



NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

**Friday, August 22, 2025
9:00AM**

The State Public Charter School Authority board meeting was conducted in-person and virtually.

MINUTES OF MEETING

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Thigpen
Vice Chair Haddad Bennett
Member Dr. Aldaba
Member Richards
Student Representative Ayala

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY

Member Salcido (Reno Conference Room)
Member Dr. Holmes Sutton
Member Stern

SPCSA STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director
Samantha King Powell, Esq., General Counsel
Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III

Dr. Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor
Karen Gordon, Education Programs Professional
Dr. Denise Shaw, Education Programs Professional
Gretchen Pfahler, Education Programs Professional
John Pilotin, Education Programs Professional

PERSONS PRESENT OR IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY

Yaimara Wheaton	Paul Ballou	Sheriyn Moore	Shannon Manning
Nathaniel Lug	Tam Shear	CeCe Rice	Laura Furlong
Lisa Schwartz	Leondrus Wright	Joseph Orosco	Melvin King
Aundria Hernandez	Amy Gladding	Raeshann Canady	Nikki Servatius
Erin Qugley	Kelly Ryder	Isabelle Parker	Sable Marandi
Joe Taglieber	Nate Hanson	Christina Fagundes	Michelle Vaird
Brandon Wiley	Brenda Ford	Colton Loretz	Wendy Koch

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call

Kurt Thigpen, Chair of the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment #1. Public Comment in person by:

Tam Shear with Opportunity 180. Spoke in support Citizens of the World Charter School.

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda

- a. June 27, 2025, SPCSA Board Meeting Action Minutes.

Motion on Consent Agenda Item 3: Vice Chair Haddad Bennett made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Member Salcido seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Motion was approved.

Agenda Item 4 – Executive Director’s Report

Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director, provided the Authority Board with the Executive Director’s report.

- a. School Highlight –Recognized Tony York who recently received the 2025 National School Safety Lifetime Achievement Award at the National School Safety Conference.
- b. Reviewed delinquent PERS payments as of 8/1/25.
- c. Introduced SPCSA’s new student representative Odalis Ayala.
- d. Provided new schools update on WYLEES, Do & Be Arts Academy of Excellence, and Nevada Classical Academy, Elko.

Questions and discussion ensued.

Agenda Item 5 – Report on Site Evaluations. The members of SPCSA’s Site Evaluation team presented changes in the Site Evaluation process that is expected to provide a more efficient system for all parties involved, and allowing the schools to allocate more time to their students. SPCSA board members made positive comments on the changes and were appreciative of the hard work that went into the changes.

Agenda Item 6 – Proposed revisions to SPCSA Performance Framework. Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing, provided the changes to the Financial Performance Framework. Board members asked questions regarding specific changes to Measure 1 & Measure 2 with regards to removing “the trend analysis”. Dr. Broughton responded that it was difficult to communicate, and the changes simplify the data that is requested and improve tracking. Question regarding Measure 5, define the difference between “defaulting” and “missed obligations”. Reviewing metric to determine school status. There wasn’t a change to the metric measure latter but looking at missed obligations added a way for the SPCSA to document & score using “missed obligations”, from the facilities’ annual audit.

Motion on Agenda Item 6 – Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton proposed a motion to approve the revisions to the SPCSA Financial Performance Framework as outlined in the documents attached to this agenda item, effective for the Fiscal Year 2026 and beyond. Member Dr. Aldaba seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7 – New Charter School Applications. Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing, Danny Peltier, Management Analysis III, and Karen Gordon, Education Programs Professional reviewed new charter school applications and provided recommendations to the SPCSA Board.

Agenda Item 7a – Citizens of the World Charter School – Las Vegas. Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, provided a detailed overview of the application and explained ratings in each area. The school leadership provided additional information and the history of Citizens of the World Charter Schools. Board members had

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questions for the school leaders regarding recruitment and community engagement. School leaders responded that they have been engaging in the community for about 5 years. School leaders explained what they are accessing the community with door-to-door contacts and participating in community events. They are also ramping up the social media actions. Board members asked, “what is meant by expert teachers”? School leadership responded that they don’t think about years of experience but how the teachers approach the work and engagement with students. “We know that day 1, year 1, that we won’t have expert teachers.” They reported having a stringent training process in place. Board members also were concerned with the budgeted salary for teachers being so low and not competitive. School leaders responded that they used school applications from prior years as a starting point for their budget. They responded that they may have to adjust the budget but do plan on using non-tangibles to attract staff, such as strong training programs and school culture. Budget also doesn’t include CSP funds, so that will add to the available funds. Board members requested clarification regarding the relationship between the CMO & board with shared responsibilities. What is the vision of the role of the board? School leaders are aware of the January deadline. Their role during the incubation period is to build up the school leader and support the board. Board members requested strong consideration be given to teacher salaries. Further questions and discussion ensued.

