



# PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

**NORTH CAROLINA VIRTUAL ACADEMY**

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This handbook sets forth general guidance for parents and students enrolled in the North Carolina Virtual Academy (NCVA). NCVA is an approved State Board of Education public charter school and is subject to the rules and regulations established for North Carolina public charter schools. A printed copy of this handbook will be available upon request from the NCVA Administrative Office.

**Thank you for choosing the North Carolina Virtual Academy (NCVA)!** We recognize that the individual student is the most important person in any school, and we will focus on the specific needs, desires, and interests of our students and families. As we partner with you, we will do everything possible to help our students reach their academic goals. We are committed to one year's growth for every child enrolled at NCVA. Our six-word motto is "Every Child, Every Class, Every Day."

Every student, regardless of their zip code, should have access to an award-winning curriculum and dedicated, highly qualified teachers. Thus far in our short history, we have served 98 of the state's 100 counties; and we are proud to continue to meet the needs of families across North Carolina. Our curriculum and teachers help build a program that leverages the strengths of virtual learning to increase accessibility of the teaching staff to a level not always seen in a physical school. Each course will offer multiple live sessions and virtual "office hours" so that our students can get real-time help with their lessons.

Integrity is our heart, accountability is our mindset, respect is our language, and excellence is our product. As such, NCVA will meet the individual, academic need of every child in every class on every day of the school year. Students will create abiding relationships with teachers and master an engaging curriculum through technological tools. Every teacher will put the needs of students and the NCVA team ahead of themselves through a "can and will do" attitude.

Socialization is a big part of our efforts through regional events during the year as well as virtual "homeroom hangouts." In 2019, we had our largest graduating class and continued the tradition of a high school prom. We also offered our first-ever middle school dance – a semi-formal – and keep looking to add other opportunities for our students and families.

Students from all walks of life and anywhere in North Carolina have an opportunity to learn using an amazing curriculum—and the help of a dedicated staff—to put them on the path to college and career readiness while learning 21st-century skills.

Welcome to NCVA, and let's partner together for success!

*Sincerely yours,*

**NCVA Board of Directors, Faculty, and Staff**

# Table of Contents

School Administrative Directory .....	4
Stride K12 Customer Support .....	5
NCVA 2023-2024 School Calendar .....	6
NCVA Testing Calendar 2023-2024 .....	7
Overview of NCVA.....	8
<b><i>Our Mission</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b><i>Our Vision</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b><i>Award-Winning Curriculum</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
Student Code of Conduct.....	8
<b><i>Acceptable Use Guidelines for the Internet</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b><i>Inappropriate Behavior</i></b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b><i>Violation Consequences</i></b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b><i>Student Offenses and School Actions</i></b> .....	<b>10</b>
Academic Integrity Policy (Plagiarism and Cheating) .....	11
State Standardized Testing Requirements .....	12
Learning Coach/Student Responsibilities .....	13
My Teacher Will Support Me By... ..	14
Parent/Student Concern, Complaint, and Grievance Policy.....	15
Communication.....	16
High-Speed Internet Access Reimbursement for Families .....	16
<i>Loaner Computer for Eligible Families</i> .....	16
Class Connect Sessions .....	17
Instructional Time and Attendance .....	17
<b><i>State Requirements</i></b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b><i>Modifying/Adding Student Attendance</i></b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Illness or Inability to Participate in Courses</i></b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Attendance Discrepancies</i></b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Attendance Procedures</i></b> .....	<b>18</b>
Truancy.....	19
<b><i>Automatic Triggers for Truancy Referral</i></b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b><i>Truancy / Withdrawal</i></b> .....	<b>20</b>
Student Support Team.....	20

<b><i>Incidents related to Student Health and Safety</i></b> .....	<b>21</b>
NCVA Instructional Assessment Plan .....	21
<b><i>Classroom Assessments</i></b> .....	<b>21</b>
Grading Policy .....	22
<i>Kindergarten – 2nd Grade</i> .....	22
<i>High School Credit in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade</i> .....	23
<i>Mid-Year Course Promotion/Placement Changes for 6-8:</i> .....	23
Late Work Policy .....	24
<b><i>Kindergarten - 5th Grade</i></b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b><i>6th Grade - 8th Grade</i></b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b><i>High School</i></b> .....	<b>25</b>
Awarding of Credit, Grade Promotion and Definition, Cohort Year, Prom, and Graduation.....	25
<b><i>Cohort Year Classifications</i></b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b><i>Credit Grade Level Promotion Guidelines</i></b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b><i>Retention Guidelines</i></b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b><i>NCVA Prom</i></b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b><i>NCVA Graduation</i></b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b><i>High School Graduation Ceremony Requirements</i></b> .....	<b>27</b>
Advanced Learners.....	27
<b><i>Advanced Learners Program</i></b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b><i>Elementary School: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Math Course</i></b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b><i>Middle School Advanced Coursework</i></b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b><i>High School Advanced Courses</i></b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b><i>Honors Courses</i></b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b><i>Advanced Placement (AP) Courses</i></b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b><i>Career and College Promise (CCP)</i></b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b><i>National and Junior Honor Societies</i></b> .....	<b>30</b>
End-of-course testing and the credit recovery option .....	30
Grade point averages (GPA).....	30
Class Rankings .....	30
<b><i>Quality Points and Uniform Grading Scale</i></b> .....	<b>31</b>
Course Withdrawals.....	31
North Carolina DMV Driving Eligibility Certificate .....	31
Outings/Events.....	32
<b><i>Clubs</i></b> .....	<b>33</b>
The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) .....	33

Comprehensive Health Education Program ..... 36

***Parental Opportunities to Review Materials and Withhold Consent for Students Participation..... 37***

Rights of Children with Disabilities ..... 37

Child Find ..... 38

Special Education Services ..... 39

NC Diploma Considerations for Exceptional Children ..... 39

Related Services ..... 40

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) ..... 40

APPENDIX A – Truancy/Non-Compliance/Withdrawal..... 41

APPENDIX B – Class Connect..... 42

APPENDIX C – Graduation Requirements ..... 43

APPENDIX D – Attendance FAQs..... 43

APPENDIX E – Manifestation Determination Process..... 44

APPENDIX F – Title IX and Non-Discrimination Notice ..... 46

***Title IX Sex Discrimination/Harassment: General Policy..... 46***

***Title IX Sex Discrimination/Harassment: Complaint Procedures ..... 48***

***Title IX Sex Discrimination/Harassment: Student Formal Complaint..... 56***

***NCVA Title IX Coordinator ..... 59***

APPENDIX G—McKinney–Vento Act..... 60

***Parent/Student Rights for Those in Experiencing Homelessness..... 60***

***State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth: ..... 60***

APPENDIX H – Migrant Education Program..... 60

APPENDIX I – Foster Care..... 61

APPENDIX J - Title 1 Information ..... 61

***200 – School Operation ..... 61***

***TITLE I SCHOOL – PARENT COMPACT ..... 64***

APPENDIX K Acceptable Use of Computers ..... 65

REQUIRED SIGNATURE PAGE ..... 68

## School Administrative Directory

Name	Title	Email	Extension
Sara Struhs	Executive Director of Board	<a href="mailto:sstruhs@ncvacademy.org">sstruhs@ncvacademy.org</a>	1007
Katie Gomersall	Head of School	<a href="mailto:kgomersall@ncvacademy.org">kgomersall@ncvacademy.org</a>	2305
Kelly Shanahan	K-5 Academic Administrator	<a href="mailto:keshanahan@ncvacademy.org">keshanahan@ncvacademy.org</a>	1022
Ingrid Kristina Rodrigues	6-8 Academic Administrator	<a href="mailto:irodrigues@ncvacademy.org">irodrigues@ncvacademy.org</a>	2355
Tasha Parnell	9-12 Academic Administrator	<a href="mailto:taparnell@ncvacademy.org">taparnell@ncvacademy.org</a>	1046
Hannah Forbes	Operations Manager	<a href="mailto:hforbes@ncvacademy.org">hforbes@ncvacademy.org</a>	2429
Laura Zuber	Operations Supervisor	<a href="mailto:lzuber@ncvacademy.org">lzuber@ncvacademy.org</a>	2214
Stacey Bryant	Special Programs Academic Administrator	<a href="mailto:sbryant@ncvacademy.org">sbryant@ncvacademy.org</a>	1009
Lea King	Student Support Administrator	<a href="mailto:lking@ncvacademy.org">lking@ncvacademy.org</a>	2100
Mariel Richter	MTSS Lead	<a href="mailto:mrichter@ncvacademy.org">mrichter@ncvacademy.org</a>	2106
Laura Lefcoski	504 Coordinator	<a href="mailto:lalefcoski@ncvacademy.org">lalefcoski@ncvacademy.org</a>	2122
Casie Cople	ESL Coordinator	<a href="mailto:ccopple@ncvacademy.org">ccopple@ncvacademy.org</a>	1029
Paige Adams	MKV Liaison, Migrant Program Coordinator, and Foster Care Point of Contact	<a href="mailto:padams@ncvacademy.org">padams@ncvacademy.org</a>	2030
Whitney Cress	Elementary School Counselor	<a href="mailto:wress@ncvacademy.org">wress@ncvacademy.org</a>	2113
Becca Lynn	Middle School Counselor	<a href="mailto:rlynn@ncvacademy.org">rlynn@ncvacademy.org</a>	2287
Taryn Brown	High School Counselor last names A-F	<a href="mailto:tbrown@ncvacademy.org">tbrown@ncvacademy.org</a>	2092
Sarah Cessna	High School Counselor last names G-N	<a href="mailto:scessna@ncvacademy.org">scessna@ncvacademy.org</a>	2150
Erin Farmer	High School Counselor last names O-Z	<a href="mailto:erfarmer@ncvacademy.org">erfarmer@ncvacademy.org</a>	2050
In process	Testing Coordinator	--	--
In process	HR and Finance Administrator	--	--

## Stride K12 Customer Support

*NCVA partners with Stride K12, Inc. for use of its virtual platform, curriculum, and student services support. As such, Stride K12 provides customer support resources available for a of variety instances.*

**CUSTOMER SUPPORT** – Visit <https://www.help.k12.com/s/> to access the Customer Support website, where you'll find resources for learning coaches, help with technical questions, materials, and equipment delivery information, and more. Additionally, you may call (866) 968-7512 and choose option #3 if you need assistance with account setup, login assistance, and course materials.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT** – Call (866) 512-2273 and choose option # 2 if you need immediate assistance as well as issues with hardware and software, or the Online School (OLS, K-5) or OMHS (6-12) platform(s).

**SUBMIT A CASE** – If you need additional support, you can request support online. Visit <https://www.help.k12.com/s/submit-a-case> if you need help with,

- Missing, lost or damaged course materials.
- Online school login and navigation.
- School email/office 365 help.
- Report an issue within the k12 curriculum or within the online school.
- Update address (independent study users only).
- Technical troubleshooting.

# NCVA 2023-2024 School Calendar

July '23						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August '23						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September '23						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October '23						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November '23						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December '23						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January '24						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February '24						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March '24						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April '24						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May '24						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June '24						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

	School Closed/Holiday		Graduation- TBD
	First Day of Grading Period		Outing
	Face to Face Testing		Teacher in-Service Day (students still report during regular school year; no live class sessions, recorded sessions possible)
○	Last day of Quarter/Grading Period		

## NCVA Testing Calendar 2023-2024

The dates below are tentative. Specific information will be emailed closer to testing window.

Grade Level(s)	Test	Dates/Window
Kindergarten, 1st Grade, 2nd Grade, and 3rd Grade.	Diagnostic Assessment	BOY: August 21 – September 1 MOY: December 6 – 15 EOY: April 26 – May 8
6th Grade, 7th Grade, and 8th Grade.	Diagnostic Assessment	August 17 – 18
Select Multilingual Learners Kindergarten – 12th Grade	*WIDA Screener	August 22 – September 28 (or within 30 calendar days of enrollment date)
3rd Grade	*Beginning-of-Grade 3 English Language Arts/ Reading	August 28 – September 1
10th	*PreACT/CCRAA10	November 13 – 17
9th Grade, 10th Grade, 11th Grade, and 12th Grade by subject.	*End-of-Course/CTE	December 11 – 15
9th Grade, 10th Grade, 11th Grade, and 12th Grade.	Diagnostic Assessment Math, English, and Biology	Fall: August 16 – 18 Spring: January 8 – 10
3rd Grade, 4th Grade, 5th Grade, 6th Grade, 7th Grade, and 8th Grade.	NC Check In	#1: October 23 – 27 #2: January 24 – 31 #3: April 10 – 17
11th Grade	*ACT/CCRAA11/NCEExtend1	March 12 – 14
Select Multilingual Learners Kindergarten – 12th Grade	*ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS	January 22 – March 8
Select 9th Grade, 10th Grade, 11th Grade, and 12th Grade.	*WorkKeys	Fall: November 6 – December 8 Spring: February 19 – March 17
10th Grade, 11th Grade, and 12th Grade by subject.	Advanced Placement (AP)	May 1 – 17
3rd Grade, 4th Grade, 5th Grade, 6th Grade, 7th Grade, and 8th Grade.	*End-of-Grade/NCEExtend1	May 20 – June 3
9th Grade, 10th Grade, 11th Grade, and 12th Grade by subject.	*End-of-Course/CTE	Fall: December 11 – 15 Spring: May 20 – June 3
Select 3rd Grade.	*Read-to-Achieve	May 20 – June 3

***\*Face-to-face tests required by the state of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.***

## Overview of NCVA

### ***Our Mission***

NCVA is a community of students, families and educators dedicated to expanding educational choice through innovative and technology rich instructional practices, and accountable for developing each student's full potential for academic and post- secondary success.

### ***Our Vision***

As a full time, statewide public virtual charter school, NCVA will be a rich school community that uses innovations in technology to educate and bring a wide range of students, families, and educators together. The web-based and print curriculum will be high quality and aligned with the NC standards. NCVA will educate each student as an individual and will equip every student with the academic and nonacademic foundations needed for any post-secondary opportunity they wish to pursue.

### ***Award-Winning Curriculum***

The Stride K12 Inc. curriculum is developed by cognitive scientists, noted leaders in the education field, math and reading specialists, Flash designers, and other subject matter experts. Stride K12 is widely regarded across the country for its passionate and rigorous approach to education focused on how students learn.

The Stride K12 curriculum works for all kinds of students to unlock their personal full academic potential and help them achieve mastery of the key concepts and skills they will need to succeed in life. From gifted children to students whose lives require an individualized schooling schedule, to those who need a gentler pace than in a traditional classroom, Stride K12 provides an adaptable but focused learning environment.

## Student Code of Conduct

NCVA students are subject to the rules and restrictions implemented by North Carolina Virtual Academy and the Student Code of Conduct: Acceptable Use Guidelines for the Internet. Students enrolled in NCVA should be aware of the following guidelines and expectations. Any activity that is not listed here, which violates local, state, or federal laws, is considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Guidelines.

### ***Acceptable Use Guidelines for the Internet***

- Posting anonymous messages online is not permitted unless authorized by the course's online teacher. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited.
- Students must use only their own usernames and passwords and must not share these with anyone.
- Students may not interfere with other user's ability to access NCVA or disclose anyone's password to others or allow them to use another user's account. Students are responsible for all activity that is associated with their usernames and passwords.
- Students should change their password(s) frequently, at least once per semester is encouraged.
- Students are expected to maintain their login and password for all platforms and devices.

- Students must not publicly post their personal contact information (address and phone number) or anyone else's.
- Students must not publicly post any messages that were sent to them privately.
- Students are not allowed to download, transmit, or post material intended for personal gain or profit, non-NCVA commercial activities, non-NCVA product advertising, or political lobbying on a NCVA owned instructional computing resource.
- Students may not use NCVA instructional computing resources to sell or purchase any illegal items or substances.
- Students are not allowed to upload or post any software on NCVA instructional computing resources that are not specifically required and approved for student assignments.
- Students must have their own student login and use it when completing work.
- NCVA does not promote any social media that is not created, maintained, and monitored by faculty and staff at NCVA. Therefore, the use of any platform such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Discord, etc. is outside of the scope of NCVA.
- Students should not create any social media profiles using their NCVA email address.
- NCVA and its staff are not responsible for any individual or group communications on any non-approved school platforms.

### ***Inappropriate Behavior***

- Insults or attacks of any kind against another person.
- Use of obscene, degrading, or profane language.
- Harassment (continually posting unwelcome messages to another person) or use of threats.
- Posting material that is obscene or defamatory or which is intended to annoy, harass, or intimidate another person. This includes distributing "spam" mail, chain email, viruses, or other intentionally destructive content.
- Bullying anyone based upon gender, race, color, national origin, or disability.

NCVA reserves the right to review any material transmitted using NCVA instructional computing resources or posted to an NCVA instructional computing resource to determine the appropriateness of such material. NCVA may review this material at any time, with or without notice. Email transmitted via NCVA instructional computing resources is not private and may be monitored.

NCVA assumes no responsibility for information obtained via the Internet, which may be illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive. NCVA assumes no responsibility for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from the use of instructional computing resources. NCVA also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement, accessible on the computer network or the Internet, is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of NCVA, its affiliates, or its employees. NCVA assumes no responsibility for damages to the user's computer system.

Nothing in this policy negates any obligation the student and Learning Coach must use the instructional computing resources as required in the Use of Instructional Property Agreement ("Agreement") the Learning Coach or guardian signed as part of the student's enrollment packet. In the event that this Code conflicts with the Agreement, the terms of the Agreement shall prevail.

### **Violation Consequences**

- Removal of student access to NCVA instructional computing resources, which could result in his/her inability to complete learning activities.
- Suspension or expulsion from NCVA.
- Involvement with law enforcement agencies and possible legal action.

NCVA administration reserves the right to update or alter this agreement at any time. Such revisions may substantially alter access to NCVA instructional computing resources. NCVA instructional computing resources include any computer, software, or transmission system that is owned, operated, or leased by NCVA.

### **Student Offenses and School Actions**

<b>Student Offense</b>	<b>School Action Options</b>
<u>Academic Honesty</u> – Plagiarism, unethical use of AI, cheating on coursework and/or standardized testing (see below for more detailed explanation of consequences to offenses).	NCVA students are required to attend, complete, and submit all work as their own for all schoolwork and State assessments. Teachers closely monitor academic integrity in all areas. If a student is found to have plagiarized, cheated, or falsely identified themselves, the NCVA teacher will intervene immediately to research the possible infraction. A meeting may be scheduled by NCVA faculty or staff, with NCVA administration, possibly leading to disciplinary consequences.
<u>Assault, verbal threats, or intimidation.</u>	School suspension or expulsion may occur.
<u>Bullying of any kind (in-person or cyber)</u> based on race, gender, color, national origin, or disability.	School suspension or expulsion may occur.
<u>Inappropriate behavior or actions during Class Connect sessions.</u>	The NCVA teacher has full control over privileges within the online sessions. A student misbehaving may be removed from the session without warning. The student will have a follow-up conference regarding this matter and disciplinary consequences may follow. The school has the right to trace the IP address and retrieve contact information from any person signing into the online classroom.
<u>Inappropriate Computer Use:</u> Specific procedures, conditions, and legal restrictions guide the use of school-owned computers. Parents should review appropriate usage of computers with their students before using school computers. Parents are the responsible adult for logging into the computer and should maintain a confidential user password.	Depending on the misuse of the school computer, the Academic Administrator or Head of School will determine disciplinary consequences, including loss of privileges up to expulsion.
<u>Disrespectful Behavior or Inappropriate Conduct:</u> Students and parents are expected to comply with reasonable directives of school personnel in a timely and cooperative manner. Any refusal to comply or any use of profane means of expression toward other students or school personnel will be assigned a range of consequences.	School suspension or expulsion may occur.
<u>Attire and Backpacks/handbags:</u> NCVA students are to dress appropriately during Class Connect sessions, staff led sessions, outings, or other school events. Parent support is critical in the effort to maintain a productive academic atmosphere. Shirts and blouses must cover the midriff, chest, and back. Pants, skirts, and tops should be high enough and long enough so no portion of the backside or undergarments is seen. Footwear is required at all times for school events.	Students may be asked to change clothing, turn it inside out, or leave the premises.  Backpacks or handbags may be subject to search at school events, outings, or testing.  Depending on circumstances, an administrative

	meeting may follow.
<b>Weapons:</b> Weapons are not permitted in any facility used by NCVA during school events or outings – including any standardized testing times. Weapons may be defined as firearms, knives, cutting tools, or any instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Small pocketknives should not be brought on any premises used by NCVA.	NCVA administration will act to protect students. If a weapon is discovered, it could ultimately lead to expulsion from school.
<b>Vulgar/Obscene Language, Gestures, or Display:</b> To establish and maintain a proper atmosphere for education, students are to refrain from inappropriate, vulgar, and obscene, language, or gestures.	School suspension or expulsion may occur.
<b>Sexual Harassment:</b> Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or display of materials that evoke responses not in keeping with an appropriate educational atmosphere.	School suspension or expulsion may occur.
<b>Controlled Substances:</b> Illegal drugs and tobacco products will not be permitted at school outings or at sites utilized by NCVA for any school-related activities.	Law enforcement may be contacted, and students will be asked to leave the premises. School suspension or expulsion may occur.

## Academic Integrity Policy (Plagiarism and Cheating)

NCVA students are expected to uphold the highest standards of Academic Integrity by expressing their own thoughts, language, and expressions, and to respect and acknowledge any other author’s works with proper documentation in all assignments. Academic Dishonesty or plagiarism is the act of using another person’s work to claim as your own. Examples of Academic Dishonesty are:

- Copying answers word for word from any portion of an outside source such as Yahoo Answers, Wikipedia, Ask.com, etc.
- Intentionally paraphrasing ideas from any outside source without proper acknowledgement.
- Submitting in whole, or in part, the work of another student
- Submitting in whole, or in part, an assignment written for another course by someone else.
- Submitting in whole, or in part, an assignment written for another course by someone else.
- Intentionally allowing one’s essay, assignment, or test answers to be copied by another student.
- Any writing that is generated using Artificial Intelligence (AI) program/ software.

Plagiarism, use of AI, and cheating, in any subject area, are taken very seriously. Students who use all or part of someone else’s work, without appropriate credit or citation, are in violation of these policies.

- Students will receive a zero on any submitted assignment containing all or partial work not completed as their own work, or properly cited within the assignment.
- Students assisting other students in cheating or plagiarizing are also in violation of this policy and will receive a grade of zero on their assignment submission.

**First Offense:** The teacher will call the student and parent/LC to provide additional instruction as to what constitutes academic integrity. The teacher will send the student a written correspondence explaining and documenting the academic integrity offense. The student may have an opportunity to make up the assignment, at the discretion of the teacher.

**Second Offense:** The teacher will call the student and parent/LC providing additional instruction and feedback regarding academic integrity. The student will receive a written correspondence from the teacher documenting and explaining the academic integrity offense and will CC the principal or other administrator on the correspondence. The student will earn

a grade of zero without any chance to make up the assignment.

**Third Offense:** The teacher will call the student and parent/LC providing additional instruction and feedback regarding the incident. The student will receive a written correspondence from the teacher explaining and documenting the academic integrity offense. The student's curriculum will be locked. The teacher will schedule a live session with the student, parent/LC, and principal or other administrator before student is allowed to continue working in their courses. Failure to attend the meeting may result in being administratively withdrawn from NCVA. Any further offenses will automatically result in progressive discipline up to and including administrative withdrawal from NCVA.

**NOTE: Offenses are cumulative and across all subjects for the year regardless of the class for which questionable work was submitted. For example, if a student gets a first offense in history and another incident occurs in math, then this most recent incident is a "second offense."**

If you wish to appeal administrative disciplinary decisions, the parent must appeal the decision within 3 business days. An email must be sent to the Head of School. In that notification, the parent should state the justification for why they are appealing the decision. The Head of School will review the appeal with documentation and may call the parent to discuss before finalizing the decision through a letter to the parent. If the appeal is denied, the parent will be provided with directions on how to appeal to the NCVA Board of Directors.

## **State Standardized Testing Requirements**

As a public Charter School in North Carolina, NCVA students **are required** to participate in all state-mandated academic assessments. These tests must be administered **in person** at NCVA testing sites. General testing windows will be provided to the parents and students during the first quarter. The date, time, and location of student-specific testing assignments will be announced closer to each scheduled testing period but are subject to change as needed.

Every effort will be made to ensure that families will not need to travel an unreasonable amount of time to testing sites, but all families should be prepared for the possibility of some travel to and from the testing location.

Mandatory state tests provide useful information to parents and teachers on a child's academic progress and are the basis for State accountability results for NCVA. In the case of End-of-Course Exams, students who do not take these assessments may negatively affect their grade.

If the student has a medical concern that may require treatment or medication during the duration of testing, a parent/guardian is required to stay on site to administer the medication in the event it is needed.

**Failure to participate in state-mandated assessments may result in a student being administratively withdrawn from NCVA.** The required state assessment is part of regular participation in academic courses for students. The law details that NCVA may withdraw students who fail to regularly participate in courses. The teachers and administrators of NCVA take these state assessments seriously and want students/families to do so as well.

**Failure to participate in these assessments may also negatively impact the future of NCVA being**

**available.** NCVA has a testing rate that we must meet in order to avoid punitive action by the State. Parents and students need to understand how important testing is for the future operation of the charter school.

## Learning Coach/Student Responsibilities

***By signing the Signature Page found at the end of this handbook, parents confirm that they understand and agree to the contents of this page.***

### ***I Understand and Agree that:***

- NCVA is a full-time public school and that my student may not be enrolled in any other full-time public, private, or charter school. Dual enrollment will be grounds for immediate withdrawal.
- NCVA is a public school of choice with a rigorous curriculum, high expectations, and daily attendance requirements.
- In order to fulfill enrollment requirements, the following documents must be provided: enrollment form, copy of birth certificate, physical (if Kindergarten), proof of residency (copy of utility bill, etc. stating service address), agreement to use of instructional property, current immunization record or waiver, previous standardized test scores and report cards (if available), custodial paperwork (if applicable) and a copy of current Individualized Education Program/504 plan (if applicable).
- NCVA students are required to have **FULL-TIME adult supervision** and participation during instruction and learning in order to be enrolled and successful in the school. I also understand that I am expected to become knowledgeable about the curriculum and the online school.
- Attendance at a parent orientation session is a requirement of the enrollment process and must be completed before my student is approved.
- My child will be required to attend and be an active participant at regularly scheduled synchronous direct instruction sessions, which are part of my child's overall grade. Failure to attend these sessions will result in a lower grade and may ultimately result in administrative withdrawal.
- Learning Coach/mentor absences are not an excused reason for a student absence, and it is my responsibility to reach out to my student's teacher(s) to help create a plan for continued study in NCVA's curriculum in my absence.
- My student needs his/her own login and will complete all work from the student account. My student will not use the Learning Coach account and my password will be kept private.
- District and state assessments are a requirement that must be completed within the given timeframe and manner specified by the teacher (including one-on-one or in an assigned break-out room within the school platform using your microphone and webcam).
- The cooperation and partnership of the Learning Coach, student, teacher, and other school staff is absolutely necessary for student success in our virtual environment.
- I will ensure that my student is meeting the state mandatory attendance requirements outlined in the handbook. Requirements include active course progress, logging into the online school platform, and marking attendance hours each day. I understand that progress must align with attendance and will schedule a minimum of six (6) hours per day to accomplish this task.
- My student will attend and participate in any mandatory teacher-led online sessions.
- I have read the withdrawal process as it relates to non-compliance, truancy, and not meeting school policies regarding attendance and engagement.
- My student's progress within the online school platform will reflect the attendance hours I enter.
- If deemed necessary by administration, a HOME VISIT may be implemented to support my student.

- I have read the withdrawal process as it relates to non-attendance, and not meeting school policies regarding attendance and engagement.
- Providing my student with continuous high-speed internet access is required and vital to his/her success in the program and agree to find an alternative internet connection should home service be interrupted. (Libraries, coffee shops, restaurants, etc.)
- Enrollment includes full participation in all state-mandated testing on the required dates and the assigned location. I understand it is my responsibility to provide transportation for all required face-to-face testing.
- I will commit to read, listen, and respond to email and phone messages daily.
- For the school to be able to appropriately place students into classes, I must supply all relevant student records including past report cards, transcripts, testing scores, and any special education documentation (IEP or 504 Plan/Evaluation, etc.).
- I will assist my student in contacting staff or Stride K12 technical support/help desk (866-512-2273) in a timely manner whenever he/she has a problem that needs to be resolved.
- I will contact the school with any account changes (including but not limited to updated phone number, parent email, physical/ mailing/ shipping address(es), etc.) within 30 days so I will continue to receive regular communications, materials from NCVA, and that appropriate state and student information systems reflect the correct address.
- Public school enrollment includes compliance with state health requirements. Immunization records sent during the enrollment process should include all immunizations from birth to present to ensure state requirements are met.
- I will have the guidance and support of a North Carolina state- certified teacher implementing the Stride K12 curriculum with my student.
- I will be expected to maintain accurate progress and attendance logs in the online school daily.
- My child and I are required to participate in scheduled conferences with our teacher(s) and that during these conferences I am expected to have access to all materials and the computer. Scheduled conferences are expected to occur from the primary location that instruction takes place.
- My student will be enrolled in NCVA during the allotted timeframe indicated on the enrollment application.
- All school policies and procedures must be met for continued enrollment in the school.
- I will follow the expectations put forward in the Parent-Student Handbook.

### **My Teacher Will Support Me By...**

- Be the first point of contact for parents and students.
- Guide and direct the student through the Stride K12 Online School platforms.
- Provide instructional support to meet NC state standards.
- Facilitate academic conferences.
- Review student-submitted work throughout each grading term.
- Maintain a school workday of Monday through Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- Respond within 24 business-hours when in office to all emails and telephone calls.
- Inform Learning Coach of school updates/information from NCVA and/or Stride K12.
- Plan and attend regional outings/field trips.
- Provide support in all areas of successful student learning and achievement.
- Complete semester progress reports and year-end report cards.

## Parent/Student Concern, Complaint, and Grievance Policy

NCVA recognizes that despite best intentions, questions, concerns, or conflicts may arise between the school and/or school staff and NCVA families and/or students. As problems arise, school personnel and parents should collaborate to solve them whenever possible. Complaints by high school students may be made by the students on their own behalf or by the parent or guardian. A parent or guardian may initiate the complaint process on behalf of an elementary or middle school student. Please follow these procedures for assistance in resolving a problem:

**Step 1:** All academic concerns and issues should first be directed to the student's content area teacher via phone or email.

**Step 2:** If the NCVA teacher cannot resolve the issue, he/she directs the parent to the Academic Administrator or other appropriate school administrator, or staff based on the exact concern.

**Step 3:** If a concern is not resolved at level, parents are advised to contact the Head of School via email.

**Step 4:** If the concern is still not resolved to the parent or student's satisfaction, the parent and/or student may request the grievance be presented to the NCVA Board at a designated time and date.

### Guardian/Students may present a complaint or grievance regarding one or more of the following:

- Violation of the student's constitutional rights.
- Denial, not related to the student's individual capabilities, of an equal opportunity to participate in any program or activity for which the student qualifies not related to the student's individual capabilities.
- Discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.
- Harassment of the student by another person.
- Intimidation by another student.
- Bullying by another student.
- Concern for the student's personal safety.

