New Charter School Application Report and Recommendation



August 25, 2023

Vegas Vista Academy

GENERAL INFORMATION

Proposed School Name	Vegas Vista Academy
Proposed EMO/CMO	Not Applicable
Proposed Mission and Vision	Mission: Vegas Vista Academy breaks down the barriers set by traditional patterns of inequality through experience and education. We facilitate equity and access for all to a data-driven, world class curriculum focused on academic excellence, community service learning, bilingual fluency, and outdoor experiential education. Vision: We believe ALL students and families deserve access to innovative, effective, and proven models of education to realize and unlock their potential. Vegas Vista Academy graduates will find future success as Inquisitive and Research-Based Critical Thinkers; Effective and Courageous Communicators; Socially Conscious and Community-Minded Leaders; and Goal-Oriented, Resolute and Motivated Lifelong Learners. With a student-centered focus, Vegas Vista Academy aims to be a community center of lifelong learning, strong support, and full social services for all of our stakeholders. Together, we will work to effect lasting positive change in our community.
Proposed Grade Configuration	Opening: K-3 Full Scale: K-12
Proposed Opening	August 2024
Proposed Location	Clark; 89106, 89107, 89108
Proposed Zip Codes to be Served	89106, 89107, 89108

PLANNED ENROLLMENT

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
K	50	50	50	50	50	50
1	50	50	50	50	50	50
2	50	50	50	50	50	50
3	50	50	50	50	50	50
4		50	50	50	50	50
5		50	50	50	50	50
6			50	50	50	50
7			50	50	50	50
8			50	50	50	50
9				50	50	50
10					50	50
11						50
12 ¹						
Total	200	300	450	500	550	600

¹ The applicant plans to reach full scale and serve grades K-12 in year seven, the first year of the second charter term.

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1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SPCSA conducts a rigorous review of new charter school applications. This process includes the submission to the SPCSA of a written notice of intent to submit a new charter school application 90 days prior to the submission of the new charter school application; the submission to the SPCSA of the actual new charter school application between April 15 and April 30 of each year; the review of the new charter school application by the SPCSA – including the review of the new charter school application by outside reviewers and a capacity interview with the applicant team. The application is rated against the SPCSA's new charter school application evaluation rubric and, as stated in the evaluation rubric, an applicant must Meet the Standard in all four, or five, if applicable², main sections of the application (Meeting the Need, Academic Plan, Operations Plan, Finance Plan, and Addendum, if applicable) by the end of the application and evaluation process to be recommended for authorization. If an application Meets the Standard in all but one section, and Approaches the Standard in the one remaining section, the application and proposed new charter school may be recommended for authorization if the remaining issues are specific and limited and the outstanding deficiencies can be addressed through conditions. In addition, as part of the review process, the SPCSA seeks input from the board of trustees of the school district in which the proposed charter school will be located. The input provided by the school district is posted along with other relevant materials for this application for consideration by the SPCSA board.

Finally, it is important to note that there is also an opportunity for an unsuccessful new charter school applicant to resubmit its charter school application, as well as an opportunity for an unsuccessful applicant to appeal the denial of its application. For more details regarding the SPCSA's application process, please see Appendix A.

The review committee and SPCSA staff determined that three of the four main sections of the application Meet the Standard as outlined in the new charter application evaluation rubric.

Application Section	Rating
Meeting the Need	Meets the Standard
Academic Plan	Meets the Standard
Operations Plan	Approaches the Standard
Financial Plan	Meets the Standard

Details regarding the rating for each component of the application can be found in Section 1.3 of this report. Based on these ratings and the findings summarized within the remainder of this report, the SPCSA staff's recommendation is to approve the Vegas Vista Academy charter school application.

1.2 Proposed Motion

Proposed motion: Approve the Vegas Vista Academy application as submitted during the 2023 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 December 1, 2023, submit a revised lottery policy that complies with Nevada's statutes and regulations to ensure that the school is open and accessible to all interested students.
- 2. By December 1, 2023, submit revised bylaws that comply with Nevada's statutes and regulations, along with a

State Public Charter School Authority

² Charter Management Organizations applying for sponsorship directly, as well as Committee to Form applicants that propose to contact with a Charter Management Organization (CMO) or Educational Management Organization (EMO) are required to complete the Addendum section of the application and therefore will be rated in five main sections. All other applicants are not required to complete the Addendum section and are only rated on four main sections.

- code of ethics.
- 3. By December 1, 2023, submit an additional budget scenario that includes additional staff or contracted services for special education.
- 4. By January 15, 2024, submit a fully executed lease for a facility that will meet the needs of the school for the 2024-25 school year.
- 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 2024-25 school year.

1.3 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION SECTION RATINGS

Rating options for each section are Meets the Standard; Approaches the Standard; Does not Meet the Standard. A detailed description of each rating option can be found in Appendix A.

Application Section	Rating
Meeting the Need	Meets the Standard
Mission and Vision	Meets the Standard
Targeted Plan	Meets the Standard
Parent and Community Involvement	Meets the Standard
Academic Plan ³	Meets the Standard
Transformational Change	Meets the Standard
Curriculum and Instructional Design	Meets the Standard
Promotion and Graduation Requirements	Meets the Standard
Driving for Results	Approaches the Standard
At-Risk Students and Special Populations	Approaches the Standard
Professional Development	Meets the Standard
School Culture	Meets the Standard
Student Discipline	Meets the Standard
School Calendar and Schedule	Meets the Standard
Dual Credit Partnerships	Meets the Standard
Operations Plan	Approaches the Standard
Board Governance	Approaches the Standard
Leadership Team	Meets the Standard
Staffing Plan	Approaches the Standard
Human Resources	Meets the Standard
Student Recruitment and Enrollment	Approaches the Standard
Incubation Year Development	Meets the Standard
Services	Meets the Standard
Facilities	Approaches the Standard
Financial Plan	Meets the Standard

³ The Vegas Vista Academy proposal did not contemplate Distance Education. Therefore, the corresponding section of the rubric was not scored.

2.1 Section Ratings

Meeting the Need		Meets the Standard
	Mission and Vision	Meets the Standard
	Targeted Plan	Meets the Standard
	Parent and Community Involvement	Meets the Standard

2.2 SUMMARY OF FINDING

Overall, the Meeting the Need section was rated as Meets the Standard. All three sections were determined to Meet the Standard as articulated in the new charter application evaluation rubric.

The Committee to Form articulated a clear, compelling, and measurable Mission and Vision statement and the Mission and Vision section was rated overall as Meets the Standard. The Vegas Vista model is focused on bringing a rigorous comprehensive International Baccalaureate (IB) program to historically underserved student groups. The vision described by Vegas Vista Academy demonstrates success for students beyond graduation and provides detail on how the proposed model will serve to benefit students well beyond their attendance at Vegas Vista Academy. The Applicant also proposed a teaching model that is innovative and is not available in targeted zip codes.

The Targeted Plan section was rated overall as Meets the Standard. Vegas Vista Academy plans to serve the 89106, 89107, and 89108 zip codes and the narrative demonstrated a deep understanding of the schools and demographics in the targeted zip codes and the needs existing for their targeted student population. The target zip codes align to the SPCSA's Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment and the Committee to Form communicated a commitment and research-based, credible plans to serve students identified within the Needs Assessment. In response to the clarifying questions, the Committee to Form shared data related to the family surveys they conducted that informed their school model, based on the expressed needs of the community.

In the Parent and Community Involvement section, the Vegas Vista Academy team shared detailed engagement plans for the targeted zip codes earning a Meets the Standard rating. During the capacity interview the Committee to Form also shared their direct ties to the community and the need for wrap around services they believe they could provide to families who attend Vegas Vista Academy. The Applicant also detailed steps they have already taken to engage their targeted zip codes, including participation in various community events. During the capacity interview, the Committee to Form shared detailed plans of already developed partnerships to meet the needs of their targeted community and continued communication with interested families.

For these reasons, as well as those detailed within the rubric criteria below, the review committee and SPCSA staff rated the Meeting the Need section as Meets the Standard.

2.3 RUBRIC CRITERIA

The tables below provide details regarding each rubric criterion and whether it was determined to Meet the Standard. The criterion for which "No" is selected was either rated as Approaches the Standard or Does Not Meet the Standard as described in the new charter school application evaluation rubric and summarized in Appendix A.

2.3.1 Mission and Vision: Meets the Standard

		Meets the
	Criteria	Standard?
	Clear, measurable, and compelling mission statement which explains the role of the school in meeting the needs of the community	
	and intended student population, and which is reflected throughout the application.	□ No
ſ	Vision describes success (beyond graduation) for students if the school fulfills its mission.	⊠ Yes

	□ No
Committee to Form/CMO aims to achieve outcomes that they demonstrate will improve the long-term quality of life of all	⊠ Yes
students served, including students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, at-risk	□ No
students, and students above or below grade level.	
School's plan, in alignment with the mission and vision, satisfies at least one statutory purpose:	⊠ Yes
Improving the academic achievement of pupils.	□ No
 Encouraging the use of effective and innovative methods of teaching. 	
 Providing an accurate measurement of the educational achievement of pupils. 	
 Establishing accountability and transparency of public schools. 	
 Providing a method for public schools to measure achievement based upon the performance of the schools, AND/OR 	
 Creating new professional opportunities for teachers. 	

2.3.2 Targeted Plan: Meets the Standard

Targeted Fiant Weets the Standard	
Criteria Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the community and students to be served, including the demographics and	⊠ Yes
educational needs of the intended student population, as well as the current school options within the community.	□ No
The proposed educational model is clearly described and addresses a need(s) related to student outcomes in the identified	
community that is either shown to exist with data or is in response to demonstrated demand for a particular school model.	□ No
Clear, comprehensive explanation of how the proposed model meets identified community needs.	⊠ Yes
	□ No
Demonstrates a commitment to meeting at least one of, and preferably multiple, academic, or demographic needs identified in	⊠ Yes
the SPCAS's Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment:	
Demographics: Applicants meeting this need will propose a school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible	□ INO
plans, and thorough research and analysis in order to intentionally enroll and serve the following student groups, each of	
which has been identified as historically underperforming based on data provided by the NDE: students qualifying for	
free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities (those with an Individual	
Education Program, or IEP), students in foster care, and students experiencing homelessness. Successful applicants will	
demonstrate the capacity to support these student groups in making rapid academic growth and achieving academic	
performance above the state average. Applicants intending to enroll and serve student groups that have historically	
underperformed can be most impactful when they alleviate barriers to access, such as by providing meals through the	
National School Lunch Program, providing student transportation, proactively translating written communication to	
commonly spoken languages, and offering robust social work and counseling services.	
2a. Academic Need: Geographies with 1- and 2-star schools that continue to have an index score below 50: Applicants	
meeting this need will propose a school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, and thorough	
research and analysis to intentionally provide access to 3-, 4- and 5-star schools in zip codes where a significant	
percentage of students are attending a school that	
 Received a 1- or 2-star NSPF rating for the 2018-19 school year, AND 	
 Continues to have an NSPF index score below 50 as of the 2021-22 school year. 	
Successful applicants will demonstrate the capacity to effectively meet the needs of students who will transfer from 1- or	
2- star schools that continue to have an index score below 50 in order to drive rapid academic growth and achieve	
academic performance above the state average. Additionally, applicants meeting this need will provide intentional plans	
for partnering with the community and building on identified community assets to meet the needs of students within the	
community. Simply adding a school option in a community with 1- or 2-star schools that continue to have an index score	
below 50 will not inherently lead to effectively meeting the community needs. Rather, schools must establish trust with	
the community by working in partnership to intentionally meet the needs of the students and community. Alternative 3-,	
4- or 5-star school options in communities where a significant percentage of students are attending a 1- or 2-star school	
that continues to have an index score below 50 can be most impactful when there are limited or no public charter school	
options available in the community.	
2b. Academic Need: Students at risk of dropping out of school: Applicants meeting this need will propose a public charter	
school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, and thorough research and analysis to enroll and	
prevent at-risk students from dropping out of school and put them on track for successful high school completion with	
concrete post-secondary plans that will put them on a trajectory toward economic success. Models may include but are	
not limited to programs designed for student groups that are most at-risk of dropping out or programs aimed at enabling	
credit-deficient students to get back on track to graduate. Applicants should demonstrate a strong understanding of	
grade-level appropriate indicators for successful high school completion, such as early literacy, attendance, and credit	
sufficiency and plans to enable students to successfully meet these milestones. Public charter schools aimed at enrolling	
and preventing at-risk students from dropping out of school can be most impactful when they offer a unique academic	
experience for students and/or are closely aligned to Nevada's priorities for workforce and economic development.	
Pursuant to NRS 388A.249(2), the SPCSA must consider the degree to which the proposed charter school will address the needs	

identified in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment as part of the application review. Additionally, in accordance with

NRS 388A.249(3) the SPCSA may only approve an application to form a charter school if, in addition to meeting other requirements, the proposed charter school will address one or more of the needs identified in the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment.

2.3.3 Parent and Community Involvement: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Demonstrates ties to and/or knowledge of the identified community and explains how the proposed school will build upon community assets.	⊠ Yes □ No
Intentional and thoughtful strategies for engaging with community members, families, and parents representative of the community to be served. Illustrates, with examples, that parents, neighborhood, and community members representative of the community to be served helped shape the school proposal.	⊠ Yes □ No
Outlines a thoughtful plan to proactively engage parents, community members, and other neighborhood partners from the time that the school is approved and once the school is operating.	⊠ Yes □ No
Describes meaningful opportunities for all parents to contribute to the school community and be active partners, including parents of students with disabilities and English language learners.	☐ Yes ☑ No
Adheres to state laws regarding parent and family volunteers, ensuring that there are no volunteering requirements as a condition of enrollment.	⊠ Yes □ No
Identifies key supporters, partners, or resources that are directly tied to the stated outcomes of the school, including community partners that are located in and/or serve the identified zip codes. Partnerships are evidenced by specific letters of commitment outlining the accountabilities of both parties and clear, measurable, time-specific deliverables from the partner which are clearly relevant to the needs of the identified population, and do not reflect a paid vendor relationship.	⊠ Yes □ No

3.1 Section Ratings

Academic Plan ⁴	Meets the Standard
Transformational Change	Meets the Standard
Curriculum and Instructional Design	Meets the Standard
Promotion and Graduation Requirements	Meets the Standard
Driving for Results	Approaches the Standard
At-Risk Students and Special Populations	Approaches the Standard
Professional Development	Meets the Standard
School Culture	Meets the Standard
Student Discipline	Meets the Standard
School Calendar and Schedule	Meets the Standard
Dual Credit Partnerships	Meets the Standard

3.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, the Academic Plan was rated as Meets the Standard. Eight of the ten sections were determined to Meet the Standard as articulated in the new charter application evaluation rubric.

The Vegas Vista Academy team provided a clear educational strategy in the Transformational Change section of the application which was rated as Meets the Standard. The Committee to Form provided details on their plans to utilize the model of small class sizes, project-based learning, and the International Baccalaureate (IB) program to provide families with a 4- or 5-star school. The application provided a clear connection between the proposed model and their proposed mission and vision of the school. In addition, the team further expanded on their plans to ensure fidelity to the IB model during their capacity interview, indicating that they would contract with an International Baccalaureate trainer to confirm that staff members had the necessary knowledge and skills to fully implement the IB model.

In the area of Curriculum and Instructional Design, the Applicant shared a detailed plan for delivery of all required courses. As such, the Vegas Vista Academy has earned a rating of Meets the Standard in this area. During the capacity interview, the Committee to Form shared additional information about their plan to deliver the components of the IB program to students, including contracting with outside trainers for teacher professional development in the IB model, as well as hiring an IB coordinator to support with curriculum development and coaching on the IB model. Vegas Vista Academy also selected curriculum aligned with the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) and shared plans to have teachers, under the guidance of the IB coordinator, implement a unique Social Studies curriculum, aligned to the IB standards and the NVACS.

The Promotion and Graduation Requirements section of the application clearly outlined policies for student promotion in line with the requirements of the state of Nevada and was rated as Meets the Standard. Throughout the application, Vegas Vista Academy referenced the high expectations that they plan to have for all students. In addition, the team outlined a thorough plan for Response to Intervention (RTI) and monitoring student progress to determine which students may need academic intervention. The graduation requirements of the proposed IB model align with Nevada Graduation Requirements and completion of Vegas Vista Academy's proposed diploma programs allow students to earn more than the necessary requirements.

