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**ACTION MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board  
**FROM:** Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing  
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III  
**SUBJECT:** Transfer of Sponsorship: Explore Knowledge Academy  
**DATE:** January 24, 2025

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**Background and Summary**

Explore Knowledge Academy (EKA) has applied to transfer charter school sponsorship from the Clark County School District (CCSD) to the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA). EKA is a public charter school educating 610 students in grades K – 12 in Clark County.

The mission of the school is Personalizing Education and Challenging Minds to open the world of learning and leadership to young people in grades K-12 with a focus on public speaking.

On September 30, 2024, Clark County School District approved EKA’s request to change sponsorship to the SPCSA. On October 29, 2024, EKA submitted their Letter of Intent to apply for transfer, and the completed application was submitted to the SPCSA on November 15, 2024.

After a thorough review of the historical data and the Charter School Sponsorship Transfer Application, staff recommend that the Authority approve the charter sponsorship transfer of EKA, and that the school be given a 3-year charter contract.

**The Process Related to Charter School Sponsorship Transfer Application and the Standards Under Which an Application for Sponsorship Transfer Will be Granted**

SPCSA staff began meeting with Clark County School District representatives and their charter schools in the spring of 2024 to discuss the transfer process and timelines. Schools were granted access to Epicenter to make operational decisions and determine if additional staffing was required to transfer to the SPCSA successfully. The Authority approved the Charter School Sponsorship Application on August 23, 2024, and that information was shared with the CCSD Charter Schools. SPCSA staff met with Infinite Campus on September 3, 2024, to outline the necessary procedures to transfer the CCSD charter schools from the

CCSD Infinite Campus to the SPCSA Infinite Campus. It was determined that if CCSD charter schools were going to transfer sponsorship in time for the 2025 –2026 school year, they would need to submit their applications by November 2024.

At least fourteen days before submitting their application, each charter school notified SPCSA staff of its intent to apply and identified a liaison. Schools submitted their board-approved application by November 24, 2024. Those applications included detailed narratives about the school's academic program and any achievement gaps in student outcomes, financial data, student demographics, family engagement, and the governing board. If the school contracts with a CMO or EMO, that information was also included. SPCSA staff gathered and reviewed each school's CCSD Performance Framework and site evaluation reports.

Final recommendations to the Authority are based on [R073-23](#), including evidence that the school is in sound financial condition and is meeting standards on the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) or that the request for change in sponsorship has been approved by the current sponsor. When determining charter school contract length, the following guidelines were used:

Term Length	Description
3-5 years	Inconsistently meets performance expectations
6 years	Consistently meets performance expectations
7-10 years	Exceeds performance expectations

The Authority Board may approve a charter contract for a term of three (3) to ten (10) years or deny the request for sponsorship transfer.

## Analysis

### *Academics*

EKA offers instruction in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The following table outlines the school's performance on the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF).

School Year	Elementary School Index Score and Rating	Middle School Index Score and Rating	High School Index Score and Rating
2018 – 2019	61.0 / 3-star	65.0 / 3-star	74.4 / 4-star
2019 – 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
2020 – 2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021 – 2022	45.5 / Not Rated	86.1 / Not Rated	68.5 / Not Rated
2022 – 2023	60.5 / 3-star	92.2 / 5-star	72.7 / 4-star
2023 – 2024	48.5 / 2-star	97.0 / 5-star	78.8 / 4-star

As the Authority is aware, due to COVID-19, NSPF school ratings and accountability for the 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 2021 school years were carried over from the 2018 – 2019 reporting year. Additionally, star ratings were not calculated for the 2021 – 2022 school year, but the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) published index scores. The NDE resumed calculating star ratings in the 2022 – 2023 school year.

EKA received the following CCSD Academic Performance Framework ratings.

School Year	Academic Performance Ratings
2018 – 2019	Meets Standard
2019 – 2020	N/A
2020 – 2021	N/A
2021 – 2022	Meets Standard
2022 – 2023	Meets Standard
2023 – 2024	Does Not Meet Standard

*Organizational*

EKA received the following CCSD Organizational Performance Framework ratings.

School Year	Organizational Performance Ratings
2018 – 2019	Meets Standard
2019 – 2020	Meets Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets Standard
2021 – 2022	Meets Standard
2022 – 2023	Meets Standard
2023 – 2024	Meets Standard

*Financial*

EKA received the following CCSD Financial Performance Framework ratings.

School Year	Financial Performance Ratings
2018 – 2019	Meets Standard
2019 – 2020	Meets Standard
2020 – 2021	Meets Standard
2021 – 2022	Meets Standard
2022 – 2023	Falls Far Below Standard
2023 – 2024	Falls Far Below Standard

*Site Evaluations*

Clark County School District conducted a three-year charter school site evaluation during the 2019 – 2020 school year and a five-year charter school site evaluation during the 2021 – 2022 school year.

In the three-year charter school site evaluation report, Explore Knowledge Academy charter school was found to have deficiencies in the academic component, per the agreed upon Clark County School District Charter School Performance Framework, during school year 2017 – 2018. Per the Sponsorship Guide, and the Clark County School District Charter School Performance Contract, the school was issued a Notice of Concern. The school did improve academic performance in the 2018 – 2019 school year. On a monthly basis, Clark County School District staff met with the school to maintain and improve student achievement.

In the five-year charter school site evaluation report, Explore Knowledge Academy was found to have deficiencies in the academic component, per the agreed upon CCSD Charter School Performance Framework, during the 2017 – 2018 school year. Due to the school’s academic performance in the middle school during the 2017 – 2018 school year, Explore Knowledge Academy was issued a Notice of Concern per the Charter School Sponsorship Guide, and the Charter Contract. In the 2018 – 2019 school year, the

school did improve its academic performance in the middle school from a 2-star to a 3-star rating on the NSPF.

*Governing Board*

As part of the review of the application, SPCSA staff reviewed the make-up of Explore Knowledge Academy’s governing board. The board currently has seven members and is in compliance with the board membership requirements outlined in [NRS 388A.320](#). A board member roster has been included with the supporting documents posted with this agenda item.

**Proposed Motion**

*Approve the Explore Knowledge Academy application to transfer charter school sponsorship from Clark County School District to the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority with a 3-year charter contract with the following enrollment caps:*

<b>School Year</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>	<b>2027-28</b>
Grade Levels	K-12	K-12	K-12
Enrollment	640	640	640