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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 7: Recommendations for Nevada Connections Academy
Stemming from the Final 2018 – 2019 Nevada School Performance Framework
Results
DATE: October 4, 2019

As the Authority is aware, the Nevada Department of Education recently released the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) results for the 2018 – 2019 school year. All public schools in the state of Nevada are issued a star rating when all data points are available.

As a reminder, the Authority has three levels of intervention when schools do not meet academic standards (i.e. a NSPF rating of 3-stars). These levels are as follows:

- Notice of Concern
- Notice of Breach
- Notice of Intent to Terminate

The academic performance of Nevada Connections Academy for the last two school years is provided below. Note that the academic performance in the 2018 – 19 school year for the elementary, middle and high school programs remained below the three-star threshold.

<u>Nevada Connections Academy</u>	<u>2017 – 2018 Index Score</u>	<u>2017 – 2018 Star Rating</u>	<u>2018 – 2019 Index Score</u>	<u>2018 – 2019 Star Rating</u>
Elementary School	18.8	1-star	21.6	1-star
Middle School	26.1	1-star	40	2-star
High School	12.7	1-star	13.8	1-star

Notice of Breach

Due to both the middle and high school programs earning a rating of less than 3-stars for the second consecutive year in the 2018 – 2019 school year, SPCSA staff recommends that the Authority issue Notices of Breach to Nevada Connections Academy regarding both the middle and high schools. Given this notice recommendation, SPCSA staff also plans to meet with staff to review the school's performance plan for the 2019 – 2020 school year. In addition, the school will be required present to the Authority in early 2020. The presentation must include:

- Progress to date in implementing the School Performance Plan
- A summary of mid-year assessment performance

Elementary School Closure

Given that the elementary program earned a rating of 1-star for the third consecutive year, SPCSA staff is recommending that the Authority issue a formal letter to notify Nevada Connections that its underperformance at elementary school triggered the automatic termination provisions of [NRS 388A.300\(1\)](#). At this time, it is staff's understanding, based on the action by the Nevada Connections Board in their September board meeting, that the school does not intend to apply for renewal of the elementary school, and that the elementary school will close at the end of the 2019 – 2020 school year.

Additionally, per [NRS 388A.367](#), low performing schools are required to notify the parent or guardian of each pupil enrolled of the school's star rating and post written notification on their website, as well as the scores of neighboring zone traditional public schools. Finally, [NRS 388A.367](#) requires the governing body of qualifying public charter schools to hold a public hearing within 30 days of sending out the required notice so as to provide all stakeholders and opportunity to discuss actions and solicit feedback for continued growth and improvement based on the statewide accountability rating system. Staff will monitor compliance with these statutory requirements.

Finally, it should be noted that an application for renewal of Nevada Connections Academy is expected by October 15, 2019.

Proposed Motion:

- *Approve the recommendation of SPCSA Staff to Issue a Notice of Breach to both the elementary and middle school programs at Nevada Connections Academy and require the school to present to the Authority an update regarding the school's progress against the performance plan and a summary of mid-year assessment performance in early 2020. Additionally approve the recommendation of SPCSA staff to notify the school that the elementary program's performance triggered the automatic termination provisions under statute and that the school must close at the end of the 2019 – 2020 school year.*