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**ACTION MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board  
**FROM:** Jennifer Villanueva, Director of Finance and Operations  
Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Transportation Plan: Pinecrest Academy of Nevada  
**DATE:** June 23, 2025

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**Background**

Access to safe, reliable, and equitable student transportation remains a significant challenge for many charter schools across Nevada, particularly those serving historically underserved communities. Recognizing the critical role transportation plays in improving access to quality education, the Nevada Legislature has taken deliberate steps to support charter schools in overcoming this barrier.

During the 2023 Legislative Session, the passage of [Assembly Bill 400](#) appropriated \$14 million to the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) for the 2023–2025 biennium to support student transportation efforts at both SPCSA-sponsored and district-sponsored charter schools. Building on that investment, the 2025 Legislature enacted [Senate Bill 468](#), appropriating an additional \$17 million to the SPCSA for the 2025–2027 biennium to further expand and enhance transportation access.

To be eligible for this funding, charter schools are required to submit a Transportation Plan to the SPCSA for review and approval. These plans must demonstrate not only a comprehensive and viable approach to student transportation, but also alignment with statutory and regulatory requirements, including driver and vehicle certifications, cost-effectiveness relative to local district averages, and the school's overall academic, financial, and organizational performance.

Plans must also clearly demonstrate how they will materially improve access to education in the region they serve.

In alignment with NAC 388A.330(4), schools that do not currently have authorization to provide transportation services must also submit a contract amendment request to their sponsor. For SPCSA-sponsored schools, the amendment request is embedded within the Transportation Plan application, and both components will be considered concurrently by the SPCSA Board.

For the 2025–26 school year, applications were due on June 5, 2025, and are being evaluated through a competitive review process. Priority for funding will be given in the following order:

1. Maintenance of existing transportation programs
2. Launch of new transportation services
3. Expansion of currently operating transportation programs

Of the \$17 million appropriated for the biennium, \$8.5 million will be awarded for the 2025–26 school year, with the remaining \$8.5 million allocated for the 2026–27 school year.

### **Transportation Plan Overview**

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada is requesting \$1,039,500 to implement a transportation plan beginning with its Sloan Canyon location. Below is an overview of the proposed transportation plan as provided in the application.

*Pinecrest Sloan Canyon is taking action to close the transportation gap...that keeps too many students from reaching their full potential. For families in some of Sloan Canyon student communities, getting to school every day can be a major challenge. This plan aims to change that by reducing chronic absenteeism, boosting on-time attendance, and helping more students stay on track academically.*

*With approval, Pinecrest Sloan Canyon will contract with American Transportation System to provide daily transportation for students in high-need areas across Henderson and the Las Vegas Valley. Routes won't be chosen at random; they'll be based on student addresses, past attendance patterns, and feedback from the community, ensuring that the plan meets real needs.*

*Funding from this transportation grant would be used to: contract with a transportation vendor to provide daily transportation for an estimated 500 students. This plan is more than a transportation solution—it's a step toward educational fairness. Every student deserves a reliable, safe way to get to school, no matter where they live. Pinecrest is committed to making that a reality*

### **Analysis and Recommendation**

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada, a Title 1 charter, is requesting approval of its transportation plan and funding to implement their proposed program beginning with the Sloan Canyon location.

SPCSA staff reviewed their 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.
2. The narrative provided by the school explains that the proposed transportation plan will eliminate barriers for low-income and underserved students, reduce the burden on parents and families and improve on-time attendance. 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 plan is financially viable.
5. The average daily enrollment for Pinecrest Academy of Nevada during the fourth quarter of the 2024-25 school year was 8,072. Pinecrest Academy of Nevada is located within Clark County where the four-year average (per pupil) transportation funding for the 2024-25 school year is \$481. The total proposed funding award for Pinecrest Academy of Nevada is \$1,039,500 which is less than the average cost per pupil for transportation within Clark County School District.
6. The academic, financial, and organizational performance of the charter school indicates that the transportation plan is in the interest of pupils who will be served by the transportation plan. Specifically, the transportation plan creates safer access for students and families to improve attendance and academic outcomes. It also reinforces a foundational commitment to equity ensuring all students can access the transformative opportunities provided by a high-quality public education.

Therefore, SPCSA staff recommend approval of the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada transportation plan, along with funding to implement the plan.

**Proposed Motion:**

1. Approve the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Transportation Plan, along with 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.