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From: Lisa Larson <Lisa.Larson@doralnnv.org>

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To: SPCSA Public Comment <publiccomment@spcsa.nv.gov>

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Subject: SPCSA meeting on 10/9, public comment

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Good morning,

I am a middle school teacher at Doral Academy of Northern Nevada and I'm writing today to briefly share what I love about my school and why an expansion campus is so important to me.

I taught in the Washoe County School District for 14 years before coming to Doral, and during my time in the District, I knew something was missing from my work, but could not pinpoint what it was. It was only when I moved to Doral that I figured it out: we teach children here. Our focus is always on the students in front of us and their growth, and that drives everything we do here. In the District, I went to meetings about standards and test scores; here at Doral, we have meetings about how we are going to improve the curriculum to grow individual students. What a difference that small shift makes in the teacher and the student, and every child deserves that kind of education!

The passion for what we do is the culture at my school and the opportunity for more students to benefit from the love and encouragement we offer is essential. Many of my students have already sent emails to the Board, detailing what they love about our school - this was merely a suggestion, not a requirement, and not for a grade. Those students took action because they care about their school, their future, and because they know their voice matters and I couldn't be prouder of them.

Not all of my students had access to a personal email though (our school doesn't allow for them send or receive emails outside of the domain), so I am including them below. I hope their words and love can sway you to approve a new campus where they can continue learning into high school with all that Doral can provide.

Thank you for your time,
Lisa Larson, M.Ed
Doral Academy of Northern Nevada
6/8 social studies, 6 ELA, Film Studies

Student letter 1:

Dear SPCSA,

Hi, I'm a sixth grader at Doral Academy in Reno, Nevada. I started at the school halfway through first grade. Our school has around 1000 kids and collectively call ourselves Dragons. Doral is extremely important to many students because it helps all kinds of kids learn and grow. Doral is an amazing school with so many supportive and respectful people like the administration, students, teachers, and more. I am here to tell you how awesome our school is and why you should put the stamp of approval on building a new K-12 school.

For starters, we offer more electives than most schools and have a lot of options in each category. Some options include art classes, dance, drama, ASL, Greek Mythology, and Spanish. Me and my friends really love this because we get to choose what we like while still following the state's requirements.

Doral has a lot of enrichments offered too after school like chess club and leadership. In addition to this we have support classes and tutoring before and after school to help the kids in different subjects depending on their schedules and how well they are in class.

Another thing we offer here at the school that I love is the support from teachers and staff. Dragons support each other and the community. We have Karma Boxes to help those in need. At Doral we also focus on getting the equipment necessary for our school, like how we buy new art supplies every year so if we break something or if markers have run low we will replace these tools with new ones. Building another Doral would be beneficial to the kids. Once again we are an art integrated school and love to encourage imagining and always have the right equipment for kids.

The final, and most important thing at Doral is providing a safe environment for students. At Doral we practice drills each month, for example code yellow is when there is a threat outside of the school like when a bear was digging through the Galena trashcans. The teachers want to keep the students safe.

Doral is more than a school to me. It's a place where I love to learn and grow and where I enjoy going to each day. I hope this shows how important this school is and let us get this new school started!

Rylie Petring
6th Grader at Doral Academy

Student letter 2:

I love Doral because the education is extremely good, the students and teachers are all very nice, and we're an arts integrated school, which means we use art with our work, whether it's in ELA or science, almost every day. Those are just some of the many reasons I've wanted to go here since second grade. I got in during 6th grade and I was a little nervous starting here, but after a couple of weeks I made a ton of new friends, and soon felt at home. Another thing that makes Doral such a great school is the teachers; all the teachers are nice, funny, and teach us a lot about the topic, whether it's math, social studies, or one of our many electives. That brings me to a good point, all of Doral's electives. We have over 40 to choose from, while public schools offer 5 to 20 and they only get to take 3, while we get to take 4 electives. A music, art, and PE class, and your choice of any elective such as leadership, robotics, Spanish, 3D printing and many more.

Audrey Angevine
7th grader

Student letter 3:

Dear SPCSA,

Doral is an amazing school top to bottom, from the helpers to the epic teachers. Kids love Doral because in school you get to make friends, you have a good learning space, and get offers and experiences that you wouldn't usually get at other schools. For example we sometimes have chances to take pictures with our school mascot, Elliot the school dragon, or even get to go to school rallies during school. I believe that making a high school for Doral would be an awesome choice for us students because if we loved the school so much, like most students do, we wouldn't want to leave it at all when it comes to our end of 8th grade year. If students and friends go to the high school Doral then there wouldn't just mainly be strangers in the halls but there would be friends and people that you can open up to. But at new schools there is no one there that you don't really know, new people, and you have to make new

friends which can be hard for some people. The new high school could even have a group of students that could be in charge of special occasions like school dances or even fun events like that. Another reason that doing a high school Doral would be a good idea because students could go all the way through lower school to high school without having to get used to a new school. Most kids don't like starting over at a new school because starting over from scratch at a new school can be terrifying but with people you actually know and at the same school with the same friends things could already be off on a great start at just the beginning of the school year.

♡-Lexi Nash-♡