

From: [Mikalee Byerman](#)
To: [SPCSA Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment in Support of DANN Charter Amendment — Mikalee Byerman
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Dear SPCSA Staff and Board Members:

My name is Mikalee Byerman, and I am the parent of an eighth-grade student at Doral Academy of Northern Nevada. I'm writing in support of DANN's charter amendment and its plans for an additional K–12 campus in partnership with the University of Nevada, Reno.

My daughter, Bryerlee, entered Doral in middle school after we had applied through the lottery every year since kindergarten. Traditional school was incredibly difficult for her. Severe emetophobia had led to school refusal, and during one school year, she missed more than 80 days while undergoing intense exposure therapy and trying to find her way back into the classroom. During that period, we often felt very alone. Despite the seriousness of what Bryerlee was experiencing, we struggled to find the support within her school that might help her reconnect with learning and feel safe returning to the classroom. I desperately wanted an educational partner who saw the child behind the attendance problem and would help us find a way forward.

I will never forget the days I spent sitting outside her former school, sometimes for hours, trying to convince her to walk through the doors. Yet since day 1 at Doral, she has walked into school happily.

That sentence may sound simple. For our family, it is enormous.

At Doral, my daughter is known. She has teachers she trusts, friends who make her feel connected and an educational environment where her creativity is valued as part of how she learns. She talks excitedly about her classes and her future, including her dream of someday becoming a Disney animator — although some days, she tells me she wants to be a teacher, modeling what she has learned from Doral. As her mom, I've watched her relationship with school change in ways I once wasn't sure possible.

I've also spent a remarkable amount of time driving to and from Doral. We live in Sparks, and on a typical school day, I make that trip four times for a total commute of roughly three hours. I do it willingly because I've seen what the right educational environment has meant for my daughter. I also know firsthand what expanded access to Doral could mean for families whose geography currently makes that choice difficult or impossible.

As Bryerlee prepares to leave Doral after eighth grade, I find myself wishing this next

chapter were already available to her. The opportunity for students to continue within the Doral community through high school, while gaining access to the resources and opportunities created through a partnership with UNR, is incredibly exciting to me as a parent.

And I think often about the families who haven't found their Doral yet. Somewhere in our community is another child struggling in an educational environment that isn't working for them, and another parent wondering what to do next. Expanding Doral gives more families another public-school option and another opportunity to find the place where their child can thrive.

My daughter got that opportunity. It changed her experience of school, and it has meant more to our family than I can adequately express in a letter.

I respectfully ask the SPCSA Board to approve Doral Academy of Northern Nevada's charter amendment as submitted.

Thank you for your time and for considering the experiences of DANN families as part of your decision.

Mikalee Byerman

Doral Academy of Northern Nevada parent

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