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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III
SUBJECT: Nevada Virtual Charter School – Charter Amendment Request to Reduce Enrollment Cap
DATE: January 26, 2024

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Nevada Virtual Charter School (NVCS) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) approve a reduction in the school’s approved enrollment cap for the 2023-24 school year.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority approve the request. A proposed motion can be found on page 3 of this memo.

Background and Overview of the Amendment

NVCS is a full-time, virtual charter school serving students statewide. As of Validation Day 2023, NVCS had 1717 students enrolled in grades 6 – 12.

At the April 14, 2023 SPCSA Board meeting, the school was approved to terminate its existing EMO contract with Stride and enter into a contract with Accel for curriculum, platform, instructional support services, student computers and technology assistance services, and school support services. In addition to plans to contract with Accel, the school plans to contract with the Charter School Management Company (CSMC) for back-office support.

According to the amendment application, because of the nonrenewal of the school’s contract with Stride, as of July 1, 2023, Stride claimed ownership of the school’s name and acronym -

Nevada Virtual Academy, NVVA. Stride sent a letter saying that the school could no longer use the name and acronym beyond 30 days after the contract ended. According to the amendment application, in order to keep some name recognition, Nevada Virtual Charter School was determined to be the best option for a name change. However, once the name change was made official, K12 reached out to families and notified them they had been withdrawn from Nevada Virtual Academy.

Additionally, according to the amendment application, the change in name and withdrawal notification by K12 caused the school to lose about 500 students that had indicated they would be returning for the 2023-24 school year and some newly enrolled students due most likely due to confusion. Despite NVCS communications of the upcoming name change towards the end of the 2022-23 school year and numerous communications over the summer informing families to ignore withdrawal notifications from K12, Stride, NVCS was unable to begin the new school year with enrollment numbers that were within 10% of the approved enrollment cap.

According to NVCS, the school was able to use some grant monies to increase marketing via television ads, billboards, magazine ads, and postcards to reach out to potential students and families and has already seen an enrollment increases through the first half of the 2023-24 school year. According to the amendment application, the lower than anticipated enrollment to start the 2023-24 school year has not significantly impacted the school’s staffing or overall financial health.

If approved, NVCS’s enrollment cap will be:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12
Total Enrollment	1837	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100

Legal Authority

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. Academically, NVCS was most recently rated 2-star for the middle school and the high school was rated as 3-stars. The NVCS middle school received 30.8 points, which did not meet standards, and the high school received 54.6 points, which met the standard, on the 2022-2023 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework.

According to the most recent organizational data, NVCS earned 100 points (out of 100) on the 2021 – 22 Organizational Framework which was approved at the December 16, 2022 SPCSA Board meeting. NVCS was also rated as Meets the Standard on the SPCSA Financial Framework which was approved at the March 3, 2023 SPCSA board meeting. Given the recent academic, organizational, and financial performance under SPCSA Performance Frameworks, SPCSA staff finds that overall, Nevada Virtual Academy is meeting performance expectations.

SPCSA staff is supportive of the request by NVCS. NVCS made necessary adjustments to its budget and shows no sign of financial trouble. NVCS has already seen increases in enrollment through the first half of the 2023-24 school year, and SPCSA staff sees no reason that trend will not continue. Therefore, SPCSA staff recommends the Authority approve the request to reduce the enrollment cap for NVCS for the 2023-2024 school year.

Proposed Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request of Nevada Virtual Charter School and approve the school’s request to reduce the enrollment cap for the 2023-24 school year.

If approved the enrollment cap for NVCS will be:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12
Total Enrollment	1837	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100

The currently approved enrollment cap for NVCS:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12
Total Enrollment	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100

Historical Performance and Demographic Information – NVCS

School Total Enrollment and Demographics since 2017

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	2097	5.5%	17.2%	48.7%	24.2%	1.5%	0.0%	2.7%	11.6%	<5%	46.9%
18-19	1840	5.1%	16.6%	45.7%	28.2%	1.1%	0.0%	3.0%	11.1%	<5%	51.4%
19-20	1461	5.0%	15.0%	44.4%	31.9%	1.0%	0.0%	2.3%	11.7%	<5%	53.4%
20-21	2187	4.7%	18.9%	43.1%	28.7%	0.7%	1.3%	2.3%	11.1%	<5%	62.5%
21-22	2027	5.4%	21.5%	37.2%	31.9%	1.1%	0.0%	2.6%	11.4%	<5%	56.7%
22-23	2153	5.0%	22.8%	32.6%	35.1%	0.8%	0.2%	3.2%	12.3%	<5%	57.3%
23-24	1717	6.1%	21.4%	32.1%	35.4%	1.0%	0.5%	3.2%	12.7%	<5%	58.1%

- 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

Nevada Virtual Charter School Financial Performance

Year	Rating
2021 – 2022	Meets the Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets the Standard
2019 – 2020	Notice of Concern

Nevada Virtual Charter School Organizational Performance

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

Nevada Virtual Charter School Academic Performance

Year	Rating
2022 – 2023	MS: 2 stars HS: 3 stars
2021 – 2022 Index Scores	MS: 42.0 HS: 53.5
2020 - 2021²	MS: 3 stars HS: 3 stars
2019 – 2020³	MS: 3 stars HS: 3 stars
2018 – 2019	MS: 3 stars HS: 3 stars
2017 – 2018	MS: 2 stars HS: 3 stars

Nevada Virtual Charter School 2022-23 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results⁴

Campus	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Score	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Rating
Nevada Virtual MS	30.8	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD
Nevada Virtual HS	54.6	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD

Nevada Virtual Charter School 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results⁴

Campus	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Score	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Rating
Nevada Virtual MS	37.2	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD
Nevada Virtual HS	44.1	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD