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**ACTION MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Authority Board  
**FROM:** Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing, SPCSA  
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, SPCSA  
**SUBJECT:** **Nevada State High School - Meadowwood – Charter Amendment Request to Reduce Enrollment Cap**  
**DATE:** March 3, 2023

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**Summary of Request and Recommendation**

Nevada State High School Meadowwood (NSHS Meadowwood) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school to reduce its enrollment cap for the 2022-2023, 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28, 2028-29 school years.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the Good Cause Exemption and approve the amendment request. A proposed motion can be found on page of 3 this memo.

**Background and Overview of the Amendment**

NSHS Meadowwood is a college-prep public charter school that serves students in grades 11-12 in Washoe County. NSHS Meadowwood is part of the NSHS Flagship network and is governed by the same board as the flagship schools. However, since NSHS Meadowwood is located in Washoe County, it operates under its own unique charter contract. Its mission is the same as the NSHS Flagship, which is to support students in a college environment with personal, academic, and social skills. The core purpose of NSHS Meadowwood is to provide opportunities for students' success in a real college environment. As of the 2022 Validation Day, NSHS Meadowwood had 34 students enrolled.

NSHS Meadowwood opened in the fall of 2018 with 26 students. According to the amendment application, NSHS Meadowwood is requesting to reduce its approved enrollment cap for the 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28, and 2028-29 school years. If approved, the enrollment caps for NSHS Meadowwood would be:

| <b>School Year</b> | <b>2022-23</b> | <b>2023-24</b> | <b>2024-25</b> | <b>2025-26</b> | <b>2026-27</b> | <b>2027-28</b> | <b>2028-29</b> |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Grade Levels       | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          |
| Total Enrollment   | 34             | 68             | 75             | 83             | 91             | 100            | 110            |

According to the amendment application, NSHS Meadowwood is seeking to make the requested changes to align to the current, and projected enrollment counts, for FY23 and to make adjustments to remaining years based on more realistic projections.

Since NSHS Meadowwood operates in conjunction with the NSHS Flagship, efforts to increase enrollment at the Meadowwood site are similar to the efforts of the overall NSHS network of schools. As stated in the NSHS Flagship memo, NSHS listed a number of efforts to increase enrollment in the coming years. According to the amendment application, those efforts include:

- In 2022, hiring a Marketing Director whose primary focuses are on promoting brand awareness and increasing student enrollment. NSHS also hired a Career Technical Coordinator whose primary focus is building out programs specific to students who are more interested in Career Technical Academy programs rather than 4-year university.
- Through targeted community and grassroots events and enhancements to current advertising strategies, NSHS anticipates a minimum of 10% YOY growth in student recruitment.
- A strong emphasis being placed on the FRL student population and underserved communities.

Finally, according to the amendment application, NSHS Meadowwood continues to focus on its Proven Process, which shows signs of strength in student retention and student graduation.

NSHS Meadowwood explained in the application that the reduction in enrollment does not impact staffing because staffing is based on actual enrollment and not the approved enrollment caps. NSHS Meadowwood budgets based on actual enrollment and thus budgets reflect the current enrollment the school has. NSHS Meadowwood does not foresee a negative impact on its finances due to the enrollment reduction.

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

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, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial, and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, SPCSA staff has waived the requirement that schools maintain enrollment levels at or above 90% of their contractual cap due to the many extenuating circumstances impacting students and families. Staff believes schools are now better positioned to adhere to this requirement for the 2022 – 23 school year, necessitating this amendment. In the case of NSHS Meadowwood, SPCSA staff finds the school to be meeting academic, financial, and organizational performance expectations for all campuses. While the NSHS Meadowwood campus has yet to be rated under the NSPF, the school was found to be exceeding expectations under the 2021-2022 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework.

Additionally, the school earned 99 points (out of 100) under the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework for the 2021 – 22 school year as approved by the Authority on December 16, 2022. As such, SPCSA staff finds the school to be ‘Meeting Standards.’ NSHS Meadowwood has also been found to ‘Meet the Standards’ on the most recent 2021 SPCSA Financial Performance Framework and preliminary results under the 2022 SPCSA Financial Performance Framework appear to signal that the school is in a sound financial position.

