

Executive Summary

Signature Preparatory submits to the SPCSA board and its staff the following Amendment demonstrating its current Academic, Operational, and Financial status. This document is in response to sections 2.3.3 and 12.7.1.5 of the school's charter contract, cited in the paragraph below. The Amendment serves as a narrative of the impact the school has experienced due to its lower than expected enrollment. The school and its charter, during the 2019-20 school year, was approved for up to 990 students by the SPCSA board and 1080 students for the 2020-21 school year. The school's current enrollment is 551 students. The school provides successful guided tours on a daily basis, leading to more than 20 new students in just the last 10 days of school. Pursuant to the aforementioned sections of its charter contract, the Signature Preparatory board has convened and approved the new enrollment for the 2019-20 school year to be 575, allowing the school a 10% fluctuation to reach as high as 632 but not to fall below 518. This proposed number allows for further anticipated growth and keeps the school accountable for its existing student body, all in accordance with its contract. The school opened its enrollment for the 2020-21 school year on November 12th, 2019, and will enroll up to 1080 students per its charter contract. While the school's academic programs haven't been impeded significantly for Tier-I core content areas, Signature Preparatory has been limited on (1) the execution of its Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship classes for middle school students (as intended); (2) acquiring the resources for implementing a research-based efficacious Tier-III reading and mathematics intervention program at the middle school; and (3) obtaining an appropriate progress monitoring tool for Reading and Mathematics, K-8. The Operations of the school have also been impacted minimally and the school has pivoted appropriately all the while taking all variables seriously. The financial impact is outlined in a budget worksheet format and a narrative, both included in the submission of this amendment.

Section 2.3.3 Elimination of a grade level that the Charter School was scheduled to serve; expansion to serve grade levels not identified in 2.3.1; or an annual increase or decrease in total enrollment by more than 10% from the enrollment of October 1 of preceding year shall be a material amendment of this Charter Contract and shall not become effective and the Charter School shall not take action or implement the change requested in the amendment until the amendment is approved, in writing, by the Authority. Authorization to expand may require the Charter School to demonstrate satisfactory academic and financial performance and organizational compliance. Regardless what enrollment projections are contained in the charter school application approved by the Authority, the first-year enrollment on October 1 for the Charter School shall serve as the basis for the 10% annual enrollment increase or decrease for the school's second year; similarly, subsequent years' enrollment on October 1 shall serve as the basis for the following years' enrollment. Each year's enrollment shall be limited to 10% more pupils than the previous year's October 1 enrollment unless the school's request for a material amendment is approved by the Authority. For example, a school enrolling 100 pupils any given year may enroll no more than 110 pupils the following year without Authority approval of a material amendment. It is the responsibility of the Charter School to request the material amendment required by this section 2.3.3 in a timely manner so as to manage the school's enrollment to comply with 2.3.3.

Section 12.7.1.5 10% annual increase or decrease in total enrollment pursuant to 2.3.3 of this

ACADEMICS

Signature Preparatory was established to provide an academic program based upon the Nevada Academic Content Standards for students in grades Kindergarten – 8th Grade. All students attend school for 435 minutes per day (7:30 am – 2:45 pm). All students that attend Signature Preparatory, K-8, receive instruction in the following core content areas: Reading/Literature, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Additionally, third grade receives cursive handwriting instruction. Beyond the core content areas of instruction, all students (K-8) attend the following specials classes: Physical Education (2-days per week), technology (1-day per week), music (1-day per week), and art (1-day per week). Moreover, a Chromebook is issued to each 2nd – 8th grade student. Kindergarten and 1st grade have access to a 30 desktop personal computer laboratory. Technological applications are integrated into core content within the regular day utilizing the SAMR Model (Puentadora, 2006). Additionally, all students receive leadership and values instruction through Signature Preparatory’s Educational Management Organization, Charter One’s proprietary RAISE curriculum.

Curriculum Materials

Signature Preparatory utilizes Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) materials to support assessment, teaching, and learning. To establish a guaranteed and viable curriculum, Signature Preparatory’s Educational Management Organization, Charter One, created curriculum maps that included essential content standards, pacing, relevant resources, and assessments. Additionally, Signature Preparatory utilizes Dave Ramsey’s Middle School Financial Literacy program materials for Financial Literacy and Elevate Global’s Entrepreneurship 101 course for Entrepreneurship.

This table lists the textbook resources per core content area:

Content Area	Grade Level	HMH Product
Reading/ELA	K-5	Into Reading (2020)
	6-8	Into Literature (2020)
Mathematics	K-5	Into Math (2020)
	6-8	Into Math (2020)
Science	K-5	Science Dimensions (2018)
	6-8	Science Dimensions (2018)

Social Studies	K-5 6-8	Into Social Studies (2018) MS Geography (2019) MS US History (2018) MS World History (2018)
Financial Literacy	6-8	Dave Ramsey Financial Literacy Middle School (2019)
Entrepreneurship 101	6-8	Elevate Global (2019)
Assessment: Reading	K-8	HMH Growth Measures Reading
Assessment: Mathematics	K-8	HMH Growth Measures Mathematics

Instructional Minutes

Signature Preparatory Charter School was established to provide an academic program based upon the following delineation of instructional minutes:

Signature Preparatory Charter School Appropriation of Instructional Minutes				
Subject	K-5		6-8	
	Daily	Weekly	Daily	Weekly
Math	90	450	50	250
ELA	120	600	100	500
Social Studies	45	225	50	250
Science			50	250
Financial Literacy			50	250
*Handwriting (3rd)	15	75		
Intervention/Extension	45	225		
Art	--	50	--	50
Music	--	50	--	50
Technology	--	50	--	50
Physical Education /Health	--	100	--	100
Lunch/Recess	35	175	35	175
Passing	30	150	35	175
Homeroom / Flex	15	75	15	75

Instructional Staff

To support teaching and learning within K-5 homerooms and content-specific classes at the middle school (6-8), Signature Preparatory utilized the following ratios to establish the balance between instructional goals and operational effectiveness:

Grade Levels	Student-Teacher Ratio(s)
Kindergarten - 1 st Grade	25:1

2 nd – 5 th Grade	30:1
6 th – 8 th Grade	30:1 Mathematics Teacher (1) English Language Arts (2) Science (1) Social Studies (1) Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship (1)

To support teaching and learning within K-8 Specials classes per the number of classes needed per grade level, Signature Preparatory provided the following human resources to establish the balance between instructional goals and operational effectiveness:

Special Class	Number of Classes
Technology	1 class per week per classroom, K-8 27 classes total
Art	1 class per week per classroom, K-8 27 classes total
Music	1 class per week per classroom, K-8 27 classes total
PE	2 classes per week per classroom, K-8 54 classes total

To support our most vulnerable student populations (IEP/ELL) within their K-5 homerooms and content- specific classes at the middle school (6-8), Signature Preparatory established the following human resources apportionments to maintain a balance between instructional goals and operational effectiveness.

Category	Enrollment	Number of Teachers / Aides and Purpose
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Special Education (IEP)	73 students, K-8 grade	1 teacher, 6-8, ELA .5 teacher, 6-8, Mathematics 1 teacher, 3-5, ELA and Mathematics 1 teacher, 1-2, ELA and Mathematics .5 teacher, special education instructional facilitator, Ensure IEP writing and documentation of services 6, special education instructional aides, to provide push-in IEP minutes 1, special education instructional aide, to 1:1 IEP services to one student
English Language Learners	67 students, K-8 grade	1 teacher to provide reading intervention to ELLs during 45-minute intervention block, provide instructional practice guidance to homeroom/content-area teachers, and administer WIDA assessment to ELLs

Human Resources (Pre-Start/Start)

Based upon the initial enrollment data and as it was monitored for growth/attrition between February 2019 and August 2019, the following was executed by school administration to provide for a full staff, K-8:

