



**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

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**BRIEFING MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board

**FROM:** Patrick Gavin, Executive Director  
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing

**SUBJECT:** Discovery Charter School Amendment Request: Relocating to a New Campus Pursuant to NAC 386.3265

**DATE:** June 28, 2018

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Discovery Charter School, operating under a receivership charter contract entered into in 2017, is located in Las Vegas, Nevada, and is currently rated as 2-star elementary school and 4-star middle school serving 388 students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Discovery is requesting an amendment to its charter contract to allow it to open a new, Kindergarten through 8th grade campus for the 2018-2019 school year. As discussed below, Staff recommends approval of the amendment request, with conditions.

**Summary of Request:**

Discovery Charter school's vision and mission is to promote a safe, nurturing environment that fosters student success through community involvement, progressive educational practices, and innovative use of technology. Discovery currently operates from two campuses, Hillpointe and Mesa Vista, and served approximately 388 students during the 2017-2018 school year.

In the upcoming 2018 - 2019 school year, and under the Receiver, Mr. John Haynal, Discovery Charter School is seeking to move approximately 110 students in Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> grades from the Mesa Vista to campus to the Mount Olive facility, which is located approximately 1 mile away. The Mesa Vista campus is deteriorating, has very limited parking, requires ongoing maintenance, and requires significant energy costs to be incurred to maintain an adequate learning environment. Moreover, the Mesa Vista campus does not have facilities that are well-suited to delivery instruction in a technology-enabled facility in line with the mission and vision of the school.

The Mount Olive building is currently uninhabited and provides the basic infrastructure in the building to meet our technological needs. The added technology provided at the Mount Olive site

gives the charter school the opportunity to better meet the school's mission and vision while realizing significant cost savings.

Under this proposal, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students (approximately 75 students) would remain at the Mesa Vista campus. The vacated classrooms under this proposal would be sub-leased to an identified tenant, JOY Academy of Southern Nevada, a small, private Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> grade private school. The addition of this sub-lease tenant, coupled with the reduction in overall plant costs by inhabiting the Mount Olive campus, would result in critical cost-savings for the school and an increased school experience for students, staff and families.

The school has spent a significant amount of time working with the community to identify the Mount Olive facility. Specifically, the Discovery Charter School Foundation, Discovery Charter School Board and a number of parents have visited this site and agree that relocating these grades would be a positive enhancement of the school. Lastly, it should be noted that the school plans to contract with a transportation service provider to ease the burden on students and families. The Mesa Vista campus will function as a pick-up and drop-off site, with transportation running between the two facilities.

**Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests:**

[NRS 388A.279](#) provides that the Authority may hold a public hearing concerning any request from a charter to amend a charter contract, including:

- Increasing the total enrollment of a charter school or the enrollment of pupils in a particular grade level in the charter school for a school year to more than 120 percent of the enrollment prescribed in the written charter or charter contract for that school year.
- Seeking to acquire an additional facility in any county of this State to expand the enrollment of the charter school.

The specific requirements for amending a charter contract to acquire and occupy a new or additional facility can be found in [NAC 386.3265](#) et seq. and Section 7 of R089-16A.

**Recommendation: Approve with Conditions**

Discovery Charter school was classified as a 2 - star elementary school and 4 – star middle school during the 2017-2018 school year. As mentioned above, the school's Mesa Vista facility is less than ideal, and relocating a large number of students to the Mount Olive facility may allow Discovery to further capitalize on its mission and vision.

SPCSA recommends approval, but with the following conditions to ensure that the facility is properly outfitted, appropriate for student learning, and does not create a financial hardship for the school:

- Quarterly financial reports, beginning for Quarter 1 of the 2019 fiscal year
- Final Inspection of the facility
- Fully-executed lease for the Mount Olive facility
- Fully-executed sublease for the Mesa Vista facility

- All other materials required by state and federal law and regulation
- Fully-executed contract between the transportation service provider and the school
- Attestation signed by both the lessor and the Receiver of the Discovery Charter School confirming that the Mount Olive facility and organization will not exercise any control over the educational program of the charter school, pursuant to [NRS 388A.090](#). Additionally, the school will comply with any statutes, regulations or guidelines related to any public school operating out of a religious facility.

***Total Current Enrollment Across All Campuses:***

Grade Level	Total Amount Across All Existing Campuses - Number of Students						
	2011-2012	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	32	60	54	61	53	37	42
1	24	37	56	62	63	62	34
2	23	44	39	66	50	58	54
3	23	33	52	50	67	51	47
4	19	32	32	57	49	73	40
5	21	29	35	41	47	49	62
6	22	32	35	30	39	47	38
7	16	31	36	31	30	34	41
8	11	19	29	31	33	30	30
9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>388</b>

**Background:**

**Discovery Charter School Academic Performance**

Year	NSPF Rating
2012	Elementary: N/A Middle School: N/A High School: N/A
2013	Elementary: 2 Star Middle School: 3 Star

	High School: N/A
2014	Elementary: 2 Star Middle School: 3 Star High School: N/A
2015	Elementary: 2 Star (frozen from 2014) Middle School: 3 (frozen from 2014) High School: N/A (frozen from 2014)
2016	No star rating published by State
2017	Elementary: 2 Star Middle School: 4 Star High School: N/A

### School Demographic Change since 2015

Discovery Charter	TOTAL ENROLLED	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
15-16	431	1.8%	4.6%	60.0%	23.2%	0.9%	7.4%	1.6%	5.5%	0.9%	8.5%
Discovery Charter	TOTAL ENROLLED	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
16-17	441	2.0%	5.2%	60.5%	21.9%	1.1%	7.2%	1.8%	3.8%	0.9%	21.0%
Discovery Charter	TOTAL ENROLLED	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	388	2.5%	7.2%	56.1%	23.4%	1.0%	6.9%	2.5%	5.9%	1.8%	19.3%

A – Asian

B – Black

C - White

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