly important in the current environment to keep families as well as the school's community informed and have open channels or means of communication for the parents/students to contact the school. Charter schools recognized this and began communications in early March prior to the Governor's order to Shelter in Place. Charter Schools established several modes of communication that would work best for their families and students. All of the charter schools administered a student and family survey to complete a needs assessment early on, allowing them to gather the pertinent information from families during the Coronavirus building closures. Family and student needs included: access to technology devices, access to internet, requiring paper learning packets, counseling,

individualized instruction, supports for social emotional wellness, access to food, access to shelter/housing, supports in collecting unemployment and general flexibility of scheduling of online learning.

Technology Leadership learned that short bursts of communication work best for their student population. Rather than inundate their students and families with many emails they are being very intentional about providing relevant, supportive and actionable communication.

All of the charter schools reported that their goal was to provide immediate, pertinent information to parents/families in regards to: learning supports for all students, learning materials, access to technology, technology usage, internet/hot spots, communication within courses, distribution of food, useful websites, and helpful community resources in the greater Albuquerque area.

### **Additional Supports Needed**

NM PED requested information from schools about additional support(s) the schools may require to better support their students and families' needs. Charter Schools unanimously reported the need for funding for computer devices and mobile hotspots to make online learning accessible to all families. South Valley Academy requested tutorials on best methods for teaching and learning online as they are venturing into new territory. If school building closures continue into the next school year, many schools may be in need of professional development for their teachers on the best methods for teaching, supporting and engaging learners online.

Under normal operations, when students are at school they have access to computers, technology and the internet during the school day. As students shifted their learning to home it became clear that many did not own the necessary technology nor did they subscribe to internet services required to participate in a fully online curriculum. Many charter schools have requested Chromebooks and hotspots (computing devices and wifi services for families) as a means of enabling equitable access to learning while schools remain closed. A few schools have requested clarification on the expectations for teacher evaluations. Generally speaking the largest support requested was related to the state providing students/families with computing devices. Other requests were for additional funding for software procurement.

### **Reflection for Continuous Improvement**

Charter schools reported that they will reflect, monitor and evaluated effectiveness of their plan through an interaction of the school leadership team with the school's internal PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) as well as their interactions with students and families. Their efforts to monitor how they were doing included the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data for reflection on how they would adjust, if necessary. Charter leaders also reported they would leverage their PLCs, learning from and reflecting with other APS Charter Leaders.

*“ECRA will monitor the data to reflect and continuously improve our quality education and service to our families. Examples of data to be collected and utilized include: student participation and engagement, plus/delta reflections in PLCs, classroom formative assessments, phone surveys with families, students passing or receiving credit, graduation numbers, enrollment data, and electronic surveys of students and parents. School teams such as the Learning Leaders, Leadership Team and/or Executive Team will review the data approximately every three weeks to ascertain our level of progress and any needed programmatic adjustments. An action plan will be developed and revisited at the next review session.” - El Camino Real*

At International School at Mesa del Sol they conduct leadership meetings and their guiding questions are “What is working?” and “What should be adjusted?” They are able to respond by doing more of what works and adjusting processes so they better support their mission of meeting both the academic and social-emotional needs of their students.

*“Through continuous contact with all Technology Leadership High School staff, students, and family the Tech staff will have direct feedback on the effectiveness of this plan. The Technology Leadership High School leadership team (referred to as Lead Team) meets on a twice a week to reflect and review on the effectiveness of this continuous learning plan and make changes as needed. The Lead Team will prioritize the equitable support and engagement of all Tech staff, students, and family.” – Technology Leadership High School*

Coral Community Charter School created an online form to families as a weekly check-in on students’ social emotional needs. This check-in process allows the Principal to collect feedback regularly on what’s working, any concerns and comments. With the collection of this information they are able to respond quickly to parents’ needs and implement solutions while providing updated communications. For example, they found that some parents wanted a way for their students to be able to have virtual meetings with other students their age to meet their social emotional needs. Once parents put in a request to share their contact information, the school has a program in which staff members proctor a zoom meeting with two students, redirecting as needed, but mostly allowing the students to interact. This social interaction is similar to what the students might experience during lunch or on the playground.

To evaluate the effectiveness of their CLP, Mark Armijo will conduct weekly wellness team meetings and staff meetings. During these meetings they check on what’s working as well as identify if there any new needs. They make changes and pivot as needed to best support their students and families. All of their quantitative data on student participation and communication will be tracked using Google sheets.

