

NSEA OPPOSES EXPANSTION OF MATER ACADEMY OF NORTHERN NEVADA

The Nevada State Education Association has been the voice of Nevada educators for over 120 years.

Since 2017, NSEA has been asking for greater controls and oversight of charter schools, especially given the separate and unequal dynamics between charter schools and neighborhood public schools. In 2019, NSEA sponsored and the Committee on Education introduced AB462, a proposed moratorium on new charter schools in Nevada. In a political compromise, the legislature amended AB462 to require the Charter School Authority to develop and implement a growth management plan. However, with your approval of supercharged growth in charter schools since its passage, it's clear this Authority has not honored the legislative intent behind AB462 to manage charter growth.

It is with this history that NSEA opposes the expansion of Mater Academy of Northern Nevada (MANN).

MANN's proposal involves the new construction of a 1460 seat K-12 school in North Valleys while also adding a program of distance education. According to materials provided to the Authority by the Washoe County School District, the North Valleys is already well served by neighborhood public schools. Several new neighborhood public schools have been built in the area with help from WC-1 funds, which NSEA strongly supported. WCSD operates 12 schools in the area, none of which are at maximum capacity. Meanwhile, school age enrollment in the area has been declining in recent years. Given this, construction of a large charter school in the area would take students away from neighborhood public schools, hurting the district, schools, and ultimately the students who attend those schools.

Performance of neighborhood public schools in North Valleys was cited as a reason to approve the MANN application. However, according to the Nevada Department of Education accountability portal for 2022-23, only 30.9% MANN middle school students were proficient in ELA and even fewer, 26.9% scored proficient in math. We know that on the whole, when correcting for demographic difference, neighborhood public schools consistently outperform charter schools. The argument that MANN would serve North Valley students better than neighborhood public schools is wrong.

NSEA asks the State Public Charter School Authority to watch out for the best interest of the broader public and deny this application from Mater Academy of Northern Nevada. Thank you.