



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Mike Dang, Manager, Financial and Organizational Performance
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
SUBJECT: Request to Add 7th Grade level from Girls Athletic Leadership School (GALS)
DATE: May 29, 2020

Summary of Request and Recommendation

The Girls Athletic Leadership School (GALS) is requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant it a good cause exemption to hear this request today and to approve its request to add a 7th grade level to its already approved 6th grade level for the school year 2020-2021.

SPCSA staff reviewed the application and recommends approvals, subject to the condition described below.

Background

GALS was approved by the SPCSA Board at the January 31, 2020 Board meeting to open this fall of 2020.

GALS will be located this fall in Las Vegas at the John D. Jackie Gaughan Boys and Girls Club of Southern Nevada, located at 920 Cottage Grove Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89119 on the UNLV campus. The school is in negotiations to enter a long-term lease in either the 89119 or 89120 zip codes. These zip codes are among the zip codes recognized by the SPCSA Board as areas of high need. Additionally, both zip codes are listed in the [2020 Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment](#) showing 1 & 2 Star schools.

GALS has also been approved for a Charter School Program (CSP) Grant of \$265,500, an Opportunity 180 Grant of \$93,000 and a SPCSA Revolving Loan of \$62,500. The GALS Revolving Loan request is scheduled to be presented to the Interim Finance Committee in June.

GALS' original enrollment plan was to open this fall with a 6th grade only and serve 135 students. Beginning in the 2021 – 2022, the school would add 7th grade, and then planned to add 8th grade the following fall. The school still plans for enrollment of 135 students this fall. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the school's efforts to effectively reach prospective families, the school is requesting to amend its contract to open with grades 6 and 7 in the 2020 – 2021 school year. As noted in the application, multiple families have inquired about the availability of 7th grade this fall for their students.

According to the application, the school’s board reviewed its ability to meet this demand, determined it can, and now submits this request to add the planned 7th grade this fall to its 6th grade. Note that this request would not impact the current enrollment cap of 135. The school wishes to enroll 80 6th graders and 55 7th graders under this amendment.

Original Planned Enrollment Approved with Original Application

Grade Level	Number of Students					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
5						
6	135	90	135	135	135	135
7	-	90	135	135	135	135
8		90	135	135	135	135
9						
Total	135	270	405	405	405	405

Proposed Planned Enrollment in this RFA

Grade Level	Number of Students					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
5						
6	80	90	135	135	135	135
7	55	90	135	135	135	135
8		90	135	135	135	135
9						
Total	135	270	405	405	405	405

GALS LV is receiving and is customizing the 7th grade curriculum from its sister school, GALS Los Angeles. GALS has discussed the 7th grade option with its teachers and those potentially affected know they may be teaching 7th grade this fall instead of 6th grade.

Applicant Eligibility

When reviewing any RFA, SPCSA staff and board typically review the academic, financial and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. GALS will be opening this fall for its first school year so documentation of this nature will be created beginning this fall. Thus far, the school has timely completed its pre-opening requirements. At this time, then, staff finds GALS in compliance with SPCSA requirements.

Summary and Recommendation

Overall, SPCSA staff finds the GALS application to add a 7th grade this fall to be compelling, and as such, staff recommends that the SPCSA board approve GALS' request to begin its 7th grade this fall.

This request would be with the condition that GALS submit a weekly enrollment report to staff showing its progress in enrolling students for grades 6 and 7 for this fall. Staff will work directly with the school on the format of these reports.

Proposed Motion:

Approve the request of the Girls Athletic Leadership School (GALS) for their good cause exemption to submit their request for amendment today and to allow them to add a 7th grade to their 6th grade beginning this fall with the 2020-2021 school year, subject to the condition that the school submit weekly enrollment updates to staff showing the number of 6th and 7th grade students for the 2020 – 2021 school year.