

Transportation Plan and Funding  
Application  
2023-24 School Year



**Nevada State Public  
Charter School  
Authority**

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# 1 OVERVIEW

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## 1.1 ELIGIBILITY

Assembly Bill 400 (2023 Session of the Nevada Legislature) appropriated \$7 million to the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) for each year of the upcoming biennium (the 2023-24 school year and the 2024-25 school year) to award to charter schools to fund student transportation. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 400, any charter school in the State of Nevada, regardless of sponsor (SPCSA or school district) may apply for transportation funding. To apply, charter schools must submit a transportation plan to the SPCSA. Transportation plans must be submitted at the charter school campus level<sup>1</sup>. If a charter holder wishes to apply for funding for multiple campuses (distinct addresses), a transportation plan must be submitted for each campus. If the transportation plan is approved, the SPCSA may award money to the charter school for the transportation of pupils.

It is important to note that a charter school is only permitted to provide transportation to pupils if the school has approval to do so from its sponsor. See NAC 388A.330(4). Therefore, charter schools may be required to submit to their sponsor a contract amendment request in order to implement the transportation plan. For those schools sponsored by the SPCSA, any contract amendment associated with the implementation of the transportation plan will be considered as part of this application as detailed below in section 1.4.

***Applications for the first round of funding for the 2023-24 school year were accepted and reviewed between July 7, 2023, through September 30, 2023. Applications for round two were accepted and reviewed between October 1, 2023 and January 31, 2024. Applications for the third round of funding will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until May 31, 2024. Schools that are opening in the fall of 2024 are eligible to apply in the third round. Because there is only \$7 million available in each school year, the SPCSA may prioritize funding Title I charter schools.***

## 1.2 ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS

Transportation funding may be used to cover the capital expenses (procuring vehicles, establishing infrastructure such as fencing to secure vehicles, etc.) and operating costs (employee salaries, employee benefits, fuel, maintenance, insurance, etc.) associated with transporting enrolled students to and from school. However, funding may not be used to cover the costs associated with transporting students during field trips or for extracurricular activities, unless the school is also providing transportation to and from school. Allowable transportation funding authorized by Assembly Bill 400 may be provided to charter schools for either direct transportation services provided by the charter school, or for transportation services purchased or contracted through a vendor that provides transportation services. Transportation plans may include the use of school buses, vans or other vehicles that are designed for up to 10 passengers, as well as public transportation vouchers (e.g., public transit passes), so long as the transportation complies with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Schools may not use transportation funding to provide stipends or reimbursements to parents for costs associated with transporting students to a charter school.

## 1.3 ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS

Schools that receive awards for transportation funding will be reimbursed for expenses associated with the transportation plan and as detailed in the approved budget. In unique situations, the SPCSA may, at its discretion, provide transportation funding to a school in advance of the school expending the funds. If a school that has been approved for transportation funding believes advance funding is necessary, a request to waive the reimbursement requirement may be submitted to the SPCSA. Waiver requests must be made in writing, thoroughly articulated, and aligned to the transportation plan. Upon approval of the waiver request, the school will be expected to agree to terms

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<sup>1</sup> Each distinct, non-adjacent address is considered a separate charter school campus.

and conditions for the post expenditure audit of the fiscal transactions and may be subject to recoupment of funds used in transactions that do not comply with applicable law, regulation, or the approved transportation plan.

## 1.4 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To apply for transportation funding, charter schools must complete and submit the following to [transportationapps@spcsa.nv.gov](mailto:transportationapps@spcsa.nv.gov):

