Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

2027 SPCSA New Charter Applicant Kickoff Training

October 13, 2026

Agenda

1	Introductions: SPCSA, Opportunity 180, and CSAN
2	SPCSA Mission & Strategic Plan
3	Application Process
4	Characteristics of Strong Applications
5	General Changes to the Application & Process
6	Questions & Next Steps

Introductions

- Melissa Mackedon, Executive Director
- Katie Broughton, Director of Authorizing
- Danny Peltier, Management Analyst Supervisor

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

- ☑ Authorizing and board experience
- ☑ Teaching/school leadership experience
- ☑ Institutional knowledge w/the Authority

Opportunity180°

A Great School for Every Kid by 2030

October 2026

Opportunity180°

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

THE NEED

In Nevada, **over 139,000 kids, or nearly 30% of students, attend schools where only 2 in10 kids** are on grade level in reading and math during the 2022-23 school year.

Only 17.9% of Nevada high school students who took the ACT scored above 22—a key indicator of college and career readiness—and **just 15% met the ACT Math benchmark**, placing Nevada among only two states with the lowest share of students achieving this standard.

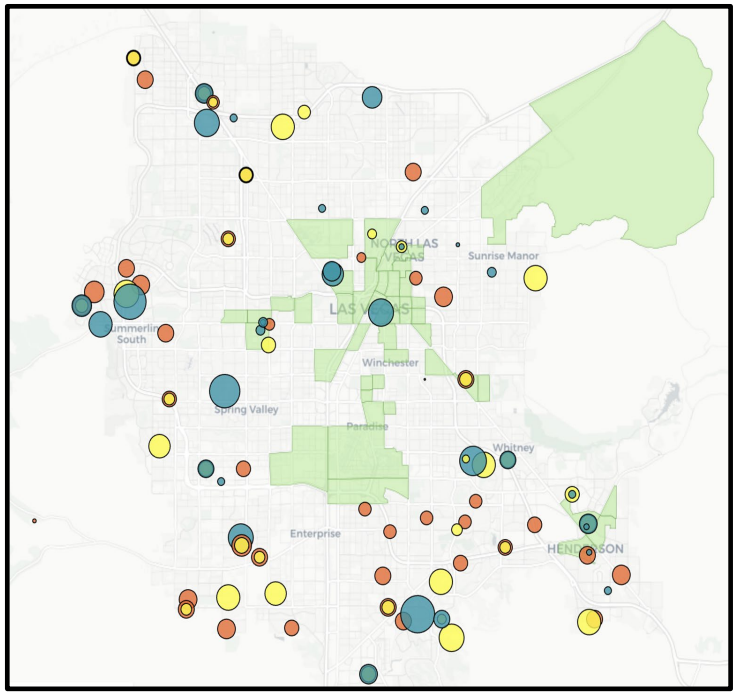
Despite increasing graduation rates, **about 1 in 5 high school students are on grade level in math and less than half are on grade level in English Language Arts.**

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

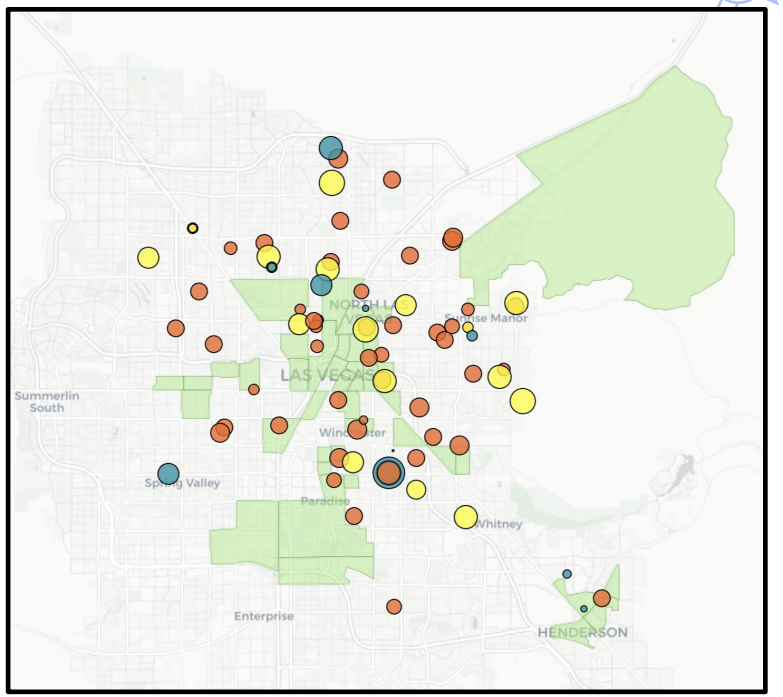
THE CHALLENGE - Clark County Case Study

School Performance Across Clark County's High-Poverty Zones:

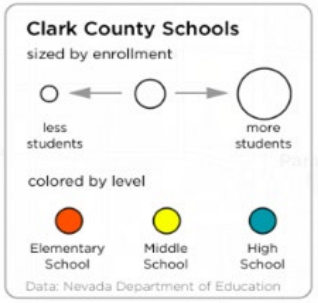
More students, across ALL zip codes, need access to a great school.



High-Performing (5-star) Schools



Low-Performing (1-Star) Schools



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Opportunity180

THE STRATEGY

Our strategy is multi-pronged and modeled after education ecosystems across the country that have seen the most dramatic and sustained gains.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Ensuring student-centered governance practices are leveraged among decision-makers

GREAT IDEAS IN ACTION

Activating education leaders and entrepreneurs to improve educational opportunities for kids

GOOD DATA

Creating a common language on school performance through the use of data

ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Elevating student and family voice in the solutions of educational challenges

MORE GREAT SCHOOLS

Ensuring every student has a great school in their neighborhood

How We Work

✓ **Scaling successful models**, locally and from across the country

✓ **Taking the long view**, beyond the 2-year legislative cycle

✓ **Serving as a facilitator**, partner and strategic advisor and investor

✓ **Providing resources** to support good, informed decision making

✓ **Remaining flexible** & adapting when necessary

O180'S ROLE IN NEVADA

O180 is strategically positioned at the center of Nevada's education ecosystem. We serve as facilitators, investors, and influencers across the community in service of our North Star.

INVESTORS

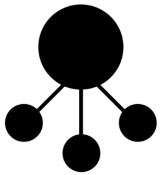
We invest in high potential organizations, leaders, and schools

INFLUENCERS

We are trusted advisors and have a seat at the table to influence decisions to be student- and quality-centered.

FACILITATORS

We facilitate collaboration by creating a common language through data and connecting members of the community.



