

STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY



2021 CHARTER SCHOOL REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO CHARTER CONTRACT APPLICATION

For Additional Instructions, please see the [Amendment Application Guidance Document](#)

For the: **Strong Start Academy Elementary School**

Date Submitted: June 7, 2022

Current Charter Contract Start Date: 7/1/2022

Charter Contract Expiration Date: 6/30/2028

Key Contact: Lorna James-Cervantes

Key Contact title: President of Governing Board

Key Contact email and phone: ljamescervantes@clvstrongstartes.org (702) 266-7240

Date of School Board approval of this application: June 7, 2022

Deadlines

	Spring Cycle	Fall Cycle
Notice ¹ of Intent to submit Request for Charter Amendment (RFA)	No Later Than: March 1	No Later Than: September 1
Request For Amendment (RFA)	Due between April 1 – 15	Due between October 1 – 15
Board Meeting for Possible Action (tentative and subject to change)	June board meeting	December board meeting

RFA application processing includes an initial high-level completeness check followed by an ongoing completeness check as specific, relevant sections of the application are reviewed in detail.

¹ Notice or Letter of Intent

This Request For Amendment (RFA) is submitted to request a contract amendment regarding the following (identify which RFA changes you are requesting approval for).

- 1. ☐ [Add Distance Education](#)
- 2. ☐ [Add Dual-Credit Program](#)
- 3. ☐ [Change Mission and/or Vision](#)
- 4. ☐ [Eliminate a Grade Level or Other Educational Services](#)
- 5. ☐ [EMOs: Entering, Amending, Renewing, Terminating Charter Contract with an EMO](#)
- 6. ☐ [Enrollment: Expand Enrollment in **Existing** Grade Level\(s\) and Facilities](#)
- 7. ☐ [Enrollment: Expand Enrollment in **New** Grade Levels](#)
- 8. ☒ [Facilities: Acquire or Construct a New or Additional Facility that will not affect approved enrollment](#)
- 9. ☐ [Facilities: Occupy New or Additional Facility](#)
- 10. ☐ [Facilities: Occupy a Temporary Facility](#)
- 11. ☐ [Facilities: Relocate or Consolidate Campuses](#)
- 12. ☐ [RFA: Transportation](#)
- 13. ☐ [Change of Incorporation Status](#)
- 14. ☐ [Other changes](#)

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Introduction

The SPCSA seeks to continuously improve its processes and the quality of its services. Over the past few years we have, for example, been able to significantly reduce the amount of paperwork involved in the processing of Request For Amendment (RFA) Applications (RFAAs), primarily by separating primarily instructional and guidance information to a separate Technical Guidance document.

The SPCSA have now add a new, brief, simple guidance section to this application. This next section is designed to provide guidance and processing steps to schools for applying for most frequently requested RFA applications.

If you're submitting RFAs in one of these areas, the following guidance may help you prepare and process your application faster

The first three and the fifth may be handled in the Consent Agenda section of the board meeting, also.

Most Frequent Request For Amendment Applications

Here are the four most frequently Request For Amendment (RFA) application types submitted to the Authority for approval by the SPCSA board. If you are requesting one of these RFA types, then you may follow the below described abbreviated process.

1. Dual credit RFA applications

2. Distant education RFA applications
3. Enrollment additions or contractions and grade expansions or contractions
4. Facilities acquisitions or leases
5. Lotteries and lottery changes

Below are the processing requirements of the RFA types above. Complete the following check marked items (☒) from the overall application requirements list below. You do not need to respond to the unchecked areas.

Sections Required

The below focused requirements are only for schools seeking approval for the above RFA types. RFAs for Facility acquisitions or expansions have additional requirements described below:

- ☒ Executive Summary
- ☐ Meeting The Need
 - ☒ Expansions to new grade levels or new campuses must complete the Meeting the Need section.
 - ☒ Lottery RFAs must include Meeting the Need section for relevant sections.
 - ☐ Academic Plan (required if expanding to new grades that are currently not being offered)
- ☒ Financial Plan
 1. Not required for Dual Credit or Distance Education RFAs assuming fiscal cost impacts less than 5%.
 2. Enrollment RFAs: complete the tab labeled “General” in the “RFA Pro Forma” MS Excel file to show the planned fiscal impacts of the RFA.
 3. Facility RFAs: complete the appropriate tab under the “**Facilities**” section below including the “RFA Pro Forma” MS Excel file to show the planned fiscal impacts of the facility RFA.
- ☐ Operations Plan
- ☒ RFA Specific Sections (as applicable for your RFA, as opposed to General Sections). This includes completing the “**Facilities**” related RFA section below.

