



NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

Monday, August 29, 2022
9:00AM

The State Public Charter School Authority board meeting was conducted in-person and virtually.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON:

Chair Melissa Mackedon
Vice Chair Sheila Moulton
Member Tamika Shauntee Rosales
Member Erica Mosca
Member Jackson Olsen
Member Maureen Schafer

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Member Lee Farris

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Member Tonia Holmes-Sutton

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT IN-PERSON:

Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
Ryan Herrick, General Counsel
Brettani Thomas, Education Programs Professional
Jennifer King, Administrative Assistant IV

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor
Denise Shaw, Education Programs Professional

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON:

Jana Wilcox-Lavin
Renee Fairless
Nicole McDermott
Brian Coy
Jessica Cruz
Cami Taiwo
Kiumars Arzani
David Johnson
Tom Hughes
Jonathan Johnson
Brett Willis
Anthony Grant
Julie Carver
John Etzell
Amanda Moss

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY:

Karli Casto
Emerald Washington
Angela Cook
Kaitlin Karpinski
Adam Nicely
Dan Wright

Before calling the meeting to order, Chair Mackedon thanked Member Cyr for her service with the State Public Charter School Authority as she resigned from the board. She also took a moment to thank Member Mosca as this will be her last meeting.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call, and Pledge of Allegiance [00:01:16]

Melissa Mackedon, State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00am and facilitated the pledge of allegiance.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment #1 [00:02:37]

1. Jana Wilcox Lavin, spoke in support of Rooted Clark County and Southern Nevada Trades High School.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of July 29, 2022 SPCSA Board Meeting Action Minutes [00:06:03]

MOTION: Vice Chair Moulton made the motion to approve the July 29, 2022 SPCSA board meeting action minutes. Member Olsen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – SPCSA Charter School Governing Body Governance Standards [00:06:33]

- a. **A member of the Authority will briefly discuss the Governance Standards recently adopted by the Authority pursuant to Assembly Bill 419 (2021).**

Vice Chair Moulton read the opening two paragraphs of their purpose in the governance standards because she thinks as they look at the charter applications, this applies to what they are going to do.

- b. **Update regarding training related to SPCSA Governance Standards [00:08:29]**

Ryan Herrick, General Counsel, said in addition to the requirement for this board to adopt governance standards, Assembly Bill 419 (2021) also required charter school governing bodies to undergo certain trainings and so they have put together a memo attached in the supporting materials. The bottom of page 3 in that memo includes the four training sessions they had this summer. About 200 board members have undergone training and about 70 have not. They plan to compare their lists and send reminders to those board members and to offer an additional training this fall and then going forward offer one in the winter and one in the summer. Again, there are also training opportunities with other entities which can be found on their website, and they are going to put the recording of the training on their website and have a certification. They will collect the certifications and go over them on an annual basis.

Agenda Item 5 – Executive Director’s Report [00:10:31]

- a. **Initiatives Related to Serving All Students Equitably**

Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director began by providing an update on the recruitment and enrollment plans the Authority required 14 of their schools to develop. Earlier this month, staff held the third and final work session to support these schools with the development of these plans. Schools have appeared to make significant headway on reviewing data, conducting root cause analysis and identifying strategies. They were also pleased to have the Executive Director of the Charter School Association of Nevada (CSAN) at their most recent meeting who offered support to schools. These plans are due to staff by September 30th and once received staff will review and provide feedback to schools before they begin implementation for the 2023-24 school year. They have notified schools they will be collecting data regarding the implementation and impact of these plans and their strategies. They look forward to looking at this data to help inform their future work.

Executive Director Feiden said through their project aware grant, they are in the process of putting in place memorandums of understanding with several Clark County based organizations. This will allow those schools participating in their project aware MTSS cohorts to refer students to these organizations for both mental health evaluations and services for the 2023-24 school year and hopefully beyond.

Finally, she noted that they are in the process of finalizing their language access plan and the final version will be posted to their website both in Spanish and in English later this week.

b. Legislative Session: Interim Committees and Planning [00:13:20]

Executive Director Feiden said the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education, is meeting tomorrow for their biannual work session. During this meeting the committee will consider several recommendations as well as legislative proposals. She provided context on the recommendations. There is a proposed letter to send to school districts and the SPCSA to encourage us to look at the ways we can address chronic absenteeism. The legislative proposals if approved will be effectively education committee bills during the next session which begins in February of 2023. While there are several proposals that relate to K-12 in general, the only one that appears to be specific in some manner to charter schools is a recommendation to modify the funding formula that would move district virtual schools to be funded at the statewide base. This would create parity for all virtual schools in the state district and charter in terms of funding. A copy of the document outlining all of the recommendations and legislative proposals can be found in today's materials. Finally, she noted that they are in the process of finalizing the agency requested budget pursuant to the timeline set forth in statute. She provided the overview and the context of the request.

