

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

PATRICK GAVIN
Executive Director



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND EPICENTER

March 12, 2018

Chris McBride
Superintendent
Nevada Connections Academy
555 Double Eagle Ct., Suite 2000
Reno, Nevada 89521
cmcbride@nca.connectionsacademy.org

Re: Notice of Breach

Mr. McBride,

As you are aware, Nevada Connections Academy's elementary school has received a 1 or 2 Star rating under the Department of Education's Nevada School Performance Framework for two consecutive ratings periods. Per the memorandum presented to the SPCSA Board on February 16, 2018, a 1 or 2 Star rating for the 2017-2018 school year would make the school eligible to have its charter contract terminated by the Authority.

This Notice of Breach serves as a reminder that the Charter School Performance Framework, which is incorporated into NVA's Charter School Contract, is meant to provide charter school leaders with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while at the same time ensuring charter school autonomy. Under the Performance Framework, the failure to meet basic levels of academic performance as measured by the Department may result in Notice of Breach being issued from the Authority, as well as a determination by the Authority that the charter school is no longer a charter school in Good Standing as defined in the Performance Framework.

As a result of the above-referenced academic performance, the Authority is issuing this Notice of Breach to NVA, and requiring that the school submit the following information to the SPCSA staff:

- 1) Articulate the most essential features of the proposed academic change(s) to the education program NCA plans to implement to correct the level of underperformance. This may include programs (e.g., curriculum, PD, afterschool programming, parent program),

principles (e.g. no excuses, individualized learning, learn at your own pace) and structures (blended learning, small learning communities, small class sizes). Please be sure to include:

- a. A thorough description why these approaches were chosen, and how NCA data supports these selections;
- b. How these approaches are different from those previously implemented;
- c. A thorough description of how these approaches will effectively serve all students across achievement levels, including those that are not proficient; and
- d. Strong evidence from independent research that meets the strong evidence standard set forth in section 8101(21)(A) of the ESEA.

2) Outline the clearly measurable interim and annual performance and growth goals that the school proposes in order to meet or exceed SPCSA performance expectations under the Nevada School Performance Framework in the chart below. Be sure to include the following information for context:

- a. Describe how the baseline performance was set
- b. Articulate how the organization will measure and evaluate academic progress throughout the school year, at the end of the academic year, and the entire school year. This includes the performance of individual students, student cohorts, subgroups and the entire school; and

Goal	NSPF or SPCSA-based Evaluation Tool	Baseline	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020

- c. In addition to mandatory state and Authority testing, identify the primary interim academic assessments the school will use for internal purposes to analyze student learning needs and ensure progress towards SPCSA and state proficiency targets. Please describe how these will be used and provide independent statistical evidence that the instrument is strongly correlated with and predictive of results no either the Smarter Balanced Assessment or the ACT.

3) To support the academic goals and benchmarks outlined above, please describe the following:

- a. How teachers and school leadership will be supported in developing capacity around these benchmarks and assessments; and
- b. Should the school fall short of the benchmarks highlighted above, explain what steps the school will take school-wide and/or at the classroom level. To address this level

of underperformance, please detail what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementation.

Additionally, SPCSA staff firmly believes that issuing a Notice of Breach necessitates a higher level of oversight. Due to its current breach status, NCA is directed to provide the following information to SPCSA staff:

- To ensure that NCA students are meeting enrollment and attendance requirements under NAC 387.193. NCA is directed to provide individual student attendance information to authority staff for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years.
- Minutes of each public NCA Board meeting during since July 1, 2015 through the present date.

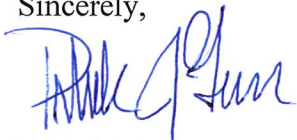
Upon receipt of this letter, SPCSA staff proposes meeting with NCA staff to determine the format of the attendance logs and Board meeting recordings

Once NCA submits proposed changes to the academic program, individual student attendance information, and recorded Board meetings, SPCSA staff will review this information to determine if NCA may be classified as in Good Standing. Failure to meet the requirements specified above will result in a recommendation to issue a Notice of Intent to Terminate the NCA Charter for Persistent Underperformance.

The SPCSA believes strongly in a quality public school of choice for every Nevada child. We hope that NCA will join us by improving its academic performance, thereby increasing the number of high-quality SPCSA-sponsored charter schools.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Patrick Gavin
Executive Director

cc: Jason Guinasso, Chair (*via email*)