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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Rooted School – Clark County Charter Amendment Request to Relocate to a Permanent Facility**
DATE: August 25, 2023

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Rooted School – Clark County (Rooted) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the request to relocate and occupy a new facility beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

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

Background and Overview of the Amendment

The Rooted charter application was approved by the Authority at the November 18, 2022 board meeting. Rooted had initially planned to open at the start of the 2023-24 school year but was approved to defer opening until the 2024-25 school year. Rooted will open in 2024-25 with grades 9 and 10 serving 180 students and ultimately grow to serve grades 9 – 12 with a total enrollment of 360 students.

After their approval to defer the opening of the charter school, the Rooted team partnered with Charter Schools Development Corporation (CSDC) to identify and secure a permanent facility. Rooted had originally contemplated partnering with another Las Vegas charter school for facility use in Year 1 if they had opened during the 2023-24 school year. However, since the school was

approved to defer, it allowed Rooted to spend more time identifying and pursuing permanent facility options that would be ready in time for the start of the 2024-25 school year. According to the amendment application, CSDC was able to identify a facility that would allow the school to secure a permanent location which Rooted believes will increase interest from potential students and families. The facility Rooted is requesting approval to occupy is located at 2401 E Tonopah, Las Vegas, NV 89030.

The amendment application went on to explain that this would be an adaptive reuse project, and the property will require multiple City entitlements, expansion and upgrade of utilities, and interior construction. Rooted, and CSDC did note that they had already completed initial traffic calculations and basic floor plans which the Rooted board had reviewed. Additionally, CSDC provided timelines for project completion as part of the report to the Rooted board, and those timelines were included as part of the amendment application. According to the amendment application, the proposed timeline is:

- June 7-October 1, 2023: Building due diligence, initial design, traffic impact study, Pre-application to city and agencies, Special Use Permit application and initial hearings, neighborhood meetings.
- October-November, 2023: Final Construction Drawings, Special Use Permit granted
- December 1, 2023: Plan submittal to the city
- January, 2024: Demolition and preconstruction planning
- February 1, 2024: Permit issuance
- February-May, 2024: Construction
- June, 2023: Certificate of Occupancy, School moves in.

According to the amendment application, the facility project is expected to be completed in three phases as the school continues to grow enrollment. Phase one contemplates 17,564 of usable square feet, Phase 2 estimates adding 3,894 square feet, and Phase 3 estimates adding 2,071 square feet once the school reaches its 360 student maximum enrollment.

Furthermore, Rooted also noted in the amendment application that securing a long term facility now will allow the school to shift its focus back to student recruitment and providing families with a certainty of where the school will be located. Rooted went on to say that they will begin outreach to the families in the 89030 zip code and begin to increase their presence in that community, along with continuing ongoing engagement efforts in the 89115, 89110, 89156, and 89101 zip codes.

Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests

Existing charter schools that are sponsored by the SPCSA may submit a charter school contract amendment application to the SPCSA – which is reviewed by SPCSA staff and presented for SPCSA Board action – in order to, among other things, increase enrollment, add grade levels above and beyond what the charter school is approved to serve, or add a new campus. When determining whether to approve an amendment request, the sponsor considers the charter school’s compliance with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations and evidence relating to the academics, finance and organization of the charter school. (See NAC 388A.400(8) and NRS 388A.276).

Analysis and Staff Recommendation

When reviewing an amendment application, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial, and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. Rooted has yet to begin operation and has not been rated academically, financially, or organizationally, however, staff finds no current issues that raise concerns regarding this amendment.

SPCSA staff is supportive of the request by Rooted. As previously noted, securing a permanent facility will allow the school to provide prospective students and families with more certainty regarding where their children will attend school. Additionally, by securing the facility, and working with CSDC, Rooted will be able to spend more time engaging with the community and recruiting students which SPCSA staff supports because lower than anticipated enrollment was a key reason in the school seeking a deferral to the 2024-25 school year. SPCSA staff would note that although the location of the facility is located in the 89030 zip code, which was a zip code not identified by Rooted in its charter application approval, the 89030 zip code is adjacent to several of the already identified zip codes and has similar demographics. As a result, this new location supports the school's mission to provide opportunities for financial freedom to students.

SPCSA staff would also note that Rooted submitted an updated budget which includes approved CSP grant funding that the school continues to utilize during its pre-opening years. Additionally, according to the agreement with CSDC, Rooted also will have the option to defer rent payments in Year 1 and Year 2 if necessary.

As previously explained in this memo, the project is expected to be completed in three phases and the school is requesting approval of the entire project, including all three phases. SPCSA staff will work with Rooted during each phase and schedule the necessary pre-opening requirements and walkthroughs prior to students occupying additional spaces within the facility. Additionally, SPCSA staff will continue to work with, and track, Rooted throughout its pre-opening process and SPCSA staff will also continue to monitor Rooted's projected enrollment for the 2024-25 school year. SPCSA staff recommends the Authority approve Rooted's request with conditions, which can be found below.

Proposed Motion: Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Rooted School – Clark County's request to relocate to 2401 E Tonopah, Las Vegas, NV 89030 with the following conditions:

- **That Rooted provides SPCSA staff with Certificate of Occupancy or Temporary Certificate of Occupancy demonstrating compliance with NRS 388A.360, which requires a school facility to be inspected at least 30 days prior to occupancy;**
- **That the school complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new schools and campuses for occupation of the facility**
- **That the school demonstrate that all prior conditions have been met, specifically, the outstanding condition regarding approval of CTE and work-based learning programs.**

The approved, Rooted School – Clark County enrollment cap for its charter term will be:

School Year	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	9-10	9-11	9-12	9-12	9-12
Total Enrollment	180	270	360	360	360

Rooted School Demographics– N/A

Rooted Financial Performance – N/A

Rooted Organizational Performance – N/A

Rooted Academic Performance – N/A