

Preview of Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment for SPCSA Board

Context

In 2019, the Nevada State Legislature voted to pass Assembly Bill 462. This legislation requires that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conduct and incorporate the findings of “an evaluation of demographic information of pupils, the academic needs of pupils and the needs of any pupils who are at risk of dropping out of school in this State” into its charter school authorizing decisions. To this end, the SPCSA is conducting an Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) as well as school districts and, moving forward, will conduct this assessment on an annual basis. The purpose of this document is to detail how the SPCSA has defined academic and demographic need and how those findings will impact the charter application process.

The SPCSA believes that this legislation presents an opportunity to enhance its authorizing and accountability practices such that they respond more directly to the needs of Nevada students. The SPCSA staff and board will, as required by AB 462, use the findings of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment to determine whether a proposed charter school meets a need that exists among Nevada’s students. The charter application process will now require that proposals not only satisfy the standards of the charter school application rubric but that they explicitly satisfy one or more of the needs found in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment.

Identified Needs

AB 462 requires that the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment evaluate the “demographic information of pupils, the academic needs of pupils, and the needs of any pupils who are at risk of dropping out of school in this state.” Accordingly, the SPCSA has defined a set of needs that are:

- supported by rationale (data);
- accompanied by information (maps and/or data) that will be useful for charter operators seeking to open schools and for SPCSA staff and Board reviewing applications for alignment to need;
- reflective of the current context of the State Public Charter School Authority (demographic makeup, locations, density and performance of schools); and
- responsive to the statewide, district and localized educational context

While the definitions of needs are specific, charter applicants will have the flexibility to determine how they would address one or more of the needs, if approved.

1. Demographics (see Appendix A for related statewide data)

- A. Applicants meeting this need will propose a school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, and thorough research and analysis in order to intentionally serve the following student populations, each of which has been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as persistently underperforming:
- Students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL)
 - English Learners (EL)
 - Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

In addition to meeting the needs of students in the subgroups identified above, strong applicants should demonstrate capacity and plans for enabling students from all backgrounds to achieve academically.

Rationale: These student populations have performed below the state average in graduation rate, ACT Assessment, Smarter Balanced Assessment (both math and reading) for the last three years based on statewide data from the Nevada Report Card and included in Appendix A.

2. Academic need and students at risk of dropping out of school (see Appendix B for definitions of Star ratings)

- A. Applicants meeting this need will seek to provide access to 3, 4 and 5-Star schools in zip codes where students are attending a 1- or 2-Star school. A map and list of zip codes will be provided; SPCSA charter schools will be removed from the data set used to identify zip codes.

Rationale: The Nevada School Performance Framework identifies 3-Star performance as adequate while 1-Star schools are defined as not meeting standards and 2-Star schools are defined as partially meeting standards. In zip codes with a 1- or 2-Star school, students are enrolling in schools that are, by definition, inadequate and the addition of a 3, 4 or 5-Star school would provide an alternative for these students. The use of the star rating as a measure of success has been reaffirmed by the state's largest school district which has established a 5-year goal of eliminating all 1- and 2-Star schools.

- B. Applicants meeting this need will propose a school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, and thorough research and analysis in order to prevent at-risk students from dropping out of school. Models may include but are not limited to programs designed for populations most at risk of dropping out or programs aimed at enabling credit-deficient students to get back on track to graduate. Applicants should demonstrate a strong understanding of grade-level appropriate indicators for successful high school completion, such as early literacy, attendance, and credit sufficiency and plans to enable students to successfully meet these milestones.

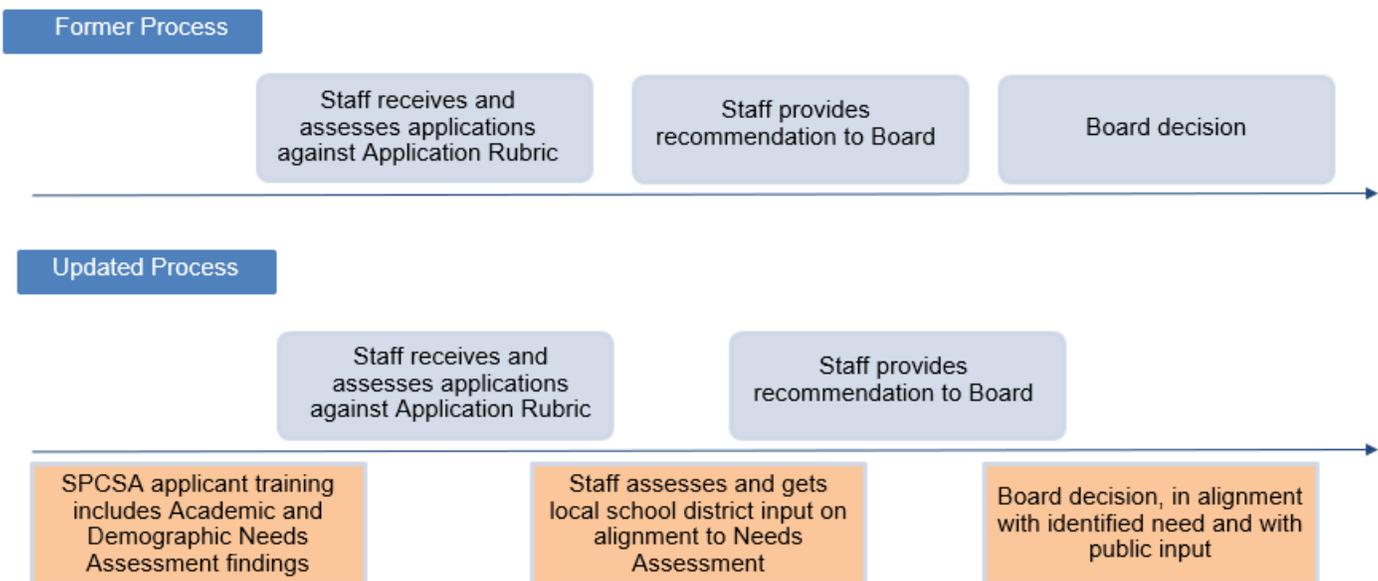
Rationale: Despite a rapidly improving graduation rate, nearly one in five students does not graduate high school in four years, with certain special populations persistently graduating at lower rates than their peers. In addition, research has shown that there are early indicators for students at risk of dropping out of school. According to research compiled by [Attendance Works](#), chronic absenteeism is a critical factor in student academic success and in certain circumstances is associated with increased risk of dropping out of school. In addition, research by the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) found that students "who do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers."

Implications for Authorizing Decisions

Section 6.3 of AB 462 requires that approval of any charter application must include a determination that the proposed school meets one or more of the needs identified in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment. The matrix below provides a framework for decision-making in this new context:

Strong Alignment to Academic Need 	Applicant meets academic needs only . Applicant may be recommended for approval contingent upon the details of their application and may be subject to additional contract conditions, so long as their application otherwise meets the standards set forth by the SPCSA in its application rubric.	Applicant meets both academic needs and demographic needs. Applicant will be recommended for approval so long as their application otherwise meets the standards set forth by the SPCSA in its application rubric.
	Applicant does not meet either of the needs. Applicant may need to revise their academic plan or pick a new location in order to qualify for a recommendation - even if their application otherwise meets the standards set forth by the SPCSA in its application rubric.	Applicant meets demographic needs only . Applicant may be recommended for approval contingent upon the details of their application and may be subject to additional contract conditions, so long as their application otherwise meets the standards set forth by the SPCSA in its application rubric.
	Strong Alignment to Demographic Needs 	

Moving forward, the SPCSA will adjust the charter application process such that both staff review of charter applications and the board decisions on charter applications are reflective of the findings of the Needs Assessment according to the definitions of need listed above. The process will also incorporate opportunities for district and community input as required in AB 462.



As in past years, charter school applicants seeking authorization by the SPCSA must meet the quality standards articulated in the SPCSA’s application rubric. In 2019 and future years, the SPCSA will also assess the extent to which applicant proposals align to the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment, as outlined below:

Phase	Details	Who leads?	Who can provide input?
Review of Charter Applications	Charter application review assesses both the quality of the application as well as the application’s responsiveness to the findings of the Needs Assessment.	SPCSA staff	Local school districts
Approval of Charter Applications	The SPCSA board will approve schools that (1) meet the standards for quality set by the SPCSA and (2) align to one or more needs identified in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment.	SPCSA board	SPCSA staff, members of the public

Moving forward, the SPCSA will collaborate with the Nevada Department of Education and local school districts statewide to conduct this Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment, will review charter applications in consideration of the Needs Assessment findings, and will approve high quality applications that address one or more of the needs identified in the Needs Assessment.

Appendix A: Statewide Academic Performance

Source: Nevada Report Card

In the subsequent data, the performance of each racial/ethnic subgroup and special population is compared to the state average for each of the last three years. The State average is highlighted in yellow. If a subgroup or special population performed better than the state average, the cell remains un-highlighted. However, if a subgroup or special population performed worse than the state average, the cell is highlighted in light orange.