c. State Infrastructure Bank [00:17:21]

Executive Director Feiden said over the last year the treasurer's office has established the Nevada State Infrastructure Bank to provide low-cost financing to Nevada state agencies, local governments, tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations for priority infrastructure projects. The bank includes a dedicated 15-million-dollar fund, which is to operate a charter school capital needs revolving loan account. Under the State Infrastructure Bank regulations, the loan to charter schools can be used solely for financing or refinancing outstanding debts for the development, construction, repair, improvement, maintenance, or acquisition of charter school facilities for a new or existing charter school. The loan has a focus on providing funds to schools serving students who are defined as at risk and in addition to be approved for a loan a charter school must have authorization from its sponsor. Given that this is new, they have sent this information to their schools and let them know to contact SPCSA staff if they are interested in applying and she anticipates the Authority may see requests for approval in the coming months which they are likely to treat similarly to bonding requests that already come before the Authority.

Vice Chair Moulton asked about the interest rates on the loan. Executive Director Feiden said she believes it is set in statute and is based on some kind of moving indicator. They expect these to be lower interest rates than you might get from a private lender and she believes the intent is to decrease the cost of borrowing particularly because they know that the interest is basically paid by public dollars and to the degree that the interest can be reduced, more money gets into the classrooms. She said she can find the interest rate but believes it is set in the regulations.

Member Schafer asked for clarity around the Title I ELL and Title III request for additional funding and increased administration and what that goes to. Executive Director Feiden said they are requesting additional positions that would help to both support the administration of the grants and supporting schools in those program areas. There was further discussion between Member Schafer and Executive Director Feiden regarding the State Infrastructure Bank and other facility funding.

d. Growth Management Plan [00:24:13]

Executive Director Feiden said as they've discussed they have shifted the timeline for the growth management plan development with the shift in timeline for new school applications. They are in the process of picking that work back up and expect to be sending surveys to schools in the coming weeks to gather their potential plans regarding expansions in the next 5-years so that they can include that in their revisions. In addition, once the Authority takes action on the applications today and any action on the resubmissions which they anticipate coming before the Authority in November, they anticipate they will be able to bring forth updates to the growth management plan with firm growth projections at their December meeting.

e. Federal Emergency Grant Funding [00:25:11]

Executive Director Feiden said today they have included a spreadsheet with updated allocations of Federal Emergency Grant Funding. They are working with schools to try to make sure these funds are expended so they can receive reimbursements and fully utilize the allocated funds. In addition, they are in the process of gaining approval for the final one third of the ARP ESSER funding. The only grant that has not yet been allocated is the AB 495 funding which by statute is only available to Title I charter schools. These funds will be used to fill, according to statute, any remaining gaps in funding so they cannot be awarded until all other funds have been accounted for. They anticipate as soon as they have approval for the last third of the ARP ESSER funding, they will then launch the application for the AB 495 funding.

f. New Schools and Campuses that Opened in August 2022 [00:26:18]

Executive Director Feiden said they are excited to share that all of their eight new schools and campuses have successfully opened their doors for this school year and are serving students. While all schools were able to complete the pre-opening requirements and receive approval or conditional approval on or before the first day of school, they have no doubt experienced a few challenges along the way. She took a moment to share all the challenges and next steps which can be found in the memorandum in the supporting materials. As a reminder they already have one school approved to open next year which is Eagle Charter School. While Doral Academy of Northern Nevada has an expansion approved, they are not sure that they will fulfill the conditions to meet that and obviously the applications before them today and staff is also in receipt of one amendment request that they expect to be heard in October for an expansion request for one of their existing schools.

g. 2021-22 School Year Academic Performance Data [00:32:11]

Executive Director Feiden said next month they will have the opportunity to review several data points for the 2021-22 school year. While the state received a waiver from the Federal government and will not be publishing star ratings for the 2021-22 school year, the state will be calculating index scores. At the October meeting, the Authority will receive information about how those index scores are calculated, the state assessment results, and the index scores for their schools. While this is a bit more normal than in previous years, she noted the 2021-22 school year has continued to see significant impacts from COVID-19 and there are some unique factors they want to be careful in understanding. She also noted with the board approval earlier in the year, they will be calculating their own academic performance ratings which will incorporate both the index scores but also the local districts comparisons, as well as the enrollment diversity indicator and staff will be sharing those results at the November meeting.

h. 2023 Proposed Board Meeting Dates [00:33:32]

Executive Director Feiden said attached to the materials for today's meeting you will find the proposed meeting dates for the 2023 calendar year. The dates have also been posted on the SPCSA's website.