Motion on Agenda Item 7a: Vice Chair Haddad Bennett proposed a motion that the board approve the Citizens of the World Charter School - Las Vegas charter school application as submitted during the 2025 Application Cycle, with the conditions as permitted by NAC 388A.410 and as outlined below, based on a finding that the applicant has met the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school.

1. By November 1, 2025, establish a board in full compliance with the requirements of NRS 388A.320. Furthermore, ensure that the board convenes quarterly meetings during the extended incubation period, in accordance with the mandates of NRS 388A.320.
2. By January 1, 2026, provide evidence that a school leader has been hired.
3. By January 1, 2026, provide evidence that the board has approved a CMO contract that outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of all parties during the incubation period and through the original terms of the contract. This contract must be in compliance with all relevant Nevada laws and regulations.
4. Upon approval of any additional grants or the receipt of any additional funding sources, provide an updated budget through FY2033 to SPCSA staff.
5. By June 1, 2027, submit a fully executed lease for a facility that will meet the needs of the school for the 2027-2028 school year to serve the 89121 and 89122 zip codes.
6. At the conclusion of the New School Enrollment audit in June 2027, provide evidence that Citizens of the World Charter School – Las Vegas has at least 135 students enrolled for the 2027-2028 school year.
7. By June 8, 2027, submit a board-approved Final Budget that includes revenue based on the fully enrolled student count at the time of board approval and accurately incorporates expenses for the identified facility.
8. Complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new charter schools, which includes meeting document submission deadlines as required by SPCSA staff, participating in required training courses, and attending monthly meetings.

Pursuant to NAC 388A.410, all conditions set forth above must be met for the school to open for the 2027-28 school year. Member Salcido seconded the motion. Vote: Chair Thigpen – Yay; Vice Chair Haddad Bennet – Yay; Member Dr. Aldaba – Yay; Member Richards - Yay; Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton – Yay; Member Salcido – Yay; Member Stern – Nay. Motion carried 6 Yay –1 Nay.

The motion was approved.

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Agenda Item 7b – Northern Nevada Wildflower Montessori. Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing, provided a detailed overview of the application and explained ratings in each area. The school leadership provided additional information. Board members asked how the school plans to provide IEP services. School leaders responded that they have budgeted for SPED teachers and contracted services required to fulfill IEP requirements. Board members also commented on the school’s “Priority Enrollment” plan for school staff and board members, and how they would meet the goal of the SPCSA to ensure that students in the community have access to the school. School leaders responded that their vision is to serve the community and underserved populations. The school leaders are currently reevaluating their priority enrollment plan, to ensure that members of the community can enroll their students. Board members wanted additional information regarding the small enrollment cap and what was the thought process behind that decision. School leaders responded that Wildflower schools are intentionally small and allows them to build up their teacher leaders. Board members had questions about teacher credentials. The school has two certified Montessori teachers that will be on the staff roster. When the school grows in year 2 the school will recruit additional certified Montessori teachers. Additional questions and discussions ensued.

Motion on Agenda Item 7b – Vice Chair Haddad Bennett made a motion to approve the Northern Nevada Wildflower Montessori application as submitted during the 2025 Application Cycle, with the conditions as permitted by NAC 388A.410 and as outlined below, based on a finding that the applicant has met the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school.

1. By January 1, 2026, provide evidence that a school leader has been hired.
2. By January 15, 2026, provide enrollment and lottery policies that ensure equitable access for families from the identified community and alignment with the school’s commitment to serve a diverse student body, specifically in relation to priorities given to board and staff members’ children. These policies should ensure that there are reserved spaces for students who do not qualify for priority enrollment.
3. By March 15, 2026, provide evidence that the Student and Family Handbook include language affirming compliance with all applicable federal and state laws regarding the enrollment of students with disabilities. This must include a statement that the school will accept students regardless of IEP placement and will provide all services required under each student’s IEP.
4. By June 1, 2026, submit a fully executed lease for a facility that will meet the needs of the school for the 2026-- 2027 school year located in the 89502, 89503, 89506, 89512, 89519, 89501, 89431, or 89433 zip codes.
5. At the conclusion of the New School Enrollment audit in June 2026, provide evidence that Northern Nevada Wildflower Montessori has at least 23 students enrolled for the 2026 – 2027 school year.
6. By June 8, 2026, submit a board-approved Final Budget that includes revenue based on the fully enrolled student count at the time of board approval and accurately incorporates expenses for the identified facility.
7. Complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new charter schools, which includes meeting document submission deadlines as required by SPCSA staff, participating in required training courses, and attending monthly meetings.

