



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board

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

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 13 - Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada Amendment Request:
Expansion Pursuant to NAC 386.3265 (additional campus, and increase in enrollment
and grade levels)

DATE: 1/26/2018

Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada, operating under a written charter entered into in July, 2016, is located in Las Vegas, Nevada. It currently operates one campus serving 1,258 students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Previously, the SPCSA Board approved an amendment request, allowing Legacy Traditional School – Nevada (Legacy) to open a second campus (Cadence) for the 2018 – 2019 school year.

Legacy is now requesting two amendments to its charter contract:

- 1) First, Legacy seeks to expand the maximum student enrollment capacity at the not-yet-opened Cadence campus from 1,200 students to 1,450 students; and
- 2) Second, Legacy is requesting SPCSA Board approval to open a new, Kindergarten through 8th grade campus for the 2019-2020 school year. This new campus would be called Legacy Traditional School – Southwest, and would be the third campus to open in three consecutive years for the network, increasing enrollment in all grade levels by a total of approximately 1,450 students beginning in the 2019-2020 school year.

In total, approving this amendment request would add 1,700 seats to the Legacy network over the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. As is evident, Legacy is aggressively moving to expand its footprint in Southern Nevada. Nevertheless, Staff recommends approval, with conditions, of the amendment request presently before the SPCSA Board.

Summary of Request:

Legacy’s vision is to positively impact the education of every student. Legacy’s mission is to provide all students with opportunity, leadership, guidance, and support to achieve academic excellence in a safe, neotraditional learning environment, with instruction from caring, knowledgeable and highly effective educators and in cooperation with supportive, involved families. Currently, Legacy serves 1,258 (as of Validation Day - October 2nd) students across the valley and has approximately 851 students on its active waitlist.

In January, 2017, the SPCSA Board approved Legacy to open a second campus for the 2018-19 school year. This new campus, Cadence, was approved to have a maximum capacity of 1,200 students. Legacy seeks to increase this enrollment cap to 1,450 at this previously-approved campus. The request to add additional seats at the Cadence campus, as outlined in the charts below, would impact all grades at this campus. The middle school grades (6- 8) would be most heavily impacted, adding approximately 40 seats in the 6th grade, and 70 seats in both the 7th and 8th grades.

Approved Enrollment capacity for the Cadence campus

Grade Level	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	150	150	150	150	150
1	150	150	150	150	150
2	150	150	150	150	150
3	150	150	150	150	150
4	150	150	150	150	150
5	150	150	150	150	150
6	120	120	120	120	120
7	90	90	90	90	90
8	90	90	90	90	90
9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200

Proposed Enrollment capacity for the Cadence campus

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	162	162	162	162	162
1	161	161	161	161	161
2	161	161	161	161	161
3	161	161	161	161	161
4	161	161	161	161	161
5	161	161	161	161	161
6	161	161	161	161	161
7	161	161	161	161	161
8	161	161	161	161	161
9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450

Additionally, for the 2019-2020 school year, Legacy seeks to open a new Kindergarten – 8th grade campus in Las Vegas: Legacy Traditional School – Southwest. The request states that, if approved, the new campus would meet the demands of parents in the Las Vegas/Enterprise area who express the desire for more high-quality schools and school choice in the area. Furthermore, the application states that the academic needs of the Enterprise community are not being met due to overcrowded Clark County School District schools, as well as the public charter and private schools in the community, with long waitlists. Approval of this request would, according to Legacy, provide a quality K-8 school option families in that community. The targeted location for the new campus is in southwest Las Vegas within the 89113 zip code.

The Legacy Board will be working closely with their current EMO, CFE Management Group, to finalize a site for the proposed new campus. CFE has a successful track record of facilities management in Arizona. The previously referenced waitlist, coupled with sibling, charter school Board and employee preference afforded to incoming students, minimizes the chance that this new campus will not be financially viable over the short-term.

The proposed new campus will create a larger footprint in the Las Vegas areas for Legacy. As noted above, there is a large wait list. Additionally, Legacy staff and its Board have conducted a digital interest campaign, resulting in a list of over 2,000 interested families in the Legacy school model. This expansion will allow more families the opportunity to educate their students in program.

According to the amendment request, Legacy has the capacity to attract and hire talented teachers and leaders, including approximately 17 individuals that the network would deem to be highly-qualified to assume the new principal position. SPCSA Staff has no reason at this time to question this assertion. Additionally, Legacy’s professional development practices for teachers are

comprehensive, and include training regarding classroom management, behavior support and accommodating student needs that are essential to ensure that the new campus would be staffed with high-quality instructional leaders.

The strengths support SPCSA staff's recommendation to approve Legacy's amendment request, with conditions, as outlined below.

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.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

The Legacy North Valley campus opened this school year, and therefore does not have a rating under the Nevada State Performance Framework. However, the school has exceeded enrollment projections this year and exhibits a healthy, active waitlist of 851 students as of early January.