ACT Composite Score (for 11th grade students) :

SY	State	Am In/AK Native	Black	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races	Asian	Pacific Islander	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	17.5	16.3	15.2	16.1	19.4	18.5	20.3	16.9	13.5	13.1	16.1
16-17	17.4	16.1	15.2	15.9	19.3	18.4	19.8	17	13.5	13	16.1
15-16	17.4	16.1	15.1	15.9	19.2	18.4	20.1	16.8	13.5	13.1	16

Smarter Balanced Assessment Proficiency:

Test	Year	State	Am In/AK Native	Black	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races	Asian	Pacific Islander	IEP	ELL	FRL
Grade 3 - Math	17-18	48.3	35.6	29	40.9	60.7	54.3	73.2	50.4	21.6	31.1	40.1
	16-17	47.5	27.4	27.9	39	61.4	53.5	72.1	49.6	22.1	29.6	38.5
	15-16	44.9	28.2	25.9	35.4	58.5	53.3	71.1	45.7	23	27.9	34.5
Grade 3- ELA	17-18	46.1	32.5	29.4	38.2	59	53.3	66.5	45.8	18.2	23.8	37.8
	16-17	44.8	26.6	28.1	35.3	58.7	53.5	65.8	48.3	18.4	22.3	35.4
	15-16	46	29.6	28.5	36.1	60.2	54.9	69	45.1	21.5	25.6	34.6
Grade 4 - Math	17-18	41.6	23.3	21.2	33	56.1	47	66.9	40.4	15.2	20	32.9
	16-17	40.7	21	21.5	31.9	54.1	48.1	67.1	41.8	15.8	13.7	31.2
	15-16	38	20.3	17.9	27.9	52.8	45.7	61.7	38.7	15.3	19.1	26.8
Grade 4- ELA	17-18	48.5	32.7	30.4	40	62.1	55.7	70.7	49.6	17	22.9	40.1
	16-17	46.2	27.9	28.3	37.5	59.3	55.5	69.8	44.8	16.3	12.7	36.5
	15-16	47.1	29.2	28	37.7	60.7	56.4	68.1	48.9	17.4	24.8	35.7
Grade 5 - Math	17-18	35.9	17.1	17.2	26.8	49.5	42.7	63.8	37.7	10.2	7.5	26.9
	16-17	33.8	18.5	14.8	24.7	47.4	40.5	57.7	37.1	8.5	7.1	23.9
	15-16	32.2	18.5	13.3	22.3	46.3	39.6	55.6	33.1	10.3	8.1	21.7
Grade 5- ELA	17-18	50.4	28.9	32.2	42.5	62.7	58.8	73.8	52	14	11.6	42.2
	16-17	50.2	30	32	41.8	62.8	59.3	71.2	53.2	12.7	12.9	40.6
	15-16	50.6	36.1	33.1	41.2	63.8	58.6	73.4	51.4	14.4	14.6	39.9
Grade 6 - Math	17-18	31.9	16.1	12.7	22.1	46.5	38.8	59.2	34.6	6.4	4.4	20.9
	16-17	30.3	17	12.3	20.4	44.2	37.8	56.9	27.3	5.9	3.9	19.5
	15-16	30.3	19	11.5	20.7	43.7	35	55.9	29.1	6.8	4.8	19.6
Grade 6- ELA	17-18	44	27.9	25.6	34.3	57.6	53.8	69.4	48.6	8.9	5.4	32.7
	16-17	42.5	28.9	24.5	33.2	55.9	49.5	67.5	40.7	7	4.9	31.5
	15-16	41.9	24.9	22.4	32	55.5	49.1	69	38.7	8	6.1	30.3
Grade 7 - Math	17-18	31.5	22.3	13.4	21.7	44.8	38.8	60.2	29.4	4.8	4.6	20.8
	16-17	29.1	18	11.1	20.3	41.7	34.2	53.9	27.2	4.8	5.1	18.9