Pursuant to NAC 388A.410, all conditions set forth above must be met for the school to open for the 2026-27 school year. Member Dr. Aldaba seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7c – Pahrum Valley Academy. Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing, provided a detailed overview of the application and explained ratings in each area. The school leadership provided additional

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information. Board members commented on gratitude and appreciation to the committee to form and encouraged them to continue working towards a successful application.

Motion on Agenda Item 7c – Vice Chair Haddad Bennett made a motion to deny the Pahrump Valley Academy application as submitted during the 2025 Application Cycle based on a finding that the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has failed to demonstrate competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school. Designate Director Mackedon to meet and confer with the applicant. Member Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7d – Pathways in Education Las Vegas. Danny Peltier, Management Analyst III, provided a detailed overview of the application and explained ratings in each area. The school leadership provided additional information. Board members commented that they were appreciative of all the work that school leaders had put into completing the application.

Motion on Agenda Item 7d – Vice Chair Haddad Bennett made a motion to deny the Pathways in Education – Las Vegas application as submitted during the 2025 Application Cycle based on a finding that the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has failed to demonstrate competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school. Designate Director Mackedon to meet and confer with the applicant. Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7e – Purpose Leadership Academy. Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing, provided a detailed overview of the application and explained ratings in each area. The school leadership provided additional information. Board members thanked the school leaders for their passion, energy, and accepting feedback. Board members encouraged team to continue working with the SPCSA team.

Motion on Agenda Item 7e – Vice Chair Haddad Bennett made a motion to deny the Purpose Leadership Academy application as submitted during the 2025 Application Cycle based on a finding that the applicant has failed to satisfy the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has failed to demonstrate competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school. Designate Director Mackedon to meet and confer with the applicant. Member Dr. Aldaba seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7f – Somerset Academy of Carson City. Karen Gordon, Education Programs Professional, provided a detailed overview of the application and explained ratings in each area. The school leadership provided additional information. Board members had questions regarding criteria for facility location, temporary vs. permanent location, and engagement with families involving location. School leaders responded that due to the size of Carson City (smaller than other cities in Nevada), it shouldn't be a hardship for families to reach a facility. However, they are looking in areas that are closer to the student population that they intend to serve, paying attention to exits, drop off/pick up. Availability will also be a determining factor. It is their hope to move into a permanent facility, and not a temporary one. Board members asked what is being done to ensure that Somerset – Carson City is one of the higher performing schools in the Somerset portfolio? School leaders responded that they collaborate and talk about best teaching practices across the board, even if it means bringing folks from Florida for training. Board members also questioned the high enrollment projections.

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School leaders responded that the Committee to Form has been marketing the school for 2 years and noted that public interest is already high. After receiving approval from the SPCSA Board for their application they feel confident that there will be much more interest. Also, they've conducted many community events and have a strong marketing plan. Additional questions and comments ensued.

Motion on Agenda Item 7f -, Vice Chair Haddad Bennett proposed motion to approve the Somerset Academy of Carson City application as submitted during the 2025 Application Cycle, with the conditions as permitted by NAC 388A.410 and as outlined below, based on a finding that the applicant has met the requirements contained in NRS 388A.249(3) in that the applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the SPCSA that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school.

1. By November 1, 2025, provide an updated Financial Plan that provides details information regarding the incubation year budget. The plan should identify all confirmed sources of revenue, including the final award details of the CSP grant from Somerset, Inc., as well as the inclusion of the 1% affiliation fee. Additionally, the submission should include a narrative explanation that clearly describes how the confirmed revenue sources correspond to the anticipated costs associated with the incubation year.
2. By November 1, 2025, provide evidence that a formal contract has been negotiated and signed between the governing board and Somerset, Inc. Within the contract, include the 1% affiliation fee and a list of agreed upon services.
3. By January 1, 2026, provide evidence that a school leader has been hired.
4. By June 1, 2026, submit a fully executed lease for a facility that will meet the needs of the school for the 2026—2027 school year located in the 89701, 89703, 89705, 89706 zip codes.
5. By June 8, 2026, submit a board-approved Final Budget that includes revenue based on the fully enrolled student count at the time of board approval and accurately incorporates expenses for the identified facility.
6. At the conclusion of the New School Enrollment audit in June 2026 provide evidence that Somerset Academy of Carson City has at least 130 students enrolled for the 2026-2027 school year.
7. Complete the SPCSA pre-opening process for new charter schools, which includes meeting document submission deadlines as required by SPCSA staff, participating in required trainings, and attending monthly meetings.

Pursuant to NAC 388A.410, all conditions set forth above must be met for the school to open for the 2026-27 school year. Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. the motion carried unanimously.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8 - Long-Range Calendar. The SPCSA board reviewed and discussed the Long-Range Calendar.

Agenda Item 9 – Public Comment #2.
No public comment provided.

Agenda Item 10 – Adjournment at 1:47 pm.