Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

# 2025
# Nevada State Public Charter School Authority Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

*December 13, 2024*

# Contents of the SPCSA Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

## I. Introduction

In 2019, the Nevada State Legislature passed [Assembly Bill (AB) 462](), which resulted in various changes to authorizing and accountability practices for public charter school sponsors, including statutory requirements for the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) to (1) annually conduct "an evaluation of demographic information of pupils, the academic needs of pupils and the needs of any pupils who are at risk of dropping out of school in this State" and (2) incorporate those findings into charter school authorizing decisions.[1]

For the initial SPCSA Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment (Needs Assessment)—approved by the SPCSA board (Authority) on July 26, 2019—the SPCSA worked with local school districts, municipalities, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Authority members, various stakeholders, and the public to establish definitions for demographic and academic needs. The Needs Assessment is updated annually by the SPCSA to incorporate feedback as well as recent Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) and demographic (enrollment) data, ensuring each charter application cycle is reflective of the state's current demographic and academic needs.

[NRS 388A.249]() requires approval of any charter application by a sponsor to include a determination that the proposed school meets one or more of the needs defined in the needs assessment prepared by the sponsor. As such, the SPCSA reviews charter applications based upon the SPCSA charter school application rubric, which includes an evaluation of the proposed school's plans to meet the demographic and academic needs identified in the Needs Assessment. SPCSA staff make recommendations to the Authority, which ultimately votes to approve or deny each charter application. The Authority is most likely to approve high quality applications that address the needs identified in the Needs Assessment.

This document outlines current SPCSA definitions of demographic and academic needs, as well as Needs Assessment findings and implementation.

## II. Definitions of Demographic and Academic Needs

[NRS 388A.220]() requires the SPCSA Needs Assessment to evaluate the "demographic information of pupils, the academic needs of pupils and the needs of any pupils who are at risk of dropping out of school in this State."

The SPCSA has worked with local school districts, municipalities, the NDE, the Authority, various stakeholders, and the public to establish definitions for demographic and academic needs that are transparent, supported by rationale and data, grounded in student and school performance, and aligned to the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school rating system. The Needs Assessment is additionally accompanied by information, such as maps, tables, and charts that may be useful to applicants seeking to open charter schools, as well as SPCSA staff and Authority members reviewing applications. It is also reflective of the current context of the SPCSA (demographic makeup, locations, density, and performance of schools), and responsive to statewide, district, and local educational context. While definitions of needs are specific, charter applicants have the flexibility to determine how to address one or more of the needs.

The SPCSA currently defines demographic and academic needs as follows.

1. **Demographic Needs**

   Student groups that consistently underperform on the Nevada state assessments in Math and ELA (3rd-8th grade Smarter Balanced and 11th grade ACT) present a demographic need. Such student groups may benefit from the creation of high-quality charter school options so long as those new charter schools have credible plans to meet their needs.

   Applicants meeting this need will propose a school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, community input, and thorough research and analysis to intentionally enroll and serve the following student groups, each of which has been identified as historically underperforming:

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[1] Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) [388A.220]() and [388A.249]()

- Students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL)[2]
- English Language Learners (ELLs)
- Students with disabilities (those with an Individual Education Program, or IEP)
- Students in foster care
- Students experiencing homelessness

Successful applicants will demonstrate the capacity to support these student groups in making rapid academic growth and achieving academic performance above the state average. Applicants intending to enroll and serve student groups that have historically underperformed can be most impactful when they alleviate barriers to access. Examples include, but are not limited to, providing meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), providing student transportation, proactively translating communications to relevant languages, and offering robust social work and counseling services.

*Rationale: These student groups have historically performed below the state average across various academic measures, including the Nevada state assessments in Math and ELA (3$^{rd}$-8$^{th}$ grade Smarter Balanced and 11$^{th}$ grade ACT assessments).*

2. **Academic Needs**

   a. **Geographies with Consistently Underperforming Schools**

   Zip codes with one or more consistently underperforming schools present an academic need. When a significant number of students are enrolled in schools that have a history of not meeting or partially meeting state performance standards, a community may benefit from the addition of high-quality charter school options so long as those new charter schools have both credible plans to meet the needs of the student population and strong partnerships within the community.

   Applicants meeting this need will propose a school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, community input, and thorough research and analysis to intentionally provide access to 3-, 4- and 5-star schools in zip codes where a significant percentage of students are attending consistently underperforming schools, which are defined as schools that received a 1- or 2-star NSPF rating in the two most recent NSPF ratings.[3]

   Successful applicants will demonstrate the capacity to effectively meet the needs of students who will transfer from consistently underperforming schools to drive rapid academic growth and achieve academic performance above the state average. Additionally, applicants meeting these needs will provide intentional plans for partnering with the community and building upon identified community assets to meet the needs of students within the community. Simply adding a school option in a community with consistently underperforming schools will not inherently meet community needs. Rather, schools must establish trust by working with the community to intentionally meet the needs of the students and community. Alternative 3-, 4- or 5-star school options in communities where a significant percentage of students are attending a consistently underperforming school can be most impactful when there are limited or no public charter school options available in the community.