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⁴ The Vegas Vista Academy proposal did not contemplate Distance Education. Therefore, the corresponding section of the rubric were not scored.

The Driving for Results section was rated as Approaches the Standard. The Applicant thoroughly described plans to review state assessment data frequently as well as plans to ensure that teacher-developed, common assessments are used across all classrooms within each grade level. In addition, the narrative included rigorous academic, organizational, and financial goals, but concerns remain regarding targets for monitoring academic goals in year one of operation. In particular, the targets identified for student academic progress do not change over time. In addition, while the proficiency goals for the Smarter Balanced and ACT assessments are sufficiently rigorous to put the school on a trajectory to meet SPCSA performance standards, the MAP goals do not appear to be aligned and could undermine the school's ability to meet its intended mission and vision. Ultimately, the Applicant does not address clear quarterly performance targets that would ensure that the school is on track to meet the annual goals identified.

In the At-Risk Students and Special Populations section of the application, the Applicant described plans to support various targeted student groups and earned a rating of Approaches the Standard. The narrative included a detailed plan for a variety of student assessments and a plan to review student data on a regular basis to ensure that students are adequately progressing. Through the responses to clarifying questions, Vegas Vista Academy shared the intention to provide instruction to students with special needs in a resource room setting only in initial years of operation due to staffing constraints. This is cause for concern, as student needs determine placement of students with disabilities and as public Charter School, Vegas Vista has a responsibility to serve all students, including students with varying unique needs. While the Committee to Form indicated during the capacity interview that they plan to provide quarterly progress reports to families of students with disabilities, concerns remain regarding the ability of Vegas Vista Academy to serve students all students with a wide range of disabilities. Ultimately, additional staffing resources may be needed to ensure that the school can meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

In the Professional Development portion of the application, Vegas Vista Academy provided a detailed plan on how teachers would receive coaching and support to ensure success for students and earned a rating of Meets the Standard. The Applicant clearly described plans for coaching and evaluation of the teaching staff and further clarified the plans for training for teachers on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program during the capacity interview. The proposed school schedule allows Vegas Vista Academy to have morning Professional Learning Community (PLC) time for all teachers four days a week and a weekly whole staff professional development time. The combination of information provided in the application, as well as additional information provided during the capacity interview, provided a full picture of the professional development opportunities available to teachers and staff at Vegas Vista Academy throughout the year to effectively support the academic program.

The Vegas Vista Academy team described their plans to create a positive school culture through various means and earned a rating of Meets the Standard in this section. Throughout this portion of the application, the team indicated their plans to utilize appropriate and effective strategies to support their school climate. In addition, during the capacity interview, the Vegas Vista Academy team clarified that all students and their families will be offered an optional meeting with school administration, prior to the start of school, to ensure that the student and family understand the school's stated mission and vision and the school culture and climate that the team has set out to create. The team indicated that these meetings would enable school staff in getting to know the family and build positive relationships, in order to support their positive culture and establish a culture of high expectations with students and families. While concerns remain that this meeting could be seen as a hurdle to enrollment, as further discussed in the Operation Section, the intent of building relationships with families as a foundation for a positive school culture is in line with the core tenants of the school.

The Student Discipline segment of the application presented sound policies for student discipline which align to Nevada statutes and regulations and earned a rating of Meets the Standard. The Vegas Vista Academy team indicated their intent to utilize proactive measures and restorative practices to support the positive behavior of students. In addition, in their responses to the clarifying questions, the Committee to Form provided additional detail on how they would train and support students who participate in the peer mediation program. The Applicant provided a thorough plan for which

staff members would be responsible for overseeing student discipline practices and ensuring that certain student groups are not disproportionately impacted by discipline policies.

The School Calendar and Schedule section of the application provided a comprehensive plan to ensure that all students receive the required number of minutes and days of instruction as dictated by statute and regulation, and therefore, the Applicant has earned a rating of Meets the Standard in this area. In addition, the proposed schedule for Friday includes a two-hour Wellness Block for teachers and students. This time will be dedicated for students to engage in wellness activities, project-based learning opportunities, or genius hour exploration. Teachers will utilize this time for planning, review of student data, or self-care. In responses to the clarifying questions, the Applicant provided detailed calculations of their proposed instructional schedule, indicating that they will provide students with more than the required instructional minutes. In addition, the Vegas Vista Academy team presented sound policies for student attendance and truancy diversion, including plans to contact families at set intervals of absences to ensure that students regularly attend school. The school calendar also shows clear alignment between teacher and student schedules.

The Dual Credit Partnerships area of the application met all of the criteria as outline in the new charter application evaluation rubric and was rated Meets the Standard. The narrative of the application described a potential partnership with Nevada State College for dual credit opportunities and plans to make these opportunities financially accessible to all students by ensuring dual credit options are provided at no cost to students. In addition, responses to the clarifying questions indicated that although Vegas Vista Academy intends to provide dual credit opportunities to students, this will not be a major area of focus for the school, as the IB model proposed will also allow students to earn college credit for the IB coursework they complete at Vegas Vista Academy.

For these reasons, as well as those detailed within the rubric criteria below, the review committee and SPCSA staff rated the Academic Plan as Meets the Standard.

3.3 RUBRIC CRITERIA

The tables below provide details regarding each rubric criterion and whether it was determined to Meet the Standard. The criterion for which "No" is selected was either rated as Approaches the Standard or Does Not Meet the Standard as described in the new charter school application evaluation rubric and summarized in Appendix A.

3.3.1 Transformational Change: Meets the Standard

5.5.1 Transformational change. Weets the Standard	
Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Compelling, well-articulated theory of change and clear educational strategy aligned to the mission and critical to the school's success.	⊠ Yes □ No
 Ambitious, yet achievable plan to further the SPCSA's strategic goals: Provide families with 4- or 5-star school. Ensure that every SPCSA student succeeds - including those from historically underserved student groups. Provides a specific description of how the proposal will be implemented to ensure fidelity to the model. 	✓ Yes☐ No✓ Yes☐ No
Demonstrates that the key features of the proposed school can be implemented together in a coherent and cohesive manner that will drive towards meeting the proposed mission and vision.	⊠ Yes □ No
Distinguishing features of the proposed school are supported by compelling evidence of success in schools implementing similar programs while serving similar student populations or a demonstration of rationale for the feature that is supported by a logic model and plans to study effectiveness.	⊠ Yes □ No

3.3.2 Curriculum and Instructional Design: Meets the Standard

Meets the
Standard?
⊠ Yes
□ No
☐ Yes
[

	⊠ No
Includes a logical plan for delivering required courses including arts, computer education and technology, health, and physical education.	⊠ Yes □ No
Demonstrates that instructional strategies are well suited to the identified student population and will enable effective differentiation.	⊠ Yes □ No
Demonstrates how the instructional model and curriculum will enable all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, at-risk students, and students above or below grade level to build the knowledge base necessary to access rigorous instruction.	⊠ Yes □ No
If the school intends to include a career and technical education program, the application outlines a logical plan that is aligned with the school's mission, vision, instructional model, and goals for student growth as well as the State's requirements for career and technical education.	⊠ Yes □ No □ N/A

3.3.3 Promotion and Graduation Requirements: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Describes promotion and retention policies for all grades to be served, demonstrating high expectations for all students.	⊠ Yes □ No
Structures are in place to support students at risk of dropping out, including those who are over age for their grade, those needing to access credit recovery options, and those performing significantly below grade level.	⊠ Yes □ No
If proposing a high school program, clearly articulates high school graduation requirements which align with Nevada Graduation Requirements and will ensure that students graduate college and career ready.	⊠ Yes □ No □ N/A

