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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Rooted School Las Vegas– Charter Amendment Request to Alter Grade Level Offerings**
DATE: April 18, 2025

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Rooted School Las Vegas (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 modify grade level offerings in Year 1 to add grade levels previously approved for Year 2 of operation.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the Good Cause Exemption and approve the amendment request. A proposed motion along with conditions can be found on page 2 and 3 of this memo.

Background and Overview of the Amendment

Rooted was approved by the Authority, upon resubmission, at the November 7, 2022, board meeting. The school requested, and was granted, two deferrals and is planning to open in 2025-26. The school was originally approved to open in grades 9th and 10th. Rooted is requesting the Authority approve a modification to its grade level offerings in Year 1 to add 11th grade for its first year of operation.

According to the amendment application, Rooted seeks to add 11th grade to ensure the school's financial viability in its first year of operation. The initial enrollment targets were based on a planned co-location with a charter school at the E. Tonopah building. However, that school decided to secure a different facility and according to Rooted, necessitated an increase in enrollment numbers to maintain financial sustainability.

As part of the amendment application, Rooted provided an updated staffing chart and budget which reflected the additional grade levels. Additionally, the proposed addition of 11th grade will not change the school's mission or model and Rooted will still primarily serve students from the 89115, 89110,

89156, and 89101 zip codes.

If approved, the enrollment cap for Rooted will be:

School Year	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Grade Levels	9-11	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Enrollment Cap	150	270	315	360	360

Legal Authority

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 – 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.¹

Analysis and Staff Recommendation

When reviewing an amendment application for RFA eligibility, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. Rooted has not started operating yet and therefore does not have performance results to analyze.

Regarding the amendment request, SPCSA staff is recommending approval. SPCSA staff would note that since Rooted deferred opening until the 2025 – 26 school year, this request hopefully will allow the school to be able to enroll enough students to meet its Year 1 enrollment requirement. Additionally, the school was approved to operate with grades 9th through 11th in Year 2 and this request does not deviate from that projected growth which was approved in the original charter application. Finally, the school provided updated staffing charts and an updated budget which reflect reasonable staffing alignment and budget projections for the first year of operation. However, staff do have concern regarding the feasibility of implementing the staffing hires as reflected in the updated staffing chart. SPCSA staff have had conversations recently with representatives from Rooted and based upon those conversations, Rooted will have a very short timeline to hire the individuals identified in the staffing chart. Additionally, while the budget reflects an enrollment of 150 students in Year 1, SPCSA staff has not seen evidence that the school is on track for that 150 student target. Ultimately, staff recommends the Authority approve this request in order to give Rooted the opportunity to open in 2025 – 26 and staff will continue to monitor the school through the remainder of its pre-opening process.

Proposed Motion: Grant Rooted School Las Vegas’ Good Cause Exemption request and approve Rooted’s request to modify grade level offerings with the following conditions:

- **By June 1, 2025, provide evidence that Rooted has 90 or more students fully enrolled for the 2025 – 2026 school year.**
- **By June 1, 2025, submit a fully executed lease for a facility that will meet the needs of the school for the 2025 – 2026 school year located in one of the following zip codes: 89115, 89030, 89110, 89156, or 89101.**
- **By June 8, 2025, submit a board approved Final Budget that includes revenue based upon**

¹ NAC 388A.400(8) and NRS 388A.276

the confirmed enrollment and expenses that incorporate the cost of the identified facility.

- **Complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new charter schools.**

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Historical Performance, Demographic Information, Academic, Financial, and Organizational Performance – Not Applicable