



NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

Friday, March 3, 2023
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 Lee Farris
Member Tamika Shauntee Rosales
Member Tonia Holmes-Sutton
Vice Chair Sheila Moulton

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Chair Melissa Mackedon
Member Cindi Rivera
Member Maureen Schafer

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT IN-PERSON:

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

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON:

Michael O'Dowd
Jose Herrera

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY:

Ashley Perkins
Dennis Zimmerman
Ingmar Berg
Ercan
Dr. Jesse Welsh
Julia Qi
Jennifer Emling
Cindy McLeod
Katy Larrabee
Janelle Veith
Sherlene Simpson
Tara Meierkord
Mike Taack
Andrea Moore
Matt Brown
Keith J.D. Hightower
Chantae Readye
Kathy Rudd

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call, and Pledge of Allegiance [00:02:10]

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

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment #1 [00:03:15]

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda. [00:03:41]

- a. **Approval of January 27, 2023 SPCSA Board Meeting Action Minutes. The Authority will review and possibly approve the action minutes from the January 27, 2023 Authority Board meeting.**
- b. **Charter School Contract Amendment Applications. The Authority may approve or deny the following charter school contract amendment applications:**
 - i. **Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas – Cadence: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas – Cadence campus’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 1850 students to 1400 students.
 - ii. **Discovery Charter School – Sandhill: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve the Discovery Charter School’s request to reduce the Sandhill campus’s 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 120 students to 100 students.
 - iii. **Explore Academy: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant Explore Academy a Good Cause Exemption and approve the request of the school to reduce the enrollment cap for the 2022 – 23 school year from 355 students to 275 and additionally reduce the enrollment cap for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years as detailed in the recommendation memo.
 - iv. **Legacy Traditional Schools – Cadence: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Legacy Traditional Schools - Nevada – Cadence campus’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 1450 students to 1186 students and to reduce the enrollment cap for the remainder of the charter term as outlined in the recommendation memo.
 - v. **Nevada Prep: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Nevada Prep Charter School’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 575 students to 300 students and to reduce the cap for the remainder of the charter contract term as detailed in the recommendation memo.
 - vi. **Nevada State High School – Flagship: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve NSHS Flagship’s request to reduce its approved enrollment cap for the for the 2022-2023 school year and to reduce enrollment caps in the remainder of the charter term as detailed in the recommendation memo.
 - vii. **Nevada State High School – Meadowwood: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Nevada State High School Meadowwood’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 135 students to 34 students and to reduce the cap for the remainder of the charter contract term as detailed in the recommendation memo.
 - viii. **Silver Sands Montessori: reduction to enrollment**
Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Silver Sands Montessori’s request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 320 students to 260 students and to reduce the cap for the remainder of the charter contract term as detailed in the recommendation memo.

Motion: Vice Chair Moulton made the motion to approve the consent agenda. Member Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – SPCSA Charter School Governing Body Governance Standards [00:04:20]

Member Olsen focused on the first paragraph in the first section regarding the purpose and the second sentence that says: “While the school leadership and staff manage the day-to-day responsibilities of operating the school, the governing body is ultimately accountable to the charter school sponsor for academic achievement of students, effective organizational practices, and strong stewardship of public funds.” He emphasized the importance of the shared responsibility for the academic achievement of their students.

Agenda Item 5 – Executive Director’s Report [00:08:02]

b. Letters of Intent for New Charter School Applications.

Executive Director Feiden said that they have received fourteen Letters of Intent for New Charter School Applications by the January 30th deadline and those are posted within the supporting materials for this meeting. Applications are due by April 30th and staff has completed their five-part training series on the new school application including the revisions that they made this year. All of the training courses were recorded and are posted to their website as are the materials for the application. They have also reached out to all applicants to offer meetings to discuss the application and answer questions they may have.

c. Review of Recent Executive Orders [00:09:40]

Executive Director Feiden briefly discussed Executive Order 2023-005, which relates to all public schools in Nevada. The Order was signed on February 3rd and it required all school districts and the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) to gather and submit third party audits prepared on behalf of school districts and charter schools during the 2022 calendar year. SPCSA staff and SPCSA charter schools collected all the materials that were required and submitted them to the Governor’s Finance Office Department of Internal Audit by the March 1st deadline. Once the Division of Internal Audit reviews all the audits, they will issue a report of their findings by December 29, 2023 regarding what they found in that review.

a. Legislative Update [00:12:44]

Mr. Herrick provided the legislative update. He referred to the memo in the supporting materials which includes the bills they are tracking. They continue to monitor and track the bills that are being introduced. There was further discussion regarding Senate Bill 124 between the Authority and SPCSA staff.