   *Rationale: The Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school star ratings were developed by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) with input from stakeholders across the state. The NSPF identifies 3-star performance as adequate, while 2-star schools are defined as partially meeting standards, and 1-star schools are defined as not meeting standards. In zip codes where a significant percentage of students*

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[2] Enrollment rates of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch are often used as a proxy measure for students in poverty.
[3] Schools rated on the Nevada Alternative Performance Framework pursuant to NRS 385A.730, SPCSA-sponsored charter schools, and schools in the University and Correctional districts are excluded from this analysis.

*are enrolled in 1- or 2-star schools, students are attending schools that are, by definition, inadequate, and the addition of a 3-, 4- or 5-star school would provide an alternative option for these students.*

**b. Students At Risk of Dropping Out of School**

Student groups that graduate from high school at lower rates (i.e. drop out at higher rates) than their peers present an academic need. Nearly one in five Nevada students do not graduate from high school in four years, with certain student groups consistently graduating at lower rates than their peers, including English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities (those with Individualized Education Programs or IEPs), students that are homeless, students in foster care, and students identifying as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black/African American, or Hispanic/Latino. Such students may benefit from the creation of high-quality charter school options so long as those new charter schools have credible plans to meet their needs.

Applicants meeting this need will propose a public charter school model that includes demonstrated capacity, credible plans, community input, and thorough research and analysis to enroll and prevent at-risk students from dropping out of school and put them on track for successful high school completion with concrete post-secondary plans toward economic success. Models may include, but are not limited to, programs designed for student groups that are most at risk of dropping out or credit-deficient students to get back on track to graduate. Applicants should demonstrate a strong understanding of grade-level appropriate indicators for successful high school completion, such as early literacy, attendance, and credit sufficiency, as well as plans to enable students to successfully meet these milestones. Charter schools aimed at enrolling and preventing at-risk students from dropping out of school can be most impactful when they offer a unique academic experience for students and/or are closely aligned to Nevada's priorities for workforce and economic development.

*Rationale: Nearly one in five Nevada students do not graduate from high school within four years, with certain student groups consistently graduating at lower rates (i.e. dropping out at higher rates) than their peers. Early indicators for students at risk of dropping out of school can be proactively addressed. For example, chronic absenteeism is a critical factor in student academic success and has been associated with increased risk of dropping out, while other research found that students who do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers.[4]*

As future Needs Assessments are developed, the SPCSA will consider changes in Nevada's educational landscape and may revise definitions of demographic and academic needs, as appropriate. For example, the SPCSA continues to gather information as to whether overcrowding of existing district schools should factor into definitions of need.

## III. Findings of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment

Below is a summary of current trends identified through this Needs Assessment. The SPCSA updates the Needs Assessment annually. As the educational landscape evolves, so do the content and findings within the Needs Assessment.

**1. Demographic Needs**

The analysis found that economically disadvantaged students (those qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch or FRL), English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities (those with Individualized Education Programs or IEPs), students that are homeless, and students in foster care historically underperform relative to the average Nevada student across multiple academic measures, including the Nevada state assessments in Math and ELA (3rd-8th grade Smarter Balanced and the 11th grade ACT), as shown below.[5]

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[4] Attendance Works and Annie E. Casey Foundation.
[5] Data retrieved from the Nevada Accountability Portal.

