



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
Mike Dang, Management Analyst IV
SUBJECT: **TEACH Las Vegas**
Request to Amend Enrollment Cap for 2021-22 school Year and to Adjust Student Transportation Plans
DATE: July 30, 2021

Summary of Request and Recommendation

TEACH Las Vegas is requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption request and approve two modifications to the school's charter contract:

- 1) TEACH Las Vegas would like to reduce its enrollment cap for the 2021 – 2022 school year from 325 to 150 students. This is request will allow TEACH Las Vegas to sublease a portion of its facilities to Explore Academy.
- 2) TEACH Las Vegas would like to delay the implementation of their student transportation plan to the 2022 – 23 school year. Student bus transportation was included in the approved charter application.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the school's request for a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school's amendment proposals, with conditions as outlined within this memo.

Background

TEACH Las Vegas was conditionally approved by the SPCSA to open its doors to students for the 2021 – 22 school year on February 26, 2021. TEACH Las Vegas will open with students in grades Kindergarten through 7th grade, eventually expanding to serve students through 12th grade. The school is preparing to open at their facility at 4660 N. Rancho Drive in Las Vegas, and is anticipating this being their permanent site as the school grows to scale. TEACH Las Vegas anticipates primarily serving students and families residing in the 89130, 89108, 89032, 89107 and 89129 zip codes.

The mission of TEACH Las Vegas is to “create a high quality, innovative K-12 teaching and learning environment in North Las Vegas that focuses on literacy; integrating state-of-the-art technologies across the core curriculum to achieve academic proficiency for all students.”

The school’s vision is to reach students of all backgrounds by teaching the entire child which includes the social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs of the student. Upon graduation, the knowledge and the experiences acquired at TEACH will be effectively applied to students’ daily lives.

According to the amendment application, TEACH is seeking to reduce its enrollment cap due to lower than anticipated enrollment for the 2021 – 22 school year. The school plans to offset these lower enrollment figures by subleasing a portion of their facility to Explore Academy. According to the amendment application, TEACH will be leasing 16 classrooms to Explore Academy for at least a portion of the 2021 – 22 school year, and will use six classrooms exclusively for the upcoming school year along with some shared space. TEACH Las Vegas anticipates offering six full sections for students according to the amendment.

The amendment application outlines the proposed caps for the full charter term, noting that the only change would be for the 2021 – 22 school year:

	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24	2024 – 25	2025 – 26	2026 – 27
<u>Grades Served</u>	K – 7	K – 8	K – 9	K – 10	K - 11	K – 12
<u>Current Enrollment Cap</u>	325	425	550	675	800	975
<u>Requested Enrollment Cap</u>	150	425	550	675	800	975

TEACH Las Vegas is also seeking to adjust its student transportation plan for Year 1 of operations. The approved TEACH Las Vegas charter application included a commitment to providing student bus transportation beginning in year 1. According to the amendment submission, TEACH Las Vegas invested significant time pursuing this option, but has come to the realization that no daily bus transportation could be made available for this upcoming year. The amendment goes on to express the school’s desire to offer student transportation beginning in the 2022 – 23 school year.

Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests

Existing charter schools that are sponsored by the SPCSA may submit a charter school contract amendment application to the SPCSA – which is reviewed by SPCSA staff and presented for SPCSA Board action – in order to, among other things, increase enrollment, add grade levels above and beyond what the charter school is approved to serve, or add a new campus. Only those existing charter schools that are meeting expectations in regard to academics (under both the Department of Education’s Nevada School Performance Framework -- the “Star Ratings” -- and the SPCSA’s Academic Performance Framework), are compliant in regard to the SPCSA’s Organizational Framework, and are fiscally sound may be approved for expansion. Furthermore, the academic, organizational, and financial performance of other charter schools that contract with the same Charter Management Organization or Educational Management organization is taken into account when reviewing an expansion application.¹

¹ There are limited exceptions to these eligibility requirements for those charter schools that have been approved by the State Board of Education and the SPCSA Board to be rated under Nevada’s Alternative Performance Framework.

Since TEACH Las Vegas has yet to open, SPCSA staff finds that the school is meeting pre-opening expectations, is compliant and fiscally sound.

Analysis, Summary and Recommendation

SPCSA staff recommends that the Authority approve the two requests of TEACH Las Vegas. TEACH Las Vegas has demonstrated that it is financially viable to open this upcoming year, despite a reduction to enrollment for the 2021 – 22 school year, as the school has entered into a sublease with Explore Academy. This arrangement will help offset lost revenues until the school can reach its Year 2 enrollment targets.

While SPCSA staff is disappointed that student transportation is not a viable option for TEACH Las Vegas this upcoming school year, staff is confident that the school will make arrangements to offer this important service beginning in the 2022 – 23 school year. This will coincide with a dramatic increase enrollment, likely assisting more families choosing to enroll at the school.

For these reasons, SPCSA staff recommends that the Authority approve a reduction to the enrollment cap of TEACH Las Vegas and permit the school to not offer student transportation services in the 2021 – 22 school year with the expectation that these services begin in the 2022 – 23 school year.

Proposed Motion:

Grant TEACH Las Vegas a Good Cause Exemption and approve the requests of the school to reduce the enrollment cap for the 2021 – 22 school year to 150 students across grades K – 7, and approve the school to postpone student transportation services until the 2022 – 23 school year.

If approved, the enrollment cap for TEACH Las Vegas will be as follows for the remainder of the charter term:

	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24	2024 – 25	2025 – 26	2026 – 27
Enrollment Cap	150	425	550	675	800	975