Agenda Item 6 – Executive Order 2023-003. [00:29:04]

Mr. Herrick said Executive Order 2023-003 was issued by the Governor on January 12, 2023. The SPCSA has held stakeholder meetings with charter school leaders and charter school lawyers to talk about their regulations. They also have been working with the Department of Education on looking at their regulations. During today’s meeting they will gather input from the board and the public on how the SPCSA’s charter school regulations can be clarified, streamlined, or eliminated. Once they submit this report to the Governor’s office on May 1, if approved they presume at that point they will start the actual regulatory process. He referred to the memo in the supporting materials which provides more details about the SPCSA’s regulations and recommendations. There was further discussion between the Authority and SPCSA staff regarding Executive Order 2023-003. There was no public comment related to this agenda item.

Agenda Item 7 – New Schools Updates. [00:38:43]

a. Eagle Charter Schools of Nevada

Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing, said Eagle Charter Schools plans to open a K-5 growing eventually to K-8 with a year one enrollment of 540 students, and their identified location is 2025 E. Sahara in Las Vegas. Jose Herrera, Founding Principal, Eagle Charter Schools, provided the pre-opening update on behalf of the school. The school’s presentation can be found in the supporting materials.

b. Pinecrest Academy – Springs Campus [55:08]

Director Modrcin said Pinecrest Academy – Springs Campus will be opening at the elementary level and eventually growing to K-12. The year one enrollment is just above 200 and last month the school was approved to operate at the Trinity United Methodist Church facility for the first two years of operation. Michael O’Dowd, Principal, Pinecrest Academy, provided the pre-opening update on behalf of the school. The school’s presentation can be found in the supporting materials. There was further discussion between the Authority and Mr. O’Dowd.

c. Rooted School – Clark County [01:11:54]

Director Modrcin said Rooted School – Clark County plans to open this fall with grades 9-10 with a year one enrollment of 180 students and their identified location is a leased space from Nevada Prep at 1580 Betty Lane, Las Vegas in year one. Julia Qi, Director of Operations, Rooted School – Clark County, provided the pre-opening update on behalf of the school. The school’s presentation can be found in the supporting materials.

d. Southern Nevada Trades High School [01:19:25]

Director Modrcin said Southern Nevada Trades High School (SNTHS) plans to open this fall with grades 9-10 with a total enrollment of 200 students and an identified location at 1580 Bledsoe Lane in Las Vegas. Julie Carver, Executive Director, SNTHS, provided the pre-opening update on behalf of the school. Brett Willis, Board Chair, SNTHS, provided the update as it relates to their facility report. The school’s presentation can be found in the supporting materials. There was brief discussion between the Authority and SNTHS representatives.

A 10-minute convenience break was taken.

Agenda Item 8 – Charter School Contract Amendment Applications [01:44:46]

a. Battle Born Academy – relocation to a new facility for the 2023 – 24 school year

Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, said Battle Born Academy has submitted an amendment application requesting that the SPCSA grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school to relocate to a new facility for the 2023-24 school year. SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority approve the request with conditions.

The current enrollment caps for Battle Born Academy are listed below and would remain unchanged should this amendment be approved:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Enrollment	K-1, 5-6	K-7	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Total Enrollment	140	300	330	360	390	430

Further details regarding the amendment request and staff’s recommendation can be found in the supporting materials.

Motion: Vice Chair Moulton made the motion to approve Battle Born Academy’s request to relocate to a new facility beginning in the 2023-2024 school year with the following conditions:

- That by March 8, 2023 the school provide a fully executed lease; and***
- That the school complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new schools and campuses for occupation of the temporary facility located at 2101 E Owens Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89101.***

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

b. Elko Institute for Academic Achievement – temporary facility and reduction to enrollment
[01:51:22]

Mr. Peltier said Elko Institute for Academic Achievement (EIAA) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the SPCSA grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school to reduce its enrollment cap for 2023-2024 school year, defer occupying its permanent facility until January 2024, and occupy a temporary facility for grades 5th – 8th during the Fall of 2023. SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the Good Cause Exemption and conditionally approve the amendment request.

