



NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

Monday, November 18, 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:

Member Kurt Thigpen
Member Jackson Olsen
Member Maureen Schafer
Member Lee Farris
Member Tamika Shauntee Rosales
Member Tonia Holmes-Sutton

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chair Melissa Mackedon

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Vice Chair Sheila Moulton

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT IN-PERSON:

Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
Ryan Herrick, General Counsel
Jennifer King, Administrative Assistant IV

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor
Brandon Gayton, Education Programs Professional
Mike Dang, Manager of Organizational and Financial
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst II

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON:

Diva Pullum
Nick Fleege
Jessica LaNeave
Barbara Lindsay
Carolyn Kobrin
Terry Scott
Donna Kobrin
Tom Nicoles
Renee Fairless
Jonathan Johnson

Kristin Kise
Rachelle Hulet
Sarah Barlow
John Etzell

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY:

Travis Mizer
Mia Nelson
David Fossett
Jai Mallory
Mindi Palomeque
Monica Johnson
Kaitlin Karpinski
Merrick Murray
Talia Livneh

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call, and Pledge of Allegiance [00:00:54]

Sheila Moulton, Vice Chair of the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), called the meeting to order at 9:07am and facilitated the pledge of allegiance.

Agenda Item 2 – New SPCSA Board Member Introduction: Kurt Thigpen. [00:02:52]

Member Thigpen provided a brief introduction.

Agenda Item 3 – Public Comment #1 [00:03:50]

1. Barbara Lindsay, regarding Nevada State High School.

Ryan Herrick, General Counsel, said they have public comment that was submitted regarding Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas Eastgate campus. The public comment has been posted to the website with the supporting materials for today.

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of October 7, 2022 SPCSA Board Meeting Action Minutes [00:10:12]

MOTION: Member Farris made the motion to approve the October 7, 2022 SPCSA board meeting action minutes. Member Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5 – SPCSA Charter School Governing Body Governance Standards [00:10:55]

Member Holmes-Sutton spoke about the SPCSA Charter School Governing Body Governance Standards today and chose focus on standard number one, bullet two: Commit to the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional success of all enrolled students and the overall academic success of the school.

Agenda Item 6 – Executive Director’s Report [00:13:12]

a. Initiatives Related to Serving All Students Equitably

Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director, said today’s materials includes the summary of the strategies included in the submitted recruitment and enrollment plans. The strategies fall into three categories: raising awareness about the school as an option for students and/or raising awareness about the programs offered by the school; increasing the likelihood that certain student groups are selected through the enrollment process; and ensuring that the school provides a welcoming and supportive environment for all learners. SPCSA staff have reviewed all the plans and they are providing feedback to all of those schools. Schools are expected to implement these plans going into the application, lottery and enrollment process for the 2023 school year. During the spring and early summer, they will collect data on the effectiveness of these strategies. They are hopeful the data they gather will enable these and other schools to continue to make progress towards serving a representative population and ultimately help them move closer to their vision of equitable access to diverse, innovative and high-quality public schools for every Nevada student.

b. Legislative Session: Interim Committees and Planning [00:15:49]

Executive Director Feiden said in terms of preparing for February, there are two priorities at this point. The first is to work with the Governor’s Finance Office to answer any questions about the SPCSA’s agency requested budget and the budget will be incorporated into the final Governor’s recommended budget, which is expected to be released in January and additionally, the first Bill Draft Requests, are populating in the legislative website platform and they are reviewing and keeping track of any education bills that may impact both the agency as well as their schools. Staff will provide regular updates as they get into session regarding the bills that are making their way through the legislative process.

c. Pre-Opening Process for Schools Opening in 2023. [00:16:57]

Executive Director Feiden said when the SPCSA approves new schools, one of the conditions is completion of the SPCSA’s pre-opening process. She began sharing the overview of that process for those schools opening in the fall of 2023. The materials associated with this item are a memo and a checklist for this upcoming year. There was discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff.