Vice Chair Moulton asked about the oversight over the federal emergency grant funding and what that looks like. Executive Director Feiden said these are allocations and represent the amount of money that schools have been told they have up to X dollars, send us an application, a budget, etc., and then the SPCSA reviews, NDE reviews, and once that is approved the school can spend money and request reimbursement. She provided an example. There is a tremendous amount of oversight and take substantial work and they have a number of contractors that they have had to hire to deal with the volume of additional grants. Member Shauntee asked for the approximate timeline for reimbursements to schools. Executive Director Feiden talked about what the process for reimbursement looks like and the delays they have experienced as well as the measures they plan to take.

Member Olsen said he knows he is not alone in being very concerned about the less than 50% enrollment at 3 of 5 schools and the process that will happen potentially when the enrollment numbers settle and they need to come back and they take a look at their proposed enrollment, his question is are any of those schools at risk of programmatic shifts or something bigger than simply saying they are going to amend the number of students enrolled. Executive Director Feiden said conversations with schools leading up to this included often

understanding often where their enrollment and staffing was and many of them paused hiring in line with where their recent projections were. She provided some examples of the types of things staff would have concerns about. Many of these schools when staff received the enrollment numbers from during the audited enrollment in June, if they were severely under, staff had them submit a revised budget already. It is something they plan to watch closely.

Agenda Item 6 – Focus on Schools: Mater Academy of Nevada [00:46:29]

Executive Director Feiden said throughout the year they typically have schools present on unique features or best practices they are implementing. For the last two years this has been a focus on practices related to serving students equitably and this month they have the chance to hear from the Mater Academy team about their Special Education Program. In particular, Mater Academy recently stood up a self-contained program, which not too many of their schools have so staff wanted to give them a chance to share details of this program and their overall Special Education Program.

Renee Fairless, Lead Principal, said they recently opened a new site in the middle of the pandemic at their East Bonanza campus, right in the middle of a very diverse population. Since they opened during the pandemic, what they saw was a tremendous influx of students with special needs as well as EL learners. They were able to open with 40% and they saw a tremendous need because of the fact that so many of the schools were closed down. Once they saw that they had so many students with severe disabilities and their IEPs called for full day self-contained, and that was not something they had at Mater nor did they think they had the resources or the room for, Ms. Nicole McDermott made a suggestion about having a heterogeneous specialized program and so they started moving towards that direction. What makes Mater unique is that their schools are 100% free and reduced-price lunch based on community eligibility and are over 40% EL and always reach that 10% cap for special education. She introduced her staff, Nicole McDermott, Brian Coy and Jessica Cruz. She turned it over to her staff to provide the presentation which can be found in the supporting materials. There was discussion between the Authority and school representatives regarding the information shared in the presentation.

Agenda Item 7 – Site Evaluation Process [01:32:12]

Director Modrcin said this is a follow up item to the site evaluation recap that was prepared and presented to the board at the June 27 meeting. This will provide the board with the opportunity to review and discuss and hear about some of the relatively minor changes they are proposing to further enhance their work in this area. Selcuk Ozdemir, Manager of Academic Performance, said he is joined by his colleagues Dr. Denise Shaw and Brettani Thomas. He began the presentation of the proposed revisions for the site evaluation process for the 2022-23 school year. First, they provided an overview and background information before providing a summary of the changes. Proposed change one relates to strengthening the differentiated process. They are looking at explaining the difference between a comprehensive site evaluation, where all schools are evaluated in years 1, 3 and 5 and how sometimes they may be need for a targeted site evaluation in years 2, 4 and 6. Dr. Shaw talked about the ‘why’ and ‘how’ as it relates to this proposed change. Dr. Ozdemir talked about proposed change two which would provide schools with an optional site evaluation debrief with school leadership at the close of the site evaluation day. He spoke to the ‘why’ and ‘how’ as it relates to this proposed change. The proposed change three is providing a site evaluation feedback survey after the site evaluation. He again spoke to the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ as it relates to this proposed change. Ms. Thomas talked about proposed change three, to update the organizational performance chart and oversight. She spoke to the ‘why’ and ‘how’ as it relates to this proposed change and referred to the specific indicators in the Organizational Performance Framework that would be updated as a result of this approved change.

Vice Chair Moulton asked for clarification around the targeted site evaluations and if they would be specific to one item or would there be more than one. Dr. Ozdemir said it will depend on the notices or what the target is. They will look at the academic data, previous site evaluation reports, or notices. It can be one and it can be more than one. She commented that if the site evaluations at 4 or 5- star schools are shorter, she thinks there is a lot they can learn from them and perhaps to check in on the defibrillators at schools.

Member Olsen suggested a consideration to the site evaluation team, he knows at the end of the day there is a 30-minute debrief sharing high level findings and following up 4-6 weeks later, he wondered if the site evaluation team could build some time into their schedule that day or potentially in the optional debrief session for some action planning and thought partnership with the school about how to implement the feedback they are getting.

Motion: *Vice Chair Moulton made the motion to accept the site evaluation changes as presented. Member Shauntee Rosales seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

The Authority took a 15-minute convenience break.

Agenda Item 8 – Argent Preparatory Academy [02:20:34]

Mr. Herrick said as many of you know, just before the 2016-17 school year, Argent Prep was placed under receivership and closed at the end of the 2017-18 school year and been in receivership since. Today is Mr. Kern's final report, the SPCSA received the court order last week and that along with a written update from Mr. Kern is contained within the supporting materials. Mr. Kern provided some brief remarks.

Agenda Item 9 – Charter School Contract Amendment Applications [02:32:02]

a. PilotED – Cactus Park Elementary – adjustment to student transportation plan

Director Modrcin said PilotED Cactus Park Elementary is requesting the Authority grant the good cause exemption request and approve their request to offer student transportation services to the school's temporary site until the school opens their permanent facility. Staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority approve the school's request for a good cause exemption and approve their submitted amendment. He provided some context related to the request.

Motion: *Member Shauntee Rosales made the motion to grant pilotED – Cactus Park a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school's request to offer temporary transportation services through a MOU/contract with Nevada Prep until the permanent facility is ready for students. Vice Chair Moulton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

Agenda Item 10 – New Charter School Applications [02:36:42]

a. Southern Nevada Trades High School

Executive Director Feiden provided a quick summary of the application process before discussing the applications. She noted that the structure of the recommendation memo is a bit different than previous cycles though the contents of the memo are still the same. She provided an overview of the changes.

Member Mosca recused herself from this agenda item.

Executive Director Feiden addressed the Southern Nevada Trades High School application. As proposed, the school plans to open in the 89110-zip code with 9th and 10th grade and 200 students and grow to eventually served grades 9-12. She provided the summary of the district input provided by CCSD that is attached as an exhibit to staff's recommendation. The input was provided around the same time staff finalized the recommendation and so it was not incorporated in that. Overall, after careful review and consideration, the review committee unanimously recommended that this application be approved, with conditions and staff agrees with this recommendation and believes that the application has satisfied the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249. She then proceeded to the overview of the application as submitted. Executive Director Feiden provided the summary of [staff's recommendation](#).

Brett Willis introduced himself as the proposed Board Chair of the Southern Nevada Trades High School. He is joined by Amanda Moss, Senior Director of Government Affairs, Southern Nevada Homebuilders Association; Julie Carver, Executive Director; Rebecca Marithrew, proposed Vice Chair, and leads their facilities committee;

Lisa Jones, CPA, and a partner at Campbell Jones and Cowan and is their Treasurer and leads their finance committee; Kelly Gaines, President and CEO of the Nevada Subcontractors Association, serving as the proposed school's Secretary and leads the marketing committee; Tina Morgan, Manager of Nevada Stairs and a retired educator and leads their academic committee; Amber Carwick, a teacher at ACE high school that could not be here; Kent Lay, Vision President of Woodside Homes and board member of the Nevada State Contractors Board; Dan Wright, Division Vice President of President Community Planning at Toll Brothers; Kelly Suiter, Controller and CEO of Wrightway Drywall and Paint; also not with them today is Michael Vanesquire, Senior Partner Managing Partner at Shumway Van; present virtually is Adam Nicely, Principal of ACE high school in Reno. Mr. Willis provided his background. There was further discussion between the Authority and the proposed school representatives.

