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ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Transportation Plan: Alpine Academy Charter High School
DATE: May 7, 2026

Background

Access to safe, reliable, and equitable student transportation remains a significant challenge for many charter schools across Nevada, particularly those serving historically underserved communities. Recognizing the critical role transportation plays in improving access to quality education, the Nevada Legislature has taken deliberate steps to support charter schools in overcoming this barrier.

During the 2023 Legislative Session, the passage of [Assembly Bill 400](#) appropriated \$14 million to the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) for the 2023–2025 biennium to support student transportation efforts at both SPCSA-sponsored and district-sponsored charter schools. Building on that investment, the 2025 Legislature enacted [Senate Bill 468](#), appropriating an additional \$17 million to the SPCSA for the 2025–2027 biennium to further expand and enhance transportation access.

To be eligible for this funding, charter schools are required to submit a Transportation Plan to the SPCSA for review and approval. These plans must demonstrate not only a comprehensive and viable approach to student transportation, but also alignment with statutory and regulatory requirements, including driver and vehicle certifications, cost-effectiveness relative to local district averages, and the school's overall academic, financial, and organizational performance.

Plans must also clearly demonstrate how they will materially improve access to education in the region they serve.

In alignment with NAC 388A.330(4), schools that do not currently have authorization to provide transportation services must also submit a contract amendment request to their sponsor. For SPCSA-sponsored schools, the amendment request is embedded within the Transportation Plan application, and both components will be considered concurrently by the SPCSA Board.

For the 2026–27 school year, applications were due on March 23, 2026, and are being evaluated through a competitive review process. Priority for funding will be given in the following order:

1. Maintenance of existing transportation programs
2. Launch of new transportation services
3. Expansion of currently operating transportation programs

Of the \$17 million appropriated for the biennium, approximately \$8.1 million was awarded for the 2025–26 school year, with the remaining \$8.9 million allocated for the 2026–27 school year.

Transportation Plan Overview

Alpine Academy Charter High School is requesting \$99,058.00 to implement the school's Transportation Plan. Below is an overview of the proposed transportation plan for Alpine as provided in the application.

If approved and funded, Alpine Academy's transportation plan will materially improve access to education by removing one of the most significant barriers families face when considering enrollment and maintaining consistent attendance—reliable transportation. Currently, students must rely on family availability, carpooling, or limited public transit options, which are often inconsistent and time-consuming, particularly for those living farther from campus.

By implementing two daily transportation routes serving Sparks, Spanish Springs, Sun Valley, North Valleys, Stead, and Northwest Reno, Alpine will provide dependable, structured access to school for students across a broad geographic area. This will allow students who would otherwise be unable to attend due to distance or transportation limitations to enroll and participate fully in the school program.

The plan is also expected to improve attendance outcomes by reducing transportation-related absences and tardiness, which are key contributors to chronic absenteeism. With consistent access to school, students are more likely to engage academically, remain on track for graduation, and benefit from the supportive environment Alpine provides.

Overall, this plan expands equitable access to educational opportunities and strengthens student success across the Reno-Sparks community.

Analysis and Recommendation

Alpine Academy is a Title 1 school requesting approval of its transportation plan and funding to implement their proposed program.

SPCSA staff reviewed their transportation plan and find that the plan meets the requirements set forth in Senate Bill 468.

1. The transportation plan is comprehensive and likely to be successfully implemented.
2. The narrative provided by the school explains that the proposed transportation plan will serve students from some of the lowest income areas in Reno. These funds will minimize the transportation challenges for families and reduce chronic absenteeism rates. This demonstrates that the transportation plan will materially improve access to education in the region.
3. The transportation plan includes details regarding how the charter school will ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory transportation requirements.
4. The budget provided within the transportation plan demonstrates that the plan is financially viable.
5. The current enrollment for Alpine Academy in the 25-26 school year is 255 students. Alpine Academy is located within Washoe County where the four-year average (per pupil) transportation funding for the 2025-26 school year is \$392. The total proposed funding award based on enrollment numbers is \$99,958, as requested, which is equal to the average cost per pupil for transportation within Washoe County School District.
6. The academic, financial, and organizational performance of the charter school indicates that the transportation plan is in the interest of pupils who will be served by the transportation plan. Specifically, the transportation plan creates access for students and families to improve attendance and academic outcomes. It also reinforces a foundational commitment to equity ensuring all students can access the transformative opportunities provided by a high-quality public education.

Therefore, SPCSA staff recommend approval of the Alpine Academy Transportation Plan, along with funding to implement the plan.

Proposed Motion:

1. Approve the Alpine Academy's Transportation Plan, along with the proposed funding to implement the plan and allow SPCSA staff to work with the school to make budget revisions as long as the total funding does not exceed the average per pupil cost in the local school district.
2. Require the school to provide SPCSA staff with documentation to demonstrate that the school is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations prior to beginning to transport students.