GREAT SCHOOLS SUPPORT STRATEGY

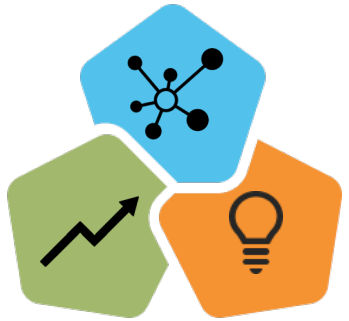
Partner with schools to launch, sustain and/or replicate great schools that ensure every kid, especially those most underserved, have access to a high quality education.

Serve as a strategic funder *and* a strategic partner that deeply understands the vision and potential of our portfolio schools.

STRATEGIC FUNDER

Fund resources to accelerate outcomes

1. Pathway to Launch
2. Accelerate and Sustain Success
3. Replication (as desired)

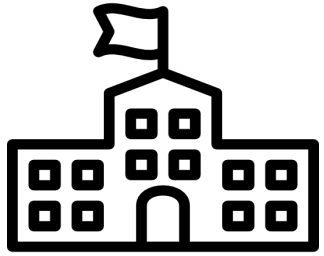


STRATEGIC PARTNER

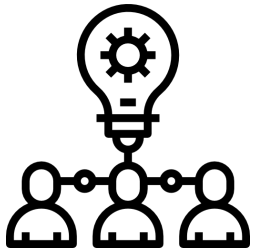
Schools thrive with the right supports and we do this in 3 distinct ways:

- **Connectivity and problem solving**
- **Foster Learning and Innovation**
- **Growing and Sustaining Success**

Charter School Program Grant (CSP)



What is CSP?
Federal government grant focused on supporting and building high quality charter schools and authorizers.



Why is it beneficial?
Charter school planning and two years of start up funds available to approved schools.

How does it work?
One application cycle per year. Planning and implementation grants awarded each cycle.

TO DATE:

2020-2025: Awarded **25** subgrants totaling **$22.5M**

2025-2030: Opportunity 180 awarded **$51M** from the U.S. Department of Education, with the goal of **27 subgrants** over five years, impacting **15,000+** students

Cycle I RFA open NOW!

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Opportunity180

Our Impact by Lever: Great Ideas

Opportunity180 DESIGN to EDRUPT

PROPEL SCHOOL LAUNCH FELLOWSHIP

NFBLME

CITIZENS OF THE WORLD CHARTER SCHOOLS

DIVERSE CHARTER SCHOOLS COALITION

By 2031, we want to cultivate 650 aspiring or existing school leaders.

To date, 179 individuals have participated in a fellowship or extended development opportunity.

To date, 283 individuals have participated in workshops and introductory learning opportunities.

Our Impact by Lever

Good Data

School Scout Nevada data portal
School quality map
Promoting data-driven policies and decision-making

Good Governance

Charter school board matching
Technical assistance + training
Advocacy in service of accountability, access, and autonomy

Engaged Community

Media and PR support
North Star Summit
Awareness and activation campaigns

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

84% Free/Reduced Lunch

21% English Language Learners

12% Special Education

53% Hispanic

28% Black

96% of schools we support are located in high-poverty zones
**based on the percentage of the measurable population in a geographic area with income below the Federal Poverty Line*

More *Great* Schools

CASLV Soaring to Excellence
EQUIPO ACADEMY EAST LAS VEGAS COLLEGE PREP
futuro academy EAST LAS VEGAS
EXPLORE ACADEMY
NEVADA RISE Academy
J. HAROLD BRINLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
STRONG START ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TONY HSIEH EDUCATION CENTER
DEMOCRACY PREP AT THE AGASSI CAMPUS Work Hard. Go to College. Change the World!
YWLA Las Vegas
NEVADA STATE HIGH SCHOOL
VEGAS VISTA ACADEMY
Victoria Fertitta Middle School
PINECREST ACADEMY
BEACON ACADEMY OF NEVADA
Do&Be ARTS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE
E.I.A. COYOTES
MARIPOSA ACADEMY Educating Children. Engaging Families. Empowering Communities.
HONOR · RESPECT · LOYALTY CIVICA ACADEMY

Fremont Junior High School	Laughlin Jr/Senior High School	Molasky Junior High School	Gibson Junior High School

Opportunity180°

- Connect on social media: **@Opportunity180**
- Check out the school performance data portal: **SchoolScoutNevada.org**
- Visit our website: **Opportunity180.org**

Jackson Olsen, Ed.D.
VP of Schools
jackson@Opportunity180.org

Delshon Henry
Managing Director of Talent
delshon@opportunity180.org

Charter School Association of Nevada

Supporting Nevada's public charter schools, from planning to opening day and beyond.

Selena Torres-Fossett
Executive Director

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

OUR MISSION

We support and grow high-quality public charter schools so every Nevada family has great options.

CSAN is a nonprofit membership and professional organization for Nevada's charter school community.

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

CSAN

Four ways we show up for charter schools

Professional Development

Professional learning and best-practice sharing across schools

Advocacy

One strong voice for charters at every level of government and with state agencies

Public Relations

PR support to help you tell your story: Spotlight wins, media support, crisis response, etc.

Information

Policy updates, newsletters, and resources so you never miss what's coming

Our advocacy centers on the 3 F's

F

Funding

Fair, equitable per-pupil funding for every charter student

F

Facilities

Access to safe, affordable school buildings

F

Flexibility

Room to innovate, paired with strong accountability

Join us for CSAN Lobby Day at the Nevada Legislature in March 2027.

Member supports built for school leaders

Member resources portal

Compliance, advocacy, grants, all CSAN Resources in one place

School Leader Council

Peer convenings in Las Vegas and Reno

Annual conference

10% off registration for member schools

Lobby Day

Meet legislators during the 2027 session

Task Forces

A seat at the table on policy

Networking

Socials and events to connect with peers statewide

OPENING SOON?

Membership is free until your doors open.

Schools in planning and pre-opening get full access to CSAN supports at no cost, so you're connected before day one.

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

CSAN

Membership is simple

Free

Pre-opening schools

Full member access while you plan, hire, and prepare to open

$6

per student*

Operating schools, based on enrollment

*Rate is based on the 26/27 school year.. Membership year runs October to October.

What's ahead for members in 2027

Jan 9

CSAN Conference

UNLV, Las Vegas

March

Lobby Day

Nevada Legislature

Spring

School Leader Council

Las Vegas and Reno

June

NCSC27 Happy Hour

Columbus, Ohio

Let's get your school connected

Selena Torres-Fossett
Executive Director
selena@nvcharterassociation.org

nevadacharters.info

@NVCharters

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

CSAN

Agenda

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SPCSA Mission and Vision

- **Vision:** Equitable access to diverse, innovative, and high-quality public schools for every Nevada student.

