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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing, SPCSA
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada – Charter Amendment Request to Reduce Cadence Campus Enrollment Cap**
DATE: March 3, 2023

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada has submitted an amendment requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve a reduced enrollment cap for the 2022-2023, 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26 school years at the Cadence Campus.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the Good Cause Exemption and approve the amendment request. A proposed motion can be found on page of 4 this memo.

Background and Overview of the Amendment

Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada (Legacy) is a network of charter schools located in Clark County. The mission of Legacy is to provide all students with opportunity, leadership, guidance, and support to achieve academic excellence in a safe, neotraditional learning environment, with instruction from caring, knowledgeable, and highly effective educators and in cooperation with supportive, involved families. As of the 2022 Validation Day, Legacy had 4,052 students across the three campuses.

Legacy’s Cadence campus is located at 325 Inflection Street, Henderson, NV 89011. According to the amendment application, it is one of three charter schools located in the master planned community of Cadence. The campus opened in 2018 and offers grades K–8. As of Validation Day 2022, the Cadence campus had 1186 students enrolled, which was less than 90% of the approved cap of 1,450. The requested Cadence enrollment caps for the current and future academic years in the amendment submission are as follows:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Total Enrollment	1186	1225	1250	1290

According to the amendment application, the Cadence campus historically had reached its enrollment cap since its first year of operation. However, there have been new school openings that are in close proximity to the campus which has caused enrollment to dip recently. According to the amendment application, while the master planned Cadence community had allotted for three schools, the community has yet to grow to its full capacity primarily due to construction delays brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has created a situation where the community is saturated with two CCSD schools, one private school, and three charter schools. The amendment states that there are not enough students to adequately fill all schools to capacity. Legacy further noted in their application that construction is once again in full swing, but it is unlikely that homes will be finished and occupied before the next school year. Therefore, Legacy is requesting this enrollment amendment.

Legacy described steps the school is taking to respond to the enrollment challenges in its amendment application. According to the school, additional marketing campaigns – a mix of traditional and digital - were implemented starting in January 2022. Legacy is also holding additional community events to reach out to families in the community. The application noted that the Cadence campus held an open house night for interested families in October, the school has partnered with the local homeowner’s association for a Trunk or Treat, family nights were held in November, and Legacy participated in the school choice fair in January 2023. Legacy said it plans to hold additional events throughout the spring of 2023.

According to the amendment application, there have been no instructional staffing impacts as a result of the lower than expected enrollment. Legacy did note that it benefited from an increase in Federal funding through various government COVID-related initiatives such as ESSER (I, II, and III) and NLSP. The school did have to reduce some non-instructional staff due to the lower enrollment, however.

Legacy continues to analyze ways to ensure financial stability of the school. According to the amendment application, the school’s plan to address the loss of revenues includes several components. The number one priority is to increase enrollment to capacity over time. Focus will be placed on ensuring efficient teacher staffing while prioritizing strong academic outcomes. The Cadence team noted it is working to explore how to better utilize technology to create efficiencies both inside and outside the classroom. All other expense lines will be scrutinized to identify any waste and/or cost-saving opportunities, and the campus is exploring other sources of revenues, including fundraising (private donors/businesses, fundraising from families

potentially), as well as competitive grants according to the amendment application.

Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests

Existing charter schools that are sponsored by the SPCSA may submit a charter school contract amendment application to the SPCSA – which is reviewed by SPCSA staff and presented for SPCSA Board action – in order to, among other things, increase enrollment, add grade levels above and beyond what the charter school is approved to serve, or add a new campus. When determining whether to approve an amendment request, the sponsor considers the charter school’s compliance with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations and evidence relating to the academics, finance and organization of the charter school. (See NAC 388A.400(8) and NRS 388A.276).

Analysis and Staff Recommendation

When reviewing an amendment application, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. In the case of Legacy, both the Cadence elementary and North Valley elementary programs earned a 2-star rating according to the 2018 – 2019 NSPF ratings and were issued Notices of Concern. The Authority approved SPCSA staff to conduct additional academic monitoring and oversight during the 2022-23 school year and to leave the Notices of Concern in place as a result of the rating the Cadence and North Valley elementary programs received on the 2021-2022 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework. The Cadence elementary program received 22.1 points and the North Valley elementary program received 29.7 points, which both did not meet standards. The Southwest elementary program has yet to receive a NSPF rating but was shown to meet the standards on the 2021-2022 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework. The middle school programs at the Cadence, North Valley, and Southwest campuses have exhibited stronger academic performance. According to the 2018 – 2019 NSPF ratings, the Cadence middle school program earned a 5-star rating, North Valley middle school program earned a 3-star rating, and the Southwest campus was not rated. The Cadence, North Valley, and Southwest middle schools were all shown to be meeting the standard on the 2021-2022 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework ratings.

Additionally, the school earned 100 points (out of 100) under the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework for the 2021 – 22 school year as approved by the Authority on December 16, 2022. As such, SPCSA staff finds the school to be ‘Meeting Standards.’ Legacy has also been found to ‘Meet the Standards’ on the most recent 2021 SPCSA Financial Performance Framework.

Overall, SPCSA staff will still continue to monitor Legacy with regard to academic performance, but SPCSA staff believes that ongoing monitoring should not negatively impact this request to reduce the Cadence campus’s enrollment cap. SPCSA also notes that it will be critical for the school reach its enrollment projections as described in the amendment application to ensure the Legacy maintains financial health. However, Legacy has made reasonable adjustments to its budget to reflect the enrollment projections proposed in the amendment application for the remaining years under its

current contract. Legacy also recognizes the enrollment challenges it faces with regard to the Cadence campus, and provided several strategies it intends on utilizing to ensure enrollment increases in moving forward. Therefore, SPCSA staff is supportive of the requested amendment and recommends the Authority approve.

