

STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY



RFA: Reduce in Enrollment in Existing Grade Levels

The SPCSA considers reductions to an approved enrollment cap to be a material change of the charter contract and require approval by the State Public Charter School Authority Board.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a brief overview of your school, including:

- 1. Identification of the school, its location(s), enrollment(s)(most recent ADE quarter), brief history, brief description of its board members and key leadership team members*
- 2. Statement and overview of the mission and vision*
- 3. A summary explanation of the reasons that the charter school is seeking to make this specific requested change.*
- 4. Specifically identify the key reasons associated with this reduction in your enrollment cap.*

About our school

Sage Collegiate is located at 4100 W. Charleston Blvd, Las Vegas, 89102. We are in the former Elks Lodge Building on Charleston near Springs Preserve and Meadows Mall. The school opened in August 2022; we are in Year 2 of operations. We have a slow growth model and will add one grade level through 8th grade each year and add additional classrooms each year until we are at capacity with 796 students.

Seventy-five percent of our scholars qualify for free-reduced lunch; 15 percent of our scholars are in Special Education; and 40 percent of our scholars are identified as English Language Learners. While we still have a ways to go, we have cut our chronic absenteeism in half from Year 1.

We are in the midst of Phase 2 development; this summer, we will begin construction for a second building on our campus, which will open in Fall 2025. We will be at capacity in our current building after next school year. In Year 4, when our second building opens, we will house Kinder through 3rd grade in the current building, and 4th grade through 8th grade will be in the new building.

Enrollment

In our most recent ADE, we had 230 students enrolled. This was 109 fewer students than budgeted and planned for and 93 students fewer than what we audited in June 2023. In Year 1, we had an ADE of 197 in Quarter 4. We have a slow growth model and are on track to meet our year 3 enrollment goals, which include an additional Kindergarten class, a second 3rd grade class, and a 7th grade class. Of our currently enrolled students, 84% of them have been with us since the first day of school.

Governing Board of Directors

The board of Sage Collegiate, including three founding board members, has the experience, skills, and qualifications to successfully govern and provide expertise and capacity to support the school's development. The seven board members have staggered terms of commitment and are actively engaged in the governance of the school. Board members have firm belief in the school's mission and vision and are committed to the school's success.

Board Member	Role	Area of Expertise (NRS 388)
Jennifer Braster	Board Chair	Legal
Jon Haskel	Board Member	Education
Adam Johnson	Board Treasurer	Education/Development/Non-profit management/Finance
Colleen Slater	Board Member	Education/Governance
Susan Splan	Board Secretary	Banking/Finance
Anthony Vu	Board Vice Chair	Education/Operations
Stephanie Wong	Board Member	Education/Non-profit management

Management Leadership

Staff Member	Role
Sandra Kinne	Executive Director
Jenni Woodard	Director of Operations
Amanda Hopkins	Director of Student Services
Sheri Thierry	Manager of Curriculum and Instruction

2. Statement and overview of the mission and vision

Mission: Driven by excellence for all in a supportive, rigorous, and ambitious school community, Sage Collegiate Public Charter School educates K-8 students for academic achievement, college success, and a life of opportunity.

Vision: We believe that all children are entitled to a high-quality, rigorous, college-preparatory education regardless of their zip code, socio-economic status, home language, race, or ethnicity. There is an urgency in Clark County to ensure that all our students have an equitable opportunity to receive an education that prepares them to get to and through college, to be on a clear path for a life of opportunity, and to be able to compete in a global community.

To be full participants in our global society and effective learners in the 21st century, and to build lives of economic and social opportunities for themselves and their families, all of our

children must have equitable access to educational attainment. This starts in Kindergarten, and includes mastering foundational academic skills, ensuring character development, and developing the hope and determination that will drive them to school and life success.

Our vision is one framed first through literacy, with all students reading at or above grade level. We want Kindergarteners to be able to read to siblings, cousins, parents, and grandparents by the end of their first year at Sage Collegiate. We want to see 3rd graders demonstrate literacy skills that reach and exceed state expectations. We aim to have our 8th grade students will achieve PSAT 8/9 scores that put them on track for college-bound SAT scores and National Merit Scholarships in their high school career, positioning our graduates to successfully enroll in Honors and Advanced Placement courses in high schools throughout the region.