SPCSA staff is supportive of the request by NSHS Meadowwood. NSHS Meadowwood made necessary adjustments to its budget and shows no sign of financial trouble. NSHS Meadowwood in conjunction with the schools under the Flagship contract has a strong track record and continues to operate successful schools in both Washoe and Clark Counties. Therefore, SPCSA staff recommends the Authority approve the request to reduce the enrollment cap for NSHS Meadowwood for the 2022-2023 school year and the remainder of the charter term.

**Proposed Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Nevada State High School Meadowwood’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 135 students to 34 students and to reduce the cap for the remainder of the charter contract term as detailed in this recommendation memo.**

If approved, the enrollment cap for NSHS Meadowwood will be as follows for the remainder of the charter term:

| <b>School Year</b> | <b>2022-23</b> | <b>2023-24</b> | <b>2024-25</b> | <b>2025-26</b> | <b>2026-27</b> | <b>2027-28</b> | <b>2028-29</b> |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Grade Levels       | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          | 11-12          |
| Enrollment         | 34             | 68             | 75             | 83             | 91             | 100            | 110            |

The current, approved, enrollment caps for each NSHS campus are as follows:

| School Year  | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade Levels | 11-12   | 11-12   | 11-12   | 11-12   | 11-12   | 11-12   | 11-12   |
| Enrollment   | 135     | 135     | 135     | 135     | 135     | 135     | 135     |

**School Demographics change since 2017 – NSHS  
Meadowwood**

**Nevada State High School Meadowwood**

| Year  | Enrollment | A     | B    | C     | H     | I    | M     | P    | IEP  | ELL  | FRL   |
|-------|------------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| 17-18 | -          | -     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -    | -    | -    | -     |
| 18-19 | 26         | 3.8%  | 0.0% | 69.2% | 15.3% | 0.0% | 7.6%  | 3.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 46.1% |
| 19-20 | 55         | 3.6%  | 0.0% | 65.4% | 21.8% | 0.0% | 7.2%  | 1.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 21.8% |
| 20-21 | 68         | 10.2% | 0.0% | 60.2% | 11.7% | 1.4% | 13.2% | 2.9% | 0.0% | 0.0% | *     |
| 21-22 | 50         | 6.0%  | 2.0% | 54.0% | 18%   | 2.0% | 12.0% | 6%   | *    | 0.0% | *     |
| 22-23 | 34         | 8.8%  | 0.0% | 58.8% | 29.4% | 0.0% | 0.0%  | 2.9% | 0.0% | 0.0% | *     |

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

**Nevada State High School - Meadowwood Financial Performance**

| Year        | Rating             |
|-------------|--------------------|
| 2019 – 2020 | Meets the Standard |
| 2020 – 2021 | Meets the Standard |

**Nevada State High School - Meadowwood Organizational Performance**

| Year        | Rating             |
|-------------|--------------------|
| 2019 – 2020 | Meets the Standard |

|             |                    |
|-------------|--------------------|
| 2020 – 2021 | Meets the Standard |
| 2021 – 2022 | Meets the Standard |

### Nevada State High School - Meadowwood Academic Performance

| School Year                | NSPF Rating         |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 2021 – 2022<br>Index Score | Meadowwood HS: 86.5 |
| 2020 – 2021 <sup>1</sup>   | Not Rated           |
| 2019 – 2020 <sup>2</sup>   | Not Rated           |
| 2018 – 2019                | Not Rated           |

### Nevada State High School - Meadowwood 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results<sup>3</sup>

| Campus             | 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Score | 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Rating |
|--------------------|--|---|
| NSHS Meadowwood HS | 86.5                                   | EXCEEDS STANDARD                        |

<sup>1</sup> Due to COVID-19, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) applied for and was granted a 2020-21 school year waiver from the U.S. Department of Education for certain requirements established by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Nevada statewide assessments were administered in the 2020-21 school year, but the NDE did not calculate new Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school ratings for the 2020-21 school year.

<sup>2</sup> Due to COVID-19, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) applied for and was granted a 2019 – 20 school year waiver from the US Department of Education for certain assessment, accountability, school identification, and reporting requirements established by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Accordingly, for the 2019 – 20 school year, Nevada statewide assessments were not administered and the NDE did not calculate Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school ratings.

<sup>3</sup> The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) calculated NSPF index scores for the 2021-22 school year but did not calculate corresponding star ratings (shown as N/A). 2021-22 NSPF details and rules can be found at: <http://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/DI/MoreDownload?filename=Nevada%20School%20Performance%20Framework%20Manual%202021-22%20School%20Year.pdf>