Grade Level/Category	Enrollment	Number of Teachers per Ratio
Kindergarten	150 students	25:1 6 teachers 3 instructional aides
1 st Grade	60 students	25:1 3 teachers
2 nd Grade – 5 th Grade	56 students	30:1
3rd Grade	56 students	3 teachers
4th Grade	70 students	
5th Grade	61 students	
6 th – 8 th Grade	55 students 42 students 23 students	30:1 6 teachers

Special Education	73 students, K-8 grade	1 teacher, 6-8, ELA .5 teacher, 6-8, Mathematics .5 teacher, special education instructional facilitator, Ensure IEP writing and documentation of services 1 teacher, 3-5, ELA and Mathematics 1 teacher, 1-2, ELA and Mathematics 6, special education instructional aides, to provide push-in IEP minutes 1, special education instructional aide, to 1:1 IEP services to one student
English Language Learners	67 students, K-8 grade	1 teacher to provide reading intervention to ELLs during 45-minute intervention block, provide instructional practice guidance to homeroom/content-area teachers, and administer WIDA assessment to ELLs
Technology	30 classes per week maximum per teacher	1 teacher
Art	30 classes per week maximum per teacher	1 teacher
Music	30 classes per week maximum per teacher	1 teacher
PE	30 classes per week maximum per teacher	2 teachers

Lowered Enrollment Impact to Academic Program

A reduction in staff based upon the first 20 instructional days enrollment data was executed. A Reduction in Force was initiated on September 11, 2019. Based on the reduction, the following occurred:

- class sizes increased in 3rd grade
- class sizes increased in 6th grade
- lost Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship as a stand-alone class in middle school, Financial Literacy/Entrepreneurship now located within Social Studies class as consistent with NVACS

Human Resource at present:

Grade Level/Category	Enrollment	Number of Teachers per Ratio	+/-
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Kindergarten	125	25:1 5 teachers 2 instructional aide	Less 1 teacher Less 1 aide
1 st Grade	60	25:1 3 teachers	
2 nd Grade	56	30:1 - 3 teachers	
3 rd Grade	56	30:1 – 2 teachers	Less 1 teacher
4 th Grade	70	30:1 - 3 teachers	
5 th Grade	61	30:1 - 3 teachers	
6 th – 8 th Grade	55	30:1 - 2 teachers	Less 1 teacher *Financial Literacy/ Entrepreneurship Dissolved
	42	30:1 - 2 teachers	
	23	30:1 – 1 teacher	
Special Education	73 students, K-8 grade	1 teacher, 6-8, ELA .5 teacher, 6-8, Mathematics .5 teacher, special education instructional facilitator, Ensure IEP writing and documentation of services 1 teacher, 3-5, ELA and Mathematics 1 teacher, 1-2, ELA and Mathematics	

		6, special education instructional aides, to provide push-in IEP minutes 1, special education instructional aide, to 1:1 IEP services to one student	
English Language Learners	67 students, K-8 grade	1 teacher to provide reading intervention to ELLs during 45-minute intervention block, provide instructional practice guidance to homeroom/content-area teachers, and administer WIDA assessment to ELLs	
Technology	30 classes per week maximum per teacher	1 teacher	
Art	30 classes per week maximum per teacher	1 teacher	
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Appropriation of Instructional Minutes at Present:

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Art	--	50	--	60
Music	--	50	--	60
Technology	--	50	--	60
Physical Education /Health	--	100	--	120
Lunch/Recess	35	175	35	175
Passing	30	150	25	125
Homeroom / Flex	15	75	15	75

OPERATIONS

The Operations at Signature Preparatory have been impacted due to enrollment, although the school does feel it is handling the decrease in funding appropriately and responsibly. During the school's open enrollment period, and up to the first day of school, the school had over 750 families enroll. The school hired teachers based on the projected student population of 650, taking into account expected attrition. Upon discovery that its student body was closer to 550, a reduction in force took place in order to stay closer to a balanced budget. Upon surveying the school's various positions in each department, the school came to the decision of reducing its force in both the front office and instructional staff. The school collapsed the position of its newly hired Office Manager and placed the responsibilities on its existing Registrar. The school also reduced its instructional force which raised the number of students in each classroom but still not exceeding the schools' sought after 25:1 and 30:1 student to teacher ratio.

