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From: Angela Ritchie <jimbo_trouble@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 7, 2026 11:52 AM
To: SPCSA Public Comment
Cc: Kurt Thigpen; Ty Whitaker; Janelle Addis; Ivet Aldaba; Rosanne Richards; Victor Salcido; Courtney Stern; Victoria Turner
Subject: Doral Academy of Northern Nevada Charter Amendment

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Dear Members of the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority;

My name is Angela Ritchie and my husband, James, and I have two children. Our oldest is 10, and currently enrolled in 5th grade in the SWAS program at Caughlin Ranch Elementary School in the Washoe County School District. Our youngest is 8, and enrolled in 3rd grade at DANN. Prior to this year, however, both of our children have attended DANN since kindergarten. I am an active volunteer at DANN, and over the years have spent many hours assisting the DANN teachers with various tasks from making copies, hanging art, chaperoning field trips, providing learning support in small groups and individually, and even leading dance integration projects for all of the grade levels. These experiences have offered me a front row seat to witnessing the dedication of the DANN Staff to education, their students, and families.

We believe our family to be in a unique position. As you may have noticed, in the above paragraph we mentioned that our oldest son is enrolled in a different school. The choice to withdraw him from DANN this summer was one of the most difficult decisions my husband and I have faced as parents so far. Over the years, we have witnessed firsthand the dedication with which the staff at Doral approach their roles as educators. They know their students. They work as a team, and stay in touch with students as they grow. It is this exact scenario that actually supported our family as our son started to struggle. The staff at Doral noticed him, out of 999 other students. They saw him. They recognized that something was off, and they reached out to us. They met with us repeatedly over the year to develop a plan for him, to keep an ongoing conversation of progress and changes, and other options. They encouraged us to seek out additional assessments and counseling. They saw our son, and our family. Through all of this, his teacher at the time, did her best to provide additional support in the classroom for him, while still providing the top level of instruction to the other students in his class. In the end, we chose, with their support, to try the SWAS program for our son. While there are some things that we have seen improve with his change in environment, there hasn't been a single day in which we haven't wondered if it was a mistake to withdraw him, and are currently eagerly awaiting the opportunity to register him for middle school at DANN.

Our youngest is thriving at DANN. The environment of high expectation and self accountability speaks dearly to his heart and mind. He is motivated by his learning environment there, and challenged. He has bonded to every teacher he has had, and remembers each one of them, returning to their classrooms each year to say hello. These people are personal to him. These educators recognize his potential and provide opportunity to help him meet that potential, and then strive to raise the bar.

We have had the opportunity now to experience both environments first hand. We can speak to the truth of dedication that the staff of DANN possess and for which they strive. My husband and I can honestly say that DANN is the type of environment where children are actually seen. A place where they have expectation and accountability, where they are learning to think toward a future goal, not just in the moment. The staff are held to the same standards and seem alive with their passion and devotion to education. We see the potential opportunity to amend the DANN Charter to expand, and build a K-12 campus in conjunction with the University of Nevada, Reno as a necessity for our community at large. The public schools are overcrowded. One system, as we know personally, does not fit all. Having more opportunity to engage in education, civic duty, research, and the community is critically important to all of us. Creating adaptability, fluidity, and potential for change and growth is what will keep our society safe from ruin. We cannot honestly understand why this amendment should be denied. It provides the opportunity for families, students, and their teachers to grow. It provides challenge to be ever present, avoiding one of the number one causes of burn out, stagnancy. It builds community partnership, bringing opportunity and engagement to the fingertips of our families, students, and teachers. It

supports Washoe County School District by being a model of education, active in the research process, and providing another opportunity in which students can enroll, thus assisting with overcrowded classrooms, and teacher burnout. The funds to support this project will be raised without impact on WCSD. It will not pull from the public education funding supply, but will, in fact, help support it.

We ask that you, please, approve the Doral Academy of Northern Nevada Charter Amendment as submitted.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our letter.

Angela K. Ritchie
James P. Ritchie