Our vision is also framed through mathematics. Our 1st graders need to understand place value, add and subtract through 20 and construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. Our 4th graders should be able to generalize and analyze patterns; represent and interpret data; understand decimal notation for fractions; and compare decimal fractions. Our graduates will be able to define, evaluate, and compare functions; understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem; and know that there are numbers that are not rational, and approximate them by rational numbers.

Our vision includes social emotional wellness. A partnership with Raise The Future and training and tools from MindUP all our scholars to develop strategies that support mindful practices, restorative justice, and making connections to build relationships that support scholars' development and growth. This vision includes a deeply supportive school community in which students grow deeply each year through their access to Mindfulness and Physical Education (PE), and a values-rich community built on high expectations, purpose, and integrity, which inspires our students' best selves, and which aligns with the deep dreams and values of our community.

Our vision is the manifestation of our listening to others, collaborating with our community, and studying what works. We heard the imperatives of our state and local elected leaders; we listened to the many voices of our community; we studied the best practices of high-performing charter schools across the country; and we analyzed current research on effective best practices to put students in low-income, low-performing communities on a clear, measurable, and unfaltering path to college.

Our vision the fulfillment of the hopes and dreams our scholars – and their families – have for themselves; the academic foundation to get to and through college, and a life of opportunity.

3. Specifically identify the key reasons associated with this reduction in your enrollment cap.

At the request of staff of the State Public Charter School Authority, we seek to make the requested changes outlined below to align our current and projected enrollment counts, based on being below our projected enrollment targets for 2023-24.

4. Specifically identify the key reasons associated with this reduction in your enrollment cap.

In Year 1, we were slightly under enrolled by quarter 4, but we had not met the 10% threshold requiring an amendment. In Year 1, we had a net loss of 45 students through the first year, in part due to delayed facilities, staffing shortages through the first trimester, and a lack of transportation.

Specifically in Year 2, our current year, of our 323 enrolled students at our June audit, about 75 students did not report to school in the first week and did not respond to outreach in the first two weeks of school. We've lost additional students due to families' relocation out of the region; decisions to homeschool due to safety matters within the region and nationally; disagreement with policies (i.e., uniform, schedule; mandated reporting); staffing shortages and fluctuations through Trimester 1; and the lack of transportation (prior to January). Additionally, we lost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a Kindergarten class due to AB65, which was passed after the school year ended and took effect July 1, 2023. This bill hit our school community hard, as we had a number of fully-enrolled scholars whose birthdays just missed the cutoff for starting Kindergarten.

Further, earlier this month, we had eight students unenroll following the execution of changes to address the budget deficit related to unenrollment. (A classic Catch 22.) We have continued to have students enroll throughout the year, including three students who started this past week and a half dozen students who returned to our school in January following the implementation of bussing.

OPERATIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Describe the steps the school is taking to respond to the enrollment challenges. Examples may be increased marketing, hiring of personnel dedicated to outreach, or other measures the school is implementing to address under enrollment.

The school has taken the following steps to respond to the enrollment challenges:

- **Hired a full-time Community Engagement Coordinator.**
We had this role in Year 0, but we were without anyone in this role for the majority of Year 1. We were able to bring a founding parent into the role part time in May 2023, and she joined us full time in July 2023. Her perspective as a founding parent, a former teacher, and as someone who is bilingual has helped us with recruitment through the year and for 2024-25. As a result of having someone in this role, we have been able to participate in far more events, revisit partnerships with community organizations, and host or table at more than two dozen enrollment events since school started, averaging at least three events per month. We have an average of one enrollment a week over the next three months, including Family Engagement nights that will bring current and prospective families together on our campus.

- **Started transportation in January 2024.**
In August 2023, we were approved for AB400 transportation funding by the SPCSA. We were able to start busing in January after the winter break. This has helped a number of families remain at Sage Collegiate and resulted in about a half dozen students – who had previously unenrolled - returning to our school. We also have two families who left in the fall re-register for 2024-25 given we are now providing transportation.

