



**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

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**BRIEFING MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board  
**FROM:** Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing  
**SUBJECT:** Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas Charter Renewal Request  
**DATE:** November 2, 2018

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**1. Background**

Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas (CASLV) has submitted a request for renewal. The current charter contract for Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas expires on June 30, 2019. Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas operates six campuses:

- CASLV – Centennial Hills, a K-5 campus that opened in 2016;
- CASLV – Eastgate, a K-8 campus that opened in 2017;
- CASLV – Nellis AFB, a K-5 campus that opened in 2016;
- CASLV – Sandy Ridge, a 6-12 campus that opened in 2006;
- CASLV – Tamarus, a K-2 campus that opened in 2006; and
- CASLV – Windmill, a 3-5 campus that opened in 2006.

After a thorough review of the historical data and charter renewal application, staff strongly recommends that the Authority approve the charter renewal of Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas (CASLV) for a six-year term, beginning July 1, 2019.

**2. The Process Related to Renewal Applications and the Standards Under Which an Application for Renewal of a Charter Contract Will Be Granted**

The first step in the renewal process is the submission by the SPCSA of a renewal report to the charter school.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, on or before June 30 immediately preceding the final school year prior to expiration of a charter school's charter contract, the SPCSA submits to the governing body a report regarding renewal. This document can be found within the supporting documentation for the item.

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<sup>1</sup> Both charter school regulations and the Authority's Performance Framework provides for an expedited and streamlined renewal process for high-performing charter schools. Generally, charter schools qualifying for expedited renewal review are those charter schools that are consistently rated as four-and five-star schools under the NSPF and have received no notices of concern or notices of breach for academic, organizational or financial performance. See R089-16A(10)(2), and the Authority's Charter School Performance Framework, at page 7.

The renewal report summarizes the performance of the charter school under the terms of the charter contract, identifies and deficiencies related to performance of the charter school that might lead to non-renewal of the charter contract, sets for the requirements forth the renewal application, and identifies the criteria that the sponsor will apply in making a determination on the application for renewal. The charter school may submit a response to the renewal report. [See NRS 388A.285\(1\) and \(2\).](#)

Next, the governing body of the charter school must submit a written notice of intent to submit an application for renewal to the SPCSA 45 days prior to submitting a renewal application. See [R089-16A\(10\)\(1\).](#)

In regard to the renewal application, the window to submit the actual renewal application is October 1 through October 15. See [NRS 388A.285\(3\)](#) and [R089-16A\(10\)\(1\).](#) The application for renewal must include, without limitation:

- (a) The requirements for the application identified by the sponsor in the performance report prepared by the sponsor;
- (b) A description of the academic, financial and organizational vision and plans for the charter school for the next charter term;
- (c) Any information or data that the governing body of the charter school determines supports the renewal of the charter contract in addition to the information contained in the performance report prepared by the sponsor and any response submitted by the governing body; and
- (d) A description of any improvements to the charter school already undertaken or planned.

See [NRS 388A.285\(3\).](#)

Decisions to renew a charter school contract or deny a renewal application are made and based upon the SPCSA’s Charter School Performance Framework, and Nevada’s charter school statutes and regulations related to charter school renewal. See [NRS 388A.285](#), and [R089-16A](#). As stated in the SPCSA’s Charter School Performance Framework, “merit-based” charter renewal decisions will be made “in accordance with statute and regulation and based on longitudinal information over a school’s charter term.” See Charter School Performance Framework, at 7.

The SPCSA’s Charter School Performance Framework makes clear that charter school renewal applications are based on the charter school’s academic, financial and organizational performance, and the expectation is that charter schools seeking renewal will be rated under the NSPF as a three-star school or above. See Charter School Performance Framework, at page 7. Note that no factor may be given more weight than the academic performance of pupils at the charter school, and the academic performance of the charter school is the touchstone of any renewal decision. See [R089-16A\(10\)\(10\).](#)

In making its recommendation to the Authority regarding a renewal application, SPCSA staff considers the past performance of the charter school, including information contained in the application for renewal, any site visits, academic achievement of pupils, and any other information that is determined to be relevant to whether the charter contract should be renewed. See [R089-16A\(10\)\(6\).](#)

When determining whether to grant an application for renewal of a charter contract, the Authority Board considers the foregoing factors, any other information that the Authority Board determines is relevant to whether the charter contract should be renewed. The Authority Board will consider the “totality of the evidence” presented to it when making a renewal decision. See [R089-16A\(10\)\(9\)](#). Again, as stated above, no factor is to be given more weight than the academic performance of pupils at the charter school.<sup>2</sup> See [R089-16A\(10\)\(10\).](#)

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<sup>2</sup> See R089-16A(10)(10) b and c. With regard to a second renewal, the Authority is required to place an even greater weight on academic performance than was assigned to it on the first renewal.

At its sole discretion, the Authority Board may renew a charter contract for a term of 6 years, or, alternatively, deny the renewal application. See [R089-16A\(10\)\(11\)](#)<sup>3</sup>. If a charter contract is renewed, the Authority Board may include a provision for a high stakes review during the term of the renewed charter contract which may result in the termination of the renewed charter contract prior to its expiration, or renewal the charter contract and include “any additional provisions, requirements or restrictions which the State Public Charter School Authority determines are appropriate....”

### 3. Analysis

#### Coral Academy of Las Vegas’ Original Written Charter (2007 – 2012)

In its initial charter term, Coral Academy of Las Vegas earned high marks at both the elementary and middle school levels. AYP targets were frequently met, and student proficiency rates were above the Annual Measurable Objectives set by the state.

