



July 11, 2021

State Public Charter School Authority
2080 East Flamingo Road, Suite 230
Las Vegas, NV 89119

Dear Chairs Mackedon and Kirner, and members of the board,

The Las Vegas Alliance of Black School Educators is a nonprofit organization in the city of Las Vegas. One of our objectives is to ensure educational equity within in our educational system. We are deeply compassionate and committed to underserved and underrepresented students. Today, we learned details of some horrific news that would seriously dismantle schools and the community of Historic West Las Vegas.

LVABSE and our community are in opposition to the City of Las Vegas implementing Strong Start Academy Elementary Schools. First, the City of Las Vegas has not done their due diligence in gathering input from the community about their plans. There seems to be no assessment of need or actual data that the community can view to make an informed decision about the need for Strong Start schools in 89106.

An approval of these plans validates disrespect to the community in Historic West Las Vegas which did not have an opportunity to share their concerns about Strong Start schools in their community. The implementation of more charter schools in 89106 will pull students away from their neighborhood schools, which will ultimately cause gentrification of Historic West Las Vegas. In essence, this would be another tragic 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre that dismantled a community for over 100 years. Still today, the Tulsa community has been severely impacted. The approval of Strong Start schools will reverse the hard work and advocacy that community activists have done to ensure Historic West Las Vegas has schools in their neighborhood.

All over the country, Black residents have to fight to preserve the communities that have served as safe havens and solid educational foundations during segregation. Historic West Las Vegas, is in fact, Historic. We hope that in the future there are plans from the Charter School Authority that require applicants of charter schools to show due diligence of community input, from both the opposers and the supporters.

We are interested in knowing how many individuals on your board grew up in or are familiar with Historic West Las Vegas and how many are Black educators? If the response is “not many” or “none” at all, then your vote should be NO to Strong Start Academy Elementary Schools.

In Truth and Service,

Kamilah Bywaters

President, Kamilah Bywaters, M.Ed. M.Div.

Tracey Lewis

Vice-President, Tracey Lewis

July 12, 2021

To: Chair Mackedon & Board Members

From: V. Wright, Member LVABSE, National Chapter of NAACP, βββ, Retired CCSD instructor, & taxpayer

Re: Opposition to the City of Las Vegas implementing Strong Start Academy Elementary Schools in 89106

Reasons:

It appears that neither the majority of “City” of Las Vegas nor CLV Strong Start Academy Elementary Schools, Inc., a proposed Nevada Nonprofit Corporation [CLV], has done their due diligence by involving the community in their assessment process for Charter schools. It is not clear how the perceived needs & wishes were obtained from the residents of Ward 5. The “City” acted with blatant disrespect of the community by excluding them from a meaningful conversation about the CLV plans. The Community was not aware of the full extent of the CLV plans. The representative for Ward 5 voted “**NO**” to having charter schools in his area, yet his zip code was included in the CLV proposal.

Approval of plans like those of CLV would pull students and monetary resources away from their existing neighborhood schools, could cause demise the educational programs which help bridge the educational achievement gaps, cause gentrification similar to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre from which they have still not recovered, and further fracture the CCSD instructional staff.

CLV’s plans to cap class size @ 20, to select the students who attend, & to pay their teachers more than CCSD pays will further contribute to the demise of the structure & support of a community system that understands and embraces the culture which helps these underserved & underrepresented students bridge the existing achievement gap. Closing this gap would continue to help this delicate population of early learners dream of, believe in, and achieve their lifetime dreams.

~It should be noted that CCSD does not have the option to tell additional students over the count of 20 students/teacher, that they cannot attend here. If that is true, then the same should be true for any other school you as an entity approve to operate in the district. ~

It appears that CLV’s current board members are neither diverse nor inclusive in the population they wish to attract or serve in the 89106 community. Ask CLV how many of their board members grew up in, share the culture of, are compassionate Black instructors or know the history of the Historic Westside.

- If the answer is “no”, “none”, or “not many”, your answer to approving CLV’s charter as proposed should be “NO”.
- If you believe/understand that for every child you take from their existing school, the school will have less money to operate and educate the remaining students, then your answer to approving CLV’s charter should be “NO”.
- If you believe that telling the 21st and 22nd and 23rd child... and their parents that they cannot come here, then your answer to approving CLV’s charter should be “NO”.

- If you understand/believe that unequal teacher pay will cause serious problems & cause increased erosion of morale within the teaching profession [and that unequal is not ok], then your answer to approving CLV's charter should be "NO".
- If you understand that leaving a school with fewer resources including money for teacher salaries to serve the remaining students will cause MORE overcrowding, [which is unequal], then your answer to approving CLS's charter should be "NO".
- If you believe that if CLV would convince CCSD to increase teacher pay, to reduce class size, and of the need to add additional technics and learning modules instead of taking away their resources, then your answer to approving CLV's charter should be "NO".

As a professional, I am still at a loss to understand why CCSD and others have not realized that underserved/underrepresented students may exceed expectations better with mentors/teachers who understand and share their culture & have working solutions, may be the key for increased academic success and decrease the feeling that they cannot succeed.

As a taxpayer, I am not satisfied with the fact that those who dictate the educational hierarchy of educational success are no further on the road to success now than they were 20-50years ago.

If you, too, share these thoughts, then the answer to the approval to CLV's charter should be "NO".

How long should a school district be satisfied with the dishonor of being at the bottom of such an important value as education?

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "V. Wright". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

V. Wright, Resident/Taxpayer/Educational Advocate
918 Country Skies Avenue
Las Vegas NV 89123