

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I    [X] Charter    [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Vickie Kwiecinski  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Albuquerque School of Excellence  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 13201 Lomas Boulevard Northeast  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Albuquerque                      State NM                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 87112-7001

County Bernalillo

Telephone (505) 312-7711                      Fax (505) 312-7712

Web site/URL https://www.abqse.org                      E-mail mayik@abqse.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Mustafa Ayik M. Ed.                      E-mail mayik@abqse.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name State Charter School District                      Tel. (505) 312-7711

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Dr Osman Anderoglu  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

**The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.**

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 1 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	28	28	56
1	32	30	62
2	35	31	66
3	35	29	64
4	50	38	88
5	35	36	71
6	49	49	98
7	65	44	109
8	44	43	87
9	30	33	63
10	23	22	45
11	10	11	21
12 or higher	12	13	25
<b>Total Students</b>	448	407	855

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 7 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 48 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 35 % White
  - 2 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 3%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	24
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	828
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English, Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Navajo, Tagalog, Arabic, French, India-Panjabi, Idia-Pamiel, Malayalam, Turkish, Filipino, Russian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 18 %  
151 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 54 %

Total number students who qualify: 459

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 12 %  
104 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>11</u> Autism                 | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>16</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>3</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>73</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	6
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	42
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	21
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	91%	98%	94%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	73%	90%	71%	87%	92%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	15
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	80%
Enrolled in a community college	13%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	7%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

To provide a safe and collaborative environment that will cultivate academic and social development for all students regardless of their socio-economic status by emphasizing math, science, and technology for students to set and meet higher education goals. The vision of Albuquerque School of Excellence is to enable students to succeed in school and have options to enter math, science, and engineering careers. ASE is a college preparatory charter school focusing on math, science, and technology. Members of ASE believe that excelling in math and science prepares youth to succeed in college, the workplace, and the 21st century.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

[https://fluxconsole.com/files/item/527/132313/2021-2022%20Student%20Handbook--November%2020th,%202021%20\(1\).pdf](https://fluxconsole.com/files/item/527/132313/2021-2022%20Student%20Handbook--November%2020th,%202021%20(1).pdf)

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Applications for enrollment at ASE will be accepted during a designated enrollment application window, determined by the Governing Council. The enrollment application window shall be from January 15 to April 15 (application deadline) each year, until/unless otherwise determined by the Governing Council.

If, after the enrollment application window has closed, there are not more applications received for a grade level than there are seats available in that grade level, applicants in that grade level will be given the opportunity to enroll. Any seats remaining open in that grade after the enrollment application window has closed shall be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

A lottery will determine enrollment in ASE if there are more applications received during the enrollment application window than seats are available in a grade level. A lottery will determine enrollment in ASE if there are more applications received during the enrollment application window than seats are available in a grade level.





## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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Albuquerque School of Excellence(ASE) is located in Albuquerque, NM, a city that welcomes visitors and citizens from all corners of the world, creating a melting pot of culture and diversity. ASE’s students and staff genuinely reflect the diverse and multicultural population in Albuquerque and New Mexico. ASE began operating in 2010, offering grades 1-8. We have now grown to serve over 800 students in grades K-12. ASE has a population of 54% economically disadvantaged students, and our multicultural environment provides a unique academic opportunity for our students to flourish and succeed.

ASE is a college preparatory charter school focusing on STEAM-based learning. Members of the ASE family believe that excelling in STEAM subjects prepares youth to succeed in college, the workplace, and the 21st century. This year, the school extended its fine arts program to include the visual arts and music. We had our first-ever Veteran’s Day celebration led by our music teacher and supported by the artwork for veterans. This led us to provide after-school fine arts clubs and events in addition to our STEM-related clubs. Our goal is to enable students to succeed in school and achieve a balance between STEM and fine arts to enter and succeed in STEAM careers.

To address the learning loss due to Covid closure and online learning, ASE opted to participate in the Extended Learning Time Program by adding ten additional school days to its calendar. We have also added extended learning lab hours in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math in classrooms K-11, providing students with three hours of additional instruction and intervention every week in these core subjects. This added time allows teachers to implement intervention strategies for students based on their individual needs. ASE has implemented the state of New Mexico’s Multi-layered Systems of Support (MLSS) model to provide students with a universal, small group, and individual support in the classroom. Our elementary teachers are currently completing Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) certifications to help teachers better support students with reading and writing skills as part of our implementation of structured literacy in our ELA program.

