

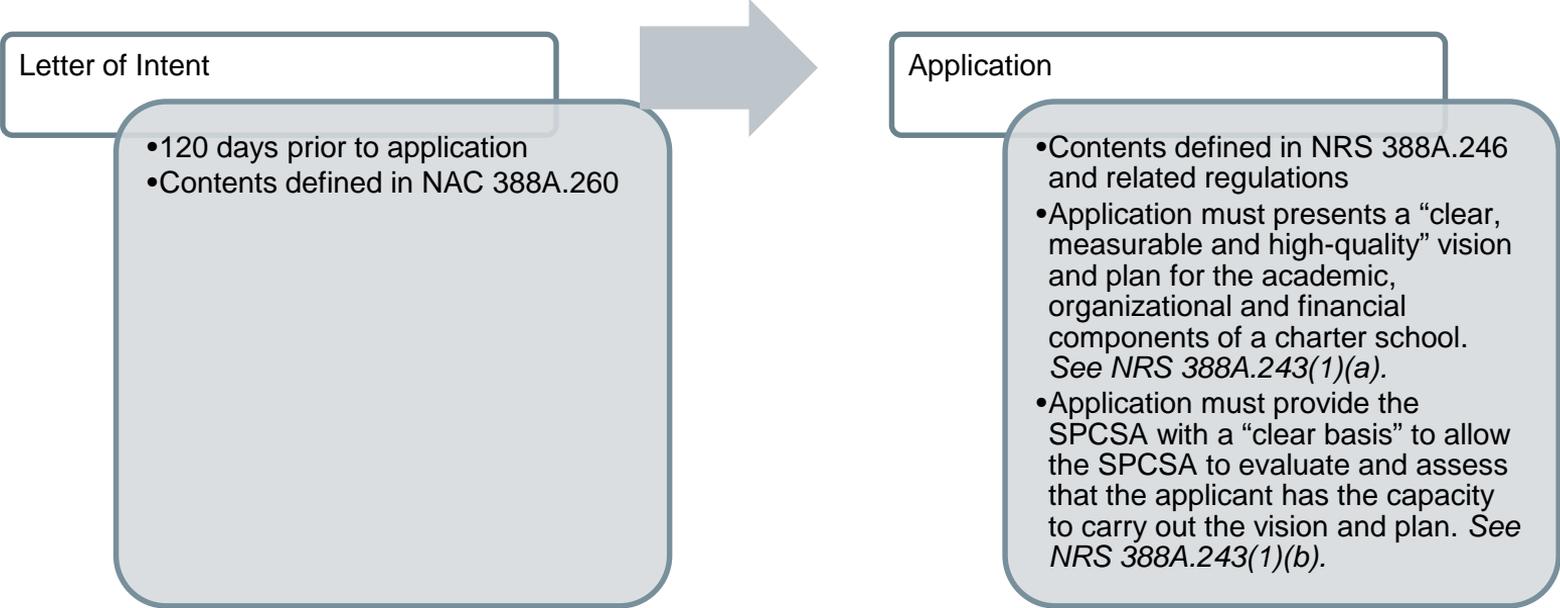


Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Overview of New School Application Process and Standards

December 17, 2019

Application Submission Process



SPCSA Creation and Purpose

The purpose of the State Public Charter School Authority is to:

- 1) Authorize charter schools of high-quality throughout this State with the goal of expanding the opportunities for pupils in this State, including, without limitation, pupils who are at risk.
- 2) Provide oversight to the charter schools that it sponsors to ensure that those charter schools maintain high educational and operational standards, preserve autonomy and safeguard the interests of pupils and the community.
- 3) Serve as a model of the best practices in sponsoring charter schools and foster a climate in this State in which all high-quality charter schools, regardless of sponsor, can flourish.

As a charter school sponsor, the SPCSA is tasked with evaluating charter school applications, and

- 1) Approving those applications that the SPCSA determines are high quality, meet the educational needs of pupils and will serve to promote the diversity of public education choices in this State, and
- 2) Declining to approve applications that do not meet the requirements set out in NRS 388A.249

Application Review and Evaluation

The SPCSA must:

- 1) Assemble a team of reviewers
- 2) Conduct a thorough evaluation of the application,
 - a) Including an in-person interview with the applicant designed to elicit clarifications or additional information and determine the ability of the applicants to establish a high-quality charter school
- 3) Consider the degree to which the proposed charter school will address the needs identified in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment
- 4) Solicit input from the board of trustees of the school district in which the proposed charter school will be located
- 5) Base its determination on the documented evidence collected through the application process
- 6) Adhere to the policies and practices developed by the SPCSA in regard to evaluating charter school applications (ex. rubric)

SPCSA Application Rubric

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively in a way which will result in a 4- or 5-star school.
Approaches the Standard	The response meets the criteria in many respects but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet the Standard	The response is undeveloped or incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

Approval

The proposed sponsor of a charter school may approve an application to form a charter school only if the proposed sponsor determines that:

- a) The application:
 - 1) Complies with the statutes and regulations applicable to charter schools; and
 - 2) Is complete in accordance with the regulations of the Department and the policies and practices of the sponsor;
- b) The applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school;
- c) Based on the Needs Assessment, the proposed charter school will address one or more of the needs identified in the evaluation; and
- d) It has received sufficient input from the public

NRS 388A.249(3)

Denial

If the State Public Charter School Authority denies or fails to act upon an application, the denial or failure to act must be based upon a finding that the applicant failed to satisfy the requirements of subsection 3 of NRS 388A.249. (*see slide 6*)

In addition, Nevada's charter school regulations also set out a number of criteria that **mandate** denial of a charter school application, or, alternatively, that the SPCSA Board **may take into account** when denying an application.

Mandatory Denial

A proposed sponsor **shall not approve** an application to form a charter school if:

- 1) The application does not satisfy the requirements of subsection 3 of NRS 388A.249;
- 2) The financial or administrative operation of the proposed charter school does not meet or exceed the minimum standards, procedures and requirements of the State; or
- 3) The application does not demonstrate a commitment to serving the category or categories of pupils that the proposed charter school intends to serve.

Possible reasons for denial

NAC 388A.175(2)-(6) set out a number of criteria that **provide discretion to the SPCSA to deny a charter school application**. These criteria relate to

- the educational program does not align with State standards or not aligning with the stated purpose and vision included in the charter school application
- the educational program does not align “with the educational needs of the category or categories of pupils that the proposed charter school intends to serve, or
- if the application is not supported by sound evidence, as provided by the applicant, which demonstrates the effectiveness of the educational program proposed for the charter school.

Other factors related to the applicant’s proposed budget, any involvement of a proposed educational management organization, and the failure of an application to comply with the SPCSA’s policies and procedures related to charter school applications.

In addition, regulations also allow the SPCSA Board to deny a charter school application if the SPCSA determines that the applicant is “unlikely” to

- 1) Develop and implement the educational program described in the application,
- 2) Manage public funds effectively and responsibly; or
- 3) Comply with the legal obligations of the charter school.

Resubmission

In the event that the SPCSA Board denies a charter school application, an unsuccessful applicant must be provided with a written notice regarding the SPCSA's Board's denial of the charter school application within 30 days. The written notice must include the

- 1) Reasons for denial of the charter school application, and
- 2) Any deficiencies identified in the application.

The applicant is then given 30 days to correct the deficiencies identified in the written notice related to denial of the charter school application, and the SPCSA Board must designate one or more SPCSA staff members in order to “confer on the method to correct the identified deficiencies.”

Appeal

In the event that the SPCSA denies a resubmitted charter school application, the unsuccessful applicant may appeal the decision of the SPCSA to the district court in the county where the proposed charter school seeks to locate.