

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Matt Pahl

505-409-5699

[matt@pcsnm.org](mailto:matt@pcsnm.org)

### **Two Public Charter Schools Awarded \$3 Million in Funding to Provide More Students Access to a High-Quality Public Education**

**Albuquerque, NM** – Today, Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (PCSNM) proudly announced plans to provide \$3 million to Solare Collegiate Charter School in the southwest area of Albuquerque and East Mountain High School in Sandia Park in the east mountains of Albuquerque. These awards, which each total \$1.5 million, are designed to support the expansion of high-quality charter schools to serve more students and enhance educational outcomes. Funding will be distributed as subgrants of the Charter School Program (CSP) grant awarded to PCSNM from the US Department of Education in 2023.

The application process was competitive, with 19 applicants vying for just two available awards this year. The subawards will ensure qualified schools are able provide more students with access to a high-quality education, which is crucial for fostering student success and community development. Funding will be used to support the schools' growth, including the enhancement of educational programs, expansion of facilities, and the increase of student enrollment capacity.

“PCSNM's investment in East Mountain High School and Solare Collegiate Charter School underscores its commitment to strengthening the state's public school system by increasing options for families,” said Erik Bose, PCSNM's Board President. “Without this funding it would be incredibly challenging for charter schools to access the resources needed to serve more students and increase academic outcomes.”

**Solare Collegiate Charter School** has been a pillar of excellence within its community, known for its innovative educational approach and strong academic outcomes. The expansion supported by this subaward will allow Solare Collegiate to reach and serve more families who seek a rigorous and supportive learning environment for their children. “I am proud of our school and our scholars,” said Rachael Sowards, Founder & Head of School. “This is a wonderful opportunity to help expand our school community to serve even more students, including elementary grades in the 2025-2026 school year.”

For 25 years, **East Mountain High School (EMHS)** has consistently demonstrated outstanding results in preparing students for college and careers. The resources provided by this grant will help EMHS extend its impact, offering more students the opportunity to benefit from its successful educational model. “We are grateful and energized by this opportunity to deepen our impact in the community,” said Trey Smith, Executive Director of EMHS. “This grant will allow us to create a seamless 6-12 education pathway on par with some of the best schools in the nation and world.”

“PCSNM is proud to provide these high-performing schools grants to expand opportunities in their communities, communities with historically limited access to a great school,” said Matthew Pahl, Executive Director of PCSNM. “These grants demonstrate our confidence in Solare Collegiate Charter School and East Mountain High School to deliver on their promise to students, families and their communities.”

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### **About the Charter School Program**

On September 27, 2023, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (PCSNM) a 5-year \$52,777,778 Charter School Program (CSP) grant. The CSP grant allows PCSNM to award subgrants to applicants, through a competitive grant process, who are looking to achieve one of the following: expand existing high-quality charter schools, replicate existing high-quality charter schools, or create new charter schools based on models that have been proven to successfully increase student achievement, especially for educationally disadvantaged students.

As the recipient of this federal CSP grant, PCSNM acts as a pass-through entity, using federal funds to administer a competitive subgrant program for which new, expanding, and replicating charter schools are eligible to apply. The subgrant process is competitive, and only applicants who receive the highest scores can receive funding.

Applications for PCSNM’s first subgrant award competition were due on XX. Nineteen eligible applications for this competition were received and each application was scored by a panel of at least three peer reviewers using a common rubric. The peer reviewers were chosen for their varying degrees of charter school expertise, policy knowledge, and experience in curriculum development and implementation. Two applicants were selected for this round of funding up to a total of \$3 million.

Learn more about PCSNM's CSP grant [here](#).

### **About Public Charter Schools of New Mexico**

Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (PCSNM) is the primary entity that supports and advocates for charter schools in the land of enchantment. It is the only statewide professional organization serving New Mexico's charter schools. Our mission is to increase student academic achievement by serving charter schools and advocating for charter school quality, growth and autonomy. Visit [www.pcsnm.org](http://www.pcsnm.org) to learn more.

For more information, please contact:

**Matthew Pahl**

Executive Director, Public Charter Schools of New Mexico

Phone: 505-409-5699

Email: [matt@pcsnm.org](mailto:matt@pcsnm.org)

Website: [www.pcsnm.org](http://www.pcsnm.org)