*“We have to go slow to go fast. We need to collectively think about the trauma and grief that is happening and has happened. The rush to get back may circumvent dealing properly with the grief.” – Technology Leadership*

The leadership team at Technology Leadership recognizes the need to provide the space and means to allow for the social emotional supports of their staff and adults with whom they

partner. They acknowledged they have learned from the early implementation process of the CLP and they will continue to learn throughout the experience through trial and error. In early April they implemented their CLP in response to the global health pandemic and they reported already hearing conversations of recovery, which can be overwhelming. They want to ensure they are intentional about how they need to change in order to evolve as a school as they begin dialogue around their plan for recovery.

Based on what they have learned during the pandemic, Native American Community Academy is looking at what they can provide related to summer enrichment to support the continuation of academic engagement for their students.

New America school's teachers put a lot of effort into creating their Google classrooms and have fully embraced teaching online as it provides a lot of flexibility for their students and their desire is to be student-centered. Their teachers want to continue a blended learning environment that they incorporated into their new model of teaching and learning post coronavirus.

East Mountain High School is conducting panels with teachers and students to start planning for Fall. They are seeking to understand what worked well and what can be improved? Survey for students. Mountain Mahogany conducted virtual meetings with families to check in and gather information on what they believe is needed for school to restart in their building.

Most of the charter schools have begun gathering information to inform their planning for the next school year. However, without knowing exactly what will happen related to the pandemic, schools are left to navigate planning with a lot of ambiguity. While many schools are waiting to hear from the state or district on whether or not schools will be fully open, Gilbert Sena seems is planning for virtual extended learning for their students this summer regardless of what the state plans. They plan to the year early in the fall and to provide students with opportunities to make up missing credits.

Charter schools have gathered feedback and reflected on what they have learned from implementing their Continuous Learning Plan. Schools have embraced what teachers and student have learned during this time and what to design a system that best supports teaching and learning for their students by allowing the place of learning to be wherever the student is at that point in time.

## Summary

In summary, while all of the APS Charter Schools outlined Continuous Learning Plans to address each category in the state's template, each charter school designed and implemented a unique academic plan to best serve the learners and families within their own community. Charter schools were able to begin implementation of their continuous learning plans immediately and in many cases they were already delivering online instruction coupled with virtual support well before their CLPs were due to the NM PED.

As the Charter School Team conducts the Spring Site Visits virtually we are learning how the Charter Leaders are already positioning themselves and their teams to create middle range and long term plans for continuous learning. Many are beginning the steps to plan for August, the beginning of the new school year and how they will most effectively begin start up if school buildings remain closed. While others are waiting to hear about the state's plan for re-opening of schools. Several schools are strategically thinking about how they will use what they are learning from this situation of fully online learning and support and figuring out how they can apply it to school, when we as a state, are able to reopen school buildings and have students return. The reality is planning for the next year needs to happen sooner than later and it involves scenario planning for several potential scenarios: fully online, hybrid or fully open with many considerations for each scenario.

At some point in the implementation of virtual school, charter leaders will need to monitor the social emotional wellbeing of their teachers and staff and suggest self-care for those who are doing everything possible in this situation to work with students and families while they themselves may be experiencing the stresses of sheltering in place.

When phases of a plan emerge for the state to return to the opening of schools it will be of utmost importance to understand that students and staff returning to schools will have very different social emotional needs. Many educators are supporting students who are experiencing trauma, while they themselves may be experiencing trauma and struggling to do whatever it takes to hold it all together. When humans are exposed to trauma, crises, or hardship there is a cumulative toll. This will need to be understood and intentionally planned for in the next phases of educational planning in New Mexico as well as across the globe. Returning to school after this global pandemic will call for transformational leadership in education.

For most schools there remains a learning curve related to differentiating learning online, providing social emotional learning and supports online, as well as providing individualized, targeted support for teaching and learning in a virtual environment. Teachers were provided with some of the necessary training to get them started in an online environment, however if the next school year is comprised of online learning there will be a great need for continued professional development for teachers on how to integrate good teaching practices into an virtual learning environment that engages students and supports teaching grade level standards.

Charter schools will need a certain tolerance of ambiguity as the pandemic unfolds. They will need to conduct scenario planning in order to be prepared for what may or may not occur. As charter schools plan for the upcoming year it will be integral for the schools to continue with agility, their spirit of collaboration and focus on social emotional supports in providing comprehensive support for their students.