### Guardian/Students may present a complaint or grievance provided that:

- The topic is not the subject of disciplinary or other proceedings under other policies and regulations of NCVA; and
- The procedure shall not apply to any matter for which the method of review is prescribed by law, or the NCVA Board is without authority to act.
- The guidelines to be followed are:
  - The accusation must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the time the student knew or should have known that there were grounds for the complaint/grievance.
  - The complaint/grievance shall be made only to Head of School or Executive Director.
  - The person receiving the complaint will gather information for the complaint form.
  - The allegation shall be reported in writing with necessary information as determined by the NCVA Board.
- The person receiving the complaint shall preserve the confidentiality of the subject, disclosing it only to the appropriate school administrator or as otherwise required by law.
- Once received, the NCVA Head of School or Executive Director will have 10 school days to review and respond to the grievance.
- Any questions concerning whether the complaint/grievance falls within this policy shall be determined by the Administrator.

## Communication

**Relationships in a virtual school are created and maintained in a different manner, so communication strategies are absolutely vital for the success of students. We, at NCVA, are expecting the following from students and staff:**

- Ongoing and consistent communication is required between the student, parent, and teacher(s) for school compliance. School communications include school email, telephone (leaving voicemail when necessary), school announcements; newsletters; and support sessions (in-person and online via Newrow.)
- Teachers, advisors, and administrators will respond to any school communication (emails, phone calls, texts, etc.) within one business day when in-office of receiving the message, and we ask that you, as parents, do the same.
- Administration may host virtual “Town Hall” meetings with NCVA families to answer questions, offer support, and receive valuable feedback for growing our school into the best virtual program in North Carolina. When these dates are selected, information will be provided to you.

## High-Speed Internet Access Reimbursement for Families

If a family’s income meets the requirements for free/reduced lunch under federal guidelines and the family requests internet reimbursement, NCVA will subsidize families for monthly internet fees at the rate of \$10.00 per month enrolled. Checks will be sent in January for fall semester and in June for spring semester. Families should request this during the enrollment/re-registration process. To confirm the response, please reach out to operations. Answers must be listed in the system by December 1 for the fall reimbursement and May 1 for spring. The school must have a family income form on file for the current school year indicating the family meets the federal guidelines for free/reduced lunch. If there is no current form, or guidelines are not met, reimbursement will not be provided even if requested.

Students must be actively enrolled until the end of the semester to receive reimbursement for that semester. Partial months will be reimbursed at the rate of \$2.50 per full week of enrollment.

Qualifying families who requested payment will be notified once checks have been sent. If a family does not receive a check within the timeframe specified in the notification, they should notify the office according to the timeframe set. Not doing so may result in the school being unable to reissue a check.

### ***Loaner Computer for Eligible Families***

If a family’s income meets the requirements for free/reduced lunch under federal guidelines, NCVA can provide a loaner computer to the family. Students will receive one computer per student. If the family did not request a computer during enrollment and needs one during the school year, they should notify their homeroom teacher. If families wish to request a computer outside of school policy, an appeal form is available and, upon completion, is reviewed by the Head of School.

## Class Connect Sessions

NCVA teachers and advisors schedule multiple live sessions each week. The instructional sessions cover a variety of topics, which may include any of the following:

- Coverage of State Standards,
- Support for Daily lessons in the OLS/OMS/OHS,
- Data supported areas of need,
- State testing preparation,
- Other instructional topics as deemed necessary.

**Students are required to attend all required/mandatory live sessions listed on their daily plan**, as student attendance, engagement, and participation are all necessary for student success in the virtual schooling environment. **Students must be actively engaged in learning with their microphone and camera on, clearly visible to the teacher and/ or staff during all sessions.**

These lessons are an integral component of virtual education and great opportunities for live instructional support. Families find these sessions and the feedback received from them indispensable to meet the expectations of our rigorous program.

Remediation sessions and all special education services documented on a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) are mandatory. See appendix B for more.

## Instructional Time and Attendance

### *State Requirements*

North Carolina requires all public schools to offer a minimum number of days of instruction each year (185 days) with a minimum number of instructional hours (1025 hours) for each student. The minimum attendance hour requirements are outlined below:

Grade Level	Minimum Yearly Hours	Weekly Hours	Daily Hours
K-12	1025	30	6

NCVA students are required to attend school **the equivalent of 6 hours for each regular school day, or an average of 30 hours for a 5-day week. Attendance will be checked weekly for completion and accuracy.** The Learning Coach is responsible for entering attendance hours daily and should not wait until the end of the week. Daily attendance hours are a combination of time spent working within the online school (OLS, OMS, OHS), attendance to live classes/ sessions, and progress made within courses.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to involve their children in supplemental educational experiences on school days, **however, students are required to complete their daily coursework/ all assigned items first. Supplemental experiences must be in addition to attending all live sessions and upon completion of daily coursework.** These experiences can count toward attendance time in subjects where the learning experience supports the objectives of the course.

### ***Modifying/Adding Student Attendance***

Learning Coaches are responsible for entering student attendance in the Online School (OLS) ***daily***. Attendance will be locked on a bi-weekly basis. Once locked, the Learning Coach will not be able to enter hours for missing days of attendance. Parents may realize after attendance is locked that they made a mistake when entering hours on a previous date. If this occurs, please contact your student's advisor. Learning Coaches must enter attendance hours on a regular basis to ensure their student receives credit for the time spent attending. Additionally, should a Learning Coach require assistance with entering attendance due to extenuating circumstances, the student's advisor and teachers can assist.

### ***Illness or Inability to Participate in Courses***

If an unexpected situation should arise and the student will miss instructional time, the student is required to follow these steps:

- Email your teacher(s) to explain the situation as soon as possible.
- Discuss a plan to make up the missing hours and view recordings with advisor or teacher prior to the absence, when possible.
- Even if a student is sick and provided a doctor's note, any missed progress or hours are still required to be made up within a reasonable timeframe.
- In the event of an extended inability to participate, the teacher will make the Academic Administrator(s) aware of the situation to determine if further action is required.

### ***Attendance Discrepancies***

NVCA requires that attendance entered by the Learning Coach and progress made by the student must align. If student progress and attendance entered do not match, the school Academic Administrator may approve adjustments be made to the student's attendance to accurately reflect progress. The truancy referral process (see below) will be followed if the student account indicates missing hours after adjustments are made.

### ***Attendance Procedures***

School staff will review student accounts weekly by monitoring progress and attendance hours entered. Students should attend an average of 6 hours on each school day in accordance with their instructional learning plan.

- Instructional components include but are not limited to:
  - Live, required Class Connect sessions,
  - MTSS, EC, therapies, evaluations, targeted small groups, remediation etc.,
  - Assigned coursework and assessments,
  - Portfolios, interims, exit tickets, etc.,
  - Supplemental Programs,
  - GoFormative, Nearpod, IXL, RAZ kids, etc.
- If a student misses instructional time, the student must work additional time outside of class to make up for the missed instructional time.
- If a student misses a live instructional session, they must watch the recording to make up for the missed hours.
- If the student's account shows 18 hours of missed live class connect instruction and/or assigned

coursework progress in OLS/OMS/OHS or 3 consecutive days of no log in to OLS/OMS/OHS courses, school staff will contact the Learning Coach with an attendance warning letter.

- If the student's account shows 36 hours of missed live class connect instruction and/or assigned coursework progress in OLS/OMS/OHS or 6 consecutive days of no log in to OLS/OMS/OHS courses, the learning coach will receive a truancy letter. An intervention plan will be put in place, and a petition to family court may be made.
- If the student's account shows 60 hours of missed live class connect instruction and/or assigned coursework progress in OLS/OMS/OHS or 10 consecutive days of no log in to OLS/OMS/OHS courses, the Learning Coach will receive a truancy letter and our attendance specialist will schedule a truancy meeting with administration to determine the administrative actions.

### ***Administrative Appeal Process***

All appeals will be directed to the NCVA Head of School, who will review the applicable documentation and uphold or overturn the appeal. A last appeal could be made to the board of directors, whose decision would be final. Should you choose to appeal, students are expected to attend all sessions and complete all assignments until a decision is reached.

## **Truancy**

According to North Carolina General Statute 115C-378(a), Every parent, guardian or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child between the ages of seven and 16 years shall cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session. Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school.

- **Initially Absent**: The school shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of a child who has accumulated three unexcused absences (equal to 18 hours of missed instruction).
- **Potentially Violating Compulsory Attendance**: The school shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of a child who has accumulated six unexcused absences (equal to 36 hours of missed instruction). This notification shall include that they may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted under that law if absences cannot be justified.
- **Habitually Absent**: The school shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of a child who has accumulated 10 unexcused absences (equal to 60 hours of missed instruction). The principal of the school will review any report or investigation of the matter and shall confer with the family to ensure previous notifications were received. If it is determined that a good faith effort to comply with the law was not made, the principal may notify the district attorney and director of social services of the county where the child resides. If it is determined that good faith effort was not made to comply with the law was made, the principal may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor or magistrate that the child is habitually absent from school without valid excuse.

### ***Automatic Triggers for Truancy Referral***

When the following events occur, a student will be automatically flagged for truancy:

- No login and/ or no progress made by a student within courses.

- 3 consecutive days absent, and/ or the equivalent of 18 hours of missing attendance.
- 6 consecutive days absent, and/ or the equivalent of 36 hours of missing attendance.
- 10 consecutive days absent, and/ or the equivalent of 60 hours of missing attendance.

Progress is defined as logging into and completing coursework within each course daily, showing mastery on assignments and quizzes, and attending live, required Class Connect sessions. The truancy process will be started based on the guidelines set forth in the handbook. Per state policy, students WILL be removed from the school roster on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of enrollment with consecutive non-attendance.

### ***Truancy / Withdrawal***

As a charter school, North Carolina Virtual Academy is required to monitor student attendance and progress, in accordance with all applicable statutes and State Board of Education rules and regulations. All hours missed due to student absence must be made up within the Online school. Not making up hours is considered an unexcused absence, which will result in truancy proceedings and the possibility of an administrative withdrawal. Hours due to absences can be made up before or after the absence.

In the event of an Administrative Withdrawal, students between the ages of 7-16 must be enrolled in another public, private, or homeschool. NCVA administration will follow up to ensure students are enrolled in another school within 10 days, as is required by law. If the intent is to homeschool, families must notify the district of that intent and provide the state homeschool ID, per state requirements.

## **Student Support Team**

The Student Support Team offers specific, targeted support to increase student achievement and persistence. The Advisor model is designed to support students identified for interventions proactively. In collaboration with teachers and school staff, students get the support they need, when they need it. Each family will work with an advisor starting with the onboarding process and continuing throughout the year. Advisors and teachers work together as a team to help your student be successful.