Students in grades K-12 complete science fair projects each year, with many students in grades four competing in regional and state science fairs. Furthermore, ASE holds a STEM Fair yearly to showcase students’ projects and experiments. ASE has built a partnership with Pitsco Education and Project Lead the Way (PLTW), providing resources for teachers and students that offer hands-on and problem-solving activities across the curriculum to connect the classroom to STEM-based careers.

Students in grades K–12 are introduced to college culture and complete projects and activities based on colleges and universities. Students participate in school trips to college campuses in grades 8 -12. Many high school students work diligently to complete AP classes and dual credit courses through our partnership with Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) and the University of New Mexico (UNM). We celebrate diversity and the many cultures that are represented at our school with an annual Language and Culture Festival where students, staff, and the community come together to celebrate with music, art, food, and storytelling that represents the best of ASE.

Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, ASE has been through many changes from school closures, including the switch to online learning and then back to in-person learning, all during a short two-year period. These changes, along with the stress of dealing with a pandemic, have left students confused, stressed, grieving, angry, sad, desperate, and feeling alone. ASE has implemented programs to assist our students, families, and staff with mental health support throughout the pandemic by growing our social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and has addressed these challenges by hiring a school counselor and a social worker. These additions are helping provide after-school tutoring and more in-depth classroom support.

ASE utilizes Move This World, an SEL curriculum that encourages communication in a safe and welcoming environment. ASE is completing the application process to become a nationally recognized Character School (character.org) in a continuous effort to improve our school culture. The Character School program is a worldwide network that empowers people of all ages to practice and model core values that shape hearts, minds, and choices. It provides students and staff with the tools to learn what character means at ASE

while we work to become the first recognized “Character” school in New Mexico.

We have seen our test scores increase dramatically through the efforts of our highly qualified teachers, support staff, after-school tutoring programs, and the practice of our intervention programs. This upholds that our whole student and family approach, family engagement opportunities, teachers' diligent work in and out of the classroom, open communication with parents and students, and the development of our social-emotional learning programs ASE has successfully created “excellent” students. ASE students have the confidence to perform as great students and work together as a community to create an environment that is safe, welcoming, and conducive to learning.

ASE strives to foster productive attitudes toward work, family, and community. When students have a positive attitude toward school and community, their perception of “school” transforms. This transformation in school perception is reflected in our students' character growth, evidenced by our core values: respect, integrity, self-motivation, and excellence (R.I.S.E). These core values were suggested and voted on by students, parents, and staff before implementation as representatives of our school.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

#### **1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:**

Since opening its doors, ASE has worked diligently to provide a rigorous, exceptional education program focusing on STEAM-based learning and college preparedness. ASE focuses on core content knowledge and essential skills so that students may achieve mastery upon which to build further learning and success throughout their lives. High-quality instructional materials by our dedicated, highly qualified teachers allow ASE to engage and challenge our students to prepare them for further learning after high school. All staff at ASE work collaboratively to help our students feel encouraged to do their best and create a learning environment that allows all students to be successful. We strive to develop lifelong learners who will continue to work towards their academic and career goals throughout their lives as they become productive citizens in our global communities.

#### **1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

K-5 teachers have implemented the New Mexico Public Education Department’s required Structured Literacy initiative by utilizing one of the state’s adopted and approved curriculums, Into Reading. Into Reading has built-in gradual release lesson plans, activities, and formative and summative assessments. They are also incorporating Heggerty, which is also a state-approved research-based curriculum of daily phonemic and phonological awareness lesson plans, into their daily instructional practices. Additionally, K-5 Reading/English language arts teachers are completing certification for LETRS. LETRS, which is aligned with Structured Literacy, teaches the skills needed to master the fundamentals of reading instruction. K-5 teachers and students use the researched-based online program, Istation Reading, for progress monitoring, interventions, and differentiated instruction.

We use the EngageNY curriculum for the 6-12th grade; it is common core aligned. The curriculum uses various texts, from mythology to Shakespeare to modern literature, all written by authors from diverse cultural backgrounds. Teachers modify the curriculum as needed to account for New Mexico learning standards and the needs and interests of our students. We make modifications by substituting and adding texts written by New Mexican authors and works that reflect our students' diverse cultural backgrounds enabling us to differentiate our instruction. We use Vocabulary.com and Noredink.com to support our language instruction. These resources enable us to identify and target specific skills and better provide our students with needed support. We use Khan Academy and other resources provided by the College Board to help students prepare for the PSAT and SAT and ensure college readiness.

