



# Nevada Connections Academy

## HANDBOOK SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

**Last Revised: August 2025**

This Supplement provides school-specific information in addition to the general policies documented in the Connections Academy General Handbook. Because this Supplement does not constitute the full set of policies related to your Connections Academy school, please be sure to read both documents. They may be updated during the year as needed. If there are any discrepancies between this Handbook Supplement and the General Handbook, the policies in this Supplement override policies in the General Handbook and are the binding policies that should be followed.

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## 2 School Mission and Overview

### 2.1 Mission Statement

The mission of Nevada Connections Academy (NCA) is to produce college/career ready graduates equipped with the social and emotional skills necessary to contribute positively to society.

### 2.3 Non-discrimination Statement

#### Nevada Connections Academy Nondiscrimination Policy

Nevada Connections Academy is committed to a policy of educational equality. The school does not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the basis of ethnic group identification/ethnicity, marital status, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), religion, physical or mental disability, age, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, or any other category protected by federal or state law in the admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services under any of Connections’ educational programs and activities.

This statement is in accordance with the provisions of Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, Title IX of the *Educational Amendment of 1972* (Title IX), Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504), the *Age Discrimination Act of 1975*, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA)*, and *Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act*.

The following individuals are designated to coordinate compliance with these laws:

#### For School Employment-Related Matters As Outlined in the Services Agreement

Contact Information	
Coordinator	Sarah Savage – School Related Inquiries <a href="mailto:sarah.savage@pearson.com">sarah.savage@pearson.com</a> 855-330-4636

#### For School Related Matters Other than Employment:

Contact Information	
Title IX Coordinator	Sara Edgar <a href="mailto:sedgar@nca.connectionsacademy.org">sedgar@nca.connectionsacademy.org</a>
504 Coordinator and Student Matters	Eve Jeanos <a href="mailto:ejeanos@nca.connectionsacademy.org">ejeanos@nca.connectionsacademy.org</a>

Student Matters	Jason Crowson <a href="mailto:jacrowson@nca.connectionsacademy.org">jacrowson@nca.connectionsacademy.org</a>
School Related Matters	Chris McBride <a href="mailto:cmcbride@nca.connectionsacademy.org">cmcbride@nca.connectionsacademy.org</a>

**\*All staff can be reached via the main Nevada office phone number at (775) 826-4200.**

For further information on public and student rights and the responsibilities of public schools, please visit the Nevada Department of Education's [website](#).

Any student and/or caretaker may file a complaint in compliance with the school's grievance procedures.

**For questions regarding the applicability of Title VII or Title IX, please contact:**

U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Civil Rights  
Lyndon Baines Johnson Dept. of Education Bldg.  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202  
Toll Free Call Center: 800-421-3481  
Fax: 202-453-6012  
[OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)  
[OCR Complaint Assessment System](#)  
[OCR Regional Office Locations](#)  
[OCR Discrimination Complaint Form](#)

## 3 School Organization and Roles

### 3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

A primary goal at NCA is encouraging parent involvement. Please click on the link to review the [NCA's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and Compact](#) developed as part of the Title I funding plan. Feedback is welcome; please send a WebMail message to the parent involvement coordinator at any time.

### 3.3 School Information

School Information	School Contact
School Phone Number	775-826-4200
School Fax Number	775-201-0999
School Address	555 Double Eagle Court, Suite 1000, Reno, NV 89521
School Hours	8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., M-F
Technical and General Support	800-382-6010
NCA Superintendent	Chris McBride
Principal	Jason Crowson
WebMail	All staff and support services are in the Education Management System's (Pearson Online Classroom) Webmail address book.
School Governing Board Members	Refer to the <a href="#">NCA board web page</a> for most current contact information

## 3.4 School Schedule

### 2025-2026 School Year Calendar

Note: The School Status Legend below the calendar reflects the possible school statuses for each event. All events which show a status of School Open indicates they are school days for students. All events which show any other status indicates they are NOT school days for students. Please refer to the legend to determine whether teachers and/or administrator staff are available for each event according to its status.

Event	School Status	Date
First Day of School (Students)	School and Office Open	August 5, 2025
Labor Day	School and Office Closed	September 1, 2025
Nevada Day	School and Office Closed	October 31, 2025
Veterans' Day	School Closed/Office Open	November 11, 2025
Fall Break	School and Office Closed	November 24-28, 2025
First Semester End Date	School and Office Open	December 19, 2025
Winter Break	School and Office Closed	December 22, 2025 - January 1, 2026
	School Closed/Office Open	January 2, 2026
Staff Work Day	Staff Work Day	January 5-6, 2026
Second Semester Start Date	School and Office Open	January 7, 2026
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	School and Office Closed	January 19, 2026
Presidents' Day	School Closed/Office Open	February 16, 2026
Spring Break	School Closed/Office Open	March 16-20, 2026
Last Day of School (Students)	School and Office Open	May 20, 2026
<b>School Closed - Additional Administrator/12 Month Employee Days:</b> October 31, 2025; November 24-26, 2025; December 22-24, 2025		
<b>School Status Legend:</b>		
School Closed/Office Open = Students and Teachers are not in school but Admin are on duty		
School and Office Closed = No one is in school		
School and Office Open = Everyone is in school		
Staff Work Day = Students are not in school but Admin and Teachers are on duty		

### Required Instructional Hours

Based on a 180-day school year, the following minutes per day are required. For planning purposes, hours per day, week, and year are also provided:

Grade Level(s)	Required Minutes per Day	Required Hours per Day	Required Hours per Week	Required Hours per Year
Grades 9-12	330	5.5	27.5	990

Note these are the minimum hours required by the state and students are responsible for mastering all material, which may require additional time.

## 3.5 Enrollment, Withdrawals and Transfers

### Maximum Age to Enroll

The maximum enrollment age of a student is determined by state law. The maximum enrollment age may also vary by student, dependent upon on the program in which a student is enrolled. In Nevada, the maximum age limits are:

- General education students who turn 21 on or before September 30th
- Students who receive special education and related services who turn 22 on or before September 30<sup>th</sup>

Maximum age limits also apply to students who choose to re-enroll. All general education students age 18 and older must remain consecutively enrolled in high school in order to remain eligible for enrollment. Any gap of one or more semesters after turning 18 requires students to enroll in an adult education program of study. For more information regarding the maximum enrollment age, please contact the school counselor or administrator.

### Completing Enrollment

Students will gain access to their courses once the enrollment process is complete, but they are not yet fully enrolled. Per state law, NAC 387.193.1a, students in distance education must meet work progression in 6\* courses before they can be considered enrolled. When work progression is met for the 6th course, the date it was met is considered the official enrollment date, which will be updated in Pearson Online Classroom. If a student is withdrawn before meeting work progression in 6 courses, they will be a no show and will not be considered as having been enrolled with NCA.

\*Students enrolled in more than 6 courses, or seniors eligible for a reduced course load, must only meet work progression for the minimum number of courses:

- Grades 9-12: 6 courses
- Eligible 12th Graders: 4 courses

### Enrollment after the Start of the School Year

Students may enroll after the start of the school year, provided there is space available in the school at the time of application. Families should contact the enrollment team for details on the school's enrollment capacity at the given time of application or inquiry. Families enrolling mid-year are subject to all the same enrollment requirements as families that enroll prior to the start of the school year.

### Returning Students

Beginning in March of each school year, students in grades 9-12\* will be required to complete and submit their "Prepare for [School Year]" Data View located on the Virtual Library.



Data Views that have not been submitted by the due date will be considered 'not returning' for the next school year and the student will be withdrawn at the end of the current school year.

Students who indicate they will be returning the next school year will be required to complete all returning student tasks by June of the current school year. Failure to complete these tasks by the deadline will result in the student's withdrawal.

For more information on the Returning Students process please contact their homeroom teacher or counselor.

*\*Excluding students expected to graduate in the spring or summer.*

### **Additional Information for High School**

High school students entering mid-semester submit report cards, progress reports and/or teacher notes from their previous school as part of the enrollment process. NCA teachers review the student's work and progress up to that point in the semester and enter an equivalent grade into the NCA grade book that represents the student's efforts at the previous school. That grade will be averaged in with the NCA grades earned in that same semester. Teachers may skip lessons that duplicate curriculum which the student previously mastered.

### **Dual Enrollment in another K-12 Program**

Because the school is a full-time program, students may not be concurrently enrolled in another public school.

In certain special circumstances, it may be possible for a student to participate in a course or activity at the local school within that district, if the district board votes to permit it, within the parameters described below. Seeking such permission should be initiated after the start of the NCA school year. The Caretaker's decision whether to enroll in NCA should not be contingent on approval to participate in a course or activity at another institution.

To make these arrangements, Caretakers should fill out the *NCA Request for Local School Activities form*, found in the Virtual Library, and then contact the NCA Superintendent or Principal to discuss having the student enroll in a course or activity at a local school. The NCA Request for Local School Activities form essentially outlines the activity, lists contact information, and indicates that the cooperating district board agrees to: 1) not claim or collect any state, local or federal funding for the student, and 2) assume all liability for that student while on the school grounds.

If the NCA Superintendent or Principal approves the student taking the course or activity at the local school, they will then assist the Caretaker in securing approval from the local school's board. Once the local school's board approves the student's participation and signs the NCA Request for Local School Activities form, the Caretaker should return the form to the NCA Superintendent or Principal. The NCA Superintendent or Principal will then contact the local school district and finalize arrangements for the student to participate in the requested course or activity.

Violations of this policy may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

## Location Change

The General Handbook describes the detailed processes needed for a Location Change. Families must follow the procedures laid out in the General Handbook and the school must approve all temporary Location Changes to be eligible to remain enrolled at NCA.

## 3.6 Assessment

### Mandatory Testing

Please note that participation in state testing is mandatory. Students enrolled in NCA do NOT have the option to “opt-out” of tests. This, and all other components of our student handbook must be adhered to and supersede “guidance” issued by state governmental agencies.

All students attending NCA will participate in the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program (NPEP). Unless otherwise noted below, students must complete required exams at an NCA testing venue supervised by an NCA proctor. Testing sites and schedules will be published and communicated well in advance of all test administrations. NPEP includes the following assessments:

- The Science Exam is required for high school students
- The State requires that all students must participate in Nevada’s College Career Readiness (CCR) assessment during their 11th grade year on the selected day for testing. At the time of this publishing, this is currently the ACT.
- The English Language Proficiency Assessment, also known as WIDA, is required for 9-12 Limited English proficient students
- Nevada Alternate Assessments (NAA) in Reading, Math, Science, and Writing are available for eligible students in grade 11; and
- The National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) is required for a limited sample of students during years in which NCA is selected by the Nevada Department of Education to participate.

Please reach out to the school for specific information regarding required testing. Refer to the [Nevada Department of Education’s](http://www.doe.nv.gov/Assessments/) website for additional information: <http://www.doe.nv.gov/Assessments/>

## 4 Attendance

### 4.2 Marking and Verifying Attendance

Attendance is entered by school staff on a weekly basis once hours have been verified for the previous week.

## Pearson Online Classroom Attendance Codes and System Controls

The attendance codes will be implemented in the following manner:

Code	Definition
0-9	Hours of Schooling
V	Vacation
E	Excused (see School Handbook: General Portion for definition)
U	Unexcused (see School Handbook: General Portion for definition)

While the system allows up to nine (9) hours to be entered for a school day, state reporting only allows the school to report up to the hours scheduled for the school day. As the standard schedule is six (6) classes, the school will only record hours of schooling as 0-6.

## Pearson Online Classroom Attendance Responsibilities by Role

### Attendance Coordinator (AC)

The Attendance Coordinator knows and understands attendance regulations and works to ensure staff and student compliance. They also work with the NCA Superintendent or Principal to enforce the school's escalation policies and processes for students in Approaching Alarm and Alarm statuses.

### Learning Coach Responsibilities

- **Monitor Student Progress** - Learning Coaches should be aware of their state's minimum weekly required hours (see Section 3.4.2) for each of their students and strive to ensure students spend the required time in schooling activities.
- **Communicate Student Absences** – Learning Coaches should contact the school and provide information about their student's absence(s) as soon as they occur, or in advance when possible. The school will then determine if the absence can be classified as excused. If the student is absent for more than three (3) consecutive days, the Learning Coach must provide the school with a note from a physician or other source documenting why the Learning Coach believes the absence should be considered excused. Examples of what may be considered Excused absences include: illness; death in the immediate family; and vacation taken outside of school scheduled holidays. Any week during which no educational activities are completed, and it cannot be determined that the absence is excused, will be treated as zero hours, which could adversely impact the student's Escalation Status. Further guidelines are listed in the School Handbook: General Portion.

- **Complete Defined School Year** – Regardless of the number of hours of schooling a student may complete prior to the last day of the school year (as defined in the school year calendar in this Supplement), students are required to meet the weekly required instructional hours up to and including the last day of the school year.
- **Vacations or Days Off** - NCA students are allocated “vacation” days based on the number of weekdays in the school calendar that are marked as non-school days/holidays/vacation. Students who start after the beginning of the school year will not be permitted to take vacation time for any school holiday or vacation days that occurred prior to their start date. For example, if a student starts school September 5<sup>th</sup> but school officially started August 18<sup>th</sup>, the student is not entitled to use Labor Day as a vacation day but is still entitled to all vacation days that are scheduled after their official start date.
- **Phone Calls** - Return phone calls from NCA staff within 48 hours.

## Student Responsibilities

**Pupil enrolled in program of distance education** - Each student enrolled in a course of distance education offered through a program of distance education must be recorded in full attendance for each week that the school district or charter school has evidence of the student’s progression in each course. To meet these requirements, the following attendance procedures must be followed:

- **Complete Enrollment** – Students must submit work for each of their courses as soon as possible to complete the state requirements to be considered enrolled.
- **Weekly Course Progression** – Students must show progress in each course every school week. Work progression in a course can be shown through the following ways: completing lessons, assessments and submitting work; attending a LiveLesson; and/or having direct contact with the teacher about course content, such as during a phone call or through a WebMail exchange.
- **Weekly Attendance Check-in** – Students must complete a check-in with their teacher in which every week they will complete a brief plan for each course for that week.
- **Weekly Attendance Hours** -Students will earn full attendance for each week as long as they have met the course progression and attendance check-in requirements for each course that week. Full attendance is considered six (6) hours of attendance for each day, Monday – Friday. If a student fails to meet the requirements for one course, each day will be docked one hour of attendance. For example, a student meeting the requirement for all six (6) courses will have six (6) hours of attendance entered for each day that week, but if they did not meet the requirement for one (1) of their six (6) courses they would only get five (5) hours for each day.
- **Monthly Phone Calls** - Students must hold monthly phone calls with their homeroom teacher. If the student is unavailable when attempt is made, students must return phone calls within 48 hours.
- **Weekly Attendance Form** – Students must complete the weekly attendance form by the end of the

day Friday, every week. This link can be found in the student planner.

## Official Attendance Record

- The Pearson Online Classroom attendance system is the record of documented attendance hours. It is, however, only one of many sources used to determine if a student is meeting the minimum instructional hours. A student may be meeting the weekly course progression and check-in requirements, but this does not mean they are on track for completing a course and/or meeting participation requirements, and they may move into escalation, or even be considered truant, as described below.

## 4.3 Escalation Status

Enrolled students are always in one of three escalation statuses:

1. On-Track
2. Slightly Off Track
3. Off Track

This status is based on several criteria, as outlined in the School Handbook: General Portion, and is a combination of measures that indicate if a student is demonstrating adequate participation (and therefore attendance) in the program. This not only includes the actual attendance hours recorded by the school staff, but also lesson and assignment completion rates, and amount of communication with the teacher. Therefore, even though staff may record a high number of instructional hours in the attendance records, if a student's work completion rates are not on track or if he/ she fails to communicate on a regular basis with the teacher, he/ she will be placed into an escalated (Slightly Off Track or Off Track) status. It is important to recognize that just marking proper attendance will not keep a student's escalation status On-Track.

When a student is in the Slightly Off Track status, the school will work with the family to help get the student back on track. If these efforts fail, the student will be escalated to the Off Track status which could lead to truancy, academic probation, and even the student's withdrawal.

## 4.4 Truancy

To maximize student learning, regular attendance is imperative. For students to remain compliant with state law and school requirements, students must complete the required instructional hours each week and communicate with their homeroom teacher.

Caretakers must also review student grades and progress and communicate with their student's homeroom teacher. If these requirements are not met, students will be at risk for being reported as truant. If a student reaches habitual truancy status, it is important to note that this may be a violation of State law and the student may be withdrawn from NCA. Additionally, caretakers may be subject to misdemeanor citations and fines.

[NRS 392.130](#) defines truancy as any unexcused absence of one period or more from the school day. An absence may be excused if the child's teacher or principal gives the child a written approval for the absence. Any of these adults, as well as the child's parents, can excuse a child who is physically or mentally unable to go to school.

If a school declares a student a truant three or more times in one school year, that child is a habitual truant, according to [NRS 392.140](#). If a school declares a student truant in one school year and that student has an unexcused absence in the next school year, that child may be declared a habitual truant again.

## Weekly Lesson Requirements

Grade	Number of Lessons
Grades 9 – 12	28 lessons per week

### A Student is considered truant when one or a combination of the following occurs:

- Student is on-track, but checking off lessons and not submitting portfolios, or clicking "Submit Offline."
- Student's completion rate is not on-track to finish the majority of courses on time.
- Student has had no successful contacts, lack of adequate work progression and is not satisfying weekly attendance requirements.

### Truancy Process:

#### Pre-Truancy

Students and Caretakers of students with the school specified amount of overdue lessons will receive [text notifications](#) alerting them of their pre-truancy status and will be informed to contact their homeroom teacher for extra support.

#### Truancy

Students and Caretakers of students with the school specified amount of overdue lessons will:

- receive [text notifications](#) and WebMails alerting them that they are truant.
- Students and families will work with the student's homeroom teacher on a plan to get removed from truancy status.

#### Habitual Truancy

Students and Caretakers of students who have been in truancy status with the amount of overdue lessons continuing to increase will become habitually truant, and

- have accounts disabled and will be required to contact a staff member.

- receive [text notifications](#) and WebMails alerting them they have entered the Habitual Truancy level.

It is important to note that in Nevada, students who are considered habitually truant may face penalties such as driver's license suspension or delay as well as misdemeanor citations of fines. NCA may not utilize suspension or expulsion as a disciplinary measure for offenses related to attendance or truancy.

## **Academic Support Process**

At Nevada Connections Academy our academic support process is designed to identify students who are at risk of academic failure and possibly not graduating on time. Any student who fails a course will be placed on either **Academic Review**, **Academic Warning**, or **Academic Probation**.

- Academic Review is a designation for students who are .5 to 1 credit behind for an on-time graduation.
- Academic Warning is a designation for students who are 1.5 to 2.5 credits behind for an on-time graduation.
- Academic Probation is a designation for students who are 3 or more credits behind for an on-time graduation.

### **Academic Review**

Students on Academic Review may need 1 – 2 credit recovery courses or summer school. Counselors will monitor and place students based on their academic plan.

### **Academic Warning**

Students on Academic Warning and their caretakers will be WebMailed notice of the student's Academic Warning status and be offered support to help improve their grades. Student's homeroom teacher will speak with the family about the warning status and identify barriers for student success.

Academic Warning requires a student to:

- Hold a bi-weekly call with their homeroom teacher to check-in and discuss progress.
- Schedule appointments with teachers, counselors, and other NCA staff as needed.

### **Academic Probation**

Students on Academic Probation and their caretakers will be WebMailed notice of the student's Academic Probation status and be offered support to help improve their grades. Student's homeroom teacher will speak with the family about the probation status and identify barriers for student success.

Academic Probation requires a student to have a meeting with their Caretaker, homeroom teacher, counselor, and possibly other staff. In this meeting an academic recovery plan may be created and discussion may occur regarding whether virtual education is the best option for future student success.

## Definition of “Missing a Day of School”

Missing a “day” of school is defined by NCA as “missing a day’s worth of hours in a week.” Missing a day’s worth of hours in a week may be considered a day of unexcused absence if the student or Caretaker does not provide acceptable documentation to the school for those missed hours to be considered excused.

PER NAC 387.215 students who do not submit school work or contact teachers for 10 consecutive school days will be considered 10 days whereabouts unknown and will be withdrawn. Students who do not submit schoolwork for 20 consecutive school days will be withdrawn with or without contact with teachers.

If your student is withdrawn, they may not be eligible to return due to enrollment caps. If this occurs, you will need to make other arrangements for your student’s education and inform us of their next school, otherwise they will be reported to the state as a dropout.

## 5 Grading and Student Evaluation

More specific policies about this school’s grading policies may be added here during the school year.

### National Honor Society

Students who are in good academic standing, have attended NCA for at least one semester, and meet other eligibility requirements, may be eligible to join the National Honor Society. Please contact your school for more details.

### 5.1 Placement, Promotion, and Retention

A student needs to pass three (3) semesters of English and 3 semesters of math in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade (total) as well as two (2) semesters of science and two (2) semesters of social studies to move onto high school.

1. Except as otherwise provided in #3, a pupil who enrolls in the seventh grade for the 2012-13 school year or after must earn at least the following units of credit during the seventh and eighth grades for promotion to high school:
  - a. One and one-half units of credit in English with a passing grade;
  - b. One and one-half units of credit in mathematics with a passing grade;
  - c. One unit of credit in science with a passing grade; and
  - d. One unit of credit in social studies with a passing grade.
2. If a pupil earns units of credit for sectarian religious courses, they may not apply those units toward promotion to high school.



3. A pupil with a disability who is enrolled in a program of special education may be promoted to high school if he meets the requirements for promotion to high school that are prescribed in their individualized educational program.
4. If a pupil transfers to a junior high or middle school from a junior high or middle school in this State or from a school outside of this State, the courses of study and units of credit completed by the pupil before they transferred must be evaluated by the school district the pupil transfers to in accordance with the procedure adopted by the board of trustees of the school district pursuant to state law.

### Entering High School on Academic Probation Due to Credit Deficiency

Per state law, a student at NCA may be promoted to high school on academic probation if they meet the following criteria:

1. The student is 15 years of age or older as of September 30 of the year in which they would normally promote to high school.
2. The student takes coursework at the “foundational” level or repeats “standard” coursework with remedial supports.

Students can potentially take remedial coursework over the summer to correct deficiencies and will receive appropriate interventions throughout the school year in needed classes to increase their chances for success.

Students will remain on probation as ninth graders until they have completed the required middle school remedial course work, achieved a passing grade, and been awarded middle school credit in all required subject areas.

The student and Caretaker may elect *not* to have the student be promoted to high school on probation, but instead may elect to have the student remain in grade 8 until such courses needed for promotion to high school have been passed and the student has received credit for such courses.

## 6 High School Programs and Policies

NCA believes that to provide the most effective education for **all** students, we must start with providing an effective education for **each** child. We know that children have different learning needs and not all children will respond to the same instructional approach. Some students require additional support to experience success. At NCA, we use Response to Instruction (RTI), a 3-tiered problem-solving approach, to identify and support students who are not experiencing success with our core curriculum and instructional strategies. Students who are not meeting standards necessary for success will be provided with three (3) levels of support beyond the curriculum.

### **Tier 1**

At Tier 1 (i.e., core curriculum), the classroom teacher uses the core curriculum for all students, including strategies and programs to support students with different skill levels. Research has shown at least 80% of student can be successful with the general education classroom approach and curriculum.

### **Tier 2**

At Tier 2, the core curriculum is supplemented with additional small-group interventions for students not successful at Tier 1. At Nevada Connections Academy, students are provided additional instruction in their area(s) of need. Families will be notified via WebMail and proposed group interventions and support strategies will be described.

### **Tier 3**

At Tier 3, a small percentage of students who do not benefit from Tier 2 are provided more individualized and more focused interventions.

At each tier, student progress is monitored on a schedule determined by the student's need. At Tier 1, all students' basic skills are monitored three (3) times a year. At Tier 2 and Tier 3, students' skills are monitored more frequently. Families will have access to ongoing progress data to ensure awareness of student progress. Response to Instruction (RTI) allows us to support each student efficiently and effectively. The ultimate goal of RTI is to close achievement gaps and ensure all students succeed in the general education classroom.

## **Benchmark Assessments**

Students in grades 9 – 11 will be required to participate in benchmark assessments at least (2) times per year (Fall and Winter). These assessments help staff determine if interventions need to be put in place to close academic gaps to help students graduate college/career ready.

NCA Staff will communicate specific procedures, dates, and other important information before each scheduled assessment window.