- **Application Cover Sheet** (Section 2)
- **Transportation Plan** (Section 3)
  - *For those schools sponsored by the SPCSA that do not already have approval to provide transportation to and from school, the transportation plan will also constitute a charter school contract amendment request pursuant to NAC 388A.330(4).*
- **Budget** (Section 4 and Budget Workbook)
- **Good Cause Exemption Request, if applicable:** For those schools that are sponsored by the SPCSA and are not already approved to provide transportation to and from school, a board-approved letter requesting a good cause exemption to consider the contract amendment outside of the amendment windows defined in regulation. (A sample letter can be found in Appendix A)
- **Attachment 1:** Board meeting minutes, draft or final, for the meeting in which the governing body authorized the submission of the transportation plan and funding request
- **Attachment 2:** Copy of vendor contract (or draft contract), if applicable
- **Attachment 3:** Authorizer’s Performance Framework reports for the preceding three years (non-SPCSA-sponsored schools only)
- **Attachment 4:** Current charter contract, including evidence that the school has been approved to provide transportation (non-SPCSA-sponsored schools only)
- **Attachment 5:** Most recent ADE report (*New schools and those schools that were approved for an Exceptional Enrollment Growth Adjustment (EEGA) should provide a copy of the signed funding request*)
- **Attachment 6:** Transportation Budget Workbook

Prior to submission, the charter school’s board must approve the transportation plan at a board meeting that complies with Nevada’s Open Meeting Laws (Charter 241 of Nevada Revised Statutes). Sample board motions can be found in Appendix B.

Recommendations regarding approval or denial of transportation plans will be presented to the SPCSA board for consideration. In general, applications received at least four weeks prior to a scheduled [SPCSA board meeting](#) are likely to be reviewed with sufficient time for a recommendation to be presented to the SPCSA board. Specific dates for each of the remaining board meetings are listed below:

| Application Submission Deadline | SPCSA Board Meeting |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| February 2, 2024                | March 1, 2024       |
| March 15, 2024                  | April 12, 2024      |
| April 19, 2024                  | May 17, 2024        |
| May 24, 2024                    | June 21, 2024       |

## 1.5 APPLICATION EVALUATION

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 400, applications will be evaluated using the following rubric. Only those applications that meet all the rubric criteria will be recommended for approval. While the SPCSA hopes to fund all applicants that submit a compliant transportation plan, because there is only \$7 million available in each school year, the SPCSA may prioritize funding Title I charter schools.

| Section                   | Rubric Criteria   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 2 Application Cover Sheet | <input type="checkbox"/> Title I School (the SPCSA may prioritize funding Title I charter schools)  |
| 3.1 Demonstration of Need | <input type="checkbox"/> The application identifies the gaps and limitations in existing transportation options and articulates how the transportation plan will address those gaps and limitations in order to materially improve access to education in the region served by the transportation plan.   |
| 3.2 Program Design        | <input type="checkbox"/> The transportation plan is comprehensive, including complete answers to questions 1-4, as applicable, and is likely to be successfully implemented.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Answers to questions 5-8 demonstrate that the charter school will be able to comply with statutory and regulatory transportation requirements, including, without limitation, the certification of bus drivers and vehicle safety.<br><i>Only applies to applicants proposing to operate vehicles.</i>   |
| 3.3 School Information    | <input type="checkbox"/> The academic, financial, and organizational performance of the charter school indicates that the transportation plan is in the interest of pupils who will be served by the transportation plan. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past financial performance indicates that the transportation plan is likely to be financially sustainable;</li> <li>• Past organizational performance demonstrates that the transportation program is likely to be operated in compliance with all applicable laws and statutes; and</li> <li>• Past academic performance shows that students who will be transported to the school will be well served by the academic program and/or that transporting students is likely to improve academic performance (e.g., through the reduction in chronic absenteeism).</li> </ul> |
| 4 Budget                  | <input type="checkbox"/> The budget demonstrates that the transportation plan is financially viable.<br><input type="checkbox"/> The budget and student enrollment demonstrate that the transportation plan would not cost more, on a per pupil basis, than the average cost for transportation for other public schools operating in the school district in which the charter school is located. <i>This will be evaluated by dividing the total cost of the transportation plan as proposed in the budget by the total number of students (Most recent Average Daily Enrollment OR for new or expanding schools, the result of the enrollment audit).</i>   |

## 1.6 QUESTIONS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For an overview of the application, evaluation rubric, and process, please refer to this [video](#). In addition, schools may refer to the SPCSA [website](#) or direct specific questions to Melissa Mackedon at [mmackedon@spsca.nv.gov](mailto:mmackedon@spsca.nv.gov).

