



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

1749 North Stewart Street Suite 40  
Carson City, Nevada 89706-2543  
(775) 687 - 9174 · Fax: (775) 687 - 9113

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

August 5, 2022

Chair James-Cervantes and Executive Director Benitez  
Strong Start Academy  
310 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Las Vegas, NV 89101  
[ljamescervantes@clvstrongstartes.org](mailto:ljamescervantes@clvstrongstartes.org)  
[mbenitez@clvstrongstartes.org](mailto:mbenitez@clvstrongstartes.org)

**Re: Strong Start Academy Pre-Opening & Conditional Approval**

Dear Chair James-Cervantes and Executive Director Benitez,

As you are aware, the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) was created to provide oversight to sponsored charter schools and to ensure that those schools maintain high educational and operational standards. To do this effectively, the SPCSA requires that new charter holders to complete a pre-opening process before opening their school. A complete list of these items can be found attached to this letter.

SPCSA staff has received a number of requested documents from the school to complete this checklist over the past six months. Additionally, after an on-site visit to the campus on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, SPCSA staff believes all but four items have been completed. These items are listed below, marked as conditionally approved within the checklist, and includes specific actions required by the school in the coming days in order to complete:

- Health Services (Operations #3): the school is making temporary arrangements in the nurse's office until the pre-ordered cot arrives.
  - o Action Required: provide SPCSA staff with evidence when the cot arrives for the nurse's office.
- Postings & Policies (Operations #9): while ordered, the required state and federal postings/notifications have not arrived at the school site.
  - o Action Required: provide SPCSA staff with evidence that these posters and notifications are visible to staff upon arrival. SPCSA staff suggests consulting the [Department of](#)

[Labor](#) and [State of Nevada Office of Business and Industry](#) to see if free, temporary posters may be available in the interim.

- Background Checks (Management #4): Individual(s) without completed background checks may not be unsupervised with children.
  - o Action Required: provide confirmation when all individuals employed at the school have cleared their background checks. Until that time, these individuals may not be unsupervised with children and the school should rely on their contingency plan to provide adult coverage as provided to Authority staff.
- Nurse's Office (Facilities #11): the school is making temporary arrangements in the nurse's office until the pre-ordered cot arrives.
  - o Action Required: provide SPCSA staff with evidence when the cot arrives for the nurse's office.

As you are also aware, the Authority attached three other conditions to the Strong Start Academy charter approval on January 28, 2022. SPCSA staff has determined that the following conditions have also been satisfied at this time:

- By March 1, 2022, and before the school begins accepting student applications, provide an updated lottery policy that complies with Nevada Revised Statutes and Nevada Administrative Code.
- By March 1, 2022, provide evidence that the Executive Director has been hired.
- By April 30, 2022, provide fully-executed copies of the contracts with key service providers identified in the resubmission: TNTP, Dual Language education of New Mexico (DLeNM) and Bambee.
- Provide evidence that the school is compliant with all statutes and regulations related to student transportation, including NRS 386.815 – 386.840 which comprises a number of requirements for the school to fulfill. SPCSA staff will work with the Nevada Department of Education and the school to monitor progress so that requirements are met approximately 30-days prior to the start of school.
- By November 30, 2022, provide evidence that a long-term facility has been secured.

Given the completion of all other remaining pre-opening requirements, this correspondence is to formally notify you that Strong Start Academy is approved to open as planned on Monday, August 8, 2022.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions. Best of luck during the 2022 – 2023 school year.

Sincerely,

*Mark Modrcin*

Mark Modrcin  
Director of Authorizing, State Public Charter School Authority

cc: Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director, State Public Charter School Authority  
(via electronic mail)  
Melissa Mackedon, Chair, State Public Charter School Authority  
(via electronic mail)  
Marinna Cutler, Deputy Director, State Public Charter School Authority  
(via electronic mail)  
Sara Jorgensen, Education Programs Professional, State Public Charter School Authority  
(via electronic mail)  
Jennifer King, Administrative Assistant IV, State Public Charter School Authority  
(via electronic mail)