

Joe Lombardo
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

Melissa Mackedon
Executive Director



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

3427 Goni Rd, Suite 103
Carson City, Nevada 89706
(775) 687-9174 · Fax (775) 687-9060

500 East Warm Springs Rd, #116
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119
(702) 486-8895 · Fax (702) 486-5543

ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Authority Board
FROM: Danny Peltier, Management Analyst Supervisor, SPCSA
SUBJECT: **Doral Academy of Northern Nevada– Charter Amendment Request to**

- **Add an Additional Campus**
- **Expand Grade Level Offerings**
- **Add Transportation**

DATE: October 9, 2026

Summary of Request and Recommendation

Doral Academy of Northern Nevada (DANN) has submitted an amendment application requesting that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) approve a request to add an additional campus.

SPCSA staff has reviewed the application and recommends that the Authority approve the amendment request. A proposed motion, along with conditions, can be found on page 5 of this memo.

Background and Overview of the Amendment

DANN operates one campus in Reno. The campus had 996 students in grades K – 8 enrolled according to the 2025 Validation Day.

According to the amendment application, DANN is requesting to add a new campus (Meadows) under its existing charter, to be affiliated with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Additionally, the school is requesting to add high school grade levels that are not currently offered at the new campus. DANN notes in their amendment application that proposed changes are designed to increase student access, expand university affiliation, and establish a new instructional model, while maintaining alignment with the school's existing mission, governance structure, and academic program. This request modifies the current charter contract, which authorizes a single campus, to include a second site operating under the same governing board and accountability framework. The new campus will ultimately serve students in grades K-12.

Additionally, according to the amendment application, the school is requesting authorization to implement a university-affiliated laboratory school model at the new campus. The school expects this laboratory school model to represent a programmatic enhancement to the current charter, rather than a departure from it. The core academic program, standards alignment, and accountability requirements will remain unchanged. However, the lab school designation will formally incorporate structured partnerships with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) to support teacher training, educational research, curriculum development, and innovative instructional practices. DANN also notes in the amendment application that upon approval, they will also seek to formalize an affiliation agreement with UNR to support dual-credit opportunities, student mentorship, and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

The school's rationale for this expansion is sustained demand far exceeding available seats, as evidenced by large waitlists and strong academic outcomes over multiple years. According to the amendment application, Northern Nevada's rapid economic growth and the concentration of 1- and 2-star schools in the Meadows campus area underscore the need for expanded access to high-quality public education. For families in zip code 89502, where more than 85% of students attend 1- or 2-star schools, the new campus provides direct access to a high-performing option.

DANN's existing K-8 campus in Reno is operating at full capacity, serving about 1,000 students with no planned changes to its facility or enrollment cap. Because the current site cannot accommodate additional growth, the school's proposed amendment centers on developing a new facility rather than altering the existing one. The amendment calls for construction of a K-12 campus on University of Nevada, Reno property near Veterans Parkway and Pembroke Avenue. Planned at roughly 100,000 square feet, the new facility will support a university-affiliated laboratory school and Collegiate Academy model, with phased enrollment growth over time. DANN acknowledged in the amendment application that development will involve extensive site development, infrastructure improvements, permitting, and utility coordination with multiple agencies and is committed to ensuring all work is completed prior to the operation of the school.

DANN explained that they have spent more than a year and a half in structured stakeholder communication to shape this proposed university-affiliated lab school. Early conversations with families and staff highlighted demand for expanded capacity and interest in deeper connections to college and career opportunities, which helped inform the academic vision. During this period, school leadership shared information, gathered feedback, and outlined opportunities associated with partnering with the University of Nevada, Reno, including research-informed practice and educator preparation.

Beginning in early 2025, DANN's Governing Board created a fact-finding group that initiated preliminary discussions with UNR leadership, culminating in the school's June 2025 proposal to pursue a ground lease and research partnership. This work accelerated in mid-2025 and early 2026 as the DANN Board reviewed and refined draft agreements, including the Ground Lease and Affiliation Agreement. After revisions to lease terms were approved by the DANN Board in April 2026, the agreements were forwarded to the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). On June 12, 2026, following committee review, the NSHE Board of Regents formally approved the Ground Lease and Affiliation Agreement, establishing the foundation for the proposed campus on UNR Farms property.

Following NSHE's approval, DANN continued planning related to due diligence, preconstruction coordination, and stakeholder communication. According to the amendment application, throughout this process, DANN also engaged community leaders and educators to explore potential collaboration aligned with educator preparation and shared instructional goals. DANN noted that the feedback from university representatives, Board members, families, staff, and community partners helped shape the final amendment and ensure the model is mission-aligned, sustainable, and responsive to regional educational needs.

In addition to the campus expansion, DANN proposes adding grades 9 – 12 at the Meadows campus. These grades are not currently offered at the existing campus and DANN provided details regarding the staffing of the new campus. Included in this explanation was DANN’s proposed staffing model for grades currently offered and its plan to ensure the additional grade levels maintain high-quality educational programs. DANN explained in the amendment application that the new campus will operate with a dedicated administrative team, independent of the existing campus, including a principal responsible for academic and operational leadership and assistant principal(s) as enrollment grows. DANN also noted that because the Meadows campus is a UNR-affiliated lab school, two categories of staffing will be unique. The school proposes hiring a Coordinator of University Partnerships who will manage collaboration with UNR’s College of Education and College of Science and oversee implementation of teacher residencies, undergraduate placements, and research protocols. DANN also proposes hiring a College Pathways Coordinator who will work directly with UNR to vet instructors, align syllabi, and maintain state/federal compliance for college-credit programming. In addition to these positions, the school provided a staffing plan that was phased in growth to accommodate additional grade levels each year until the school is at its full K – 12 capacity.

DANN also described its recruitment strategies in the amendment application. DANN noted that the school will be intentionally designed to enroll a diverse and representative student population by conducting broad, multilingual outreach in high-need neighborhoods, maintaining fully equitable lottery and enrollment practices, and leveraging its location within the diverse 89502 corridor. The amendment stated that the school will enroll and serve students with disabilities without screening or limitation, replicating DANN’s existing IDEA-compliant systems at the new campus. DANN went on to explain in the amendment application that the Meadows campus will employ licensed special education and English Learner specialists, implement robust MTSS and WIDA-aligned instructional models, and partner closely with UNR to strengthen recruitment pipelines. The school expects that together, these commitments will ensure that the new campus will be accessible, inclusive, and fully prepared to meet the needs of all learners. Additionally, DANN noted that if funding is available the school will explore adding transportation as part of this expansion. The school said that if the funding is adequate and ensures fiscal viability of the bussing of students, then the school would develop bus routes aligned with enrollment patterns, family survey data, and demographic need and would prioritize students who face transportation challenges due to distance, safety, or economic constraints. Additionally, DANN will continue to provide all legally required transportation for students with disabilities whose IEPs mandate travel services.

Regarding the facility, DANN provided a timeline that included key milestones that would ensure the school would be open in time for the fall of 2028. According to the amendment application, during 2026–2027, the project would enter the pre-construction phase, including architectural design, engineering studies, environmental reviews, traffic analysis, utility planning, and coordination permitting agencies at UNR, Washoe County, and the City of Sparks. In early to mid-2027, DANN anticipates the completion of permitting processes, followed by financial closing. DANN explained that construction will be scheduled from mid-2027 through summer 2028, with the campus receiving final inspections, certificates of occupancy, and safety clearances shortly before opening.

Finally, according to the amendment application and budget workbook, DANN’s five-year financial plan shows sustainability as the network expands from a single K–8 school to a two-campus K–12 system. DANN explained that they expect to remain financially stable due to increased enrollment. Additionally, according to the amendment application, even with additional costs in staffing, facilities, and high school programming, the school plans to maintain annual operating surpluses once the Meadows campus opens. The plan included bond financing, with a conservative cost estimated.

Legal Authority

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 – to, among other things, increase enrollment, add grade levels above and beyond what the charter school is approved to serve, or add a new campus. When determining whether to approve an amendment request, the sponsor considers the charter school’s compliance with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations and evidence relating to the academics, finance and organization of the charter school.¹

Analysis and Staff Recommendation

When reviewing an amendment application for eligibility, SPCSA staff reviews the academic, financial and organizational performance of the applicant charter school. Doral Academy of Northern Nevada has consistently earned 5-stars at both the elementary and middle school since the school opened and received its first star ratings for the 2017 – 18 school year. Additionally, DANN has received Exceed Standard ratings at both the elementary and middle schools under the SPCSA’s Academic Performance Framework. DANN was rated as Meets the Standard on the SPCSA’s Financial Performance Framework and was rated as In Compliance under the SPCSA’s Organizational Performance Framework for the 2024 – 25 school year.

Regarding the amendment request, SPCSA staff is recommending approval. DANN has met the legal requirements and is eligible for this amendment request. The SPCSA received a letter notifying the SPCSA of its intention to explore an expansion in partnership with UNR on April 27, 2026. SPCSA staff met with members of DANN on April 30, 2026, to discuss the initial outline of the proposal. The SPCSA received the charter amendment application on July 31, 2026. The SPCSA notified the Washoe County School District and the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency on August 6, 2026, pursuant to NRS 388A.225 and provided both entities 30 days to provide feedback regarding this amendment request. That feedback is provided with the supporting documents for this amendment request.

SPCSA staff is recommending approval for this amendment for several reasons. The amendment requests to amend DANN’s current charter contract to add a second campus and expand the school’s grade span to include grades 9–12. The new Meadows campus will operate under DANN’s existing governing board, and academic program, with additional enhancements through a formal affiliation with UNR. DANN proposes implementing a university-affiliated laboratory school model at Meadows which will support teacher preparation, educational research and dual-credit courses. These additions are aligned with the school’s mission and don’t represent a departure from its approved academic model. The school provided a clear explanation in how they would add these additional programs with intention at the Meadows campus while maintaining fidelity to the fundamental model the school was approved to implement. The academic plan closely aligns with the school’s existing model and current performance framework expectations. The addition of high school grades will allow DANN to offer grades K-12 and the expansion to high school will allow for more access for students who otherwise would have aged out. The laboratory school designation is unique and would be the first of its kind for a charter school in Nevada and will support teacher residencies, applied educational research, and curriculum innovation.

SPCSA staff found that DANN has provided evidence of need for a second campus. The existing campus is at full capacity, appears to have a robust waitlist at most grade levels, and has demonstrated strong academic outcomes. DANN also provided a reasonable rationale regarding demand for a high-quality school in the targeted zip codes. Specifically, as highlighted by DANN and confirmed by SPCSA staff, the 89502 zip code has a significant concentration of economically disadvantaged and English language learners, and more than 85% of students in this area attend 1- or 2-star schools. The new Meadows campus would expand access for these students and families and directly serve a community with documented need for a high-quality option.

¹ NAC 388A.400(8) and NRS 388A.276

SPCSA staff also notes the community and stakeholder engagement DANN has implemented prior to the submission of this amendment. DANN has developed a unique partnership with UNR and as of June 12, 2026, been approved by the Nevada System of Higher Education to pursue this expansion on UNR land. Additionally, as noted in the amendment application, representatives from DANN have been doing frequent outreach with members of the community, UNR leadership, families, students, and existing staff at the current DANN campus. The amendment detailed strategies to recruit and enroll a diverse student population. These include multilingual outreach in high-need areas and equitable lottery practices, with the school targeting the 89502 zip code. DANN affirms that it will enroll students with disabilities without screening or limitation and will provide all mandated IEP transportation and services. SPCSA staff found the enrollment and engagement plans both reasonable and detailed.

SPCSA staff also found the proposed staffing plan to be reasonable. The Meadows campus will employ a dedicated principal, assistant principals, operations staff, and instructional and student-support personnel. The school proposed two partnership-specific roles, a Coordinator of University Partnerships and a College Pathways Coordinator, to manage dual-credit programming, research activities, and alignment with UNR. Staff find this structure reasonable for a laboratory school affiliated with UNR. DANN also discussed strong plans for special education and English Learner staffing, including licensed specialists, paraprofessionals, WIDA-aligned instructional systems, and IDEA-compliant practices replicated from the existing campus. SPCSA staff also notes that the UNR affiliation provides a unique educator pipeline which DANN expects to strengthen recruitment of SPED and ELAD-endorsed teachers. SPCSA staff found that DANN demonstrates adequate capacity to serve diverse learners and comply with state and federal requirements.

The amendment includes a detailed, multi-year facilities timeline aligned with the UNR ground lease and permitting requirements. During 2026–27, DANN plans to conduct pre-construction activities, including architectural design, engineering, environmental review, traffic analysis, and coordination with UNR, Washoe County, and the City of Sparks. The school expects permitting processes to be complete in early to mid-2027, followed by financial closing. Construction is scheduled to run from mid-2027 through summer 2028, with a targeted opening in fall 2028 after completion of all required inspections and certificates of occupancy. SPCSA staff find the facility timeline realistic and feasible.

SPCSA staff reviewed the financial elements of the proposal and found the estimates to be realistic and conservative. Regarding facility financing, SPCSA staff initially had questions and requested more information on how the school intended to fund a new building projected at \$50–55 million, since the initial five-year budget showed bond payments but did not include capital outlay. In response, DANN updated the workbook to reflect capital expenditures in Year 0 (2027–28) and identified the anticipated facilities investment associated with the expected bond issuance. SPCSA staff and DANN both note that the amount included is conservative, with final amounts determined by construction costs that may increase due to outside factors. The existing campus will remain fully funded and unaffected. SPCSA staff found that the school demonstrated an adequate financial plan and viability to support the proposed expansion.

Based upon this analysis, SPCSA staff recommends the Authority approve the request by DANN.

Proposed Motion: Approve Doral Academy of Northern Nevada’s request to add transportation, an additional campus, and to add additional grade level offerings with the following condition:

- 1. Complete the SPCSA’s pre-opening requirements for new campuses.**

The current enrollment cap for DANN is:

School Year	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Enrollment	950	950	950	950	950

The enrollment cap for DANN if the amendment is approved:

School Year	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32 ²	2032-33
Current Campus							
Grade Levels	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	<i>K-8</i>	<i>K-8</i>
Enrollment	950	950	950	950	950	<i>950</i>	<i>950</i>
Meadows Campus							
Grade Levels	N/A	N/A	K-3 and 6-9	K-4 and 6-10	K-11	<i>K-12</i>	<i>K-12</i>
Enrollment	N/A	N/A	884	1112	1370	<i>1520</i>	<i>1570</i>
Total Enrollment	950	950	1834	2062	2320	<i>2470</i>	<i>2520</i>

School Demographics for current charter term

DANN

Year	Enrollment	A	B	C	H	I	M	P	IEP	ELL	FRL
23-24	996	4.7%	0.3%	69.2%	16.7%	0.1%	8.6%	0.2%	11.1%	*	6.5%
24-25	996	4.9%	0.5%	67.9%	17.0%	0.1%	9.1%	0.3%	10.3%	<5.0%	7.4%
25-26	996	5.4%	0.3%	67.5%	17.3%	0.1%	8.9%	0.3%	10.0%	<5.0%	7.6%

A – Asian
 B – Black
 C – Caucasian
 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
 * - Suppressed data due to n-count

DANN Financial Performance

Year	Rating
2022-23	Meets Standard
2023-24	Meets Standard

² Italics are enrollment caps if approved for renewal

2024-25	Meets Standard
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DANN Organizational Performance

Year	Rating
2022-23	Meets Standard
2023-24	Meets Standard
2024-25	In Compliance

2023–24 SPCSA Academic Performance Score / Rating	Elementary: 92.2 / Exceeds Standard Middle: 86.4 / Exceeds Standard
2023–24 NSPF Index Score / Star Rating	Elementary: 91.1 / 5-star Middle: 82.7 / 5-star
2024–25 SPCSA Academic Performance Score / Rating	Elementary: 85.9 / Exceeds Standard Middle: 85.0 / Exceeds Standard
2024–25 NSPF Index Score / Star Rating	Elementary: 93.3 / 5-star Middle: 90.0 / 5-star