Enrollment
Policy, Procedure and Application

Submitted by the TECCA Board of Trustees
to Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

January 29, 2020
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1 Introduction

TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School ("TECCA," or "the school") serves students in grades K through 12 and is a high-tech, high-touch, virtual “school without walls,” combining the best in virtual education with very real connections among students, families, teachers, and the community. The school’s program combines a first-class curriculum, high-quality teaching, state-of-the-art technology, community connections, and a Personalized Learning Process that work together to maximize learning. Students have great flexibility and freedom in virtual schools supported by Connections Academy —but you will also find that your school’s dedicated teachers and administration are focused on fulfilling the TECCA mission:

_The Mission of TEC Connections Academy is to provide the students of Massachusetts a quality virtual public school experience._

This document provides detail with respect to enrollment policy, procedures, and applications for admission into TECCA. We hope it will serve as a useful guide to you as you consider our school for your child’s educational needs.
2  General Policy Statements

2.1  Non-discrimination Statement
TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or religion, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

2.2  Student Recruitment and Retention Policy Statement
The school will implement and follow their Student Recruitment and Retention Policy in accordance with the regulations governing Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools (“CMVS”s), which is provided in Section 8, and in compliance with TECCA’s Certificate of Organization. TECCA offers enrollment preference for the following student situations:

1. Siblings of students currently attending the virtual school;
2. Students who reside in the districts that are members of The Education Cooperative;
3. Students with disabilities;
4. Students with medical needs requiring a home or hospital setting;
5. Students who have been expelled;
6. Students in institutionalized settings;
7. Students who are over-age for their grade;
8. Students who have or are at risk of dropping out;
9. Students who are pregnant or who have a child;
10. Students who feel bullied or who are out of school due to other safety concerns;
11. Students with unusual needs requiring a flexible schedule;
12. Students who seek academic work not available in their school;
13. Students in rural communities; and
14. Students who are gifted and talented.

2.3  Enrollment Incentives Statement
TECCA specifically forbids the use of financial or technology incentives to recruit students.
3 Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment

3.1 Verification of Residency

Proof of residency will be collected during the enrollment process. To be eligible to apply, to enroll, and to attend TECCA a student must be a resident of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. To verify residency, a copy of two of the following documents must be provided in the parent or guardian’s to establish both residency and occupancy.

- A Utility Bill (Gas or electric, water or sewer) dated within the past 60 days
- A Deed, Mortgage statement dated within the past 60 days, or Property Tax Bill dated within the last year
- A current Lease, Section 8 Agreement, or Landlord Affidavit, dated within a year
- A W2 form dated within the year or a Payroll Stub dated within the past 60 days
- A Bank or Credit Card Statement dated within the past 60 days
- A Letter from an Approved Government Agency* dated within the past 60 days
- *Approved government agencies: Departments of Revenue (DOR), Children and Family Services (DCF), Transitional Assistance (DTA), Youth Services (DYS), Social Security, any communications on Commonwealth of Massachusetts Letterhead

McKinney-Vento Statement

TECCA will abide by all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, policies, and guidelines for student enrollment and does not impose enrollment requirements that are inconsistent with these policies and guidelines. These policies and guidelines include compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act regarding homeless students. The school leader or his/her designee shall serve as the liaison for homeless students. Students who meet the definition of homeless shall not be barred from enrolling due to the inability to provide required residency documents.

3.2 Eligibility for Enrollment will be Consistent with School Grade Levels

Eligibility in applicable grades requires a student to have successfully completed the preceding grade to which an enrollment offer is made. Academic documentation will be requested and reviewed to ensure accurate grade level assignment and course placement for each student if an offer of enrollment is accepted.
3.3 Interviews, Informational Meetings, and Tests are not Required
The school will not administer tests to applicants or predicate enrollment on result from any test of ability or achievement. Potential students and their families are not required to attend interviews or informational meetings as a condition of enrollment. However, families are encouraged to attend an open house or informational meeting with TECCA staff to learn more about the school.

3.4 Kindergarten Admissions Statement
Consistent with TECCA’s Certificate of Organization, a kindergarten student must be 5 years old as of August 1st of the year of enrollment.

3.5 Maximum Age to Enroll in School Statement
The maximum age to enroll in TECCA for regular and special education students is 21. Special education students may stay in school until they graduate or turn 22.

3.6 Enrollment Condition: Dual Enrollment of a Full-time Student
A student shall not be allowed to enroll in TECCA while enrolled as a full time student in another public or private school.

3.7 Proof of Age
In order to verify legal name, date of birth, and to confirm any age eligibility requirements are met, applicants must submit a copy of the student’s official birth certificate, or a passport, green card or baptismal or birth record.

