



**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

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**BRIEFING MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** SPCSA Board

**FROM:** Patrick Gavin, Executive Director  
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing

**SUBJECT:** Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Charter Contract Amendment Request: Expansion Pursuant to NAC 386.3265 (additional campus, and increase in enrollment and grade levels)

**DATE:** January 26, 2018

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Pinecrest Academy of Nevada, operating under a written charter entered into in 2012, is located in Las Vegas, Nevada, and is currently rated as a 5-star school serving 4,126 students in Kindergarten through 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Pinecrest is requesting an amendment to its charter contract to allow it to open a new, Kindergarten through 9<sup>th</sup> grade campus for the 2019-2020 school year. This would eventually grow into a Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade campus, increasing enrollment in all grade levels by a total of 2,025 students by the 2023-2024 school year. As discussed below, Staff recommends approval of the amendment request, with conditions.

**Summary of Request:**

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada's purpose is to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment that maximizes student achievement and fosters respect for all. Pinecrest Academy of Nevada's mission is to unite the community to prepare students for college and career. Pinecrest Academy of Nevada currently serves 4,126 (as of Validation Day - October 1<sup>st</sup>) students across the valley and approximately 3,300 students on its waitlist.

In the 2019-2020 school year, Pinecrest seeks to open a new Kindergarten – 9<sup>th</sup> grade campus in Henderson, eventually growing to a K – 12 campus. The proposal states that, if approved, the proposed school would relieve overcrowding, shorten an already lengthy waitlist, and provide a quality high school option to current Pinecrest students. The targeted location is in West Henderson, and the Pinecrest Board will be working closely with Pinecrest's current EMO, Academica Nevada, to finalize a site if approved. The previously referenced waitlist, coupled with sibling preference afforded to incoming students, minimizes the chance that this new school would not be financially viable in the short-term.

The proposed school will create a streamlined feeder pattern for the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada. The Inspirada, St. Rose and Horizon campuses all feed to the Cadence Campus. By opening a new K-12 campus under this proposal, there would be one singular K-12 campus option for Pinecrest families. As noted above, Pinecrest has a large wait list and this expansion will allow more families the opportunity to educate their students in this high-quality program. Pinecrest also exhibits robust human capital policies to ensure that they are staffed with high-quality instructional leaders. This is especially important given that the an additional campus will expand the number of employees by nearly 20 percent

It is noteworthy that Pinecrest has made a strong commitment in their amendment application to expand the opportunity for all students to attend their programs. The school community plans to implement the National School Lunch Program. Pinecrest also has plans to implement a robust grassroots campaign that meets parents and families where they are located. Both of these efforts align to the SPCSA strategic plan. By educating a large group of constituents about the Pinecrest educational program, more students are thereby likely to apply for admission, thereby increasing the availability of equitable services to underserved populations.

**Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests:**

[NRS 388A.279](#) provides that the Authority may hold a public hearing concerning any request from a charter to amend a charter contract, including:

- Increasing the total enrollment of a charter school or the enrollment of pupils in a particular grade level in the charter school for a school year to more than 120 percent of the enrollment prescribed in the written charter or charter contract for that school year.
- Seeking to acquire an additional facility in any county of this State to expand the enrollment of the charter school.

The specific requirements for amending a charter contract to acquire and occupy a new or additional facility can be found in [NAC 386.3265](#) et seq. and Section 7 of R089-16A.

**Recommendation: Approve with Conditions**

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada is classified as a 5-star school according to the 2016-17 Star rating system, and exhibits both a healthy enrollment and waitlist.

The school is targeting the 2019 – 2020 school year to open the new campus, affording nearly eighteen months for the school to find a final location, approve work permits, survey and rescore the property, hold community meetings, design and construct the facility, and pass final inspections for occupancy. This will parallel similar processes that the organization underwent when opening its previous four campuses, two of which opened in 2015, and one opening in 2016. Additionally, the school is financially viable, and is able to take on additional debt and costs to complete this project without jeopardizing the school.

SPCSA recommends approval, but with conditions that ensure the school remains financially stable and construction remains on schedule, allowing for students to begin class for the 2019 – 2020 school year on time. The following should be submitted by the school to SPCSA:

- Quarterly financial reports, beginning for Quarter 1 of 2018

- Proof of purchase, facility or rental agreement
- Building inspector report (if purchased)
- Final Inspection of the new facility
- All other materials required by state and federal law and regulation

Additionally, if the SPCSA Board agrees with staff's recommendation, and grants conditional approval, SPCSA staff is further recommending that the amended charter contract with Pinecrest include a provision that all campuses implement a weighted lottery for student enrollment pursuant to [R131-16A](#).

It should be noted that the current charter for Pinecrest expires on August 24, 2018. This conditional approval does not supersede that obligation, and the renewal of the Pinecrest charter will be considered by the Board under a separate item.

**Total Current Enrollment Across All Campuses:**

Grade Level	Total Amount Across All Existing Campuses - Number of Students					
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	117	94	94	288	445	447
1	93	123	94	292	423	448
2	96	96	112	303	445	464
3	97	98	93	296	442	470
4	96	97	94	301	470	469
5	97	97	97	309	456	495
6	75	121	101	289	415	469
7	51	80	95	172	334	388
8	N/A	46	64	90	197	316
9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	74	95
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	65
11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>2,340</b>	<b>3,701</b>	<b>4,126</b>

**Proposed Expanded Enrollment for the Additional Campus:**

Grade Level	Pinecrest Proposed K-12 Campus - Number of Students				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	125	125	125	125	125
1	125	125	125	125	125
2	130	130	130	130	130
3	130	130	130	130	130
4	130	135	135	135	135
5	130	135	135	135	135
6	150	192	192	192	192
7	93	150	192	192	192
8	62	93	150	192	192
9	60	93	128	192	256
10	N/A	60	93	128	192
11	N/A	N/A	60	93	128
12	N/A	N/A	N/A	60	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>1,595</b>	<b>1,829</b>	<b>2,025</b>

**Full Enrollment if Approved:**

If the SPCSA approves this amendment request, Pinecrest Academy of Nevada will expand from four to five campuses and will grow from an enrollment of approximately 4,571 students in 2018-2019, approximately 6,221 students in 2019-20, 6,933 students in 2020-21, approximately 7,271 students in 2021-22, approximately 7,523 students in 2022-23, and approximately 7,779 students in 2023-24.

Grade Level	All Campuses - Number of Students					
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	500	625	625	625	625	625
1	500	625	625	625	625	625
2	526	656	656	656	656	656
3	516	656	656	656	656	656
4	526	656	661	661	661	661
5	498	686	681	681	681	681
6	484	664	706	706	706	706
7	424	607	664	664	664	664
8	337	456	696	696	696	696
9	120	300	333	368	432	496
10	90	240	300	393	428	492
11	50	90	240	300	393	428
12	N/A	50	90	240	300	393
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,571</b>	<b>6,221</b>	<b>6,933</b>	<b>7,271</b>	<b>7,523</b>	<b>7,779</b>

**Background:**

**Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Academic Performance**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Performance</b>
2012-2013	3 Star (Elementary and Middle)
2013-2014	3 Star (Elementary) and 4 Star (Middle)
2014-2015	3 Star (Elementary) and 4 Star (Middle)
2015-2016	N/A
2016-2017	5 Star (Elementary and Middle)

**School Demographic Change since 2013**

Year	Enrollment	AI/AN	A	H	B	W	PI	2/MR	IEP	ELL	FRL
2012-2013	722	2.0%	4.6%	5.1%	3.9%	81.2%	2.2%	-	-	-	-
2013-2014	852	1.2%	3.5%	8.4%	4.5%	79.0%	1.8%	1.6%	7.7%	3.3%	13.6%
2014-2015	844	-	2.7%	19.2%	3.4%	69.7%	-	3.7%	9.6%	2.5%	7.5%
2015-2016	2,340	0.6%	6.3%	21.2%	4.0%	57.5%	1.7%	8.8%	6.8%	0.5%	6.8%
2016-2017	3,701	0.4%	7.2%	21.3%	5.1%	54.5%	1.6%	9.9%	8.2%	1.7%	22.0%
2017-2018	4,126	0.4%	7.8%	23.1%	6.0%	51.3%	1.9%	9.6%	10.0%	2.1%	12.0%

AI/AN – American Indian/Alaskan Native

A – Asian

H – Hispanic

B – Black

W - White

PI – Pacific Islander

2/MR – Two or more races

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

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada was approved by the State Board of Education in 2012, and currently operates under a written charter with four campuses: Horizon, Inspirada, St. Rose and Cadence. Three new campuses were opened in 2015, and the system has expanded to serve students in Kindergarten through 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The school has received only one Notice of Concern related to their financial performance in 2015 – 2016, but has not received either a Notice of Concern or Breach since that time, indicating that the financial health of the school has improved and is once again stable. The school currently operates a 5 star level across its elementary and middle school programs. Serving only 9<sup>th</sup> graders in 2016-2017, there is insufficient data for the school to be rated at the high school level according to the state rating system. The school is scheduled to graduate its first class in 2018-19 and will receive its first high school star rating in the fall of 2020.