Motion: *Member Holmes-Sutton made the motion to approve the Southern Nevada Trades High School application as submitted during the 2022 Application Cycle, with the conditions as permitted by NAC 388A.410 and as outlined below, based on a finding that the applicant has met the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school.*

1. *By September 30, 2022, provide a detailed plan for hiring the principal.*
2. *By November 30, 2022, provide a fully executed agreement with ACE Charter School regarding the ongoing services and supports to be provided by ACE Charter School.*
3. *By November 30, 2022, provide a revised budget which includes an ELL/TESOL Teacher during the first year of operation.*
4. *By March 1, 2023, provide evidence that the principal hire has been hired.*
5. *Complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new charter schools*

Pursuant to NAC 388A.410, all conditions set forth above must be met for the school to open for the 2023-24 school year. Member Shauntee Rosales seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Rooted School – Clark County [03:40:30]

Director Modrcin said this item is the application for Rooted School – Clark County. As proposed, the school plans to open with 9th and 10th grade with 180 students and eventually grow to 9-12 with 90 students per grade for a total of 360 students. The school intends to primarily serve the 89110, 89115, 89116-zip codes. Director Modrcin provided the summary of the district input provided by CCSD that is attached as an exhibit to staff's recommendation. Like the previous application, the input was provided around the same time staff finalized the recommendation and so it was not incorporated in that. Overall, after careful review and consideration, the review committee unanimously recommended that this application be denied. SPCSA staff agree with this recommendation and believes the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249. Director Modrcin provided an overview of the application along with [staff's recommendation](#). John Etzell, Executive Director of Boys Town Nevada, and proposed Board Chair for Rooted School – Clark County, provided background and introductions. Kaitlin Karpinski was also present on behalf of the school. There was discussion between the Authority and the proposed school representatives.

Motion: *Member Schafer made the motion to deny the Rooted School – Clark County application as submitted during the 2022 Application Cycle based on a finding that the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has failed to demonstrate competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school. Designate Director Feiden and Director Modrcin to meet and confer with the applicant. Vice Chair Moulton seconded the motion.*

Role call vote:

Member Schafer: Yes

Member Olsen: Yes

Member Mosca: No

Member Shauntee Rosales: No
Vice Chair Moulton: Yes
Chair Mackedon: Yes
Member Holmes-Sutton: Yes

The motion carried 5-2.

Member Mosca left for the remainder of the meeting.

c. Mind Your Books Charter School [05:35:43]

Executive Director Feiden said this item is the application and recommendation for Mind Your Books Charter School. As proposed, the school plans to open in the 89115-zip code and serve students in and around that community. The school would open with 300 students in K – 7th grade and grow to serve 540 students in K – 8th grade. Executive Director Feiden provided the summary of the district input provided by CCSD that is attached as an exhibit to staff’s recommendation. Overall, after careful review and consideration, the review committee unanimously recommended that this application be denied. SPCSA staff agree with this recommendation and believes the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249. Executive Director Feiden provided an overview of the application along with [staff’s recommendation](#). There was brief discussion between the Authority and Executive Director Feiden. Cami Taiwo, Executive Director of Mind Your Books provided introductions and brief comments.

Motion: *Member Olsen made the motion to Deny the Mind Your Books Charter School application as submitted during the 2022 Application Cycle based on a finding that the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has failed to demonstrate competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school. Designate Director Feiden and Director Modrcin to meet and confer with the applicant. Member Shauntee Rosales seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Agenda Item 11 – Long-Range Calendar [06:06:43]

Executive Director Feiden reminded the Authority they will not be meeting in September and their next meeting will be in October. They will be talking about academic performance at their October meeting and also at their November meeting as this is the time of year when a lot of their data comes in.

Agenda Item 12 – Public Comment #2 [06:09:51]

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 13 – Adjournment [06:10:00]

The meeting was adjourned at 3:12PM.

State Public Charter School Authority

Monday, August 29, 2022 Board Meeting

Las Vegas

Name	Representing	Agenda Item #
Kiunars Arzani	CSMC	
Nicole McDermett	Mater Academy	
Renee Jankes	Mater Academy	6
Brian Coy	Mater Academy	6
Jessica Cruz	Mater Academy	
Jana Lavin	OISE	10
David Johnson	-	-
Tom Nicholas	CSMC	
Jonathan Johnson	Rooted School	
Beth Willis	Southern Nevada Trades High School	10
Anthony Grant		

Name	Representing	Agenda Item #
Julie Carter	SNTHS	10
John Ebel	Kantid	
Amanda Moss	SNTHS	10
Rebecca Merrick	SNTHS	10
Tina Morgan	SNTHS	10
Kelly Suiter	SNTHS	10
Kelly Gaines	SNTHS	10
Lisa Jones	SNTHS	10
Keara Lay	SNTHS	10
Cam Taiwo	NYBCS	

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VISITOR'S CARD

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Meeting

Welcome... PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY all information in full so that we may maintain accurate records.

Date 8/29/22

Name Jane Wilcox Lawin

Title EEO

Address 732 S. 6th Str.
2 V NV

Phone No. _____

Representing 0180

Agenda Item 10

I Request To Speak

I am a scheduled speaker

I am a visitor