All other amendment types require applicants to complete each applicable section below. Should you have questions, please reach out to Mike Dang for further guidance.

Section I: Standard RFA Requirements

A) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Required for all submissions. 4 Pages or less per RFA, If your RFA submission includes more than one requested change, this must be listed in the Executive Summary. Should you have questions, please contact Mike Dang.

Provide a brief overview of your school, including:

1. Identification of the school, its location(s), enrollment(s)(most recent ADE quarter), brief history, brief description of its board members and key leadership team members

Strong Start Academy Elementary School’s (SSAES) charter application was approved in January 2022. The school was originally slated to open at three incubation sites: 1617 Alta Dr., 700 Twin Lakes Dr., and 2950 E. Bonanza Road. The Board of Directors have secured a lease at one permanent location, the 9th Bridge School at 302 S. 9th Street in Downtown Las Vegas. The City of Las Vegas has planned to purchase the property and lease it back to the school within the next year. They have also committed to providing maintenance, security, and improvements to the building as needed. SSAES will open in August 2022 with

three classes of students in each grade from kindergarten through 2nd grades, and then add third, fourth, and fifth grade classes in each of the subsequent three years. Class sizes will be capped at 20 students per class and all students will be engaged in a dual language educational model. The school leadership team is committed to hiring bilingual, TESL/bilingual endorsed teachers. The Board is comprised of a highly qualified set of individuals including experienced, bilingual educators, college professors, human resources experts, and a parent. The Leadership Team includes a highly qualified and experienced Executive Director, several highly experienced educational consultants, and a team of teacher leaders.

2. Statement and overview of the mission and vision

Vision: Strong Start Academy Elementary School is a culturally diverse learning community that prepares children to excel academically in two languages and have a positive impact on an increasingly evolving and global society.

Mission: The mission of Strong Start Academy Elementary School is to provide equitable, high- quality academics as we prepare our bilingual, civic-minded thinkers to maximize their potential in their community and the world.

Students deserve equal access to opportunity and high-quality education, regardless of the zip code in which they live, the color of their skin, their gender, the language they speak, or their country of origin. Strong Start Academy Elementary School (SSAES) believes that every child has the ability to excel given the right supports, and that all students have talents that can grow through formal learning. SSAES will equip students with the knowledge, skills, and mindsets they need to put their learning to use as active citizens. SSAES want students to love coming to school each day because they feel valued, safe, supported, and respected by peers and faculty. The goal of SSAES is to holistically cultivate the academic ground for these students with a rigorous and innovative academic experience. SSAES will promote student achievement in a safe and enriching learning environment where students will develop a sense of purpose and become responsible, independent life-long learners.

3. Specific statement of the request

(Example:) “The Board of the above named charter school, operating under a current contract with a start date of 7/1/2022 and a six-year expiration date of 6/30/2028 requests that the SPCSA approve this request to amend its charter school contract with the SPCSA regarding the following (check all that apply):

The Board of the above named charter school, operating under a current contract with a start date of March 1, 2022 and a six-year expiration date of June 30, 2029 requests that the SPCSA approve this request to amend its charter school contract with the SPCSA regarding the following:

- ☐ 1. Dual-Credit Programs
- ☐ 2. EMOs: Amend charter contract with an EMO or CMO
- ☐ 3. Enrollment: Expand enrollment in existing grades and facilities
- ☐ 4. Enrollment: Expand enrollment in new grade levels
- ☐ 5. Enrollment: Eliminate a grade level or other educational services
- ☐ 6. Facilities: Acquire or construct a new or additional facility that will not affect approved enrollment

___ 7. Facilities: Occupy additional sites

X 8. Facilities: Relocate or consolidate campuses

___ 9. Facilities: Occupy a temporary facility

___ 10. Other (specify): _____

(See full list above of RFA amendment types)

Attach a copy of the document(s), including minutes, confirming approval of the RFA.

