



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
Mike Dang, Management Analyst IV
SUBJECT: **Mater Academy of Nevada**
Request to Amend Mission and Vision Statement
DATE: July 30, 2021

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Mater Academy of Northern Nevada (MANN) is requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) grant a Good Cause Exemption request and approve the change to the school's Mission and Vision Statements. Mater Academy, which first opened in Florida in 1998, recently presented a new mission and vision statement as part of their 2020-2021 Strategic Plan. Mater Academy of Nevada, as an affiliate school of the original Florida model, is seeking to adopt this new mission and vision.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority grant the school's request for a Good Cause Exemption and approve the school's amendment proposals.

Background

MANN first opened in August of 2017 serving grades K-5. Today the school serves 432 students in grades K-8 and is currently led by Principal Gia Maraccini and is governed by a 7-member Board of Directors. For the 2020-2021 school year, nearly 70% of students are Hispanic/Latino, nearly 40% are English Language Learners, and nearly all students are eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, per the Validation Day data.

MANN's elementary school received 3-star ratings for the two most recent years that ratings are available and was the fastest improving school in the state with an index score increase of 48 points in one year. MANN's middle school has received a 5-star rating every year that it has operated and has been recognized as a Shining Star school.

The current mission statement for Mater is as follows:

“The mission of Mater Academy of Northern Nevada is to provide an innovative, challenging, multi-cultural education, preparing students to be global citizens and have a competitive edge in the 21st century workforce.”

The current vision statement is:

“The vision of Mater Academy of Northern Nevada is to develop successful scholars with 21st century skills of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Students will be college and career ready with cross-cultural competence.”

Starting in July of 2020, principals from all schools began work on developing new mission and vision statements as part of Mater’s strategic plan.

The new mission statement is:

“Mater provides a safe learning environment where Academics are facilitated by Teachers, administrators, parents, and the community which enables students to become confident, self-directed learners in a technology rich college preparatory environment through, Rigor, Relevance, Relationships.”

The new vision statement is:

“Mater provides exemplary educational choices by offering an innovative college preparatory curriculum; empowering confident leaders of tomorrow.”

These changes to the mission and vision statements will have no impact on the makeup of the student body served, the academic program, or school operations.

Legal Authority and Requirements Related to Amendment Requests

Existing charter schools that are sponsored by the SPCSA may submit a charter school contract amendment application to the SPCSA – which is reviewed by SPCSA staff and presented for SPCSA Board action – in order to, among other things, increase enrollment, add grade levels above and beyond what the charter school is approved to serve, add a new campus, or change mission and vision statements.

Only those existing charter schools that are meeting expectations in regards to academics (under both the Department of Education’s Nevada School Performance Framework – the “Star Ratings” – and the SPCSA’s Academic Performance Framework), are compliant in regard to the SPCSA’s Organizational Framework, and are fiscally sound may be approved for expansion.

At this time, SPCSA staff finds that MANN is meeting expectations in regard to academic expectations, are compliant in regard to the SPCSA’s Organization Framework, and are fiscally sound.

Eligibility, Analysis, Summary and Recommendation

Mater Academy of Northern Nevada has demonstrated consistent improvement in their elementary grades and consistent high performance in their middle school grades. The most recent Nevada State Performance Framework ratings for Mater Academy of Northern Nevada 3-stars for the elementary school and 5-stars for the middle school.

The school is in good standing on both the Organizational and Financial Performance Frameworks. This amendment will not make changes to the school’s successful academic program, will not impact their high performing organizational structure, or impact their healthy financial position. What it will achieve is to bring consistency between the Mission and Vision of the local school, Mater Academy of Northern Nevada, and the national organization, Mater Academy.

For these reasons, SPCSA staff recommends that the Authority approve a change to the Mission and Vision Statements for Mater Academy of Northern Nevada.

Proposed Motion:

Grant Mater Academy of Northern Nevada a Good Cause Exemption and approve the request to change their Mission and Vision statements as stated in this memo.

Mater Academy of Northern Nevada

Star Rating and Grade Structure

Year	Star Ratings
19-20¹	Elementary: 3-Stars Middle: 5-Stars
18-19	Elementary: 3-Stars Middle: 5-Stars
17-18	Elementary: 1-Star Middle: Not Rated

School Total Enrollment and Demographics

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
20-21	432	1.1%	7.1%	15.5%	68.9%	2.3%	4.3%	0.4%	15%	39.1%	>95%
19-20	339	0.9%	9.4%	14.5%	68.4%	2.1%	3.8%	0.9%	10.9%	37.5%	>95%
18-19	269	0.7%	10.0%	16.4%	66.2%	0.7%	3.3%	2.6%	10.4%	18.6%	81.4%
17-18	169	1.2%	8.9%	18.9%	65.1%	0.6%	4.1%	1.2%	7.7%	34.3%	76.3%

¹ 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.