

Vision

A quality public school of choice for every Nevada child.

Mission

The SPCSA improves and influences public education in Nevada by sponsoring public charter schools that prepare all students for college and career success and by modeling best practices in charter school sponsorship.

Beliefs

Students first --High expectations – Excellence--Autonomy/Accountability--Transparency--Leadership

Goal

By 2016, increase the number of SPCSA-sponsored quality charter schools from 4 to 12 based on the Authority's performance framework.

Strategies

Open and sustain quality new schools

- Define the standard of quality using the performance framework
- Refine the application process to align with new performance framework and contract
- Coordinate and align SPCSA technical assistance with CSAN applicant training
- Collaborate with stakeholders to encourage replication of successful schools
- Provide more intensive oversight and support of schools during the first two years of operation

Establish performance-based contracts for all schools

- Advocate for state policy, through statutes and regulations, to facilitate contracts
- Develop contract documents, adoption process and schedule for new and existing schools
- Execute new contracts with the boards of all new and existing schools
- Develop a robust renewal/revocation process consistent with the statute and contract
- Communicate with and provide performance contract technical assistance to boards

Support strong school governance

- Define effective school governance
- Develop a board effectiveness rubric
- Assess effectiveness of all boards
- Provide technical assistance to boards
- Report on school performance to all boards

Collaborate to improve the environment for Nevada charter schools

- Develop and advance a charter school policy agenda
- Support NDE in development and oversight of charter school sponsors
- Develop new charter school funding
- Build productive relationships with school districts
- Work with all stakeholders to expand facility options for charter schools
- Collaborate with stakeholder groups to develop a plan to improve the charter school environment

Measures

- % of approved applications
- # of schools meeting quality criteria after 1, 2 & 3 years
- # of replications of quality schools

- # of schools voluntarily adopting new contracts
- # of school renewals
- # of school closures

- % of schools with effective boards
- % of boards receiving technical assistance

- Alliance rating of NV charter school laws
- # of partners engaged in Charter School Stakeholder group
- New funding sources for charter schools

Mission-- What the organization does and why it does it

The SPCSA improves and influences public education in Nevada by sponsoring public charter schools that prepare all students for college and career success and by modeling best practices in charter school sponsorship.

Vision--What the organization is trying to do/achieve; a picture of what success will look like.

A quality public school choice for every Nevada child.

Goals--Goals define what the organization is trying to accomplish.

By 2016, increase the number of SPCSA-sponsored quality charter schools as defined by the Authority's performance framework from four to twelve by improving the performance of existing schools and sponsoring new schools.

Core beliefs--Principles that guide an organization's internal conduct as well as its relationship with the external world.

We believe that our success depends on:

- Making decisions that put the interests of our students first.
- Maintaining high expectations.
- Implementing policy and practice that reflect national best practices.
- Recognizing that our schools receive autonomy in exchange for accountability.
- Conducting our business in a fair and transparent manner.
- Holding ourselves and others accountable for improved student outcomes.
- Employing effective leadership, governance, staffing, and commitment.

Core functions--The organization's major activities; its major lines of work or business.

- Improve the environment for charter schools in Nevada by developing and advancing a policy agenda to support best practices, providing a voice for quality charter schools, maintaining productive relationships with schools, districts, school boards and superintendents and other stakeholders.
- Recruit quality school operators.
- Conduct a rigorous new schools application and review process.
- Execute performance contracts with each school.
- Oversee and support sponsored schools.
- Provide targeted technical assistance to key stakeholders.
- Review, renew and close schools based on the performance contract.

Theory of action--The organization's operating hypothesis for advancing change, expressed as a statement about cause and effect. Typically, it takes the form: "If we do X, then Y will occur."

If we establish and implement a performance contract based on ambitious goals for student growth and attainment, and

Raise expectations for charter school board governance and leadership, and

Attract high quality proposals for new schools, and

Create an environment in which charter schools can prosper,

Then, more new quality schools will open, existing schools will improve their performance, and persistently low performing schools will close,

Resulting in an increase in the number of quality SPCSA schools from four to twelve and the elimination of failing SPCSA schools.

And a quality public school choice for every Nevada child.

Work Plan

Strategy #1: Open and sustain quality new schools

THEORY OF ACTION

IF SPCSA (Authority) develops and implements a new application process and contract aligned with a robust performance framework;
AND works with stakeholders to identify and recruit high performing school operators, both within and outside of Nevada, to replicate successful schools;
AND obtains funding to support replication of successful schools;
AND provides intensive oversight of new schools during the first two years of operation;
THEN the quality of proposals for new schools will improve
AND the number of successful new schools will increase
WITH THE RESULT THAT all new schools will meet SPCSA quality standards during their first two years.