Agenda Item 7 – Charter School Contract Amendment Applications. [00:36:55]

- a. Somerset Academy of Las Vegas Stephanie Campus**
- b. Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Cadence Campus**

Danny Peltier, Management Analyst II, said items 7(a) and 7(b) are recommendations regarding amendments from Somerset Academy of Las Vegas Stephanie campus (Somerset Stephanie) and Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Cadence campus (Pinecrest Cadence). The schools have submitted good cause exemptions and amendments to enter in an articulation agreement. The agreement would be between the Somerset Stephanie and Pinecrest Cadence. The Somerset Stephanie campus operates K-8 and is requesting to enter into an articulation agreement with the Pinecrest Cadence campus for 8th grade students matriculating from the Somerset Stephanie campus to qualify for priority enrollment at the Pinecrest Cadence campus high school. The change would be implemented for the 2023-24 school year. Staff have reviewed the articulation agreement and finds it is compliant with the relevant NRS and recommends approval. There was brief discussion between the Authority and David Fossett, Principal at Somerset Stephanie and Travis Mizer, Board Chair at Somerset Academy.

Motion: *Member Shauntee Rosales made the motion to Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Somerset Academy of Las Vegas to enter into an articulation agreement with the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada permitted under NRS 388A.456(1)(d) for Stephanie campus 8th graders. Member Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Motion: *Member Shauntee Rosales made the motion to Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Pinecrest Academy of Nevada to adopt modified enrollment preferences and to enter into an articulation agreement with the Somerset Academy of Las Vegas permitted under NRS 388A.456(1)(d). Member Thigpen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

- c. Mater Academy of Nevada East Campus [00:45:10]**

Mr. Peltier said Mater Academy of Nevada has submitted a request for a good cause exemption and approval for Mater Academy of Nevada to provide bus transportation to and from Mater Academy East for extracurricular activities. SPCSA staff finds this amendment request to provide transportation for extracurricular activities to be both reasonable and compliant with applicable Federal and State regulations and recommends approval. There was further discussion between the Authority, school representatives and SPCSA staff.

Motion: *Member Olsen made the motion to Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Mater Academy of Nevada to provide bus transportation of students to and from Mater's East Las Vegas campus for extracurricular activities with the following conditions that must be satisfied prior to implementation:*

- 1. After purchase of the bus, Mater shall submit evidence the bus has been inspected by the Department of Public Safety to ensure that the vehicle is mechanically safe and meets the minimum specifications established by the State Board.*
- 2. Evidence that the school has obtained proper insurance coverage pursuant to NRS 386.795.*

Member Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 8 – Academic Performance Review and Recommendations [00:52:18]

- a. 2021-22 School Year Index Scores as issued by the Nevada Department of Education**

Executive Director Feiden said they are going to continue the conversation about academic performance for the 2021-22 school year and recapped what they discussed at the last meeting. This month they will look at school level data for the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) and the SPCSA's academic performance framework. Staff will also be recommending some action related to academic performance for certain schools. Executive Director Feiden provided the outline of the items they will discuss today. Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor, provided a refresher of the data shared at the last meeting. He discussed the national trend where the pandemic has impacted communities more than others such as high poverty communities. They

looked at and compared the NSPF adjusted scores for Not Title I and Title I schools before moving to discussing the SPCSA v. Nation Smarter Balanced Proficiency for ELA and math.

b. 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Ratings [01:04:05]

Brandon Gayton, Education Programs Professional, provided a refresher of the SPCSA academic performance framework and the analysis for the 2021-22 SPCSA academic performance framework ratings. He spoke to the geographical indicator comparison and the enrollment diversity indicator comparison of the overall results of the charter school NSPF performance before discussing the key takeaways of the 2021-22 SPCSA academic performance. There was brief discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff.

Motion: *Member Farris made the motion to accept the 2021 – 2022 school year Academic Performance Framework results as presented. Member Shauntee Rosales seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

c. Removal of prior Notices for academic performance [01:21:37]

Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing, began with reiterating the academic performance oversight of the Authority and the historical context. They looked at the list of schools on slide 20 that are currently operating under a notice but based upon the most recent index scores for 2021-22 school year, are now at or above a 50-index score. Staff is recommending that these notices be lifted.