3.3.4 Driving for Results: Approaches the Standard

	Meets the
Criteria Criteria	Standard?
All academic goals and targets are expressed in SMART terms (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) and	☐ Yes
demonstrate a commitment to ensuring the success of all students including students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, at-risk students, and students above or below grade level.	⊠ No
• Mission-specific academic goals explicitly complement or supplement, but do not replace, the SPCSA's performance standards. All such indicators, measures, and metrics are rigorous, valid, reliable, and objectively verifiable.	
 Annual performance and growth goals align to the Nevada School Performance Framework and/or the Authority Performance Framework and will put the school on a trajectory to meet SPCSA performance standards. 	
 Quarterly performance targets can be used to develop a plan for monitoring and reporting academic performance gaps and a process for using data to support instruction and inform professional development. 	
Sound plan for measuring and reporting academic performance and progress of students and monitoring for disparities in	
academic performance between student groups.	□ No
Explanation of corrective actions that will be taken if the school fails to meet achievement outcomes at the classroom, cohort,	⊠ Yes
special population and/or school-wide level (throughout the year or at end of year), including the party responsible for implementing these actions.	□ No
Internal assessment selections will provide sufficiently rich data for evaluation of the education program, are valid and reliable,	
and are fully align with state assessments, Nevada Academic Content Standards, and the curriculum as presented.	□ No
The assessment plan is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate collection and analysis of individual student, student cohort, special	
populations, and school level data (interim, annual, year over year), including a clear process for setting and monitoring ambitious	□ No
academic goals.	
Logical plan for using assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at improving academic outcomes.	
	□ No
Organizational and financial goals are aligned to the SPCSA's Performance Frameworks.	
	□ No

3.3.5 At-Risk Students and Special Populations: Approaches the Standard

	Meets the
Criteria	Standard?
At Risk Students	
Provides a clear and research-based process for identifying at-risk students and their needs, including those with academic and	
behavioral needs.	□ No
Outlines the methods according to which the school will remediate academically underperforming students, including the system	⊠ Yes
according to which the school will track progress, facilitate teacher collaboration, and the research supporting the school's	□ No
remediation strategy.	

The school's Response to Intervention system differentiates planning for each student according to the significance of their need, providing a continuum of programs, strategies, and supports that corresponds with the needs identified for each student and is supported by research.	⊠ Yes □ No
Presents a reasonable plan and identifies the parties responsible for communicating with parents regarding remediation needs.	Yes □ No
Demonstrates that the school's response to early signs of behavioral and/or social emotional needs will be met with positive interventions and restorative justice practices. The school will utilize differentiated support for each student in collaboration with the students' parents, teachers, and with support, as needed, from other school staff.	⊠ Yes □ No
Special Populations	
Demonstrates the Committee to Form or CMO's track record of success serving a wide range of students with disabilities (mild, moderate, and severe), English language learners, homeless and migrant students, and intellectually gifted students.	Yes □ No
Clear demonstration and understanding of Nevada and federal laws and regulations governing services for special populations.	Yes □ No
For students with disabilities:	☐ Yes
 Provides a logical plan to screen all students and to ensure that struggling students are evaluated for special education services early and accurately. 	⊠ No
 Presents a plan for student evaluation and developing IEPs that contain rigorous goals and instructional plans that are suitable to meet those students' goals. 	
 Presents a monitoring plan that will enable relevant staff to track the progress of all students with IEPs towards the goals articulated in their respective plans. 	
 Demonstrates that the school will be able to provide all special education and related services needed either by the staff listed on their organization chart or identified external groups with whom they can contract to provide needed 	
services. Specifies full Nevada licensure for all special education teachers/coordinators.	
 Articulates requirements and processes for monitoring services to students in need and plans to exit students who attain sufficient progress. 	
 Articulates process for monitoring compliance with state and federal laws pertaining to serving students with disabilities. 	
For middle and high schools, presents a logical and thorough plan for developing and implementing transition plans.	
For English language learners	⊠ Yes
 Processes for identifying English language learners are well-defined, including administration of placement assessments and communications to parents and teachers. 	□ No
 Indicates full Nevada licensure for all English language learners teachers/coordinators. 	
 Describes the specific services that will be provided for students within and outside the classroom, including curriculum and instruction and exposure to co-teaching. 	
 Articulates requirements and processes for monitoring services to students in need and plans to exit students who attain sufficient progress. 	
For intellectually gifted students, demonstrates that the school will extend their learning offerings such that those students have	⊠ Yes
access to unique, tailored opportunities. The proposed staffing structure demonstrates sufficient staffing and teacher support to implement the plan.	□ No
For homeless/migrant students:	
 Presents a logical and systematic method according to which the school will identify homeless and/or migrant students. Clear plan to assess and meet the needs of students and identified as homeless and/or migrant. 	□ No

3.3.6 Professional Development: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Clearly describes professional development that will be offered during the incubation year to effectively support the academic program, including the topics to be covered and any specialized components of the educational model.	⊠ Yes □ No
Provides a summary of professional development opportunities throughout the school year to effectively support the academic program, including topics and structures.	⊠ Yes □ No
Explains teacher coaching plans that will effectively support teacher development, including responsible parties.	⊠ Yes □ No
Demonstrates how professional development will support all teachers in meeting the needs of special populations including students with disabilities and English language learners.	⊠ Yes □ No
Clear identification of the persons or organizations responsible for professional development. If professional development is to be provided by contracted third party, the third party has appropriate expertise.	⊠ Yes □ No
Cost of any third party provided professional development is reflected in the budget.	⊠ Yes □ No

3.3.7 School Culture: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Appropriate and effective strategies to support a school climate that will allow for fulfillment of the school's stated mission and vision, as well as the school's stated academic goals.	⊠ Yes □ No
Describes a concrete plan for norming social/cultural expectations at the start of each year as well as for students who enter mid-year.	⊠ Yes □ No
Provides plans to establish a culture of high expectations with students/families and teachers/staff and promote a positive school culture.	⊠ Yes □ No
Presents well-defined goals around school culture and plans to monitor progress.	⊠ Yes □ No
Presents research-based and age-appropriate strategies to support students' social and emotional needs.	⊠ Yes □ No
Dress code and/or uniform policy is age-appropriate, and the applicant articulates how the proposed school will ensure that uniform requirements do not create a barrier for economically disadvantaged students.	⊠ Yes □ No

3.3.8 Student Discipline: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Presents sound policies for student discipline, suspension, and expulsion including procedures for due process which align to Nevada statutes and regulations.	
Describes the proactive use of restorative justice practices, including prior to suspensions or expulsions.	⊠ Yes □ No
Clear designation of staff responsible for implementing the discipline plan, including maintenance of student records and data.	
A plan to ensure that certain student populations are not disproportionately impacted by discipline policies, including protection of the rights of students with disabilities.	⊠ Yes □ No
Goals for student behavior are clear and measurable. There is a plan, and designated personnel, for monitoring and reporting related to behavior goals as well as ongoing maintenance of discipline records.	

3.3.9 School Calendar and Schedule: Meets the Standard

	Meets the
Criteria	Standard?
Proposed Calendar and schedule meets or exceeds applicable statutory and regulatory requirements:	
Minimum of 180 (or equivalent) days of instruction.	□ No
 43,200 minutes of classroom instruction/year for grades k-2. 	
• 54,000 minutes of classroom instruction/year for grades 3-6.	
• 59,400 minutes of classroom instruction /year for grades 7-12.	
Minimum of 120 hours of instruction for High School courses.	
Calendar and schedule support implementation of the academic program.	⊠ Yes
	□ No
Alignment between teacher and student schedules.	
	□ No
Outlines meaningful goals for student attendance and plans to monitor and intervene to prevent students from becoming	⊠ Yes
chronically absent.	□ No
Presents sound policies for student attendance and truancy including procedures for due process that comply with state laws and	⊠ Yes
are customized to the charter school.	□ No

3.3.10 Dual Credit Partnerships: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Detailed plan for establishing and running a program for dual credit to enable students to enroll in dual credit courses at a college or university.	⊠ Yes □ No
Evidence of, at minimum, initial engagement with a college or university and clear steps and timelines for further engagement to ensure that the dual credit program will come to fruition.	⊠ Yes □ No
Specific plans for monitoring students enrolled in the dual credit program to ensure they have sufficient supports and resources to successfully earn college credits.	

The proposed program for dual credit is shown to be both appropriate for high school students seeking advanced coursework as	⊠ Yes
well as financially accessible to all students.	□ No

4.1 Section Ratings

Operations Plan	Approaches the Standard
Board Governance	Approaches the Standard
Leadership Team	Meets the Standard
Staffing Plan	Approaches the Standard
Human Resources	Meets the Standard
Student Recruitment and Enrollment	Approaches the Standard
Incubation Year Development	Meets the Standard
Services	Meets the Standard
Facilities	Approaches the Standard

4.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, the Operations Plan was rated as Approaches the Standard. Four of the eight sections were determined to Meet the Standard as articulated in the new charter application evaluation rubric.