## **Promotion**

Student grade levels will be determined at the time of enrollment based on prior school history. At the time of a student's enrollment, school counselors will establish estimated grade levels based on preliminary information such as past enrollment history, previously earned credits, state testing results, and the school counselor's professional judgment. Typically, students are placed in cohort grade level classifications regardless of credits previously earned.

Classification	Grade	Minimum # of Credits
Sophomore	10	5
Junior	11	11
Senior	12	17

## Graduation and Diploma Requirements

To be eligible to graduate and receive a diploma from NCA, a student must meet all the following requirements:

- Be enrolled at NCA for the semester immediately prior to graduation, and not be full-time enrolled in any other high school.
- Earn a minimum of 25% of the courses required for graduation at NCA.
- Earn a total of 23 credits in specific areas and subjects as outlined in this Supplement.
- Pass all state-mandated tests.
- Meet another additional graduation requirement required by the school or state or meet alternative requirements as provided by Nevada law<sup>1</sup> (A student with an IEP may remain in school until the student turns 22 years old.)
- Enroll and participate in a College and Career Readiness Track. Students can choose from the follow tracks:
  - » Track 1 – Advanced Placement/ Honors
    - Students enrolled in Track 1 must complete at least one (1) AP course and the AP exam that coincides with it.
  - » Track 2 – Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway through NCA or Community College partner
    - Students enrolled in Track 2 must complete two (2) state assessments that coincide with their specific track choice. Assessments will be scheduled towards the end pathway completion.
  - » Track 3 – Dual Enrollment through our Community College partner
    - Students enrolled in Track 3 will be required to complete up to 12 credits through our Community College partner. Students interested in this track should contact their counselor for more information as not all students will qualify.
- Civics Test Requirement
  - » High schools are required to administer the civics portion of the naturalization test as a graduation requirement. A minimum score is not required.

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<sup>1</sup> Students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) may be eligible for an “Adjusted Diploma,” based on the requirements of the IEP if such an allowance is clearly indicated on the IEP. Students who have not passed the state proficiency exams but who have met all other credit requirements may earn a Certificate of Attendance.

- » Students will have the ability to take this test starting their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year and are able to continue taking the test until they pass, through their 12<sup>th</sup> grade year.
- » The Civics test offered during both A and B semesters.

Credits earned at another Connections Academy school or schools may be included in this total, as these schools all use the same curriculum, technology, and instructional protocols as NCA.

## Early Graduation

At the close of the fall semester, the school principal, assistant principal, and school counselor will review the records of any senior who completes all graduation requirements by the end of the first semester (Mid-Year Graduates). When successful completion of those requirements is verified, the school counselor will initiate the “Withdrawal for Graduation” process in Pearson Online Classroom. Students interested in early graduation must obtain a 70% or higher in each course for the current school year and the prior semester. Students who complete all graduation requirements at any time prior to the end of second semester may request early graduation by contacting the principal, assistant principal, or school counselor. The administration and counselor will review the student’s records to verify that all graduation requirements have been fulfilled. If the principal approves the early graduation, the school counselor will complete the Graduation Data View, which confirms graduation status on the high school transcript. Once graduated, the student is no longer enrolled in Connections Academy and will not have access to Pearson Online Classroom.

Unofficial transcripts can be accessed in Pearson Online Classroom if students are enrolled with Connections Academy. Official transcripts can be requested by contacting the school counselor or registrar. Mid-year and early graduates will receive their diplomas at the end of the second semester, at the same time as the rest of the graduating class. Mid-year and early graduates are welcome to participate in graduation ceremonies but must inform the school of their desire to be involved in the graduation activities when they request early graduation.

## Area Subject Requirements

All 9<sup>th</sup> grade students must enroll in the courses in the column labeled “credits attempted,” as well as successfully complete and earn the credits in the column labeled “# credits earned.”

Area	Subject	# of Credits Earned	# Credits Attempted
Language Arts	English*	4.0	4.0
Mathematics	Algebra 1	1.0	1.0
Mathematics	Geometry	1.0	1.0
Mathematics	Any in the Area of Mathematics	1.0	2.0
Science	Biology	1.0	1.0

Science	Physical Science**	1.0	1.0
Science	Any Approved Science	1.0	1.0
Social Studies	U.S. History	1.0	1.0
Social Studies	U.S. Government	1.0	1.0
Social Studies	World History or Geography	1.0	1.0
Social Studies	Personal Finance	0.5	0.5
Heath & PE	Heath	0.5	0.5
Heath & PE	Physical Education	2.0	2.0
Technology	Computers	0.5	0.5
Humanities	The Arts and/or World Languages	1.0	1.0
Electives/ College and Career Readiness	Any Approved	6.0	5.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>23.5</b>	<b>23.5</b>

*\*English courses include reading, composition and writing, speech and debate.*

*\*\*Physical Science courses include Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science, and Earth Science.*

*Pearson Online Classroom uses a standard whereby one credit equals approximately 180 hours of instruction within a school year (sometimes referred to as Carnegie Units).*

### Typical Course Sequence for High School

Subject	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>
<b>English</b>	English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
<b>Mathematics</b>	Option A: Algebra I Option B: Geometry	Option A: Geometry Option B: Algebra II	Option A: Algebra II or Other Math Option B: Pre-Calculus	Option A: Algebra II or Other Math Option B: Pre-Calculus or Other Math Option C: Calculus or Other Math

<b>Science</b>	Biology	Option A: Chemistry Option B: Physical Science	Option A: Physics Option B: Chemistry or Environmental Science	
<b>Social Studies</b>	N/A	World History	US History	American Government
<b>Computers</b>	NV Computer Science and Applications (0.5 credit)			
<b>Elective Option 1</b>	Physical Education/ Personal Fitness	Ind. Study- PE (0.5 credit)/Ind. Study- PE (0.5 credit)	Civics Test (no credit) ACT Prep (0.5 credit) Computer Technology (0.5 credit)	Economics (0.5 credit)
<b>Elective Option 2</b>	Freshman Success (required; first semester) Health (second Semester)	Elective (recommended Humanities)	Any Elective	Senior Success
<b>Elective Option 3</b>	Any approved Elective.	College & Career Readiness (Courses based on track selection)	College & Career Readiness (Courses based on track selection)	College & Career Readiness (Courses based on track selection)

### Information for Seniors:

Pursuant to state law for local education agencies (LEAs) to count a student as enrolled in grade 12 for apportionment purposes, the LEA must demonstrate that the student is prepared for college and career success without the need for remediation. If the student is not, they must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) courses or the equivalent of six (6) periods per day; or a local education agency (LEA) could demonstrate that a student is working on preparedness for college and career success without the need for remediation through the following:

- Be on track to earning an advanced diploma with no more than fourteen (14) courses credits remaining (i.e., three (3) credits remaining in junior year, four (4) credits remaining in senior year); or
- Be on track to earning a college and career ready diploma by successfully demonstrating at least one (1) of the following coursework, assessment, or credential areas:
- Advanced placement (AP) coursework – 5th semester benchmark
  - » complete two (2) honors courses in academic areas, achieving a B average or higher; or
  - » complete one (1) AP course, achieving a B average/'3' or higher; or
  - » completion in two (2) or more AP courses, achieving a C or better in 5th semester; or

- Dual-credit (DC) coursework – 5th semester benchmark
  - » complete one (1) DC course, achieving a B average or higher; or
  - » enrollment in one (1) DC course in the 6th semester; or
- Completion of the ACT with a minimum score of 18 in ACT English and a minimum score of 22 in ACT Mathematics; or
- Completion of the SAT with a minimum score of 500 in SAT Critical Reading and a minimum score of 500 in SAT Mathematics; or
- Completion of the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) with a minimum score of Silver; or
- Completion of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) with a minimum score of 50; or
- Completion of the Career and Technical Education Skills Attainment Certificate or
- Obtainment of an industry-recognized credential pursuant to **Nevada's Eligible Industry Credentialing List.**

## Grades and Grade Point Averages

Students must earn a 60% or better in a course to earn credit for it. Courses with earned grades below a 60% will not be awarded with credit but will appear on student records and will be included in a student's grade point average (GPA).

Semester and year-end GPA calculations will follow a four-point scale in keeping with the Nevada Uniform Grading Scale:

Grade Point Range	Grade	Value
90-100	A	4.00
80-89	B	3.00
70-79	C	2.00
60-69	D	1.00
<60	F	0.00

Grade point averages will only include graded courses; pass/fail courses will not be averaged into a student's GPA. In Nevada, the grade point average of a pupil enrolled in grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 must be computed to the fourth decimal place and then rounded to the third decimal place. A grade point average that:

1. Is less than 0.0005 must be rounded down; and
2. Is 0.0005 or higher must be rounded up.

## Weighted Grade Points

A weighted grade point factor for successful completion of Honors and Advanced Placement (AP), and Dual Enrollment courses will be added as follows:

- Honors .025
- AP .050
- Dual Enrollment courses are typically weighted the same as Honors courses, although some are weighted at the AP level as approved by the Nevada Department of Education.

The weighted GPA cap for the Honors Program for Students will be added as follows:

- The weighted GPA cap (maximum) for the Honors Program is no more than twenty-eight semesters (14 classes) of Honors/AP courses.
- Students will receive a weighted grade point factor of .050 for four semesters (2 classes) of AP courses and will also receive a weighted grade point factor of .025 for twenty-four semesters (12 classes) of Honors courses.
- Students who choose to enroll in only Honors level courses will receive a weighted grade point factor of .025 points for twenty-eight semesters (14 classes) of Honors courses.
- The highest possible GPA under this system is 4.80.

**For each semester, the GPA is calculated based on the grade points received by the student.**

## College and Career Readiness Diploma

Students may qualify to earn a College and Career Readiness Diploma. To qualify for this diploma, a student must successfully complete:

- A minimum total of 24.0 credits
- All the requirements of a standard diploma
- An additional 1.0 credit of Mathematics (1 year)
- An additional 1.0 credit of electives (1 year)
- Complete and pass the two (2) state assessments that coincide with the specific track choice or take the qualifying CPR skills course.

The student must also earn a minimum unweighted GPA of 3.25.

## Advanced Diploma

Students may qualify to earn an Advanced Diploma if the following requirements are successfully met:

- A minimum total of 24.0 credits
- All the requirements of a standard diploma



- An additional 1.0 credit of Mathematics (1 year)

The student must also earn a minimum unweighted GPA of 3.25.

## **National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility**

To be eligible for National College Athletic Association (NCAA) participation, students must meet certain academic and other requirements, including but not limited to taking NCAA-approved high school courses.

Many of Connections Academy's core and elective courses are NCAA-approved; however, students should contact their school counselor to determine an appropriate course schedule that will help them meet NCAA requirements. Students should also visit the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) for more information.

## **Class Rank**

NCA Connections Academy will calculate the class rank for each high school student two times per year, shortly after the conclusion of each semester. Students who have not yet successfully completed any high school courses for credit directly from Connections Academy will be excluded from the class rank calculation.

For the purposes of calculating the class rank, the student's cumulative GPA will be used. Courses transferred in from other accredited institutions will also be included in the class rank if there is a grade assigned for that course.

The cumulative GPA is calculated to the thousandth of a point. Students whose class rank rounds off to the same thousandth of a point will be considered tied and will receive the same class rank. The ranking will compare students within the same grade level at the same school.

## **Valedictorian and Salutatorian Recognition**

### **Valedictorian**

Each year, NCA recognizes the top academic student(s) in the graduating class as the Valedictorian. To be considered a Valedictorian, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Have the highest GPA ranking (calculated to the hundredth decimal place) in the graduating class through the first semester prior to graduation
- Be enrolled at NCA for at least four (4) semesters through the semester prior to graduation
- Be in good academic standing until graduation

In the event of a tie for the highest GPA ranking in the graduating class, each student who shares the GPA will be recognized as a Valedictorian.

## Salutatorian

NCA will recognize the student with the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) highest GPA ranking in the graduating class as the Salutatorian. To be considered the Salutatorian, a student is expected to meet the same exemplary standards as the Valedictorian listed above.

## Release of High School Records

Connections Academy will provide educational records, including official high school transcripts, class rank, test scores, and letters of recommendation to third parties such as post-secondary institutions, scholarship committees, and/or potential employers, only with prior written approval from the student's Caretakers, or from the student if they are aged 18 or older or an emancipated minor.

To ensure that application deadlines are successfully met, we require advance notice of at least **10 working days for requests to provide educational records** to students, Caretakers, and/or third parties. We require **30 days' notice for letters of recommendation**. Class rank is only calculated twice a year.

Requests for records should be made using the Authorization for Release of High School Records and Letter of Recommendation form available in the Virtual Library or by calling the school counselor.

## Prerequisites

Students must meet all course prerequisite requirements prior to registration in them. Prerequisites are listed by each course's overview in the course catalog. Semesters A and B of a course cannot be taken concurrently (during the same semester).

## Duplicate Course Work: Repeating a Course

Students may repeat a course to improve their grade. Only the higher of the two grades will be included in the GPA. Credit will be awarded only once, for the higher of the grades. Both courses and both grades will show on the transcript.

## Schedule Changes

Students may request changes to their schedules within the first six weeks of enrollment or in the first six weeks of the semester. To add or drop a course, a Caretaker must make a request of the school counselor.

## Transcripts

Students will be able to access ongoing information about their courses through their online grade books within Pearson Online Classroom. To request an official copy of a transcript, families must complete the *Authorization for Release of High School Records and Letter of Recommendation form* (located in the Virtual Library) and submit it to the NCA Superintendent or Principal for approval and processing. Official transcripts are generated

at the school. They have official school signatures, raised seals, and are sent in a sealed envelope. Caretakers will be able to view a copy of the transcript through Pearson Online Classroom.

## Credit from Other Schools

As part of the enrollment process, families submit their students' most recent report cards and/or transcripts. Counselors analyze previously earned credits and determine which credits will transfer to the NCA. The school counselor may require complete unofficial transcripts or complete end-of-year report cards before approving a student's grade level and course selection. Official transcripts are required within the first 30 days of school for final credit transfer approval and for final course approval. Upon graduation or withdrawal, the official NCA transcript will display both the credits earned at NCA as well as any transfer credits.

## Credit for Coursework Completed in a Non-standard School Program

There are **three** options for requesting and being granted credit by NCA for coursework completed in a non-standard school program (such as home school, non-accredited public, private, alternative or international schools):

1. **Assessment:** the student takes and achieves a "B" or higher on the Connections Academy exam(s) associated with the course. This may be the midterm and final exam, or other proficiency exam as determined by the content area teacher and administration. The exam(s) must be taken in a school-approved proctored setting.
2. **Portfolio:** The student submits a portfolio documenting coursework mastery, which may include:
  - Samples of prior work
  - List of texts used in prior courses
  - Artwork
  - Writing samples
  - Report card from prior school/home school
  - Student Interview
  - Other materials as requested by the school counselor and content area teacher

The portfolio will be reviewed by the respective content area teacher and the counselor. The content area teacher and the counselor will make final decisions about credit(s) to be granted for the student's prior coursework. The student will be placed in Connections Academy at the grade level appropriate for the number of credits granted.

The school counselor and/or NCA Superintendent or Principal may review the student's portfolio along with the content area teachers, but the content area teachers will be responsible for determining if the student is indeed proficient in the specific subject and whether credit is to be granted.

3. **Competency:** If the student earns a passing grade in the NCA course that immediately follows a course taken in a non-standard school (as noted on the student's Prior Academic History (PAH) form), the school may award credit(s) for the course(s) taken in the non-standard school.

The awarding of final credit of the course(s) taken in the non-standard school environment will be based upon successful completion of a course taken at Connections Academy. For example, the school may grant the student credit for Algebra 1A taken in the non-standard school after the student has successfully completed Algebra 1B at Connections Academy. Final decisions regarding granting credit this way will be at the discretion of the school.

Course placement based on competency is only applicable to foreign language courses, certain math courses, and courses that occur in a clearly linear sequence, as determined by the school.

Credits for courses completed in a non-standard school program are granted as described above, but no grades are assigned. Students receiving credit will be given a grade of "Pass," which is not included in the calculation of the student's GPA. These credits are not entered into the student's records until the student has completed a full semester in Connections Academy.

## **Middle School Courses**

Students may earn high school credit for high school level courses taken during the middle school years. A middle school course for which high school credit is granted must cover the same content as the equivalent high school course and must be approved by the school counselor in advance. Check with the school counselor for more specific information.

## **Dual Enrollment/Credit for College Courses**

Families must consult with the school counselor for permission to earn high school credit for college courses taken while the student is still enrolled in NCA. Students wishing to earn high school credit for college courses must have written approval of the school counselor in advance. The school counselor will work with the Caretaker and student to determine the amount of high school credit that a college course could earn. To receive high school credit for a college course, the student must pass the course with a grade of D- or higher and present an official transcript to NCA. College credits and letter grades from dual enrollment courses will appear on the NCA high school transcript.

## **Credit for Other Experiences**

Many students are involved in activities outside their school experiences, such as: music, dance, and art lessons, foreign language instruction, and participation on athletic teams. While NCA recognizes the value of these activities, in most cases they cannot be used to earn high school credit. In certain special cases, with

appropriate documentation, gifted athletes may be able to use their hours of training to acquire physical education credits at NCA if the program is certified and proper proof of participation/documentation is submitted to the school, usually under an Independent Study program.

### **Independent Study**

Independent Study is a school-approved, student-centered, alternative method of learning that allows a student to earn regular education course credit while working on a standards-based, curriculum-aligned, independent project. Students work independently under the supervision of a certified teacher following a plan created jointly by the student, the Caretaker, and the teacher. Students who wish to earn credit for an Independent Study project must complete an application and have the approval of both the teacher and school counselor in advance.

## **7 Services for Special Populations**

### **7.1 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Eligible Students**

#### **Enrollment Requirements**

At the time of enrollment, all Caretakers who indicate their students have special needs are asked to submit a copy of the student's most recent Individualized Education Program (IEP). It is important that the IEP is current and complete, and that any educational assessments and evaluation reports that support the IEP are also submitted.

All documents are reviewed by the Manager of Special Education, and, if necessary, a member of the special education staff contacts the family to discuss specific student needs or to clarify the information. The student's annual review date is noted, and once enrollment is complete, the team begins to schedule IEP meetings, as necessary.

#### **During the School Year**

At the beginning of the school year, the special education team ensures that teachers have access to the student IEPs. The teachers are made aware of each student's special learning needs and are given guidance on how to make the necessary program accommodations.

#### **Conducting IEP Meetings**

The special education teachers plan for and schedules all annual reviews and other IEP-related meetings. They contact families and establish mutually beneficial meeting times. Although typically held virtually, the IEP meetings occur in compliance with all state and federal laws.

#### **Continuum of Special Education and Related Services**

According to their IEPs, some students qualify to receive related services. NCA provides a continuum of

special education and related services to eligible students consistent with the student's IEP. Due to the virtual nature of the school, the services are typically provided virtually over the internet with real-time conferencing software. The IEP team ensures the service is provided in compliance with the IEP. The team locates and secures the provider and handles all contracting and financial issues.

## **New Referrals**

Throughout the year, both teachers and Learning Coaches or Caretakers may detect that a student is having difficulties with learning, and they may believe there could be a need for special education assistance. If this is suspected, the teacher will first help the Learning Coach implement a series of program modifications. If those documented strategies fail, they will then refer the student to the school's Student Support Team (SST). This team will meet and suggest additional strategies and considerations, and they will also work to gather more information about the student's learning history and profile. They may even consult with a member of the special education team. If after all the recommended strategies fail, the team (along with the Caretaker) will consider a referral to the school's special education team. Once the team receives the referral, they will begin the process of determining if the student needs a special education evaluation, an IEP, and ultimately special education services.

## **7.2 Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Section 504 Eligible Students**

### **Enrollment Requirements**

Caretakers of students with Section 504 plans seeking to enroll in the school are asked to submit a copy of the Section 504 plan during the enrollment and academic placement process. When a student enters the school with a Section 504 plan developed by a prior school, the school will review the plan and supporting documentation and comply with Section 504.

### **During the School Year**

At the beginning of the school year, the 504 Coordinator ensures that teachers have access to a student's 504 Plan. The teachers are made aware of each student's special learning needs and are given guidance on how to make the necessary program accommodations.

Students who have Section 504 plans will participate in the regular education environment, with the use of supplementary aides and services. The regular education teachers (with the support of the Section 504 coordinator and/or special education staff) will implement the provisions of Section 504 plans. A case manager will be assigned to notify teachers about the accommodations and to assist with and monitor implementation of the Section 504 plan. Teachers will also have access to information as to accommodations and modifications on their home page.

## Reevaluation

The school shall establish procedures for periodic reevaluation of students, consistent with the requirements of Section 504. Transitions from primary grades to intermediate grades, elementary school to middle school, and middle school to high school are often appropriate times to review and update a student's Section 504 plan. For students who enter the school with an existing Section 504 plan, the schedule for the reevaluation will be determined by the Section 504 coordinator based on the following: how recently the plan was developed, the appropriateness of the plan for the virtual school setting, changes to the student's impairment, etc.

## Section 504 Accommodations

According to their Section 504 plans, some students qualify for accommodations and modifications to their educational program. Due to the virtual nature of the school, the services are typically provided virtually over the internet with real-time conferencing software. The 504 Coordinator ensures the service is provided in compliance with the student's Section 504 plan.

## New Referrals

Throughout the year, both teachers and Learning Coaches may detect that a student is having difficulties with learning, and they may believe there could be a need for accommodations and modifications, supplemental aides and services as required under Section 504. If documented strategies fail, the student will be referred to the school's Student Support Team (SST). This team will meet and suggest additional strategies and considerations, and they will also work to gather more information about the student's learning history and profile. They may even consult with a member of the special education team and/or Section 504 Committee. If all the recommended strategies fail, the team (along with the Caretaker) will consider a referral to the school's special education team and/or Section 504 Committee.

Once the team receives the referral, they will begin the process of determining if the student needs evaluations and a Section 504 plan.

Federal law requires NCA to provide its students, regardless of disability, with an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the school's education program. NCA is committed to providing its students with equal access to its education program. We provide students with accessibility through resources tailored to each student's individual abilities and needs, including assistive technologies and individualized support.

If your student needs assistance to fully participate in NCA's education program, please contact the school's special education coordinator. You can also obtain 24-hour technical support by calling the Accessibility Hotline at 888-639-5960.

## 7.4 Gifted Students

The NCA gifted and talented instructional program provides gifted and/or talented students with many opportunities to expand and challenge their learning. Our teachers are sensitive to the varying needs of gifted and/or talented learners, and our virtual environment fosters individualization of instruction to meet those unique needs. Opportunities for gifted and talented students at NCA include working above grade level, working on grade level at an accelerated rate, and/or working on personalized extension projects, investigations, and/or activities.

## 9 Community Events, Trips, and Activities

### Students Driving to Sanctioned Events

The school highly recommends to Caretakers that students not be permitted to drive unaccompanied to Connections Academy sanctioned events (“event(s)”). Preferred options include having Caretakers or designated adults drive and supervise students, or having students use public transportation options.

However, we recognize that in certain circumstances students may need or wish to drive to an event without supervision from an adult. To be able to drive unaccompanied to a Connections Academy sanctioned event, students must meet the following guidelines:

- Must be 16 years of age.
- Must possess a valid driver’s license.
- Must have access to a currently registered, inspected, and insured vehicle.
- Must be a student in good standing, with good attendance, and with no disciplinary actions noted in the student’s file.

In addition, it is the responsibility of the student who attends an event without a Caretaker or designated adult to do the following:

- Document parental permission to drive to events for the current school year by submitting a completed and signed Connections Academy Sanctioned Event Student Driving and Attendance Authorization to the School (form available in the Caretaker’s DataView).
- Obey all time schedules
- Obey all school rules including maintaining acceptable attendance and disciplinary standards. If a student arrives late, privileges may be revoked
- Adhere to school rules and procedures for events

Under no circumstances shall the school be responsible for students who make their own personal travel arrangements and/or are not accompanied by an adult. The conduct of unaccompanied student drivers at events will remain the responsibility of their parent/ legal guardians. If a student driving to or from an event is



involved in an accident, Connections Academy will not be liable for any injuries or damage; all liability rests with the student, his/her parent/ legal guardians and/or any insurance maintained by the parents/ legal guardians and/or the student.

Under no circumstances shall students drive other students to an event. If a student nevertheless permits another student or students to ride with him/her, Connections Academy shall not be liable for any injuries or damage to any parties. The student, the student's parents/ legal guardians, and/or any insurance maintained by the parents/ legal guardians and/or the student, will be responsible for all injuries and/or any damage that may occur.

Even if a parent/legal guardian does grant permission for a student to drive unaccompanied, it is important to note that driving a car to an event is a privilege for a student and not a right, and such privilege may still be denied or revoked by the school at any time. Safe driving practices must always be adhered to. Students who endanger other drivers, individuals, pedestrians, or property, and/or do not follow school rules and/or procedures for events, may have their permission to drive unaccompanied to school events revoked by the school. Furthermore, students may be reported to school authorities and, if warranted, may also be reported to the police for further action.

## **10 Conduct, Due Process, Grievance, and Communication**

### **Dress Code**

Students and parents/caretakers are responsible for the dress and grooming of students.

Approved dress and grooming:

- During all in-person student events and LiveLessons, students must wear clothing including both a shirt and pants, skirt, short, or the equivalent. All students attending field trips/events must also wear shoes.
- Shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides.
- Clothing must cover undergarments.
- Fabric covering all private parts must not be see through.
- Hats and other headwear must allow the face to be visible and not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff. Hoodies must allow the student's face and ears to be visible to staff.

Not-Approved Dress and Grooming:

- Clothing may not depict, advertise, or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
- Clothing may not depict pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, political beliefs, or any other protected groups.

If the student's attire or grooming threatens the health or safety (e.g. attire that is affiliated with a gang) of any other person, then discipline for dress or grooming violations will be consistent with discipline policies for similar violations.

All persons who are visible during student LiveLessons should adhere to the student dress code. This applies to parents, caretakers, siblings, or others within view of the web camera.

## 10.2 Bullying and Prohibited Behaviors: Bullying and Cyber-Bullying is Prohibited in Public Schools

Nevada Connections Academy is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all its students, and encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations among members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the school community, whether by or toward any student, staff, Learning Coach, Caretaker, or other third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Examples of such prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to, stalking, bullying/cyber bullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior; physical, verbal, and psychological abuse; and violence within a dating relationship. These types of behavior are forms of intimidation and harassment and are strictly prohibited, regardless of whether the target of the prohibited behavior are members of a legally protected group, such as sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability.

The following definitions are intended to provide guidance in assessing whether a particular behavior is a prohibited behavior. They are not exhaustive in their scope and are not intended to replace the intuition of the individual. When in doubt as to whether a suspected behavior is a prohibited behavior, you are urged to rule on the side of caution and report your concerns to the appropriate authority, as provided for in this policy.

**Harassment** - any intentional behavior or course of conduct (whether written, verbal, graphic, or physical) directed at a specific person or group of persons that causes substantial physical and/or emotional distress or harm and is sufficiently severe, persistent, and/or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, and/or abusive educational environment for the other person(s) and serves no legitimate purpose.

**Bullying** – a willful act of abusive treatment (whether written, verbal, graphic, cyber, or physical) or a course of conduct on the part of one or more persons which is not otherwise authorized by law, and which exposes a person one time or repeatedly and over time to one or more negative actions which is highly offensive to a reasonable person, and:

1. Is intended to cause or causes the person to suffer harm or serious emotional distress;
2. Poses a threat of immediate harm or inflicts harm to another person or to the property of another person;
3. Places the person in reasonable fear of harm or serious emotional distress; or
4. Creates an environment which is hostile to a pupil by interfering with the education of the pupil.

**Cyber-bullying** – bullying using electronic communication, such as, but not limited to, cell phone, personal digital assistant, email, instant messaging, social media websites, Twitter, etc. Cyber-bullying also includes the posting or other transmission of text, video, or images that are embarrassing, demeaning, or threatening in nature, regardless of whether the subject of such text, video, or images directed, consented to or otherwise acquiesced in the at issue posting or other transmission.

**Hazing** – the use of ritual and other activities involving harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, abuse or humiliation for the purpose of initiating a person or persons into a group, regardless of whether such person(s) consented to or otherwise acquiesced in the at issue behavior(s) and action(s).

**Intimidation** – a course of behavior that instills fear or a sense of inadequacy.

**Violence within a dating relationship** - any behavior by a student exhibited towards that student's dating partner that is an attempt to gain and/or maintain power and/or control over a dating partner through violence, threats of violence, and/or physical, verbal, psychological, and/or mental abuse.

**Sexting** - knowingly using a computer, or any other device capable of electronic data transmission or distribution, to transmit or distribute to another minor any photograph or video which depicts nudity and is harmful to minors. Knowingly possessing a photograph or video that was transmitted or distributed by another minor as described above.

**Prohibited behaviors** include all the above.

The school Administration and School Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which (i) cause, threaten to cause, or, an objective and reasoned third-party would find was intended to cause, bodily harm or personal degradation, or (ii) creates, or an objective and reasoned third-party would determine was intended to create, an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment for any student, staff member, member of the administration, Caretaker or guardian, or other third-party.

This policy applies to all school-related activities and/or engagements, including, but not limited to, online school-related activities such as LiveLesson sessions, participation in clubs and activities, WebMail messages, text messages, discussions, telephonic communications, and message boards; and in-person activities, such as state testing, field trips, open houses, and any other in-person school-related activities on school property. This policy also applies to those activities or engagements which occur off school property if the student or

staff member is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, where a staff member is engaged in school business, or where the prohibited behavior is facilitated through the use of any school property or resources.

Any student or student's Caretaker who believes that student, any other student, or other third-party, has been or is the recipient of any of the above-described prohibited behaviors should immediately report the situation to the school counselor, NCA Superintendent or Principal or assistant principal, or School Director. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate school administrator or Board official. Complaints about prohibited behavior against the NCA Superintendent or Principal should be filed with the Connections Academy School Director or the Vice President of Schools, or the Board President. Complaints about prohibited behavior against the Connections Academy School Director or the Vice President of Schools should be filed with either the Connections Academy Executive Vice President or the Board President.

In addition to reporting to the school administration, a student or witness to an act of bullying or cyber-bullying may also report through the 24-hour, toll free statewide hotline: 1-775-689-0150, text STANDUP to 839863 or the following website maintained by the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment:

[www.bullyfreezone.nv.gov](http://www.bullyfreezone.nv.gov).

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be prohibited behavior. Reports may be made to those identified above. If a student or other individual believes there has been prohibited behavior, they should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action. Any teacher, school administrator, or school staff member who does not timely make a written report of an incident of prohibited behavior shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary process.

All complaints about prohibited behavior shall be kept confidential and be investigated within one (1) day of the school receiving notification of the violation. The NCA Superintendent or Principal or appropriate administrator will provide a notification to the parents or Caretakers of students allegedly involved in any bullying or cyber-bullying. The notification will inform all parties that an investigation of the incident will be taking place, and all efforts to notify the parents or Caretakers will be documented. The investigation must be completed within 10 days after the date on which the investigation was initiated.

When investigating an alleged act of bullying or cyber-bullying, interviews will be conducted with the reported aggressor, reported victim, and relevant witnesses, as well as with the parents or Caretakers of both the reported aggressor and reported victim. To the extent possible, these interviews will remain confidential to the extent reasonable and possible. The NCA Superintendent or Principal or appropriate administrator will prepare

a written report of the investigation containing the date, time, subject, and content of each interview. The report will also include findings of fact, a determination of whether any prohibited behavior(s) were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified a recommendation for intervention, including restorative disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements will be attached to the report. When the target of the prohibited behavior is a student, the school will provide that student with a written copy of the rights, protections, and support services available to him/her. If there is any evidence that the student has experienced physical harm because of the prohibited behavior, the school will promptly communicate that information to the appropriate personnel, including, but not limited to, emergency personnel and /or law enforcement. If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence, or any other prohibited behavior, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary process and may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for students; up to and including discharge for staff members; exclusion for Caretakers, guests, volunteers, and contractors; and removal from any official position and/or a request for a Board member(s) to resign. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials. Remedial and/or disciplinary action for staff members will follow the procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook. Remedial and/or disciplinary action for students will follow the procedures outlined in this Supplement.

At the conclusion of the investigation the NCA Superintendent or Principal or appropriate administrator will meet with the reported victim and the reported aggressor to ensure that the bullying or cyber-bullying does not continue. These meetings will be conducted in a private manner and will remain confidential.

When appropriate, the target(s) of the prohibited behavior (and/or such target(s) Caretaker(s)) will be notified of the findings of the investigation, and, when appropriate, that action has been taken. In providing such notification, care will be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the accused perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence.

If after investigation the act(s) of prohibited behavior by a specific student is/are verified, the NCA Superintendent or Principal or appropriate administrator will notify the Caretaker of the perpetrator of that finding in writing. If disciplinary action is taken against such student, a description of such discipline will be included in the notification.

The NCA Superintendent or Principal or appropriate administrator will notify the parents or Caretakers of the students directly involved in the incident of their right to appeal the school's decision within twenty-four (24) hours after the investigation and report have been completed. Parents or Caretakers may submit a complaint and/or request a meeting with the NCA Superintendent or Principal or appropriate administrator to discuss the outcome of the investigation, disciplinary decision, and/or to appeal the school's decision.

For more information on the appeals process and/or filing a complaint with the Department of Education,

please contact the school.

**Retaliation** against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence, or any other prohibited behavior will not be tolerated, independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of school policy, and suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as prohibited behavior. Making intentionally false reports about prohibited behavior will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

This policy shall not be interpreted as infringing upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by state or federal law).

## Complaints

Students and/or their Caretakers may file **written** reports regarding any suspected prohibited behavior by completing the *Report of Bullying, Aggressive, or Other Prohibited Behavior Form*, found in the My School section of the Virtual Library, and sending this to the school. Such reports should be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the suspected prohibited behavior(s), and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the NCA Superintendent or Principal for review, investigation, and action.

Students and/or their Caretakers may make *informal* complaints of conduct that they consider to be prohibited behavior(s) by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected prohibited behavior, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who received an informal complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing by completing *the Report of Bullying, Aggressive, or Other Prohibited Behavior Form*, found in the My School section of the Virtual Library. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the NCA Superintendent or Principal for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

## Privacy/Confidentiality

The school will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted

by law.

## 10.3 Discipline and Due Process for Students

All students enrolled in NCA are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the rules for the school, and Caretakers are expected to cooperate with the school staff in helping students to maintain this conduct. Student codes of conduct are set forth in this Supplement. School students are also guaranteed due process of law as required by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

### Restorative Disciplinary Practices & Alternative Conflict Resolution

In accordance with Nevada state law, NCA utilizes restorative disciplinary practices alternative conflict resolution and interventions based on social emotional learning rather than removing students from the classroom. Restorative disciplinary practices are intended to repair harm done as a result of breaking a rule.

Restorative disciplinary practices include, but are not limited to:

- Holding students accountable for their behavior;
- Restoration directly related to the behavior of the student;
- Relief for any victim of the student's behavior; and
- Changing the behavior of the student.

NCA will establish a Restorative Discipline Plan which will include the input of the NCA Superintendent or Principal, School Administration, staff, and the parent(s)/caretaker(s) of enrolled students. More information regarding the Restorative Discipline Plan can be found in "Appendix III: NCA's Restorative Discipline Plan". This plan is subject to change pursuant to collaboration and feedback from stakeholders.

### Progressive Discipline Measures

There are three levels of disciplinary measures utilized by the school: 1) Warning, 2) Suspension, and 3) Expulsion. Each level has associated conduct breach definitions and corresponding disciplinary actions that may occur. For suspension or expulsion to be imposed, a student must be at least eleven (11) years old.

#### 1. Warning

Students who receive warnings from the school will have a conference (via phone or in person) with their Caretaker(s) and teacher. Other school personnel, including the school administrator(s) may also attend. The incident will be formally documented in writing and will become part of the student's permanent record. The student will not have a disruption in schooling and will not be removed from the class (Pearson Online Classroom).

Warnings are issued when a student demonstrates a breach of expected conduct, but not as serious as those listed under the suspension and/or expulsion categories in this Supplement. When warnings are issued, all

measures of the Restorative Discipline Plan, as outlined in “Appendix III: NCA’s Restorative Discipline Plan” will be utilized.

Before suspension or expulsion is imposed, NCA must provide the student and/or parent(s)/caretaker(s) notification of the student’s conduct breach, an explanation of any evidence, and given the opportunity for a hearing.

## **2. Suspension**

When a student is suspended, they are temporarily removed from class (Pearson Online Classroom) or a school sponsored program or activity. The length of a suspension is determined by the school administrator (up to 10 days at a time). A suspension will be documented in writing and will become part of a student’s permanent record.

During a period of suspension (as defined by the NCA Superintendent or Principal), a student’s permission to log on to and/or use parts of Pearson Online Classroom is restricted. Student access to WebMail, the message boards, online clubs/activities, and/or the entire EMS may be revoked. In such cases where the student’s access is completely revoked, the Learning Coach is responsible for logging on to Pearson Online Classroom and obtaining the student’s assignments, responding to WebMail, and recording assessment responses for the student. The student should continue with their schoolwork during a suspension.

NCA will develop a Restorative Discipline Plan in consultation with the student and their parent(s)/caretaker(s) after the first suspension as outlined in “Appendix III: NCA’s Restorative Discipline Plan”.

Violations that may lead to suspension include, but are not limited to, the following breaches of conduct:

- *Cheating on tests or daily work:* A student who knowingly participates in copying, using another’s work, and representing it as their own (for example, students transmitting their work electronically for another student’s use), or who provides other students with test answers, answer keys, or otherwise uses unauthorized materials in an assignment or assessment situation.
- *Plagiarism:* A student’s use of another person’s words, products, or ideas without proper acknowledgement of the original work with the intention of passing it off as their own. Plagiarism may occur deliberately (with the intention to deceive) or accidentally (due to poor referencing). It includes copying material from a book, copying-and-pasting information from the Internet, and getting family or friends to help with coursework.
- *Unexcused absence:* An unexcused absence is the absence of a student due to truancy, illegal employment or educational neglect.
- *Abusive conduct:* A student who uses abusive language or engages in abusive conduct in the presence of others either in person or electronically/virtually. A student who commits a battery which results in the bodily injury of a staff member, student or Learning Coach of the NCA or who sells or distributes any



controlled substance while at the school site or at any activity sponsored by the school will be suspended or expelled as required under NRS 392.466.

- *Bullying*: A student who repeatedly engages in bullying or cyberbullying.
- *Harassment*: A student who demonstrates verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, age, religious beliefs, ethnic background, or disability that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the school's programs that: 1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating or hostile environment, 2) unreasonably interferes with an individual's educational performance, or 3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.
- *Vandalism*: A Student who intentionally damages or destroys school property or records (physical or electronic). In these instances, the school reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agencies.
- *Theft and robbery*: A student who takes money or other property (physical or electronic) with the intent to deprive another person or the school of that property. The threat or the use of force or violence is considered a serious breach of conduct. In these instances, the school reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency.
- *Sexual harassment*: A student who subjects another to any unwelcome sexual advances including verbal harassment, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or suggestions, requests, or demands for sexual favors.
- *Violation of acceptable use policy*: Students who violate the acceptable use policy in one form or another are open to disciplinary action including suspension. This would include signing on as Caretakers.
- Repeated violation of any disciplinary issues.

Violation of NCA's immunization policy: All students shall be immunized against certain diseases in accordance with NRS 392.435 unless specifically exempt for religious or medical reasons. A child can be enrolled conditionally for up to 90 days if the Caretaker can provide certification from a physician or local health official showing that the child is receiving the required immunizations. During this time the student will not be able to participate in any community-based school related activities. If a certificate showing proof of the required immunizations is not received within 90 days from the date of enrollment after the child was conditionally enrolled, the child will be suspended from NCA's online program for 10 school days and will not be provided access to the system until proof of immunizations is received. If proof is not received within ten (10) days, the student will be withdrawn and not be eligible for re-admittance until all immunizations are up to date. The school will review immunization records annually and notify families if the child's immunizations are lacking.

In accordance with the State Health Officer and Nevada Requirements for school age children, NCA requires the following immunizations:

- **DTP, DT, Dtap, or Tdap:** Primary series (given between 2 months to 6 years of age) plus Tdap booster upon entry to 7th grade OR primary series plus 10 year Tdap booster for older students.
- **Polio:** Primary series with proof of 4th dose given after a child's 4th birthday.
- **MMR:** Primary series of 2 shots
- **Hepatitis A:** Series of 2 shots given to any student new to Nevada schools after 7/1/2002.
- **Hepatitis B:** Series of 3 shots given to any student new to Nevada schools after 7/1/2002.
- **Varicella (Chickenpox):** Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, all students new to NCA will be required to have 2 doses of the Varicella vaccine.
- **MCV4:** Incoming seniors must have had a second dose.

Please also refer to the [Immunization chart](http://www.connectionsacademy.com/nevada-virtual-school/enrollment/) at: [www.connectionsacademy.com/nevada-virtual-school/enrollment/](http://www.connectionsacademy.com/nevada-virtual-school/enrollment/).

### 3. Expulsion

#### Restorative Discipline Plan

Before imposing expulsion as a method of student discipline, NCA will provide a Restorative Discipline Plan for the student based on restorative justice which include, but are not limited to:

- Positive behavioral interventions and support;
- A plan for behavioral intervention;
- A referral to a team of student support;
- A referral to an individualized education program (IEP) team;
- A referral to appropriate community-based services; or
- A conference with NCA's NCA Superintendent or Principal or their designee and any other appropriate staff.

The Restorative Discipline Plan will be shared with the student, parent(s)/caretaker(s), school administration, and homeroom teacher. If the student has an IEP their Restorative Discipline Plan will also be shared with their case manager and the Manager of Special Education.

When a student is expelled, they are separated from the school for an extended period of time, or permanently, for disciplinary reasons. An expulsion will be documented in writing and will become part of a student's permanent record.

Violations that may lead to expulsion include, but are not limited to, any behavior that indicates that a student is a serious threat to the safety of others, possession of firearms, dangerous weapons, bombs, or explosives, criminal behavior, arson, under the influence of or possession of, or sale of controlled substances or

paraphernalia. Suspensions or expulsions for children designated as exceptional follow all appropriate state and federal policies, regulations, and laws.

For those students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the disciplinary procedures required by the IDEA will be followed. In the event a student has disabilities under both Section 504 and the IDEA, both policies shall be followed in determining appropriate disciplinary actions.

## **Due Process for Students**

The following actions will be conducted by the school as outlined below if a student is suspended or expelled: Per Nevada law, if a student is suspended or expelled from a charter school, the governing body of the charter school shall provide, on the same day that the student is suspended or expelled, a notice of the policy for appealing the suspension or expulsion pursuant to [NRS 392.4671](#). A notice provided must:

- Include information regarding the timelines for appealing the suspension or expulsion;
- Be written clearly and in a manner that allows a student and parent or legal guardian to understand each provision of the policy; and
- Be provided in as many languages as possible, to the extent practicable.

The student and/or parent/guardian has five school days to file an appeal pursuant to the policy adopted by the governing body of the charter school. Not later than five school days after receiving notification of the appeal of a suspension or expulsion, the governing body of the charter school must schedule a hearing.

The pupil who is suspended or expelled or is being considered for suspension or expulsion:

- Must be provided education services to prevent the pupil from losing academic credit during the period of suspension or expulsion; and
- May be considered for temporary alternative placement, if, in the judgment of the principal after consideration of the seriousness of the acts which were the basis for the discipline of the pupil:
- The temporary alternative placement will serve as the least restrictive environment possible, pursuant to [NRS 392.4676](#); and
- The pupil does not pose a serious threat to the safety of the school.

## **Discipline for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Nevada law, NCA utilizes restorative discipline practices for students with disabilities.

If a student with a disability violates a code of conduct, they will be disciplined according to the discipline measures described above for up to 10 days. Upon subsequent violations that result in suspensions that exceed 10 days, the school will determine if the behavior manifested from the student's disability. If the school

determines that the violation is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school will apply the discipline procedures to the student in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities. However, if it is determined that the violation manifested from the student's disability, the school will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavior plan to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

The behavior plan will embrace restorative discipline practices which include, but are not limited to:

- Holding the student accountable for their behavior;
- Restoration related directly to the behavior of the student;
- Relief for any victim of the student's behavior; and
- Changing the behavior of the student.

In accordance with Nevada law, any student who is at least eleven (11) years old who is participating in a special education program may not be suspended or expelled without NCA Board of Directors review.

## 10.4 Academic Honesty

### Curriculum Based Assessments (CBAs)

CBAs are a key component of verifying learning in a virtual environment. CBAs are required by all students as requested by the teacher throughout the school year.

### Plagiarism

NCA requires the original work of all students and in so doing, prohibits plagiarism of the work of others and all other forms of cheating. Students shall be expected to properly cite the origin of work that is not the student's own. If work content, other than commonly known facts, is not properly cited, attributed, or credited, the work may be determined to be plagiarism.

Students may not plagiarize in written, oral, or creative work. In general, plagiarism occurs when a student uses another person's words, products, or ideas without proper acknowledgement of the original work and with the intention of passing it off as their own. Plagiarism may occur deliberately (with the intention to deceive) or accidentally (due to poor referencing). It includes copying material from a book, copying and pasting information from the Internet, and getting family or friends to help with coursework.

### Consequences for Violating the Academic Honesty Policy – Grades 7-12

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Offense

If a teacher identifies evidence of violation, the following will occur:

1. WebMail evidence of violation to Caretakers & Learning Coaches (bcc student's other teachers)
  - a. Contact the Learning Coach and Student to explain findings, offer the student the opportunity to

provide an explanation, and discuss a solution to the problem.

- b. If the Student is struggling academically implement interventions and/or refer to the appropriate SST Representative. If the student violated policy due to non-academic reasons suggest alternatives.
- c. The teacher will advise the student and Learning Coach of potential consequences\* and will make-up work and due dates.

\*Portfolio assignments receive a temporary zero, teachers will determine make-up assignment, students will be given a minimum of two weeks to complete make-up work.

- 2. The student will be referred to school administration for a breach of the school's Academic Honesty Policy and the school's Restorative Discipline Plan will be followed.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Offense**

Follow the same procedure as above, except consequence = permanent zero on assignment.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Offense**

Referral to Administration; consequences may include suspension or withdrawal of the student.

## **10.5 Grievance Policy for Caretakers**

The school is committed to ensuring stakeholder satisfaction and takes its responsibilities for the provision of educational services to the student very seriously. These school responsibilities are set out in the Parent/Legal Guardian Agreement (PLCA) and the School Handbook: General Portion and include such things as: contacting the family regularly, delivering educational materials and equipment, and providing accessible support.

The school will also ensure the family and student adhere to their responsibilities stated in the PLCA and the School Handbook: General Portion, and when necessary, will discipline, withdraw a student, or take legal action against the family for a breach of the agreement or a school policy.

Reasons for such disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, failure to return materials. NCA provides state-funded computer equipment and educational materials to families for educational purposes during the school year and reserves the right to invoice or refer to collections those families who do not return equipment or materials in a timely manner at the end of the school year or upon withdrawal from the school.

## **Caretaker Remedies**

If a Caretaker has concerns with the school's action or performance on any of the above-defined school responsibilities or disciplinary actions, they have the following remedies available.

## Addressing Issues

For routine issues or for a first attempt at redress, contact General Information Services via phone at 1-800-382-6010 or via e-mail at [support@connectionsacademy.com](mailto:support@connectionsacademy.com).

For more serious issues and/or to address lack of resolution of the issue at lower level, a detailed grievance procedure has been set forth below. All grievance proceedings will be conducted in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the facts. If a hearing is required for grievance proceedings, the parties will be provided with all due process procedures as required by law.

Where a Caretaker feels that there has been discrimination on the basis of sex or on the basis of Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973 that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, allegations of sexual abuse or any other misconduct on the part of the school or its staff members, then the Caretaker must activate the grievance procedures set out below and can directly report the complaint to the Academic Success Partner, formally Director of Schools, who is the person designated for the overall implementation of the requirements of Title IX and Section 504.

If charges are brought against a student for a breach of the PLCA, which could result in a suspension of an additional ten (10) days or an expulsion, the due process procedures in the *Discipline and Due Process for Students* section of this Supplement are to be followed.

## Grievance Process

1. A Caretaker with the grievance must, in writing, report the dissatisfaction, and submit it to the student's teacher (or other appropriate NCA staff member, as necessary). All parties involved must be appropriately defined, and the problem must be clearly outlined.
2. The recipient of the grievance must review the issue with their supervisor and respond to the Caretaker within three (3) school days.
3. If the original recipient did not resolve the grievance, the Caretaker should request a meeting with the recipient's supervisor. The supervisor should investigate the matter, and schedule a meeting with the Caretaker, the student, if necessary, and any other staff member, if necessary, within five (5) school days.
4. If either party does not resolve this grievance, the Caretaker should then request a meeting with the Academic Success Partner. The Director will investigate the matter and schedule a meeting within five (5) school days.

If the school has not been able to address the Caretaker's concern through the grievance process set out above, or if there has not been a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint prohibited by Title IX and Section 504, the Caretaker can contact the parent member on the school's Governing Board. The Caretaker can also resort to contacting the Nevada Department of Education. Current contact information for Governing Board members is listed on: [www.connectionsacademy.com](http://www.connectionsacademy.com).

## Caretaker Access to Teacher Qualification Information

Caretakers may access [teacher qualification information](http://nvteachersearch.doe.nv.gov/TeacherSearchResults.aspx) at:  
<http://nvteachersearch.doe.nv.gov/TeacherSearchResults.aspx>

## 10.6 Communication

### Student and Staff Communications

All educational and/or school related communications with teachers, NCA Superintendent or Principals, or any school staff member are required to be conducted via the approved tools and platforms provided by Connections Academy. All communications must be appropriate and remain educationally relevant.

## External Video and Web Conferencing Services

NCA may use external video and web conferencing services and tools (e.g., Zoom) in addition to the Education Management System. When using external communication services and/or tools, students must comply with the expectations provided by their teacher, school policies and the Honor Code.

## 11 Educational Materials Provided by the School

### 11.2 Returning School Educational Materials and Equipment

#### Technology Provided by Connections Academy

Consult the [Hardware and Connectivity](#) section of the school website to find out what technology is provided by the school.

#### Use of Personal Equipment and Software

NCA provides families the necessary equipment and software needed for students and Learning Coaches to do their day-to-day schoolwork, except a printer. Because of this, there is no technology hardship scholarship program available to families in this school. Families are not required to have additional personal access to equipment and software, but may use their own equipment and software if they meet the [minimum system requirements](#) detailed on the school website.

### 11.3 Use of the Internet

#### Internet Subsidy

During enrollment, families can elect to receive a subsidy for their internet use. The subsidy is awarded on a per-family basis, not a per-student basis, and is paid via debit card. For the household to receive the internet subsidy, the following information is provided to the third-party vendor contracted to issue the debit cards: payee name, email address, and mailing address. No other information will be provided to such third-party vendors.

The subsidy will be equal to \$16.95 a month but will be paid out three times during the year through a third-party vendor contracted through Connections Education LLC. Therefore, each debit card amount will be \$50.85. If the family starts school after the first day of any of the three payment periods, then the payments are prorated. Families must be enrolled at the time of the disbursement in order to be eligible. The debit cards will be sent according to the approximate schedule listed below.

### Debit Card Issuing Schedule

Debit Card Number	Approximate Cut Off Date for Debit Card Disbursement	Month Debit Card is Issued	Months the Debit Card Covers
1	November 25	December	September, October, November
2	February 25	March	December, January, February
3	May 25	June	March, April, May

### Internet Safety Policy

It is the policy of NCA to:

- prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- prevent unauthorized access to and other unlawful online activity related to inappropriate material via the Internet;
- prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personally identifiable information
- comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”) (Pub. L. No.106-554 and 47 USC 254 (h)).

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) shall be made available for all computers accessible by students and placed on the computers located at the school site locations. As required by CIPA, this blocking technology is applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography or any other material deemed to be harmful to minors.

Technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

To the extent practical, the school takes steps to promote the safety and security of users of Pearson Online Classroom when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and any other form of direct electronic communications.



Specifically, as required by CIPA, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

To the extent practical, the school, through its handbooks, the Pearson Online Classroom Terms of Use and its staff, is committed to educating, supervising and monitoring the appropriate usage of Pearson Online Classroom and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, CIPA, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

The school will provide age-appropriate training for students who use Connection Academy's Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote Connection Academy's commitment to the standards and acceptable use of Internet services, as set forth in the school's handbooks and the Pearson Online Classroom Terms of Use; and Student safety with regard to safety on the Internet; appropriate behavior while online, on social networking websites, and in chat rooms; and cyber bullying awareness and response.

This Internet Safety Policy was adopted by the Board of NCA at a public meeting, following normal public notice, on April 9, 2013.

## 12 Additional Required Handbook Items (website links)

No fee or required donation for students to attend the charter school:

<https://www.connectionsacademy.com/nevada-virtual-school/learn-more/faqs/#2914197-1>

FERPA Policy: <https://www.connectionsacademy.com/privacy-policy/>

Public Records Request [Form](#) and [Policy](#)

Rights of individuals to attend board meetings: <https://www.connectionsacademy.com/nevada-virtual-school/overview/governance/>

Available courses: <https://www.connectionsacademy.com/nevada-virtual-school/academics/curriculum/>

## Appendix I: NCA Enrollment Policy

NCA is committed to providing fair access and high-quality education to high school students within its annually set enrollments. Below are the enrollment policies and processes - in compliance with Nevada Revised Statute - that ensure this fair access and high-quality education.

### 2023-2024 SY: Lottery Impacted Grades

Enrollment is capped in grades 9-12. The following processes only apply to students (or siblings of students) entering the impacted grades.

#### Returning Student Process

Returning students will be provided an opportunity to indicate their intent to return for the following school year. Any student who does not indicate their intent to return prior to the returning student notification deadline will forfeit their seat at the school to ensure access to new student enrollees. Any student who indicates they will return must have all returning student tasks submitted by the communicated deadline or will forfeit their seat at the school.

#### New Student Process

Each year the school will conduct an open application period. After accounting for returning students and their eligible siblings, if the number of enrollment applications during the annual open application period exceeds the available slots, NCA will use a publicly held random lottery to determine who can attend.

#### Lottery Procedure

No applicants will be enrolled during the open application period. During this period applicants who are interested in enrolling must begin and complete the enrollment process through stage two including high school cohort eligibility but excluding final course placement. After accounting for returning students and their eligible siblings, if a random lottery is needed, NCA will post the date and time of the lottery on its website Enrollment page. Attendance is not required.

The lottery will be conducted by grade cluster. The order in which those clusters are drawn and the total number of students selected for each cluster may vary each year in consideration of the school's overall enrollment limit, the expected number of returning students and any of their eligible siblings who complete an enrollment application during the open application period, and/or other operational factors.

For each grade cluster, a computer program will randomly select a student name from the pool of eligible enrollment applications for that grade cluster until the pool of enrollment applications is exhausted. Enrollment offers will be offered in the order of selection, noting that if the student has siblings, who are also lottery eligible, the sibling will also receive the enrollment offer. Those students that were lottery eligible but not

selected in the lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order they were selected and will receive priority based on the order they were randomly selected.

### **Offer of Enrollment Process:**

Parents/Caretakers of students selected in the lottery will have 5 calendar days to accept an offer of enrollment; if they fail to accept such offer within the 5 days, they shall forfeit the student's space to the next student on the list. (If the 5th day falls on a weekend or school holiday, the 5th day shall extend to the next working day.)

Families that accept the offer of enrollment will be required to complete remaining tasks in a timely manner or may lose their priority. If the student's academic record does not demonstrate that the student is cohort eligible, they will not be able to attend NCA.

NCA will continue to accept applications after the open application period. If the school is oversubscribed these students will be placed on the waiting list in the order they complete the enrollment process through stage two (2) including course placement. These students will be allowed to enroll based on the availability of space in their grade and their place on the waiting list: Students who completed first will be offered the space first after siblings.

If the school is not oversubscribed by the end of the open application period, no lottery will be held and NCA will continue to accept applications and admit eligible students in the order they completed all enrollment tasks based on availability. Again, once the enrollment limit has been met, students will be placed on a waitlist and allowed to enroll if space becomes available.

### **Enrollment Preference**

Enrollment preference will be given to children of board members, children of school staff members, and siblings of enrolled students.

## Appendix II: Title IX - The Final Rule

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal funding. The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) enforces Title IX and has created regulations relating to how schools are required to respond to reports of sexual harassment. The regulations are known as the *Final Rule*. The Title IX sexual harassment protections apply to Connections Academy schools that do or may receive Federal financial assistance.

Under the *Final Rule*, Connections Academy is required to promptly respond to and investigate every formal complaint of sexual harassment by a student. The *Final Rule* establishes an emphasis on restoring a student's access to the Connections Academy's education program and/or sanctioned events and activities using supportive measures. Additionally, the *Final Rule* places the burden of proof on the school and requires a strict adherence to due process measures.

### Definitions

#### **Actual Knowledge**

Notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or any designated school official/employee with the authority to institute corrective measures. Under state law, school employees are mandatory reporters. In the K-12 environment any employee may receive notice of sexual harassment. This standard is not met when the only person with actual knowledge is the respondent. Additionally, the ability or obligation to report sexual harassment or to inform a student how to make a report of sexual harassment, or having training on how to report sexual harassment does not qualify an individual to have the authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the school.

#### **Complainant**

An individual who has alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

#### **Formal Complaint**

A document filed by the complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting an investigation of the alleged sexual harassment. A complainant must be an active student participating or attempting to participate in the education program provided by Connections Academy.

#### **Respondent**

An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- An employee of Connections Academy conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the school on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (quid pro quo).
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a Connections Academy education program or sanctioned activity.
- Sexual assault as defined by 20 USC 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking as defined by 34 USC 12291(a)(10), (8), (30).

## **Supportive Measures**

Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, free of charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint, as well as, instances where no formal complaint has been filed.

Supportive measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to Connections Academy education programs and sanctioned events and activities. Such measures are designed to protect the safety of all parties, the education environment, and ultimately deter sexual harassment.

Supportive measures may include:

- Counseling
- Deadline extensions or other course related adjustments, including changes to class schedule
- Modification of class schedules
- Restricted contact between parties

Supportive measures provided to the complainant and/or respondent will remain confidential to the extent that confidentiality would not impair the ability of the school to provide such measures.

Effective implementation of supportive measures is the responsibility of the Title IX Coordinator.

## **Title IX Coordinator**

The employee designated by Connections Academy to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX responsibilities will be referred to as the Title IX Coordinator. In addition to students and current employees, the Title IX Coordinator's contact information must be provided to prospective employees, parents or legal guardians, and all unions (if applicable).

The name or title, office address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator shall be prominently posted on the school's website.

Any person, including a student's parent or guardian, may report sex discrimination and sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email at any time, including non-business hours.

## Formal Complaint

A formal complaint of sexual harassment should be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, by electronic mail, or by phone using the contact information provided below:

Manager of Counseling  
[OBLTitleIXCoordinator@pearson.com](mailto:OBLTitleIXCoordinator@pearson.com)  
Nevada Connections Academy  
555 Double Eagle Ct.  
Suite 1000  
Reno, NV 89521  
Phone: 775-826-4200

## Initial Response

The school must treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures to a complainant and respondent. The grievance process outlined below is followed prior to imposing disciplinary sanctions or other actions outside supportive measures against a respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures and consider the complainant's wishes with respect to the use of such supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures regardless of filing a formal complaint, and explain the process for filing a complaint.

Anyone may report instances of sexual harassment or potential violations to the Title IX Coordinator; reports may be anonymous. However, formal complaints of sexual harassment can only be filed by the complainant or the Title IX Coordinator.

In instances where the respondent faces allegations of sexual harassment and is determined to be an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of a student or other individual, they may be removed upon completion of an individualized safety and risk assessment. If a student is removed under emergency conditions, instant notice will be provided, and the student will be afforded the opportunity to respond to the emergency removal.

An employee respondent may be placed on administrative leave during the grievance process.

## Required Grievance Procedures

### Formal Complaints

Connections Academy is required to follow the grievance process defined by *the Final Rule* before disciplinary measures, not to include supportive measures, against the respondent are made. The procedures include:

All parties will be treated equitably through the remediation process. Remedies under *the Final Rule* are designed to restore or preserve equal access to Connections Academy's education program and sanctioned

events and activities.

An objective and thorough investigation and evaluation of the relevant evidence will be reviewed. This includes both evidence that can establish guilt (inculpatory) and evidence that can exonerate guilt (exculpatory).

Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision makers, and any designee tasked to assist in the informal resolution process must be free of bias or conflicts of interest. Additionally, training must be completed on:

- the definition of sexual harassment;
- the scope of Connections Academy's education program or sanctioned events/activities;
- the process for investigation and grievance process including, hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes;
- how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at hand, conflicts of interest, and bias;
- any person identified as a decision maker must complete training on any technology used during any part of the grievance process, on issues of relevance of questions and evidence (including instances when questions and evidence arise that are not relevant regarding the complainant's sexual predisposition or previous sexual behaviors);
- any person identified as an investigator must complete training on issues of relevance to properly compose a report that summarizes the relevant evidence;
- all training materials must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote objective investigations and final disciplinary decisions (adjudications) of formal complaints of sexual harassment.

A presumption the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until the conclusion of the grievance process.

A reasonably prompt time frame for conclusion to the grievance process, filing and resolving appeals and informal resolutions processes, if offered. A temporary delay or the limited extension of time frames for good cause may be granted. In such instances, written notice outlining the reason for the delay shall be sent to all parties. Examples of good cause are the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or to provide an accommodation of disabilities.

There will be a range of disciplinary sanctions and remedies that may be issued in the event responsibility of the respondent is determined.

The standard of evidence used may be the preponderance of evidence standard **or** the clear and convincing standard. The chosen standard must be used throughout the complaint process.

Include the procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

List the range of supportive measures available to complainants and respondents.

Disallow the use of questions or evidence that seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless waived by the party holding such privilege.

## **Notice**

If a formal complaint is made, written notice will be provided to all known parties. Included within the notice are the grievance process and the informal resolution process. Any details known at the time of report of sexual harassment may include the identities of the parties involved (if known), the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident (if known). The notice will include a statement acknowledging the respondent is presumed not responsible until the conclusion of the grievance process. The parties may have an advisor who may inspect and review evidence. Such an advisor may be an attorney, though the presence of an attorney is not required. All parties will be afforded enough time to prepare. Finally, the notice will include that knowingly making false statements is against the student and employee code of conduct.

If, during an investigation, Connections Academy decides to investigate allegations not included in the original notice, the school will provide subsequent notice to include the additional allegations to all known parties.

## **Dismissal**

Under some circumstances, Connections Academy must dismiss a formal complaint of sexual harassment.

If the conduct did not occur while participating in the school's education program or sanctioned events or activities or did not occur in the United States, the complaint will be dismissed. However, the school may pursue action under the Code of Conduct Policy.

The school may dismiss the formal complaint if:

- a complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing wishing to withdraw the formal complaint and included allegations,
- the respondent is no longer enrolled, registered, or employed by Connections Academy, and
- specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering enough evidence to reach a determination regarding the formal complaint and/or allegations.

If conditions exist that require the school to dismiss the complaint, prompt written notice indicating a dismissal



including any reason(s) must be sent to all parties.

## **Consolidation of Formal Complaints**

Consolidation of formal complaints to allegations of sexual harassment may occur under the following conditions due to the same facts or circumstances:

- against more than one respondent
- by more than one complainant against one or more respondents
- by one party against the other party

## **Investigation**

Under *the Final Rule*, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence to make a determination as to responsibility of alleged sexual harassment falls to Connections Academy. Voluntary written consent must be obtained to use a party's physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other professional treatment records.

An equal opportunity to present witnesses and evidence will be provided to all parties. The ability of either party to discuss the allegations investigated or gathered and present evidence may not be restricted.

All parties will be provided the same opportunities to have others present at any grievance proceeding. If either or both parties are joined by an advisor, including an attorney, at a proceeding, Connections Academy may limit or restrict their participation.

Written notice of the date, time, location, participants and purpose of all hearings, investigations, or any related meetings will be provided to all parties. Such notice shall permit enough preparation time for all parties.

Equal opportunity to inspect and review all evidence regardless of intent to rely upon said evidence in reaching the final determination will be provided to all parties. Prior to the investigative report, an itemized evidence list subject to review will be sent to all parties, including advisors/attorneys if applicable, in electronic format or hard copy. The parties will have ten (10) days to submit a written response. The response will be considered by the investigator prior to completing the investigative report. All evidence subject to inspection and review will be available at any hearing for reference and purposes of cross-examination.

Finally, an investigative report will be prepared to summarize the relevant evidence and sent in an electronic format or hard copy to all parties and their advisors/attorneys, if applicable. The report shall be sent to the relevant parties at least ten (10) days prior to a hearing to permit review and the opportunity to provide a written response.

## Hearings

***The Final Rule* does not require hearings in the K-12 environment.**

The designated decision maker shall provide each party the opportunity to submit relevant written questions to any party or witness, permit time for parties to respond, and subsequently allow for limited follow-up questions.

It is an important distinction that questions and evidence relating to the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual history are not considered relevant to the final determination.

The exceptions to this rule are if the pertinent information proves that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged sexual harassment, or if the evidence offered relates to specific incidents and prove consent between the complainant and respondent.

## Determination

The decision maker may not be an investigator or the Title IX Coordinator. The decision maker will issue a written determination with respect to responsibility. Under *the Final Rule*, the determination must include:

- A description of the allegation that meets the definition of sexual harassment
- A full description of the procedural steps from receipt of the complaint through final determination (notices, interviews, site visits, evidence gathering methods, and hearings)
- Findings of fact supporting the final determination
- Conclusions as to the application of the school's code of conduct and the known facts
- A statement and rationale for:
  - » Each allegation and determination of responsibility
  - » Disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, if any
  - » If remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to Connections Academy's education program and/or sanctioned activities will be provided by the school to the complainant; any such remedies will be implemented by the Title IX Coordinator
- The school's allowable reasons and procedures for appeal (see Appeals section below)

The school shall issue written determination to all parties at the same time. The determination will be considered final when the time for filing a timely appeal has passed. If the allegations are appealed, the decision is considered final upon receipt of the final written determination.

## Appeals

Both the complainant and respondent have the option to appeal under the following circumstances:

- A procedural irregularity

- New evidence that could affect the outcome – not available prior to dismissal or determination
- Conflicts of interest or bias by the Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), and/or decision maker(s)

The school may provide additional equitable circumstances as situations warrant. If a party wishes to appeal the determination, written notice will be provided to the other party that an appeal has been filed and provide procedures that apply to both parties. A new decision maker(s) will be appointed on appeal and such person will not have participated in the complaint prior to appeal, including investigators or the Title IX Coordinator.

Both parties will be permitted and equal opportunity to submit written statements supporting or opposing the outcome. A written decision will be provided to both parties at the same time and will indicate the result of the appeal and the rationale for the final determination.

## **Informal Resolution**

Informal resolutions may be offered once a formal complaint is filed.

Parties are not required to participate in an informal resolution however, the school may offer this option instead of a full investigation and determination. The school will disclose information about the informal resolution process, including the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process prior to an agreed resolution. Once a party withdraws from the informal resolution process, the grievance process of the formal complaint will resume.

If both parties wish to proceed with an informal resolution, a voluntary written consent must be obtained waiving the right to an investigation and adjudication of a formal complaint. A common example of informal resolution is mediation.

The informal resolution process may not be used in instances where the school's employee is the respondent of alleged sexual harassment against a student.

## **Recordkeeping**

The school shall maintain a complete record for seven (7) years relating to:

- All investigations, determinations regarding responsibility, disciplinary sanctions (respondent), and remedies (complainant); including audio/audiovisual recordings and/or transcripts
- Appeals and their result,
- Any informal resolutions and their result,
- Training materials used (posted publicly on the school's website), and

- Any actions, including supportive measures, in response to a formal complaint of sexual harassment.

The records shall provide a basis for the conclusion and show the response was not deliberately indifferent. Additionally, records should document the measures to restore or preserve equal access to Connections Academy's education program or sanctioned events and activities. Further, records shall indicate the rationale for not providing the complainant with supportive measures, if applicable.

## **Retaliation**

Retaliation is prohibited. Prohibited behavior includes intimidating, threatening, coercing, or discriminating against anyone for the purpose of interfering with the rights protected by *the Final Rule*.

Specifically, retaliation because an individual made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in a Title IX investigation, proceeding, or hearing. Retaliation against a student for code of conduct violations that arise from the same facts and circumstances as a report or complaint of sexual discrimination/harassment is also prohibited.

Speech protected by the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation.

The identity of parties and witnesses shall remain confidential except as permitted by FERPA.

Any party that makes a false statement in bad faith may be charged with a code of conduct violation.

## Appendix III: NCA's Restorative Discipline Plan

This plan is subject to change as it will be reviewed on or before September 15th each year. The NCA Superintendent or Principal will collaborate with NCA staff, school administrators, teachers, and parents/caretaker(s) of students enrolled at NCA during the review process.

### Introduction

At NCA, maintaining a safe and productive learning environment for all students is a top priority. This is imperative to help students feel empowered, give them the opportunity to expand their knowledge and improve their skills that will aid them in meeting NCA's mission by the time they graduate from high school.

**NCA's Mission:** The mission of NCA is to help each student maximize their potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program at our virtual school in Nevada.

It is for this reason that all students are expected to follow NCA policies and regulations. Students who disregard established policies, rules, or regulations are subject to disciplinary action. All students are expected to adhere to appropriate standards of conduct while participating in LiveLessons, communications via WebMail or taking part in any school sponsored activity.

### Restorative Discipline Practices

Restorative discipline practices are strategies that use underlying principles of restorative justice instead of traditional punishment measures. Restorative discipline practices are implemented in schools across the state of Nevada to promote and support schools in building a positive, safe climate for all students and staff.

Restorative discipline practices represent positive steps forward in helping all students learn how to take ownership of their behaviors. They are designed to empower students to learn from their mistakes.

NCA will utilize restorative discipline practices for behaviors that fall under the following: **bullying, threats, extortion, violence, abuse, cheating and plagiarism**. The severity of the violation connected to one (or more) of the behaviors above will be determined by NCA Administration and the following steps will be followed:

### Violations

**First Violation:** The NCA Staff member who witnessed the violation will provide a written warning to the student describing the violation and expectations for appropriate behavior. The written warning will also be sent to the student's parent(s)/caretaker(s).

**Second Violation:** The NCA Staff member who witnessed the violation will follow the steps for the **First Violation** noted above. The involved student will also be required to participate in NCA's Truancy Diversion

Program which will connect the student to an Education Advocate. The student will meet with the Education Advocate weekly to monitor progress, discuss behaviors and any other concerns noted in the written warning.

**Third Violation:** The NCA Staff member who witnessed the violation will refer student to NCA Administration. NCA Administration will hold a required conference with the student's parent(s)/caretaker(s) to discuss violations and the consequences of continued violations. Action steps will be set, a follow up meeting will be scheduled, and a review of action based on restorative justice will be provided.

**Continued Violations:** If a student continues to violate the code of conduct, they may be suspended for up to ten (10) days at the NCA Superintendent or Principals discretion. The suspension of up to an additional ten (10) days is at the discretion of the Discipline Committee. The NCA Superintendent or Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding long-term suspension, expulsion, or an alternative. The NCA Board of Directors will then make the determination of the student's standing at NCA.

Students, in accordance with Nevada law, will be deemed a habitual disciplinary problem if the student, on school property including within LiveLesson sessions or at a school related event or activity, threatens or extorts any other person, initiates more than one (1) fight or has a record of five (5) suspensions from the school for any reason. NCA will develop a Restorative Discipline Plan in consultation with the student and their parent(s)/caretaker(s) after the first suspension. The parent(s)/caretaker(s) may choose not to have the student participate in the Restorative Discipline Plan.

If deemed a habitual disciplinary problem, the student may be suspended from school as determined by the seriousness of violations which were the basis for discipline or expelled under extraordinary circumstances. A suspension may not exceed one (1) full semester.

A student who is identified as a continuing danger to other NCA students, NCA Staff, school property or is a continual disruption to the academic process, who is selling or distributing any controlled substance or who is found to be in possession of a dangerous weapon (as provided in NRS 392.466) may be removed from NCA, after the NCA Board has made a reasonable effort to complete a plan of action based on restorative disciplinary with the student in accordance with Nevada state law.

Students with special education accommodations who face suspension or expulsion will have circumstances reviewed by the NCA Board and action will be determined in compliance with IDEA.

### **Student Removal**

Per Nevada law a teacher or other staff member may temporarily remove a student from the class or the school premises and assign a temporary alternative placement if:

- The student has engaged in disruptive behavior that seriously disrupts the teacher's ability to teach;
- The student has engaged in disruptive behavior that seriously disrupts the other student's ability to learn.

If a student is removed from the class or the school premises the NCA Superintendent or Principal will provide an explanation of the removal and the duration of the removal to the student. The student will be provided an opportunity to respond to the explanation. The student's parent(s)/caretaker(s) will also be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the removal of the student by the NCA Superintendent or Principal. Once the duration of their removal is complete the parent(s)/caretaker(s) will be notified that the student may return.