



new mexico **early childhood development** partnership

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

Dear Public Education Commission:

The New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership would like to extend our support of the Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School. With over 76% of our state's student population coming from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, it is imperative that educational leaders support the type of culturally and linguistically responsive programming that this school promises to offer. Five independent meta-analysis come to the same essential conclusion, that high quality dual language education is the only program that fully closes the academic achievement gap between English learners and their native-English-speaking peers. Unfortunately, out of some 900 public schools in New Mexico, only approximately 115 offer dual language programming, and the quality of these programs varies across the state. Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School offers a tremendous opportunity to fill some of that gap for students in southern New Mexico.

While students in Dona Ana County possess just as much potential as their peers across the country, the county also struggles with one of the lowest annual family incomes in the country. As a result, students show up to the school door with a litany of unmet physical and socio-emotional needs that interfere with their learning. Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School proposes to offer a community school approach with the types of services for students and families that have been proven to mitigate the impact of poverty on student achievement.

The New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership is committed to ensuring that every New Mexican child has access to the educational resources they need to ensure success, and we are supportive of the efforts of Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School to that end.

Sincerely,

Edward Tabet-Cubero  
Executive Vice President



## College of Education

Office of the Dean  
MSC 3AC  
New Mexico State University  
P.O. Box 30001  
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001  
575-646-2498, Fax: 575-646-6032

New Mexico Public Education  
Commission Jerry Apodaca Education  
Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue Santa Fe, NM 87501

May 22, 2018

Attn: Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners,

I write this letter in support of the Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School. This school is a dual language, experiential learning community school that will utilize culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum. The school will focus on Mesoamerican heritage as it prepares K-5 students to enter middle school.

The Xinachtli Community School is an innovative model that is timely and very much needed in the region. What separates this school from others is the innovative pedagogy and curriculum. Specifically, it advances identity formation as a foundational component in the mission, learning, and culture of the school. Research has indicated that identity formation helps improve overall academic outcomes for students, particularly students of color. This school presents the opportunity to have identity formation at the forefront of learning that will advance developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive instruction.

This Community School goes beyond the standard mission of a typical school by serving as a hub for integrating local community resources and promoting civic engagement among families. Research has demonstrated that community schools have a significant impact on improving the overall well-being of children and families.

It is for these reasons that I support the creation of this school and welcome the opportunity for the school to collaborate with New Mexico State University (NMSU), College of Education. I look forward to developing collaborative efforts between NMSU College of Education and this new educational approach found in the Xinachtli Community School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Pope-Davis".

Don Pope-Davis, Ph.D.  
Dean



College of Education  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
P.O. Box 30001 – MSC 3CUR  
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001  
575-646-4820

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Ave,  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

May 29, 2018

Attn: Chair Patricia Gipson

I am delighted to write a letter of support for this exciting new elementary school in Las Cruces called the Raices del Saber Xinachti Community School. As the J. Paul Taylor Endowed Professor of Early Childhood Education in the College of Education, I envision this experiential learning program to be ground-breaking, progressive, and informative for the surrounding community. It will support children and families with culturally-relevant teaching and learning opportunities.

I expect our NMSU teacher candidates to participate at the school to learn more about the importance of curriculum that emerges from historical context and is connected to the rich Mesoamerican heritage language and culture. It is hoped that our college students will increase their day-to-day responsiveness to the children, understanding that each child's developmental trajectory is deeply rooted in cultural context, including language spoken at home, geographic histories, and social class. As many of us believe, it is of utmost importance to nurture a future educator's sense of identity as a cultural being as well as build the necessary teaching skills and dispositions to work with all families.

In addition to the preparation of future teachers, I look forward to providing our over 150 families at the NMSU Myrna's Children's Village lab school an alternative to our current public schools as they look for K-5<sup>th</sup> schooling. We serve a majority Latina/o families, many of whom would like to build on the positive experiences their children have gained at the NMSU early childhood education lab school.

Lastly, I'm eager about this proposed project because there will be opportunities for research that could inform teacher educator programs as well as state and national policy standards on the preparation of teachers serving diverse learners. Thank you for supporting this endeavor – the Raices del Saber Xinachti Community School. If you have any questions, please contact me at [bcahill@nmsu.edu](mailto:bcahill@nmsu.edu) or 575-646-5702.

Sincerely,

Betsy Cahill

Betsy Cahill, Ph.D.  
J. Paul Taylor Endowed Professor  
Director of the Early Childhood Program  
Interim Associate Dean



## Office of the Mayor

KENNETH D. MIYAGISHIMA  
MAYOR

CITY OF LAS CRUCES

May 25, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

RE: Letter of Support for Xinachtli, Raices del Saber Community School

Dear Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners,

As the Mayor, I enthusiastically support the application of the proposed school referenced above. I have known Lucia Veronica Carmona for several years and know her dedication and capabilities. It is known she has formed a strong committee of educators, community members, parents and others who are all working very hard to create for the children of Las Cruces a tri-lingual school in which the children will be prepared by their teachers to enter middle school proficient in all the core subjects through a rigorous multidisciplinary curriculum that acknowledges the existing United States/Mexico border in its cultural context.

I believe that teaching in the tried and true manner that Mr. Carlos Aceves developed in his years in the Canutillo Independent School District, (Canutillo, Texas) will bring about pride in the children, real academic growth and appreciation for the diversity that surrounds us.

Please call (575) 541-2067, if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ken D. Miyagishima  
Mayor

cc: Stuart C. Ed, City Manager



Hector Girón  
Principal  
Gadsden High School



6301 Highway 28  
Anthony, N.M. 88021  
Phone: (575) 882-6310  
hgiron@gisd.k12.nm.us

May 8, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being written to express my gratitude to a colleague, Carlos Aceves, a teacher with whom I worked during my 12 year tenure as Assistant Principal and Principal at Canutillo Elementary School in the Canutillo Independent School District from 1995-2007. I feel that Mr. Aceves and I connected in a manner that rarely happens between teachers and administrators. My bachelor's degree is in History with an emphasis on the history of Latin America. I love the study of history and feel that people that do not have a true understanding of their family's history, their cultural history, their local history, their national history, will suffer from anomie.

In 1997, when I became Principal at Canutillo Elementary School, Mr. Aceves approached me requesting permission to implement Project Xinachtli. He immediately captured my imagination with his description of Project Xinachtli. Mr. Aceves requested permission to teach his first grade bilingual students in Spanish, English, and Nahuatl. He proposed to expose the children to a constructivist approach particularly in math and science. I gave him permission to proceed. The core concept of Xinachtli as stated by Mr. Aceves is one that "views the time of the sprouting of a seed as the point in which the seed is neither seed nor plant but a moment of infinite possibilities." <http://www.indigenousecultures.org/programs-xinachtli-aceves.html>.

Mr. Aceves began to grow and cultivate this opportunity and his work captured the imagination of the parents of the students in his classroom and then eventually began to impact and involve other teachers in the school. Mr. Aceves began to share his knowledge and philosophy with them. He taught his students algebraic concepts that are not part of the first grade curriculum, yet his students demonstrated an understanding of these concepts. Mr. Aceves shared his ideas with other teachers in grades K, 2, and 3. ELL students who experienced this from Kinder through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade did exceptionally well on the state mandated test-TAKS at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and beyond.

Mr. Aceves also addressed Social Emotional Learning with students. For example, one idea that he used to help children overcome a deep fear or concern was for the children to write it down, fold it, and put it in a box. Each week Mr. Aceves would conduct a ceremony where the children would place all of these pieces of paper in a fire and release them. This symbolically allowed the children to deal with their fear or concern. This is just one example of how he addressed not only the academic but also the personal side of education.

Additionally, Mr. Aceves organized a yearly festival around the Aztec New Year. In conjunction with this festival, he also organized a campus based mini-conference involving indigenous people and leaders in the Xinachtli movement. These events were experienced by all students, parents, community members, and staff members in the Canutillo Elementary School community. Mr. Aceves collaborated with a committee of parents, students, staff, and an artist to

conceptualize the Four Directions Mural Project that involved students and parents in painting four large mural panels. These panels depicted the four directions and the symbolism about the color and continents associated with them. These murals were connected to each other with lines of White, Red, Black, and Yellow and the lines converged around a large round mirror. This was intended to get all people who experienced this series of murals to see themselves in the process and to recognize that we are all one people on this planet.

I believe that the opportunity for all of our educational community at Canutillo Elementary School to experience the ideas and concepts that Mr. Aceves brought to the school enriched our lives and had a significant impact on all who experienced them. I believe that all of these experiences contributed to the development of a phenomena that developed at Canutillo where all who experienced this, felt at peace, felt loved, felt that they belonged. It contributed the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hector Giron', written over a horizontal line.

Hector Giron



**ANAHUACALMECAC  
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY**  
An International Baccalaureate World School

CDS Code: 19 76885 0132928

4736 Huntington Drive South, Los Angeles CA 90032 • (323) 352-3148 •  
Email: [info@dignidad.org](mailto:info@dignidad.org) • [www.dignidad.org](http://www.dignidad.org)



May 20, 2018

To whom it may concern:

As L.A.'s first International Baccalaureate World Schools, Semillas Community Schools ("Semillas") I write this letter in support of *Raíces der Saber Xinachtli Community School*, a NACA Inspired school. Our support is based upon over two years of collaboration with the school's founders and a growing collaboration with the NACA Inspired Schools Network. In 2017, Semillas hosted a visiting committee of Raíces founders and a week-long residency with Lucia Carmona, sponsored by the NACA Fellowship. Based upon these and other experiences, Semillas is committed to continuing to develop this collaborative relationship to include the following areas:

- Teacher professional development
- Teacher recruitment and cross-training
- Teacher international experiences/exchanges
- Student international experiences/exchanges
- International education (IB and others)
- Meeting federal and state-based mandates, limitations and opportunities
- Recognition of needs of Indigenous Peoples children internationally

Our school Anahuacalmecac, currently serves over 350 students in our k-12 continuum of learning. First founded in 2002, Semillas is a community-based, educational non-profit organization led by Indigenous educators in Los Angeles, California that organizes youth, parents and educators to advance self-determination, sovereignty and human rights as Indigenous Peoples through autonomous education and advocacy.