- **Mission:** The SPCSA sponsors, supports and oversees dynamic and responsive public charter schools that prepare all students for academic, social and economic success.

SPCSA Strategic Plan

GOALS

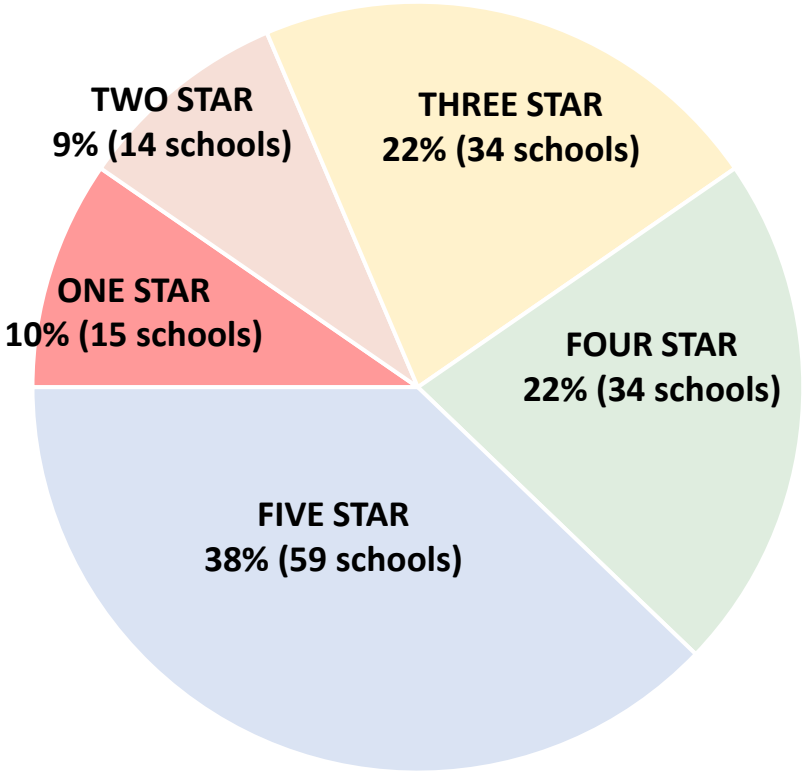
- Provide communities with access to excellent schools that students and families want to attend.
- Provide equitable access to charter schools.
- The SPCSA is committed to being a responsive organization.

Note: the SPCSA's Strategic plan for 2025 – 2030 can be found here.

SPCSA-sponsored schools generally outperformed the state

Nevada School Star Ratings

(2025-26 School Year)



Graduation Rates

(Class of 2025)

82.6%

4-year graduation rate

25 high schools

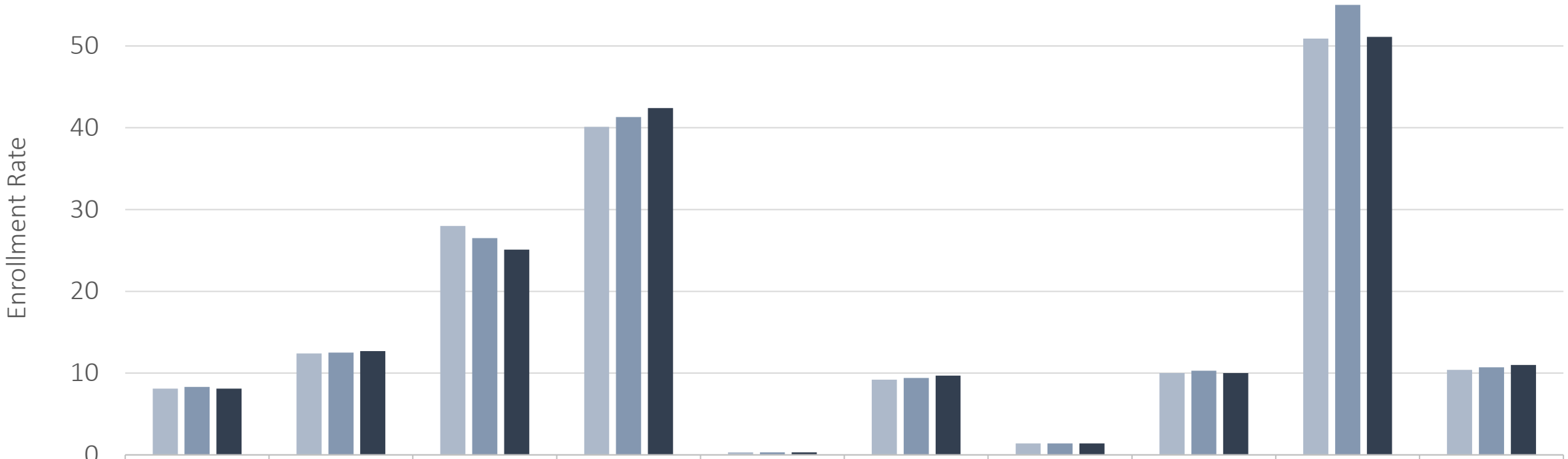
exceeded the statewide graduation rate

More than half of SPCSA

graduates earned a more rigorous CCR diploma

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

SPCSA Student Group Enrollment Trends



	Asian	Bl/Afr Amer	White	Hisp/Latino	Am Ind/AK Nat	Two or More	Pacific Isl	Eng Lrnr (ELL)	Econ Disadv (FRL)	Stud w/Disab (IEP)
2023	8.1	12.4	28.0	40.1	0.3	9.2	1.4	10.0	50.9	10.4
2024	8.3	12.5	26.5	41.3	0.3	9.4	1.4	10.3	63.9	10.7
2025	8.1	12.7	25.1	42.4	0.3	9.7	1.4	10	51.1	11

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Enrollment rates are from the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) October validation day of the respective year.

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Application Training Components

Component	Training Date
Application Overview	October 13, 2026
Cover Sheet, Meeting the Need, & Academic Plan	October 20, 2026
Operations Plan & Addendum	November 5, 2026
Financial Plan	November 9, 2026
Clarifying Questions & Capacity Interview	November 16, 2026

All trainings will be virtual. Additionally, each module will be recorded and posted to the SPCSA website.

Application Materials

- The **Guidance** includes background and information regarding the application process, specific requirements for the application, application submission, and the application process.
- The **Application** template includes all of the questions that should be answered by the applicant. If an applicant does not answer all applicable questions, the application may be deemed incomplete.
- The **Rubric** describes the characteristics of a strong response that would meet standards.