In the event a student becomes non-compliant with work completion and/or live class attendance, the advisor/teacher team will work together to give your family additional support. Advisors and teachers will call the learning coach and student to offer suggestions and plans to get back on track. If there is no response from the Learning Coach and/or the student does not get back on track, the student's curriculum may be locked until a meeting with the Academic Administrator (principal) is held. If deemed necessary by administration, a **wellness check by the sheriff's department** may be implemented to ensure the safety of your student. may be implemented to support your student. Once the team and family meet, the curriculum will be unlocked, and the student is placed on probation with the opportunity to work and meet the expectations set forth by the Student Support Team. If the student continues to be non-compliant, administrative withdrawal is possible.

*I understand if deemed necessary by administration, a wellness check may be implemented to ensure the safety of my student.*

### ***Incidents related to Student Health and Safety***

If any of following events occur, the Learning Coach should notify their student’s teacher(s) or advisor. This information will be shared automatically with the school Student Resource Coordinator to determine the appropriate level of support from NCVA. These events could increase the likelihood for a student to be unsuccessful, and NCVA wants to have every opportunity to keep the student engaged in their education.

Death/Major illness in the family	Financial hardship/community resources
DJJ/DSS involvement	Homelessness
Drug/alcohol abuse	Runaway
Severe health/medical concerns	Teen pregnancy

## **NCVA Instructional Assessment Plan**

The NCVA Instructional Assessment Plan is a strategic use of the diagnostic and informal assessments over the course of a school year to ensure that all students are provided with a growth measure and a systematic exposure to state standards. The data generated will make data-driven instruction possible. These assessments include course interims and diagnostic assessments given at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. The goal is to continuously improve student learning using data, and ensure all students are exposed to and become proficient on state standards. Through the Stride K12 Instructional Assessment Plan these goals can be accomplished.

Participation in the Instructional Assessment Plan is a requirement for continued enrollment with NCVA. Missing required assessments will immediately generate referrals to the Student Support Team and may lead to administrative withdrawal from NCVA for non-compliance.

### ***Classroom Assessments***

All students in grades K-12 will be required to take assessments based on their course load and/or grade level. Details on these assessments will be communicated by grade level teachers. Assessments will be computer based and students may be required to complete these during their class connect sessions using a webcam and microphone. It is critical that each student complete the assessment independently, as the data helps to inform teachers on the mastery of concepts. The results provide teachers with data to help content delivery.

It is important that the child/student complete the ALL assessments independently. This independent work reveals the current state of academic functioning. These assessments are not a ‘high stakes’ testing situation much like the state mandated tests. The purposes of these assessments are to:

- Demonstrate growth of the student during the course of the year and throughout their K12 experience
- Allow teachers to plan based on your child’s strengths and weaknesses.
- Provide educators with valuable data to support instruction.

# Grading Policy

## ***Kindergarten – 2nd Grade***

Kindergarten through second grade students will be issued 4 official grade updates through PowerSchool. With NCVA being a cumulative program, the final grades given at the end of the school year is the official report card that reflects the student’s overall grades. The end of the year report card will be cumulative and will be one data point used in determining grade level/course promotion for the next school year. Promotion and retention decisions will be made using multiple data points collected throughout the year. Decisions will be made on mastery of state standards. Grades for students in kindergarten through second grade will be calculated as follows:

Grade Mark	Definition
<b>S</b>	Satisfactory – the student does excellent work, achieves mastery of the course objectives and learning outcomes, consistently produces high quality work demonstrating skill and thoroughness, and consistently applies knowledge gained in new situations.
<b>N</b>	Needs Improvement – the student does above average or average work, achieves mastery of almost all of the course objectives and learning outcomes, produces above average work demonstrating skill and awareness, and is able to apply knowledge gained to many new situations.
<b>U</b>	Unsatisfactory – the student does below average work and is not making adequate progress toward mastering the course objectives and learning outcomes, struggles to produce adequate work demonstrating growth, and is only able to apply knowledge gained in limited situations

## ***3rd Grade – 5th Grade***

3rd through 5th grade students will be issued 4 official grade updates through PowerSchool. With NCVA being a cumulative program, the final grades given at the end of the school year is the official report card that reflects the student’s overall grades. The end of the year report card will be cumulative and will be one data point used in determining grade level/course promotion for the next school year. Promotion/retention decisions will be made using multiple data points collected throughout the year. Decisions will be made on mastery of state standards, successful completion of courses, and BOG/EOG testing scores as applicable. Grade marks will be based on the student’s level of success using a combination of categories and weights. Depending on the course and grade level, grades will be calculated based on progress, assessments, academic effort/engagement, and class participation. Grade marks for students in grades 3rd – 5th will be calculated as follows:

Grade Mark	Definition
<b>A</b>	90-100%
<b>B</b>	80-89%
<b>C</b>	70-79%
<b>D</b>	60-69%
<b>F</b>	0-59%

## ***6th Grade – 8th Grade***

Middle School students will be issued an official grade update through PowerSchool after each Quarter. The Semester grade will be comprised of the average of the two quarter grades (Example: Q1 + Q2/2= S1). The end of the year grade is the cumulative grade and is the official Middle School transcript grade for the

student. Promotion and retention decisions will be made using multiple data points collected throughout the year. Decisions will be made on mastery of state standards, successful completion of courses, and EOG testing scores where applicable. Grades for students in Middle School will be calculated as follows:

Grade Mark	Definition
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

### **9th Grade – 12th Grade**

High School students will be issued 4 official grade reports during the year: one at the midpoint of each semester and one upon conclusion of each semester. The final grade for a course will be based on an average of the two semester grades for non-EOC courses. Final grades for courses with a state EOC/CTE assessment will be calculated by an average of the two semesters totaling 80% and the EOC/CTE totaling 20% of the final grade. Grades are determined by the total of points a student earns on all **graded assignments and tests**. In accordance with NC State Board of Education policy, **NCVA uses the 10-point grading scale for high school students**. Points earned by student /Total points possible = Grade

*Example: In his or her math class, the student earns 563 points out of a total of 700 possible points. The grade would be 80%. ( $563/700 = 80\%$ )*

Grade Mark	Definition
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

### **High School Credit in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

In Middle School, advanced courses are only offered in Math. These courses are Pre-Algebra in Grade 7, and Math 1 in Grade 8. Math 1 is a high school credit course and will be included on an official transcript. Students enrolled in Math 1 are required to take and pass the Math 1 End of Course exam to receive high school credit. As a North Carolina public charter school, NCVA follows the statutes set forth by the North Carolina General Assembly. Information regarding the state’s most recent decisions regarding math placement can be found here. In order for a student to earn placement in an advanced math course, they must meet the requirements outlined in the general statutes.

### **Mid-Year Course Promotion/Placement Changes for 6-8:**

Students are enrolled in age-appropriate coursework for **all** subjects. However, due to multiple indicators such as diagnostic test scores, previous test scores, and parent feedback, there are some students who may be eligible for our Advanced Learner Program. (See Advanced Learner section).

Students are only allowed to change courses within the first 10 days of the school year at NCVA. Any requests for course changes must come from the parent/guardian in writing and be sent to the student’s counselor with final approval determined by the school administrator. If requests are granted, students are still responsible for previous work assigned in the new course. All requests submitted after the timeframe described above will not be considered.

## Late Work Policy

### Kindergarten - 5th Grade

- OLS-Graded assignments – any assignments not completed by the provided due date will be considered overdue. All overdue assignments will be moved to the “overdue tab” in the OLS. Students are expected to go in and make up all overdue lessons as soon as possible.
- Benchmark Assessments will have set due dates and will not be allowed to be completed late. Benchmark assessments will be entered as a grade for all students.
- Teacher-graded assignments, such as those created in Go Formative, will close on Monday for student completion. This ensures that timely instruction, following the assignment review by the teacher, can occur to target students' learning needs. After one week, students will receive a grade of zero if the assignment has not been submitted.
- In case of computer- or internet-issues, students are required to contact their classroom teachers immediately to communicate the issue, so please have a hardcopy of all teachers' names and phone numbers.

### 6th Grade - 8th Grade

#### I. OMS Assignments

- All OMS assignments are given a due date. Graded assignments, whether teacher or computer scored, are listed on the course calendar. These assignments must be completed and *submitted no later than the due date for that assignment to receive full credit for the work*. Any work that is not received by the due date will be considered missing and assigned a zero no later than the Tuesday following the due date.
- Teacher-graded assignments, such as those created in Go Formative, will have a one-week deadline for student completion from the date assigned. This ensures that timely instruction, following the assignment review by the teacher, can occur to target students' learning needs. After one week, students will receive a grade of 0 if the assignment has not been submitted.
- Under some circumstances, teachers may grant due date extensions on assignments. *Families should never assume that they will automatically grant these requests*. Due date extensions *must* be requested before the due date of the assignment during the school week. Requests received on or past the due date, or on a non-school day may not be granted.
- In case of computer- or internet-issues, students are required to contact their classroom teachers immediately to communicate the issue. Therefore, it is recommended to have a hardcopy of all teachers' names and phone numbers.

- II. **OMS Checkpoints and quizzes** remain open for the semester. Students have up to 3 attempts to take the OMS quizzes. The highest attempt will remain as the recorded grade.

Type of Assignment	Submission Window	Penalties
OMS Checkpoints	Always open.	Score remains 0 until it is turned in.
OMS Quizzes	Always open.	Score remains 0 until it is turned in.
OMS Teacher Graded Assignments	Closes one week (7 days) after the due date.	Score remains 0 after the one-week late window.
OMS Discussion Boards	Closes one week (7 days) after the due date.	Score remains 0 after the one-week late window.
OMS Tests	Closes one week (7 days) after the due date.	Score remains 0 after the one-week late window.
External Platforms (GoFormative, Classkick, Nearpod, etc.)	Closes one week (7 days) after the due date.	Score remains 0 after the one-week late window.

## High School

- All assignments, whether teacher or computer scored, are listed on the course calendar and are given a due date. These assignments must be completed and submitted by their assigned due date. Any work not received by the due date will be considered missing and assigned a 0.
- A grade of zero will remain until the assignment is completed, upon which teacher graded assignments will be changed according to the grading scale below:

1 week late from due date	10% off assignment grade
2 weeks late from due date	20% off assignment grade

- Assignments submitted more than two weeks late will not be graded and the zero will stand.
- In case of computer- or internet-issues, students are required to contact their classroom teachers immediately to communicate the issue. Please have a hardcopy of all teachers' names and phone numbers for reference.
- **Please be aware that because of the point values assigned to teacher- scored assignments, it is mathematically impossible to pass a course without completing them.**

Type of Assignment	Submission Window	Penalties
Lesson Checkpoints	Always open.	Score remains 0 until it is turned in.
Quizzes	Always open.	Score remains 0 until it is turned in.
Teacher Graded Assignments	Two-week late window.	10% within 7 days, 20% within 14 days. Score remains 0 if not submitted within two-week window.
Discussion Boards	Two-week late window.	10% within 7 days, 20% within 14 days. Score remains 0 if not submitted within two-week window.
Unit Tests	Grace period until the Sunday following due date.	Score remains 0 if the test is not turned in by Sunday.