Semillas currently operates one International Baccalaureate authorized World School: Anahuacalmecac International University Preparatory School of North America (Anahuacalmecac) for grades kinder through twelfth. *Anahuacalmecac International University Preparatory of North America is dedicated to student academic excellence, Native wisdom, and appreciation of the cultural and intellectual heritage of Indigenous Peoples and the promotion of positive social awareness.*

Our school is dedicated to serving disadvantaged children, children at risk of gang membership, and children at risk of cultural alienation in mainstream schools, in particular Native youth of Mexican family origin. As an IB World School, Anahuacalmecac students enjoy access to an inquiry-based, student-centered curriculum organized through the IB Primary and Middle Years





## College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Anthropology

MSC 3BV

New Mexico State University

P.O. Box 30001

Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001

575-646-2725, fax: 575-646-3725

[nmsu.edu/~anthro/](http://nmsu.edu/~anthro/)

May 7, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue Santa Fe, NM 87501

Attn: Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners

Re: Application of Racies del Saber Xinachtli Community School

Dear People,

I highly recommend approval of the application of the Racies del Saber Xinachtli Community School (R.A.I.C.E.S) as a New Mexico Charter School. As a Professor in the Anthropology Department here at New Mexico State University, I believe this educational plan coincides with the theory and practice of learning and teaching that we espouse in working with Indigenous people.

In my working with Native American, tribes and groups, as well as other Indigenous peoples for over thirty years, I consider R.A.I.C.E.S as an epitome of an essential way to improve the quality of life for the descendants of Indigenous people. The significant issue is instituting an educational program that builds off cultural strengths. This obviates the ongoing failures that continually attempt to ameliorate the perceived deficits of people whose ways of knowing are different from Western models deriving from Eurocentric societies.

In the R.A.I.C.E.S mission statement, it relates to preparing students to be "bi-literate" in Spanish and English with the Nahuatl as an "enrichment" language as well as a "cultural context" of U.S./Mexico. A fine example of successful endeavors using culture and language in the curriculum is the growth of the Tribal College movement in the United States and Canada. The existing thirty-five Tribal Colleges rose from the Navajo Nation instituting the Rough Rock Demonstration School in the late 1960s. These colleges have improved and enhanced post-secondary educational access and attainment (<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p20-578.pdf>).

Many tribal groups in the United States have adopted the "language emersion" model developed from the Hawaiian and Maori groups to revitalize indigenous languages and improve successful participation in society. Although the achievement data is varied and the argument about bi-lingual education continues, the right of choice and social justice are overwhelmingly significant. However, the evidence exists that

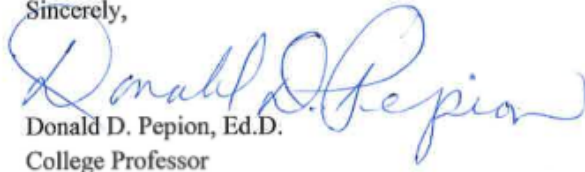


factors such as self-esteem and individual identity are important attributes to positive human development.

I believe an important function of R.A.I.C.E.S is that it infuses Indigenous ways of knowing into the curriculum. Paulo Freire (1970, 1985, 2009) in "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" was one of the first to delineate how effects of oppression dehumanized indigenous peoples into believing they were less intelligent. Through oral literacy, he explained how oppressed peoples could empower themselves through a dialogical process. Freire's theory and practice identified a facilitative process of learning to "name" or identify their situation and use their own knowledge and actions to bring about positive change. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999, 2012), a Maori articulated the term "decolonization" to help indigenous people see how they needed to use their own knowledge and truth to deconstruct the negative effects of colonization in order to utilize their cultural knowledge for positive human development. From these origins, there is a fountain of emerging indigenous scholarship. For example, Vine Deloria, Jr. a Native American has produced prolific books and literature on subject matter relevant to the Indigenous worldview and experience. I believe R.A.I.C.E.S is a budding blossom of this scholarship. (Note: I am attaching one of my theoretical/conceptual statements to support this point of view).

I appreciate your approval of the R.A.I.C.E.S application as a charter school. I have attended several of the planning and development meetings of the numerous people that support the proposed school. I will continue to support the development and implementation of R.A.I.C.E.S.

Sincerely,



Donald D. Pepion, Ed.D.  
College Professor



P. O. BOX 1414 ■ SAN MARCOS, TEXAS 78667 ■ (512) 393-3310

ICIINFO@INDIGENOUSCULTURES.ORG ■ WWW.INDIGENOUSCULTURES.ORG

May 31, 2018

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

Dear Public Education Commission:

Indigenous Cultures Institute was formed as a nonprofit in 2006, preserving the culture of Native Americans indigenous to Texas and northern Mexico through lectures and public presentations. Over the past twelve years we've expanded to ten major programs and twelve volunteer staff members. During the past seven years we have established an Indigenous Arts Summer Camp based on the Xinachtli pedagogy, with tremendous success in addressing the indigeneity of local indigenous-Hispanic youth. This teaching method was developed and taught to us by Carlos Aceves who assisted us with several camp encounters during the first years of our development.

During a week-long, ceremonial experience of the arts, we see a significant change in the attitudes and behavior of up to forty youth ages nine to fourteen. Through pre- and post-surveys, administered by University of Texas at Austin staff, we learn that students have a new vision of themselves and their relationship to their family, community and Mother Earth. The parents, who are also surveyed, report that their children are now very respectful and helpful at home, and eager to absorb their lessons for the next day. Parents also report their gratitude that their entire family knows more about their indigenous roots, and how this knowledge has transformed their lives. Xinachtli has delivered dramatic success.

We are in the process of meeting with the local San Marcos school district to establish Xinachtli-based after school cultural enrichment classes, which we hope will lead to integrating our curriculum into some or all of the local schools' regular classes. The school district appears very receptive. We are also hoping that we can continue networking with charter schools such as Raices, as models that will help us to continue to improve our programs and support our expansion plans.

We wholeheartedly support Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School in their effort to obtain its charter. This school will make a profound difference for our indigenous children and give them the support they need to understand their place in society – a place of special contributions because of their unique perspective as First People of this land. This curriculum can only come from their cultural heritage, that opening seed of potential that has been their legacy for thousands of years. We ask you to approve this charter for the benefit of our children, our nation and future generations.

Sincerely,

Mario Garza, Ph.D.



May 23, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Ave,  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

**Attn: Chair Patricia Gipson**

RE: Letter in support of charter application for *Raices del Saber*

---

Dear Ms. Carmona,

I am writing this letter to support your incredible endeavor: *Raices del Saber* *Xinachtli* Charter School. A charter school geared toward an indigenous imperative, indigenous ways of knowing, and one that is community focused is sorely needed in our community. I am delighted that you are taking the lead in this charge.

As you know, I am from the region where the school will be located. I was born and raised in Berino, New Mexico, and know intimately the challenges that this region faces in relation to unemployment, crime, poor education, poor health, and many more indicators of a strained quality of life. I have dedicated my life and educational trajectory to understanding these injustices and inequities as they relate to region, race, and class. What I've learned is that many of these challenges can be addressed by strong identity formation work and high quality, relevant education. This, from my observations and from attending the many workshops, lectures, and community

events hosted by your team in the past two years, would be addressed in a thoughtful, sincere, rigorous manner by your school.

I am the Director of Ethnic Studies at NMSU, a nascent program being created for reasons similar to your own for creating *Raices*. We live in the Borderlands that connect disparate nations, peoples, ideas, realities. Education in the Borderlands should be relevant to the population(s) served in this region and your curriculum aims to do this and to reach the youngest of our residents. I have most hope in the upcoming generations to understand and address social challenges and create appropriate and sustainable solutions to these challenges. Your elementary school model is a perfect way to start educating and socializing our youngest thinkers about the world in critical ways that move us as a society toward healing. It would be great to model *Raices* in a scaled-up way for Middle and High School students in the future!

I fully endorse *Raices del Saber* and look forward to working in partnership with your school as the Ethnic Studies initiative at NMSU gets underway. Our missions are aligned in really powerful ways that center the well being of our region in ways that have not been done before. Thank you for all the diligence, commitment, and hard work you've expended in bringing this charter to this stage. Your community-building and stakeholder-investing work has been incredible, to say the least. People I speak to in the community are impressed by the amount of time you have spent garnering support for *Raices*.

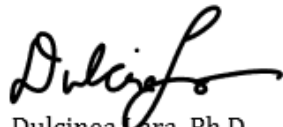
For those reading these commitment letters, thank you for your time and openness to realization that this charter, based strongly on relevant and place-based education is exactly what our region needs—for both its academic content and its attention to identity/history/memory/consciousness. This kind of education is innovative and crucial and Veronica Lucia Carmona is the right person to do it. She is beloved in the community for all the right reasons and will see this project through with transparency, humility, and grace.



I can be reached at [Dulcinea@nmsu.edu](mailto:Dulcinea@nmsu.edu) or (575) 405-8781 to discuss further.

Thank you for your consideration!

Kindly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dulcinea", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Dulcinea Lara, Ph.D.  
Director of Ethnic Studies  
NMSU



**LA SEMILLA**  
LEARN GROW INSPIRE

**La Semilla Food Center**

P.O. Box 2579

Anthony, NM 88021

(575) 882-2393

[www.lasemillafoodcenter.org](http://www.lasemillafoodcenter.org)

May 17, 2018

La Semilla Food Center is pleased to extend its enthusiastic support for Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School (Raíces). Raíces is a dual language, experiential learning community charter school reclaiming Mesoamerican heritage. Raíces prepares K-5 students to enter middle school biliterate in Spanish and English and to achieve academic proficiency in all core subjects through a rigorous multidisciplinary curriculum that relies on the existing U.S.-Mexico border cultural context.