The Board Governance portion of the application was rated as Approaches the Standard. The proposed board members bring a range of experience and expertise relevant to overseeing a successful charter school. The Committee to Form indicated plans to host quarterly board meetings with several committees represented, including an executive committee, within the proposed seven-member board. While quarterly board meetings may satisfy the minimum function of the board, concerns arose surrounding how the board would effectively govern if they were only updated on the performance of the school quarterly. The Applicant indicated that ethics standards for the proposed board of Directors are still under development, leading to concerns about the readiness of the proposed board. During the capacity interview, the Vegas Vista team clarified that if the need arose, they would develop an academic committee to address the performance of the school and indicated that quarterly board meetings would be the bare minimum for meeting frequency. Nevertheless, concerns remain regarding whether the proposed board has the necessary structures in place to oversee the school.

The Leadership Team section of the application was rated as Meets the Standard. The Applicant describes that the proposed leadership team has previous experience in multiple areas, including school administration, Special Education, and curriculum and instruction. During the capacity interview, the Committee to Form clarified that there was one member for each of the elementary, middle, and high school ranges to support with curriculum and instructional planning. The proposed school leader also has demonstrated experience with running an effective International Baccalaureate (IB) program and previously served as a school administrator. The Vegas Vista Academy team also proposed a thorough leadership evaluation process, aligned to the school's mission and vision and focused on preestablished goals, set before the start of each school year.

The proposed Staffing Plan generally aligns to the mission and vision of the school. However, the Applicant did not clearly share the plans for two key program areas and therefore received a rating of Approaches the Standard in this section. The Applicant mentioned curriculum development and coaching would rely heavily on the role of the IB coordinator and during the capacity interview, the Committee to Form indicated this position would be a teacher, with the dual role and responsibilities as IB coordinator. This raised concerns about the capacity of this person to adequately complete both roles, as a teacher and an IB coordinator, providing coaching and curriculum development support for the proposed salary. In addition, concerns remain regarding Special Education supports for students with disabilities. The Committee to Form indicated that the staffing plan only accounted for resource room supports in year one of operation. As it is federally required that publicly funded schools provide support for all students, the Applicant does not have a plan for serving students with placement in a self-contained setting, if needed.

The Human Resources portion of the application was rated as Meets the Standard. The Vegas Vista Academy team provided their plans for new teacher recruitment and potential partnerships with Teach for America and University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV). During the capacity interview, the team indicated they would use their diverse connections in the community to help recruit more experienced teachers. The Committee to Form also indicated, in their responses to the clarifying questions, that they intend to match the salary scale of the local school district. The Vegas Vista Academy team also indicated plans to provide teachers with individualized Professional Development.

The Student Recruitment and Enrollment section outlined various strategies to recruit and enroll students but did not directly address how recruitment would focus on the targeted zip codes or how the previously mentioned interview process would be conducted, and therefore, this section was rated as Approaches the Standard. The Vegas Vista Academy Team indicated during the capacity interview that they understood the importance of ensuring they meet their enrollment targets and further explained that if approved for a Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant, one of the staffing priorities will be a Community Engagement Coordinator, who will be responsible for student recruitment. While the narrative included statements about student interviews as part of the process for enrollment, Vegas Vista Academy clarified that the interview process could take place before enrollment or after enrollment. The Committee to Form also noted that interviews would not be mandatory and were intended to build relationships with students and families. Nevertheless, concerns remain that this practice could create an unintentional hurdle for students and families.

The Incubation Year Development section of the application was rated as Meets the Standard. The Vegas Vista Academy team has developed a thorough plan for the incubation year and demonstrated that they are willing to volunteer the time necessary to ensure the plan is successful. The Committee to Form also indicated, during the capacity interview, that they have requested CSP funds, which, if approved, would provide additional supports to ensure a successful launch for Vegas Vista Academy. The Applicant indicated plans to utilize the funds from the CSP grant to bring on all teaching staff by May of 2024 to ensure that staff has adequate time to for training and to plan and prepare for the opening of the school year. Finally, the narrative includes thoughtful plans for the school leader to shadow existing charter school leaders during the incubation year in order to prepare for the launch of the proposed school.

The Services portion of the application was rated as Meets the Standard. The Vegas Vista Academy team indicated plans to offer breakfast, lunch, and snack to students daily. In addition, the narrative outlines options for transportation in coordination with the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada. In response to the clarifying questions, the Committee to Form indicated several services will be provided through contracts, including health services and counseling. Various other services including informational technology support, maintenance and facilities, and campus safety staff were also accounted for in the proposed budget for Vegas Vista Academy.

The Facilities section of the application provided detail on plans for the acquisition or lease of a facility for the upcoming year, however, concerns remain from the review team as to the feasibility of this plan. Because of these concerns, the application received a rating of Approaches the Standard in this area. The narrative outlines an aggressive timeline to prepare a facility for the 2024-25 school year which included a deadline for May 15, 2023, to select a facility. During the capacity interview, the Vegas Vista Academy team indicated that they had vetted several options and submitted a Letter of Intent for one facility. However, the Committee to Form has not yet secured a facility raising questions about the ability for Vegas Vista Academy to secure, renovate, and occupy a space in time for the opening of the 2024-2025 school year.

For these reasons, as well as those detailed within the rubric criteria below, the review committee and SPCSA staff rated the Operations Plan as Approaches the Standard.

4.3 RUBRIC CRITERIA

The tables below provide details regarding each rubric criterion and whether it was determined to Meet the Standard. The criterion for which "No" is selected was either rated as Approaches the Standard or Does Not Meet the Standard as described in the new charter school application evaluation rubric and summarized in Appendix A.

4.3.1 Board Governance: Approaches the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Proposed governance structure is likely to ensure effective governance and meaningful oversight of school performance, operations, and financials.	☐ Yes ⊠ No
Clear delineation of authority and working relationship between the governing body, school staff and any committees, advisory bodies, and/or councils.	⊠ Yes □ No
The board puts into place a structure that enables it to collect the information it needs to evaluate the performance of the school.	☐ Yes ⊠ No
Demonstrates that the membership of the governing body will contribute the wide range of relevant knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school, including but not limited to educational, financial, accounting, legal, and community experience and expertise, as well as special skill sets to reflect school-specific programs, if applicable (e.g., STEM, fine arts, blended learning, alternative programs, etc.). The proposed governing body members demonstrate capacity and expertise to successfully oversee a school.	⊠ Yes □ No
Provides evidence that the governing body fulfills (or describes reasonable and detailed plans to ensure that the governing body will fulfill) statutory requirements for board membership, including at minimum, one teacher or other person licensed pursuant to chapter 391 of NRS; one teacher or other person licensed pursuant to chapter 391 of NRS or a school administrator; one parent or legal guardian of a pupil enrolled in the charter school who is not a teacher or an administrator at the charter school; and two individuals with knowledge and expertise in one or more of the following areas: accounting, financial services, law, or human resources.	⊠ Yes □ No
If the governing body is not fully developed, a clear plan and timeline for expanding capacity prior to the opening of the school.	☐ Yes ☐ No 図 N/A
Shows that the governing body is or describes specific strategies to ensure that the governing body will be representative of the identified community and describes plans for engaging with the community in order to ensure that community voice is meaningfully incorporated into the governing body's decision-making.	⊠ Yes □ No
There are no prohibited familial relationships between charter holder board members, charter holder board members and staff, or charter holder board members and CMO/EMO employees within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity nor any supervisory or business relationships.	⊠ Yes □ No
Proposed conflict of interest policy, ethics policy, and bylaws are reasonable and compliant. Bylaws contemplate a mechanism for removal of governing body members if needed.	☐ Yes ⊠ No
Provides plans for meaningful, appropriate training for board members on a regular basis. Governance training is provided by experienced, third parties and addresses on-boarding for new members, or when the composition of the board changes.	⊠ Yes □ No
Board training costs are reflected in the budget narrative assumptions and the budget calculations.	⊠ Yes □ No
Describes a reasonable process for resolving student/parent objections.	⊠ Yes □ No