Additionally, the LTS-Nevada network is targeting the 2019 – 2020 school year to open the new campus, affording nearly eighteen months for the school to find a final location, approve work permits, survey and rescore the property, hold community meetings, design and construct the facility, and pass final inspections for occupancy. This will parallel similar processes that the organization underwent when opening its initial campus, as well as the Cadence campus, which is slated to open in 2018-19.

The school is financially viable and has a sound plan with experienced partners to ensure that the facility construction project is completed in a timely manner. The structure for completing this project has been successfully executed at the Legacy Traditional campuses in Arizona over the approximately the last five years. The debt service payments, maintenance and utilities costs for this campus are expected to be covered by the revenues generated by the school.

SPCSA Staff recommends approval, but with conditions that will ensure the school remains financially stable and construction remains on schedule, allowing for students to begin class for the 2019 – 2020 school year on time. The following should be submitted by the school to the SPCSA:

- Quarterly financial reports, beginning for Quarter 1 of 2018
- Building permit
- Building inspector report
- Fire Marshall Inspection report

- Certificate of Occupancy for the new facility

Additionally, if the SPCSA Board agrees with staff's recommendation, and grants conditional approval, SPCSA staff is further recommending that the amended charter contract with the Legacy Traditional School network include two provisions. First, staff is recommending that Legacy implement a weighted lottery for student enrollment at all campuses pursuant to [R131-16A](#). Second, staff recommends including a provision that freezes future expansion until at least two years of academic results demonstrate that the network is performing at a high-level in Nevada. It is critical that the Authority maintain an unwavering commitment to high-quality schools, as highlighted in the Authority's Strategic Plan. While SPCSA staff firmly believes that Legacy will exhibit the same exemplary performance seen in Arizona, it is critical that only proven, high-quality schools in Nevada be permitted to replicate.

It should also be noted that the current charter for Legacy expires on June 30, 2022. This conditional approval does not supersede that obligation; Legacy is still required to submit a renewal application with a decision to be made separately at a public meeting through a vote of the SPCSA Board. Any staff recommendation regarding renewal will rely upon the academic, financial and organizational performance of the school during the current term, as well as other historical data, similar to that presented within this report.

Total Current and Projected Enrollment Across All Approved Campuses:

Grade Level	Current and Projected Enrollment at Approved Campuses					
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	154	300	300	300	300	300
1	157	300	300	300	300	300
2	164	300	300	300	300	300
3	154	300	300	300	300	300
4	159	300	300	300	300	300
5	167	300	300	300	300	300
6	155	240	240	240	240	240
7	92	180	180	180	180	180
8	56	180	180	180	180	180
9	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
11	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
Total	1,258*	2,400^	2,400^	2,400^	2,400^	2,400^

**Reflects actual enrollment as of Validation Day (October 2, 2017)*

^Includes projected enrollment for the Cadence campus as approved in January, 2017

Proposed Expanded Enrollment for the Additional Campus (Legacy – Southwest):

Grade Level	Legacy Traditional - Southwest Proposed K-8 Campus - Number of Students			
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	162	162	162	162
1	161	161	161	161
2	161	161	161	161
3	161	161	161	161
4	161	161	161	161
5	161	161	161	161
6	161	161	161	161
7	161	161	161	161
8	161	161	161	161
9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450

Full Enrollment if Approved:

If the SPCSA approves this amendment request, Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada will expand from two to three campuses, and will grow from a projected enrollment of 2,400 students for the 2018 – 2019 school year, to approximately 3,850 students in 2019-20, and will maintain this estimated enrollment each year thereafter through the 2022 – 2023 school year, or the end of the current charter term.

Grade Level	All Traditional – Legacy Campuses – Projected Number of Students					
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	154	312	474	474	474	474
1	157	311	472	472	472	472
2	164	311	472	472	472	472
3	154	311	472	472	472	472
4	159	311	472	472	472	472
5	167	311	472	472	472	472
6	155	311	472	472	472	472
7	92	251	412	412	412	412
8	56	251	412	412	412	412
9	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
11	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
Total	1,258*	2,700^	4,130	4,130	4,130	4,130

**Reflects actual enrollment as of Validation Day (October 2, 2017)*

^Projections use proposed enrollment caps for both the Cadence and Southwest campuses

Background:

School Demographics

Year	Enrollment	AI/AN	A	H	B	W	PI	2/MR	IEP	ELL	FRL
2017-2018	1,258	0.8%	3.2%	37.0%	18.4%	36.2%	1.0%	3.3%	8.4%	13.4%	18.9%

AI/AN – American Indian/Alaskan Native

A – Asian

H – Hispanic

B – Black

W - White

PI – Pacific Islander

2/MR – Two or more races

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

Legacy Traditional Schools – Nevada was approved by the State Public Charter School Authority in October, 2015, and currently operates one campus under a charter contract, with an additional campus (Cadence) opening for the 2018 – 2019 school year. The school has received one notice of concern related to a dress code policy. To resolve that concern, the school fully cooperated with SPCSA staff, updating its student dress code policy in order to address the concerns outlined by Authority staff. No notices of concern or breach related to the academic or financial performance of the school have been issued. Because the school opened its first campus this school year, there is insufficient data for the school to be rated under the Nevada state report card system.