



## NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

Friday, March 13, 2026  
9:00AM

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

### MINUTES OF MEETING

#### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Vice Chair Whitaker  
Member Addis  
Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton

#### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY**

Member Dr. Aldaba  
Member Salcido  
Member Stern

#### **SPCSA STAFF MEMBERS & DAG ATTORNEY**

Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director  
Joseph Ostunio, Esq., DAG Office  
Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing  
Danny Peltier, Management Analyst IV

#### **PERSONS IN ATTENDANCE IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY**

Paul Ballou	Tara Raines	Alexandria Evans	R. Gourrier
Bredan Muffoletto	Robert Diaz	Gabriel Gomez	Lamar Jones
Dennis Cronia	Les Patu	Eddie Jimenez	Al L.
Jose Gonzalez	Raquel Dexter	Joseph Franco	Kenneth McLin
Robert Frentos	Lisa Satory	Renee Fairless	Danielle Ranney
Bob Howell	Michael Odowd	Mike Taack	Katelyn Kenney
Danette Olmos-Green	Valerie Martinez	Linda Jones Easton	Dr. Bianté Gainous
Janelle Veith	Kim Izumo	Brandi Adams	Valerie Martinez
Ayanna Thomas	Joseph Franco		

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**Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call. [00:03]**

Ty Whitaker, Vice Chair of the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

**Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment #1. [01:52] Written Public Comment is posted online with board documents. Public Comment in person or telephonically:**

The following individuals spoke in support of ensuring that the appropriate bidding processes and prevailing wage statutes are followed when charter schools have applicable construction/work projects.

1. Robert Diaz
2. Lamar Jones
3. Joseph Franco
4. Gabe Gomez
5. Les Patu

**Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda. [07:24]** The following items were reviewed:

- a. January 23, 2026, SPCSA Board Meeting Action Minutes for approval.
- b. Updated condition deadlines for new schools approved during the 2026 New Charter Application Cycle and deferring opening to the 2027-28 school year.
  - i. Somerset Academy of Carson City
  - ii. Pahrump Valley Charter School
- c. Updated Financial Performance Framework Results for Fiscal Year 2025
- d. Charter School Contract Amendment Applications – reduction to enrollment caps:
  - i. Explore Academy
  - ii. Nevada Classical Academy Elko
  - iii. Quest Academy
  - iv. Silver Sands Montessori Charter School
  - v. Western Youth Leadership, Engagement, and Empowerment School (WYLEES)
  - vi. Young Women’s Leadership Academy

**Motion on Agenda Item 3.** Member Salcido made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Motion was approved.**

**Agenda Item 4 – SPCSA Charter School Governing Body Governance Standards. [08:26]** Vice Chair Whitaker discussed the Governance Standards adopted by the Authority pursuant to NRS 388A.224 (2024). He reviewed the purpose of the Standards and cited all 6 Standards.

1. Focus on Student Growth, Achievement, and Social and Emotional Wellbeing
2. Ensure an Effective and Well-Run Organization
3. Manage Financial Resources Responsibility
4. Commit to Long-Term Success
5. Ensure Strong Leadership and Effective Partnerships
6. Operate in Service of your School Community

**Agenda Item 5 – Executive Director’s Report. [10:55]** SPCSA Executive Director Mackedon provided the Authority with information and updates regarding the following:

- a. **School Highlight:** Signature Preparatory’s low chronic absenteeism rates serve as a strength. For the second consecutive year, both elementary and middle school grades registered rates below 5%. Elementary school reported 3.2 percent for the year 2024-25, and middle school reported 1.9 percent, well below the SPCSA’s district average of 16 percent for elementary grades and 13 percent for middle school grades. Additionally, on SPCSA’s Academic

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Performance Framework (APF), the elementary and middle school grades earned 5 out of 5 points on the *Chronic Absenteeism Reduction Indicator*, helping the school meet the APF standards.

- b. Reviewed NV Prep's delinquent PERS contributions.
- c. **New Schools Update:** SPCSA staff met with all schools in their incubation year on March 2, 2026, to get updates on facilities, hiring, and enrollment efforts. Importantly, Wildflower Montessori continues to work toward finalizing facilities. During these monthly check-ins, SPCSA staff also highlight upcoming documents due, including any unique conditions for each school.

SPCSA staff also meet with schools that opted for a two-year incubation period or have determined to defer a year during the first week of each month.

- d. **Legislative Council Bureau and Governor's Finance Office School Visits.** Executive Director Mackedon attended charter school visits in Northern Nevada with the four staff members from the Legislative Council Bureau and three members from the Governor's Finance Office on Monday, March 2, 2026. The group visited Pinecrest Academy of Northern Nevada, Alpine Academy, Mariposa Academy (WCSD charter school), and Mater Academy of Northern Nevada. Seeing schools in action provides nonpartisan fiscal and policy staff with important context and a practical frame of reference that strengthens their fiscal and policy analysis related to charter schools. When organizing these visits, we intentionally aim to showcase a diverse cross-section of Nevada's charter sector, including Title I schools, small schools, different grade configurations, newly opened schools, under-enrolled schools, schools with waiting lists, and schools that utilized Nevada's Charter School Facility Grant Program to finance their facilities. Our aim is to provide a balanced and transparent view of the charter sector by highlighting both its strengths and the challenges it faces.

On March 26, 2026, Marinna Cutler, Director of School Support, will tour the following Clark County charter schools: WYLEES, Beacon Academy, Young Women's Leadership Academy, Odyssey Charter School, and Coral Academy of Science, Tamarus Campus.

**Public Meeting Attendance**

Over the past month, the SPCSA had the opportunity to appear before several public bodies:

- February 10, 2026 – Board of Examiners. The SPCSA had a contract requiring approval on the agenda.
- February 12, 2026 – Metrics Subcommittee of Accountability Design. I was appointed to and attended this subcommittee meeting. The group is tasked with developing the District Performance Framework as required by SB 460 (2025 Legislative Session).
- February 12, 2026 – Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA) Governing Board. SPCSA staff attended to answer questions regarding the Memorandum of Understanding between SPCSA and TMRPA. This MOU has been a multi-year effort to ensure that regional planning appropriately considers charter school growth as part of TMRPA's broader planning responsibilities.
- February 17, 2026 – Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education. The SPCSA presented information on outcomes in the charter school sector, as well as on challenges facing the sector and potential policy considerations.
- February 19, 2026 – Interim Finance Committee. The SPCSA brought forward two work programs that required approval.
- February 20, 2026 – School Funding Commission. The SPCSA presented information on charter school funding, including the role and purpose of reserve funds and how charter schools use them.

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- February 26, 2026 – Legislative Commission. The Legislative Commission approved Regulation R080-24, which was brought forward by the SPCSA.

**Agenda Item 6 – Proven Provider Updates. [15:05]** Executive Director Mackedon provided some background regarding the State Public Charter School Authority’s decision to not renew Nevada Prep’s Charter Contract. Academies of Math & Science (AMS), a proven provider, will take over and restart the school. Nevada law allows the students of Nevada Prep to stay at the school, to not disrupt the students that are already enrolled at the school.

Brandi Adams provided an update on their work with the school. AMS has been working closely with Building Hope and addressing building issues. Many repairs have been completed. They are in the process of getting bids and are most excited about adding a playground.

First board meeting was held on March 10. Their board reviewed many of items on the agenda, including policies & procedures.

Board members had questions regarding the current enrollment. Current enrollment – 186 out of the 500 students currently enrolled have submitted an intent to enroll for next school year. They have some other plans for contacting families of the currently enrolled students. They also have 113 new students in the pipeline. Enrollment lottery scheduled for April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Agenda Item 7 - Charter School Contract Amendment Applications. [21:50]** Danny Peltier, Management Analyst IV, provided the Authority with recommendations related to charter school contract amendment applications, and the Authority may approve or deny the following charter school amendment applications based on NRS 388A.276 and NRS 388A.279.

**7.a. Mater Academy of Nevada – Request to Acquire/Occupy a New Facility, Occupy an Additional Facility, and Expand Enrollment in Existing Grade Levels.** Board members had questions. What does leadership look like as the number of students are increasing and with the complexity of the transition? The school has retained leadership from the very beginning, long term employees that are ready to step into the position. We are always training staff internally and also look outside the organization for candidates. Clarification about the timeline of the proposed transportation plan? The school will utilize the current buses to provide transportation and will apply for additional transportation funds. The school will have transportation available for the fall of 2026. Based on the location of the new school and plans to use the waitlist, have you looked into the interest of the families on the wait list? The school has researched the waitlist and has also determined that the location of the new school is in an area of families on the waitlist. How does the demographic and academic need fit into the area/neighborhood that you plan to serve? The location on the East side of Las Vegas, where we currently sit, and is heavily populated by Hispanics and African Americans. Those are the demographics that we have served and continue to serve. What is your plan for enrollment? The school will do enrollment fairs, have mariachi bands and other activities to let the community know that we are coming to the area. How will you maintain the quality that you currently have as you are growing in size? The school has experience, with Cactus Park, implementing the Mater way, and being consistent with what we know works. What are your plans for staffing highly qualified educators in each classroom at the new facility? We grow our own staff with interventionalists to prepare them to move into teaching positions. Demographics are similar between staff and students. We have a very diverse staff.