Motion: *Member Farris made the motion to Lift notices of concern or breach for schools with a 2021-22 NSPF index score at or above 50 and a 2021-22 SPCSA Academic Framework rating of Meets or Exceeds Standard, including: Amplus Durango ES, Elko Institute for Academic Achievement ES, Nevada Connections Academy HS, Quest Academy ES, Somerset Aliante ES, Somerset Losee ES, Somerset Losee MS, and Somerset North Las Vegas ES. Member Olsen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Director Modrcin said moving to slide 21, these are the list of schools that are approved to be rated under the Alternative Performance Framework and/or received an NSPF index score for the 2021-22 school year that would have equated to a 2-star rating and also did not meet standards under the SPCSA's academic performance framework but were also not under a prior notice. Staff is recommending no action of these schools.

d. Recommendation to Conduct Additional Monitoring [01:28:16]

Director Modrcin said moving to slide 22, these are the list of schools that are currently operating under an active notice issued as a result of their performance during the 2018-19 school year and those star ratings, and received an NSPF index score less than 50 points during the 2021-22 school year, and/or received an index score under the NSPF that would have equated to a 1-star rating if those had been calculated. Staff is recommending additional monitoring and oversight. There was further discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff regarding the trend with elementary schools. Renee Fairless, Principal at Mater Academy of Nevada, and Rachelle Hulet, Executive Director at Amplus Academy, provided comment.

Motion: *Member Farris made the motion to delegate staff to conduct additional academic monitoring and oversight during the 2022-23 school year through the School Performance Planning Process and site evaluations for the following schools: CIVICA ES, Coral Academy Nellis ES, Democracy Prep Agassi ES, Discovery Sandhill ES, Explore Academy MS, Freedom Classical Academy ES, Futuro Academy ES, Learning Bridge ES, Legacy Cadence ES, Legacy North Valley ES, Mater East Las Vegas ES, Nevada Prep ES, and Nevada Rise ES. Member Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Agenda Item 9 – New Schools Updates. [01:44:15]

a. Eagle Charter Schools of Nevada.

Director Modrcin provided the background of Eagle Charter Schools of Nevada before turning it over to the school.

Monica Johnson, Board Chair for Eagle Charter Schools of Nevada, provided the update regarding facilities, hiring, and student recruitment. She discussed the school's immediate areas of focus including construction, student recruitment and replacement of CMO services. There was further discussion between the Authority and school representatives, Ms. Johnson and Nick Fleege, regarding the change in CMO services.

A 10-minute convenience break was taken.

Agenda Item 10 – Rooted School – Clark County Resubmitted New Charter School Application. [02:13:39]
Board Member Thigpen recused himself from this agenda item.

Director Modrcin provided the background regarding Rooted School – Clark County's initial charter application and the resubmission. He provided some context about the school before diving into areas that have improved since the initial application and highlighted any lingering concerns. Overall and after careful consideration the review committee recommends conditional approval as the applicant was found to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249. The complete recommendation along with the proposed conditions can be found in pages two and three of today's memo. Director Modrcin broke down staff's recommendation and findings under each of the components. Staff is recommending conditional approval.

John Etzell, Board Chair, Rooted Clark County, provided remarks. There was brief discussion between the Authority and school representatives.

Motion: *Member Shauntee Rosales made the motion to approve the Rooted School – Clark County resubmitted 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 January 1, 2023, provide a revised lottery policy that complies with Nevada statutes and regulations.*
2. *By January 17, 2023, provide fully executed lease for a facility for the 2023-24 school year.*
3. *By March 31, 2023, provide an updated budget that reflects secured philanthropic funding, along with evidence for each funding source.*
4. *By March 31, 2023, provide evidence that the principal has been hired.*
5. *By March 31, 2023, provide an updated list of partners and evidence of these relationships that includes deliverables and responsibilities of each party, such as Memorandums of Understanding.*
6. *By July 30, 2023, provide evidence that*
 - a. *All Career and Technical Education courses comply with NDE requirements and that those course for which students will earn academic credit have been approved by the State Board of Education (see NAC 389.672), and*
 - b. *The school has received approval from the State Board of Education to offer work-based learning, if it will be offered during the 2023-24 school year. (see NRS 389.167)*
7. *Provide notification to SPCSA staff in the event that the Rooted School Foundation or an organization intending to contract with the Rooted School Foundation submits an application to open a charter school in any state, or if the Rooted School Foundation enters into a new contract to provide services to an existing charter school prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year.*
8. *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 Farris seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Agenda Item 11 – Charter Application and Rubric for 2023 Applications. [02:44:30]