3.8 Custody
Custody documentation will be required if applicable.

3.9 Immunizations and Health Examination Forms
Student Immunizations and Health Examination Forms (dated within one year) or the appropriate exemption documents are required in accordance with state guidelines.

Enrollment Process Overview
The following diagram provides an overview of the TECCA enrollment process:

1. Public notification of all Application Period(s) and other important enrollment application deadlines will be publicized at least 30 days in advance on the school’s public website [http://www.TECCConnectionsAcademy.com](http://www.TECCConnectionsAcademy.com).

2. The Open Application period opens.
   2.1 During the open application period, the parent/guardian completes the online application via the school’s online education management system, including the family contact information and student name, grade and birth date and the Parent/Legal Guardian Caretaker Acknowledgement form. The parent/Guardian also submits one verifiable proof of residency to ensure state eligibility requirements are met.
   2.2 Parent/guardian(s) who do not have access to a computer are instructed to call the TECCA’s enrollment team at 800-382-6010 to complete the application over the phone. Parents who are unable to provide a proof of residency are directed to contact the TECCA enrollment team at 800-382-6010 or enrollment@connectionsacademy.com to determine if the student meets criteria of the McKinney-Vento Act or has other special circumstances that can be accommodated.

3. Upon the close of the Open Application Period, if the school is oversubscribed a random number lottery will be conducted; details are provided in Section 5 Lottery Process and Procedures.

4. Wait List: If a lottery is conducted, then students not selected are placed on a wait list. See Section 6 Wait List for more information.

5. If a lottery is not needed, an offer of admission is extended to each eligible applicant.
6. The parent/guardian has ten (10) business days to confirm their acceptance of the offer of enrollment. Once a parent/guardian accepts an offer of enrollment on behalf of his/her child, the student’s start date is conditional on the completion of the following stages of the enrollment process:

   6.1. Stage One – Parent/guardian completes the Student Information Form (one per student) and the Family Information Form (one per family). This information is used to ensure appropriate course placement and gathering information that will be helpful to school personnel in assisting student success in the program. Any and all information collected in the application is not intended and will not be used to discriminate in accordance with 603 CMR 52.05(3)

   6.2. Stage Two – Parent/guardian submitted documentation is verified and course placement is completed by the TECCA enrollment team.

   6.3. Stage Three - The parent will review grade and course placement and agrees to the terms and conditions of enrollment.

7. If the school’s enrollment cap is not met after the Open Application Period and subsequent potential lottery, enrollment will continue on a first come, first served basis until the cap is reached. Once the cap is met, students with accepted offers who complete all enrollment tasks will be placed on a waiting list, and released to enroll based on space available in the student’s grade and the date order that enrollment tasks were completed.

8. Except for the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07 (4)(a) through 23.07(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or parent. When granting consent the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate is maintained in a temporary record by the school. TECCA includes a detailed policy statement pertaining to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the student handbook and has a formal process to have each parent/guardian or eligible student review and acknowledge the policy yearly. The school also provides access to review and update the parent/guardian or eligible student’s FERPA preferences regarding the disclosure of student information each year. The complete FERPA description is included in Section 10 of this document as well.

4 Lottery Policy and Procedure

TEC Connections Academy (TECCA) is committed following all lottery guidelines as required by 603 CMR 52.05 (6). The number of Available Spaces for each school year is set forth in TECCA’s Certificate of Organization, and is included below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Maximum Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will be enrolled based on the annually set enrollment limits by grade level and the school’s determination of the number of spaces available each year by grade level based on factors such as graduation and student transfers and withdrawals.
### Grade Cap Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-5</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>1,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Cap Total</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Explanation of Proposed Grade Level Caps.** Inherently, a virtual school allows much more flexibility in serving students in the grades in which the demand occurs. Unlike traditional (bricks and mortar) schools, virtual schools do not have the physical space constraints and can nimbly adjust staffing models to accommodate enrollment in the grade(s) where the student need is. Also, given the lack of data in Massachusetts (MAVA was a K-8 program for 3 years and was capped at 500 students) it is difficult to know where the grade level demand will be. Since DESE has requested a proposal for the initial term of TECCA’s Certificate of Organization, the school has provided it, but respectfully requests to revisit this issue as enrollment begins and student needs are better understood. Finally, as the school has the flexibility to have teachers instruct students in multiple grades, a virtual school is less constrained by the grade level caps that a traditional school would be.

Therefore, each year the school will conduct at least one open application period of no less than 30 days. After accounting for the students who have enrollment preference (listed in Section 2.2), if the number of enrollment applications during the open application period exceeds the available spaces, TECCA will use a public random lottery to determine who is selected for enrollment. Parents/guardians of applicants will receive at least one week prior notice by email of the time and place of the lottery. This information will also be posted at [http://www.TECCConnectionsAcademy.com](http://www.TECCConnectionsAcademy.com), the TECCA school website. Attendance is not required.

The lottery will be conducted by grade beginning with kindergarten and proceeding through each grade to 12th grade. The lottery will be conducted in public at the facilities of the school’s sponsor, The Education Cooperative (TEC), 1112 High Street, Dedham, MA 02027, and both witnessed and certified by a neutral party. The neutral party observing the lottery will certify the process is fair, and that selection is random.

TECCA uses an Excel application for conducting lotteries that identifies each student by grade and links students in the same family by a household ID generated by the EMS when the application is completed. The Excel application randomly assigns a number to each applicant by grade while also taking into account the enrollment preferences for admission identified above, distributing the number of students per grade cap onto a “selected in lottery” list and a “not selected in lottery” list. Using the household ID, as a student is selected.

When all available spaces are filled, students on the “not selected in lottery” list will be placed on a wait list by grade based on their random number, with the lowest number receiving the first space on the waiting list. Lottery results will be published online in accordance with 603 CMR 52.05 (8).
The parent/guardian of selected students will receive an offer of enrollment by email and mail and must confirm student enrollment within 10 business days by mail to the afore-mentioned address or by response to the email or forfeit the student’s space to the next student on the waiting list in that grade. Parents/guardian will also receive a telephone call from the TECCA enrollment team notifying them to expect the offer. The date the offer is made and the deadline for acceptance will be recorded in the EMS. As each offer is accepted, the acceptance will also be recorded in the EMS. The day after the deadline any unaccepted offers will be voided and additional offers of enrollment will be made to students in the appropriate grade level from the waiting list. Parents/caretakers of students not selected will receive email notification that their student(s) was not selected and of the student’s place on the waiting list. The school will continue to enroll students from the waiting list throughout the year to backfill for withdrawals.

9. If the school is not oversubscribed, no lottery will be conducted and students who applied and provided a verifiable proof of residency will be made an offer of enrollment by email and mail and must confirm student enrollment within 10 business days. Offers not accepted will be voided. Enrollment will then continue on a first come, first served basis until the cap is reached. Once the cap is met, students with accepted offers who complete all enrollment tasks will be placed on a waiting list, and released to enroll based on space available in the student’s grade and the date order that enrollment tasks were completed.
5 Other Enrollment Considerations

5.1 Parent/Legal Guardian Signature Requirement
TECCA does not require dual parent/legal guardian signatures in any of its application, enrollment, and placement processes.

5.2 Requests for Student Social Security Number Statement
TECCA does not request or collect a student’s social security number as part of the application process.

5.3 Wait List
Once the lottery has been conducted and all available spaces are filled, students on the “not selected in lottery” list will be placed on a waiting list by grade based on their random number, with the lowest number receiving the first space on the waiting list. Once placed on the wait list, students will be kept on a wait list for the entirety of the current school year, or until a space becomes available for the student based on the student’s place on the wait list and grade, or until the student’s parent or guardian informs the school they are no longer interested in enrolling the student for the current school year. Parents/caretakers of students not selected will receive email notification that their student(s) was not selected and of the student’s place on the waiting list.

Wait list status does not carry over from year to year. All students on the current school year’s wait list must reapply to be eligible for the next school year. Siblings for whom a space was not available will be moved to the top of the waiting list in their grade and will be given first priority to enroll as space becomes available in their grade while also taking into consideration their original random rank order.

The school will keep accurate records of the wait listed students containing the names (first, middle, last), home addresses, telephone numbers, date of birth, and grade levels of the students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission. The names of selected students will be published online in accordance with 603 CMR 52.05 (6).

Once a space is available for a wait listed student, an offer of enrollment is made. The parent/guardian of selected students will receive an offer of enrollment by email and mail and must confirm student enrollment within 10 business days by mail to the afore-mentioned address or by response to the email or forfeit the student’s space to the next student on the waiting list in that grade. Parents/guardians will also receive a telephone call from the TECCA enrollment team notifying them to expect the offer. The date the offer is made and the deadline for acceptance will be recorded in the Connexus. As each offer is accepted, the acceptance will also be recorded in the Connexus. The day after the deadline any unaccepted offers will be voided and additional offers of enrollment will be made to students in the appropriate grade level from the waiting list.

If the parent/guardian declines an offer of enrollment, the student will be removed from the waitlist. If the offer is made during the school year and the parent/guardians decline based on reasons that the transition will be too disruptive to the child’s academic success, the parent/guardians may elect to
remain on the waitlist for the remainder of the school year and the position will be offered to the next child on the waitlist. A parent/guardian may elect this option only one time.

6 Other Regulatory Requirements

6.1 Enrollment Restrictions
Any Massachusetts school committee may vote to restrict full-time enrollment of future students in a CMVS if the district’s total full-time student enrollment exceeds one percent of the total enrollment in the district. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will publish an annual list of districts eligible to restrict future full-time enrollment. October SIMS data will be used to assess which school committees are eligible to vote to restrict future full-time enrollment. [603 CMR 52:05 (11)]

6.2 How Students Take Individual Online Courses
Students who are enrolled in another district may take some classes through TECCA when such classes are approved by the district in which the student attends school. Each student will be counted in the foundation enrollment of the district of residence, and such courses shall be reported as online courses in accordance with Department guidelines. TECCA will charge a district or a school for individual courses provided that TECCA reaches an agreement with the resident student’s district or school. [603 CMR 52:05 (12)]

6.3 Access to Materials and Technology
TECCA shall ensure that all enrolled students have access to necessary technology and materials to participate in our educational program and shall provide such technology and materials free of charge to students as required by state law, and agree to be bound by the requirements of the Parent/Legal Guardian (Caretaker) Acknowledgement regarding return of technology and materials. [603 CMR 52:05 (15)]

7 Student Recruitment and Retention Policy

Recruitment Plan
TECCA has a formal recruitment plan that will ensure that it conducts outreach designed to reach the 14 student conditions included in its Certificate of Organization (see Section 2.2), and more broadly, to all Massachusetts families and students who may benefit from the TECCA learning model.

Student recruitment and enrollment policies need to be balanced with the mutual goals of ensuring that families are aware of their choices with the competing demand of being fiscally conservative. TECCA has an active base of interested families that have already reached out, without any direct contact, to the
Connections Academy website seeking additional information about the school. Since approval of the CMVS certificate, TECCA has worked to develop a plan to actively recruit families that represent the full cultural, demographic, and socioeconomic range of Massachusetts.

**Direct Mail:** TECCA conducts direct mail campaigns announcing the school to families with students throughout Massachusetts. In a typical mailing, a postcard will be sent out inviting parents to attend an Information Session, visit the website, and/or contact the call center. TECCA uses electronic mail to supplement or replace its physical mail campaign.

**Information Sessions:** TECCA conducts multiple Information Sessions across Massachusetts to assure that families from a variety of communities are able to attend. Information sessions may be virtual, and families may attend the session from home via their computers. TECCA will educate families about the school and provide a complete array of information, including its curriculum, teaching methods, technology, and testing requirements. These sessions will also emphasize the enrollment preferences offered to students in the 14 categories identified in TECCA’s Certification of Organization (listed in Section 2.2). Finally, the school will periodically staff booths and tables at events designed to attract a broad range of students, including those with enrollment preference.

**Website:** The school has created and will maintain a website for TECCA, http://www.TECConnectionsAcademy.com. The website contains information about TECCA, its approach, its curriculum, and FAQs and their answers. The site includes enrollment information and procedures, a detailed lottery description, information sessions schedules, and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.

**Telephone/e-mail Information Service:** TECCA maintains a toll-free information line and an email information service to answer parents’ questions.

**Media Outreach:** TECCA will make use of paid media, which may include print advertising, television advertising, online advertising or radio advertising.

**Referrals/Word of Mouth:** As TECCA grows, it anticipates that an increasing number of families who come to the school will enroll due to positive feedback received from their friends, community members, traditional school leaders, and family. In similar schools nationally, 95% of parents say they would recommend their school to friends, neighbors, and relatives.

**Search Engines and Social Media:** TECCA will be linked to leading Internet search engines with local reference capability to help Massachusetts families looking for a virtual school option find this high-quality school. In addition, TECCA benefits from Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outreach conducted by parent advocates.

**Retention Policy and Practices**
To ensure outstanding retention of TECCA’s students, the school will undertake a number of initiatives, including but not limited to the following:

**Begin Outreach Early:** TECCA will begin formal outreach in the spring of each year and engage students and parents in information sessions, offered both virtually and face to face. To ensure that the school is accessible to all families, the school varies the day of the week, time of day, geographic location (for
face-to-face information sessions) to ensure the broadest opportunities for all Massachusetts to learn about TECCA and its educational program. The school also offers a self-paced information session that can be viewed at any time for those who may have schedule conflicts with both face-to-face and virtual information sessions.

**Provide a Local Face:** The Executive Director and his/her staff are the local representatives for the school. The school conducts information sessions, one-on-one consultations, and appears at local events. The Executive Director remains engaged with the community throughout the year.

**Establish a Sense of Place:** The teaching center in Walpole, MA will host walk-in inquiries, school tours, information sessions, and other activities throughout the school year.

**Provide Multiple Interactions:** The initial outreach effort includes evening and daytime information sessions, virtual info sessions, informal drop-in hours, community appearances, earned and paid local media coverage, social events such as pizza parties and coffee breaks, and individual staff consultations to ensure that families receive helpful school information.

Particularly critical throughout this process is helping families develop a clear picture of the unique scheduling and workload realities of the online learning model, including the need for self-motivation. Following enrollment, the team leads each student and his or her family through on-boarding activities that prepare the student for success. Follow-up interventions are provided as needed throughout the school year based on the escalation system that tracks student attendance, participation, and performance.

### 8 Application Samples

**Online Application:**

* Register for TECConexions Academy Commonwealth Virtual School

Yes! Only parents/legal guardians who have never had a student enrolled in this program should submit this form.

Not! If you have already registered, or have ever had a student enrolled in the program and want to add an additional student, please call 1-800-382-6010.

**Email**

* CTTestEnrollmentTECCA@mailinator.com

**Why is this necessary?**

**Confirm Email**

* CTTestEnrollmentTECCA@mailinator.com

Please note that this email address will be associated with the primary contact for your household. All messages addressed to the primary contact will also be sent to this address.

**School**

Massachusetts - TECConexions Academy Commonwealth Virtual School (TECCA)

**Home Address**

This address will be used to verify your residency. All curriculum and equipment will be shipped to this address.

- **Address Line 1**: 123 Main Street
- **Address Line 2**: Apartment number or the second line of your address
- **Address Line 3**: The third line of your address

**Country**

United States

**City/Town**

Boston

**State/Province**

MA

**Postal Code**

02108

**Phone Number**

* (415)-555-1212

If you provide a mobile number, you are consenting to receiving automated calls with important information regarding your student to this number and acknowledge that the mobile carrier associated with this number may impose usage charges in connection with these calls.
Parent/Legal Guardian (Caretaker) Acknowledgement - Caretaker Test Last TECCA

Reference the following links to confirm the conditions of enrollment.

- Student Handbook 2014-15
- Regulatory Program Description 2014-15
- State-Specific Handbook 2014-15
- Technology Information

Please review each of the following sections, enter your name in the signature line at the bottom of the page, and save the page. Once you enter your name and save this page then the school can provide you, the Parent, Legal Guardian or Emancipated Minor with access to Connexus®.

Confirmation of Conditions of Enrollment

Caretaker/Learning Coach Responsibilities

The following is a list of responsibilities associated with being the Caretaker and Learning Coach. The following items will ensure that you are able to make the necessary educational decision with regards to the student(s) you have registered.

- I confirm my name is listed at the top of the page and I have the legal authority to make educational decisions for the student(s) I have registered.
- I understand that, except for approved part-time programs and Florida's full-time Home Ed program, I am registering my student in a full-time public program that has a defined school calendar, required assessment and other requirements.
- If I am the caretaker with physical custody of the student, I acknowledge that I am responsible for transporting and supervising my student during his or her participation in any school activities.
- I acknowledge to my students attending all mandatory meetings and standardized tests if required by the school.
- I acknowledge that my role as a Learning Coach does not make me an employee, contractor, agent, official, teacher, representative, or affiliate of my student's school.
- I acknowledge that I am not entitled to receive benefits or compensation from Connections in my capacity as a Learning Coach.
- I acknowledge that the school has no responsibility for my activities or actions.
- I understand that I am responsible for reviewing family and enrollment information, and I will notify the school immediately of any errors or changes.

Connexus® Access

Connexus® is the Education Management System (EMS) that you are currently logged into. It provides tools i.e., WebMail and Enrollment Details, that are accessible from your Caretaker Homepage to help you to complete the enrollment tasks, and once enrolled and the school year begins you and your student(s) will enjoy access to Courses, Assessments, the Planner, and many other tools to manage the educational experience of your student(s).

- I agree to comply with all federal and state laws and applicable Connections' policies, terms and conditions with regard to my access to Connexus.
- I agree to use Connexus in compliance with all applicable school policies and I acknowledge that failure to comply with school policies is grounds for immediate termination, without further prior notice, of my Connexus account.
- I will not use Connexus for the purpose of creating a hostile environment by harassing, threatening, intimidating, degrading or abusing any Connexus user(s).
- I understand that I am being provided full access to Connexus with respect to the above-named student(s) who will enroll in Connections Academy.
- I agree to access Connexus solely for the purpose for which it is intended.
Parents who do not have access to a computer are instructed to call the TECCA enrollment team at 800-382-6010 to complete the application over the phone.
• Offer of Enrollment:

Dear Caretaker(s),

We are pleased to make this offer of enrollment in TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School (TECCA) to your student(s) for the 2019-20 school year. The school has an enrollment cap of 2,300 students and space is very limited. Please note that the acceptance of the offer of enrollment is only the first step in enrolling your student. You must accept this offer of enrollment and complete all the enrollment requirements within the allotted time or your account will be archived.

In all circumstances, the confirmation of enrollment is dependent on TECCA not reaching 2,300 students. Students who accept their initial offer and complete all required paperwork who are not enrolled due to the school-wide cap being met will immediately be placed on a Wait List, to be drawn from based on the date of completion of all required documents.

Please note the following next Steps:

To accept this offer, please sign the enclosed form and return it by DATE to:

TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School
Upload: By way of your caretaker homepage.
Fax: 800-887-6590
Mail to:
Connections Academy
10560 Grantchester Way
3rd Floor
Columbia, MD 21044

If you have already accepted this offer by responding to the email that was sent to you, then you may disregard this.

The day after we receive your acceptance you will have access to Connexus®, our Education Management System, where you can check your caretaker homepage and view your student’s status and any outstanding documents.

You will then have 14 days from the date of acceptance to complete the remaining steps of the enrollment process or your account will be archived.

a. Log in to your caretaker homepage at www.Connexus.com using the password you chose when you created your account and review any incomplete tasks. (If you have forgotten your password please click on the “Do you need a username and password?” link on your login page.)

b. Complete the online forms listed.

a. Review the outstanding documents listed on your homepage and send them to us. For fastest processing please fax documents to 800-887-6590 or upload them to your caretaker homepage. Please make sure to keep your student enrolled in another school until the enrollment process is complete.

Once all enrollment tasks are complete, your final step will be to confirm your student’s enrollment. This is a brief list of statements that confirms your student’s course placement and the address where materials will be shipped. A link to confirm enrollment will be available on your caretaker homepage once all enrollment tasks are completed.

Once you confirm enrollment, your student will be enrolled and we will ship curriculum materials for the school year.

We look forward to receiving your acceptance of this enrollment offer and to helping you meet your student’s educational needs at TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School.

Best regards,

TEC Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School Enrollment Team

The information contained in this letter and its attachments may include Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and/or student education records that are protected by federal and state privacy laws, including, but not limited to, the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (“COPPA”).
TECCA FERPA Policy

Collection and Release of Student Information by the School (FERPA)
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that gives parents/legal guardians (referred to as “Caretakers by Connections Academy”) and students over eighteen (18) years of age, attending a post-secondary institution, and/or emancipated minors (Eligible Students) certain rights regarding the student’s educational records. These rights include the ability to review and correct educational records and the protection of a student’s educational records and “personally identifiable information” from unauthorized disclosure. For complete FERPA information, see Appendix 1, FERPA notification. See also the Release of Student Information and Educational Records to Third Parties below.

FERPA rights are extended to both the Caretaker and non-custodial parent/guardian unless the school is provided with a judicial court order (custody order, protective order etc.), state statute, or legally binding document that specifically revokes or restricts a non-custodial parent’s/guardian’s FERPA rights. If a state law and/or enforceable court order provides the noncustodial parent/guardian’s greater or more restrictive access than provided for by FERPA, that state law and/or court order will be followed.

Other statues protecting students include the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (see Appendix 5, Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment Policy) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (“COPPA”) (See Appendix 3, Privacy Policy), as well as state law in the state in which the student is enrolled.

Parental Access to Teacher Qualification Information
Families have access to basic background information about the school’s teachers. This information, found in Connexus® through the teacher’s Teacher Profile Data View, includes teacher qualifications, experience, current teaching assignments, and photos.

Third Party Access to Student Information
FERPA provisions allow the school to disclose certain student information to third parties without the prior written consent of the parent/legal guardian or Eligible Student. This occurs in two situations. Directory Information and situations in which FERPA permits the school to release educational records without consent (see below). All other disclosure of student information to third parties requires the written consent of the Caretaker or Eligible Student.

Release of Educational Records without Consent: Directory Information
The school may release Directory Information (defined by Connections Academy as student name, student WebMail address, state of residence, student telephone number, student webmail address and student grade level) to third parties as permitted by FERPA.
If the Caretaker or Eligible Student does not wish to have Directory Information released to third parties, s/he may prevent the release of this information by indicating in the FERPA Directory Information section of the Student Information that your preference is to not release the information.

If families do not make a selection, then the school may, without additional permission, disclose the Directory Information to third parties as permitted by FERPA.

**Release of Educational Records without Consent: Legitimate Educational Interest**

The school may provide a student’s educational records to third parties in certain situations listed under FERPA. Examples include the transfer of educational records to the student’s new school upon request from the new school, and the provision of educational records to school officials who possess a “legitimate educational interest” in the student’s records. “Legitimate educational interest” is defined by FERPA; for this definition, and other exceptions to the prior written consent rule, see Appendix 1, FERPA Notification.

**Release of Student Records with Consent**

With the exception of that information that FERPA and/or applicable state law or court order allows the school to release without consent, as noted above, the school must obtain written consent from the Caretaker or Eligible Student prior to releasing any educational record or personally identifiable information to any third party. Requests to release this information must be made in writing, be signed by the Caretaker or Eligible Student, and include the following information:

- A specific description of the information or record(s) to be released.
- The party or agency to which the information will be released and their address.
- The signature of the requestor, and the date of the request.

For more detailed information on FERPA, please see Appendix 1, FERPA Notification.

**School or Connections Use of Student Images, Recordings, and School Work**

To help illustrate the school program and to celebrate student successes, Connections and/or the school may want to film, interview, and/or photograph students and their work (all collectively referred to as “Student Property”) to duplicate, broadcast, distribute and/or display.

In order for Connections/the school to use Student Property, proper consent must be obtained through the Media Consent and Release CA- Student Data View in Connexus. This Data View is completed by the Caretaker/Learning Coach (or by the student, if the student is 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor). Student Property may be used for the purposes and time frame stated in the Data View.

If the Caretaker or student prefers not to have Student Property used by Connections/the school for purposes other than the student’s academic program, this should be indicated in the Media Consent and Release CA –Student Data View.

The election on the Media Consent and Release Data View can be changed at any time. From the Caretaker Connexus Home Page, click on the student’s “i” and go to the Media Consent and Release CA- Student Data View.
Clubs and Activities/Specialty Academies
This Media Consent and Release Data View also applies to Student Property pertaining to Clubs and Activities (such as The Monitor School Newspaper, Pens and Lens, and others) and/or to the Specialty Academies (such as the Sports Academy, Visual and Performing Arts Academy, and others). An election (Yes or No), must be made in the Media Consent and Release Data View in order to participate in Clubs and Activities and/or the Specialty Academies.

School or Connections Use of Learning Coach/Caretaker Images and Recordings
To help illustrate the school program and to celebrate successes, Connections and/or the school may want to film, interview, and/or photograph a Learning Coach/Caretaker (all collectively referred to as “Depiction”) to duplicate, broadcast, distribute and/or display.

In order for Connections/the school to use any Depiction, proper consent must be obtained through the Media Consent and Release CA- Learning Coach/CT Data View in Connexus. This Data View is completed by the Caretaker/Learning Coach. Any Depiction may be used for the purposes and time frame stated in the Data View.

If the Caretaker/Learning Coach prefers not to have any Depiction used by Connections/the school, this should be indicated in the Media Consent and Release CA- Learning Coach/CT Data View.

The election on the Media Consent and Release Data View can be changed at any time. From the Caretaker Connexus home page by the Learning Coach.
9 Appendix
FERPA Annual Notification and Policy

Overview

FERPA is a Federal law that is administered by the Family Policy Compliance Office (Office) in the U.S. Department of Education (Department). 20 U.S.C. section 1232g; CFR Part 99. FERPA applies to educational agencies and institutions (e.g., schools) that receive funding under any program administered by the Department.

FERPA gives custodial and noncustodial parents alike certain rights with respect to their student’s education records. Unless the School is provided with evidence that there is a court order or State law that specifically provides to the contrary, both custodial and noncustodial parents have the right to:

- Access and inspect their student’s education records;
- Provide written consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the student’s education records;
- Request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA; and
- File a complaint with the Department.

When a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, he or she becomes an "Eligible Student" at which point FERPA rights transfer from the parent to the student.

The term "education records" is defined as those records that contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

Right To Inspect And Amend Educational Records

Under FERPA, the School must provide a parent, legal guardian or Eligible Student with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her student’s education records within 45 days following its receipt of a request. The School is required to provide a parent with copies of education records, or make other arrangements, if a failure to do so would effectively prevent the parent from obtaining access to the records.

Parents, legal guardians, and Eligible Students possess the right to request and receive from the School the following: (1) an explanation of information in the student's education records; (2) a copy of all or part of the student's education record; and (3) a list of the types and locations of the student's education records collected, maintained, or utilized by the School.
A written request identifying the records to be inspected must be provided to the School. The school official will arrange for access and will notify the parent or Eligible Student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If copies are requested, the School may charge the requesting party reasonable copying costs.

A parent, legal guardian or Eligible Student has the right to request an amendment to an education record but must do so in writing. The request must clearly identify the part of the record in question, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading for submission to the School Principal. If the School decides not to amend the record, the parent, legal guardian, or Eligible Student shall be notified in writing. If the School decides not to amend the record, the parent, legal guardian, or Eligible Student then has the right to request and receive a records hearing review. The request must be made in writing. At this time, additional information shall be provided to the parent, legal guardian, or Eligible Student regarding the hearing process procedures.

FERPA was intended to require only that schools conform to fair recordkeeping practices and not to override the accepted standards and procedures for making academic assessments, disciplinary ruling, or placement determinations. Thus, while FERPA affords parent the right to seek to amend education records which contain inaccurate information, this right cannot be used to challenge a grade, an opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about a student.

Additionally, if FERPA's amendment procedures are not applicable to a parent, legal guardian or Eligible Student’s request for amendment of education records, the school is not required under FERPA to hold a hearing in the matter.

**Disclosure Without Consent**

Parents, legal guardians or Eligible Students possess the right to prevent disclosure of educational records to third parties except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The following are examples, including but not limited to, instances that do not require the School to obtain prior written consent. The School may release education records to/or:

- School officials with legitimate educational interests. School officials include the following: persons employed by the School, whether paid or unpaid, administrator, supervisor, instructor, support staff or school Board of Directors members; authorizing bodies or districts, vendors employed by or under contract with the school, such as an attorney, auditor, consultant, etc.; or a parent, student or volunteer serving in an official school capacity. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the school.

- Other schools when a student graduates or transfers. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
Upon receipt of the request, the school will make reasonable attempts to notify the parent or the Eligible Student of the request and the date the records were forwarded.

- Accrediting institutions.
- Compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- Appropriate officials in the case of a health or safety emergency.
- State and local authorities within a juvenile system pursuant to applicable state law.
- Parents if an Eligible Student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid.

**Directory Information**

FERPA permits the School to designate certain information contained in student educational records as Directory Information. Directory Information is generally defined as information not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released.

FERPA permits a School to disclose Directory Information for any purpose to third parties, unless the parent, legal guardian, or Eligible Student has exercised the right to opt–out of the release of Directory Information. A parent, legal guardian or Eligible Student may opt-out of having his/her Directory Information released by completing the Authorization to Withhold Directory Information Form found in the Permissions Manager section of the Student Information Form (SIF). If refusal is requested, the Directory Information will not be disclosed except with the consent of the parent, legal guardian, or Eligible Student or as otherwise allowed by FERPA. This is an annual election which occurs during the enrollment or returning student process.

The following information regarding students is considered Directory Information by the Connections Education LLC and its affiliated schools:

- student name
- student city of residency
- student webmail address
- student telephone number
- student grade level

Parents, legal guardians and Eligible Students should consult their student handbook for specific information related to their school’s defined Directory Information.

If an opt-out form is not received, the School will assume that there is no objection to the release of the designated Directory Information.

Federal law requires schools receiving federal monies to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following three categories of Directory Information for high school students:

- student name
- student address
• student telephone number

However, the law affords parents/legal guardians the option to refuse disclosure of such information by completing the Authorization to Withhold Directory Information Form.

Disclosure with Consent

Written consent must be obtained prior to the release of personally identifiable information to any party not in the Disclosure without Consent list found above or not categorized as Directory Information.

Custody, Dependency and Post-Secondary Course Records

FERPA rights are extended to both the custodial and noncustodial parent unless the School is provided with a judicial court order, state statute, or legally binding document that specifically or effectively revokes parent's FERPA rights.

Under FERPA, a school may provide parent access to the educational records of an Eligible Student if either parent or a legal guardian can demonstrate their student’s financial dependency, as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code, by producing their most recent tax return or completing the forms at the Family Compliance Office website (this does not apply to emancipated minors). If a parent or legal guardian cannot prove financial dependency their Eligible Student must provide written consent before the school will permit access to educational records.

If a student takes a course at a postsecondary institution, the FERPA rights are accorded to the student for any such course. In order for Connections Education LLC, parents, or any third parties to gain access to such educational records, the student is required to provide consent in writing.

Right To File A Complaint

Parents, legal guardians, or Eligible Students who have concerns or questions should e-mail to privacy@connectionseducation.com. Additionally, parents, legal guardians, or Eligible Students may file a complaint with the Department:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901