

Pre-Kindergarten Manual 2025-2026



**Nevada State Public
Charter School
Authority**

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1 ABOUT THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY (SPCSA)

In 2011, the Nevada Legislature created the State Public Charter School Authority, a statewide executive branch agency tasked with authorizing and overseeing most of Nevada’s public charter schools. The Legislative purpose of the SPCSA was and is to:

- Authorize charter schools of high-quality throughout this State with the goal of expanding the opportunities for pupils in this State, including, without limitation, pupils who are at risk.
- Provide oversight to the charter schools that it sponsors to ensure that those charter schools maintain high educational and operational standards, preserve autonomy, and safeguard the interests of pupils and the community.
- Serve as a model of the best practices in sponsoring charter schools and foster a climate in this State in which all high-quality charter schools, regardless of sponsor, can flourish.

The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) authorizes public charter schools across Nevada and is responsible for the oversight and monitoring of those schools. The SPCSA sponsors, supports, and oversees dynamic and responsive public charter schools that prepare all students for academic, social, and economic success.

1.1 SPCSA VISION STATEMENT

Equitable access to diverse, innovative, and high-quality public schools for every Nevada student.

1.2 SPCSA WEBSITE AND STRATEGIC PLAN

For additional information about the SPCSA, please refer to the website at charterschools.nv.gov.

You may also wish to review the [SPCSA Strategic Plan](#).

2 INTRODUCTION

This manual serves as a reference for school personnel regarding the operation of Pre-Kindergarten programs in SPCSA.

2.1 PURPOSE

The SPCSA, as the Local Education Agency (LEA) for sponsored charter schools, submits an annual request to the Office of Early Learning and Development (OELD) and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) for a number of Pre-Kindergarten seats, based on available funding. Before calculating the number of seats to be requested, the SPCSA communicates with all charter holders to determine their interest in running a Pre-Kindergarten Program and to determine charter holder eligibility.

Requests made to the SPCSA for Pre-Kindergarten seats will only be considered under the following conditions:

- Schools should not request more Pre-Kindergarten seats than Kindergarten seats. In the event that the school does not serve kindergarten students school staff should reach out to the SPCSA Director of School Support.
- Schools should be in good standing (no notices of concern, breach, or closure on any framework).
- Schools should thoroughly read this manual and ensure that they are prepared to satisfy all requirements set forth in this manual.

Should an SPCSA school choose to adopt a Pre-Kindergarten program, it should submit a board-approved application to the Executive Director of the SPCSA. The Executive Director of the SPCSA must approve all Pre-Kindergarten programs. Upon approval, the Charter Contract will be updated to reflect the addition of the Pre-Kindergarten program.

The Pre-Kindergarten program application form is attached in this manual in Appendix A.

2.2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Legal requirements related to Pre-Kindergarten programs can be found in NRS 387.652 and NAC 432A.

2.3 DESCRIPTION

This manual contains:

- Information regarding the process for SPCSA-sponsored Charter Schools to obtain approval to operate a Pre-Kindergarten program.
- Information regarding the requirements for schools authorized by the SPCSA operating Pre-Kindergarten programs
- Resources for schools who are interested in operating Pre-Kindergarten programs.

2.4 DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Throughout this manual you will encounter a variety of terms that are relevant to this process. Additionally, some items may be referred to using acronyms. Please review the following items to familiarize yourself with the terminology and acronyms used throughout this manual.

- SPCSA: State Public Charter School Authority
- NDE: Nevada Department of Education
- Pre-K: Pre-Kindergarten, referring to programs that serve 4-year-old students in preparation for Kindergarten
- ECERS: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
- QRIS: Quality Rating Improvement System, specific to Nevada

3 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

3.1 TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Lead Pre-K teachers must:

- Bachelor's degree in ECE/ECSE; OR
- Bachelor's degree in another field and working toward permanent license in a state-approved ARL Early Childhood or Early Childhood Developmentally Delayed program; OR
- Bachelor's degree in another field with 35 or more ECE college credits; OR
- Bachelor's degree in another field and enrolled in TEACH Early Childhood; OR
- 5.2 on Nevada Registry Career Ladder or higher; OR
- Participating in the TEACH Scholarship and are actively working towards 5.2 Nevada Registry Career Ladder; OR
- SPCSA and TEACH Early Childhood approved Special Exception