All English classes have a corresponding “English Lab” class, an elective that enables students to spend more time focusing on building their reading and writing skills. This time is also used to help prepare students for state assessments such as the PSAT and SAT for high school students. During Lab, students have the opportunity to receive additional small group instruction, which helps teachers differentiate their instruction and target students' specific needs. This class essentially gives students double the required English instruction. During Lab class, teachers can provide intervention for students struggling in class or whose test results indicate that they are reading or writing significantly below grade level. Lab class also provides teachers an opportunity to meet student needs identified by our Interim Assessments.

In addition to required state assessments, the English department also administers interim assessments for all students in grades 6-12. These assessments are standardized for each grade level, aligned to common core standards, and drawn from our pacing guides. The interim assessments are given three times yearly and test high-priority common core ELA standards. Each interim assessment has a writing task. After each interim assessment, English teachers complete a standardized reflection form that prompts them to reflect on students’ performance—essentially, how many students have achieved proficiency in each priority standard.

Teachers reflect on this date, set goals, and plan any additional instruction needed to ensure that students can achieve proficiency.

### **1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

K-5 teachers have implemented one of the New Mexico Public Education Department's adopted and approved math curriculums, Eureka Math. This Common Core-aligned math curriculum is rigorous and includes gradual release lesson plans, activities, and formative and summative assessments. K-5 teachers and students also utilize the research-based online programs, Istation Math and ALEKS, for progress monitoring, interventions, and differentiation.

While bound to the common core, our middle school teachers specifically analyze and choose the curriculum for their classrooms. The math department utilizes a variety of common core curricula, each chosen by the instructor to fit that particular instructor's teaching style. Teachers use the latest technology to present material in various ways. Students have a range of ways to access the product in math classes. All teachers in the math department offer after-hours tutoring to fit the educational needs of struggling students. ASE uses NWEA three times yearly to identify student needs and address individual deficiencies.

We have adopted a wide selection of curriculums for high school, including Illustrative Mathematics, High School Solution Math, Pathway 2 Careers Math Program, Intermediate Algebra Enhanced 5th Edition, Miller, and Precalculus 1st edition, Miller as our resources. Our teachers use the resources to create their lesson plans and practices for their students. Teachers always establish mathematics goals to focus on learning, use and connect mathematical representations to engage students' participation, check students' understanding and progress by using formative (bell ringer, warm-up, lesson practice, exit tickets, quizzes, and students' self-reflections on short cycled quizzes) and summative assessments (unit assessment, P2C assessment, NWEA, and PSAT/SAT). We provide college-level math classes for gifted and accelerated students. ASE utilizes formative assessments tools to help students perform to their best potential. We also differentiate our approach for our SPED students based on their IEPs. Our approaches include reviewing or reteaching the struggling topics with an alternative lesson plan followed by the retake of the assessment, extending tutorials for students in need, and EA/SPED teachers help by reading the instructions for dyslexic students.

### **1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

K-5 teachers use an NGSS aligned curriculum, Stemsscopes. Stemsscopes is a comprehensive suite of results-oriented STEM curricula. It includes gradual release lesson plans, hands-on activities, and formative and summative assessments. Additionally, teachers and students have partnered with Pitsco Education to transform our students into confident and future-ready learners with hands-on projects, lessons, and activities with assessment throughout.

For middle school science classes, we are partnering with NMPED and implementing a very rigorous curriculum where the students are the driving force. The students make observations and develop ways to investigate them. The engagement level is high since the students decide what they want to do next and how to do it. We do not study and memorize facts in the classroom; instead, we discuss and solve. We are often not after the right answer, and there is always more than one right answer. This is a core change to the way we have been teaching science. Traditionally we expect the right answer to the questions we ask. However, it's about what the students bring to the table. Right or wrong, everyone's ideas contribute to this "figuring out" process, which is an important aspect of the way we teach and how the students learn. When we make the students our partners in decision making, instead of asking them to do things, they internalize and own what they are doing. One strategy used is when a question is asked, instead of choosing a student to answer the question, partners take turns answering. This leads to a large group discussion and increases engagement dramatically. This also helps pull low-achieving students into the conversation. Student teams are carefully arranged so that there is always peer support. With the help of cooperative learning strategies, we have positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation, and simultaneous interaction in our class. Nobody is off the hook, and this kind of engagement creates participation where everyone is learning.

### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Our K-5 teachers have implemented a teacher-prepared, culturally responsive curriculum for social studies/history/civics, which is aligned to the New Mexico State Social Studies Standards and includes elements of cultural literacy so that our students can understand and participate fully in society. Formative and summative assessments are included in these lessons, which incorporate the gradual release of responsibility model of instructional practices. As the state of New Mexico implements its recently updated Social Studies Standards in the 2023-224 school year, ASE will incorporate all standards updates and curriculum suggestions adopted and approved by the state.

ASE middle school and high school Social Studies prepare students for college and careers. Our AP program has a high pass rate allowing students the freedom to follow their desired career path after graduation no matter their socio-economic background. We prepare students for life after school by incorporating other disciplines such as economics or science into our classes to show that history connects everything. Students engage in civics and participate in the community while applying their historical knowledge to better the world around them. We build self-confidence through proficiency and teach team building, time management, and other life-ready skills. We verify student learning by administering a pre and post-test every year for our classes to know what students have learned. We utilize formative assessments to ensure any gaps in knowledge are filled during the year. Overall, our students graduate highly versed in how the world around them came to be and are ready to be the change in the world they want to create.

### **1f. For secondary schools:**

College Readiness: Lab time is also used to prepare students in 9-12 grade for college, including PSAT and SAT prep, personality and interest surveys such as the YouScience aptitude and interest survey, goal setting activities, and projects that provide students the opportunity to explore career options and potential colleges. We use Khan Academy and other resources provided by the College Board to help students prepare for the PSAT and SAT and ensure college readiness. Due to our preparation and the quality of our students, two of our students were recognized nationally for scoring in the top 1% of the students taking the SAT this year, with one student winning recognition as a National Merit Scholar.

Career Readiness: From the hands-on science and engineering activities in the Pitsco Lab and PLTW to our Mock-Trial and School Newspaper classes, we prepare our students for whatever career path they are inclined to pursue. This year, the Pitsco Lab and PLTW projects were showcased at the STEM Fair. Still, we also brought in professional engineers, project managers, and staff from the community, including several from the Air Force Research Laboratories and Sandia National Laboratories, as our Science Fair judges so our students could interact with these STEM professionals. Four of our students placed in the Regional Science Fair, and two competed in the NM State Science Fair this year. Our Mock Trial Team was unanimously voted the winners of the Michell Giger Award and Star Witness and Star Attorney Awards in the 2022 Gene Franchini Mock Trial Competition held at the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Courthouse. Our School Newspaper, the Phoenix Times, highlights school events and award-winning staff and students. Still, it also includes history, biographies, opinion pieces, poetry, and artwork done entirely by our students. Our Middle School students submitted entries in the 2021 National Free Press Women's High School Communications Contest and won 2 third-place awards and 8 Honorable Mentions. Finally, we also have one College and one High School Student interning on our staff to gain professional experience while attending school.

### **1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

At Albuquerque School of Excellence, we strive to make Social Emotional Learning (SEL) a priority. We are currently using the Move This World curriculum for grades K-12. It uses interactive videos, movement,

and creative expression to develop social-emotional skills. Move this World is aligned with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Every student gets an SEL class for at least 30 minutes a week. All 6th-12th grade students received the Signs of Suicide (SOS) classes. SOS comprises two 30-minute classroom sessions and learning about identifying signs of suicide in friends, family, and yourself. This year eighth graders received an experiential program to include outside field trips in the Sandia Mountains and along the Rio Grande river. The field trips address social skills, mindfulness, developing empathy, and team building.

Art is a medium we use for our students to empower themselves through expression and provide a unique and personal view of the world around them. In art, project-based learning is essential. Art Club, Digital Arts, and Artletes are the framework of our Art program. Artletes is an academic program where students compete in national and local art competitions. This gives students chances to expand their art resumes and become involved with community events. In 2021 we had an ASE student win an overall 1st place award in the Hispanic Heritage Youth Art Contest, which is open to students in grades k-12 from all corners of New Mexico.

