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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Jennifer Bauer, Director of Finance and Operations
Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Transportation Plan: Thrive Point Academy of Nevada
DATE: July 26, 2024

Background

[Assembly Bill 400 \(2023 Session of the Nevada Legislature\)](#) appropriated \$7 million to the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) for each year of the upcoming biennium (the 2023-24 fiscal year and the 2024-25 fiscal year) to award to charter schools, including SPCSA-sponsored and district-sponsored charter schools, to fund student transportation. To receive funding, a charter school must submit a Transportation Plan to the SPCSA and the SPCSA may approve the Transportation Plan and award funding to the charter school if the plan meets the following criteria:

1. “The transportation plan is comprehensive and likely to be successfully implemented;
2. The transportation plan will materially improve access to education in the region served by the transportation plan;
3. The transportation plan demonstrates that the charter school will be able to comply with statutory and regulatory transportation requirements, including, without limitation, the certification of bus drivers and vehicle safety;
4. The transportation plan is financially viable;
5. The transportation plan would not cost more, on a per pupil basis, than the average cost for transportation for other public schools operating in the school district in which the charter school is located; and

6. The academic, financial and organizational performance of the charter school indicate that the transportation plan is in the interest of pupils who will be served by the transportation plan.”¹

It is important to note that pursuant to NAC 388A.330(4), a charter school is only permitted to provide transportation to pupils if the school has approval to do so from its sponsor. Therefore, charter schools that are not already approved to provide student transportation will be required to submit to their sponsor a contract amendment request in order to implement the Transportation Plan. For those schools sponsored by the SPCSA, the amendment request to provide student transportation was incorporated into the application process, and the SPCSA Board will consider approval of the amendment request in conjunction with the Transportation Plan.

Applications for the 2023-24 school year were accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis from July 7, 2023 and through September 30, 2023². While the SPCSA hopes to fund all applicants that submit a compliant transportation plan, because there is only \$7 million available in each school year, the SPCSA may prioritize funding Title I charter schools.

Additional details and form associated with the Transportation Plan and Funding Application can be found on the [SPCSA’s website](#).

Transportation Plan Overview

Thrive Point Academy of Nevada is requesting a total of \$63,750.00 to implement the school’s Transportation Plan. Below is an overview of the proposed Transportation Plan for Thrive Point Academy of Nevada, as provided in the application.

“TPAN is seeking funding to provide Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) bus passes for students who request transportation assistance and who reside more than two miles from campus.”

Analysis and Recommendation

Thrive Point Academy of Nevada is a new school and is requesting approval of its Transportation Plan and funding to implement the Transportation Plan. In addition, because the school is not currently approved to provide transportation, the school is requesting by this document also to amend its charter contract to provide transportation, and has submitted a good cause exemption request to have this amendment considered outside of the established amendment windows.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the Transportation Plan and find that the Plan meets the requirements set forth in Assembly Bill 400.

1. The Transportation Plan is comprehensive and likely to be successfully implemented.

¹ Section 28.5 of Assembly Bill 400 (2023 Session of the Nevada Legislature)

² After September 30, 2023, the SPCSA will determine if there are remaining funds that have not yet been awarded. If funds remain, the SPCSA will re-open the transportation application.

2. The narrative provided by the school explains "...that two types of bus passes will be issued, based on eligibility criteria:
 - 24 Hour Full Fare Day Bus Pass – provided to student requesting transportation assistance and living two or more miles away from the campus
 - 30 Day Full Fare Bus Pass – provided to students who qualify under SB 147 (Foster Care, McKinney-Vento, etc.)”

This demonstrates that the Transportation Plan will materially improve access to education in the region.

3. The Transportation Plan includes details regarding how the charter school will ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory transportation requirements.
4. The budget provided within the Transportation Plan demonstrates that the Transportation Plan is financially viable.
5. Since this is a new school, average daily enrollment for the school during the fourth quarter of the 2023-24 school year was not available. However, the preopening enrollment audit for the school resulted in a validated number of enrolled students at 149. The school is located in Clark County where the four-year average (per pupil) in transportation funding for the 2024-25 school year is \$481.00. The total funding request for the school is \$63,750.00, which is less than or equal to the average cost, per pupil, for transportation within the Clark County School District.

Therefore, SPCSA staff recommend approval of the school’s Transportation Plan, along with eligible funding to implement the plan.

Proposed Motion:

1. Approve the Thrive Point Academy of Nevada Transportation Plan, along with eligible funding to implement the Plan and allow SPCSA staff to work with the school to make budget revisions as long as the total funding does not exceed the average per pupil cost in the local school district.
2. Require the school to provide SPCSA staff with documentation to demonstrate that the school is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations prior to beginning to transport students.

If approved, the enrollment for the remainder of the contract term will remain unchanged:

School Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade Levels	N/A	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Total Enrollment	N/A	300	450	450	450