	15-16	29.3	18.6	12.1	19.8	42.3	34.3	55.3	24.3	6.3	5.3	19.2
Grade 7- ELA	17-18	47	33.5	28.9	37.5	60.3	55.7	72.9	45.7	8.5	7	35.9
	16-17	46.9	34.1	27.5	37.9	59.3	56	72.5	44.4	7.9	9.1	35.8
	15-16	46.9	34.4	26.8	36.7	60.7	55.9	71.1	43.9	9.7	7.6	35.5
Grade 8 - Math	17-18	30.3	16.9	13.1	21.9	41.8	35.2	57.2	26.1	3.4	4.6	20.6
	16-17	17.5	14.2	7	11.7	26.3	21.4	38.4	19.2	3.3	4	11.6
	15-16	17.6	13.9	6.4	12.1	26.5	21	40.2	21.8	3.6	3.9	11.9
Grade 8- ELA	17-18	47.5	33.4	28.3	38.6	60.3	54.1	72.5	44.8	8.6	7.7	36.8
	16-17	46.4	33	26.1	37.1	59.6	55.6	71.2	43.1	8.8	9	35.4
	15-16	47	38	26.6	37.3	60.6	54.6	72	48.9	9.5	7.6	35.8

Graduation Rate:

Graduating Class	State	Am In/AK Native	Black	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races	Asian	Pacific Islander	IEP	EL	FRL
17-18	83.2	79.8	71.5	82.3	86	83.2	94.1	84.3	66	76	80.5
16-17	80.9	73.9	67.7	79.7	84.2	81.3	93.1	82.3	64.7	81.7	76.8
15-16	73.6	64.7	56.5	69.7	79.9	76.8	87.9	75.9	29.3	42.6	66.7

Retention:

SY	Kinder			1st			2nd		
	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL
18-19	1.8	2	2	2	2.8	2.4	1	1.6	1.3
17-18	0.7	0.8	0.6	1.9	2.9	2.4	1	1.5	1.2
15-16	2.1			2.2			1		

SY	3rd			4th			5th		
	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL
18-19	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
17-18	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.2
15-16	0.5			0.3			0.2		

SY	6th			7th			8th		
	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL	Retention Rate	Retention Rate LEP	Retention Rate FRL
18-19	0.4	0.8	0.5	0.9	1.5	1.2	2	3.4	2.7
17-18	0.7	1.3	1	1.2	2	1.6	1.4	2.2	1.8
15-16	0.9			1.1			1.6		

Credit Deficiency

SY	9th Grade			10th Grade			11th Grade			12th Grade		
	Credit Deficient Rate	Credit Deficient Rate LEP	Credit Deficient Rate FRL	Credit Deficient Rate	Credit Deficient Rate LEP	Credit Deficient Rate FRL	Credit Deficient Rate	Credit Deficient Rate LEP	Credit Deficient Rate FRL	Credit Deficient Rate	Credit Deficient Rate LEP	Credit Deficient Rate FRL
17-18	12.1	18.5	16	16.7	26.5	21.9	16.9	32	22.1	9.5	19.1	13.1
16-17	12.7	18.6	16.5	17.3	33.1	22.3	19.4	38.4	24.8	10.6	20.3	14.7
15-16	0.8			12.7			16.5			16.8		

Dropout Rate

Group	SY	Total - Dropout Rate	Grade 6 - Dropout Rate	Grade 7 - Dropout Rate	Grade 8 - Dropout Rate	Grade 9 - Dropout Rate	Grade 10 - Dropout Rate	Grade 11 - Dropout Rate	Grade 12 - Dropout Rate
State	17-18	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.2	2.2	2.9	3.6	3.9
Am In/AK Native	17-18	3	1.4	2.2	3.3	2.8	3.6	2.9	5
Black	17-18	6.1	6.1	6	6.4	3.9	6	6.7	7.8
Hispanic	17-18	3	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.9	3.7	4.3
White	17-18	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.9	1.8	2.2	3	3
Two or More Races	17-18	3.2	3.9	2.8	3.8	2.4	2.8	3.6	2.7
Asian	17-18	1.4	2.1	1.4	1.9	1	1.2	1.4	1
Pacific Islander	17-18	3.2	4.2	3.2	4.4	2	2.1	3	2.9
IEP	17-18	4.3	3.2	3.1	3.5	2.8	3.9	5.7	9.4
ELL	17-18	4.4	3.1	3.5	3.6	3.4	5	7.3	8.4
FRL	17-18	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.6	2.9	3.9	4.9	5.3
State	16-17	3	2.8	2.7	3.1	2.3	2.7	3.7	4
Am In/AK Native	16-17	2.6	1.1	1.5	1.1	2.4	2.8	3.6	5.6
Black	16-17	5.7	5.1	5.7	6	4.7	4.7	6.5	7
Hispanic	16-17	3	2.6	2.3	2.8	2.2	2.7	4.1	4.7
White	16-17	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.6	1.9	2.4	2.7	3
Two or More Races	16-17	3.4	3.6	3.3	4.3	2.7	3.2	3.9	2.8
Asian	16-17	1.7	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.4	1.7	1.8	1.4
Pacific Islander	16-17	3.6	3.7	4	5.8	2	2.9	2	4.1
IEP	16-17	4.2	2.4	3.1	2.8	2.6	3.1	5.2	11.2
ELL	16-17	4	2.9	2.8	3.1	2.8	4.5	7.6	10.1
FRL	16-17	3.7	3.2	3.2	3.4	2.9	3.4	4.9	5.2

State	15-16	2.7	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.8	1.9	3.1	7.9
Am In/AK Native	15-16	3.5	2.4	1.9	1.5	2.4	2.3	4.1	10.3
Black	15-16	4.3	2.6	3.4	2.6	3.3	3.5	5.4	9.6
Hispanic	15-16	2.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.8	3.3	9.7
White	15-16	2.4	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.9	1.8	2.7	6.3
Two or More Races	15-16	2.7	1.8	1.8	1.4	2.1	2.7	2.7	7.3
Asian	15-16	1.4	0.9	0.9	1	0.5	0.7	1.2	4.4
Pacific Islander	15-16	2.6	1.6	2	1.6	1.4	1.2	3.3	7.9
IEP	15-16	3.1	0.8	1	1.4	1.2	1.8	3.9	13.3
ELL	15-16	3.2	1.6	1.9	1.6	1.7	3.4	6.4	15
FRL	15-16	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.7	5.9

Appendix B: Definitions of Star Ratings

Elementary and Middle School

Category	Policy Descriptors
★★★★★	Recognizes a superior school that exceeds expectations for all students and subgroups on every indicator category with little or no exception. A five star school demonstrates superior academic performance and growth with no opportunity gaps. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any indicator. These schools are recognized for distinguished performance.
★★★★	Recognizes a commendable school that has performed well for all students and subgroups. A four star school demonstrates satisfactory to strong academic performance for all students. Further, the school is successfully promoting academic progress for all student groups as reflected in closing opportunity gaps. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any indicator. Schools identified for targeted support and improvement are not eligible to be classified as four star school or higher.
★★★	Identifies an adequate school that has met the state’s standard for performance. The all-students group has met expectations for academic achievement or growth. Subgroups meet expectations for academic achievement or growth with little exception; however, no group is far below standard. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and indicators that are below standard. Schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement are not eligible to be classified as a three star school or higher. Schools identified for targeted support and improvement are eligible to be classified as three star schools.
★★	Identifies a school that has partially met the state’s standard for performance. Students and subgroups often meet expectations for academic performance or growth but may have multiple areas that require improvement. Areas requiring significant improvement are uncommon. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and indicators that are below standard. A 2 star school in consecutive years is subject to state intervention. Schools identified for targeted support and improvement or comprehensive support and improvement are eligible to be classified as two star schools.
★	Identifies a school that has not met the state’s standard for performance. Students and subgroups are inconsistent in achieving performance standards. A one-star school has multiple areas that require improvement including an urgent need to address areas that are significantly below standard. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and indicators that are below standard. The school is subject to state inventions.

High School

Category	Policy Descriptors
★★★★★	Recognizes a superior school that exceeds expectations for all students and subgroups on every indicator category with little or no exception. A five star school demonstrates superior academic performance and a superior graduation rate. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any indicator. These schools are recognized for distinguished performance.
★★★★	Recognizes a commendable school that has performed well for all students and subgroups. A four star school demonstrates satisfactory to strong academic performance for all students. Further, the school's graduation rate meets expectations. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any indicator. Schools identified for targeted support and improvement are not eligible to be classified as four star school or higher.
★★★	Identifies an adequate school that has met the state's standard for performance. The all-students group has met expectations for academic achievement. Subgroups meet expectations for academic achievement or show progress with little exception; however, no group is far below standard. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and indicators that are below standard. Schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement are not eligible to be classified as a three star school or higher. Schools identified for targeted support and improvement are eligible to be classified as three star schools.
★★	Identifies a school that has partially met the state's standard for performance. Students and subgroups often meet expectations for academic performance but may have multiple areas that require improvement. Areas requiring significant improvement are uncommon. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and indicators that are below standard. A 2 star school in consecutive years is subject to state intervention. Schools identified for targeted support and improvement or comprehensive support and improvement are eligible to be classified as two star schools.
★	Identifies a school that has not met the state's standard for performance. Students and subgroups are inconsistent in achieving performance standards. A one-star school has multiple areas that require improvement including an urgent need to address areas that are significantly below standard. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and indicators that are below standard. The school is subject to state interventions.