Application Timeline

Date	Activity	Responsible Party
October 31, 2026	Notice of Intent[0F]	Applicant
January 31, 2027	Application Deadline[1F]	Applicant
February 1-15, 2027	Completeness Check (see section 7)	SPCSA Staff
February 1-15, 2027 (Applicants are provided with approximately 48 hours to respond)	Response to Completeness Findings	Applicant
February 15-March 19, 2027	Application Evaluation	SPCSA Staff & Review Panel
March 22-April 3, 2027	Send Clarifying Questions	SPCSA Staff
March 22-April 9, 2027 (Applicants are provided with 4 business days to respond)	Response to Clarifying Questions	Applicant
March 29-April 16, 2027 (Date and time for each Applicant will be scheduled based on availability of Applicant and Review Panel)	Capacity Interview	Applicant, SPCSA Staff, & Review Panel
May 14, 2027	Recommendation Published	SPCSA Staff
May 21, 2027	Consideration of Approval/Denial	SPCSA Board
May 24-28, 2027	Notice of Denial, if applicable	SPCSA Staff
May 24-June 4, 2027	Meet and Confer on Deficiencies of Denied Application	Denied Applicants who wish to resubmit, SPCSA Staff
June 23-28, 2027 (30 days from receipt of Notice of Denial[2F])	Resubmission Deadline	Denied Applicants
August 20 or October 1, 2027 (Applicants will be provided with a specific date during the resubmission process)	Resubmission Recommendation Published	SPCSA Staff
August 27 or October 8, 2027 (Applicants will be provided with a specific date during the resubmission process)	Consideration of Approval/Denial of Resubmitted Applications	SPCSA Board

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Application Guidance

Part I

- Introduction
- Glossary
- Resources
- Application Overview
  - Applicant Types
  - Timeline
  - Submission Directions
  - Application Contents
  - Application Review Process

Part II

For each section of the Application

- The **application questions** which are identical to the questions found in the Application Template Document;
- The **rubric criteria** which are identical to the criteria defined in the Evaluation Rubric Document; and
- **Guidance** regarding the section or subsection, such as important information and resources to consider when drafting an application.

Refer to the corresponding section of the Guidance Document while completing the Application Template Document

Application and Rubric: Example

2.1 Mission and Vision Questions

1) Provide the mission and vision for the proposed school.
2) Briefly describe how the mission and vision statements serve as the foundation for the proposed school, including:
   a) The students and community to be served,
   b) The key components of your educational model,
   c) The outcomes and goals you expect to achieve for students and the school overall, and
   d) Key supporters, partners, or resources that will contribute to your school's success.
3) Identify the statutory purpose(s) that the school will fulfill and explain the alignment to school's the mission and vision.

2.1 Mission and Vision Rubric

Criteria
Clear, measurable, and compelling mission statement which explains the role of the school in meeting the needs of the community and intended student population, and which is reflected throughout the application.
Vision describes success (beyond graduation) for students if the school fulfills its mission.
Committee to Form/CMO aims to achieve outcomes that they demonstrate will improve the long-term quality of life of all students served, including students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, at-risk students, and students above or below grade level.
School's plan, in alignment with the mission and vision, satisfies at least one statutory purpose: • Improving the academic achievement of pupils. • Encouraging the use of effective and innovative methods of teaching. • Providing an accurate measurement of the educational achievement of pupils. • Establishing accountability and transparency of public schools. • Providing a method for public schools to measure achievement based upon the performance of the schools, AND/OR • Creating new professional opportunities for teachers.

Application and Rubric: Example

4.6 Incubation Year Development Questions

1) Provide a detailed start-up plan for the planning year (the year leading up to the opening of the school) to ensure that the school meets all of the SPCSA's Pre-Opening Requirements and is ready for a successful launch. Using the template provided, outline key activities, responsible parties, and milestones, and submit as Attachment 15 ("Incubation Year Planning Table").
2) Describe the plans for leadership training and development of the selected school leader during the incubation year prior to school opening and how these plans support your year 0 goals. If partnering with an organization to provide training and development, briefly describe the main components of the training program and why that organization was chosen.
3) Explain who will work on a full-time or part-time basis immediately following approval of this application to lead development of the school(s). Explain who will employ these individuals, describe plans to compensate these individuals, and describe each individual's core responsibilities during the incubation year.

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

While most criteria are evaluated through both the written application and capacity interview, several criteria, an indicated with "*" will only be evaluated after the capacity interview.

4.6 Incubation Year Development Rubric

Criteria
Provides key milestones for the planning year, as well as concrete actions and accountability, which will ensure that the school is ready for a successful launch. Incubation year plan: • Includes necessary activities/milestones to ensure that any program-specific components will be ready to begin on the first day of school. • Includes necessary activities/milestones to ensure the school will be operationally ready to open. • Includes necessary activities/milestones to ensure that the SPCSA Pre-Opening Requirements will be met. *Note it is not necessary to duplicate every SPCSA pre-opening requirement into your incubation year plan. Instead, focus on the activities that will ensure success and the major milestones that must be met.* • Clearly identifies the individuals responsible for leading year 0 initiatives and meeting year 0 milestones.
If a third party (including an CMO/EMO) will implement portions of the Year 0 plan, these actions should align to the contract or additional documentation presented later in the application.
Outlines comprehensive leadership development plans that include training aligned with incubation year goals as well as stated academic goals.
Outlines the function of any employees in Year 0, as well as the funding source for associated compensation. The staffing outlined for Year 0 will enable the school to reach its Year 0 milestones and goals.
Startup expenses are reflected in the budget narrative assumptions and the budget calculations.
Capacity Interview Criteria:
The committee to form demonstrates that they understand the challenges of opening a school and articulate a commitment and understanding of what it will take to ensure a successful launch of the school.*
The committee to form demonstrates that they can work together to solve problems.*
The committee to form demonstrates they are well versed in the incubation year plan and are committed to following through with the implementation.*
The committee to form demonstrates that they are actively engaged* throughout the application process and plan to maintain active engagement through the incubation year.*

Applicant Types

Committee to Form

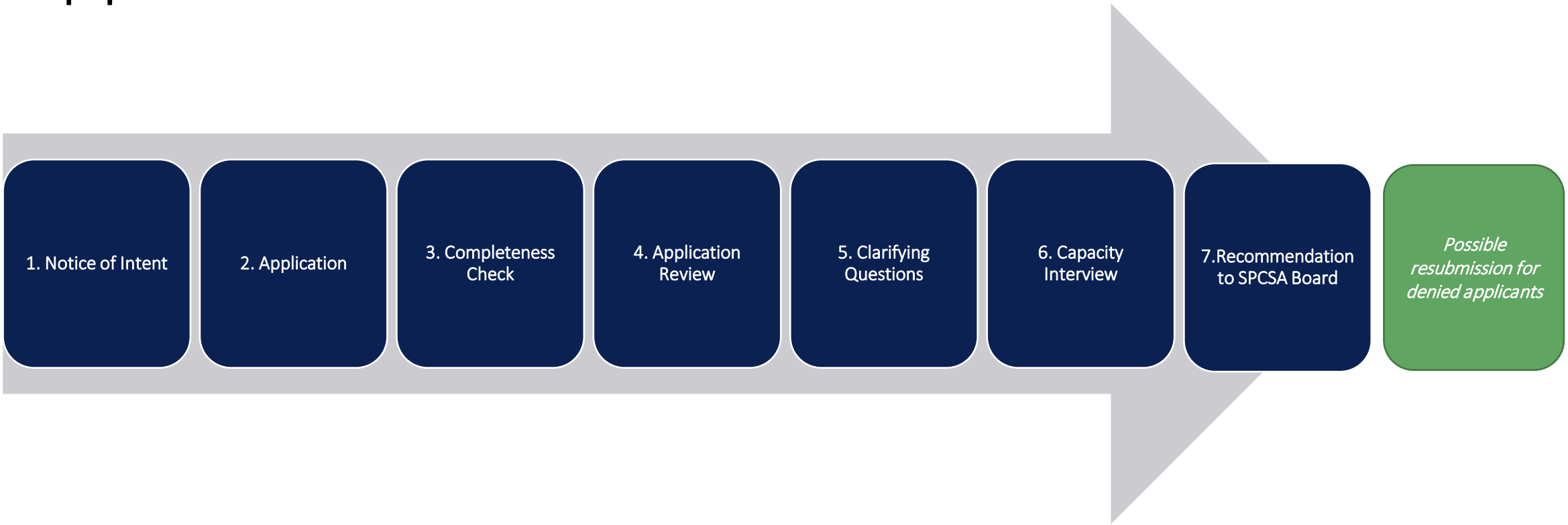
- Must meet membership requirements
  - 1 Teacher
  - 1 Teacher/Administrator
  - One parent/guardian
  - Two members with knowledge and expertise in accounting, financial services, law, or human resources
- Majority of members must be residents of Nevada
- Members cannot include contractors, facility lessors, EMO representatives
- Committees to Form may propose to contract with a CMO or EMO

Charter Management Organization

- Nonprofit organization that operates or supports charter schools
- May apply with the intent to
  - hold the charter contract
  - establish a new governing to hold the charter contract with the understanding that the new governing board would contract with the CMO for educational and/or operational services
- Whichever entity holds the charter must comply with membership requirements for the governing body of a charter school

"Teacher" is defined as someone who (1) holds a current license to teacher, pursuant to chapter 391 of NRS or who previously held such a license and is retired, as long as his or her license was held in good standing and (2) has at least two years of experience as an employed teacher in any state in a position for which a teaching license is required. The term does not include a person who is employed as a substitute teacher.

Application Process



Note: District and public input is included in the Application Review phase of the process.

Application Process– Approximate Timeline

- Completeness Check: About 1-2 weeks
- Initial Reviews: About 5-6 weeks
- Clarifying Questions: 4 business day turnaround
- Capacity Interviews: About 3-4 weeks after initial review
- Findings and Recommendation to Board: About 3 weeks
- From submission to recommendation about 3-4 months

Application Requirements

Notice of Intent

Due October 31

- Request for basic information
  - Name and contact information
  - County and Proposed Zip Codes
  - Facility
  - EMO/CMO
  - Grade Levels
  - Planned Opening Year
  - Planned Enrollment
  - Committee to Form
  - Proposed School Model
  - Community Engagement

Application Requirements

Application

Due January 15 – 31

Complete all applicable sections:

- Meeting the Need
- Academic
- Operations Plan
- Financial Plan
- Addendum
  - Only required for CMOs applying directly OR applicants proposing to contract with EMO or CMO

Application Sections

Cover Sheet	Meeting the Need	Academic Plan	Operations Plan	Financial Plan	Addendum*
• General Information • Applicant Team Information • Pending Applications & Schools • Planned Enrollment • Proposed Location • CMOs and EMOs* • Application Preparation • Applicant Certification	• Mission and Vision • Targeted Plan • Parent & Community Involvement	• Transformational Change • Curriculum & Instructional Design • Promotion & Graduation Requirements • Driving for Results • At Risk Students & Special Populations • Professional Development • School Culture • Student Discipline • School Calendar & Schedule • Dual Credit Partnerships^ • Programs of Distance Education~	• Board Governance • Leadership Team • Staffing Plan • Human Resources • Student Recruitment & Enrollment • Incubation Year Development • Services • Facilities	• Narrative • Budget	• Past Performance* • Scale Strategy* • Network Capacity* • School Management Contracts* • CMOs Applying for Sponsorship Directly**

*Required for Committee to Form Applicants that propose to contract with a CMO or EMO, or CMO Applicants
**Required for CMO Applicants
^Required for applicants proposing a high school program
~Required for applicants proposing to offer distance education

Application Requirements

Completeness Check

February 1 – 15

- Staff reviews against completeness checklist before in-depth review and analysis
- Should questions or concerns arise, applicants are afforded 48 hours to cure
- Ensure ADA compliance

Application Requirements

Application Evaluation

February 15 – March 19

- "Application review panel composed of experts selected by the Executive Director who are not employed by the [SPCSA] and employees of the [SPCSA]."
- "Thorough evaluation of the application…"
- Public and district input are solicited
- **Reminder:** applications should be complete and fully established prior to submission

NRS 388A.249 (2)(d)

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

(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;

Application Requirements

Clarifying Questions

March 29 – April 16

- After the initial review, but prior to the capacity interview, SPCSA staff may reach out to applicants in the following scenarios:
  - To provide written answers to clarifying questions about the application so as to maximize time during the capacity interview (applicants are provided with **4 business days to respond**)
    - Examples:
      - *Please clarify which members of the proposed school staff are on an IEP team.*
      - *Please clarify which line items in the budget include the following instructional resources: NWEA-MAP, iReady & Class Dojo.*
  - If there are substantial concerns about the written application and/or readiness of the applicant team to open as proposed.
  - **A considerable number of clarifying questions may be indicative of an application with significant deficiencies and concerns.**