Through our work with youth in *colonia* communities in Southern New Mexico and El Paso, Texas, we experience firsthand that students who learn through educational modalities that elevate culturally relevant achievements, historical figures and movements demonstrate more positive learning outcomes than those who are being exposed only to Western systems of education. Raíces will integrate a culturally responsive and constructivist pedagogy (Xinachtli) as a means of enhancing the curriculum and will provide students the context in which to learn about their indigenous heritage. We believe, along with Raíces and other education innovators, that the idea that students' own personal histories resonate within the learning environment, the idea that their history and culture—rooted in our border region—has validity, is profound. It grounds identity and provides a sense of belonging and confidence instead of leaving students feeling vulnerable, unsure and marginalized. Many models of learning are cumulative in their approach, but none is more successful than those that are rooted in the image of the learner.

Raíces re-imagines what Indigenous education and the school experience can be for students. Through developmentally appropriate & culturally responsive instruction, Raíces builds foundational skills and deep conceptual knowledge that will improve educational and life outcomes and support student achievement. Its emphasis on valuing parents as participants in the construction of knowledge will foster intergenerational ties and strengthen familial bonds.

As native border women leading food justice, community health, and agroecological programming with youth, ages kinder through early college, we can attest to the impact and value of curriculum that elevates and promotes our Mesoamerican cultural heritage and ancestral roots. We have partnered with Ms. Carmona in various capacities over the past 8 years and look forward to cultivating an even deeper partnership in support of the establishment of Raíces.

La Semilla is supportive of Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School and we look forward to the contribution Raíces will make to students, families, and the community.

Sincerely,

Cristina M. Domínguez  
Co-Founder & Co-Director  
La Semilla Food Center

Marlene Yañez  
Youth & Community Education Programs Manager  
La Semilla Food Center



345 EAST ALAMEDA STREET • SANTA FE, NM 87501  
505.983.8300 • 505.983.7887 fax  
[www.nmmccune.org](http://www.nmmccune.org)

May 21, 2018

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

Dear Public Education Commission:

The McCune Charitable Foundation is pleased to be writing in support of the Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School. As one of the largest family foundations exclusively focused on serving the state of New Mexico, our work is dedicated to enriching the health, education, environment, cultural and spiritual life of New Mexicans. We practice proactive grantmaking that seeks to foster positive social change, and our education priority area emphasizes locally designed approaches and multilingual educational opportunities that are responsive to our culturally diverse communities while also serving our most vulnerable students and their families.

Through our education funding work over the years, we have learned that students in high-quality, academically rigorous and culturally relevant multilingual classrooms have certain learning advantages over those in classrooms where only one language is used. We are excited about the dual language two-way immersion model that Raices del Saber will offer the students of Doña Ana County, and the fact that a community school approach will be taken to ensure that students and their families will have access to the resources and services needed to ensure success. We are also excited about the innovative and unique Mesoamerican Indigenous cultural heritage curriculum and the use of Nahuatl as an enrichment language.

We hope the Public Education Commission will welcome Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School as a new member of our state's high performing, innovative charter school community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allison Hagerman', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Allison Hagerman  
Associate Program Officer  
McCune Charitable Foundation



*A Partner With Communities Where Children Come First*

Public Education Commission  
300 Don Gaspar  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

**Re: Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School**

Dear Chair Patricia Gipson and Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School (Raices).

The WK Kellogg foundation has a strong history of supporting children and families in New Mexico. Our strategic plan embraces education as a fundamental component to positively affecting the lives of vulnerable children in our community. Our grantmaking includes analysis of grants through a lens of race equity and community engagement. Raices del Saber is very much in line with our fundamental philosophy.

Given New Mexico's rich history and diverse cultural composition, we welcome Raices del Saber's innovative approach to education. We are excited about the possibilities Raices could bring to our communities in terms of dual language, culturally relevant curriculum and teaching practices.

This letter represents the WKKF's full support of Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School. We ask that the Public Education Commission provide Raices del Saber Xinachtli full consideration.

Warm Regards,

Frank Rene Lopez  
Director of New Mexico Programs  
WK Kellogg Foundation





# Dual Language Education of New Mexico

## Board of Directors

### Co-Chairpersons

Jesse Winter  
Loretta Booker

### Members

Flor Yanira Gurrola Valenzuela  
Mishelle Jurado  
Dr. Sylvia Martínez  
Cristina Benitez de Luna  
Barbara Sena  
Silvia Sosa de Chávez  
Ryan Salmon

### Executive Director

David Rogers

### Director of Operations

Victoria Tafoya

### Director of Operations

Michael Rodriguez

### Director of Programing

Lisa Meyer

### Director of Finance and Development

Leslie Sánchez

## Mission

To develop, support, and advocate for high-quality dual language enriched education in New Mexico.

*Desarrollar, apoyar y abogar por una educación de lenguaje dual de la más alta calidad en Nuevo México.*

## Vision

Our Legacy – Their Future.  
Providing children with a world-class, multilingual education.