## 2 APPLICATION COVER SHEET

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### 2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Charter School/Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Name<sup>2</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year<sup>3</sup>: 2023-24

Title I Status:  School *identified* as Title I for the 23-24 SY  School *not identified* as Title I for the 23-24 SY

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Name<sup>4</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2.2 APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Date of Charter School's Board's Approval of Transportation Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

As Attachment 1, provide the copy of the board meeting minutes, draft or final, for the meeting in which the governing body authorized the submission of the transportation plan and funding request. Note that sample board motions for the approval and submission of the transportation plan can be found in Appendix B.

### 2.3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Total Amount of Funding Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the transportation plan and how you plan to use the requested funding, if approved. (300 words or less)

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<sup>2</sup> Transportation plans must be submitted at the charter school campus level. Each distinct, non-adjacent address is considered a separate charter school campus. If a charter holder wishes to apply for funding for multiple campuses (distinct addresses), a transportation plan must be submitted for each campus.

<sup>3</sup> School year for which transportation funding is being requested.

<sup>4</sup> If the transportation plan is approved, the school's primary contact will be added to the Nevada Department of Education's Emergency Service Directory for Transportation.

## 2.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The school acknowledges the following:

- Charter schools that are awarded funding for daily transportation to and from school may not charge any fees for daily transportation to and from school.
- Charter schools providing transportation are responsible for complying with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to the transportation of students.
- A school that receives an award will be reimbursed for expenditures made, upon submission of proof of payment of those expenditures. A school that receives an award may request a waiver to the reimbursement requirement. Waiver requests must be made in writing, thoroughly articulated, and align to the transportation plan.
- Before implementing an approved transportation plan a charter school must provide the following, as they pertain to the components of the transportation plan:
  - Provide evidence of proper insurance coverage pursuant to NRS 386.795;
  - Provide evidence that any school buses have inspected by the Department of Public Safety to ensure that the vehicle is mechanically safe and meets the minimum specifications established by the State Board of Education;
  - Provide written attestation that any vans or other vehicles that are designed for up to 10 passengers are in good repair pursuant to NRS 386.830; and
  - Complete the driver certification form demonstrating that bus, van, or other vehicle driver(s) have met all training, testing, and fingerprinting requirements.
- Charter schools providing transportation are required to submit certain reports to the Nevada Department of Education, including but not limited to the Annual Transportation Report and the Stop Arm Violation Report.

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Primary Contact Name

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Date

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Signature



### 3 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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#### 3.1 DEMONSTRATION OF NEED

- 1) Describe the current transportation options available to students and identify the gaps and limitations. Include data on the number of students who need transportation and their geographic distribution.

- 2) Describe how the school’s Transportation Plan, if approved and funded, is likely to materially improve access to education in the region served by the transportation plan.

#### 3.2 PROGRAM DESIGN

*For those charter schools sponsored by the SPCSA that do not already have approval to transport students to and from school, the Program Design section will constitute an amendment request pursuant to NAC 388A.330(4).*

- 1) Describe the transportation program. Include the following:
  - a. How do you plan to provide transportation to students?

- b. How many students will be served by the proposed transportation plan?
- c. What grade levels will be served by the proposed transportation plan?
- d. What geographic area(s) will be served by the proposed transportation plan?
- e. Describe all policies pertaining to the transportation program such as student eligibility, how students will be prioritized if the transportation program is oversubscribed, etc.
- f. Describe the implementation timeline for the transportation program.

2) List and thoroughly describe any partnerships or contracts under which the school may provide the transportation services. As Attachment 2 provide a copy of the contract (or draft contract).

*Schools proposing to provide bus or van/vehicle transportation must answer questions 3-8. This section is not required if the school's plan only contemplates the use of public transportation.*

- 3) Describe the scope and scale of the transportation that will be offered:
  - a. Provide the number of vehicles, make and model of each vehicle, and capacity of each vehicle;
  - b. Provide the number of daily routes operated; and

- c. Provide the average number of students per route (to calculate the average number of students per route, take the total of students transported, including pre-K and special education, and divide by the number of routes).

- 4) Describe the proposed transportation routes and schedules, including a description of the pick-up/drop-off location(s) and how they comply with NRS 386.840. If possible, provide a tentative map of the transportation routes.

- 5) Explain how the school will ensure compliance with [Nevada’s School Bus Standards](#), and Nevada Revised Statutes and Regulations, particularly NRS 386.790 through NRS 386.845 and NAC 386.500 through NAC 386.555.

6) Describe how the school will comply with requirements and protocols for driver training and safety. For school bus transportation, confirm that the driver(s) of the school bus will meet the minimum qualifications as described in NRS 386.825 and describe how the school will maintain all required employer documentation per Nevada Department of Education regulatory guidance for school bus operations.

7) Describe how the school and/or transportation vendor will ensure student safety, including complying with NRS 386.820, as applicable. Include:

- a. The proposed schedule for practicing student evacuation
- b. A description of the bus/vehicle safety program

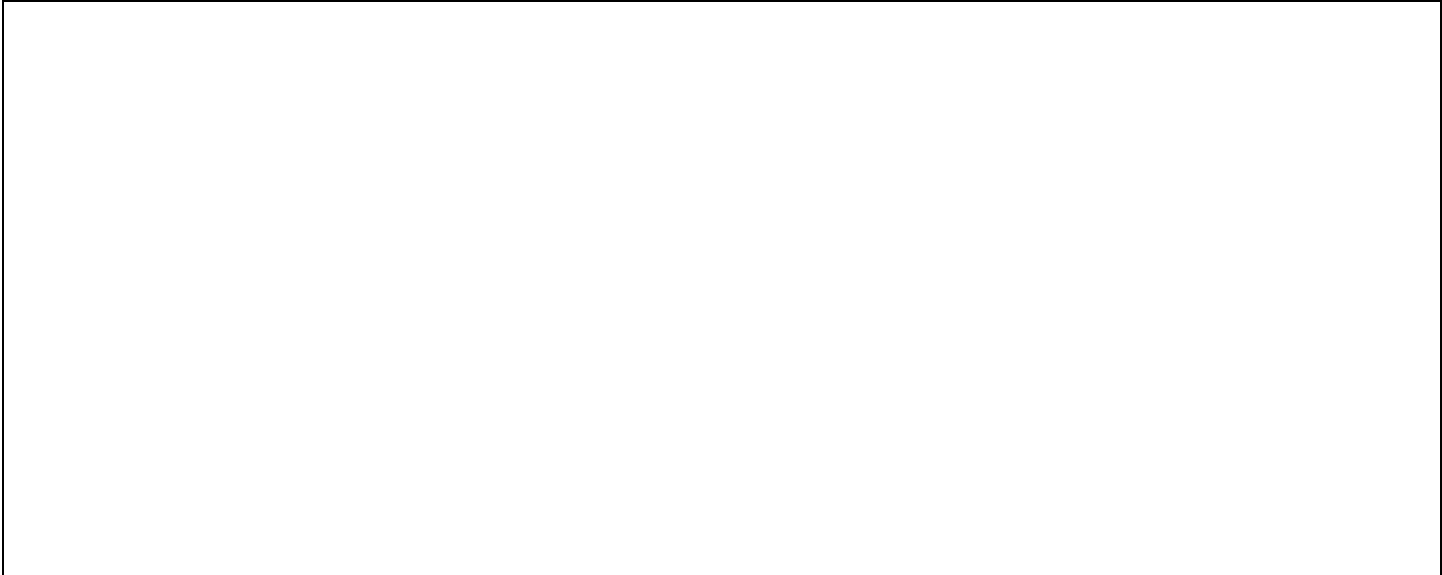
8) **Optional:** For schools that intend to transport students to and from activities and programs, describe how the school and/or transportation vendor will comply with NRS 386.815 regarding operating a school bus for extended periods of time, if applicable. *Note that transportation funding cannot be used to cover the expenses associated with field trips and extracurricular activities, unless the school is also providing transportation to and from school. However, SPCSA-sponsored schools should complete this question if they are seeking a transportation amendment and intend to transport students to and from activities and programs.*