4. A summary explanation of the reasons that the charter school is seeking to make this specific requested change.

SSAES is seeking this change to more effectively serve the students and parents of our target population. It was always the Board's intention to seek a single site that could house all three of the preliminary grade levels with the capacity to expand to the three remaining grade levels in the future. Serving all students at one site will also assist the Executive Director in providing quality observation, coaching, and feedback to all staff members to ensure implementation of the school's vision and provide a high quality instruction for all students. It will also eliminate the need to provide transportation for students or parents from one site to another. It also assists parents in meeting with teachers of multiple children in multiple grades, and in having a single drop-off/pick-up point for all of their children.

5. Description of proposed target model and target communities **No change**

6. Statement of outcomes you expect to achieve across the network of campuses **No change**

7. Key components of your educational model for the expanded school **No change**

8. Describe the charter school's plan to ensure that proper restorative justice principles are practiced. Describe plans, including record keeping, to monitor for potential disproportionate discipline practices. **No change**

9. Describe the charter school's plan to ensure enrollment diversity and equity, commensurate with the neighborhood and zip codes it serves. Include plans to close any proficiency gaps among diverse student groups (ex. race/ethnicity, FRL, EL, IEP) as well as family and community engagement strategies. **No change**

10. The values, approach, and leadership accomplishments of your school or network leader and leadership team **No change**

11. Key supporters, partners, or resources that will contribute to your expanded school's success. **No change**

NOTES

1. **For all remaining General Requirements Sections:** Complete and submit all RFAs by answering remaining General Requirements Section questions.

2. **Indicate "No change" for any below requested response that has not changed from your charter school contract.**

3. **Indicate "N/A" for any below requested response in this General Requirements Section that is not applicable to your request. Applicants do not need to respond "N/A" to any Specific Requirements RFA section for which they are not applying.**

4. ***If your school is seeking an amendment outside of the Fall or Spring Amendment Cycle, please include at the front of the application:***

a. Letter from the Board chair requesting Good Cause Exemption;

b. Agenda for the Board Meeting where Board voted to request the Good Cause Exemption; and

c. The draft or approved minutes for the Board Meeting where the Board voted to request the Good Cause Exemption.

5. To expand any closed section(s) below, put your cursor on the left side of a heading below and click the triangle (▲) left of that heading.

B) MEETING THE NEED

C) ACADEMIC PLAN

D) FINANCIAL PLAN

E) OPERATIONS PLAN

Section II: SPECIFIC RFA SECTIONS

RFA: Academic Amendments

8. RFA: Lottery: Change(s) in Charter Lottery Policy N/A

The SPCSA considers changes to the admission process for sponsored schools to be a material amendment to their charter contract.

To incorporate a weighted lottery program, a Request For Amendment must present, in at least three to five narrative pages, plus any spreadsheet, a description of the following:

1. The current academic model including current student demographics and academic performance, including performance by student group,
2. An updated Meeting the Need section noting relevant sections and changes. The projected impacts from the proposed weighted lottery on student demographics,
3. How the school will ensure strong academic results for all students, including any adjustments to the school model and/or staffing to account for expected changes in student demographics,
4. A summary of the current fiscal state of the school under the current model, such as by a copy of the current school budget, and
5. A summary of the projected fiscal impact to revenues, expenditures, reserves, and surplus (deficit).

Additionally, include a copy of the current lottery policy as well as a copy of the charter school board-approved, proposed weighted lottery policy.

The draft of your proposed lottery policy must include a thorough explanation/rationale for any adjustments to lottery priorities and/or weights. Proposed policies must demonstrate alignment to [NRS 388A.456](#) and/or [R131-16](#). If your school/network is proposing a weighted lottery, please be sure to provide a thorough explanation for the proposed weighting system.

Provide a plan and timeline for communicating the proposed lottery changes to your charter school/network community. How will the charter/network ensure that prospective families are aware of these changes?

Attach a revised student enrollment form to be used under the proposed policy³.

Facility RFAs

General Facility RFA requirements

Facility RFA Attachments required

³ Note: if the charter/network is proposing a weighted lottery, additional information asked of students and families should be clearly labeled as optional.