

**STEVE SISOLAK**  
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**STATE OF NEVADA**

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**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

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**BRIEFING MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board  
**FROM:** Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing  
Mike Dang, Management Analyst  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item 6c: Signature Preparatory Contract Amendment Request:  
Modification of Current Enrollment Cap  
**DATE:** **DECEMBER 13, 2019**

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**Summary of Enrollment Cap Modification Request in Existing Grades:**

Signature Preparatory is seeking approval from the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) for a Good-Cause exemption as part of its request to amend its current charter to modify the enrollment cap for the 2019 – 2020 school year from 990 students as originally approved by the Authority in 2017 to 575 students during this school year. As of October 1, 2019 (Validation Day), the school served 548 students.

Staff recommends approval of the Good-Cause exemption request as well as the amendment to modify the current enrollment cap for the 2019 – 2020 school year only.

**Background**

Signature Preparatory, operating under a charter contract entered into in 2019, is located in Henderson, Nevada, is in its first year of operation during the 2019 – 2020 school year. As such, the school has yet to be rated under both the SPCSA Performance Framework or the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF). Signature Preparatory is requesting an amendment to its charter contract to modify the current enrollment cap for the 2019 – 2020 school year. The school has also submitted a Good-Cause exemption request as this amendment was submitted after the Fall Amendment Cycle.

According to the amendment submission, the school seeks this modification due to the lower than expected enrollment during their initial year. The school was approved for up to 990 students this year. As noted in the application, this under-enrollment has impacted the operations at the school, although the school is confident that it is handling the decrease in funding appropriately and responsibly. The school initially hired teachers for a projected enrollment of 650 students, but 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. According to the submitted amendment, this action was taken after surveying the school's various positions in each department. 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 kept numbers below preferred student to teacher ratios.

As stated in the amendment submission, it is worth noting that the school continues to work closely with their EMO (Charter One) so as to find solutions to the issues created by a lower than anticipated enrollment. The school's Open Enrollment period for the upcoming school year is already open and provides hope that that an increase in enrollment will occur for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

Finally, and as described in the amendment, the school continues to make adjustments to its financial plan for the 2019 – 2020 school year. These are outlined on pages 10 and 11. A few important highlights:

- 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.
- The developer of the facility has agreed to provide an in-kind donation in the form of rent credits for the remainder of the school year, saving the school a total of \$1.3 million in cash.
- Charter One has agreed to provide an in-kind donation of management services by providing services without collecting cash payments for the remainder of the school year.
- Charter One continues to market for new prospective students for the remainder of the school year.

The amendment application states that this modification of the enrollment cap in existing grade levels will not alter Signature Preparatory's educational model or commitment to serve its target population and current student body. Additionally, this request only pertains to the enrollment cap for the 2019 – 2020 school year. The school does not plan to alter the enrollment cap of 1,080 students for the 2020 – 2021 school year at this time.

**Staff's Proposed Motion:** approve Signature Preparatory's request for a Good Cause Exemption and modified enrollment cap, without conditions, for Signature Preparatory for the current school year.

Approving this motion would allow the school to reduce the enrollment cap from 990 students to 575 students during the 2019 – 2020 school year only.

**Total Current Enrollment Across All Campuses:**

<b>Year:</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>Grade</b>	
<b>Pre-K</b>	-
<b>K</b>	125
<b>1</b>	60
<b>2</b>	56
<b>3</b>	56
<b>4</b>	70
<b>5</b>	70
<b>6</b>	61
<b>7</b>	42
<b>8</b>	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>548</b>

**School Performance (NSPF Star) Ratings:**

Not Yet Rated

**School Demographics:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>							<b>Special Population</b>		
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>FRL</b>	<b>IEP</b>	<b>ELL</b>
19-20	3.6%	21.5%	23.7%	38.7%	1.5%	9.9%	1.1%	66.2%	13.3%	12.2%

A – Asian

B – Black

C - White

H – Hispanic

I – American Indian/Alaskan Native

M – Two or more races

P – Pacific Islander

IEP – Individualized Education Plan –A student with a disability/special education student

ELL – English Language Learner

FRL – A student who qualifies for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch