



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 2: Nevada Connections Academy
DATE: May 5, 2020

State Public Charter School Authority Staff is recommending that the Authority resolve the pending litigation initiated by Nevada Connections Academy (“NCA”) against the SPCSA in regard to the Authority’s denial of NCA’s renewal application as it related to NCA’s middle and high schools, on the terms and conditions outlined in this memorandum. This resolution would include dismissal of the pending litigation, with prejudice, and a three-year contract for Nevada Connections Academy’s High School as further detailed below.

Dismissal of Pending Litigation

The pending litigation (Case No. 20 OC 00036 1B; First Judicial District Court, Carson City) would be dismissed with prejudice, with each party to pay their own costs and attorneys’ fees.

Approval of a 3-year Charter School Contract for the High School

Approval by the Authority of a three (3) year charter school contract for NCA’s high school, which includes the following terms and conditions:

1. Charter term:

The term of the charter school contract will be for a three-year term, beginning with the execution of the contract and ending June 30, 2023. This means that the charter school contract will be for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 school years, and that NCA will apply for renewal during the fall of 2022. The charter term can be found in Section 1.3 of the charter school contract.

2. Grade Levels:

The charter school contract will be for the high school grade levels only (grades 9 through 12). This information can be found in Section 2.3.1 of the charter school contract.

3. Enrollment:

For the 9th and 10th grade levels, the charter school contract will specify that no more than 850 students (combined for the 9th and 10th grades) may be enrolled. For the 11th and 12th grade levels, enrollment will be “frozen,” meaning that only current NCA students may be enrolled in the 11th and 12th grade levels. In other words, only current NCA 10th grade students may matriculate to the 11th grade, and only current NCA 11th grade students may matriculate to the 12th grade. This information can be found in Section 2.3.1 of the charter school contract.

4. Expansion:

The charter school contract will specify that NCA agrees that it will not apply for any expansion amendment (grades or enrollment) during the term of the charter contract, except as provided in NAC 388A.415(4). This provision can be found in Sections 2.3.2 and 12.7.1.10 of the charter school contract.

5. Termination:

The charter school contract will include a provision whereby NCA agrees to close at the end of the school year in the event that the high school receives a one-star rating under the NSPF, or equivalent statewide system of accountability as contemplated by NRS Chapter 385A, for the 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 school year (this provision tracks NRS 388A.300). If for any reason NSPF ratings are suspended or NSPF ratings from one school year are applied to the next school year, those NSPF ratings would not serve as a basis for closure under this provision. This information can be found in Section 8.2.2 of the charter school contract.

A copy of the proposed charter school contract is included along with the supporting materials for this agenda item, and NCA’s governing body approved the foregoing terms and conditions at a public meeting held on April 28, 2020.