*Nuestro legado, su futuro.  
Una educación multilingüe de primera clase para nuestros hijos.*



April 24, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter in support of Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School (Raíces). As the former director of a dual language charter school here in New Mexico, I can truly appreciate the thoughtful and reflective work that has already taken place by the founders of this proposed school, in order to ensure the submission of a detailed, quality application to the Commission.

There are many factors involved with starting a new charter school. In addition to having a handle on the business side of program management, school leaders must also have a viable instructional model. To truly create a high-quality dual language program, it is essential that considerations for program structure, staff recruitment and training, quality curriculum and assessments (in both program languages), and partnerships with the community are always at the forefront of any and all decisions. These are all areas that have been discussed and are already being planned for as Raíces looks to entering a planning year of implementation.

Through consultation with leadership that is responsible for the development of the critical foundational components of the school, I am confident that they are well on their way to a successful launch. The thoughtful selection and development of this proven, sustainable program model will truly serve their students in the manner that is promised through their charter. They will truly serve to reinforce a global perspective while developing our next generation of leaders that have the academic and cultural skills necessary to succeed.

If you need any additional information, please reach me at the phone number listed below, or by email at [michael@dlenm.org](mailto:michael@dlenm.org).

Sincerely,

Michael Rodríguez  
Director of Operations



2017 - 2018  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Barbara Reasoner  
President

Michael Mandel  
Vice President

Patti Havstad  
Secretary

EMMITT BOOHER  
Treasurer

Scott Breckner  
Past President

Jim Vorenberg  
Member At Large

**DIRECTORS**

Glen Cerny

Frank Hernandez

Dan Lee

Ken Mompellier

Abby Osborne

Mary Helen Rajce

Eric Rivera

Deret Roberts

Maisa Sage

**HONORARY EMERITUS**

J. Paul Taylor

**EMERITUS DIRECTORS**

George Giffin

Diana Seward

Lanova Sheets

Kathleen Squires

**STAFF**

Kathleen Albers  
Executive Director

Linda Moore  
Office Manager

Katy Milligan  
Development/Volunteer  
Coordinator

May 25, 2018

**Reference: Recommendation Letter for Xinachtli, Racies del Saber Community Charter School**

Chair Patricia Gipson  
New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gasper Avenue  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Chair Gipson,

It is with great enthusiasm that the Dona Ana Arts Council in Las Cruces submits this letter of recommendation for the establishment of the Racies Elementary Charter School.

DAAC has partnered with several of the Founders and organizers of this school in the past, especially in arts in education projects, events, and programs. Therefore, we are aware of the artistic and educational excellence of the people involved in starting this school.

DAAC has been a partner with the Arts in Education program at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC since the mid-1990's. We have a strong relationship with the Las Cruces Public Schools in teacher training, enrichment opportunities for students, and the development of trained artists in resident. Our model of arts integration includes the relationship of educational and arts content with a shared learning environment between artist, educator, and students.

We believe that the Kennedy Center's arts integration program complements the Raices tri-lingual, rigorous, and multidisciplinary curriculum. We are excited that such a school would exist to highlight the historic, cultural, and arts heritage of our border community. We believe that border artists would benefit from the Racies curriculum and could offer their understanding of the educational process of creativity and integrate with the educators at the school to offer enriched learning experiences for the students and the parents.

We highly recommend and support this new charter school in our community and offer our resources and arts and education practices and programs to benefit the Racies community of students, educators, and parents.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Kathleen Albers  
Executive Director

*Envisioning a Community Where the Arts Thrive*

P.O. Box 1721 • Las Cruces, NM 88004 • Located at 1740 Calle de Mercado in Mesilla, New Mexico • Phone: 575-523-6403 • FAX: 575-523-4760 • [www.DAArts.org](http://www.DAArts.org)



May 21, 2018

Attn: Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners  
New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Commissioners,

Ngage New Mexico (Ngage) is pleased to offer this letter in support of Raices del Saber Charter School.

Ngage is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that serves as a backbone organization for an education initiative that is committed to improving education outcomes in Doña Ana County from prenatal to career. This endeavor is complex and requires a long-term deliberate commitment on the part of many different sectors in the community. The initiative is called the SUCCESS Partnership and consists of over 100 partners. The SUCCESS Partnership has developed a community agenda of 10 goals. The proposed Raices del Saber Charter School, which aims to serve students from K-5<sup>th</sup> grade, specifically addresses 4 of the 10 community goals, specifically: (1) Whole Child Wellbeing; (2) Parent and Community Voice; (3) Creative Student-Centered Education; and (4) Cultural and Bilingual Competency. These are four goals that require the greatest amount of ingenuity. The Raices del Saber curriculum rises to the level of creativity and innovation necessary to accomplish these four community goals.

Ngage is eager to strengthen collaboration with Raices del Saber as it becomes a charter school. We greatly value the theoretical and applied perspective that drives the work of Raices. We believe that our entire community will benefit by having such a school.

Thank you for accepting this letter on behalf of Ngage. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at 575-521-1957 or via e-mail at [Lori@NgageNM.org](mailto:Lori@NgageNM.org).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lori Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lori" and last name "Martinez" clearly distinguishable.

Lori Martinez  
Executive Director



All About Discovery!<sup>TM</sup>  
New Mexico State University

**Mathematically Connected Communities (MC<sup>2</sup>)**  
New Mexico State University  
P.O. Box 30001, MSC-3R  
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003



Phone: 505.646.3084  
Fax: 505.646.3020  
Web: [mc2.nmsu.edu](http://mc2.nmsu.edu)  
Email: [mc2@nmsu.edu](mailto:mc2@nmsu.edu)

May 27, 2018

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Public Education Commission;

As Project Director of the Mathematically Connected Communities Project, I strongly endorse the opening of Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School. The project provides a needed option for children in the Las Cruces area to develop both Spanish and English proficiency through an experiential learning environment. Along with the worthy mission of biliteracy for all students, I am impressed with the school's curriculum plan that uses the most current research on how students best learn mathematics and science. The curriculum plan provides opportunities for children to develop both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency needed for success in upper grades.

The curriculum and instruction of the proposed school is aligned with CCSS-M and NGSS standards including mathematics and science practices that promote reasoning, problem-solving, and critical thinking. This reasoning and sense-making, which leads to understanding, is often lacking in the traditional mathematics and science learning of public school classrooms. This is evidenced by our state's low proficiency scores on the PARCC mathematics assessments, which focuses on reasoning and modeling with mathematics. In Las Cruces Public Schools, 73% of third grade students scored non-proficient in 2017.

The Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School is an innovative approach that provides children with a rigorous, meaningful, and discourse-rich academic learning experience. The research-based curriculum and instructional model attends to the individual learning needs of students while developing a community of learners where children are valued, happy, and successful.

The Mathematically Connected Communities project looks forward to partnering with the school faculty to provide professional learning and support in implementing effective, research-based instruction. Our project will provide professional development in implementing Number Talks, designing classroom instruction aligned to CCSS-M, and planning math learning centers that target student learning needs. We can provide this professional development during summer workshops and through school-based instructional coaching during the academic year.

Our project is committed to the academic success for students across New Mexico, particularly in mathematics. We whole-heartedly support the effort of Raices del Saber Xinachtli Community School and look forward to working as a school partner.

Sincerely,

Wanda Bulger Tamez  
Project Director





April 24, 2018

This is a letter of support for Lucia Carmona and the development of Raices del Saber Community School.

Children's Reading Alliance supports the concept and cultural relevance of empowering parents to see themselves as their children's first and most important teachers. Our bi-lingual First Teacher/Primer Maestro program supports parents of three to five year olds to provide developmentally appropriate activities that promote literacy and lifelong learning. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with Ms. Carmona to provide this support to the families of Raices del Saber Community School.

CRA is grateful to Ms. Carmona for her leadership during our formative stage to develop effective methods to reach underserved communities. We respect her heartfelt passion for people and her desire to create a program that helps our community overcome intergenerational historical trauma.

I have known Lucia for six years. If I can be of further assistance please contact me at [rmeasure@gmail.com](mailto:rmeasure@gmail.com) or by phone (575) 522 4804.

Sincerely,

  
Rorie Measure  
President



Contributions to Children's Reading Alliance, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, are fully tax deductible under IRS regulations.



Cultivating Communities, LLC  
*"One seed at a time"*

---

May 20, 2017

Chairwoman Patricia Gipson and Commissioners  
New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue Santa Fe. NM 87501

Dear Chairwoman Patricia Gipson and Commissioners:

It is with great honor that Cultivating Communities LLC support Raices Del Saber Xinachtli Community School, a dual language, experiential learning community charter school reclaiming Mesoamerican heritage. Raices provides an opportunity for our community to have our children prepare K-5 to enter middle school bi-literate in Spanish and English and to achieve academic proficiency in all core subjects through a rigorous multidisciplinary curriculum that relies on the existing U.S/Mexico border cultural context.

If Raices is approved, as the managing member of Cultivating Communities LLC, I will be committed to engage in the Governing Council, community outreach, parent orientations and/or other activities that will assist in the success of Raices.

Raices Del Saber Xinachtli Community School is an outstanding innovative model that will transform the trajectory of our children education as well as parents by integrating indigenous wisdom Azteca/Maya into the education of our children. Cultivating Communities trusts on the importance of community grounded ways of knowing within our U.S/Mexico Border communities and stand committed to assist at any capacity to assure the success of our community school.

As a former director of Dona Ana County Health and Human Service and a current member of the National Partnership for Action, Southwest Region Health Equity Council, I cannot underscore the importance of the consideration of Raices for our community. We are in a critical point in the education of our Mexican American students not only in our border community in New Mexico, but in our nation as a whole and Raices provides a venue to evaluate a new educational approach more fitting with the growing demographics of our country. With the current shift of demographics, it is critical to consider multidisciplinary, dual language education in a culturally responsive educational space, where two states and two countries intersect adding to the critical challenges and/or opportunity our children face in their daily lives. Raices is an opportunity to build on the cultural assets of our community as well as the bi-national strengths of our US/Mexico Border.

We are honor to endorse Raices Del Saber Community School for Dona Ana County.

Sincerely,

C Silvia Sierra, MA

Sunday, May 28, 2017

Attn: Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners  
New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501



Unifying communities through  
civil and informed dialogue, and  
encouraging collaborative action

RE: Letter of Support for Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School

Dear Chairwoman Patricia Gipson and Commissioners,

I write this letter in support of Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School.

I've enjoyed the privilege of working with Lucia Carmona for many years, on a broad range of community issues, many of which are rooted directly and/or indirectly in education.

In our organization's capacity as conveners of civil, informed community engagement, many of our more than 800 community dialogues have been specifically focused on issues of education.

These dialogues have included participation by students, parents, teachers, administrators, public officials, and non-profit organizations with missions in education.

Thus having some awareness of what's working or not working in our educational systems, the Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School seems an excellent model for bringing together many people with important and diverse perspectives that are most often underrepresented or missing entirely in our current education models.

The integration of indigenous wisdom and encouragement of multi-lingual, multi-cultural education, understanding and practices seems like an incredibly valuable contribution today, and into the future.

As conveners of dialogue for community engagement, The Great Conversation organization is committed to future collaboration with Raices - employing cross-sector dialogue processes, encouraging and advancing public awareness and commitment to embracing the values of diversity and inclusivity. Together, as a community, we can move forward effectively toward deeper understanding and meaningful and lasting systemic change.

With much confidence and enthusiasm, I support the formation and operation of Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School as an important contribution to current and future generations in our communities, our region, and our country.

With gratitude,

Randy Harris  
Executive Director

1300 El Paseo Road, Suite G, #144 • Las Cruces, NM 88001

(575) 640-1999 • [greatconversationslc@gmail.com](mailto:greatconversationslc@gmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/TheGreatConversationLasCruces](http://www.facebook.com/TheGreatConversationLasCruces)





924 Park Ave SW, Ste C  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
505.255.2840  
nmpovertylaw.org

*Leadership*

Edward Tabet-Cubero  
*Executive Director*

Gail Evans  
*Legal Director*

Stacey Leaman  
*Development Director*

*Board of Directors*

Peter Mallory  
*Board President*  
New Mexico Trial Lawyers  
Association

Justice Richard Bosson  
New Mexico Supreme Court  
(Retired)

John W. Boyd  
Freedman Boyd Hollander  
Goldberg Uras & Ward, P.A.

Regis Pecos  
*Leadership Institute*

Gwendolyn Perea  
Warniment  
LANL Foundation

Jim Spadaccini  
Ideum, Inc.

Jessica R. Terrazas  
Rodey Dickason Sloan Akin  
& Robb, P.A.

May 24, 2017

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
ATTN: Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Ms. Gipson and Commissioners:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit this letter of support for the founding of the **Raices Del Saber Xinachtli Community School** in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

The NM Center on Law and Poverty (The Center) uses education, advocacy, and litigation to improve living conditions, increase opportunities, and protect the rights of low-income New Mexicans. New Mexico is a very diverse state with underserved populations who are linguistically and culturally diverse. Unfortunately, these populations are unable to access classroom curriculum that is responsive to their language and culture. This school will work to provide students with the opportunity to bridge this gap for children living near the U.S.-Mexico border by providing them with curriculum that will ensure that they are bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish at the end of their 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. The Center strongly supports the efforts of Lucia Carmona and her endeavor to provide children with the opportunity to learn of their heritage, language and culture.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (505) 255-2840 or [edward@nmpovertylaw.org](mailto:edward@nmpovertylaw.org) should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Edward Tabet-Cubero".

Edward Tabet-Cubero  
Executive Director





Collaborating for Outstanding Readiness in Education

New Mexico Public Education Commission  
Jerry Apodaca Education Building  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

May 28, 2018

Attn: Chair, Patricia Gipson and Commissioners,

Collaborating for Outstanding Readiness in Education extends its support for *Raices del Saber Xinatchli Community School*. The commitment of this innovative school to serve southern New Mexico families with dual language, culturally and linguistically relevant and rigorous academic instruction will enrich the borderland community. Incorporating indigenous ways of knowing into the school curriculum, will support students' in developing an identity as successful and high-achieving learners.

CORE collaborates with teachers and administrators in improving educational outcomes for all students by providing professional development and instructional coaching. Through this work CORE has noticed that children attending schools that affirm their identities as learners by the incorporating their home culture and language feel validated and have better academic outcomes. We believe that *Raices del Saber Xinatchli Community School* will serve that role for the borderland community.

It is our hope that the Public Education Commission approves *Raices del Saber Xinatchli Community School's* charter application.

Sincerely,

Rocío Benedicto  
CORE Project Director  
New Mexico State University  
Las Cruces, NM 88003

Collaborating for Outstanding Readiness in Education  
New Mexico State University  
MSC 3R, PO Box 30001  
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001  
(575) 646-2012