The ASE Music Program is an elective course that uses sequential lessons to build musical skills in five areas: singing, playing instruments, coordinated movement, listening, and creating. ASE Middle-School and High School students are often new to music. Many have never experienced a music classroom and have had little exposure to music at home. The ASE Music curriculum is divided into two sections. Sections one and two contain the curriculum according to the nine Content Standards defined in the NM State Framework. Each unit builds on the prior to developing skill levels and knowledge. For each Content Standard, the Performance Standard is defined; an explanation of what students should know and be able to do is provided in various tables per grade level. This reflects the idea that students' experience in music is a spiraling process of learning and applying a diverse set of skills and knowledge needed to meet each standard.

Our Elementary PE program meets the diverse needs of all students by using a skill theme approach. This allows students to develop various physical skills needed for an active lifestyle. During PE class, students also develop The Five Core SEL Competencies; Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making.

ASE has worked diligently to expand extracurricular activities, including our sports programs. This year, we have seen an uptick in participation. Our boys' varsity basketball finished strong making it to the semi-final game, further than they have ever gone. The JV high school girls volleyball team is currently in the middle of an undefeated season despite never competing in the high school division. We have a diverse group of students participating in our athletic program, with all of our teams having a minority-majority roster and a diverse group of coaches. Our coaches' enthusiasm and dedication have attracted students to the program, including many first-time players. Our athletes gain greatly, including the health benefits of regular exercise and the lessons in teamwork, sportsmanship, and humility our coaching staff provides.

The foreign languages offered at ASE in middle and high school are Spanish and Turkish. With 21 languages spoken by our students and staff, we hope to add more diversity to our foreign language program in the future. Our foreign language instructors teach more than language skills; students are introduced to new cultures, foods, religions, and ways of life. We pride ourselves on providing our students with the knowledge and exposure to seek understanding and common ground in our global community.

### **3. Academic Supports**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level:**

In alignment with NM Public Education requirements, ASE has implemented MLSS to support all students and provide interventions for all students, including those performing below grade level. These targeted interventions allow teachers and students to address areas in all content areas where students need extra support.

When we make the students our partners in decision making, instead of asking them to do things, they internalize and own what they are doing. We are using cooperative learning strategies in the classroom—one successful method used by one of our middle school science teachers; instead of choosing a student to answer the question, partners take turns to answer whenever asking a question. So, in a few minutes, all students will be discussing the question, which increases engagement dramatically. This also helps pull the low-achieving students up and get them more involved in the classroom, helping them better understand the curriculum. Student teams are arranged so that there is always peer support. With the help of cooperative learning strategies, we have positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation, and simultaneous interaction. Nobody is off the hook, and this kind of engagement pulls everyone up. The students are given various activities and assessments to measure the standards and skills taught. This helps develop critical and analytical thinking, tap individual potential, and be equipped with social skills needed in the future by developing self-confidence in individuals who are capable of facing the demands and challenges of everyday life. Cooperative learning strategies can be found in all classrooms. Teachers use centers, and small group works on projects in all subjects, including those related to PITSCO, robotics, and math and science projects.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level:**

High-performing students in elementary can work on alternative assignments to challenge themselves and further their learning. In 3rd through 5th grade, online platforms such as ALEKS allow students to work at their own pace and on higher than grade level math content. We also offer advanced electives for our high-performing 3rd through 5th-grade students which include classes such as robotics and science and engineering exploration, allowing students to make connections with real-life applications.

High-performing students in grades 6-8 are encouraged to challenge themselves by taking advanced courses, tutoring peers, and putting in effort above and beyond minimum expectations. These students are encouraged to use online platforms such as ALEKS to work at their own pace and move on to higher than grade-level content.

In high school, ASE expects students to begin preparing and planning for college and our high-performing students are offered the opportunity to enroll in college courses and be a step ahead of their peers by graduating with college courses completed. This and the advanced ELA, math, and science courses ASE offers prepares our students for STEAM-based careers.

### **3c. Special education:**

Albuquerque School of Excellence services all students. Students receiving special education support have an IEP with goals for improvement based on their needs. Students receive services in a couple of ways; there are ELA and Math Special Education classes and inclusion at the elementary. Science and Social Studies classes are general education classes, and students have accommodations and modifications to ensure success in all classes. The special education reading curriculum is Spire. Students receive instructions based on their placement level and are grouped by the level. The special education math curriculum is Saxon. Students use manipulatives in all classes and have extended time and accommodations or modifications to ensure student success. The middle and high school services are special education classes and inclusion, and some receive resource room help. The high school students in need of special education science receive a special education science. They are in general education for social studies and all other required classes and electives with their accommodations and modifications for support.