**3.3 SCHOOL INFORMATION**

1) Explain why academic, financial and organizational performance of the charter school indicates the transportation plan is in the interest of the students who will be served by the transportation plan.

2) For charter schools not sponsored by the SPCSA, provide a summary of any findings under the Authorizer’s Performance Framework (NRS 388A.273) for the preceding three years and the actions taken by the school to address the findings. Include as Attachment 3 copies of the Authorizer’s Performance Framework reports for the preceding three years.

3) For schools not sponsored by the SPCSA, provide as Attachment 4 the current charter contract, including evidence that the school has been approved to provide transportation. If the school has not been approved to provide transportation, describe the school’s plans to receive approval pursuant to NAC 388A.330(4).



## 4 BUDGET

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 400, Section 28.5(3)(e), schools may be funded up to the average per pupil cost for transportation in the school district in which the charter school is located.

- 1) What is the total number of students enrolled at the charter school campus based on the most recent Average Daily Enrollment (ADE) from the 2023-24 school year? *New schools and those schools that were approved for an Exceptional Enrollment Growth Adjustment (EEGA) should report the audited enrollment number. For schools opening in fall of 2024, it is recommended that the school plan to apply for approximately 50% of the approved enrollment cap. If a new school is approved for and receives funding at 50% of the enrollment cap but the pre-opening enrollment audit does not reflect the school will achieve that enrollment amount, the SPCSA may true-up the awarded funding and recoup the disbursed funds.*
- 2) As Attachment 5, provide a copy of the most recent ADE report. *New schools and those schools that were approved for an Exceptional Enrollment Growth Adjustment (EEGA) should provide a copy of the signed funding request.*

- 3) Which county is the charter school campus located in? \_\_\_\_\_

*For reference, per pupil funding amounts by school district are included below.*

| School District   | Per Pupil Transportation Funding<br>(Based on the FY19-FY22 four-year average) |
|-------------------|--|
| Carson City       | \$359  |
| Churchill County  | \$519  |
| Clark County      | \$481  |
| Elko County       | \$480  |
| Washoe County     | \$392  |
| White Pine County | \$968  |

- 4) Use the Transportation Budget Workbook to show how the transportation funds requested will be used to support the school's proposed Transportation Plan. For each item in the budget include Object Code; Function Code; Quantity; Salary, Rental or Unit Cost; and Narrative. The Narrative should include details on the purpose, justification for the cost, and the cost calculation. Submit the Transportation Budget Workbook as Attachment 6.
- 5) If necessary, provide any additional narrative in support of the budget details.



## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE GOOD CAUSE EXEMPTION LETTER

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Those charter schools that are sponsored by the SPCSA which are not already approved to provide transportation to and from school will require an amendment to their charter contract. The transportation plan within the application serves as the amendment application. Because this amendment is being requested outside of the SPCSA's typical contract amendment windows, schools must include a request for a good cause exemption pursuant to NAC 388A.400. In addition to including a good cause exemption in the board's motion approving the transportation application, the school must provide a letter regarding the good cause exemption request. The following language may be used for the good cause exemption letter. This letter should be on the school's letterhead and signed by the school's board chair.

*This letter is provided to formally request a Good Cause Exemption to amend the [school name] charter contract outside of the traditional amendment cycle. This request was approved by the Governing Body of [school name] on [board meeting date]. The attached amendment application would formally establish transportation services to and from school at [school name]. Transportation would begin on or about [date].*

## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE BOARD MOTIONS

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**For a school that is requesting approval of the transportation plan and a contract amendment (SPCSA schools only):**

Approve the [school name] transportation plan and funding request for submission to the State Public Charter School Authority and approve the amendment request to add transportation of students to and from school, including a request for good cause exemption request to have the State Public Charter School Authority consider this amendment request outside of the established windows.