Application Requirements

Capacity Interview

March 29 – April 16

- After staff review, applicant team (as outlined in Section 1.2 of application) participates in capacity interview to answer questions about the proposed school.
- Capacity interviews…
  - Assess the qualifications of the applicant
  - Assess the ability of the applicant to establish a high-quality charter school
  - Elicit any necessary clarifications or additional information about the proposed charter school
- Capacity interviews include SPCSA staff and external reviewers
  - External reviewers are required under statute and bring expertise, ensure the process remains independent of bias or local factors, and bolster the integrity of the process
- Applicants should be prepared to answer specific questions about their application
- Applicants should not prepare a presentation for the capacity interview but should prepare for a scenario-based question.
- While most criteria are evaluated through both the written application and capacity interview, some rubric criteria will only be evaluated after the capacity interview. These criteria are indicated with an * in the rubric and guidance document.
  - 4.1 Board Governance
  - 4.2 Leadership Team
  - 4.6 Incubation Year

Capacity Interview

- Red Flags
  - Applicant has difficulty answering questions or is overly reliant on a service-provider.
  - One person dominates the conversation, answering all questions.
  - Potential conflicts of interest are not disclosed.
  - Disagreement among respondents.
  - Applicant raises new plans not included in the proposal.
  - Responses are largely anecdotal or lack specifics.
  - Individuals outside of the Committee to Form or proposed Board participate and provide substantial answers.

Capacity Interview (cont.)

A Simple Way to Frame Roles

Governing Board = to Ensure
Management = to Execute

- Applicant teams often fail to ensure Team Synergy.
  - Avoid “one-person show”.
  - Clarity around organizational relationships and lines of accountability.
  - Identify gaps in the team and explain how you’ll address them.

Application Requirements

Recommendation to Board

May 21, 2027

- Based on **application and capacity interview**, SPCSA staff submits recommendation to the Authority Board
- SPCSA staff will notify all applicants of the final recommendation prior to making this information public
- Recommendations are posted approximately one week prior to the Authority Board meeting
- At the SPCSA Board meeting, applicants should expect 10-15 minutes to speak to their application, followed by any questions from the Authority

Applicant guidance projects final recommendations to be posted on May 14. Applicants will be notified of the final recommendation prior to that date.

Resubmission

This process is the opportunity for denied applicants to address deficiencies through modifications to the initial application.

- If denied, applicants may elect to resubmit pursuant to NRS 388A.255.
- SPCSA staff notifies each applicant of denial, in writing, within 30 days.
- Applicants may meet and confer with SPCSA staff regarding identified deficiencies during this 30-day window.
- Applicants may resubmit the written application within 30 days after written notification from SPCSA staff.

The SPCSA encourages only those unsuccessful applicants that the SPCSA has found **limited or specific areas where the application does not meet standards** to resubmit their charter application. Unsuccessful applicants that the SPCSA has found numerous or significant issues within the application that do not meet standard are encouraged to submit a new charter application during the SPCSA's next application window

Reminder

- The new charter school application process includes a notice of intent, application, application review, capacity interview and any clarifying questions, recommendation to the SPCSA Board, SPCSA Board decision, and a resubmission process, if needed.
- The application process does not contemplate additional materials or information submitted outside of the application, clarifying questions, and capacity interview (other than material changes to information that has been submitted by the applicant during the new charter school application process).
- ***New or additional information should be submitted as part of the resubmission process.***

Application Withdrawal

- Applicants may, at any time, withdraw their application to form a charter school by providing written notice to the State Public Charter School Authority.
- Notice of withdrawal may be sent to the SPCSA's Executive Director via email: mmackedon@spcsa.nv.gov.

Application Submission

- Applicants will upload to Epicenter, the online system we use with all of our charter schools.
- Staff will send out link and access details in advance of the submission window.
- Unlike some authorizers, we do not accept hard copies.

Application Submission

- **Submission format:** 11pt font; margins at least ½ inch; references/citations in the footer
- **Labeling:** keep section/subsection titles and questions (enter your response after each question); provide accurate table of contents
- **Documents to submit:**
  - **Combined Charter Application PDF:** combine narrative and all non-Excel attachments into a single document and continuously number
  - **Excel Attachments:** Submit all attachments that are in Excel format separately (ex. Financial Plan Workbook)
- **Ensure your document is accessible**

See guidance for additional details

Application Page Limits

Page limits apply to the narrative (Sections 2-6) but do not apply to the cover sheet or attachments.

Applicant Type	Notes	Page Limit
Committee to Form Applicants that do not propose to contract with a CMO or EMO	Addendum not required	140
Committee to Form Applicants that propose to contract with a CMO or EMO	Addendum required	150
Charter Management Organization (CMO) Applicants	Addendum required	150

Questions

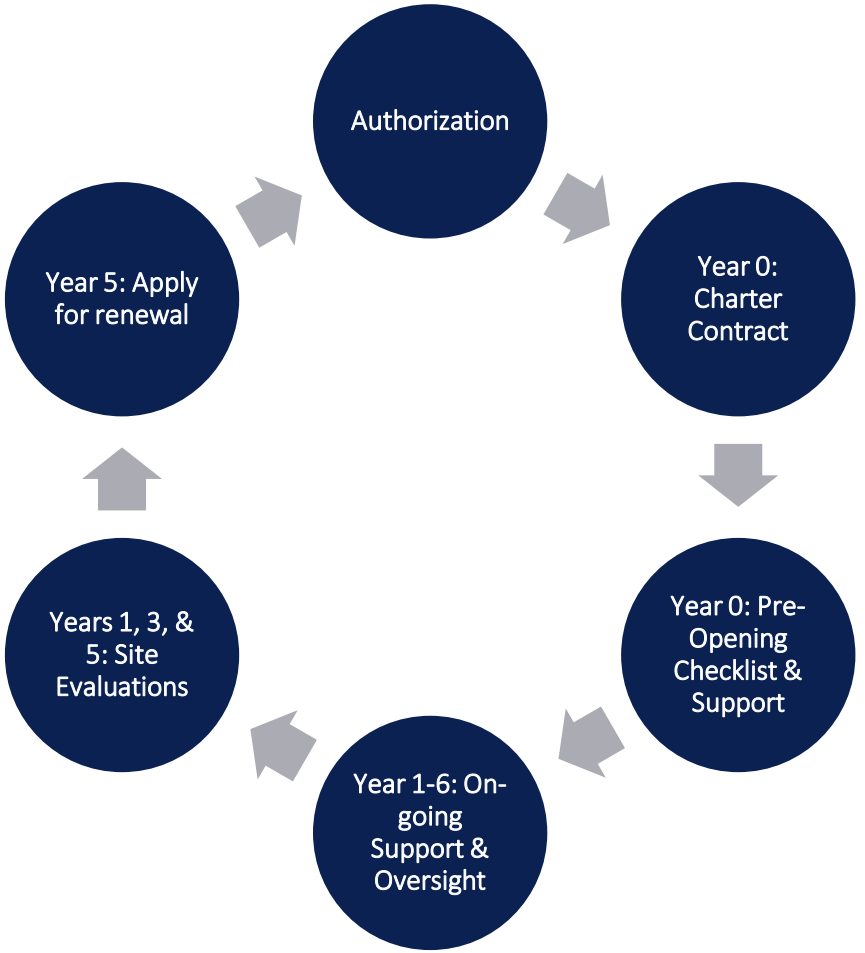
Approved applicants move to the Pre-Opening Process