- **Returned to successful Y0 practices related to student recruitment and community outreach, including marketing, home/community visits, and community events.**

In Year 0, we had strong enrollment and recruitment practices, including more than 40 community events in five months; home and community visits with founding families; and broad marketing, including a billboard on the school's property. While we no longer have the billboard due to renewal costs, we still have a significant amount of CSP funds left to spend and have earmarked a considerable amount for marketing through August 2024. This includes revisiting best practices from Year 0 such as RTC ads, mass digital ads, canvassing in our authorized zip codes, and external technical support from the Bloomwell Group. Our longstanding marketing/recruitment partner, Effect.org, recently completed a 3-minute recruitment video in support of enrollment, and we are working with them on short clips for social media.

In addition to marketing practices, we will again have home/community visits with incoming families. Due to staff capacity and not having a full-time Community Engagement Coordinator through the school year, we opted not to organize home/community visits in the spring and summer of 2023. This was detrimental to our enrollment, as we did not build strong relationships with families and 75 fully-enrolled students not show within the first two weeks of school.

- **Adjusted our daily schedule.**

After we had so many enrolled scholars not show the first two weeks of school, our Executive Director reached out to a number of fellow school leaders, thought partners, invested stakeholders, and parents/adults of some children who had enrolled but not reported to Sage Collegiate. In conversations with more than two dozen individuals who know the work of education, charters in Nevada, and have context and familiarity with the school team's capacity, there were two overarching, recurring themes related to enrollment. One was, "Your schedule is too long." After polling families and staff, there was overwhelming consensus to adjust the schedule to be more aligned with the needs of families and staff, who were previously contracted for more than 40 hours/week.

While we still far exceed the state's minimal instructional minutes required, we did cut 75 minutes from students' daily schedule. Instead of a 7:30 a.m. arrival and 3:45 p.m. dismissal Monday through Thursday (with a 1:45 p.m. Friday dismissal), scholars' start time is now 8:30 a.m., with dismissal at 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 1:30 p.m. on Friday.

For 2024-25, this new schedule will result in 65,055 instructional minutes over the course of the school year, exceeding the state's minimum of 43,200 (K-2)/54,000 (3rd- 6th), and 59,400 (7th). This will still provide for an extended day/year for students and ensure scholars in our community get additional learning time to help address the learning loss of the pandemic and the growing proficiency deficits in our region.

- **Eliminated positions/reduced staff.**

This was far from an ideal choice, and it was a more recent decision as we had hoped to avoid this solution. Alas, in early February, we eliminated three roles and shifted staff to support those positions. In one case, due to enrollment across the K-2 band, we combined our

two 2nd grade classes and fully enrolled on 2nd grade class and shifted our two 1st grade classes to create a 1st/2nd grade combo class through the end of the year. We shifted an Instructional Aide to support in K-2, as opposed to just Kindergarten. We also shifted our Enrichment/PE block to be solely PE, eliminated the Enrichment position, which had been led by a long-term sub through an external firm since October. We moved our Manager of Curriculum and Instruction into a classroom role. Our MCI still supports classroom teachers and maintains her title, with a weekly schedule adjustment to support instruction and work with teachers. Additionally, as we lost nearly a whole Kindergarten class due to AB65, as outlined above, we never filled that role. In all, given our under-enrollment, we have not filled/eliminated five roles this school year.

- 1. If the reduction in enrollment will impact staffing, please complete the staffing chart on the budget workbook. If the reduction in the cap will not impact staffing, please write no impact below.***

This chart was not in the budget workbook, but the budget related expenses to reduced staffing are reflected in the workbook.

- 2. Please complete the enrollment charter with the proposed enrollment changes for the remainder of the charter term. Please feel free to add rows for grades and change columns to fit the charter term.***

Grade Level	Number of Students				
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
K	37	90	90	90	90
1st	45	60	90	90	90
2nd	39	60	60	90	90
3rd	23	60	60	60	90
4th	26	30	60	60	60
5th	26	30	30	60	60
6th	29	30	30	30	30
7th	n/a	30	30	30	30
8th	n/a	30	30	30	30
Total	225	420	480	540	570

These numbers are based on current enrollment and planned enrollment for 2024-25. They are also aligned with our current authorized charter. With the opening of our second building on our campus in Fall 2025, as mentioned above, we anticipate requesting an enrollment amendment to reach capacity by 2026-27. We do not have specifics on the expediated slow growth adjustments, but we anticipate putting forth an amendment to the Authority in the fall.