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**Motion on Agenda Item 7a.** – Member Stern proposed a motion to Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Mater Academy of Nevada’s requests to: • Occupy the 2025 E. Sahara Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89104 (Sahara campus) beginning in the 2026 – 27 school year. • Acquire, construct, and occupy the 6814 E. Vegas Valley Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89142 (Vegas Valley campus) for the 2027 – 28 school year. • Increase the Enrollment Cap at the East campus as detailed in the recommendation memo. With the following condition: • That Mater Academy of Nevada complete the SPCSA’s pre-opening process for new facilities for the Sahara campus and the Vegas Valley campus. Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Motion was approved.**

**7.b. Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Virtual Campus. [47:00]** – Request to Expand Enrollment in Existing Grade Levels. Board members had some questions. What is the teacher-student ratios in the classroom? It varies by class, but the average is 20:1. How many teachers would you need to bring in? Many of our teachers are teaching virtually in addition to their face-to-face teaching responsibilities. I know you had past enrollment challenges in 2024. I wonder what has changed. Due to COVID, I think that families were hesitant, but now families are more interested in a flexible schedule. Students can pursue interests such as acting or sports during the day and then complete their coursework in the afternoon, evenings, whatever works with their schedule. What is the plan to increase attendance going forward? We would like to grow at a rate that is manageable. We will increase our advertising and let people know of this option. We’ll hire full-time teachers for the virtual school to improve relationships with the students. Also, provide sport options for the virtual students. Why is the virtual high school not rated? SPCSA staff responded that when a high school is not rated, it is due to the school not having a graduating class. When a student attends virtual and comes back to the brick-and-mortar school, how do you ensure that they are at the same academic level? Ensure that attendance connections are happening by making daily phone calls. The school has hired interventionist to assist either online, or support students working in the lab.

**Motion on Agenda Item 7b.** Member Dr. Aldaba proposed a motion to Grant the Good Cause Exemption request and approve Pinecrest Academy of Nevada’s requests to increase the enrollment cap at the Virtual campus as detailed in the memo. Member Addis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Motion was approved.**

**Agenda Item 8 – Democracy Prep at the Agassi Campus. [1:09:36]** Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing presented an update to the Authority on DPAC’s transition plan outlining the process for transitioning from management by a Charter Management Organization (CMO) to operating as an independent school. The Authority will also consider approval of the school’s Financial Performance Framework ratings for FY2025.

- a. Transition Plan – the Board will review and consider approval of the transition plan outlining how the school will transition from management by Democracy Prep to operating as an independent school. Board members had questions. What are the reasons for the transition? The school is working with consultants and ensure we have the appropriate vendor and contracts. What does communication to families look like? We have requested feedback from our families, students and staff. What about staffing, do you have a percentage rate of what staff will return? We don’t have a number at this time but hope to have that data in the next few weeks. What is the follow up procedure? The SPCSA have been meeting with the DPAC team regularly to get updates.

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- b. FY2025 Financial Performance Framework Ratings – the Board will consider approval of the Financial Performance Framework ratings for DPAC.

**Motion on Agenda Item 8a.** Member Salcido made a motion to approve the transition plan for Democracy Prep at the Agassi Campus as the school transitions from management by Democracy Prep Public Schools to independent operation with the following condition: • DPAC will collaborate with SPCSA staff to develop and submit a financially sound budget that is accurately completed in the required state template. The tentative budget must be submitted by April 15, 2026, and the final budget must be submitted by June 8, 2026. Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Motion was approved.**

**Motion on Agenda Item 8b.** Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton proposed a motion to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Performance Framework results for Democracy Prep at the Agassi Campus as provided within this memo. Member Salcido seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Motion was approved.**

**Agenda Item 9 – Long-Range Calendar.** [1:22:46] Executive Director Mackedon reminded board members to be sure to let us know if they are unable to attend a meeting.

**Agenda Item 10 – Public Comment #1.** [1:23:47] **Written Public Comment is posted online with board documents. Public Comment in person or telephonically:**

- 1. Robert Diaz

**Agenda Item 11 – Adjournment.** [1:26:46] The meeting adjourned at 10:27 am.