Teacher Aide Qualifications:

- Nevada Registry Certificate and 24 hours of Nevada Registry approved trainings

- CPR first Aid
- High school diploma or its equivalent (e.g., the GED); and demonstrate subject matter competency by: Earning an Associate's (or higher) degree or: Completing at least two years (48 credit hours) of study at an institution of higher education; or passing a formal assessment measuring one's knowledge of and ability to assist classroom teachers in reading, writing, and mathematics. (Para Pro Exam)

Documentation of qualifications will be submitted via Epicenter task.

3.2 STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- Children participating in Pre-K3 programs must be 3 on or before August 1 of the school year in which they plan to enroll.
- Children participating in Pre-K4 programs must be 4 on or before August 1 of the school year in which they plan to enroll.
- Schools are responsible for verifying that students are the appropriate age for enrollment. This information should be maintained and available for SPCSA audits.
- Upon enrollment, students must be entered into Infinite Campus (IC), Nevada's Student Information System.

3.3 CLASS SIZE AND RATIOS

- Class size/ratio will be no more than 1:10 or 2:20.
 - The referenced 2 adults will be (at minimum):
 - A teacher with a bachelor's degree, and
 - An appropriately certified teaching assistant

3.4 INTENSITY

- All SPCSA Pre-K programs must provide a minimum of 25 hours per week of Pre-K class time.
- Schools should work with their boards to develop appropriate attendance and expulsion policies as applicable for Pre-K programs.

3.5 EXPULSION/SUSPENSION GUIDELINES

"Addressing the use of suspension and expulsion in early childhood settings is vital to Nevada's goal of increasing access to high-quality early education. Research demonstrates the negative impact of expulsion on children and families. The preschool years are critical for developing a positive foundation for learning, health and wellness, and social-emotional skills. These skills are necessary for success throughout the lifespan.

Building a positive school climate and using practices that promote social-emotional learning including data based behavioral plans should replace exclusionary discipline practices. All policies are to be evenly administered, without bias.

All SPCSA Pre-K programs are recommended to follow the State of Nevada's Policy Statement on expulsion and suspension in early childhood settings. For more information, please visit: <http://nvecac.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/SuspensionExpulsionPolicy.pdf>

3.6 CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY RATING IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

All SPCSA Pre-K programs are required to participate in the Nevada Silver State Stars Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). For more information on QRIS, please visit: <https://doe.nv.gov/offices/oeld/ece-professionals/qrisc/>. It is the expectation that all SPCSA Pre-K programs are rated at 3-star or above overall on the QRIS and an overall average score of 5 or above for all ECERS III subscales. The Nevada Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and Development facilitates scheduling of QRIS rating visits and a formal assessment should be scheduled bi-annually. In the alternating year, a “reliability” informal assessment from QRIS should be scheduled and conducted. Additionally, new Pre-K sites should coordinate with QRIS to receive a Pre-Assessment visit to receive an informal rating as a program baseline.

SPCSA Pre-K classrooms’ ratings on QRIS should reflect the upper range of each subscale and item in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- 3 (ECERS-3) to the extent practicable. It is the expectation that SPCSA Pre-K Programs receive an average rating of 5 or above on all subscales on the ECERS-3 rating tool, utilized by QRIS.

Should a school receive a rating that does not meet these expectations, schools will be required to develop an annual improvement plan detailing their plans to meet expectations within the next 12 months, which will be reviewed by SPCSA staff.

3.7 HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

All SPCSA Pre-K programs will comply with required health and safety standards as outlined in NAC 432A. <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nac/nac-432a.html#NAC432ASec010>

3.8 SERVING ALL STUDENTS

3.8.1 Serving Students with Disabilities and Inclusive Practices

All SPCSA Pre-K classrooms are committed to providing supports for vulnerable populations including students with special needs. SPCSA Pre-K programs should reach out to locally available providers (Child Find, school districts, community services) to screen and identify children with special needs. Programs will arrange programming so that inclusive environments are available to meet the needs of all children for whom inclusion is appropriate.

