

**BRIAN SANDOVAL**  
*Governor*

**STATE OF NEVADA**

**PATRICK GAVIN**  
*Executive Director*



**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

1749 North Stewart Street Suite 40  
Carson City, Nevada 89706-2543  
(775) 687 - 9174 · Fax: (775) 687 - 9113

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**BRIEFING MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board  
**FROM:** Patrick Gavin  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item 10—Strategic Plan  
**DATE:** September 23, 2016

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**Background:**

The Authority adopted its first [strategic plan](#) on March 23, 2013. Based on feedback from NACSA and WestEd in the fall of 2015, the Authority began revisions to its strategic plan in May 2016. At that time, the Authority identified two key objectives and four goals in the [draft document](#).

Objectives:

- 1) **By 2020, increase the number of high quality seats in SPCSA-sponsored charter schools to 60,000.**
- 2) **By 2020, enroll a statewide student population which is representative of our sending schools.**

Goals:

- 1) **Open and sustain quality schools that reflect the demographics of their community**
  - a) Proactive Enrollment Practices
  - b) Equitable Funding
  - c) Focusing on local talent to open new schools
- 2) **Unwavering Commitment to High Quality Schools—4 & 5 Star Schools**
  - a) Approve only the highest quality applicants
  - b) Reward High Quality Schools and Disseminate Best Practices
  - c) Sanction low performing schools
  - d) Align assessments to standards
  - e) Third party comprehensive assessment of the quality of the sector

### 3) **Fulfillment of Public School Obligations**

- a) Ensure equitable service to traditionally underserved populations
- b) Reward schools that equitably serve underserved populations
- c) Investigate and sanction schools that do not equitably serve underserved populations
- d) Recognize problems and encourage partnerships to facilitate solutions for children's environmental challenges

### 4) **Facilitate a Community of Practice Among Charter School Operators and Leaders to Build a Culture of Innovation and Collaboration**

- a) Leverage the Authority's LEA role to encourage the development and dissemination of best practices
- b) Collaborate with the Governor's Office, the Office of Economic Development, and other key stakeholders to encourage the formation of high quality schools that support the overarching workforce and economic development goals of the state.

Pursuant to a request from members of the Authority, staff have broken out the review of the proposed measures for consideration over the next several meetings. /

The draft metrics related to Goal 4 are:

- The number and percentage of 4 and 5 star schools that develop and disseminate best practices in academics and equity
- The number and percentage of 1, 2, and 3 star schools that increase by one level or more each year
- The number and percentage of targeted RFP school applications received and approved

Each of these measurements represents new areas of focus for the Authority based on Board, community, and legislative concerns regarding the demographics of our portfolio and the need to ensure high quality, high achieving programs for all students, including those who are at risk.

The first metric for goal 4 is aligned to the Federal Charter Schools Program grant's dissemination funding stream, which funds the sharing of best practices by top performing charter schools. As we strive for high academic achievement and a more diverse and equitable charter school movement in this state, it is critical that we look to those schools in our portfolio who excel at this and we encourage them to share their knowledge with others and to seek out funding streams to support the growth of a community of practice in this area.

While the first metric is primarily an input or behavioral/process measure, the second metric is an attempt to quantify a critical output of dissemination that is not captured in any of the other metrics—the number and percentage of schools at the one, two, or three star level that increase their performance. While our focus on performance management and tools like closure, receivership, and reconstitution are an important component of that, it is also important to recognize that the greatest resource and support our schools have is not their financially strapped, state agency authorizer. Rather, it is the larger charter school community. If we look at the limited examples of self-directed versus authorizer imposed turnaround—e.g. the turnaround of Excel Academy in Boston, which is now one of the top performing public school systems in one of the nation's highest performing states—one of the essential elements has been the network of school leaders at high performing schools and a handful of linchpin board members who have shared their knowledge and even their homegrown talent with schools that have stumbled. Similarly, the dramatic shifts in the academic programs and culture of many “no excuses” school models over the past several years are

a result of generous knowledge sharing and unabashed appropriation of what is working well at peer schools. While we cannot directly control this, we do have some ability to influence knowledge sharing across the sector.

Similarly, the last metric for goal four reflects our interest in ensuring that the charter school sector continues to be a force of innovation and a catapult towards success in college and career. Our state is embarking on an ambitious set of workforce and economic development initiatives and it behooves us to seek out and encourage applications from organizations that have the knowledge and skills to create high quality programs which will ensure that Nevadans of all backgrounds can benefit from the promise of a more diversified New Nevada economy.

**Recommendation:**

Staff requests endorsement of the proposed metrics for Goal 4. A final review of the revised mission, core beliefs, core functions, and theory of action will be placed on the October agenda.