



NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

**Friday, June 26, 2026
9:00AM**

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

MINUTES OF MEETING

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Thigpen
Member Addis

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY

Vice Chair Whitaker
Member Richards
Member Salcido
Member Stern

SPCSA STAFF MEMBERS

Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director
Samantha King Powell, Esq., General Counsel

PERSONS IN ATTENDANCE IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY

Jennifer Braster	Sandra Kinne	Brandi Adams	Mark Peterson
Josh Kern	LaRita Williams	Kristen Guthrie	

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call. [00:00:01]

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

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment #1. [00:01:10] Written Public Comment is posted online with board documents. Public Comment in person or telephonically:

1. Jennifer Braster (Agenda Item 6)

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda. [00:05:53] The following items were reviewed:

- a. May 15, 2026, SPCSA Board Meeting Action Minutes for approval.

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

Motion was approved.

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Agenda Item 4 – SPCSA Charter School Governing Body Governance Standards. [00:06:20] Member Salcido discussed the Governance Standards adopted by the Authority pursuant to NRS 388A.224 (2024). He reviewed the third principle: Manage Financial Resources Responsibly. This is important because all other goals, visions and dreams of opening and running a school are dependent on financial solvency. This is challenging because what motivates a person to start a school usually doesn't consist of keeping the "financials". The reasons people often get into running a school, is passion for education and students. So, financials don't come naturally to them. Governing boards need to make sure that financial oversight is a priority.

Agenda Item 5 – Executive Director's Report. [00:08:40] SPCSA Executive Director Mackedon provided the Authority with information and updates regarding the following:

a. **School Highlight**

Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director, highlighted several schools and leaders from the SPCSA portfolio who were honored at Opportunity 180's inaugural North Star Charter School Awards. Held in June 2026 at the Blind Center of Nevada in Las Vegas, the event celebrated the educators, school leaders, governing boards, and school communities whose work exemplifies Opportunity 180's North Star: ensuring that every student graduates college and career ready and prepared to live the life they dream.

The recipients from the SPCSA portfolio:

- **Excellence in Education Award:** Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas – Cadence Campus
- **The 180 Award:** Quest Academy
- **Community Empowerment & Engagement Award:** Nevada Rise Academy
- **Leader-to-Leader Award:** Dr. Benjamin Feinstein
- **Board Excellence Award:** Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas

These recognitions reflect the extraordinary commitment, innovation, and student-centered leadership that exist across Nevada's public charter school community. From fostering academic excellence and strengthening community partnerships to advancing strong governance and collaborative leadership, these award recipients represent the very best of what charter schools can accomplish on behalf of students and families.

She extended our sincere congratulations to each of the honorees and thanked Opportunity 180 for creating this meaningful opportunity to celebrate excellence within Nevada's education landscape. She also expressed our appreciation to Chair Thigpen for representing the SPCSA at the ceremony and joining in recognizing the outstanding achievements of our schools and leaders.

b. **Delinquent schools PERS contributions**

c. **Current events in charter space**

The SPCSA is excited to welcome Denise Frolich as the SPCSA's new Director of Finance and Operations. Denise officially joined the Authority on May 26 and brings extensive expertise and leadership experience that will support the agency's operational excellence and continued growth. We are pleased to have her on board and look forward to the contributions she will make to the SPCSA and the schools we serve.

Professional learning and collaboration continue to be an important priority for the SPCSA leadership team as we seek to strengthen our work in service of Nevada's charter school students and families.

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Members of the SPCSA leadership team attended the Nevada Association of School Superintendents (NASS) Conference, held June 7–9. Participation in the conference provided an important opportunity to strengthen relationships with educational partners throughout Nevada and to engage in meaningful dialogue about the shared challenges and opportunities facing public education.

From June 22–25, Melissa Mackedon had the opportunity to participate in the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools Conference, the nation's largest gathering of charter school leaders, authorizers, advocates, and policymakers. The conference provided valuable opportunities to learn from national experts and colleagues from across the country on topics including innovative school models, effective governance, accountability, federal policy developments, and strategies to ensure that all students have access to high-quality public-school options. These conversations reinforced the importance of maintaining a strong focus on educational quality, responsible growth, and student outcomes while continuing to adapt to the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

Melissa continues to participate in the Nevada Gold Leadership program, an intensive leadership development experience designed to strengthen the skills and effectiveness of executive leaders across the state. She has completed two of the six Gold Leadership courses and one of the six individualized coaching sessions. The opportunity to reflect on leadership practices, receive personalized coaching, and engage with colleagues from diverse sectors was both energizing and informative.

