



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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

2080 East Flamingo Road Suite 230  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-5164  
(702)486-8895 • Fax (702)486-5543

---

---

RECOMMENDATION MEMORANDUM

---

---

**TO:** SPCSA Board  
**FROM:** Mike Dang, Manager, Financial and Organizational Performance  
Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing  
**SUBJECT:** Mater Academy of Northern Nevada - Contract Amendment Request: Addition of  
Distance Education Program  
**DATE:** December 4, 2020

---

**Summary of Request:**

Mater Academy of Northern Nevada (MANN) first opened in August of 2017 serving students in grades K-5. Today the school now serves 430 students in grades K-8. MANN would like to add supplemental distance education options for students for credit retrieval and advancement of coursework not currently offered in the brick-and-mortar school for middle school students.

MANN has also applied for expansion in this amendment cycle and that request is contained within the charter amendment application. The expansion request will be considered separately at a future SPCSA Authority Board meeting.

**Background:**

MANN's mission is to provide an innovative, challenging, multicultural education, preparing students to be global citizens and have a competitive edge in the 21st century workforce. MANN is affiliated with and replicates the Mater Academy of Nevada (Las Vegas) as well as the Florida Mater Academy charter school network. Both of these systems have demonstrated success with diverse, at-risk student populations, including English Language Learners. The Mater Academy model emphasizes positive, student-centered cultures that value equity, collaboration, and personalized learning.

MANN's proposed target population is children who are already enrolled in grades 6-8, who are in need of credit recovery or remediation, academic challenge such as Advanced Placement, or wish to take an elective course that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to attend through the proposed new Distance Education program. Stated another way, the proposed addition of distance education courses will not replace the current delivery of instruction in a brick-and-mortar atmosphere; MANN will offer distance education as a supplement for students with specific needs.

MANN currently operates one campus in the Reno-Sparks neighborhood. MANN would like to create a new program of Distance Education for its currently enrolled middle school grade students to better serve each student's unique educational needs.

MANN has established the following goals for the proposed Distance Education program:

1. Expand student learning opportunities and enhance success for middle school students currently enrolled in MANN;
2. Create and strengthen community and educational partnerships;
3. Create a culture of innovation and collaboration that empowers teachers and students to achieve their goals to their maximum potential; and
4. Ninety percent (90%) of middle students enrolled in blended Distance Education classes will successfully pass the course.

MANN's proposed Distance Education program will include the following best practices: (1) two-way academic communication such as email, internet, chat, and videoconferencing; (2) opportunities for synchronous (real-time) communication and discussions such as voice over internet protocol (VOIP); (3) multi-faceted social networking platforms that include community engagement; (4) access to internal and external technology support and consulting to teachers and students; (5) creative, flexible, and innovative teachers equipped to meet the unique needs of the distance learner; and (6) highly visible and accessible student support that meet or exceeds the level of support offered in MANN's traditional classrooms.

Additionally, MANN's state-approved distance education providers: Accelerate Education, BYU, Edgenuity, and Fuel Education/K12; along with the support of Virtual Education that has established successful distance education services to MANN's affiliate schools in Las Vegas and Florida will contribute to the success of the distance education program. MANN will recruit and retain interested teachers in expanding their experience to include virtual learning to support distance education. Principal Maraccini along with her administrative leadership teams will collaborate with all key stakeholders to ensure success of their distance education program. MANN's proposed Distance Education program will not replace any existing curriculum or educational programs, but rather serve to complement and improve traditional delivery methods already in place providing students with the following additional educational options: credit recovery, academic challenge, and/or academic enrichment.

According to the amendment application, the implementation of the Distance Education program will have no impacts on the current academic, organizational, or financial aspects of the school.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

To be eligible for consideration of approval of a contract amendment a school must timely submit a complete and accurate RFA, in accordance with the requirements and directions stated in the RFA application.

The RFA application includes Eligibility Requirements that a charter school must be "meeting the requirements of the performance framework concerning academics, finances or organization", in good standing in all three domains of the Authority's academic, financial and organizational performance frameworks and it must not be considered a low-performing school or otherwise ineligible. This includes those schools rated at the approaches standards, unsatisfactory, or critical level on the authority performance framework either in aggregate or at the elementary, middle, or high school level. This memo now summarizes staff's review in light of the Eligibility Requirements.

#### **1. Academic Performance Framework**

MANN's most recent Nevada School Performance Rating was three-stars in elementary and five-stars in middle school. While MANN's elementary school did receive a one-star rating in SYE 18, the school improved their rating to 3-stars the following year. Please see the attached Academic Performance table.

#### **2. Financial Performance Framework**

MANN “met standards” for all 8 measures in the two most recent years available (SYE 18 and SYE 17).

### 3. Organizational Performance Framework

MANN “met standards” for all 5 measures in the most recent year available (SYE 20).

Staff have reviewed the application in light of relevant NRS law and NAC regulations mentioned above, the RFA template with its Eligibility Requirements, and prior and current best practices. Staff finds MANN in good standing with regards to the performance framework and also with regards to the statutory, regulatory and SPCSA requirements mentioned above.

#### **Recommendation: Approve with conditions**

Authority staff recommends approval, but with conditions, to ensure that the first year of implementation runs smoothly, and the school is working to ensure that it maintains strong oversight of these programmatic additions. The school should submit the following to Authority staff:

- A year-end report of the student performance against the performance expectations outlined both in the memo and on page two of this memo, or that 90% of middle school students enrolled in blended Distance Education classes will successfully pass their courses; and
- A student enrollment summary or course log that notes the number of students enrolling in supplemental distance education courses during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Approval by the State Board of Education to implement the Distance Education program.

#### **Proposed Motion:**

**Approve, Mater Academy of Northern Nevada’s request to implement a distance education program for all eligible middle school students enrolled at the MANN charter school with the conditions listed by SPCSA staff**

#### **Background:**

##### **Academic Performance of MANN**

<b>Year</b>	<b>NSPF Rating</b>
2020 <sup>1</sup>	Elementary School: 3 stars Middle School: 5 stars
2019	Elementary School: 3 stars Middle School: 5 stars
2018	Elementary School: 1 star

<sup>1</sup> Due to COVID-19, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) applied for and was granted a 2019-20 school year waiver from the US Department of Education for certain assessment, accountability, school identification, and reporting requirements established by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Accordingly, for the 2019–20 school year, Nevada statewide assessments were not administered and the NDE did not calculate Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) school ratings.

**School Total Enrollment and Demographics since 2017**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>IEP</b>	<b>ELL</b>	<b>FRL</b>
<b>17-18</b>	169	1.2%	8.9%	18.9%	65.1%	0.6%	4.1%	1.2%	7.7%	34.3%	76.3%
<b>18-19</b>	269	0.7%	10.0%	16.4%	66.2%	0.7%	3.3%	2.6%	10.4%	18.6%	81.4%
<b>19-20</b>	339	0.9%	9.4%	14.5%	68.4%	2.1%	3.8%	0.9%	10.9%	37.5%	100.0%

A – Asian

B – Black

C - White

H – Hispanic

I – American Indian/Alaskan Native

M – Two or more races

P – Pacific Islander

IEP – Individualized Education Plan –A student with a disability/special education student

ELL – English Language Learner

FRL – A student who qualifies for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch