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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Young Women’s Leadership Academy– Charter Amendment Request to reduce enrollment cap**
DATE: March 1, 2024

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Young Women’s Leadership Academy (YWLA) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the request to reduce its 2023-24 enrollment cap and the enrollment cap for the remainder of the charter term.

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

Background and Overview of the Amendment

YWLA is located at 3415 S. Mojave Rd. in Las Vegas, Nevada 89121 in Clark County. YWLA is affiliated with the Young Women Leadership Schools network of all-girls college prep schools all driven by the same mission and vision: to nurture the intellectual curiosity and creativity of young women. Young Women’s Leadership Schools accomplish this by supporting the “whole girl” and seek to maximize the academic achievement, social emotional well-being, and post-secondary success of each student. YWLA began operation in 2022 with Grades 6 and 9. As of the 2023 Validation Day, YWLA had 141 students enrolled in grades 6 – 10. However, as noted below in the enrollment cap table, the school lost some students during the 23-24 school and currently has around 100 students, which is why the request for the 2023-24 cap 118 instead of 141.

According to the amendment application, YWLA remains committed to serving a student population representative of the local communities on the east side of the Las Vegas Valley. Furthermore, with the addition of a transportation program, YWLA hopes to expand the opportunity to attend YWLA to

underserved students throughout the valley who may not otherwise be afforded the chance to attend. YWLA also continues to the following as part of ongoing community outreach efforts:

- Door knocking in the surrounding neighborhoods;
- Reaching out to parents, students, and community members through after-school and neighborhood programs;
- Reaching out to parent-teacher associations;
- Organizing neighborhood walks to meet families;
- Reaching out to young people through community-based organizations; and
- Reaching out to partner organizations and “connectors” like community leaders.

Additionally, according to the amendment application, YWLA implements marketing techniques such as hosting school functions and tours that invite the public to visit the campus to show families what the school is like in action, billboard advertising, and partnering with other community organizations such as Opportunity 360 to raise awareness. YWLA’s administration has also engaged in door-to-door marketing efforts and targeted mailing campaigns in government-subsidized and low-income housing surrounding the school to inform families of the resources available. Furthermore, the school continues to utilize targeted social media ads for these same zip codes identified by the SPCSA as areas of Academic Need.

Finally, YWLA presented a fiscally conservative budget; however, YWLA noted that as student enrollment is lower than expected, some budgeted expenses decreased as a result; these include EMO/CMO Fees, student supplies, IT fees, etc. According to the amendment application, YWLA will look to apply for grants deemed beneficial to the school to further support the planning and implementation of the charter. YWLA will pursue some of the following grants: the Charter School Program (CSP) grant as well as funding for schools available under Titles I, II, III, and/or IVA.

If approved, the enrollment cap for YWLA will remain at:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	6-10	6-11	6-12	6-12	6-12
Enrollment Cap	118	135	150	165	180

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 for RFA eligibility, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. YWLA is in its second year of operation and

has not been rated financially, or organizationally, however, staff finds no current issues grounded in past performance that raise concerns regarding this amendment. Regarding YWLA’s academic performance, the middle school was rated as 2-stars, and received 38.6 points on the SPCSA’s Academic Performance Framework, which did not meet standards. The high school was not rated.

SPCSA staff is in support of YWLA to change its enrollment cap for the 2023-24 school year and the remainder of the charter term. SPCSA staff agrees with the YWLA’s assessment that the school is financially viable and with the addition of transportation, SPCSA staff agrees with YWLA’s assessment that the school will be able to enroll students who may not have been able to attend otherwise. This should allow the school to meet enrollment targets moving forward.

Proposed Motion: Grant YWLA’s Good Cause Exemption request and approve YWLA’s request to reduce the enrollment cap for the 2023-24 school year and the remainder of the charter term :

If approved, the enrollment cap for YWLA will remain with the addition of 8th grade:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	6-10	6-11	6-12	6-12	6-12
Enrollment Cap	118	135	150	165	180

The current enrollment cap for YWLA is:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	6-10	6-11	6-12	6-12	6-12
Enrollment Cap	300	450	540	570	600

Historical Performance and Demographic Information – YWLA

School Total Enrollment and Demographics since 2017

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
22-23	62	1.6%	40.3%	8.0%	45.1%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0	*	*	70.9%
23-24	141	0.7%	30.4%	6.3%	52.4%	0.0%	8.5%	1.4%	12.0%	19.1%	100.0%

- 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
- * - Suppressed data due to n-count

YWLA School Financial Performance – Not Rated

YWLA Organizational Performance – Not Rated

YWLA Academic Performance

School Year	NSPF Rating
2022 – 2023 Star Rating	Middle School: 2-stars High School: Not Rated

YWLA 2022-23 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results

Campus	2022-23 SPCSA Academic Framework Score	2022-23 SPCSA Academic Framework Rating
Middle School	38.6	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD
High School	Not Rated	N/A