Support from Authority continues through Pre-Opening process to ensure a strong start to school

Timeframe	Action Item	Responsible Party
Summer 2027	Pre-Opening Checklist provided to new and expanding schools	SPCSA Staff
Summer 2027	Pre-Opening kickoff call/video conference	SPCSA Staff; School leaders and one board member participate
Fall 2027 through Summer 2028	**Monthly meetings** to discuss progress and challenges, review Pre-Opening Checklist, and discuss any revisions needed to submitted items	SPCSA Staff and School
Fall 2027 through Summer 2028	**School submits documents** and information by deadlines established in the Pre-Opening Checklist	School
Fall 2027 through Summer 2028	**SPCSA reviews** submitted items within 2 weeks and approves or provides feedback on additional information needed	SPCSA Staff
At least 30 days prior to first day of instruction	Evidence of TCO (Temporary Certificate of Occupancy) or COO (Certificate of Occupancy)	School
At least 10 days prior to first day of instruction	Pre-Opening Walkthrough	SPCSA Staff; School participates

Charter School Lifecycle

- Charters granted for 6-year terms
- Renewal applications due in summer of Year 5 to ensure continuity of program and school
- Ongoing charter, state, and federal compliance measures
- Continuous support from SPCSA's School Support Team
- Oversight from SPCSA's Authorizing Team
- Site Evaluations (Typically Years 1,3,& 5)



Agenda

1	Introductions: SPCSA, Opportunity 180, and CSAN
2	SPCSA Mission & Strategic Plan
3	Application Process
4	Characteristics of Strong Applications
5	General Changes to the Application & Process
6	Questions & Next Steps

Proposed charter schools must aim to accomplish at least one of the following (NRS 388A.246)

- Improve the learning of pupils and, by extension, improve the system of public education
- Increase the opportunities for learning and access to quality education by pupils
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods
- Establish appropriate measures for and assessments of the learning achieved by pupils who are enrolled in charter schools
- Provide a more thorough and efficient system of accountability of the results achieved in public education in this state
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers and other educational personnel, including, without limitation, the opportunity to increase the accessibility and responsibility of teachers and other educational personnel for the program of learning offered

Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

NRS 388A.220(6) & NRS 388A.249 stipulate the following regarding the Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment:

- The annual assessment conducted by the SPCSA shall be an evaluation of demographic information of pupils, the academic needs of pupils, and the needs of pupils who are at risk of dropping out of school in this state
- The SPCSA shall conduct the assessment in collaboration with the Department and the board of trustees of each school district in Nevada. This assessment was initially approved by the Authority on July 26, 2019, and the most recent version was approved Friday, October 9. A copy of the most recent version can be found here.
- When reviewing applications, the SPCSA must solicit input from the school district in which the applicant proposes to open and consider whether the application aligns with identified needs
- When approving charter applications, the SPCSA must allow for public input and affirm that any application recommended for approval meets one or more identified needs.

Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

The SPCSA Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment defines these three needs:

Demographics

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.

- Students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL)3
- 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.

Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

Academic: Geographies with Consistently Underperforming Schools

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.

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.**

Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

Academic: Students At Risk of Dropping Out

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**.

Demographic and Academic Needs Assessment

Fulfilling and or proposing to meet at least one of these needs is more than just checking a box or stating an intent to do so within an application.

Successful applicants will:

- Demonstrate a **commitment** to serve one of the populations identified on the previous slide and/or propose to locate within a geography that has 1- and 2-star schools.

  AND

- Demonstrate the **capacity** to serve that population well through a model that is appropriately designed to ensure the students can be successful.

Alignment to Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment

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

Likelihood applicant is approved

Strong Applications

The Proposed School:

- Meets at least one of the demographic or academic needs from the Needs Assessment[1].
- Designed based on best practices of high-performing schools or demonstrate rationale through a logic model and plans to study effectiveness
- Aligned to best practices of charter schools as supported by National Alliance for Public School, National Charter Schools Institute, and other established charter organizations.
- Demonstrates ample support from families and a thorough understanding of the community to ensure full enrollment and shared investment in the school's success (includes significant number of Intent to Enroll forms).
- Grounded in research and evidence, which is included in application.
- Has an identified school leader with a high-level of capacity OR has a clear plan to identify a school leader prior to school opening.

1 SPCSA Academic and Geographic Needs Assessment (revised October 9, 2026)

Strong Applications (cont.)

- Has a Committee to Form and proposed board that has appropriate experience and demonstrates an ability to execute effectively on the proposed school plan.
- Have a reasonable budget and financial plan.
- Rooted in state and federal law.
- Founders have already actively engaged community and provide specific examples of how the community has shaped the school proposal.
- Strong grammar, punctuation, spelling → Edit the document before you submit

Questions

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Overview of Revisions

- Updated application questions, rubric criteria, and guidance:
  - 4.3 Staffing Plan
    - Added Nevada class-size requirements and State Board recommendations as benchmarks for evaluating reasonableness of proposed student-teacher ratios.
    - Clarified that these are evaluation benchmarks, not requirements for charter schools.
  - 4.4 Human Resources
    - Revised questions to require applicants to demonstrate the reasonableness of their teacher recruitment and retention strategies.
    - Added requirements for applicants to identify minimum staffing, education, licensure, and certification requirements.
    - Added rubric criteria to evaluate the reasonableness and completeness of proposed recruitment, retention, and staffing plans.

Overview of Revisions

- Revising and clarifying sections of the Information and Disclosure Forms (Attachment 1).
- Updating the Financial Plan Workbook (Attachment 22).
  - Adding Year 6 to reflect the full initial contract term.
  - Including additional information regarding the cost of Infinite Campus implementation during Year 0.
- Clean-up and alignment of language across the guidance document, application, and rubric that do not make substantive changes to the requirements or process.