Executive Director Feiden began by recapping the statutory authority and requirements regarding the application rubric before talking through the procedures and criteria for soliciting and evaluating charter school applications. She shared the initial staff priorities and summarized the feedback they received from the Authority at last month's meeting as it related to the revision process and characteristics to prioritize/emphasize. Additionally, they gathered feedback from some of their constituents (past applicants, local support organizations, community working group). She shared those application/rubric suggestions and the identified characteristics to prioritize. She went through each of the changes individually and how they relate to the incorporated feedback. There was brief discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff.

Motion: *Member Holmes-Sutton made the motion to approve the New Charter School Application and Rubric effective for the 2023 application cycle. Member Farris seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Agenda Item 12 – 2023 Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment. [03:26:34]

Executive Director Feiden said as the Authority knows statute requires the Authority to review and approve updates to their Needs Assessment each year by January 31st. Given the early application cycle, they believe it is critical to publish revisions concurrent to the new school application. The revised Needs Assessment is posted and revisions to the document are highlighted in yellow. Executive Director Feiden walked through the revisions.

Motion: *Member Farris made the motion to accept the 2023 Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment as presented. Member Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Agenda Item 13 – 2022-23 School Year Demographics [03:40:44]

Dr. Ozdemir said today they are presenting the official 2022-23 school year SPCSA enrollment data. He began with the overview of the Annual Nevada Enrollment Data: "Validation Day" before talking through the SPCSA enrollment highlights. The next slide showed the SPCSA's total enrollment beginning in 2018 to now, as well as the enrollment across Nevada. Dr. Gayton spoke about the SPCSA's student group enrollment trends from school years 2020 – 2022 which can be found on slide seven of the presentation. The next several slides showed the student group enrollment comparisons to the State, Clark vs. Clark and Washoe vs. Washoe. He then talked through the enrollment for recently opened schools before concluding with the key takeaways from the data. There was further discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff regarding the data as presented.

Agenda Item 14 – Overview of Organizational Performance Framework. [04:12:36]

Mike Dang, Manager of the Organizational and Financial Frameworks, began with the overview of the SPCSA Organizational Framework. He discussed the current progress to date which included authorizing staff compiling and reviewing all relevant data for the 21-22 school year and sending reports to all school leaders and board chairs for FY22. The review window closes on December 2 and the final data will be presented to the Authority at the December meeting. There was brief discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff.

Agenda Item 15 – Long-Range Calendar. [04:22:06]

Executive Director Feiden said looking ahead to next month they will see the organizational performance framework results and renewal applications. The growth management plan will updated as well and they will also be sharing the graduation data along with a preview and recap on the financial performance framework. In January, some annual things come into play and they will begin their new school updates. Finally, they will update their Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan. Member Holmes-Sutton asked if there could be a consideration for inviting one or two of the schools that had met the full 15 points for the diversity indicator and met or exceeded the academic framework rating and perhaps speak specifically to the strategies utilized to support their students and families.

Agenda Item 16 – Public Comment #2 [04:25:37]

1. Donna Kobrin, regarding Nevada State High School.

2. Terry Scott, regarding Nevada State High School.
3. Kristine Kise regarding Discovery Charter School.
4. Barbara Lindsay regarding Nevada State High School.
5. Tricia Wilbourne regarding Discovery Charter School.

Mr. Herrick said they received four written public comments regarding Discovery Charter School and they will be posted to the SPCSA website.

Agenda Item 17 – Adjournment [04:45:04]

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00PM.

DRAFT