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

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Subject: Letter of support for Doral Academy Of Northern Nevada's K-12 Amendment Proposal

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Dear SPCSA Board Members,

In my experience as a parent, aunt, and friend of Doral students and as a teacher of 16 years, Doral Meadows Lab School represents a rare and extraordinary opportunity to build on Doral's integrity and relentless drive to improve education by expanding, rigorously studying, strengthening, and sharing its educational model—with the potential to benefit public education across Washoe County and Nevada.

I am writing from a perspective shaped by sixteen years in education. I hold a master's degree in engineering education and have taught at Wooster, McQueen, Damonte Ranch, Davidson, Coral Academy, Bishop Manogue, Sage Ridge, Doral, and Bakersfield High School all with positive teacher reviews, test scores, and success. That represents district, charter, private, and traditional public schools in Nevada and California. I am also a Doral parent and the daughter of a master teacher. I have seen excellent educators in every system. That breadth is why Doral standing out so sharply in my experience is so amazing.

What is extraordinary to me is the integrity with which Doral approaches education. This is not a school that talks about educating the whole child while quietly accepting that some students will fall through the cracks. When something is not working, the expectation is that we respond: administrators support teachers, teachers continually improve their practice, concerns are followed up on, and professional development is treated as meaningful work rather than a requirement to check off. As a part-time teacher, I could attend fewer PD days, but I choose to attend every one because I consistently leave better equipped to teach. Across sixteen years and nine schools, I have never experienced another school so committed to continually asking, What can we do better for these children?

That same integrity is even more evident in how Doral responds when a child struggles. The answer is neither to give up on the student nor to lower the standard until success becomes meaningless. We support relentlessly while continuing to communicate, You are capable of more, and we will help you get there. Academic, behavioral, and emotional needs are met with intervention, evidence-based supports, accountability, relationships, and adults willing to keep trying. Students are expected to take responsibility and rise to high standards, but they are not expected to do it alone. To me, that combination of extraordinary support and unwavering belief in what children are capable of is true respect for students. If we genuinely believe children are our future, this is what that belief should look like in practice: invest deeply in them, expect great things from them, and refuse to give up on them.

That is why the lab-school component matters beyond Meadows. A Doral–UNR partnership can study which practices produce results, refine them, prepare future teachers inside that environment, identify what transfers elsewhere, and share what it learns. Students in WCSD who never attend Meadows could benefit, as could teachers trained through UNR, schools throughout Nevada, and families who move here years from now. Its value is not only the students in its seats; it is the knowledge and educator capacity it can leave behind.

Principal Angela Orr has told me repeatedly that she tried to create a lab school while working in WCSD roughly a decade ago and that WCSD declined, and that WCSD was invited to participate in this project and declined. WCSD can make those choices, but the work is still worth doing. Education is worth studying, improving, and sharing.

The table that follows addresses WCSD's concerns about demand, access, demographics, funding, governance, facilities, and process. Those issues deserve evidence. But WCSD and Doral serve the same public purpose: both can press Nevada for adequate funding while learning from practices that improve education.

Something this amazing and rare should be expanded, studied and shared. That is the promise of this lab school.

Callie McCartney, M.S., Engineering Education

Doral Academy Parent, Aunt, Friend, & Teacher

Thank you!

Callie Rose McCartney

Faith, Hope, and Love