The Gifted Program at Albuquerque School of Excellence is for students K-12 who qualify in intelligence and one or more areas, including math, reading, writing, critical thinking, and creativity. Students are identified in the general education classroom by teachers, and NWEA scores are used to screen for students who score 90th percentile and above. Parents can also request gifted screening. The process begins with a Student Assistance Team (SAT); parents and teachers decide if screening for eligibility for gifted services is beneficial to the student based on work samples, classroom observations, test scores, and teacher and parent input. The screening test at ASE is the CogAT. Students are tested in three areas: verbal, non-verbal, and quantitative. Students must score in the 98th percentile in at least one of the three areas to qualify based on

intelligence. If a student qualifies in the non-verbal section, they are also qualified in the area of critical thinking. The NWEA is currently used to qualify students in math, reading, and writing. The Structure of Intellect is given to screen for creativity.

After a student is qualified, an IEP is written with goals in all qualifying areas and a career readiness goal. The program at ASE focuses on student advancement, engagement, and enrichment in the goal areas. Students are greatly in charge of their learning through self-selected projects that are created with the help of our curriculum and teacher input. Renzulli Learning is the ASE gifted curriculum. It provides a specialized approach to project-based learning. Students take a profiler, and the program directs students to PBLs they might be interested in learning about that match their goals. Students then select a goal to work on and a PBL to meet the goal. The class also does projects as a group based on levels, goals, and interests. Students meet with the teacher of the gifted during their homeroom time four days a week for 30 minutes until high school. When students reach high school, they can take college-level classes at local universities and AP classes. Hence, the gifted service is an advisory for 30 minutes a week during their homeroom. We have three teachers of the gifted who work with students in classes based on grade. In the general education classes, students are placed in the advanced classes; if appropriate for them, all students have accommodations and modifications to help them succeed in the general education setting. Curriculum compacting and advancing to the student's level, using higher-order thinking questions in class, and making connections to prior knowledge and some of the most common accommodations and modifications to help gifted students in general education courses.

### **3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:**

Many different languages are spoken at Albuquerque School of Excellence, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Navajo, Chinese, Arabic, Turkish, and French. English Language Learners (ESL students) are identified using state-approved screening methods. Once identified as an ESL student, the student is pulled for ESL services by a TESOL qualified instructor for 45 minutes a day four days a week in grades K-5 and 90 minutes twice a week in grades 6-12. Students also receive sheltered instruction in their regular classrooms. Teachers have been provided training in techniques that use sheltered instruction. Students are tested yearly to assess their English Language proficiency using the state-approved assessment. Once a student has passed the yearly proficiency screener, they are monitored by the ESL coordinator for an additional two years.

### **3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:**

Equity at Albuquerque School of Excellence means holding students' identity, culture, and language at the center of the education we provide. Our Equity Council works to ensure that we uphold and implement the framework of the Martinez-Yazzie Consolidated Lawsuit into our culture. Albuquerque School of Excellence's homeless student and family program is growing and evolving to fit the population of our students and their families in a welcoming climate where identification is a benefit of attending ASE. Our homeless education liaison works alongside our Deans of Students and Culture, our schools' counselors, and social workers to ensure that school and classroom policies and procedures, such as disciplinary policies, are fair to homeless students and do not negatively impact their success in school. In compliance with McKinney-Vento, we identify families needing services through a semi-annual residency questionnaire and referrals from teachers, deans, assistant principals, medical assistants, school counselors, and social workers. We connect homeless students and families to services and have on-hand school supplies and hygiene kits, and can provide access to transportation to and from school. We work to help families get needed documents and connect with other resources they may express a need for, including housing vouchers. ASE strives to provide fair, equitable services to all students and families while upholding our values and standards. We believe that with the incorporation of programs like these, along with our STEAM-based education, highly qualified educators, and supportive environment, ASE is helping build character-centered students and productive global citizens who will find success in achieving their academic and societal aspirations.



## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Albuquerque School of Excellence wants students to feel engaged and connected to their educational experience. We have high academic expectations for our students and expect them to foster excellent character. While we have these expectations, we are committed to providing students with the support they need to succeed in the classroom and in life. ASE has a dedicated staff that includes assistant principals, deans of students and culture, social workers, and a school counselor to meet the needs of our students. They work collaboratively to ensure our students have the resources to succeed. Our students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities, including after-school clubs, sports, student council, and journalism. Our high school students must complete community service hours before they graduate. These hours are earned by assisting staff with office duties that include filing, answering phones, assisting parents, assisting students, and working on projects for the school. The students regularly help with the front office, which allows them to become accustomed to real-life situations and how to communicate with adults properly. ASE has a middle school and high school student council, which develops ideas to help engage other students by organizing activities and encouraging charity participation. Throughout the remote learning school year, due to Covid, our staff was readily available to assist students with their courses in ensuring that they could succeed outside of the classroom. Each student was assigned a Google Chromebook so they would not miss the opportunity to continue classes. Since returning to in-person learning, our students have shown significant improvements in their social skills and willingness to return to the classroom setting. Elementary teachers utilize NEPRIS to bring scientists, engineers, and other careers into the classroom to allow students to experience and learn about a multitude of possibilities for post-secondary education and career options. In-person guest speakers from the community are also brought in to allow students to learn about and participate in a variety of subject matters and projects including the AFRL rocketry program, Junior Achievement program, robotics, and local ecological outreach programs. Our teachers incorporate hands-on activities to allow the students to experience working in teams and groups and to allow their imaginations to expand their learning and Elementary teachers utilize NEPRIS to bring scientists, engineers, and other careers into the classroom to allow students to experience and learn about a multitude of possibilities for post-secondary education and career options. In person guest speakers from the community are also brought in to allow students to learn about and participate in a variety of subject matters and projects including the AFRL rocketry program, Junior Achievement program, robotics, and local ecological outreach programs. Our teachers incorporate hands-on activities to allow the students to experience working in teams and groups and to allow their imaginations to expand their learning and knowledge.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Albuquerque School of Excellence takes a great deal of pride in the involvement of our families and community partners in all aspects of ASE life. Our administration team works hard to provide students and parents with opportunities to express their questions and concerns. We have an active Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), a weekly online newsletter for parents and staff, The Friday Phoenix. Our students work on a monthly newspaper, The Phoenix Times, where they share school events, announcements, local and world events, poetry, comics, and other news. Parent-school communication is a top priority at ASE, and we provide several avenues for parents and teachers to utilize. This includes Parent-Teacher conferences and Home visits which are offered both virtually and in-person and are a tool we use to help parents and teachers work together to build a bridge between home and school. Teachers communicate with parents in-person, by email, and through classroom, newsletters to keep parents involved with what is happening in their child's school day. ASE strives to support all students and families through our Title I parent/student/teacher compact and McKinney-Vento equity council and homeless support programs. We hold an annual Multi-Cultural Fair that invites students, parents, and the public to participate in and attend. This event hosts artists, musicians, storytellers, and people who represent the diversity that makes up ASE and the surrounding community. We also hold an annual STEM Fair where students display and demonstrate their STEM-based projects.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

