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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing, SPCSA
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Young Women’s Leadership Academy Charter Amendment Request to Reduce 2022-2023 Enrollment Cap**
DATE: December 16, 2022

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Young Women’s Leadership Academy (YWLA) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the request to reduce its first-year enrollment cap from 110 students to 58 students.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the Good Cause Exemption and approve the amendment request. A proposed motion can be found on page 3 of this memo.

Background and Overview of the Amendment

YWLA is located at 3415 S. Mojave Rd. in Las Vegas, Nevada 89121 in Clark County. YWLA is affiliated with the Young Women Leadership Schools network of all-girls college prep schools all driven by the same mission and vision: to nurture the intellectual curiosity and creativity of young women. Young Women’s Leadership Schools accomplish this by supporting the “whole girl” and seek to maximize the academic achievement, social emotional well-being, and post-secondary success of each student. YWLA began operation in 2022 with Grades 6 and 9. As of the 2022 Validation Day, YWLA had 62 students enrolled.

According to the application, YWLA is seeking to reduce its enrollment cap to 58 students from its currently approved enrollment of 110 students for its initial year of operation during the 2022-23 school year. The reason for this reduction according to the amendment application is due the school’s inability to secure the necessary paperwork from families in order to confirm many of those students’ completed registration.

The Authority approved a reduction of the enrollment cap from 150 students to 110 students for similar reasons at its June 27, 2022 meeting. According to the most recent amendment, the school continues to have issues gathering the necessary paperwork to complete registration and although 240 students applied to enroll in YWLA’s inaugural class of 110 students, YWLA has only been able to obtain complete paperwork to register 57 of those 240 students despite numerous efforts and multiple contacts to those families. The amendment application goes on to state 164 students applied to enroll in YWLA’s 6th grade class of 80 students, 115 students declined seats while 12 additional students have withdrawn which led to YWLA being able to register 36 of those 80 students. Similarly, although 76 students applied to enroll in YWLA’s 9th grade class of 30 students, 53 students declined seats while 2 additional students have withdrawn so YWLA has only been able to register 21 of those 30 students.

YWLA did note in their application that it continues to aggressively market the school and hopes that now since it is operational, the school will be able to recruit more students moving forward. According to the amendment application, YWLA is in the process of increasing efforts to market the school to, at least, five nearby apartment complexes (Tara Hills, Cottonwood Creek, Sierra Pines, Sevilla, and Gateway Villas) which are located within a 10-minute walk to the YWLA campus. YWLA also continues to the following as part of ongoing community outreach efforts:

- Door knocking in the surrounding neighborhoods;
- Reaching out to parents, students, and community members through after-school and neighborhood programs;
- Reaching out to parent-teacher associations;
- Organizing neighborhood walks to meet families;
- Reaching out to young people through community-based organizations; and
- Reaching out to partner organizations and “connectors” like community leaders.

The request for a reduction in enrollment only contemplates a reduction in Year 1 of operation. If approved, YWLA’s enrollment cap for the remainder of its charter term would be:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	6 th , 9 th	6 th 7 th & 9 th 10 th	6 th – 11 th	6 th – 12 th	6 th – 12 th	6 th – 12 th
Total Enrollment	58	300	450	540	570	600

The amendment submission states that YWLA believes that a commitment from a local donor will help address the decreased revenues as a result of lower than anticipated enrollment. After reviewing materials, including a revised budget, submitted as part of the amendment, SPCSA

staff agrees with this analysis, but notes that the school is now projecting a very small surplus for FY23.

Legal Authority

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. When determining whether to approve an amendment request, the sponsor considers the charter school’s compliance with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations and evidence relating to the academics, finance and organization of the charter school. (See NAC 388A.400(8) and NRS 388A.276).

Analysis and Staff Recommendation

When reviewing an amendment application for RFA eligibility, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. YWLA is in its first year of operation and has not been rated academically, financially, or organizationally. However, staff finds no current issues that would impact the eligibility of this amendment request. In light this, SPCSA staff finds that YWLA’s amendment request as eligible to be approved.

SPCSA staff recommends the SPCSA board approve the request of YWLA to change its enrollment cap from 110 students to 58 students for the 2022-2023 school year in order to comply with terms in the charter contract. SPCSA staff agrees with the YWLA’s assessment that the school is financially viable for the 2022 – 2023 school year with an enrollment cap of 58 students. SPCSA staff will continue to monitor the enrollment of YWLA throughout the 2022-2023 school year.

Proposed Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Young Women’s Leadership Academy’s request to reduce its enrollment cap for the 2022-2023 school year to 58 students.

If approved, Young Women’s Leadership Academy’s enrollment cap for its charter term will be:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	6 th , 9 th	6 th 7 th & 9 th 10 th	6 th – 11 th	6 th – 12 th	6 th – 12 th	6 th – 12 th
Total Enrollment	58	300	450	540	570	600

The approved Young Women’s Leadership Academy’s enrollment cap for its charter term will be:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	6 th , 9 th	6 th 7 th & 9 th 10 th	6 th – 11 th	6 th – 12 th	6 th – 12 th	6 th – 12 th
Total Enrollment	110	300	450	540	570	600

School Demographics since 2022 – Young Women’s Leadership Academy

YWLA

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
22-23	62	1.6%	40.3%	8.0%	45.1%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%	*	*	70.9%

A – Asian

B – Black

C – Caucasian

H – Hispanic

I – American Indian/Alaskan Native

M – Two or more races

P – Pacific Islander

IEP – Individualized Education Plan – A student with a disability/special education student

ELL – English Language Learner

FRL – A student who qualifies for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

* - Suppressed data due to n-count

YWLA Financial Performance – Not Rated

YWLA Organizational Performance – Not Rated

YWLA Academic Performance – Not Rated