

Futuro Public Comment –
SPCCA
Compliance and OPF – 10/9/25
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INTRO AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

My name is Ignacio Prado and I am the Executive Director of Futuro Academy Charter school, a public charter school in the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority. Our school is in its ninth year currently serving grades K-5 for 475 students and their families. We are a Community Eligibility Provision school providing 100% of our students free lunch and breakfast, and 45% of our students are an English Language Learner, with 15% of students receiving Special Education services ranging from primarily self-contained, resource and general education settings. We are a four star rated school, averaging more than double the index point of our neighboring district schools.

I am also the Vice Chair of the Charter School Association of Nevada, or CSAN, the membership organization representing the second largest system of K-12 public education in Nevada, with more than 68,000 students in grades Pre-K-12.

GENERAL CONTEXT REGARDING COMPLIANCE OVER TIME

Despite constant feedback from schools regarding the compliance overload, the SPCSA has drifted forcefully in the direction of more arbitrary compliance demand.

Board minutes are returned due to subjective opinion about summary quality, handbooks are rejected and forced for resubmission for not having a preferred URL link, items will now have extensive checklists with rationale like “best practices” for insertion of new requirements on submissions not required by statute. For our organization, the rejection rate for the average of 200-215 annual requirements has risen in the span of 3 years from 4% to 38% in the prior year for us as a school with no appreciable impact in student learning, wellbeing, or any particular objective.

SPECIFIC COMMENT ABOUT THE 2024-25 ORGANIZATION FRAMEWORK (OPF):

As a prime example, the 2024-25 OPF itself is by far the hardest framework to succeed at in terms of overall compliance in the last decade. Being rated as 'not meeting' any one of nine indicators results in an overall "Out of Compliance" rating that is not remediable.

I personally participated in one of the WestEd listening sessions that the staff will represent as helping form this framework, but I would state that the overwhelming sentiment was that compliance is ever growing and very difficult to keep up with. As you can see, it appears that the direction of the SPCSA appears to be prefer its own stricter and more robust interpretation of how compliance should look despite our feedback.

CALL TO ACTION

Every single day, I as a school leader accept responsibility for things outside of my control or that are difficult as does our team. We have largely succeeded in challenging a narrative that our children could not succeed despite their home language, social status, you name it.

I cannot, and you should not, accept that the SPCSA cannot take responsibility for compliance and how their choices and interpretations have made it more burdensome or punitive. I suggest two things:

1. Do not blanketly accept SPCSA staff representations that compliance has to be this way, it is a result of some legal requirement, etc. It is patently not true, and the information I have provided today regarding examples and statistics should make you wonder how it's possible it is now mathematically 10x harder for our organization to meet item submission requirements in the span of a few years with no meaningful legal reform around compliance. A reasonable person, which is your standard, would infer that this is worth investigating.
2. In preparation for my public comment today, I have reached out to several leaders and organizations that expressed similar sentiments. However, some representatives expressed fear of speaking out as they are up for site reviews or other processes and would rather submit than stand out or have an uncomfortable dynamic with the SPCSA. You should as a board gather perceptual data from schools about the performance and direction of the SPCSA across its functions including compliance anonymously and directly to the board, with questions framed by the board.

Both as a school leader and CSAN representative, I can certainly commit to being available to you for further information and can always be reached at the attached contact information.