At ASE, we pride ourselves on our commitment to developing, supporting, and recognizing our staff as well as our students. Every Friday afternoon is devoted to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), once per month by department, then school (Elementary, Middle, or High), grade level, and District in that order. When we hold a District-wide PLC, we have specific training which will help all staff from Test Control training for our State testing, NWEAs, and SATs, to MLSS Implementation training, to Dean's List training for behavior management, and Social Emotional Learning training by our Counselor. When we went to online-only classes during the height of the pandemic, these meetings still occurred over Zoom to continue developing our staff though we were not in person. ASE also has sent out surveys to staff members throughout the pandemic to get their input and feedback on policies and procedures for educating students while maintaining a Covid-safe environment. After each survey, we presented the results during our District meeting and explained any decisions made based on those surveys. We have mid-year development meetings personally with the Principal and Assistant Principal to go over attendance and academic metrics with each staff member so we can set achievement and development goals which are designed for each individual. Through these meetings, two of our former Education Assistants have earned their Level One Teacher licenses this year and several others have submitted their dossiers to become Level Two or Three Teachers. We have also used the Dedicated Employee Education Program (DEEP) to fund staff members going to school for their Masters Degrees or to pursue their National Board Certification. We recognize our outstanding teachers every month in our Teacher of the Month Award, but we also pay our teachers for extra duties using stipends approved by the Governing Council.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Our administration supports teachers' professional judgment regarding what works best in each classroom by giving teachers the freedom to add as they choose to our adopted curriculum in ELA, math, and science. ASE focuses on alignment to common core standards, student achievement data, and goal setting; rather than dictating what must be taught, teachers are allowed the flexibility to address the needs of our diverse student body. Our principal is the foundation of our school and leads our administration team, teachers, staff, and district offices while providing support to students, parents, and the community. Assistant Principals are assigned by grade level, K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Each grade level assistant principal has typical responsibilities in supporting our principal to implement school goals and ensure that teachers are implementing common core standards in the classroom. By implementing and monitoring our MLSS Plan, our assistant principals work with teachers to support students with in-class interventions and tutorials. Teacher support is also provided with annual teacher evaluations as we build practical observation, feedback, and coaching cycles throughout the school year. Assistant Principals assist with staff hiring, the navigation of our employee handbook, and meetings with families as needed to address questions or concerns. Assistant Principals at ASE play a unique role in leadership. They are an integral part of the foundation that makes up our administration team and help students prepare to be college and career-ready. They also provide balance by organizing and offering a variety of electives, extracurricular activities, and clubs for students to enjoy and expand their educational experience. Albuquerque School of Excellence administration team also includes two Deans of Students and Culture; this position works closely with the Assistant Principals to implement school goals. The Dean of Students and Culture is responsible for creating a positive learning environment for all students. They help students resolve problems, such as attendance issues, that interfere with gaining the most significant benefit from the school's educational opportunities. Our Deans assist in creating a positive and safe school environment conducive to teaching and learning and serve as a resource to staff in dealing with classroom management issues and student discipline. Our Deans also provide leadership that ensures student safety and well-being, social-emotional learning, school discipline, and overall school effectiveness to create a strong culture for learning. This is done by understanding and supporting the mission, vision, and values of Albuquerque School of Excellence and developing guidelines for proper student conduct, and implementing disciplinary procedures and policies that ensure a safe and orderly environment at ASE.

#### **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

At Albuquerque School of Excellence, we attempt to bridge gaps between students and teachers through culturally responsive teaching and learning. Culturally responsive learning and education bring about a strong sense of belonging for our students by creating an environment where students are heard, respected,

challenged, and safe. This allows teachers to identify subtle differences between students and themselves, building stronger relationships instead of breaking them down. This is important because when it comes to certain aspects of culture, many are misunderstood between teacher and student, causing that misunderstanding to be the leading factor for a student to be in trouble within the school discipline system. We combat that at ASE by empowering our students. We encourage them to take ownership of their education and their environment. The conversations during Social Emotional Learning classes allow each student to feel respected and heard while ensuring that each student feels welcomed in the classroom through their interactions with one another.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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To close achievement gaps exacerbated by the COVID pandemic, ASE has added ten instructional learning days to the school year and three hours per week for ELA and Math labs. This increase in instructional hours and school year days has shown students to be more engaged in academic classes and have gained a broader and deeper coverage of curricula. Students have more time devoted to lessons and activities that enhance students educational experiences and engagement in school. These extended hours in the classroom offer more direct instruction of content material; targeted MLSS interventions; examining topics in greater depth; completing, reinforcing, and extending lessons; making cross-curricular connections; addressing students' questions; and discussing and reflecting on lessons. Along with the extended hours in our school days, we have implemented after-school tutoring in core subjects for all students. This extended time also benefits our teachers by providing more dedicated time for teacher collaboration and embedded professional development that enables educators to strengthen instructional practices and develop a shared commitment to high expectations. ASE monitors and tracks student growth using NWEA interim assessments three times per year, and we set growth goals for teachers and reward them for meeting or exceeding their projected growth goals with a year-end stipend. ASE has long held the practice of awarding our teachers for helping our students succeed academically. In the past, these year-end stipends were based on state teacher evaluations when testing data was included in teacher evaluations. Since the state has removed that element from the teacher evaluation system, ASE has begun to utilize an in-house monitoring system of projected growth goals with a year-end stipend for our teachers. This practice will continue to be a part of our culture. Given the current state of education related to COVID or other outside factors that impact student growth and success, it will be adapted as needed.