4.3.2 Leadership Team: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
The organizational chart clearly indicates all positions, delineating board and leadership roles and lines of authority.	⊠ Yes □ No
The qualifications of the Committee to Form/CMO are demonstrable with empirical data related to student performance, including students from diverse backgrounds and experiences, students with disabilities, English language learners, and other special populations.	⊠ Yes □ No
The qualifications of the Committee to Form/CMO include experience with recruitment, hiring, and development of a highly effective staff.	
If identified, school leader demonstrates a range of experience serving all students (students with disabilities, English language learners, students in need of remediation, and students above or below grade level) including: • leadership role at a high-performing and/or high growth school, • experience establishing a high-performing culture with students and staff, and • responsibility for significant student achievement gains with demographics similar to the proposed school.	⊠ Yes □ No □ N/A
If the school leader is not yet identified, explains the timeframe and the method by which the board will recruit and select a candidate who demonstrates qualifications and competencies aligned with the school's mission and program and has experience working with special populations.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☑ N/A
Structure of the school leadership team will allow for effective management of the school and staff and demonstrates appropriate assignment of management roles and distribution of responsibilities for instructional leadership, curriculum, personnel, budgeting, financial management, special education and EL programming, legal compliance, state reporting, external relations, and any unique, school-specific staffing needs.	⊠ Yes □ No

School leadership team job descriptions or resumes identify qualifications and competencies of the administration that align with the school's mission and program and demonstrate capacity to successfully manage the school.	
Comprehensive plan for coaching, support, and evaluation of school leadership. The board articulates a clear, ambitious, data-	⊠ Yes
driven set of standards and criteria that the school leader must satisfy to keep the school on track to achieve its vision.	□ No
	1
3.3 Staffing Plan: Approaches the Standard	80
Criteria	Meets the Standard
Aligns to the mission, vision, and proposed academic program.	☐ Yes
	⊠ No
Natches the proposed budget and is explicitly aligned to both budget narrative assumptions and to budget calculations.	⊠ Yes
	□ No
Demonstrates an understanding of expected student population and aligns to the applicant's commitment to meet the needs of	☐ Yes
pecial populations and the community the school intends to serve.	⊠ No
insures sufficient capacity to enable high-quality teacher support/development, student/family support, effective school	
perations, and compliance with all applicable policies and procedures.	□ No
Demonstrates reasonable student-teacher ratios based on the proposed model and statutory student-teacher ratios for special	☐ Yes
ducation are met (22:1 for students with severe disabilities).	⊠ No
Criteria Criteria	Standar
Criteria Articulates recruitment and hiring processes and strategies likely to result in the hiring of high-quality teachers, leaders, and staff	Standard
in the didities recording to the state gives likely to result in the filling of flight quality teachers, teaders, and stan	⊠ Vac
·	⊠ Yes □ No
<u>'</u>	□ No ⊠ Yes
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers.	□ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee	☐ No ☑ Yes ☐ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified.	☐ No ☑ Yes ☐ No ☑ Yes
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of	□ No ⊠ Yes □ No ⊠ Yes □ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and	☐ No ⊠ Yes ☐ No ⊠ Yes ☐ No ⊠ Yes ☐ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and	□ No □ Yes □ No □ Yes □ No □ Yes □ No □ Yes □ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and training for improvement, and provides the steps the school leadership will take in instances of persistent low-performance.	□ No □ Yes
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and craining for improvement, and provides the steps the school leadership will take in instances of persistent low-performance. 3.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment: Approaches the Standard	□ No □ Yes □ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and craining for improvement, and provides the steps the school leadership will take in instances of persistent low-performance. 3.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment: Approaches the Standard Criteria	□ No □ Yes □ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and training for improvement, and provides the steps the school leadership will take in instances of persistent low-performance. 3.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment: Approaches the Standard Criteria Recruitment and enrollment plan for year 1 and subsequent years	□ No □ Yes □ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and training for improvement, and provides the steps the school leadership will take in instances of persistent low-performance. 3.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment: Approaches the Standard Criteria Recruitment and enrollment plan for year 1 and subsequent years Leverages proactive, grassroots strategies such as door-to-door visits, open houses, and forums, and community	□ No □ Yes □ No
Criteria Recruitment and enrollment plan for year 1 and subsequent years	□ No □ Yes □ No
Describes a feasible compensation structure and rewards/incentives that are likely to attract and retain high-performing teachers. Essential recruitment, hiring, and dismissal functions and processes, such as background checks, payroll, benefits, and employee relations, are clearly described and responsible parties are identified. School performance management system is likely to retain and promote talented staff, allows for re-structuring and removal of staff as needed, creates opportunities for leadership development, and sets clear expectations. School performance management system identifies low-performing teacher or leader performance, provides plans, support, and training for improvement, and provides the steps the school leadership will take in instances of persistent low-performance. 3.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment: Approaches the Standard Criteria Recruitment and enrollment plan for year 1 and subsequent years • Leverages proactive, grassroots strategies such as door-to-door visits, open houses, and forums, and community conversations over the internet, social media, or other passive tactics which disproportionately benefit more	□ No □ Yes □ No

Is likely to allow the school to enroll a representative student population based on surrounding zoned schools or a

 \boxtimes Yes \square No

☐ Yes

⊠ No

✓ Yes

□ No

☐ No

Recruitment and enrollment plan for year 1 and subsequent years includes realistic and appropriate targets, timelines, staff

The application and enrollment process adequately addresses and is compliant with Nevada laws and regulations regarding

for new schools which determines initial per pupil funding is conducted on or before June 15 of each year.

capacity, and monitoring plan to provide confidence that the school will meet its minimum enrollment. Note, the enrollment audit

notification to families within a 2-mile radius during the incubation year, application and enrollment timelines, lotteries, weighted

The planned enrollment numbers for years 1 through 6, including annual growth, is reasonable and supported by a clear rationale.

The recruitment and enrollment plan as well as planned enrollment numbers for year 1 and subsequent years are aligned with the

Demonstrated interest from parents of students in the appropriate grade level to enroll in year 1 and originating in the identified

communities or zip codes to be served (approximately 30% of year 1 enrollment). Demand should be demonstrated through

staffing plan and budget, including projected recruitment expenses.

Demonstrates an understanding of the identified community.

lotteries, enrollment preferences, and backfilling vacant seats when students withdraw.

mission-specific educationally disadvantaged population.

Needs Assessment.

Proactive and detailed plan for maintaining engagement with parents of prospective students who have already demonstrated	meeting sign in sheets or intent to enroll forms that capture, at minimum, parent name, student grade levels, and zip code of residence.	
interest and converting interest into actual applications for enrollment.	Proactive and detailed plan for maintaining engagement with parents of prospective students who have already demonstrated interest and converting interest into actual applications for enrollment.	⊠ Yes □ No

4.3.6 Incubation Year Development: Meets the Standard

Criteria Criteria	Meets the Standard?
 Provides key milestones for the planning year, as well as concrete actions and accountability, which will ensure that the school is ready for a successful launch. Incubation year plan: Includes necessary activities/milestones to ensure that any program-specific components will be ready to begin on the first day of school. Includes necessary activities/milestones to ensure the school will be operationally ready to open. Includes necessary activities/milestones to ensure that the SPCSA Pre-Opening Requirements will be met. Note it is not necessary to duplicate every SPCSA pre-opening requirement into your incubation year plan. Instead, focus on the activities that will ensure success and the major milestones that must be met. Clearly identifies the individuals responsible for leading year 0 initiatives and meeting year 0 milestones. 	⊠ Yes □ No
If a third party (including an CMO/EMO) will implement portions of the Year 0 plan, these actions should align to the contract or additional documentation presented later in the application.	☐ Yes ☐ No 図 N/A
Outlines comprehensive leadership development plans that include training aligned with incubation year goals as well as stated academic goals.	⊠ Yes □ No
Outlines the function of any employees in Year 0, as well as the funding source for associated compensation. The staffing outlined for Year 0 will enable the school to reach its Year 0 milestones and goals.	⊠ Yes □ No
Startup expenses are reflected in the budget narrative assumptions and the budget calculations.	⊠ Yes □ No

4.3.7 Services: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Operations plan includes logical plans for all essential and program-specific non-academic services, including, but not limited to transportation, food service, facilities management, nursing, and purchasing processes, and school safety.	⊠ Yes □ No
Articulates a reasonable process and timeline for ensuring school will have information technology infrastructure, equipment, software, and policies to support the school operations and model, including plans for data security and privacy.	⊠ Yes □ No
Operations plan for services and information technology demonstrates sufficient staff/contactor capacity to implement the plan, including clear lines of authority.	⊠ Yes □ No
Costs of services are realistic and align with budget.	⊠ Yes □ No
Articulates metrics and processes for evaluating effectiveness of services.	☐ Yes ⊠ No