**For a school that is requesting approval of the transportation plan only (non-SPCSA schools and those SPCSA schools already approved to provide transportation to and from school):**

Approve the [school name] transportation plan and funding request for submission to the State Public Charter School Authority.

## APPENDIX C: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. Can transportation funding be used for capital expenses?  
*Yes, transportation funding may be used for capital expenses, such as the purchase of a vehicle to transport students or the cost to retrofit a space to secure the transportation vehicles.*
2. Can transportation funding be used to contract with a vendor that will provide transportation services?  
*Yes, a charter school may use transportation funds to contract with a vendor to provide transportation services. Note that any transportation, regardless of whether it is provided by the school or a vendor, must comply with applicable statutes and regulations.*
3. Can transportation funding be used for capital and/or operating expenses associated with transporting students in vans?  
*Transportation funding may be used to fund expenses associated with vans, so long as they are vehicles designed to transport 10 passengers or less. Any vehicle designed for more than 10 passengers must comply with all laws and regulations pertaining to school buses.*
4. Can transportation funds be used to cover the cost of insurance related to transporting students to and from school?  
*Yes, transportation funds may be used to cover the cost of insurance related to transporting students to and from school.*
5. Can transportation funding be used to purchase public transportation passes?  
*Yes, transportation funds may be used to purchase public transportation passes for students.*
6. Can transportation funding be used for private motor coaches/buses that transport adults instead of school buses?  
*No, daily transportation operated by the school to transport students to and from school can only be provided on vehicles that meet the school bus requirements. The only exception is vehicles that are designed to transport 10 passengers or less.*
7. Can transportation funding be used for expenses associated with transporting students to field trips?  
*Transportation funds can only be utilized for expenses associated with transportation students to field trips if the school is also providing transportation to and from school.*
8. Can transportation funding be used for stipends or to reimburse parents for the costs associated with transporting their students to school?  
*No, transportation funding cannot be used for stipends or reimbursements to parents.*
9. What should be included in the budget?  
*The budget should show how the transportation funds being requested will be used to support the school's proposed Transportation Plan. For each item in the budget include Object Code; Function Code; Quantity; Salary, Rental or Unit Cost; and Narrative. The Budget Narrative must contain:*
  1. *Purpose of Cost (Why does the school need funds in this line item?)*
  2. *Beneficiary (Who will benefit from funds in this line item? E.g., Salary for one bus driver or cost for one school bus to transport 25 students)*
  3. *Cost Calculation (Show your math. E.g., Funds for 1.0 FTE school bus driver at estimated \$32,000 annual base salary.)*
10. When will schools be able to receive transportation funds?

*Schools that receive awards for transportation funding will be reimbursed for expenses associated with the transportation plan and as detailed in the approved budget. In unique situations, the SPCSA may, at its discretion, provide transportation funding to a school in advance of the school expending the funds.*

11. What is the process and timeline for charter contract amendments and approvals?

*A charter school is only permitted to provide transportation to pupils if the school has approval to do so from its sponsor. See NAC 388A.330(4). Therefore, charter schools may be required to submit to their sponsor a contract amendment request in order to implement the transportation plan. For those schools sponsored by the SPCSA, any contract amendment associated with the implementation of the transportation plan will be considered as part of this application as detailed in section 1.4. Charter schools sponsored by school districts must work with their sponsor to gain approval of an amendment to provide transportation to pupils.*

12. Will transportation funding be renewed each year?

*Assembly Bill 400 only appropriates funds for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. Schools that receive transportation funding during the 2023-24 school year will be prioritized to receive funding again in the 2024-25 school year. However, the Legislature will need to appropriate funding for charter schools beyond the 2024-25 school year.*