d. Member Dr. Holmes-Sutton

As Dr. Tonia Holmes-Sutton concludes her service on the SPCSA Board of Directors, the SPCSA staff and board extended our deepest gratitude for her years of dedicated leadership and service to Nevada's students, educators, and families. Dr. Holmes-Sutton was first appointed to the SPCSA Board by the Nevada State Board of Education in August 2019 and was reappointed in June 2022. During her tenure, she served as Board Chair for two years, guiding the Authority through significant periods of growth, challenge, and opportunity with thoughtfulness, integrity, and an unwavering focus on student success.

Dr. Holmes-Sutton brought to the Board an extraordinary breadth of experience as an educator, school leader, professor, and nationally recognized advocate for teacher excellence. A National Board Certified Teacher and veteran educator of more than two decades, she consistently elevated the Board's conversations through her deep understanding of teaching and learning, educational leadership, special education, and the needs of students and families in diverse communities. Her expertise in professional learning and educator development, coupled with her commitment to equity and educational opportunity, helped shape thoughtful decision-making that always kept students at the center.

On behalf of the SPCSA staff, Board members, and the charter school community, we thank Dr. Holmes-Sutton for her remarkable contributions and steadfast commitment to public education. Her leadership has left a lasting impact on the Authority and the students it serves. She will be greatly missed, and we wish her continued success in all that lies ahead.

e. Appointment of Student Representative for the 26-27 school year.

During the spring of 2026, the State Public Charter School Authority received three applications from outstanding students interested in serving as the student representative on the SPCSA Board of Directors for the 2026–2027 school year. Each applicant demonstrated a strong commitment to

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leadership, student advocacy, and improving educational opportunities for their peers, making the selection process especially difficult.

To ensure a thoughtful and equitable process, members of the SPCSA leadership team and Board Chair Thigpen independently reviewed each application. Reviewers ranked the candidates by awarding three points to their first-choice applicant, two points to their second choice, and one point to their third choice. The cumulative scores from this process determined the selected student representative.

We are pleased to announce that the 2026–2027 SPCSA Student Representative will be Cason Noll, a student at Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas – Sandy Ridge Campus.

Cason brings an impressive record of leadership, service, and student engagement to this role. Throughout high school, he has actively sought opportunities to elevate student voice and contribute to meaningful change. He previously participated in two SPCSA student focus groups during site evaluations, where he provided thoughtful feedback to inform school performance evaluations and shared insights from the charter school student experience. He is an Eagle Scout and a Nevada Youth Legislator.

Agenda Item 6 – Sage Collegiate and NV Prep Closure Update. [00:14:00] Josh Kern provided an update on closing activities for Sage Collegiate and highlighted two issues to bring to the board’s attention. These issues closely mirror the issues that we encountered at Nevada Prep, and other recently closed charter schools. 1) Sage delayed payment or nonpayment to critical vendors. This created a crisis with the school’s special education program during the final weeks of the school year. On July 1, 2025, Sage signed Memorandum of Understanding with Wildflower (special education service provider). By the Fall of 2025, payments for services became increasingly sporadic, and a few weeks before the end of the school year, Sage owed Wildflower over \$60,000. The school’s liabilities far exceeded the school’s ability to pay Wildflower and other vendors. Wildflower could not continue services without receiving payment in full. Fortunately, another company, Behavior Consultants (local to Las Vegas), stepped in to provide special education services. 2. Board Governance: underlying concerns about not providing the school fiduciary obligations and responsibilities. Josh will provide the SPCSA board with a detailed report in the coming months.

LaRita Williams, Chief Schools Officer of the Ten Square Group, provided a report on the academic program at Nevada Prep. The first step was completing an audit/assessment to evaluate the level of the school’s academic operations. Then they worked alongside the school leaders to strengthen instruction, operations and governance. They are setting the foundation for success moving forward. Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director of SPCSA, thanked not only LaRita, but other Ten Square Group employees, for the support they provided during the wind down and transition to AMS. Special thanks to their grant team, for coming in and helping ensure that their grant funds weren’t left on the table, getting those reimbursements completed.

Agenda Item 7 – FuturEdge Academy. [00:42:00] Samantha King Powell, Esq., General Counsel for the SPCSA, provided information on FuturEdge and a possible surrender of their charter contract. Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director, thanked the school Principal, Kristen Guthrie, Board Chair, Michael Marshall, the folks at Rosemawr Management, and the team at Academies of Math and Science. They have all been working cooperatively for weeks in the best interest of the school to find a path moving forward to keep the school open. SPCSA staff recommended Notice of Intent to Terminate. Kristen Guthrie, Principal, thanked the team and the SPCSA for their support and plans for keeping the school open.

Motion on Agenda Item 7. Member Salcido made a motion to issue this Notice of Intent to Terminate

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FutuEdge's Charter Contract per NRS 388A.330 and proceed with charter contract termination proceedings under the following grounds:

- 1) The school is financially impaired such that it cannot continue to operate. The school has failed to meet its bond obligations, faces the potential loss of its current facility as a result of the bond default, and does not presently demonstrate a financially sustainable path to continued operation.
- 2) The FuturEdge governing body has failed to maintain a legally compliant board capable of exercising the independent oversight, financial stewardship, and operational authority required by Nevada law and the charter contract.
- 3) FuturEdge's EMO has exercised control over school operations and decisions reserved to the governing body under Nevada law and the charter contract, in direct violation of NRS 388A.393.

The Notice shall provide FuturEdge until Monday, July 27, 2026, to cure the identified deficiencies. The SPCSA Board will hold a public hearing on July 31, 2026, to determine whether FuturEdge has corrected the deficiencies to the satisfaction of this Board and, if not, whether to terminate FuturEdge's charter contract pursuant to NRS 388A.330. Member Stern seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8 – Consideration and possible action to Issue a Notice of Intent to Terminate the Charter Contract. [00:54:20] Chair Thigpen announced a change to this agenda item. Today the board will not be taking action on this agenda. This item is for information and discussion. Brandi Adams from Academies of Math and Science (AMS) was in attendance and provided answers to board questions. Member Stern requested clarification on two consecutive 1-star rating. Would we reset their academic record? Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director, stated the new operator of the school would get a restart on its academic record. Member Addis asked about the one year "run way" for the restart. How does the bond issue affect whether the school will be able to stay in the building? Melissa Mackedon couldn't project what is going to happen with the bond, but it will be a huge part of what we are working on over the next year. How are you going to keep enrollment up? Brandi Adams stated that they have Kristen Guthrie, Principal, who is well connected to the community. Also, AMS has a very robust marketing department and feels confident that they can increase attendance. Highlight 1-2 things that you have done to engage the community? AMS uses the school leader to create partnerships with the community such as Raising Canes and other local organizations. Along with planned partnerships with community centers. Member Salcido asked about next steps and queried if the current discussion was hypothetical? Samatha King Powell, confirmed that these scenarios are hypothetical. Melissa Mackedon also noted that due to the late notice we had to move quickly on a solution and prepare the board for a vote at the July board meeting.

Agenda Item 9 – Proven Provider Update. [01:14:18] Brandi Adams, AMS provided an update. They closed on the purchase of the property this week. Enrollment is at 479 now and they are hoping to hit the target of 600 students for the beginning of the school year. The Middle School is completely full. They are offering tours, and had a good turnout at Parent Night. Staffing update, all the teacher roles have been filled, we have a few support positions still open. AJ Scott is staying on as Assistant Principal. Andrea Tee, Principal, has been working with administrators. Member Stern asked about challenges or concerns with the transition? Brandi Adams responded that nothing is standing out right now. Early on there were many parents and former Nevada Prep staff that were angered by the change. That was one of the tougher things. Melissa Mackedon asked what percentage of Nevada Prep students are returning? Brandi answered that around 50% of students are returning.

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Agenda Item 10 - Feedback solicitation of the SPCSA Language Access Plan as required by SB318. [01:21:30] Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director, reviewed the plan and answered questions posed by board members at the June board meeting. She explained how certain data had been collected. There wasn't any feedback on the plan.

Motion on Agenda Item 10 - Member Addis made a motion to approve the Language Access Plan as presented. Member Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion was approved.

Agenda Item 11 – Long-Range Calendar. [01:23:58] Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director, reminded board members to let her know of any planned absences. Ms. Mackedon will present the 2027 board calendar at the July board meeting. SPCSA staff are soliciting ideas from board members about presentations for the 2027 board meetings.

Agenda Item 10 – Public Comment #2. [01:25:15] Written Public Comment is posted online with board documents. Public Comment in person or telephonically:

1. Sandra Kinne

Agenda Item 11 – Adjournment. [01:29:00] The meeting adjourned at 10:29 am.