



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board

FROM: Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
Mike Dang, Management Analyst

SUBJECT: Oasis Academy –Amendment to add additional seats at approved grade levels

DATE: September 13, 2019

Summary of Request:

Oasis Academy seeks an amendment to expand by providing additional seats in already-approved grade-levels. Oasis Academy, located in Fallon, NV, is a brick-and-mortar public charter school serving students in grades K – 12 and had an enrollment of 612 students during the 2018 – 2019 school year.

According to the amendment application, the Oasis board has approved the slow growth of grades Kindergarten through 8th grade, which adds a third class of twenty-five students that will year over year matriculate upward until there is a third section of each grade level for grades K-8. Currently the school offers two sections per grade level. This amendment would add a third section within one grade level each year, or about 25 seats annually, until a third section is added to all elementary and middle school grades.

Background Information

The Oasis Academy charter contract was first approved in 2011 and the school opened for the 2011 – 2012 school year. The school was renewed in 2017 for a second, six-year term which expires on June 30, 2023.

According to the application, there are multiple reasons why Oasis Academy is seeking to expand. First, the school has maintained a rather extensive waitlist for many years. Currently, there are just under 400 students who have applied for enrollment in the 2019 – 2020 school year, but the school is unable to offer seats to the vast majority of these families. Second, as stated in the application, it is worth noting that Oasis Academy is the only brick-and-mortar, public school choice option available to students in Churchill County outside of the traditional school district.

The Oasis Board of Directors believes that students in Churchill County deserve a high-quality education. The annual Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) results indicate that Oasis Academy is a quality school for its students, earning a 5-star rating for both the middle and high schools, and a 3-star rating for the elementary school for the 2017 – 2018 school year. Additionally, while the high school was not rated for 2016 – 2017, both the elementary and middle school earned a 5-star rating. More information regarding the NSPF ratings for Oasis Academy can be found on page 4 of this memo.

According to the amendment application, Oasis Academy would add one additional section for grades Kindergarten through 8th grade over the course of nine years. More information regarding this growth plan can be found on page 4 of this memo.

As described within the proposal, the Oasis Academy Board of Directors sees many advantages to utilizing a slow-growth model. Primarily, this allows the school to establish a firm educational foundation of early literacy and number sense skills. Additionally, the slow-growth approach lets the school approach human resource needs in a more methodical manner. Based on the current teacher applicant pool and the in-house teacher pipeline (IA to Classroom Pipeline) program the leadership team feels confident the Oasis Academy can add a qualified teacher each year under this proposed growth plan. Lastly, this growth trajectory does not create unnecessary logistical or space challenges, and the school can house all of these additional students until a new facility can be constructed.

Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests

[NRS 388A.279](#) requires that:

1. The State Public Charter School Authority, the board of trustees of the school district or a college or university within the Nevada System of Higher Education, as applicable, which sponsors a charter school may hold a public hearing concerning any request to amend a written charter or a charter contract of the charter school it sponsors, including, without limitation, a request to amend a written charter or charter contract for the purpose of:
 - a. Expanding the charter school to offer instruction in grade levels for which the charter school does not already offer instruction.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Reducing 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 less than 80 percent of the enrollment prescribed in the written charter or charter contract for that school year.
 - d. Seeking to acquire an additional facility in any county of this State to expand the enrollment of the charter school.
 - e. Consolidating the operations of multiple charter schools pursuant to [NRS 388A.282](#).

Staff Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

For all of these reasons, SPCSA staff is recommending that the Authority approve the request of Oasis Academy of Nevada, with conditions, to add an extra section of each grade level for grades K-8. Additionally, staff recommends that the Authority attach two conditions to this approval:

1. Oasis Academy must demonstrate that it has faithfully executed on its plan to increase their student body population that is classified as English-Language learners (ELL). This plan is outlined on Attachment 1, but includes:
 - a. Spanish materials will be provided to local congregations, businesses and events beginning 60-days prior to enrollment opening;
 - b. Offering six-week radio campaigns on KSRN, KRNV-FM;
 - c. Written and audio advertising that notes a Spanish interpreter is available daily at the school; and
 - d. A Spanish version of the online application be readily available on the Oasis website.
2. Oasis Academy must take additional steps to market to students qualifying for Free and Reduced lunch. This must include:
 - a. Sharing information about the school and the enrollment process at a minimum of five locations which provide resources and/or services for low income families (ex. Food Banks, Community Resource Centers, etc.)

SPCSA staff will work with Oasis Academy Board and staff to see that these requirements are fulfilled beginning with students entering the school year for the 2020 – 2021 school year. SPCSA staff believes that quarterly updates on both fronts are appropriate, beginning at the end of Quarter 1 of the 2020 fiscal year (October 1).

Nevada School Performance Ratings (NSPF) - Oasis Academy

School Year	Rating(s)
2014 – 2015	Elementary School: 5 stars Middle School: 5 stars
2015 – 2016	No Star Ratings Released
2016 – 2017	Elementary School: 5 stars Middle School: 5 stars
2017 – 2018	Elementary School: 3 stars Middle School: 5 stars High School: 5 stars

Oasis Academy Historical Enrollment (as of Validation Day)

	2015 – 16	2016 – 17	2017 – 18	2018 – 19
<u>K</u>	40	40	48	72
<u>1st</u>	42	40	48	48
<u>2nd</u>	40	40	48	48
<u>3rd</u>	40	40	48	48
<u>4th</u>	41	40	48	48
<u>5th</u>	41	41	48	48
<u>6th</u>	40	40	48	48
<u>7th</u>	40	40	48	49
<u>8th</u>	40	41	47	48
<u>9th</u>	46	41	40	40
<u>10th</u>	27	46	37	46
<u>11th</u>	48	22	44	38
<u>12th</u>	5	39	20	31
<u>TOTAL</u>	490	510	572	612

Proposed Kindergarten through 8th grade Enrollment if Approved

	Additional Seats Added	Total K – 8 Student Population Cap
2018 – 2019	25, Kindergarten	475
2019 – 2020	25, 1 st grade	500
2020 – 2021	25, 2 nd grade	525
2021 – 2022	25, 3 rd grade	550
2022 – 2023	25, 4 th grade	575
2023 – 2024	25, 5 th grade	600
2024 – 2025	25, 6 th grade	625
2025 – 2026	25, 7 th grade	650
2026 – 2027	25, 8 th grade	675

Demographic Breakdown

Year	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
15-16	2.7%	2.2%	75.9%	10.8%	4.7%	3.3%	0.4%	9.4%	1.0%	16.1%
16-17	2.5%	5.1%	54.5%	21.4%	0.4%	9.8%	1.6%	10.4%	0.6%	18.8%
17-18	3.5%	1.6%	75.0%	11.7%	4.2%	3.5%	0.5%	9.8%	2.3%	14.2%
18-19	3.8%	1.5%	72.9%	13.9%	3.8%	3.8%	0.5%	9.8%	2.3%	19.9%

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