The charter leaders reported that the support from the Office of Innovation and School Choice helped them tremendously through this time. The team approached this time through communication, as a convener for charter leaders, and have provided coaching to the charter leaders and staff during this time.

## Additional Items Shared by Charter Schools

Within each school’s Continuous Learning Plan there was a section in which they could share additional information or something unique to their plan. These are items that charter schools shared in the additional items section:

<b>Charter School</b>	<b>Additional Item</b>
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Academy	<a href="#">21<sup>st</sup> Century Academy Mission video</a>
Albuquerque Talent Development Academy	Created and implemented new student virtual orientation / on-boarding
Alice King Community School	Virtual Field Trip to Yosemite
Christine Duncan’s Heritage Academy	School’s Mission and Vision Video - <a href="https://drive.google.com/open?id=16E-fZezCFng5N85UuDG0f21qPzDOyp8">https://drive.google.com/open?id=16E-fZezCFng5N85UuDG0f21qPzDOyp8</a>
Cien Aguas	YouTube Video for Students - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEmK8SsND1I">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEmK8SsND1I</a>
Cottonwood Classical	Resources from their counselor: Weekly Youtube videos about skills for de-stressing and reflection, Mindfulness handout for student and parents, availability 9 hours a day, and calls families to check in.
East Mountain High School	Created an Information Graphic for Communication to Families
Health Leadership	Student Support Website – <a href="https://sites.google.com/healthleadershiphighschool.org/socialwork/">https://sites.google.com/healthleadershiphighschool.org/socialwork/</a>
Los Puentes	Online Wellness and Technology form – created a MS form to collect information from parents and students related to wellness and technology
Native America Community Academy	KOB TV video of Warlance Chee, NACA Diné teacher, encouraging students to learn their native language <a href="https://www.kob.com/albuquerque-news/navajo-nation-encourages-families-to-learn-the-native-language-while-staying-at-home/5696909/">https://www.kob.com/albuquerque-news/navajo-nation-encourages-families-to-learn-the-native-language-while-staying-at-home/5696909/</a>
New Mexico International School	Violin teachers has a Youtube channel and has created about 25 additional learning videos to support the students at home.
Performing Arts Public Academy	Virtual Graduation - Recorded a video of Board President handing out diplomas and each graduating senior accepting their diploma. Graduation will take place on May 8, 2020. <a href="https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=j21F-eHxf78&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=j21F-eHxf78&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Robert F. Kennedy Charter	Has a system in place to loan welding students a welding kit using a similar process to loaning Chromebooks.
Siembra Leadership	Shared an article to teachers on Trauma Informed Approach to Teaching during Coronavirus <a href="https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/a-trauma-informed-approach-to-teaching-through-coronavirus">https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/a-trauma-informed-approach-to-teaching-through-coronavirus</a>
South Valley Academy	SVA developed a parent resource guide and have members of the school team helping parents navigate unemployment applications.
William W. & Josephine Dorn	Learning packets with seeds being sent out to families allowing them to grow plants while learning at home.

# Appendix

**Table 1: Software Used by Charter Schools for Continuous Learning**

Charter School	Google Classroom	Edgenuity	Khan Academy	Google Hangouts	Google Meet	Zoom	Email	YouTube Videos	Learning Packets	Phone Calls / Google Voice
21st Century	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
ABQ Charter Academy	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
ACE Leadership High School	✓						✓		✓	✓
Albuquerque Talent Development Secondary	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
Alice King Community Academy	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Christine Duncan Heritage Academy	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Cien Aguas International School				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Coral Community Charter School	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
Corrales International	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Arts and Technology Academy		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
East Mountain High School	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
El Camino Real Academy	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Gordon Bernell		✓					✓		✓	✓
Health Leadership High School	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
International School at Mesa del Sol						✓	✓		✓	✓
La Academia de Esperanza	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓
Los Puentes	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓
Mark Armijo	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Montessori of the Rio Grande	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Mahogany Community School	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
Native American Charter Academy	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
New America School-New Mexico	✓						✓		✓	✓
New Mexico International School	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Public Academy for Performing Arts	✓						✓		✓	✓
Robert F. Kennedy Charter School	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Siembra Leadership High School	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
South Valley Academy	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Technology Leadership High School	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
William W. & Josephine Dorn Community						✓	✓		✓	✓