	Initiative	Scope	Benefits
1A	Define the standard of quality using the performance framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize the Performance Framework Identify the performance levels of all existing schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The performance framework will define success for all authority-sponsored schools.
1B	Refine the application process to align with new performance framework and contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edit the application to incorporate the performance framework. Create an application for replicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the application is aligned with the performance framework, applicants will be clear about expectations and understand the contract prior to applying.
1C	Coordinate and align SPCSA technical assistance with CSAN applicant training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a technical assistance program for new school applicants. Coordinate the SPCSA TA with CSAN training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By providing technical assistance to applicants in addition to the CSAN training, the Authority will improve the quality of applications.
1D	Collaborate with stakeholders to encourage replication of successful schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with stakeholder group to identify high performing schools both inside and outside Nevada. Develop FAQs that address common concerns of potential applicants about operating a charter school in Nevada. Provide the stakeholder group with assistance in recruiting the schools to apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By leveraging the resources and connections of the charter school stakeholders group, the Authority will increase the number of quality applications it receives. By directly addressing concerns about conditions in Nevada, the Authority may be able to resolve concerns of some quality school operators.
1E	Provide more intensive oversight and support of schools during the first two years of operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new school monitoring. Identify critical areas of success for 1st and 2nd year schools. Define and communicate the nature and level of SPCSA support to schools. Differentiate the nature and intensity of monitoring for 1st and 2nd year schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help new schools get off to an effective start and where schools are performing poorly, provide an opportunity to intervene immediately and fix the problem. Where improvement does not occur, the early attention makes it possible for the Authority to terminate the contract quickly to minimize possible (or potential) harm to students.

Strategy #2: Establish performance-based contracts for all schools

THEORY OF ACTION

IF SPCSA (Authority) effectively advocates for changes to state legislation and administrative rules that enable the performance framework to be incorporated into charter school contracts;
AND over time all contracts with the SPCSA define success based on the performance framework;
AND SPCSA develops and implements a robust renewal/revocation process consistent with state law and the contract with schools;
AND communicates with and provides effective technical assistance to charter school boards;
THEN Charter school boards will be more aware of their responsibilities and the expectations for their schools,
AND boards will provide more effective governance,
WITH THE RESULT THAT charter school performance will improve.

	Initiative	Scope	Benefits
2A	Advocate for state policy, through statutes and regulations, to facilitate the new performance contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the spring 2013 legislative session, successfully advocate for legislation that permits the use of a performance framework and modification of contracts upon renewal. In the fall, work with NDE on the adoption of rules to enable use of the framework in a performance contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By aligning the laws and rules with the SPCSA contract, the Authority will be able to communicate clear performance expectations and hold schools accountable. Clarify Authority's power to modify contract terms on renewal.
2B	Develop contract documents and contract adoption process and schedule for new and existing schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop contract documents that incorporate the performance framework. Develop a process for schools' adoption of the new contract, either voluntarily or on contract renewal. Develop a schedule for school adoption of the new contract based on the renewal schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify expectations for both new and existing schools. Possible for boards and school leaders to plan for the new contract and higher expectations.
2C	Execute new contracts with the boards of all new and existing schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new schools will use new contract as of July 2013. Provide boards of existing schools with an opportunity to voluntarily adopt the new schedule. All renewals will use new contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2019 all schools will be on a new contract.
2D	Develop a robust renewal/revocation process consistent with the statute and contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the new renewal and revocation process. Test against NRS and NAC. Edit and revise as needed. Implement beginning with 2014-15 renewals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A renewal/revocation process aligned with new contractual expectations and performance framework will clarify the basis for renewal and revocation process and decisions.
2E	Communicate with and provide performance contract technical assistance to schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop technical assistance for 2013-14 new schools. Refine board TA and deliver to all schools in 2014-15. Offer schools an opportunity to voluntarily shift to new contract prior to renewal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective technical assistance will help school boards to both understand the new expectations and the new contract and make decisions in the interest of their students.

Strategy #3: Support strong school governance

THEORY OF ACTION

IF SPCSA (Authority) develops a definition of effective school governance with a rubric that describes levels of effectiveness;
AND reviews and rates the effectiveness of each board using the rubric;
AND provides technical assistance to boards in the areas of need identified in the reviews;
AND provides all boards with annual reports of school performance during the first three years of operation;
THEN school board effectiveness will improve,
AND the Authority will be able to hold boards accountable for school performance;
WITH THE RESULT THAT school performance will improve and more schools will meet the quality standard.

Initiative	Scope	Benefits
3A Define effective school governance .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain a consultant to develop a governance framework that can be used as the basis for a rubric, evaluations and technical assistance . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the Authority has a clear definition of board effectiveness, it will clarify expectations and provide support aligned with the definition.
3B Develop a board effectiveness rubric.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the same consultant to develop a rubric that describes levels of effectiveness in the key areas of governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rubric will enable the Authority to differentiate technical assistance based on individual board needs.
3C Assess effectiveness of all boards using the framework and rubric.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of all boards using the rubric and provide boards with a report on strengths, weaknesses and sources of support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review will make it possible for the Authority to differentiate its support for school governance based on identified needs.
3D Provide technical assistance to boards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority will contract with a technical assistance provider(s) for boards to address the needs identified in the review. Boards that are found to be effective will not receive individualized support . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The technical assistance for boards should help to improve their effectiveness. If dysfunctional boards fail to improve after receiving technical assistance, the Authority will be in a position to intervene.
3E Report on school performance to all boards during the first three years of operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority staff will develop and deliver an in-person report to each board during the first and second year of operation. The report will be based on the school's performance on the key elements of the performance framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report will help boards to focus their attention on areas of need during the first and second year of the school's existence. The goal is to identify and address problems early so that by the end of the 3rd year of operation, Authority oversight can be reduced. Schools that fail to address problems during the 1st and 2nd years can have their contracts terminated.

Strategy #4: Improve the environment for Nevada charter schools

THEORY OF ACTION

IF SPCSA (Authority) develops and works with other stakeholders to advance a charter school policy agenda;
AND works with NDE to encourage best practice sponsorship by all sponsors;
AND successfully works with other stakeholders to seek new charter school funding;
AND builds successful relationships with all school districts;
AND works with stakeholders to develop new facility options;
AND convenes charter school stakeholders to develop a plan to improve the charter school environment;
THEN the environment for charter schools will improve,
WITH THE RESULT THAT charter schools will have access to increased funding and affordable facilities.

Initiative	Scope	Benefits
4A Develop and advance a charter school policy agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to each session of the legislature, the Authority will develop an agenda for changes to laws and administrative rules to advance charter schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development process provides an opportunity to engage multiple stakeholders, including school leaders, in discussions about Authority priorities and school needs.
4B Support NDE in development and oversight of charter school sponsors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help NDE to be the “sponsor of sponsors.” • Assist NDE in ensuring that all sponsors are using best sponsorship practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority is charged with advancing best practices in charter school sponsorship. By helping NDE to promulgate those best practices, the Authority will improve the environment for charter schools and, over time, improve the performance of all Nevada charter schools.
4C Develop new charter school funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority staff will collaborate with other stakeholders to seek out opportunities for charter schools to access new funding for all purposes through local, state, federal governments and philanthropy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to increase funding equity and access to quality facilities, the Authority will pursue multiple sources and work with multiple partners.
4D Build productive relationships with school districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with all districts to facilitate enrollment and service to district students by authority schools. • Work directly with districts that sponsor charter schools on implementing best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By maintaining good relationships with all districts, the Authority helps to ensure that all students have access to quality charter schools. • By working on charter school issues with districts that sponsor charter schools, the Authority fulfills its legislative mandate of advancing best practices in charter school sponsorship
4E Work with all stakeholders to expand facility options for charter schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually seek opportunities to increase the number and quality of facilities available for charter schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of affordable, appropriate facilities in high need communities is one of the major obstacles to increasing the number of quality charter schools. The Authority will facilitate and align the work of multiple stakeholders to advance a facility strategy.
4F Collaborate with stakeholder groups to develop a plan to improve the charter school environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene and facilitate a group of charter school stakeholders to develop a plan to improve the charter school environment in the state. (see appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to improve the charter school environment, the Authority will collaborate with other groups to identify shared goals and clarify strategy, roles and responsibilities.

SPCSA 3-year strategic plan Timeline

		2013				2014				2015				2016	
Initiative		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Open new schools	1A-Finalize performance framework	Feb-May													
	1B-Align application process			June-Jan											
	1C-Coordinate TA w/CSAN training					Dec-April									
	1D-Outreach to potential replicators	Feb-July				Feb-July				Feb-July				Feb-July	
	1E-Intensive oversight in yrs. 1 & 2					Ongoing									
Contracts	2A-Contract-related policy advocacy	Feb-Oct													
	2B-Contract development & rollout	Feb-Aug				June-Aug									
	2C-Contract execution with boards		Aug					Ongoing through 2019							
	2D-Renewal/revocation process				Ongoing										
	2E-TA to boards re contracts			Jul-Dec				Jul-Dec				Jul-Dec			
School governance	3A-Define effective governance				Sept-July										
	3B-Develop governance rubric				Sept-July										
	3C-Assess board effectiveness						Ongoing								
	3D-Provide TA to boards						Ongoing								
	3E-Report to boards on performance					June '14 and then ongoing									
Charter School environment	4A-Charter school policy agenda	Feb-June								Feb-June					
	4B-Support NDE work w/sponsors					Jan-June									
	4C-New sources of charter funding							Ongoing							
	4D-Relationships w/districts							Ongoing							
	4E-Develop facility options							Ongoing							
	4F-Facilitate charter environment planning		May-Nov												

Appendix A

Strategy 4F: Possible elements of a charter school environment plan

- Identification and interests of stakeholders
 - Example:
 - Human capital development: TFA, New Leaders, University of Nevada
- Roles of stakeholders in advancing a state-wide charter school agenda
- Identification of leverage points, strategies to address each and assignment of responsibility for each
 - Possible leverage points
 - Preparing and recruiting effective teachers and school leaders
 - Effective governance
 - Funding equity
 - Facilities
 - Recruiting successful school operators
 - Replicating successful schools
- Organizational and funding implications
 - Feasibility of a new organization to advance a charter school agenda

Implementation Plan (to be completed by June)

Strategy#1: Open and sustain strong new schools

Activity/deliverable	Responsible	Consulted (2 way)	Informed (1 way)	Start	Complete	Funding required/ possible source(s)
1A--Define the standard of quality using the performance framework.				Feb '13	May '13	
1B--Refine the application process to align with new performance framework and contract				June '13	Jan '14	
1C--Coordinate and align SPCSA technical assistance with CSAN applicant training				Dec '13	April '14	
1D--Collaborate with stakeholders to encourage replication of successful schools				Annual Feb. to July		
1E--Provide more intensive oversight of schools during the first two years of operation				Ongoing		
Measures of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of approved applications • # of schools meeting quality criteria after 1, 2 & 3 years • # of replications of quality schools 						

Implementation Plan (to be completed by June)

Strategy #2: Establish performance-based contracts for all schools

Activity/deliverable	Responsible	Consulted (2 way)	Informed (1 way)	Start	Complete	Funding required/ possible source(s)
2A--Advocate for state policy, through statutes and regulations, to facilitate contracts				Feb '13	Oct. '13	
2B--Develop contract documents, adoption process and schedule for new and existing schools				Feb '13	Aug '13	
2C--Execute new contracts with the boards of all new and existing schools				Aug '13 for new schools Begin Oct '13 for all other schools; ongoing through renewal process		
2D--Develop a robust renewal/revocation process consistent with the statute and contract				Ongoing		
2E--Communicate with and provide performance contract technical assistance to boards				Annually July to Dec		
Measures of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of schools voluntarily adopting new contracts • # of school renewals • # of school closures 						

Implementation Plan (to be completed by June)

Strategy #3: Support strong school governance

Activity/deliverable	Responsible	Consulted (2 way)	Informed (1 way)	Start	Complete	Funding required/ possible source(s)
3A--Define effective school governance				Sept '13	July '14	
3B--Develop a board effectiveness rubric				Sept '13	July '14	
3C--Assess effectiveness of all boards				Ongoing		
3D--Provide technical assistance to boards				Ongoing		
3E--Report on school performance to all boards during the first three years of operation				Begin June '14, then ongoing annually		
Measures of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of schools with effective boards • % of boards receiving technical assistance 						

Implementation Plan (to be completed by June)

Strategy #4: Improve the environment for Nevada charter schools

Activity/deliverable	Responsible	Consulted (2 way)	Informed (1 way)	Start	Complete	Funding required/ possible source(s)
4A--Develop and advance a charter school policy agenda				Feb '14 to June '15 Every other year		
4B--Support NDE in development and oversight of charter school sponsors				Annually Jan to June		
4C--Develop new charter school funding				Ongoing		
4D--Build productive relationships with school districts				Ongoing		
4E--Work with all stakeholders to expand facility options for charter schools				Ongoing		
4F--Collaborate with stakeholder groups to develop a plan to improve the charter school environment				May '13	Nov '13	
Measures of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance rating of NV charter school laws • # of partners engaged in Charter School Stakeholder group • New funding sources for charter schools 						