High school performance during this term was also at least adequate according to multiple measures despite only a small student population.

#### Current Charter Term

##### *Academics*

CASLV has exhibited satisfactory academic performance throughout its initial charter term. Most recently, the Nevada State Performance Framework (NSPF) rated the Sandy Ridge middle and high schools and the Windmill elementary school as 5 stars; Nellis AFB and Centennial Hills campuses were rated 4 stars; and Eastgate and Tamarus were not rated.

CASLV’s graduation rate has nearly doubled since its first year, graduating 53.33% of its students in 2012-13 to 96.6% in the 2017-18 school year. Additionally, the following academic data is available from throughout the charter term:

<b>Year</b>	<b>NSPF Rating</b>
2018	Sandy Ridge Middle School: 5 stars Sandy Ridge High School: 5 stars Windmill Elementary: 5 stars Nellis AFB Elementary: 4 stars Centennial Hills Elementary: 4 stars
2017	Elementary: 3 stars Middle School: 5 stars
2016	Elementary: 3 stars Middle School: not ranked
2015	Elementary: 2 stars Middle School: 3 stars
2014	Elementary: 5 stars Middle: 5 stars High School: 5 stars
2013	Elementary: 4 stars Middle: 4 stars High School: 4 stars
2012	Elementary: 5 stars Middle: 5 stars High School: 4 stars

<sup>3</sup> Note that upon recommendation by SPCSA staff to deny a renewal application, or the Authority Board denying a renewal application, Nevada’s charter school regulations provide for reconsideration and other mechanisms by which the charter school may provide additional information to the SPCSA. See R089-16A(14).

Year	SPCSA Academic Programmatic Audit Findings	SPCSA Academic Intervention Ladder Status
2014	Adequate	Good Standing
2013	Exceeds	Good Standing

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2017-18
<b>NDE Validated Graduation Rate</b>	53.33%	61.29%	94.87%	95.74%	96.6%

*Organizational*

In its current iteration, the SPCSA Organizational Framework is a rolling evaluation of school organizational performance. Based on verified complaints and spot checks of school organizational performance, the Authority issues Notices of Concern or Notices of Breach for Organizational Performance. Schools which have not received such notices are presumed to be in Good Standing. CASLV has not received a Notice of Breach or Notice of Concern since the inception of the Framework, has been classified as in Good Standing in each year from 2013 – 2016 and maintained a Good Standing rating in 2017.

**SPCSA Organizational Programmatic Audit Findings**

2017	Good Standing
2016	Good Standing
2015	Good Standing
2014	Good Standing
2013	Good Standing

The total number of staff across all CASLV campuses, including central office, is 274, with 184 of those – 67% being instructional staff members.

In addition to robust enrollment with 3632 students across all CASLV campuses, Coral has a waitlist of 3879 students – more than their current enrollment. Per the school’s renewal application, .90% of waitlisted students have preference status.

*Financial*

Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas has a history of clean audit findings. The SPCSA Financial Framework monitors a variety of indicators of financial health. This is supported by the school being classified within the financial rating system as in Good Standing each year since 2013.

**SPCSA Financial Programmatic Audit Findings**

2017	Good Standing
2016	Good Standing
2015	Good Standing
2014	Good Standing
2013	Good Standing

**4. Recommendation: Approve Renewal**

Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas has shown commendable academic and organizational performance in its initial charter term. They are financially viable, and SPCSA staff is confident the school will continue its current trajectory and performance outcomes. They currently have strong enrollment with a healthy waitlist, and they are financially viable.

The Authority is strongly encouraged to renew Coral Academy of Science – Las Vegas for a six-year term, beginning July 1, 2019.

**School Demographics, 2017-18**

<b>Campus Name</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>AI/AN</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Mixed Races/ Two or more races</b>	<b>Pacific Islander</b>	<b>IEP</b>	<b>ELL</b>	<b>FRL</b>
Coral Academy LV – Nellis AFB	722	0.6%	3.7%	13.4%	49.4%	18.4%	10.5%	3.9%	6.0%	-	29.7%
Coral Academy LV – Centennial Hills	682	0.3%	11.3%	12.5%	46.6%	19.2%	9.2%	0.9%	8.2%	4.1%	10.2%
Coral Academy LV – Sandy Ridge	817	0.7%	23.1%	6.5%	43.3%	15.8%	8.7%	1.8%	3.4%	2.2%	5.8%
Coral Academy LV – Windmill	399	1.0%	29.1%	3.5%	35.8%	13.3%	16.0%	1.3%	4.0%	5.0%	4.7%
Coral Academy LV – Tamarus	382	0.3%	28.3%	4.2%	42.4%	13.6%	10.5%	0.8%	4.1%	10.4%	9.6%

Additionally, CASLV projects strong continued enrollment through a renewed charter term.

	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>
<b>Planned Total Enrollment</b>	<b>3722</b>	<b>3736</b>	<b>3795</b>	<b>3795</b>	<b>3795</b>	<b>3795</b>
<b>PreK</b>	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Kindergarten</b>	170	185	235	235	235	235
<b>1<sup>st</sup> grade</b>	346	290	240	267	267	267
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> grade</b>	325	346	299	276	276	276
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> grade</b>	426	331	378	331	331	331
<b>4<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	373	426	347	396	396	396
<b>5<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	421	395	448	375	375	375
<b>6<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	393	393	421	398	398	398
<b>7<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	384	393	421	398	398	398
<b>8<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	297	384	369	403	403	403
<b>9<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	185	167	135	133	133	133
<b>10<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	137	137	167	135	135	135
<b>11<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	120	137	185	167	167	167
<b>12<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	105	120	137	185	185	185