FINANCIAL

1. Please complete the amendment budget workbook and include as part of your amendment application submission or provide an updated budget in a workbook of your choosing.

Please see the attached workbook.

2. Provide a budget narrative including a detailed description of assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. The narrative should specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising, etc.). There is no page limit for the budget narrative. Include the following: A detailed discussion of Per-Pupil Revenue: Use the figures provided in developing your budget assumptions.

The attached budget and cash flow projection are based on conservative estimates of actual costs to operate Sage Collegiate PCS. Assumptions used to create the budget model are based on rates provided by the State of Nevada and actual historical rates for this school.

REVENUES

- Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP), formerly Distributive School Account: The largest source of revenue is the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan based on average daily enrollment, with weighted adjustments for special populations. The budget reflects a model assuming an enrollment of 230 students in FY23-24. PCFP rates are per the State PCFP workbook and align with actual rate of \$8,966 in FY23-24. The budget also includes \$72,624 in PCFP – ELL funding per apportionment schedule received from the State of Nevada.
 - Federal and State Revenue: Federal and state revenue assumptions are based on rates provided by the State of Nevada and SPCSA for this school per the GMS system. Sources of Federal revenue include eligible Title funding, special education funding, and the National School Lunch Program. Percentages of students identified as eligible for free and reduced lunch, English Language Learners, and Special Education are based on historical average demographics. The budget model reflects that the school is receiving State Special Education funds now that they are in Year 2 of operations.
 - Other Grants and Start-Up Funding: Sage Collegiate PCS received a Federal CSP grant totaling \$1,500,000 for certain eligible start-up expenses. The School has until the end of FY23-24 to spend these funds and has included relevant revenue and expenses in the FY23-24 Budget that are one-time in nature. The School also received ARP ESSER, AB495 and State transportation funding that are one-time in nature and included in the FY23-24 Budget along with offsetting expenses.
- 3. Given current the current enrollment of your school, discuss in detail the school's plans to address the loss of revenues. Please reference the submitted budget as may be appropriate.**

As outlined above and reflected in line item 29, we have eliminated/reduced staffing by five positions.

In addition to those cuts, we have done the following:

- Suspended on substitute services except for Special Education support.
- The Executive Director took a voluntary 7% pay cut to support budget line items.
- We adjusted some operational budget line items, including custodial and non-instructional auxiliary services.

We also were able to reduce operating costs by more than \$281,000 with the identification of some expenses as eligible and allottable to our CSP grant. Further, we continue to scrutinize the budget to identify further opportunities for cuts and line-item shifts.

In addition to the information above, please submit:

- 1. The agenda and approved/draft minutes of the meeting in which the governing board of the charter school approved the Request for Amendment.***
- 2. A board approved and board chair signed Good Cause Exemption letter along with the amendment application.***



SAGE COLLEGIATE BOARD of DIRECTORS

Jennifer Braster, Chair
Anthony Vu, Vice Chair
Susan Splan, Secretary
Adam Johnson, Treasurer

Jon Haskel, Member
Colleen Slater, Member
Stephanie Wong, Member

SAGE COLLEGIATE MANAGEMENT

Sandra Kinne, Executive Director

Friday, March 22, 2024
State Public Charter School Authority
2080 East Flamingo Road, Suite 230
Las Vegas, NV 89119

Re: Good Cause Exemption Request to Amend Charter Application

Ms. Mackedon and members of the Authority Board:

Sage Collegiate Public Charter School (Sage Collegiate) respectfully requests a good cause exemption from the current amendment schedule to amend its charter contract with the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA).

The purpose of this out-of-cycle amendment is by mandate of the Authority to adjust our enrollment to reflect this year's under enrollment. As notified by the SCPSA, "Sage Collegiate will need to submit an amendment to adjust the enrollment cap in order to maintain the 10% threshold for the 2023-2024 school year. Sage Collegiate may include adjustments to future enrollment caps in the submitted amendment should they be warranted."

We appreciate the diligence of the SPCSA staff and the support of the Authority and ask for the approval of this good cause exemption.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J Braster", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jennifer Braster, Board Chair
jbraster@sagecollegiate.org

SAGE COLLEGIATE: Proving the Possible.

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