The school's EMO has confirmed the campus will become more secure by surrounding it with gates in the future, but currently the lack of funding is impacting this need which assists with proper safety for its staff and students. Purchasing the 10 acres upon which the school resides has been used as an easement for the past 40 years by local residents. Vehicles continually utilize its parking lot as an easement to avoid traffic lights. Despite best efforts to blockade the entrances and exits, vehicles continually enter through the exits and exit through the entrances, allowing vehicles on campus with no purpose other than saving time on their commute. Ideally, the campus should be closed after pick-up and drop-off, with the exception of one entrance and exit which would impede neighborhood traffic and those having no purpose on campus, forcing them to use the more than capable Henderson streets and proper thorough ways. The lack of gates on the south side of campus also allows students to exit through the school's doors and flee campus in a hurry, presenting a security breach, although not yet experienced. The school has taken precautionary security measures to assist in avoiding this possibility, but it is still a safety concern.

The school is in need of reading and math software which will assist with its intervention periods (for example, HMH Read 180 and HMH Math 180 at Middle School). The lack of funding also causes the inability for the school to purchase additional assessment software (AIMS web plus) to appropriately progress monitor students in Reading and Mathematics. The school is offsetting this void the best it can but with the lack of human resources, the schools best attempts are no substitute for what technology-based assessments and intervention can provide.

The school and its EMO's Human Resources department are working closely together to come to a resolution in order to locate the funding for several much needed positions. The school has

not turned away any families who are in need of special education services, and in doing so, its special education population grows continually. Currently, the school has two openings for special education aides, one kindergarten aide, an office manager, and an additional special education instructional position. The need for these positions continually rises as the school's enrollment swells. The school constantly hears from families enrolling after Day 1 that other schools in the area refuse to offer the special education services needed for their children, or, in other creative ways, inform the parents that their child may not be a good fit for their current school. Just in the last few weeks, the school's special education population, already at 13%, has risen to 16.8%, now serving 91 students. This upward trend calls for an additional special education staff member. Furthermore, the school believes it now qualifies for a self-contained unit. The school's Administration is currently having discussions with the SPCSA to come to a resolution.

The school's administration and staff have worked closely with the EMO and are continually discovering remedies and solutions to offset the unmet needs. The school's Open Enrollment period begins November 12th and should provide hope and evidence to an increase in enrollment for the 2020-21 school year.

FINANCE

(Prepared by Charter One Finance, school EMO)

The Signature Preparatory financial plan adjustment for 2019-2020 encompasses several aspects and changes to the budget.

Staffing

- The administration evaluated the instructional staff and collapsed classes to eliminate three positions saving \$150k annually. The goal was to balance teaching and operational effectiveness to maximize efficiency without adversely affecting classroom instruction.
- The administration continues to evaluate support staff to identify additional opportunities to reduce expenses. The administration team has identified three potential positions to reduce, saving \$80k annually, but is currently analyzing the budget and spending to hopefully avoid another reduction in force.
- Administration will continue to look for further reduction in force opportunities as the school exits the start-up phase.
- Administration has not asked for changes in teacher contracts, or reductions in salary compensation.

Facility

- The developer has agreed to provide in kind donation in the form of rent credits for the remainder of the school year, saving the school a total of \$1.3m in cash. (i.e. these will not be recouped in the future)

EMO

- The EMO (Charter One) has agreed to provide in kind donation (i.e. these will not be recouped in the future) of management services by providing services without collecting cash payments for the remainder of the school year.

Cash Flow

-The EMO (Charter One) and the developer have stepped in to cover short term cash flow requirements to allow Signature Prep to meet its financial obligations. For example, covering shortfall of payroll prior to receiving the true up state payments and paying start up grant invoices that will be reimbursed.

Spending

-The school administration is closely monitoring all expenses to ensure a balanced budget.

Revenue Opportunities

-School administration continues to seek out additional grant opportunities.

-The School and its PTO are organizing fundraisers to bring in additional revenue.

Marketing

-The EMO (Charter One) is continuing to market for new prospective students for the remainder of the school year.