4.3.8 Facilities: Approaches the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
Facility plans in the short and long-term are reasonable and meet the needs of the projected student population and proposed program.	
 If a facility (including a temporary facility) has been identified: Evidence that facility will be appropriate for the educational program of the school and adequate for the projected student enrollment. Projected costs associated with the proposed facility, including purchase price, rent, utilities, insurance, and maintenance, as applicable, are reasonable and supported by evidence. A sound plan for construction, renovations, or tenant improvements including sufficient funds and a realistic timeline for completion. A sound plan, which demonstrates an understanding of the local permitting requirements and processes, for ensuring that the facility will have proper permitting to operate as a school. Evidence that the applicant has engaged with local jurisdiction(s) and municipalities, specifically the applicable planning department/division and traffic department/division. Assurance that the proposed facility will comply with applicable building codes, health and safety laws, and with the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Charter schools must demonstrate that a facility has been 	☐ Yes ☐ No ☑ N/A

inspected and meets requirements of any applicable building codes, codes for the prevention of fire, and codes pertaining to safety, health, and sanitation 30 days before the first day of school.	
If a facility (or permanent facility) has not yet been identified:	Yes
	No
adequate for the projected student enrollment.] N/A
 Inclusion of costs associated with the anticipated facilities needs in the budget including renovation, rent, utilities, insurance, and maintenance. 	
 Evidence to indicate that facilities-related budget assumptions are realistic based on anticipated location, size, etc. 	
 A realistic, timebound plan for selecting and preparing a facility that will meet the programmatic needs and budgetary constraints. 	
 A sound plan, which demonstrates an understanding of the local permitting requirements and processes, for ensuring that the facility will have proper permitting to operate as a school. 	
 A clear, time bound plan to engage with local jurisdiction(s) and municipalities, specifically the applicable planning department/division and traffic department/division. 	
 Assurance that the proposed location will be in compliance with applicable building codes, health and safety laws, and 	
with the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Charter schools must demonstrate that a facility has	
been inspected and meets requirements of any applicable building codes, codes for the prevention of fire, and codes	
pertaining to safety, health and sanitation 30 days before the first day of school.	
Demonstrated capacity to manage facility selection, leasing, acquisition, development, renovation, and management, as	Yes
applicable. If Committee to Form or CMO has identified a facility development partner, Committee to Form or CMO has thorough	No
plans for managing the partner relationship and ensuring that the partner meets expectations.	
Plans for facility maintenance will ensure that the facility provides a safe and clean learning environment for students.	Yes
	No No

5 FINANCIAL PLAN

5.1 Section Ratings

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In the Financial Plan section of the application, the Vegas Vista Academy team demonstrated a sound financial plan that provided sufficient detail to indicate that the school would be viable and therefore received a rating of Meets the Standard. The Committee to Form engaged EdTec to assist with the preparation of the budget and will conduct a formal solicitation to select a back-office service provider, if approved to open. Vegas Vista Academy presented a conservative budget that closely aligns with the proposed school model. The review team had initial concerns regarding the budget, particularly regarding the very minimal margins. However, through the responses to the clarifying questions and during the capacity interview, the Committee to Form clarified that additional staff would be added during the incubation year should the school be awarded the Charter School Program (CSP) grant. While this grant is not guaranteed, the Committee to form demonstrated that the school could successfully open without grant funding, and should the grant be secured the additional resources would help to ensure an effective launch of the school. In addition, the narrative provides an overview of critical policies and procedures that would be used by the school to ensure proper management of funds.

For these reasons, as well as those detailed within the rubric criteria below, the review committee and SPCSA staff rated the Financial Plan as Meets the Standard.

5.3 RUBRIC CRITERIA

The tables below provide details regarding each rubric criterion and whether it was determined to Meet the Standard. The criterion for which "No" is selected was either rated as Approaches the Standard or Does Not Meet the Standard as described in the new charter school application evaluation rubric and summarized in Appendix A.

5.3.1 Financial Plan: Meets the Standard

Criteria	Meets the Standard?
The financial manager has the appropriate expertise to provide accurate and timely financial information to decision-makers.	⊠ Yes □ No
The school protects mission-critical expenses when faced with budget cuts and commits to maintaining financial viability. The budget does not appropriate for any fund any amount in excess of the budget resources of that fund (in any single year).	⊠ Yes □ No
There is appropriate segregation of financial duties which align to organizational charts, leadership roles and responsibilities, and vendor responsibilities, as applicable.	⊠ Yes □ No
Control systems ensure that only allowable expenses will be made and that all expenses will be coded appropriately.	⊠ Yes □ No
Projections are accurate, conservative, and legally compliant. This includes appropriate allocations for required expenditures such as sponsorship fee, Public Employee Retirement System contributions, etc.	⊠ Yes □ No
Budget priorities are consistent with the proposed model, including but not limited to educational program, staffing, and facility, and budget priorities are aligned with the proposed enrollment plan, including any enrollment growth.	⊠ Yes □ No
Sufficient detail and specificity of assumptions for all budget line items to allow for the assessment of fiscal viability.	⊠ Yes □ No
Clear understanding of monthly cash flow that demonstrates viability of the school.	⊠ Yes □ No
Current ratio based on proposed budget of at least 1.1 on a monthly basis is either 1.1 or better or is between 1.0 and 1.1 and trending positive from the immediately prior year.	⊠ Yes □ No
The debt-to-asset ratio based on proposed budget is less than 0.9.	⊠ Yes □ No

Sufficient cash reserves to cover operations.	⊠ Yes
	□ No
All funds from external sources that are included in the budget are guaranteed with cash in hand or letter of award and grant	⊠ Yes
terms.	□ No
There is no evidence that the school ever will become insolvent or lack access to the necessary amount of liquidity.	⊠ Yes
	□ No
Assumptions about facilities in all financial statements correspond to a conservative facility plan and account for possible	⊠ Yes
contingencies.	□No

6 Application Process Details

6.1 TIMELINE

SPCSA staff offered a five-part training series regarding the New Charter School Application process. Each training was recorded and posted to the SPCSA's website: https://charterschools.nv.gov/OpenASchool/Application_Packet/. Below is a summary of the training that was provided.

- December 5, 2022 Application Overview and Process
- January 11, 2023 Application Cover Sheet and Meeting the Need Section
- January 24, 2023 Academic Plan
- February 9, 2023 Financial Plan
- February 27, 2023 Operations Plan and Addendum Section

Below are key dates related to the Vegas Vista Academy charter school application.

- January 28, 2023 Vegas Vista Academy Notice of Intent is received
- April 29, 2023 Vegas Vista Academy Application is received
- May 17, 2023 Memo sent to CCSD soliciting input⁵
- July 3, 2023 Clarifying Questions sent to Applicant; responses received within four business days
- July 12, 2023 Vegas Vista Academy capacity interview is conducted
- August 2, 2023 Input provided by CCSD
- August 25, 2023 Recommendation is presented

6.2 CAPACITY INTERVIEW

Based on the independent and collective review of the application, the review committee conducted a capacity interview of the Applicant to assess the capacity to execute the application's overall plan. The capacity interview for Vegas Vista Academy was conducted on July 12, 2023, and lasted approximately 120-minutes. All members of the Committee to Form attended the interview. Additionally, one representative from EdTech, a potential back-office service provider, and two representatives from Hiltz Commercial, the proposed realtor, attended the capacity interview. Questions during the capacity interview focused primarily on these areas:

- Targeted Plan
- Parent and Community Involvement
- Driving for Results
- At-Risk Student and Special Populations
- Curriculum and Instructional Design
- Facilities
- Board Governance
- Student Recruitment and Enrollment
- Staffing Plan
- Finance

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⁵ Pursuant to NRS 388A.249, the SPCSA solicited input from the Clark County School District regarding this application. NRS 388A.249(2)(a) requires that "[t]he proposed sponsor of a charter school shall, in reviewing an application to form a charter school...If the proposed sponsor is not the board of trustees of a school district, solicit input from the board of trustees of the school district in which the proposed charter school will be located."

Prior to the capacity interview, the review committee sent the Applicant team a list of clarifying questions to provide an additional opportunity for details and information to be presented. These responses were considered by the review team and were used to better inform the capacity interview.

