



New Mexico
Office of the
State Auditor

GAO
Government
Accountability
Office

Risk
Advisory



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State Auditor
Wayne Johnson

Risk Advisory:

September 18, 2018

Something's Phishy Here: Emails target school districts and regional education cooperatives

We have received multiple reports about emails that appear to come from a real New Mexico charter school and are an apparent attempt to "phish" financial information from school districts and regional education cooperatives. These emails have targeted financial staff, but also superintendents, school board members, and other staff.

If you receive such an email, it's important to NOT open any attachments or click on any links.

The full text of one of the emails appears like this:

"From: Jesus Moncada <jmoncada@christineduncan.org>

Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 3:41 PM

Subject: Invoice & Payment Advice

Good Afternoon,

Please see attached for this week's ACH payment remittance details. These funds should be posted to your account within the next 2 business days. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

We appreciate your business. Thank you and have a great day.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Thanks

Mr. Jesús A. Moncada

School Principal
Christine Duncan Heritage Academy
1900 Atrisco Dr. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120
(505)-859-4941
(505) 861-9037 fax"

The email contains a file or a link that may look like an actual webpage from the charter school's website. **Do not open this link, as it may contain malicious code or could prompt you to enter financial data that could make you vulnerable to a significant loss of funds.**

Generally, the fact that a charter school would seek to pay money to a school district is a red flag. Typically, districts receive money from funding agencies and pay money to vendors and employees. Charter schools usually receive monies from districts.

Mr. Moncada is a real principal, and the charter school exists. Other New Mexico charter schools have been "spoofed" as well, so be on the look-out for suspicious emails from any source.