Questions

Closing

1	Introductions: SPCSA, Opportunity 180, and CSAN
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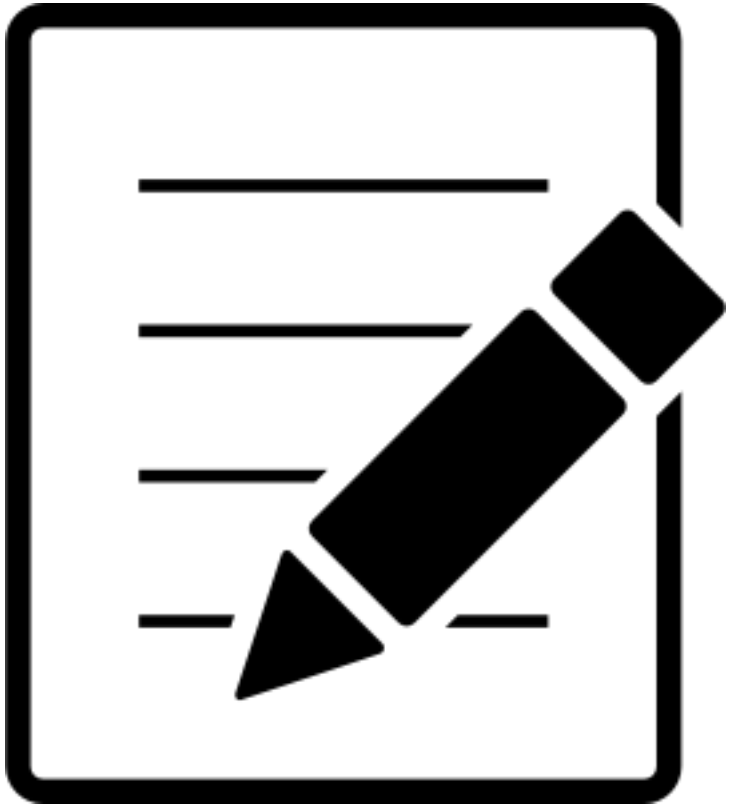
Application Training Components

Component	Training Date
Application Overview	October 13, 2026
Cover Sheet, Meeting the Need, & Academic Plan	October 20, 2026
Operations Plan & Addendum	November 5, 2026
Financial Plan	November 9, 2026
Clarifying Questions & Capacity Interview	November 16, 2026

All trainings will be virtual. Additionally, each module will be recorded and posted to the SPCSA website.

- Applications can be rushed at the last minute, so be sure to plan out the work.
- Ground in research and data, not wistful language. Be specific.
- Formatting matters. Ensure your formatting does not hinder understanding of the content.
- Applications are often misaligned, inconsistent, and/or lack cohesiveness.
  - Budget alignment (staffing, PD, enrollment)
  - Describe how certain aspects of the program will work together.
  - Review specifically for consistency.



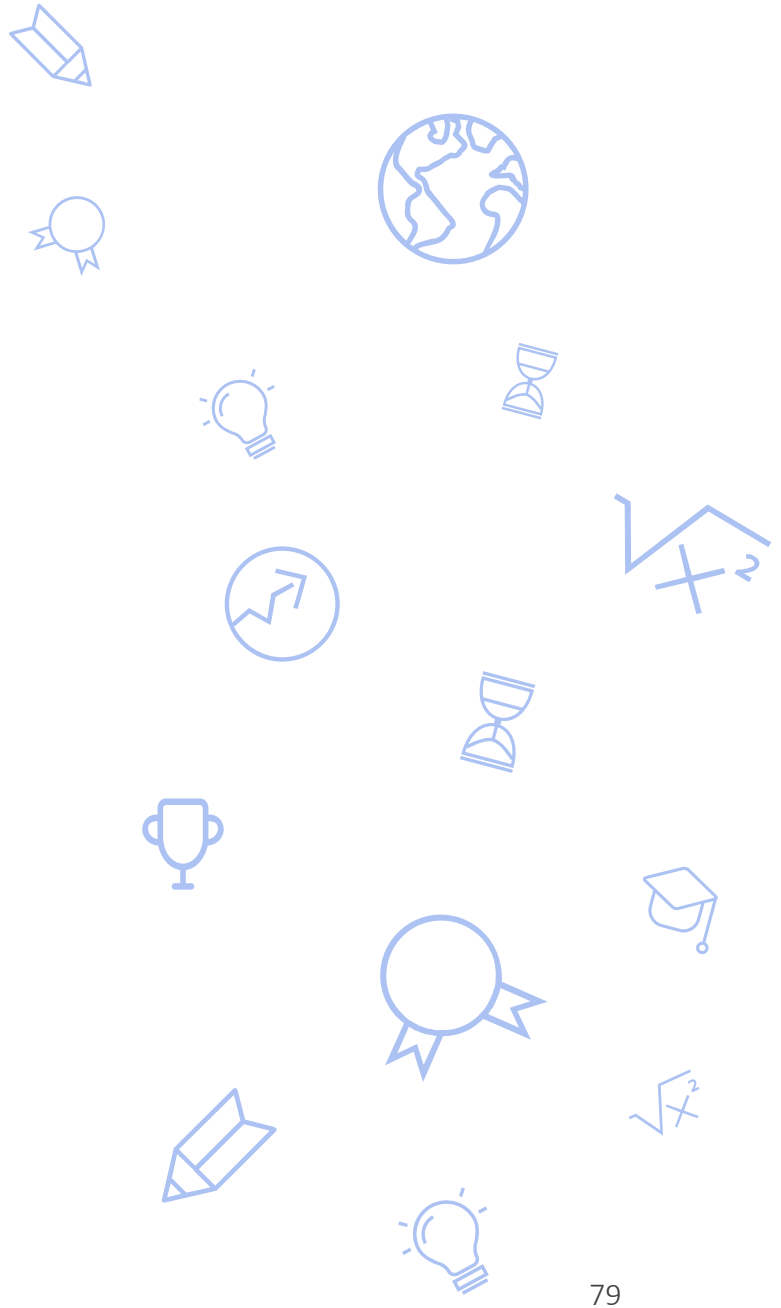
Two Final Notes

- The application, if approved, is incorporated into the actual charter (contract). You may not commit to a program, delivery model, location, etc. and do the opposite.
- Until you are authorized, you are a **proposed** public charter school.
  - Use ‘proposed’ in your fliers, messaging, social media, websites, videos, etc.
- Be mindful of marketing materials and making promises to families about your existence.
  - If you’re authorized, you become an ambassador for charter schools. Be transparent with families – not only for your school but for the sake of all public charter schools.

USE	Do not USE
- We propose to locate at … - We will enroll starting in … - We plan to open in …	- We are located at … - We are enrolling … - We exist.

Thank you!

charterschools.nv.gov



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority