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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III
SUBJECT: Nevada Virtual Academy – Charter Amendment Request to Change the name of the charter school
DATE: July 28, 2023

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Nevada Virtual Academy (NVVA) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) approve a change to the charter school’s name. NVVA is requesting it change its name from Nevada Virtual Academy to Nevada Virtual Charter School.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application, and recommends that the Authority approve the request, with conditions. A proposed motion can be found on page 3 of this memo.

Background and Overview of the Amendment

NVVA is a full-time, virtual charter school serving students statewide. As of Validation Day 2022, NVVA had 2153 students enrolled in grades 6 – 12.

At the April 14, 2023 SPCSA Board meeting, the school was approved to terminate its existing EMO contract with Stride and enter into a contract with Accel for curriculum, platform, instructional support services, student computers and technology assistance services, and school support services. In addition to plans to contract with Accel, the school plans to contract with the Charter School Management Company (CSMC) for back-office support.

According to the amendment application, because of the nonrenewal of the school’s contract with Stride, as of July 1, 2023, Stride claimed ownership of the school’s name and acronym -

Nevada Virtual Academy, NVVA. Stride sent a letter saying that the school could no longer use the name and acronym beyond 30 days after the contract ended. According to the amendment application, in order to keep some name recognition, Nevada Virtual Charter School was determined to be the best option for a name change.

Additionally, according to the amendment application, the change in name will not affect the school's mission or vision, academic model, or operations. NVVA has already begun notifying families of the name change as part of the Executive Director's summer newsletter, and according to the amendment application, newsletters from the Executive Director, the Operation's team, as well as the Community Engagement Specialist will go out the following week after SPCSA approval announcing the name change and ensuring families that the mission, vision, and goals will remain the same. Additionally, during orientations for both new and returning families on the new platform, the name change will be addressed and communicated. NVVA also noted that the website and headers for all communications will be changed to the new name upon approval. According to the amendment application, NVVA has submitted name changes and email updates to both the state, and county, for the business licenses, the financial banking and credit entities, key members in both the SPCSA and NDE, and accounts payable vendors.

Legal Authority

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. Academically, NVVA was most recently rated as 3-stars for both the middle and high school. The NVVA middle school received 37.2 points and the high school received 44.1 points on the 2021-2022 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework, neither of which met the standard.

According to the most recent organizational data, NVVA earned 100 points (out of 100) on the 2021 – 22 Organizational Framework which was approved at the December 16, 2022 SPCSA Board meeting. NVVA was also rated as Meets the Standard on the SPCSA Financial Framework which was approved at the March 3, 2023 SPCSA board meeting. Given the recent academic, organizational, and financial performance under SPCSA Performance Frameworks, SPCSA staff finds that overall, Nevada Virtual Academy is meeting performance expectations.

Regarding this amendment request, SPCSA staff is supportive of the request. NVCS reached out to the SPCSA shortly after the approval of the separation from Stride and notified staff that a name

change would most likely need to occur prior to the start of the 2023-24 school year. As stated previously, NVVA was proactive with all stakeholders including families of current and prospective students. The school’s mission, vision, academic model, and operations all remain the same and the school is prepared to make all updates to signage, websites, vendors, NDE, and the SPCSA upon approval. SPCSA staff recommends approval for Nevada Virtual Academy to change its name to Nevada Virtual Charter School.

Proposed Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request of Nevada Virtual Academy and approve the school’s request to change its name from Nevada Virtual Academy to Nevada Virtual Charter School.

The currently approved enrollment cap for NVVA is listed below. Under the proposed amendment, this would not change if approved¹:

Grade Level	Maximum Enrollment
6	300
7	400
8	450
9	400
10	400
11	400
12	257

Historical Performance and Demographic Information – NVVA

School Total Enrollment and Demographics since 2017

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
17-18	2097	5.5%	17.2%	48.7%	24.2%	1.5%	0.0%	2.7%	11.6%	<5%	46.9%
18-19	1840	5.1%	16.6%	45.7%	28.2%	1.1%	0.0%	3.0%	11.1%	<5%	51.4%
19-20	1461	5.0%	15.0%	44.4%	31.9%	1.0%	0.0%	2.3%	11.7%	<5%	53.4%
20-21	2187	4.7%	18.9%	43.1%	28.7%	0.7%	1.3%	2.3%	11.1%	<5%	62.5%
21-22	2027	5.4%	21.5%	37.2%	31.9%	1.1%	0.0%	2.6%	11.4%	<5%	56.7%
22-23	2153	5.0%	22.8%	32.6%	35.1%	0.8%	0.2%	3.2%	12.3%	<5%	57.3%

- 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

¹ The maximum total enrollment at the Charter School shall not exceed 2,100 students (the “Maximum Enrollment Number”). In addition, the Charter School shall not enroll new students into the 12th grade after the first day of school for each school year. In the event that the number of students matriculating from the 11th grade to the 12th grade exceeds the maximum enrollment for 12th grade, there is no requirement to unenroll students, however, no new students could be enrolled into the 12th grade.

FRL – A student who qualifies for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Nevada Virtual Academy Financial Performance

Year	Rating
2021 – 2022	Meets the Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets the Standard
2019 – 2020	Notice of Concern

Nevada Virtual Academy Organizational Performance

Year	Rating
2021 – 2022	Meets the Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets the Standard
2019 – 2020	Meets the Standard

Nevada Virtual Academy Academic Performance

Year	Rating
2021 – 2022 Index Scores	MS: 42.0 HS: 53.5
2020 - 2021²	MS: 3 stars HS: 3 stars
2019 – 2020³	MS: 3 stars HS: 3 stars
2018 – 2019	MS: 3 stars HS: 3 stars
2017 – 2018	MS: 2 stars HS: 3 stars
2016 – 2017	MS: 3 stars HS: Not Rated

² Due to COVID-19, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) applied for and was granted a 2020 – 21 school year waiver from the US 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 Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school ratings for the 2020 – 21 school year.

³ 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

Nevada Virtual Academy 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results⁴

Campus	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Score	2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework Rating
Nevada Virtual MS	37.2	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD
Nevada Virtual HS	44.1	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD

⁴ 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>