If approved, EIAA’s enrollment cap for the remainder of its current charter term would be:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Enrollment	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Total Enrollment	198	308	396	396

Further details regarding the amendment request and staff’s recommendation can be found in the supporting materials.

Motion: Member Farris made the motion to grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Elko Institute for Academic Achievement’s request to occupy a temporary facility located at the Boys and Girls Club at 782 Country Club Drive for the 2023-24 school year, or until a time in which the new facility is completed for grades 5th – 8th, continue use of the existing facility for the 2023-24 school year, or until a time in which the new facility is completed for grades K – 4th , reduce the 2023-24 enrollment cap from 396 students to 308 students, and waive the timeline for notification pursuant to NRS 388A.450 with the following condition.

- ***That the school complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new schools and campuses for occupation of the temporary facility located at the Boys and Girls Club.***

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

c. TEACH Las Vegas – reduction to enrollment and adjustment to the student transportation plan
[01:58:21]

Mr. Peltier said TEACH Las Vegas has submitted an amendment application requesting that the SPCSA grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school to reduce its enrollment cap for the 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028 school years. Along with the reduction, TEACH is requesting to delay the implementation of its transportation plan until the 2023-24 school year. SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the Good Cause Exemption and approve the amendment requests as presented.

If approved, TEACH’s enrollment cap for the remainder of this charter term would be:

School Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Enrollment	K-8	K-9	K-10	K-11	K-12
Total Enrollment	325	425	550	675	800

Further details regarding the amendment request and staff’s recommendation can be found in the supporting materials.

Motion: Member Shauntee Rosales made the motion to grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve the TEACH Las Vegas request to reduce its 2022-2023 approved enrollment cap from 425 students to 325 students and to further reduce the cap for the remainder of the charter contract term as detailed in this recommendation memo and to defer implementation of transportation until the 2023-2024 school year. Member Thigpen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 9 – Financial Performance Review and Recommendations for the 2021-22 School Year.
[02:07:22]

a. 2021-22 SPCSA Financial Performance Framework Ratings

Mike Dang, Manager of Academic and Financial Performance, discussed the overview of the Financial Performance Ratings before providing staff’s analysis and considerations, and the recommendations related thereto.

Motion: Member Holmes-Sutton made the motion to adopt the Financial Performance Framework results presented for the schools listed in Appendix A, excluding Democracy Prep, for fiscal year 2022 for all indicators except the Enrollment Variance measure, which was not rated. Member Farris seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Rescind prior Notices for financial performance

i. Quest Preparatory Academy

Motion: Vice Chair Moulton made the motion to rescind the Notice of Concern for Quest Preparatory Academy. Member Schafer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

c. Maintain existing Notice of Concern

i. Signature Preparatory

Motion: Member Farris made the motion to maintain the Notice of Concern for Signatory Preparatory, as the school works to resolve remaining financial concerns. Member Thigpen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

d. Issue Notices of Concern

i. Democracy Prep

ii. Girls Empowerment Middle School (GEMS)

iii. TEACH Las Vegas

SPCSA staff is recommending that the Authority table d(i) Democracy Prep to a future meeting as they received some information from them yesterday and plan to provide an updated motion.

Motion: Member Olsen made the motion to issue a Notice of Concern under the Financial Performance Framework to Girls Empowerment Middle School (GEMS) and TEACH Las Vegas, and require each school to develop and submit a financial improvement plan, and require each school to provide quarterly updates regarding the implementation of the improvement plan. Vice Chair Moulton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

e. Revise existing Targeted Remediation Plan

i. Legacy Traditional Schools

Motion: Member Holmes-Sutton made the motion to require Legacy Traditional Schools to develop and submit an updated Targeted Remediation Plan for the fiscal years ending 2023 and 2024. Member Olsen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 10 – Growth Management Plan Revisions. [02:44:38]

Executive Director Feiden said the proposed revisions can be found in the supporting materials. She walked through the changes by section, which are highlighted in grey.

Motion: Member Farris made the motion to adopt the proposed updated Growth Management Plan as presented. Member Thigpen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 11 – Long-Range Calendar. [02:57:40]

Executive Director Feiden said she will not be present at the April 14 meeting. She discussed the items to look forward to on the long-range calendar in the upcoming months.

Agenda Item 12 – Public Comment #2. [03:01:57]

Member Olsen provided some updates that he thought the Authority may want to be aware of

Agenda Item 13 – Adjournment [03:04:45]

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04PM.