**English Language Arts (ELA) Proficiency by Population Over Time**



**Math Proficiency by Population Over Time**
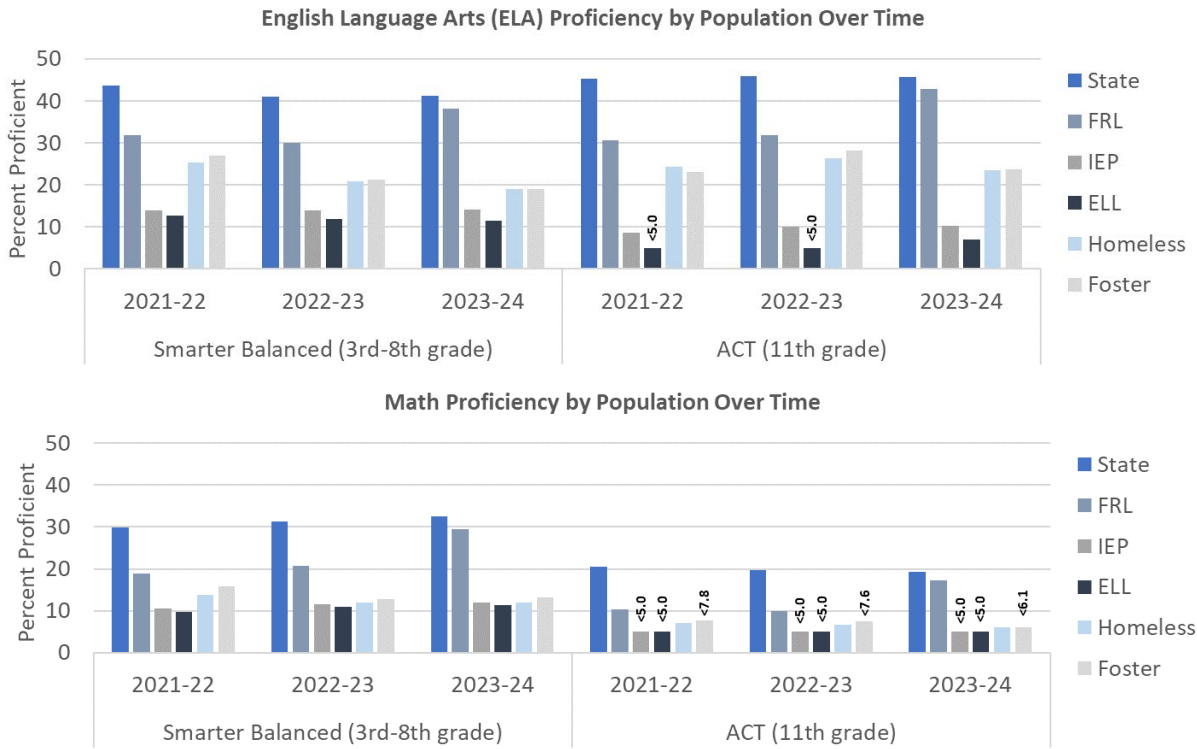


In addition, while the focus of this analysis was on the five student groups above, data also show students identifying as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or Pacific Islander underperformed relative to the average Nevada student on the Nevada state assessments in Math and ELA (3rd-8th grade Smarter Balanced and the 11th grade ACT).[6]

**English Language Arts (ELA) Proficiency by Population Over Time**



**Math Proficiency by Population Over Time**



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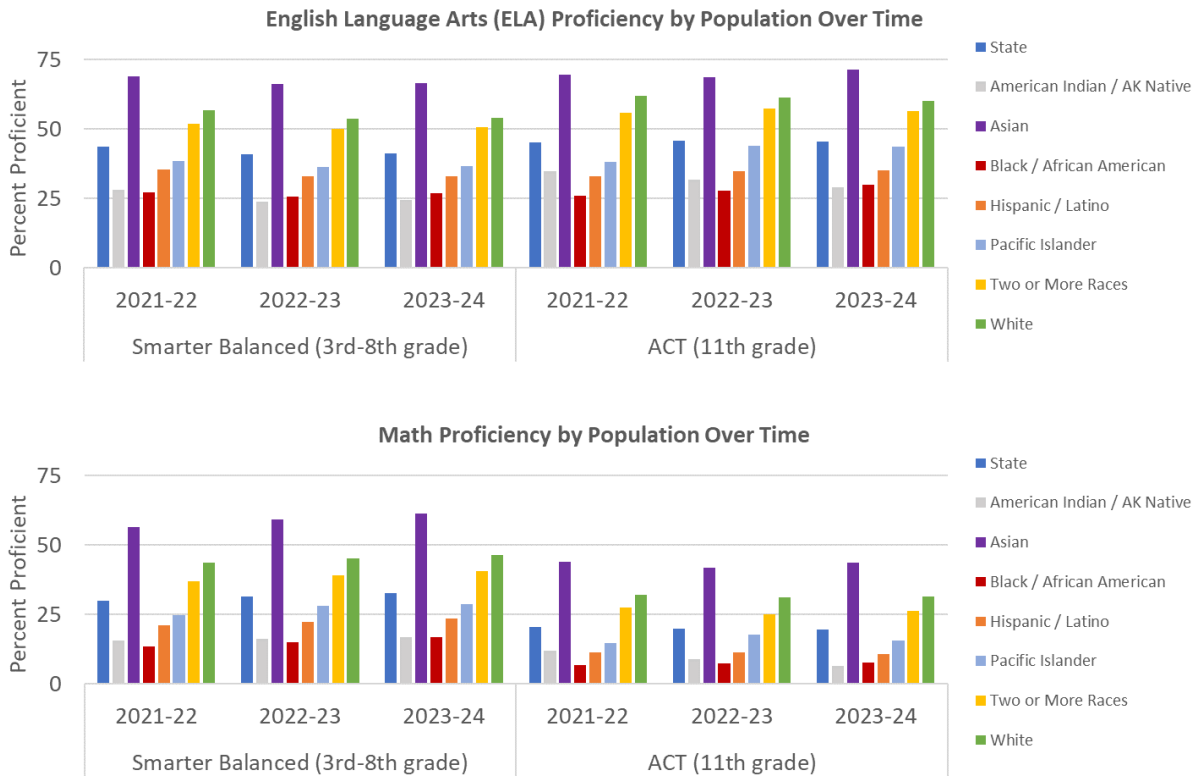
6 Ibid.

2. **Academic Needs**

   a. **Geographies with Consistently Underperforming Schools**

   Below is an overview of academic need measured by geographies with consistently underperforming schools, which are defined as schools that received a 1- or 2-star NSPF rating in the two most recent NSPF ratings.

   This analysis utilized 2022-23 and 2023-24 school year NSPF star ratings as well as 2023-24 school year enrollment.[7] Schools rated on the Nevada Alternative Performance Framework pursuant to [NRS 385A.730](#), SPCSA-sponsored charter schools, and schools in the University and Correctional districts are excluded from statements and analyses below. Only schools that received an NSPF rating in both years are included in the statements regarding consistently underperforming schools.

   - Statewide (does not include SPCSA-sponsored charter schools)
     - As of October 2, 2023, 17 local school districts served 414,031 students in 652 schools across 137 zip codes. There were 325 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 98 zip codes serving 192,141 students as of October 2, 2023, or 46.4% of students enrolled in local district schools.
   - Carson City School District
     - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 7,439 students in 12 schools across 3 zip codes. There were 6 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 3 zip codes serving 3,332 students as of October 2, 2023, or 44.7% of students in the district.
   - Churchill County School District
     - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 3,178 students in 5 schools across 1 zip code. There were 3 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 1 zip code serving 2,268 students as of October 2, 2023, or 71.3% of students in the district.
   - Clark County School District
     - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 301,968 students in 361 schools across 63 zip codes. There were 189 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 44 zip codes serving 137,052 students as of October 2, 2023, or 45.3% of students in the district.
   - Douglas County School District
     - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 5,010 students in 15 schools across 5 zip codes. There were 8 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 5 zip codes serving 2,697 students as of October 2, 2023, or 53.8% of students in the district.
   - Elko County School District
     - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 9,881 students in 40 schools across 8 zip codes. There were 17 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 7 zip codes serving 5,031 students as of October 2, 2023, or 50.9% of students in the district.
   - Esmeralda County School District
     - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 89 students in 7 schools across 3 zip codes. There were 2 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 1 zip code serving 45 students as of October 2, 2023, or 50.5% of students in the district.

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[7] NSPF data are from the [Nevada Accountability Portal](#), while the NDE provided enrollment data by NSPF code.

- Eureka County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 325 students in 4 schools across 2 zip codes. There were 0 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years.
- Humboldt County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 3,349 students in 17 schools across 5 zip codes. There were 5 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 2 zip codes serving 1,486 students as of October 2, 2023, or 44.3% of students in the district.
- Lander County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 1,077 students in 5 schools across 2 zip codes. There were 3 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 1 zip code serving 1,066 students as of October 2, 2023, or 98.9% of students in the district.
- Lincoln County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 916 students in 8 schools across 4 zip codes. There were 2 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 2 zip codes serving 249 students as of October 2, 2023, or 27.1% of students in the district.
- Lyon County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 9,047 students in 20 schools across 5 zip codes. There were 13 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 5 zip codes serving 5,615 students as of October 2, 2023, or 62% of students in the district.
- Mineral County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 594 students in 4 schools across 2 zip codes. There were 4 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 2 zip codes serving 594 students as of October 2, 2023, or 100.0% of students in the district.
- Nye County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 5,307 students in 20 schools across 8 zip codes. There were 10 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 8 zip codes serving 3,471 students as of October 2, 2023, or 65.4% of students in the district.
- Pershing County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 637 students in 4 schools across 2 zip codes. There were 2 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 1 zip code serving 447 students as of October 2, 2023, or 70.1% of students in the district.
- Storey County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 400 students in 4 schools across 2 zip codes. There was 1 school rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 1 zip code serving 102 students as of October 2, 2023, or 25.5% of students in the district.
- Washoe County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 63,545 students in 117 schools across 19 zip codes. There were 56 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years across 14 zip codes serving 27,994 students as of October 2, 2023, or 44.0% of students in the district.
- White Pine County School District
  - As of October 2, 2023, this district served 1,269 students in 9 schools across 4 zip codes. There were 4 schools rated 1 or 2 stars in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school

years across 2 zip codes serving 692 students as of October 2, 2023, or 54.5% of students in the district.

The following resources are available:
- A file (posted here when available) containing (1) a list of zip codes with consistently underperforming schools, (2) a list of said consistently underperforming schools, and (3) a list of current SPCSA-sponsored charter schools.
- A 2025 Needs Assessment map with the location and basic information for consistently underperforming schools as well as current SPCSA-sponsored charter schools.

b. **Students At Risk of Dropping Out of School**

As shown below, certain Nevada student groups have consistently lower four-year graduation rates (i.e. higher dropout rates) than their peers, including English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities (those with Individualized Education Programs or IEPs), students that are homeless, students in foster care, and students identifying as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black/African American, or Hispanic/Latino.[8]



Four-Year Graduation Rate by Population Over Time
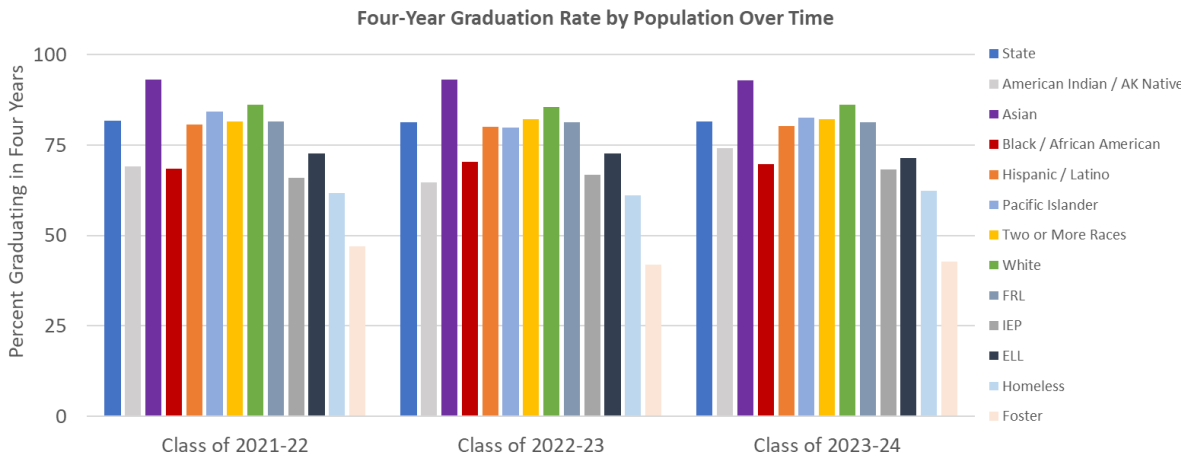
## IV. Implementation of the Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

The SPCSA has collaborated with the NDE, local Nevada school districts, and other stakeholders to develop and conduct an annual Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment, resulting in robust definitions of demographic and academic needs as well as findings that are utilized in charter school authorizing processes and decisions. This section of the document discusses implementation of the Needs Assessment, including its incorporation into the charter school authorizing process and impacts on the SPCSA school portfolio.

1. **Incorporation of the Needs Assessment into the Charter Application Process**

Prior to implementation of the SPCSA Needs Assessment, the SPCSA charter application process required an applicant to define the academic need their proposed school would serve, as well as the school's academic, operational, and financial plans. Based on the information provided, the SPCSA review team evaluated applicants and recommended approval to the SPCSA board (Authority) for those that "[provided] specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; present[ed] a clear, realistic picture of how the school is expected to operate; and inspire[d] confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively

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[8] Data from the Nevada Accountability Portal.

and result in a 4- or 5-star school", as long as the applicant complied with applicable laws and regulations and "demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the sponsor."[9]

Enactment of the Needs Assessment did not contradict the historical SPCSA authorizing practices aligned to national best practices; rather, SPCSA practices now additionally incorporate the Needs Assessment and public input into charter school authorizing processes and decisions. As such, in reviewing an application and developing a recommendation to the Authority, SPCSA staff consider an application's alignment to the Needs Assessment and factors raised by the community, including evidence of demand for new schools, whether due to a need for additional facility capacity, students on charter school waiting lists, or families desiring different educational options. SPCSA staff generally make recommendations to the Authority based on the approach below. Ultimately, the Authority board votes to approve or deny an application. The Authority is most likely to approve high quality applications that address needs identified in the Needs Assessment.

| Scenario 1 | Scenario 2 | Scenario 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Applicant does not meet either a demographic or academic need identified in the SPCSA Needs Assessment. | Applicant meets one or more demographic needs OR one or more academic needs identified in the SPCSA Needs Assessment. | Applicant meets one or more demographic needs AND one or more academic needs identified in the SPCSA Needs Assessment. |
| Applicant may need to revise their academic plan or pick a new location to qualify for an SPCSA staff recommendation for approval to the Authority - even if the application otherwise meets the standards set forth in the SPCSA application rubric. | Applicant **may be recommended for approval** to the Authority by SPCSA staff contingent upon application details and may be subject to additional contract conditions, so long as the application otherwise meets the standards set forth in the SPCSA application rubric. | Applicant **will likely be recommended for approval** to the Authority by SPCSA staff so long as the application otherwise meets the standards set forth in the SPCSA application rubric. |

Likelihood of approval ⟶

As outlined below, various steps of the charter application process incorporate the Needs Assessment and/or public input, including applicant training, application review, staff recommendations to the Authority, and ultimately, a vote by Authority members on each proposal at a public meeting.[10]

a. **Charter Applicant Training**

The SPCSA annually provides multiple trainings for charter applicants that include information on the SPCSA Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment.

b. **SPCSA Charter Application Review**

For each charter application, the SPCSA conducts a review aligned with NRS 388A.249 subsection 2, as provided below.

NRS 388A.249

2. The proposed sponsor of a charter school shall, in reviewing an application to form a charter school:

(a) Assemble a team of reviewers, which may include, without limitation, natural persons from different geographic areas of the United States who possess the appropriate knowledge and expertise with regard to the academic, financial and organizational experience of charter schools, to review and evaluate the application;

(b) Conduct a thorough evaluation of the application, which includes an in-person interview with the applicant designed to elicit any necessary clarifications or additional information about the proposed charter school and determine the ability of the applicants to establish a high-quality charter school;

(c) Consider the degree to which the proposed charter school will address the needs identified in the evaluation prepared by the proposed sponsor pursuant to subsection 5 or 6 of NRS 388A.220, as applicable;

(d) If the proposed sponsor is not the board of trustees of a school district, solicit input from the board of trustees of the school district in which the proposed charter school will be located;

(e) Base its determination on documented evidence collected through the process of reviewing the application;

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[9] SPCSA Application Rubric (posted on this page) and NRS 388A.249.
[10] See the SPCSA New Charter School Application page for more information.

(f) Adhere to the policies and practices developed by the proposed sponsor pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 388A.223; and

(g) Consider the academic, financial and organizational performance of any charter schools that currently hold a contract with the proposed operators, including, without limitation, a charter management organization or educational management organization, of the proposed charter school.

As such, the review process includes but is not limited to: a thorough evaluation of the proposal against the SPCSA charter application rubric by SPCSA staff and external reviewers; a capacity interview with the applicant; and, as added by AB 462, a consideration of "the degree to which the proposed public charter school will address the needs identified" in the sponsor's Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment and solicitation of "input from the board of trustees of the school district in which the proposed public charter school will be located".

c. **SPCSA Staff Recommendations to the Authority on Charter Applications**

In preparing a recommendation to the Authority for approval or denial of an application, SPCSA staff utilize information from the review process as outlined above as well as NRS 388A.249 subsection 3, as provided below.

> NRS 388A.249
>
> 3. The proposed sponsor of a charter school may approve an application to form a charter school only if the proposed sponsor determines that:
>
> (a) The application:
>
> (1) Complies with this chapter and the regulations applicable to charter schools; and
>
> (2) Is complete in accordance with the regulations of the Department and the policies and practices of the sponsor;
>
> (b) The applicant has demonstrated competence in accordance with the criteria for approval prescribed by the sponsor pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 388A.223 that will likely result in a successful opening and operation of the charter school;
>
> (c) Based on the most recent evaluation prepared by the proposed sponsor pursuant to subsection 5 or 6 of NRS 388A.220, as applicable, the proposed charter school will address one or more of the needs identified in the evaluation; and
>
> (d) It has received sufficient input from the public, including, without limitation, input received at the meeting held pursuant to subsection 1 of NRS 388A.252 or subsection 1 of NRS 388A.255, as applicable.

SPCSA staff generally recommend applicants for approval to the Authority if proposals meet the criteria above, including the requirements added by AB 462 in paragraphs c and d for the proposed charter school to address one or more of the needs identified in the SPCSA Needs Assessment and receive sufficient public input. In reviewing charter applications, the SPCSA solicits input and feedback from local school districts, municipalities, the public, and other key stakeholders.

d. **Approval or Denial of Charter Applications by the Authority**

Before voting to approve or deny a charter application at a public meeting of the Authority, members of the Authority review each application, its accompanying staff recommendation, and alignment with the Needs Assessment. Additionally, members of the Authority consider factors including but not limited to the relevant statute noted above and public input. The Authority may approve applications that, in addition to previous requirements outlined, meet at least one need identified in the Needs Assessment and have received sufficient public input.

2. **Impacts of the Needs Assessment**

The implementation of the Needs Assessment—along with the adoption of an SPCSA five-year strategic plan centered around the vision of "Equitable access to diverse, innovative, and high-quality public schools for every Nevada student"—has cemented the SPCSA focus on increasing enrollment diversity to serve a population representative of the state. While shifting student demographics will take time, the SPCSA is monitoring demographics at new charter school campuses to understand impacts of Authority actions.

With this context in mind, there is progress toward serving a population more representative of the state. The table below shows that the recent demographics of SPCSA-sponsored schools that were approved post implementation of the Needs Assessment (NA) are more representative of the state's overall student population.

| Entity | Year Opened | Location (County) | Oct 1 2024 Enrollment | % AI | % AS | % BL | % HS | % MR | % PI | % WH | % ELL | % FRL | % IEP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STATE** | - | - | **482908** | **0.7** | **5.6** | **12.3** | **45.7** | **7.6** | **1.4** | **26.3** | **14.4** | **85.0** | **14.1** |
| **CLARK COUNTY** | - | - | 306038 | 0.3 | 6.0 | 16.1 | 49.0 | 7.9 | 1.5 | 19.0 | 16.2 | 95.8 | 14.3 |
| **WASHOE COUNTY** | - | - | 64244 | 1.0 | 4.2 | 2.7 | 44.1 | 6.3 | 1.5 | 39.7 | 14.8 | 62.5 | 16.0 |
| **SPCSA** | - | - | **63609** | **0.3** | **8.3** | **12.5** | **41.3** | **9.4** | **1.4** | **26.5** | **10.3** | **63.9** | **10.7** |
| **Schools Opened Post NA\*** | - | - | 10075 | 0.5 | 3.9 | 13.5 | 58.0 | 6.1 | 0.9 | 16.7 | 21.4 | 74.4 | 11.8 |
| Explore Acad.\*\* | 2020-21 | Clark | 356 | 0.2 | 2.8 | 23.8 | 47.1 | 8.7 | 2.5 | 14.6 | 13.2 | 69.9 | 15.1 |
| Mater East | 2020-21 | Clark | 2492 | 0.2 | 0.9 | 10.5 | 81.9 | 3.1 | 0.4 | 2.6 | 34.1 | >95.0 | 10.5 |
| NSHS Dwtn. Henderson | 2020-21 | Clark | 100 | 0 | 5.0 | 1.0 | 19.0 | 9.0 | 1.0 | 65.0 | 0 | 17.0 | 0 |
| Pinecrest Northern NV | 2020-21 | Washoe | 1033 | 3.6 | 2.3 | 0.9 | 21.6 | 7.2 | 0.4 | 63.6 | <5.0 | 15.7 | 15.1 |
| Beacon Acad.^ | 2021-22 | Clark | 928 | 0.3 | 1.6 | 25.3 | 54.3 | 7.4 | 2.4 | 8.5 | 18.5 | 86.0 | 22.7 |
| CIVICA Acad. | 2021-22 | Clark | 1074 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 12.2 | 81.0 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 2.8 | 35.3 | >95.0 | 9.3 |
| Battle Born Acad. | 2022-23 | Clark | 330 | 0 | 0.3 | 12.1 | 80.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 4.8 | 51.2 | 94.2 | 15.1 |
| Coral Acad. Cadence | 2022-23 | Clark | 1673 | 0.1 | 15.6 | 8.5 | 39.9 | 11.5 | 1.1 | 22.8 | 8.3 | 44.7 | 8.1 |
| NSHS North Las Vegas | 2022-23 | Clark | 55 | 0 | 7.2 | 25.4 | 50.9 | 5.4 | 0 | 10.9 | n<10 | 47.2 | 0 |
| pilotED Cactus Park | 2022-23 | Clark | 350 | 0.2 | 1.4 | 32.8 | 54.5 | 4.2 | 0 | 6.5 | 19.7 | >95.0 | 8.8 |
| Pinecrest Virtual Acad. | 2022-23 | Clark | 147 | 0 | 3.4 | 6.8 | 38.0 | 12.2 | 1.3 | 38.0 | n<10 | 37.4 | 14.2 |
| Sage Collegiate | 2022-23 | Clark | 312 | 0 | 1.2 | 14.1 | 44.5 | 6.7 | 0.9 | 32.3 | 23.0 | >95.0 | 10.2 |
| Strong Start Acad. | 2022-23 | Clark | 216 | 0 | 0.9 | 16.6 | 71.7 | 4.6 | 0 | 6.0 | 27.3 | >95.0 | 10.1 |
| Young Women's Leadership Acad. | 2022-23 | Clark | 111 | 0 | 0 | 30.6 | 56.7 | 2.7 | 0.9 | 9.0 | 18.9 | >95.0 | n<10 |
| Pinecrest Acad. Springs | 2023-24 | Clark | 277 | 0.7 | 8.6 | 16.6 | 49.0 | 9.3 | 0 | 15.5 | 13.3 | >95.0 | 10.1 |
| Southern NV Trades HS | 2023-24 | Clark | 182 | 0 | 0.5 | 27.4 | 59.8 | 3.2 | 0.5 | 8.2 | 16.4 | >95.0 | 15.3 |
| Thrive Point Acad. | 2024-25 | Clark | 318 | 0.3 | 1.2 | 27.3 | 42.4 | 8.1 | 1.8 | 18.5 | 15.7 | 12.5 | 11.6 |
| Vegas Vista Acad. | 2024-25 | Clark | 121 | 0 | 1.6 | 18.1 | 62.8 | 9.9 | 0 | 7.4 | 33.8 | 66.1 | 9.0 |

AI=American Indian / Alaska Native, AS=Asian, BL=Black / African American, HS=Hispanic / Latino, MR=Two or More Races, PI=Pacific Islander, WH=White, ELL=English Language Learners, FRL=Free or Reduced-Price Lunch, IEP=Students with IEPs.

To protect student privacy, under the ELL, IEP, and FRL populations, rates are suppressed if the population size is greater than 0 and less than 10 (shown as n<10), and rates <5% (aside from 0) or >95% are displayed as <5.0 or >95.0, respectively.

\* Includes schools approved by the SPCSA post implementation of the Needs Assessment (NA).

\*\* Approved by Achievement School District and transferred to SPCSA prior to opening per Section 80.75 of Assembly Bill 78 (2019).

^ In addition to the original Flamingo location, Beacon Academy opened a second campus (Sahara) in Las Vegas to provide the in-person portion of their hybrid learning model. As students may attend either location and demographics cannot be easily reported between campuses, demographics displayed are across both campuses.

## V. Conclusions

This iteration of the Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment integrates 2022-23 and 2023-24 school year NSPF data and 2023-24 school year state assessment, graduation rate, and enrollment data, resulting in definitions of demographic and academic needs as well as findings that must be incorporated into charter school authorizing processes and decisions.

As required by state law, the SPCSA updates the Needs Assessment annually. As future versions are developed, the SPCSA will consider changes in Nevada's educational landscape and may propose revisions to definitions of academic and demographic needs, as appropriate. Additionally, the SPCSA will continue to provide local school districts, municipalities, the NDE, the Authority, members of the public, and other stakeholders with opportunities for feedback on the definitions of demographic and academic needs, as well as the methodology of the Needs Assessment.

Beyond providing up-to-date information about the demographic and academic needs of students across the state of Nevada, the Needs Assessment serves as a key driver in the development of the Growth Management Plan required under NRS 388A.167 as amended by AB 462. While the Needs Assessment provides a snapshot in time of Nevada student needs, the Growth Management Plan provides a preview of how new public charter schools will address the identified needs of Nevada students. Ultimately, AB 462 created a platform for the strategic and informed growth of public charter schools.

Taken together, the Needs Assessment and the Growth Management Plan will continue to help the SPCSA fulfill its responsibilities as an authorizer of public charter schools that are responsive to the needs of students and families throughout Nevada.

**Appendix A: Glossary of Terms**

Unless otherwise noted, all definitions are from the [Nevada Accountability Portal](#).

**American College Test (ACT) Assessment:** A standardized assessment for high school students used as Nevada's college and career readiness assessment required by [NRS 390.610](#).

**Chronic Absenteeism:** Chronic absenteeism is a school quality measure that captures the rate of students who are absent for 10% or more of their enrolled days.

**Credit Deficiency:** Not having enough credits to progress to the next grade or graduate.

**Dropout:** Any pupil who withdrew during the previous school year for any reason specified in subsection 3 of [NAC 387.215](#).

**English Language Learners:** English Language Learners (ELLs) are students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses. Previously referred to as LEP.

**Free or Reduced-Price Lunch:** Students who are from households that qualify by income to receive free or reduced-price lunch at their school.

**Graduation Rate:** The rate at which 9th graders graduate by the end of the 12th grade (the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.)

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A written statement for each child with a disability that is receiving special education services that is developed and reviewed by the IEP Team.

**Nevada Administrative Code (NAC):** Codified regulations of the State of Nevada.

**Nevada Department of Education:** The State of Nevada's educational agency.

**Nevada Revised Statute (NRS):** Codified laws of the State of Nevada.

**Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF):** The Nevada school rating system, where each public school in the state is issued an annual index score and star rating from 1-5 based on that school's performance on specific Measures.

**Nevada State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA):** A governmental agency of the state of Nevada and a statewide charter school sponsor.[11]

**Proficiency:** Students demonstrating the successful acquisition of knowledge and skills they are expected to learn, as determined by established levels or cut-scores of proficiency on State-approved tests, as they progress through their education.

**Smarter Balanced Assessment:** The Smarter Balanced assessments are a key part of measuring Nevada student progress in grades 3-8 towards success in college and career. The computer-adaptive format and online administration of the assessments provide meaningful feedback that teachers and parents can use to help students succeed. The assessments are aligned with the Nevada Academic Content Standards in ELA and mathematics. Results from SBAC are included on the Nevada Report Card.[12]

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[11] [SPCSA Strategic Plan 2019-2024](#)
[12] [NDE Smarter Balanced Assessments](#)

## Appendix B: NSPF Star Rating Descriptors

Below are definitions of each star rating level from the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF).[13]

### Elementary and Middle School NSPF Star Rating Descriptors

| Category | Policy Descriptors |
|---|---|
| 5 Stars | Recognizes a **superior** school that exceeds expectations for all students and subgroups on every Indicator category with little or no exception. A five-star school demonstrates superior academic performance and growth with no opportunity gaps. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any Indicator. |
| 4 Stars | Recognizes a **commendable** school that has performed well for all students and subgroups. A four-star school demonstrates satisfactory to strong academic performance for all students. Further, the school is successfully promoting academic progress for all student groups as reflected in closing opportunity gaps. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any Indicator. |
| 3 Stars | Identifies an **adequate** school that has met the state's standard for performance. The all-students group has met expectations for academic achievement or growth. Subgroups meet expectations for academic achievement or growth with little exception; however, no group is far below standard. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and Indicators that are below standard. |
| 2 Stars | Identifies a school that has **partially met** the state's standard for performance. Students and subgroups often meet expectations for academic performance or growth but may have multiple areas that require improvement. Areas requiring significant improvement are uncommon. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and Indicators that are below standard. |
| 1 Star | Identifies a school that has **not met** the state's standard for performance. Students and subgroups are inconsistent in achieving performance standards. A one-star school has multiple areas that require improvement including an urgent need to address areas that are significantly below standard. |

### High School NSPF Star Rating Descriptors

| Category | Policy Descriptors |
|---|---|
| 5 Stars | Recognizes a **superior** school that exceeds expectations for all students and subgroups on every Indicator category with little or no exception. A five-star school demonstrates superior academic performance and a superior graduation rate. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any Indicator. |
| 4 Stars | Recognizes a **commendable** school that has performed well for all students and subgroups. A four-star school demonstrates satisfactory to strong academic performance for all students. Further, the school's graduation rate meets expectations. The school does not fail to meet expectations for any group on any Indicator. |
| 3 Stars | Identifies an **adequate** school that has met the state's standard for performance. The all-students group has met expectations for academic achievement. Subgroups meet expectations for academic achievement or show progress with little exception; however, no group is far below standard. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and Indicators that are below standard. |
| 2 Stars | Identifies a school that has **partially met** the state's standard for performance. Students and subgroups often meet expectations for academic performance but may have multiple areas that require improvement. Areas requiring significant improvement are uncommon. The school must submit an improvement plan that identifies supports tailored to subgroups and Indicators that are below standard. A two-star school in consecutive years is subject to state intervention. |
| 1 Star | Identifies a school that has **not met** the state's standard for performance. Students and subgroups are inconsistent in achieving performance standards. A one-star school has multiple areas that require improvement including an urgent need to address areas that are significantly below standard. |

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[13] Per the 2023-24 Nevada School Performance Framework Manual.

**Appendix C: Document Control**

| Date | Summary of Changes |
|---|---|
| December 8, 2023 | Document and text reorganized and updated for clarity and conciseness. Updated Definitions of Demographic and Academic Needs section to incorporate currently available NSPF data under Geographies with Consistently Underperforming Schools. Updated Findings of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment and Implementation of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment sections to incorporate current data. Removed dropout data from the Findings of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment section as those data are no longer meaningfully reported by the NDE. Updated Appendix section NSPF Star Rating Descriptors with current star rating descriptors. Added Appendix section Document Control to outline changes. |
| December 13, 2024 | Updated Definitions of Demographic and Academic Needs section to incorporate currently available NSPF data under Geographies with Consistently Underperforming Schools. Updated Findings of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment and Implementation of the Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment sections to incorporate current data. |