Proposed Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Legacy Traditional Schools - Nevada – Cadence campus’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 1450 students to 1186 students and to reduce the enrollment cap for the remainder of the charter term as outlined in the recommendation memo.

If approved, the enrollment caps for each Legacy campus will be as follows for the remainder of the charter term:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Cadence Campus				
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	1186	1225	1250	1290
North Valley Campus				
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250
Southwest Campus				
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450
Total Enrollment	3,386	3,925	3,950	3,990

The current, approved, enrollment caps for each Legacy campus are as follows:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Cadence Campus				
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450
North Valley Campus				
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250
Southwest Campus				
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450
Total Enrollment	4,150	4,150	4,150	4,150

School Demographics change since 2017 – Legacy Traditional

Legacy North Valley

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	1258	3.1%	18.3%	36.2%	37.0%	0.7%	3.3%	1.0%	8.4%	13.4%	18.9%
18-19	1300	2.3%	18.3%	25.2%	40.4%	0.1%	12.5%	0.8%	8.9%	8.6%	40.3%
19-20	1394	2.7%	20.0%	22.8%	40.8%	0.1%	11.9%	1.2%	7.7%	8.7%	26.1%
20-21	1415	3.5%	21.5%	19.3%	43.2%	0.2%	10.5%	1.5%	7.7%	8.7%	45.7%
21-22	1346	3.1%	22.3%	17.6%	42.8%	0.1%	11.7%	2.0%	5.5%	8.3%	54.5%
22-23	1367	3.2%	22.8%	17.1%	44.5%	0.1%	10.1%	1.8%	<5%	9.4%	52.0%

Legacy Cadence

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18-19	1205	5.8%	8.7%	39.1%	32.1%	0.0%	11.6%	2.4%	7.8%	6.8%	42.4%
19-20	1332	6.8%	8.4%	36.3%	36.6%	0.1%	9.7%	1.8%	8.4%	*	<5%
20-21	1415	7.9%	8.9%	34.9%	35.9%	0.0%	10.3%	1.9%	9.5%	<5%	47.3%
21-22	1393	7.0%	8.3%	35.9%	36.1%	0.0%	10.7%	1.6%	8.3%	5.0%	49.6%
22-23	1186	6.3%	12.4%	31.6%	35.4%	0.2%	12.2%	1.6%	7.5%	<5%	47.9%

Legacy Southwest

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18-19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19-20	1489	26.0%	11.2%	24.5%	21.8%	0.2%	12.9%	3.0%	<5%	7.1%	18.6%
20-21	1614	27.0%	11.5%	22.4%	22.0%	0.2%	13.7%	2.8%	<5%	7.0%	45.2%
21-22	1531	29.9%	12.0%	21.3%	21.5%	0.3%	12.8%	1.8%	<5%	7.9%	40.5%
22-23	1499	31.5%	12.5%	20.4%	20.2%	0.3%	12.4%	2.4%	<5%	6.9%	40.2%

A – Asian
 B – Black
 C – Caucasian

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

Legacy Traditional Charter School Financial Performance

Year	Rating
2019 – 2020	Meets the Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets the Standard

Legacy Traditional Charter School Organizational Performance

Year	Rating
2019 – 2020	Meets the Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets the Standard
2021 – 2022	Meets the Standard

Legacy Traditional Academy Academic Performance

Year	Ratings	
2022 Index Scores	Cadence ES – 23.5	Cadence MS – 59.5
	North Valley ES – 34.5	North Valley MS – 51.5
	Southwest ES- 69.5	Southwest MS – 73.0
2021 ¹	Cadence – ES: 2-star	Cadence – MS: 5-star
	North Valley – ES: 2-star	North Valley – MS – 3-star

¹ Due to COVID-19, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) applied for and was granted a 2020-21 school year waiver from the U.S. Department of Education for certain requirements established by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Nevada statewide assessments were administered in the 2020-21 school year, but the NDE did not calculate new Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school ratings for the 2020-21 school year.

2020 ²	Cadence – ES: 2-star North Valley – ES: 2-star	Cadence – MS: 5-star North Valley – MS – 3-star
2019	Cadence – ES: 2-star North Valley – ES: 2-star	Cadence – MS: 5-star North Valley – MS – 3-star
2018	North Valley – ES: 2-star	North Valley – MS – 2-star

Legacy Traditional 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results³

Campus	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Score	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Rating
Legacy Cadence ES	22.1	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD
Legacy Cadence MS	60.7	MEETS STANDARD
Legacy N. Valley ES	29.7	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD
Legacy N. Valley MS	59.9	MEETS STANDARD
Legacy Southwest ES	62.7	MEETS STANDARD
Legacy Southwest MS	65.8	MEETS STANDARD

² Due to COVID-19, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) applied for and was granted a 2019 – 20 school year waiver from the US Department of Education for certain assessment, accountability, school identification, and reporting requirements established by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Accordingly, for the 2019 – 20 school year, Nevada statewide assessments were not administered and the NDE did not calculate Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school ratings

³ The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) calculated NSPF index scores for the 2021-22 school year but did not calculate corresponding star ratings (shown as N/A). 2021-22 NSPF details and rules can be found at: <http://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/DI/MoreDownload?filename=Nevada%20School%20Performance%20Framework%20Manual%202021-22%20School%20Year.pdf>