

Uplift Community School closing

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 07 April 2017 03:43



June 30 is last official school day

With less than two months left before the close of Gallup's Uplift Community School, school administrators want students to have the best academic and social experience possible.

Alecs Mojica, director at Uplift since January 2017, said the absolute last school date is June 30. The New Mexico Public Education Department approved a charter application for the school, 406 New Mexico 564, in 2011. The PED did not renew the charter. By state law, charter schools are free and subject to the same open enrollment policy as regular schools.

"We are bringing training to staff and students to improve our school and our students performance," Mojica recently told the *Gallup Sun*. "We intend to finish out the school year at full speed and include unique events that enhance our student's project-based learning."

About three months ago, New Mexico's Charter School Division made some recommendations for Uplift to approve a renewal charter.

"I'm going to recommend that the charter not be renewed based on multiple reasons, but first and foremost, because they have not fulfilled the mission of the school that the (PED) authorized them for," wrote Gilbert Peralta, vice chairman of the Charter School Division, in a two-page December piece of correspondence.

Uplift Community School closing

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 07 April 2017 03:43

The Charter School Division stated that Uplift received failing grades for three consecutive years on student performance. Uplift serves K-8 students and the school has 179 registered students and a teacher for each grade level, Mojica said.

Mojica said that the school's closing dates back to something that was administratively brewing at Uplift more than two years ago. Asked to expound on the statement, Mojica said, "I have nothing I can say since I was not employed there at the time..."

According to the state PED, Uplift failed to:

- Complete teacher evaluations as required by NMTEACH, an arm of New Mexico's teacher evaluation program.
- Uplift failed to protect student safety by not developing a student wellness program.
- Uplift failed to comply with certain legal provisions of which the school was not exempted.
- The current Uplift Community School charter license was granted under the conditions that Uplift meet stipulations regarding student growth and achievement and certain financial goals.

Mojica said Uplift is working with Gallup-McKinley County Schools to assist students in finding new schools. Of the things happening to academically and socially benefit students, she said the University of New Mexico collaborated with Uplift's science teacher and an official from NASA to set up a presentation that occurred April 4.

***By Bernie Dotson
Sun Correspondent***