

Joe Lombardo
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

Melissa Mackedon
Executive Director



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

3427 Goni Rd, Suite 103
Carson City, Nevada 89706
(775) 687-9174 · Fax (775) 687-9060

500 East Warm Springs Rd, #116
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119
(702) 486-8895 · Fax (702) 486-5543

ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst IV, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Explore Academy– Charter Amendment Request to reduce enrollment cap**
DATE: March 13, 2026

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Explore Academy has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption and approve the request to reduce its enrollment cap.

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

Background and Overview of the Amendment

Explore is located at 3551 North Ferrell St. North Las Vegas, NV 89032. Explore is requesting the SPCSA approve a reduction in its enrollment cap for the 2025 – 26 school year. As of the 2025 Validation Day, Explore had 329 students enrolled in grades 6 – 12.

According to the amendment application, in 2024-2025, the enrollment reached 350. 2025 – 26 enrollment dropped to approximately 320 which the school explained may be, in part, attributed to family concerns regarding charter renewal. The school was approved for a three-year charter contract in December and the school is confident it will be able to increase enrollment to meet future projections as outlined. The Explore Governing Board has determined that the projected enrollments for the remainder of the charter contract, listed in this application are reasonable and attainable.

Explore explained that budget adjustment costs include staffing adjustments aligned to enrollment levels, instructional materials and classroom supplies, student technology devices, minor operational and utility adjustments, and food service scaling (85%–95% reimbursed through USDA programs). Additionally, according to the amendment application, since staffing and expenditures are aligned with actual enrollment, the school will proportionally reduce variable costs during the temporary enrollment

dip in FY2025 – 26 and no significant fixed-cost increases are anticipated.

Finally, during FY2025 – 26, the school continues to adjust staffing and discretionary expenditures conservatively to align with the temporary enrollment reduction. The school is currently projecting a surplus of approximately \$20,000–\$30,000.

If approved, the enrollment cap for Explore will be:

School Year	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12
Enrollment Cap	320	390	390	390

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. Regarding Explore’s academic performance, the middle school was rated as 1-stars and received 35.0 points on the SPCSA’s Academic Performance Framework, which did not meet standard. The high school was not rated. Explore was rated as Partially-Compliance on the 2024 – 25 Organizational Performance Framework. Explore’s Notice of Breach was continued on the 2025 SPCSA Financial Performance Framework.

SPCSA staff supports the request of Explore to reduce its enrollment cap. While the school has struggled since opening in 2020, recent staffing changes and improved year-over-year academic outcomes is evidence that the school is on an upward trajectory.

Proposed Motion: Grant Explore Academy’s Good Cause Exemption request and approve Explore’s request to reduce the enrollment cap as outlined in the recommendation memo.

If approved, the enrollment cap for Explore will be:

School Year	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12
Enrollment Cap	320	390	390	390

¹ NAC 388A.400(8) and NRS 388A.276

The current enrollment cap for Explore is:

School Year	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grade Levels	6-12	6-12	6-12	6-12
Enrollment Cap	390	390	390	390

Historical Performance and Demographic Information – Explore Academy

School Total Enrollment and Demographics since 2020

Year	Total Enrolled	A %	B %	C %	H %	I %	M %	P %	ELL %	FRL %	IEP %
2020-2021	136	2.2	19.8	50.0	24.2	0.0	0.7	2.9	0.0	41.1	13.9
2021-2022	192	4.1	19.2	39.0	29.6	1.0	6.7	0.0	5.2	46.3	14.5
2022-2023	289	2.4	23.1	26.6	37.0	0.3	10.3	0.0	<5.0	54.6	15.9
2023-2024	269	2.9	18.9	18.9	46.8	0.0	10.4	1.8	10.7	>95.0	12.6
2024-2025	356	2.8	23.8	14.6	47.1	0.2	8.7	2.5	13.2	69.9	15.1
2025-2026	329	2.1	20.9	10	53.1	0	10.3	3.3	14.5	77.8	17.6

- A – Asian
- B – Black
- C – Caucasian
- H – Hispanic
- I – American Indian/Alaskan Native
- M – Two or more races
- P – Pacific Islander
- IEP – Individualized Education Plan – A student with a disability/special education student
- ELL – English Language Learner
- FRL – A student who qualifies for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
- * - Suppressed data due to n-count

Explore Financial Performance

Year	Findings & Framework Results
2020 – 2021	Meets the Standard
2021 – 2022	Does Not Meet Standard—Notice of Concern
2022 – 2023	Does Not Meet Standard—Notice of Breach
2023 – 2024	Does Not Meet Standard—Notice of Breach
2024 – 2025	Does Not Meet Standard—Notice of Breach

Explore Organizational Performance

Year	Findings & Framework Results
2020 – 2021	Meets Standard
2021 – 2022	Meets Standard
2022 – 2023	Meets Standard
2023 – 2024	Meets Standard

2024 – 2025	Partially Compliant
-------------	---------------------

Explore Academic Performance

2021–2022 NSPF Index Score	Middle: 18.8 High: 40.0
2021–2022 SPCSA Academic Performance Score / Rating	Middle: 31.2 / Does Not Meet Standard High: Not Rated
2022–2023 NSPF Index Score / Star Rating	Middle: 11.1 / 1-star High: 20.0 / Not Rated
2022–2023 SPCSA Academic Performance Score / Rating	Middle: 18.6 / Below Standard High: Not Rated
2023–2024 NSPF Index Score / Star Rating	Middle: 13.0 / 1-star High: 38.8 / Not Rated
2023–2024 SPCSA Academic Performance Score / Rating	Middle: 20.8 / Does Not Meet Standard High: Not Rated
2024–2025 NSPF Index Score / Star Rating	Middle: 22 / 1-star High: 31.5 / Not Rated
2024–2025 SPCSA Academic Performance Score / Rating	Middle: 35 / Does Not Meet Standard High: Not Rated