Lastly, the capacity interview included a scenario-based question that probed the Committee to Form's capacity to collaboratively solve an issue related to a budget shortfall due to lower than anticipated student enrollment and discuss options for how to remedy the issue.

THE CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION "NOTICE OF INTENT"

The charter school application process begins with the submission of a written "notice of intent" to submit a new charter school application. See NAC 388A.260(2). This notice of intent is a brief document, submitted to the SPCSA 90 days prior to the submission of the applicant's new charter school application, stating, among other things, the name of the proposed charter school, contact information for the applicant, the proposed location of the charter school, and the grade levels and number of students the proposed charter school seeks to serve.

THE SPCSA'S PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION WINDOW

In December 2021, Nevada's Legislative Commission approved proposed regulation R043-21, which amended Nevada Administrative Code 388A.260(1). With this change, the SPCSA moved from two new charter school application windows each year (previously in January and July of each year), to a single annual application window. As a result, new charter school applications now must be submitted to the SPCSA between April 15 and April 30 of each year.

Part of the intent behind the change to NAC 388A.260(1), and the move from two annual application windows to a single application window in April of each year, was to allow sufficient time to ensure that a newly approved charter school opens successfully. That is, upon receipt of a new charter school application in April, the SPCSA's review process (as described in greater detail below), typically takes four to eight months – meaning that a new charter school application that is received in April will be approved or denied by the SPCSA in August or December. This timeline allows a newly approved charter school nine to 12 months to successfully execute the charter school's incubation year plan and ensures a successfully opening of the charter school.

Note that NAC 388A.260(1) still contains a "good cause" provision whereby a new charter school applicant may, for "good cause," request that the SPCSA accept a new charter school application outside the annual April 15 – April 30 window. However, if the SPCSA approves a "good cause" exemption to submit a new charter school application outside of the annual April application window, a notice of intent to submit a new charter school application must still be submitted to the SPCSA 90 days prior to receipt of the actual application. In practice, this means that upon approval of a good cause exemption by the SPCSA, allowing an applicant to submit a new charter school application outside of the typical April application window, an applicant will submit its new charter school application 90 days after approval of the good cause exemption and receipt of the applicant's notice of intent.

THE REQUIRED CONTENTS OF A NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

NRS 388A.246 and NAC 388A.135-160 detail the requirements related to a new charter school application. Note that these statutes and regulations related to the required contents of a new charter school applications are extensive.⁶

- The name of the proposed charter school;
- The date on which the proposed charter school seeks to open;
- Grade levels and the proposed enrollment that the charter school seeks to serve;

- The organization structure of the proposed charter school;
- Information regarding the committee to form and the proposed governance of the charter school;

⁶ Although the following list is not all-inclusive, among the required contents of a new charter school application are the following:

[•] A summary of the plan for the proposed charter school, including the mission, vision and goals of the proposed charter school;

[•] Information regarding the indicators, metrics and measures that the proposed charter school will use to evaluate the academic, organizational, and financial performance of the proposed charter school;

COMPLETENESS CHECK

After receiving a new charter school application, the SPCSA, pursuant to NRS 388A.249(3)(a)(2) and NAC 388A.260(2) conducts a "completeness check" of the application to ensure that the new charter school application contains all the information required by NRS 388A.246 and NAC 388A.135-160. If a new charter school application does not contain all the information required by Nevada's charter school statutes and regulations, if practicable, the SPCSA follows up with the applicant to obtain the required information. If not, the applicant is asked to submit a new, complete charter school application during the next application cycle.

WITHDRAWAL OF A NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

NAC 388A.260(3) allows an applicant to withdraw a new charter school application upon written notice to the SPCSA. An applicant may decide to withdraw its application due to significant concerns regarding the completeness of the application, or because it is evident after a cursory review of the new charter school application that the proposed charter school application is not fully developed.

THE SPCSA'S REVIEW OF A NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

Once a new charter school application is deemed complete in accordance with 388A.249(3)(a)(2) and NAC 388A.260(2), the SPCSA begins its substantive review of the new charter school application.

NRS 388A.249(2)(a) requires the SPCSA to conduct a "thorough review" of the new charter school application. This "thorough review" requires that the SPCSA establish a review team to review and evaluate the new charter school application and include in the review team persons with knowledge and expertise regarding the academic, financial, and organizational facets of charter school that are not employed by the SPCSA – these persons are often referred to as "external reviewers." NRS 388A.249(2)(a) and NAC 388A.260(4).

As part of this "thorough evaluation" the SPCSA is required to conduct an interview with the applicant to elicit clarifying or additional information about the proposed charter school and determine the ability of the applicant to establish a high-quality charter school – this is the "capacity interview" conducted by the SPCSA. NRS 388A.249(2)(b) and NAC 388A.260(4)(b)(2)

- Information regarding the proposed administrative head of the proposed charter school;
- Information regarding how teachers and staff will be recruited and hired;
- Course and curriculum information, including any dual-credit programs for high school students (if applicable);
- Information regarding serving students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, an at-risk student;
- The organization structure of the proposed charter school;
- Information regarding the committee to form and the proposed governance of the charter school;
- Information regarding the proposed administrative head of the proposed charter school;
- Information regarding how teachers and staff will be recruited and hired;
- The proposed charter school's calendar;
- Information regarding any proposed facility for the proposed charter school;
- Equipment, furniture, and fixtures that the proposed charter school will utilize;
- Transportation, if applicable;
- Health and safety requirements;
- Student records;
- Extracurricular activities and dress code;
- Discipline policies;
- Budget;
- Enrollment and any lottery process and procedures;
- Information regarding required insurance

In its review of the charter school application, the SPCSA is required to evaluate the new charter school application based on documented evidence collected through the process of reviewing the application and the information gleaned during the capacity interview. See NRS 388A.249(2)(b) and (e).

The determination regarding whether to grant a new charter school application is to be based on the ability of the applicants to establish a high-quality charter school. NRS 388A.249(2)(b). The SPCSA may approve a new charter school application if:

- The application complies with all charter school laws and regulations;
- The application is complete;
- The applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the SPCSA's new charter school application rubric demonstrating that approval of the new charter school application will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school;
- The application meets the criteria contained in the SPCSA's academic and demographic needs assessment; and
- Sufficient input has been received the public. NRS 388A.249(3).

The North Star of the review team's evaluation of the new charter school application is the SPCSA's new charter school application rubric. NRS 388A.249(2)(b). The rubric is broken into four major sections, plus an addendum. Rating options for each section are Meets the Standard; Approaches the Standard; Does not Meet the Standard. These are defined as follows:

- **Meets the Standard:** The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school is expected to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively and result in a 4- or 5-star school.
- **Approaches the Standard:** The response meets the criteria in many respects but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
- **Does Not Meet the Standard:** The response is undeveloped or incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation and/or raises serious questions about the coherence of the application and whether it is original work; raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

Detailed descriptions of each rubric item can be found in the full rubric located on the SPCSA Application website: http://charterschools.nv.gov/OpenASchool/Application Packet/

Once the review team reviews and scores the new charter school application, the SPCSA's Executive Director, or his or her designee, forwards his or her recommendation to the SPCSA Board for its consideration. NAC 388A.260(6)

THE SPCSA'S APPROVAL OR DENIAL OF A NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

The SPCSA Board is required to consider a new charter school application at a public meeting held no more than 120 days (or later if agreed to by the applicant) after receipt of the new charter school application. NRS 388A.255(1).

RESUBMISSION AND APPEAL OF A DENIAL OF A NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

If a new charter application is denied, an unsuccessful applicant will be provided with a written notice setting out the deficiencies contained in the new charter school application. If the applicant chooses to do so, the applicant may resubmit the applicant's new charter school application within 30 days after receiving the written notice of deficiencies. NRS 388A.255(2). Given the lengthy and rigorous application process utilized by the SPCSA in regard to charter applications, as well as the limited timeframe specified in NRS 388A.255(2) for an unsuccessful applicant to resubmit their charter application, the SPCSA encourages only those unsuccessful applicants that the SPCSA has found limited or specific areas where the application does not meet standards to resubmit their charter application. Unsuccessful

applicants that the SPCSA has found numerous or significant issues within the application that do not meet standard are encouraged to submit a new charter application during the SPCSA's next application window.

If a new charter school application is denied after resubmission, the unsuccessful applicant may then appeal the denial to the district court in which the proposed charter school was to be located. NRS 388A.255(3).