SPCSA Pre-K classrooms are required to serve an annually determined minimum number of children with identified special needs within a classroom of 20 for a minimum number of 25 hours per week. The percentage of eligible children with disabilities served in SPCSA classrooms must be no less than the State’s previous year rate of early childhood inclusion or the current national average, whichever is greater, and no more than 49% per classroom. Individualized accommodations and supports must be provided to ensure access and participation for all children.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) teams will work together with families to identify the least restrictive environment placement for the child. It is expected that each year the minimum number of SPCSA Pre-K eligible children with special needs will be included in classrooms with typically developing peers. SPCSA Pre-K classrooms will ensure that appropriate supports are provided so that children meet their IEP goals.

SPCSA Pre-K programs are required to report on early childhood outcomes in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Office of Inclusive Education (OIE) using the Nevada Special Education Accountability and Reporting System. All guidelines are to be followed with respect to reporting progress and entry/exit dates. Professional Development and support are available upon request.

3.8.2 Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Programming

Children, ages birth to five years, who are learning two or more languages at the same time or are learning English while continuing to develop in their home language, are often referred to as Multilingual learners. Many children in Nevada live in households where a language other than English is spoken. SPCSA Pre-K classrooms are expected to provide children opportunities for high quality interactions, academic vocabulary and robust language experiences in English in order to enhance language and literacy development.

Educators in high quality early education programs show acceptance of and respect for all children and families by integration home languages and cultures into the ongoing experiences of the program and by encouraging communication with all families. SPCSA Pre-K programs will help children to understand similarities and differences and positively interact regardless of language, gender, culture, race, age, and ability. Linguistic and cultural acceptance is promoted by emphasizing strategies for integrating multi-cultural and anti-bias themes into all curricular areas.

3.9 CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS

Teachers in SPCSA Pre-K programs are responsible for providing interactions and instruction focused on the [Nevada Pre-Kindergarten standards](#) as well as formal assessment data gathered during 3 periods throughout the instructional year. They must implement a specific, developmentally appropriate, research-based curriculum that is aligned to the Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Standards with an emphasis on play-based instruction and a center-based classroom environment.

3.10 PROGRESS MONITORING AND CHILD ASSESSMENT

SPCSA Pre-K programs are responsible for monitoring children's progress for the purpose of guiding instruction and making curricular decisions. In addition, this data should be passed on to the child's Kindergarten teacher whenever possible. SPCSA Pre-K programs utilize one of the two assessments: COR Advantage or Teaching Strategies GOLD. Both assessments should be administered during three assessment periods throughout the school year, as dictated by the SPCSA staff. All data should be completed for each period no later than 2 weeks following the end date of the given period.

3.11 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Engagement is a critical component of high-quality services that benefit children and their families. SPCSA Pre-K programs are required to effectively engage parents and families of their Pre-K students to support their growth and development across all the settings. Schools will participate in any required parent surveys, as dictated by the SPCSA, and will develop an annual Family Engagement plan based upon annual survey data provided by the Nevada Department of Education.

3.12 STUDENT OUTCOMES

It is the expectation of SPCSA Pre-K programs that by end of the school year, 70% of students Meet or Exceed expectations for Pre-K, as measured by the selected data tool (COR advantage or Teaching Strategies GOLD). Programs that do not meet this standard will receive additional support and will risk losing their Pre-K program, if specified improvements are not made within a three-year time period.

4 APPENDIX A: PRE-K APPLICATION

Application for Addition of Pre-K to Charter Contract

Name of Charter School		
Date of Request		
Application Contact Information		
Full Name		
Role at School		
Phone		
Email		
Program Information		
Most Recent Star Rating (link NSPF score report)		
Number of Pre-K Seats Requested		
Funding Source (Nevada Ready!, Private Funding, etc.)		
Evidence of Pre-K Demand (attach interest list to application, if applicable)		
Acknowledgement		
<input type="checkbox"/>	The board of the charter school has approved this request. Provide, as Attachment XX, the agenda and draft or final minutes from the applicable board meeting.	
Authorization		
School Leader Name		
Signature		
Board Chair Name		
Signature		