## Awarding of Credit, Grade Promotion and Definition, Cohort Year, Prom, and Graduation

Students must have the required number of total credits (22) to receive a diploma issued from NCVA. Credit is not awarded for courses in which a student earns an F or fails to complete the required attendance (60 hours per semester or 120 hours per 1 credit course). Students may repeat a course in which they have earned an F. If the student passes the course on the second attempt, they will receive a grade that will replace the first attempt. If the student retakes the course as credit recovery, a grade of P (pass) or F (fail) will be inputted, but the previous failed course will remain on the transcript. Credit is granted for courses in which the student completes the attendance requirement and earns an A, B, C or D. Students are required to complete:

- 4 units of English/Language Arts
- 4 units of Math
- 3 units of Science
- For students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade prior to 2020-21, 3 units of Social Studies are required- 1 credit of Civics, 1 credit of World History and 1 credit of American History or AP US History
- For students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade after 2020-21, 4 units of Social Studies are required- 1 credit of Civics, 1 credit of World History, and 1 credits of American History or 1 credit of AP US History and 1 credit for Economics and Personal Finance
- 1 unit of Health/PE

- 6 units of Electives
- Students planning to attend a 4-year public college/university in NC also need to take 2 consecutive years of World Language.
- For specific courses required for graduation from high school, please see Appendix C.

Students who do not pass a course during the year will be required to complete credit recovery courses during summer school and/or during the school year. Failure to complete the credit recovery course(s) during the summer and/or during the school year may result in the student being administratively withdrawn from the NCVA program for regularly failing to participate in courses as permitted by law.

Students are only allowed to change courses within the first 10 days of the semester. Any requests for course changes must come from the parent/guardian in writing and be sent to the student’s counselor with final approval determined by the school administrator. If requests are granted, students are still responsible for previous work assigned in the new course. All requests submitted after the first 10 days of the semester will not be allowed.

### ***Cohort Year Classifications***

Students are placed in a graduation cohort year when they begin 9th Grade for the first time. A student’s cohort year is based on their expected year of graduation, which is calculated as the spring of their fourth year in high school. For example, a student who begins in 9th Grade for the first time in 2023-2024, will be assigned to the 2027 cohort. A student’s cohort year does not and cannot change, regardless of grade-level classification earned.

Grade Level	Cohort Year
9th Grade	2027
10th Grade	2026
11th Grade	2025
12th Grade	2024

### ***Credit Grade Level Promotion Guidelines***

NCVA determines grade level based on credits earned.

- 9th to 10th Grade (5 credits minimum required, including passing credits in English 1, Math 1)
- 10th to 11th Grade (11 credits minimum required, including the above as well as passing credits in English 2 and Math 2)
- 11th to 12th Grade (17 credits minimum required, which included the above as well as passing credits in English 3, Math 3, and Biology)
- 22 total credits are required to graduate.
- See appendix C for more information.

### ***Retention Guidelines***

Students who do not meet the minimum credit expectation for the proceeding grade level may be retained within the current grade level. All parents of students in danger of failure or retention will be notified through email, phone, and/or conferencing and written notice throughout the school year. Information regarding summer school to recoup a failing grade will also be communicated to parents and students throughout the year.

### ***NCVA Prom***

To attend prom, students must be classified as a junior or senior. Please review the credit grade level promotion guidelines above. Any junior or senior that wishes to attend prom will need to complete the NCVA Student Prom Approval form and return to the prom committee at least two months prior to the date of the prom. All students must present a valid photo id in order to be admitted into prom. Students who are on academic or truancy probation are not allowed to attend prom.

Each NCVA junior and senior can bring one guest to prom. Prom dates must be between the ages of 15-20 years old. Each prom guest must complete the NCVA Prom Guest Approval form which must be returned to the prom committee at least one month prior to the date of the prom. Prom dates must bring a valid photo id to prom in order to be admitted into prom.

Semi-formal to formal attire must be worn to attend prom. Exact dress guidelines will be posted on the NCVA webpage and sent to students and parents via NCVA publications.

NCVA administration has final approval regarding all aspects of prom from attendees (students and guests) to prom attire.

### ***NCVA Graduation***

Information about graduation materials such as invitations, cap and gowns, and pictures will be sent to seniors by email and via NCVA publications.

### ***High School Graduation Ceremony Requirements***

To participate in the graduation ceremony, students must complete all required credits by the last day of the Spring semester. Students that require summer school to complete their graduation requirements will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony.

The graduation ceremony will be in June at a location in Durham, NC. Business casual attire must be worn under the graduation cap and gown. Exact dress guidelines and final location details will be posted on the NCVA webpage and sent to students and parents via NCVA publications. Final grades may not be ready at the time of graduation due to state testing requirements. In those cases, students will receive the diploma jacket during the graduation ceremony and the diploma will be mailed to students once grades have been finalized.

Students are required to wear the cap and gown purchased through NCVA to the ceremony. Students may decorate their caps but should avoid anything that is vulgar or offensive. If the cap decoration is deemed inappropriate, the student will not be allowed to walk in the ceremony. Please reach out to your school counselor if you need to confirm what is acceptable.

## **Advanced Learners**

Many NCVA students have participated in Gifted and Talented or AIG programs before enrolling in our program. Students who present this documentation will be considered for the Advanced Learners Program (ALP) program. The OLS/OMS/OHS curriculum is already very rigorous. If you feel that your

student needs enrichment or more challenging work, please speak with your teacher and he/she will assist you with finding a way to meet the needs of your child.

### ***Advanced Learners Program***

The goal of the Advanced Learner Program is to provide an individualized learning experience that addresses the unique needs of a student who is advancing educationally at NCVA and requires additional opportunities to meet the educational and emotional needs of this unique population of students. Our model for services enables us to meet the needs of all students who demonstrate the need for academic challenge beyond the regular education curriculum. Elements of the ALP Program: Students in grades K-5th who qualify for the Advanced Learner Program are offered,

- Opportunities to advance to the next grade level of coursework in ELA and/or Math.
- Enrichment sessions.
- Enrichment activities and optional lessons to enhance learning.

### ***Elementary School: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Math Course***

5<sup>th</sup> grade Advanced Math will be offered to students who meet the qualifying criteria. Any students who are enrolled in Advanced Math during their 5<sup>th</sup> grade year will be on track to continue advanced courses in Middle School. To qualify for Advanced Math, students must meet two or more of the below criteria:

- Student has been identified as AIG in a previous school and can provide paperwork.
- Student scored a level 5 on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Math EOG.
- Student is in good standing with grades, attendance/participation, and progress in the OLS.
- Student has a recommendation from a previous teacher based on performance.

### ***Middle School Advanced Coursework***

Middle School students are offered the opportunity for advanced coursework in 6th – 8th Grade Math, Math 1, 6th – 8th Grade ELA, and 8th Grade science. These courses offer an advanced pace and deeper depth into the course standards.

*\*A small group may qualify for Math 1 during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, this is a High School level course and will remain on a student's permanent high school transcript.*

Adherence to the placement criteria must be maintained throughout the year to remain in the class. Student placement in an advanced course is determined by:

- Student grades,
- State test scores,
- Past teacher recommendation,
- A pre-test (if determined necessary).

## **High School Advanced Courses**

### ***Honors Courses***

Honors courses demand a high level of independence and self-discipline. Students synthesize and evaluate information and concepts from multiple sources and read texts typically assigned in college-

level courses. Students also demonstrate college-level writing in essays that require analysis of primary and secondary sources, responsible use of evidence, and comprehensive citation of sources. Successful completion of prerequisites, teacher/school counselor recommendation, and a strong interest in the subject are recommended for enrollment in an Honors course. Honors courses receive extra credit points towards GPA calculation. Student may elect to register for honors courses and teacher recommendations are required.

### ***Advanced Placement (AP) Courses***

NCVA Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college-level courses that follow curriculum specified by the College Board. Like Honors courses, AP courses require a greater degree of self-discipline for in-depth study of the subject. These courses are designed to prepare students for success on AP exams, providing students the opportunity to earn credit at most of the nation's colleges and universities. Successful completion of prerequisites, teacher/school counselor recommendation, and a strong interest in the subject are recommended for enrollment in an AP course. Students that take AP courses **MUST** take the AP exam by College Board during the first two weeks in May on the assigned exam day and time. Exam dates and times are predetermined and scheduled by the College Board. All AP exams will be held at a site in the Raleigh/Durham area. AP courses receive 1.0 extra credit points towards GPA calculation. Placement in an Advanced Placement course is subject to the following:

- Student must be a Junior or Senior – a sophomore may register with administration approval.
- Prior to taking an AP course, students must have a grade of an **A or B** in the connected prerequisite courses.

Students who fail to attend their scheduled AP exam for a reason deemed unexcused by the College Board will be responsible for paying the College Board fee and may result in being administratively withdrawn from NCVA. Failure to pay the fee will result in administrative action pending a meeting with the student, Learning Coach, and school administration to review the situation.

### ***Career and College Promise (CCP)***

High school students may be enrolled in Career and College Prep courses at a local community college that will count towards high school graduation to fulfill elective requirements. The student is fully responsible for initiating this process at their community college. This is only an option for 11th and 12th graders. Students must have an unweighted GPA of 2.8 at the time of application and then maintain a 3.0 unweighted GPA in all courses including CCP.

Classes are free, but any textbooks/fees are the responsibility of student. Students must make sure CCP courses do not conflict with live class connect requirements for their NCVA courses (check with your counselor for your NCVA course schedule). Students must send a copy of CCP application and schedule to their counselor once registered at college. Once students receive a final grade for their CCP course, they are to send a copy of the final grade to their NCVA counselor so that credits earned can be inputted onto the student's transcript.

If a student drops a CCP class or is withdrawn from the course by the community college after the five days in a 90-day/semester long course or 10 days in a 185-day/year long, student **MUST** inform their counselor. A WF will be assigned to the CCP course, and the grade of a F will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average on the student's transcript. Please note that no student can drop below 3 classes in a semester which includes CCP classes.

## ***National and Junior Honor Societies***

Students who excel academically may be eligible for Junior and/or National Honor Society. Eligible students will receive information regarding requirements and application process by email from the faculty. Students must be enrolled at NCVA for one full semester before they are eligible to be inducted into the Junior and/or National Honor Society.

## **End-of-course testing and the credit recovery option**

In courses requiring state end-of-course testing (Math 1, Math 3, English 2, and Biology), the school will apply the mandatory 20 percent weighting of the end-of-course test to the student's final grade. The student will be allowed to take the examination only once, at the end of the regular course duration and not at the end of an extended period granted through the credit recovery option. The end of course evaluation will be administered within the final 5 days of the course each semester per the school calendar.

If students repeat an EOC as credit recovery and have previously taken the EOC, students will not be required to retake the EOC exam. If students repeat the EOC course as a regular class, the school will treat students who repeat the course as though they were taking the course for the first time and all requirements will apply including retaking the EOC exam. All End-of-course testing results will be included in the student's permanent records and high school transcript.

## **Grade point averages (GPA)**

The uniform grading scale and system for figuring GPA and class rank will apply to all courses carrying Carnegie units, including units earned at the middle/junior high school level. As applicable, the school will recalculate GPAs already earned by students based on the three-decimal-point scale.

Grade point averages will be determined uniformly using the following formula. The formula will yield each student's GPA which can then be ranked from highest to lowest rank in class. Computations will not be rounded to a higher number. All diploma candidates are included in the ranking.

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{Sum of (quality points x units)}}{\text{Sum of units attempted.}}$$

## **Class Rankings**

Class rankings will be determined based on the grade point ratios ("GPRs") of students in grade twelve at the conclusion of the seventh semester of high school in order:

- To determine honor graduates and select a valedictorian and salutatorian. The high school will determine the manner of recognition of honors graduates, i.e., honor cords, special recognition in the graduation program/ceremony, etc.
- To provide information needed for applications for admission to post-secondary programs.
- To provide information students need for scholarships and other awards.
- However, class rank for LIFE Scholarships is determined at the conclusion of the spring semester of the senior year.

## Quality Points and Uniform Grading Scale

AVERAGE	GRADE	Standard Course	Honors Course	Dual Credit/AP Course
90-100	A	4.0	4.5	5
80-89	B	3.0	3.5	4
70-79	C	2.0	2.5	3
60-69	D	1.0	1.5	2
59 and below	F	0	0	0

## Course Withdrawals

With the first day of enrollment as the baseline, students who withdraw from a course within five days in a 90-day course or 10 days in a 185-day course will do so without penalty.

Students who withdraw from a course after the specified time five days in a 90-day/semester-long course or 10 days in a 185-day/year-long course will be assigned a WF and the F (as a 55) will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average.

The five and 10-day limitations for withdrawing from a course without penalty do not apply to course or course level changes approved by the administration of a school.

Students who drop out of school or are expelled after the allowed period for withdrawal but before the end of the grading period will be assigned grades in accordance with the following:

- The student will receive a WP if he/she was passing the course. The grade of WP will carry no Carnegie units and no quality points to be factored into the student's GPA.
- The student will receive a WF if he/she was failing the course. The grade of WF will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 55/F.
- If a student fails a course due to excessive absences, the school will record an FA on his/her transcript. The grade of FA will carry not Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 55/F.

## North Carolina DMV Driving Eligibility Certificate

At NCVA, students must pass 4 out of 6 classes for the year or 2 out of 3 classes per semester in order to be eligible to receive a Driving Eligibility Certificate issued by the school. Parents must make the request for the Driving Eligibility Certificate by school email to their child's NCVA counselor. Certificates will be processed each week on Thursdays and sent by mail to the student's address on file.

- **What is a Driving Eligibility Certificate?** Answer: A Driving Eligibility Certificate is used to verify a student is meeting academic and enrollment expectations for the state of North Carolina and therefore in combination with the other requirements outlined in §20-11 (d) (1), (2), and (3) may obtain either a limited driver's learner permit or a provisional (limited or full) driver's license.
- **Who needs a Driving Eligibility Certificate?** Answer: A person under age 18 seeking a driver's learner permit or provisional driver's license needs a Driving Eligibility Certificate. A person over

age 18 may also need a Driving Eligibility Certificate if the Driving Eligibility Certificate was revoked prior to age 18 due to disciplinary action during high school or community college. § 20-11(n1)

- **How does a minor enrolled in a public school within North Carolina obtain a Driving Eligibility Certificate?** Answer: Upon successful completion of a Driver Education program, the student may obtain a Driving Eligibility Certificate from the school once adequate academic progress (pass at least 70% of the maximum of possible courses each semester and meet promotion standards established by the LEA) 16 NCAC 06E.0301 has been verified by the school.
- **Why would a Driving Eligibility Certificate be revoked?** Answer: There are three reasons why a Driver Eligibility Certificate could be revoked.
  1. **DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL PRIOR TO AGE 18:** As of August 1, 1998, any public, private, federal, home-schooled, or community college student under age 18 who does not make adequate academic progress or drops out of school will have their driving permit or provisional license revoked. (§ 20-11). Under the Dropout Prevention Guidelines, a dropout student is one who has withdrawn from school before the end of the academic term and whose enrollment in an educational setting cannot be verified for 30 days. Parents should be notified in writing that the student's Driver Eligibility Certificate will be revoked. Parents may submit a hardship request to the principal or principal's designee to maintain the student's Driving Eligibility status.
  2. **DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** Disciplinary action includes an expulsion, a suspension for more than 10 consecutive days, or an assignment to an alternative educational setting for more than 10 consecutive days. (§ 20-11(n1)). Under the Lose Control/Lose License guidelines, the Driving Eligibility Certificate is revoked for one year. Unlike the Dropout Prevention guidelines that end when a student turns age 18, the revocation of a Driving Eligibility Certificate for disciplinary action can extend beyond age 18 if the disciplinary action took place during the time the student was age 17.
  3. **NOT MAKING ADEQUATE ACADEMIC PROGRESS:** At the end of each semester, students not passing 70% of the maximum possible courses are identified. Parents are notified that the student is not making adequate academic progress and have the option of submitting a hardship request to the principal or principal's designee to maintain the student's Driving Eligibility status.

## Outings/Events

NCVA sponsors optional outings for students and families on a regular basis that enhance the Stride K12 curriculum/learning activities. While attendance is not mandatory, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet other school participants and have conversations about our children and programs and share practices that work. Outings are opportunities for both the students and parents to socialize. Parents are responsible for the cost of transportation and any entrance fees associated with optional outings. While credit for field trips is not offered in lieu of the regular curriculum for most outings, attendance at these events can be included under an applicable subject area. Parents/ Legal Guardians must complete the Liability and Photo release form for their student to fully participate and attend outings and events.

Parents/Guardians are required to remain with students at all NCVA outings. Students may NOT be dropped off at any outing. Students who are of driving age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to attend an outing.

**Students and parents** are to abide by the code of conduct listed earlier in this handbook. Tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, and weapons of any kind are not permitted on school outings or events. If these circumstances arise, they will be dealt with in accordance with this handbook and all applicable state laws. NCVA parents and students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all optional outings. Parents are responsible for supervision of their children at all times. Any other group outings are not considered “official” outings unless a NCVA staff attends.

Students are expected to dress appropriately when attending outings. Examples of inappropriate dress include but are not limited to:

- Clothing, apparel, or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any other combinations thereof, advocates or promotes sexual activity, violence, death, suicide, or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demeans, degrades, or intimidates another because of race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, or gang membership.
- Apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff/lower back or sides of the upper body or torso and/or undergarments.
- Any clothing that is excessively tight, is of transparent material, see through material, or that is ripped or torn, or has suggestive signs or symbols.
- Any clothing through which underwear or any type of undergarment may be seen.
- Spandex, clothing that does not cover backs, clothing that permits viewing of cleavage, halter tops, tank tops with open sides, spaghetti strap tops, and muscle/tank shirts.
- Spikes, dog chains/chokers, ball bearing chains, wallet chains, or other jewelry that increases the risk for accidents.

### **Clubs**

There are multiple school level and Stride K12 clubs available to students. These clubs offer wonderful opportunities for students to express and expand their interests as well as interact with other Stride K12 students. Clubs are optional and will not affect a student’s grade. Students are welcome to participate in as many clubs as they like but club participation should not affect student’s ability to complete schoolwork. If a club meeting is scheduled the same time as a student’s required academic class, the NCVA class should take precedence. While a student is participating in the club meeting or activity all school code of conduct rules apply.

## **The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–
  - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent,
  - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family,
  - Sex behavior or attitudes,
  - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior,

- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships,
  - Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers,
  - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent, or
  - Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding,
  - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law, and
  - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)
3. Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –
- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party,
  - Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes, and
  - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. In addition to Policy 3210, Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials, NC VIRTUAL ACADEMY will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. NC VIRTUAL ACADEMY will notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. NC VIRTUAL ACADEMY will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. NC VIRTUAL ACADEMY will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the district has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.
- Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
 U.S. Department of Education  
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
 Washington, D.C. 20202

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provide parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights regarding the student’s education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.
- To request an inspection and review, the parent or eligible student should submit a written request to the Head of School that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The Head of School arranges access and notifies the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request an amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.
  - Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Head of School; clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school notifies the parent or eligible student of the decision and advises him/her of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.
  - Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA allows disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits the school to disclose information without consent is when the school discloses information to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by or contracted to provide services to or designated by the contractor to provide services to the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Directors of the School; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

FERPA requires that the school, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent’s or eligible student’s written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a child’s education records. However, the School may disclose “directory information” without written consent, the parent or eligible student, have advised the school in writing that he/she does not want all or part of the directory information disclosed. The method for objecting to disclosure of directory information is specified below. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include the following information

from education records in certain school publications or disclose it to certain parties. Examples include:

- Shipment of computer and school materials to and from student's home.
- Entry of student enrollment information into a computer database for use by school officials.
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. In addition, federal laws require the school to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents or eligible students have advised the school in writing that they do not want their student's information disclosed without prior written consent. The school has designated the following information as directory information:

- |                    |                        |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| • name             | • e-mail address       | • grade level          |
| • address          | • photo                | • activities and clubs |
| • telephone number | • athletic information | • awards               |

If there are certain items the School has chosen to designate as directory information that parents do not want disclosed from their student's education records, without their prior written consent, parents may opt out when logging in to PowerSchool each year. After the annual notification in PowerSchool, families may email [registrar@ncvacademy.org](mailto:registrar@ncvacademy.org) listing the question below and the answer to have this updated.

- Do you grant permission to allow directory information to be shared for non-commercial purposes?
- Do you grant permission for your student's contact information to be provided to the U.S. Military for the sole purpose of informing students of potential career opportunities?
- Do you grant permission to share information with NC public and private colleges?
- During the Junior year of high school, students take the state-administered nationally recognized college readiness assessment, currently the ACT. Do you grant permission to share your student's ACT scores with colleges and universities?

Notice of these rights is available upon request on audiotape, in Braille, and in languages other than English.

If a student has reached the age of 18 and does not wish for his/her educational information to be released to the parent or legal guardian, the student should submit a letter, ink signed by the student, indicating that desire. The letter will be placed in the student file and information will only be released to the student from that point forward.

## **Comprehensive Health Education Program**

According to North Carolina State Law, a comprehensive health education program will be taught to students in the charter school. As required by law, the health education program must include age-appropriate instruction on bicycle safety, nutrition, dental health, environmental health, family living, consumer health, disease control, growth, and development, first aid and emergency care, mental and emotional health, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, and reproductive health and safety education.

As required by law and beginning in 7th grade, reproductive health and safety education will include age-appropriate instruction on sexual abstinence until marriage, STDs, the human reproductive system, effective contraceptive methods for preventing pregnancy, and awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse.

Further, NCVA will comply with the legal requirements outlined in the law by providing parents and guardians and students the following information:

- Meningococcal meningitis and influenza and their vaccines at the beginning of every school year. This information will include the causes, symptoms, and how meningococcal meningitis and influenza are spread and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children.
- Cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, human papillomavirus, and the vaccines available to prevent these diseases. This information will be provided at the beginning of each school year to parents of children entering grades 5 through 12. This information shall include the causes and symptoms of these diseases, how they are transmitted, how they may be prevented by vaccination, including the benefits and possible side effects of vaccination, and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children.
- Preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, including induces abortion, smoking, alcohol consumption, the use of illicit drugs, and inadequate prenatal care. This information shall be provided to grades 7 through 12.
- The manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person in accordance with G.S. 7B-500. This information shall be provided to students in grades 9 - 12.
- Guidelines for individual diabetes care plans are implemented in which students with diabetes are enrolled.

### ***Parental Opportunities to Review Materials and Withhold Consent for Students Participation***

Each year before students participate in reproductive health and safety education or in other separate instruction on the prevention of STD's, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, the Head of School or designee shall notify parents of the opportunity to review the materials and objectives that will be used in instruction. Content materials will be sent to parents prior to course participation.

Parents have the right to withhold or withdraw consent for their child's participation in all reproductive health and safety education instruction or in specific topics such as STDs, the effectiveness and safety of contraceptive methods, and awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse. Parents may also withhold consent to student participation in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Any parent wishing to withhold consent must do so in writing to the Head of School.

## **Rights of Children with Disabilities**

This section explains the educational rights of children with disabilities to attend a charter school that has been authorized by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). Both federal and state law requires that admission to a charter school be conducted without regard to or consideration of whether the child has a disability; therefore, charter schools are open to all students, whether or not they are eligible to receive special education services. Charter schools must provide special education services,

as outlined in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), to all eligible students. This is a summary of your child's rights to attend and receive needed services from his or her public charter school.

**Charter schools accept and serve students with disabilities.** Charter schools within the NCDPI are open to all grade-eligible children on a space available basis. If more students apply than there are available spaces, a lottery is held to randomly determine who will be admitted. All students who wish to attend a charter school have an equal chance of admittance regardless of, and without any consideration of, any need for special education services.

**Charter schools must ensure that your child receives special education services if the child has been determined to be an eligible student with a disability by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team.** Charter schools within the NCDPI must ensure that students with disabilities receive the special education services to which they are entitled. The services consist of special education instruction and related services in the least restrictive environment. The amount and location of services (where services will be delivered) are determined by the student's IEP team and are documented in the student's IEP.

**Your child must receive related services if the IEP Team determines the child needs them.** Charter schools within the NCDPI must provide related services to students with disabilities if the IEP Team determines that the services are necessary for the student to benefit from special education (i.e., OT, PT, counseling, etc.).

**Charter schools are required to meet the needs of qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, even if the student is not eligible as a student with disabilities under federal and state special education laws.** Charter schools within the NCDPI are required to provide a FAPE to students with disabilities determined eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under Section 504 regulations could consist of education in general education classrooms with or without accommodations and/or supplementary services. These services will be decided upon by the child's 504 Planning Committee.

Direct questions or concerns about the information contained in this notice to:

Stacey Bryant, Special Programs Academic Administrator  
(919) 346-0121  
sbryant@k12.com

## Child Find

Child Find is a process based on the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part C. The purpose is to identify, locate and evaluate individuals with disabilities who may need special education services. Anyone can initiate the process: a parent, doctor, teacher, relative or friend.

To ensure that all NCVA students are properly identified and served, the parent or guardian will be asked at least twice if their student has ever been evaluated for possible special education services, and if the student has ever received special education services as a student in a public or private school. If so, the parent or guardian will be asked if their student has an active Individual Education Plan (IEP).

## Special Education Services

NCVA is responsible for providing a free and appropriate education under the federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). NCVA Special Education professionals assist parents in accessing and coordinating services pursuant to a current Individualized Education Plan. Parents should indicate that their child has an Individualized Education Plan on their enrollment form.

Special education services are available to students who have been identified with a disability and meet eligibility requirements. Documentation of the disability must be provided, such as a previous Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students with IEPs in need of adapted learning support services are those whose complex learning needs impact their academic achievement and their ability to make sufficient progress toward IEP goals in the general education setting. Services offered may include adaptations and modifications to the general education curriculum and specialized, individualized instructions.

The NCVA program is considered an **inclusive** program. The student's home is the regular classroom and additional services are provided by a highly qualified special education teacher in the online (virtual) classroom.

### What to expect:

- Every special education student will be assigned a special education teacher in addition to their regular education teacher.
- The special education teacher will work with the learning coach on IEP goals; how to modify and adapt the learning environment; and curriculum paths for success.
- The special education teacher will hold Class Connects online to provide specialized instruction that addresses a student's specific learning needs.
- The special education teacher is available to be used as a resource for instructional strategies and adaptations and modifications to the curriculum.
- Special Education meetings will be held either online or through the use of a conference call line.
- The special education teacher will provide a progress report at the end of each grading period noting the progress on the student's IEP goals.
- **Special Education students are required to meet the same attendance policies as their peers.** The home environment and individualized instruction can help the students create a learning environment that meets their specific needs.

## NC Diploma Considerations for Exceptional Children

Students will participate in the North Carolina Future-Ready Core Course of Study to obtain a North Carolina High School Diploma. Based on the student's ability levels and post-secondary goals some students will participate in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS), which provides a different route to earning a North Carolina High School Diploma yet ensures that students graduate "Future-Ready."

For students entering the ninth grade in 2015, and thereafter, will be expected to earn 22 credits as outlined by the specific course of study. In some cases, students with identified specific learning disabilities in mathematics may opt for an alternate math sequence to meet graduation requirements.

Students with significant cognitive challenges and other disabilities will be instructed on the extended content standards to allow them to earn a Graduation Certificate. Students must successfully complete 21 course credits in high school and pass all requirements noted in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) to earn the Graduation Certificate.

Each student will be assigned a special education teacher who will assist with graduation details, graduation plans and course selection throughout the year.

## **Related Services**

Related services, placement and goals are determined by the IEP Team. Options for related services should be discussed with the special education staff before a decision is made to enroll with NCVA.

NCVA provides related services through contracts with service providers (speech pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.). It is important for students and parents to attend all related services appointments in order for the student to receive maximum benefit and achieve IEP goals.

\*\*\* We understand that it is our responsibility to provide a free and appropriate public education to each enrolled special education student. Because NCVA is a virtual school of choice, it is understood that any related services or evaluations that are necessary to be provided face to face are not always in the home environment. Services will be offered at the nearest office to the family's home.

## **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

**What is MTSS?** The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) program is an instructional framework with multiple tiers which promotes school improvement through engaging, research-based academic and behavioral practices. NCVA employs a whole-school systems approach using data-driven problem-solving to maximize growth for all. Every student is a part of the tier structure, and every faculty member is involved in providing our students support within it.

**How does it work?** MTSS is an instructional model that consists of three tiers of instruction that are fluid and overlapping. The tiers provide varying levels of instruction to students in terms of duration and intensity. The more instructional support needed the higher up on the model the student moves. It is possible that a student may be receiving a different tier level of support in different subjects at different times throughout the year. Students can change tier levels multiple times in a year. Every student is given an opportunity to meet or exceed proficiency standards by teachers utilizing data in an effective and collaborative decision-making process which results in differentiating instructional practices for all learners.

**What does it look like?** Every four to six weeks grade levels meet with the MTSS team to discuss students. As a team, decisions are made about what tier of support a student requires. The higher the tier the more support the student gets. These decisions are based off data.

- All students are on Tier 1, this is regular core instruction where teachers support students as needed.
- Students that are at Tier 2 will have additional, required class connect sessions in their areas of need.
- Students that are at Tier 3 will have additional, required class connect sessions with a reading and/or math interventionist in their areas of need.

## APPENDIX A – Truancy/Non-Compliance/Withdrawal

As a charter school, the North Carolina Virtual Academy is required to monitor student attendance and progress, in accordance with all applicable statutes and State Board of Education rules and regulations.

All hours missed due to student absence should be made up within the Online school. Not making up hours is considered an unexcused absence and will result in truancy proceedings. Hours due to absences can be made up before or after the absence.

An NCVA parent or student may also be deemed non-compliant, and may be placed on probation for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to make sufficient progress as established during the student goal setting conference (15 lessons or 18 hours behind-equivalent to 3 days missing attendance),
- Repeated failure to log completed progress and attendance in a timely manner,
- Failure to respond to teacher/administrator phone calls and/or e-mails,
- Failure to participate in scheduled parent, student, & teacher conferences,
- Failure to attend live Class Connect (Newrow) sessions as indicated in students Individual Learning Plan or Back on Track Plan or as required by advisor or teacher,
- Failure to submit required work samples by deadlines,
- Failure to participate in state-mandated assessments,
- Failure to participate in required benchmark training sessions,
- Falsifying attendance and/or progress in the online school platform,
- Providing student(s) access to adult's online school platform username/password,
- Failure to follow other school policies,
- Failure to follow Back on Track Plan requirements, and/ or
- Cyber-bullying and/or inappropriate behavior in any online capacity or at any NCVA event.

### Non-compliance procedures:

**Step 1:** Prior to determining non-compliance, the advisor and teacher will communicate with the parent/learning coach about concerns by phone. The advisor and teacher will make every effort to support the parent/learning coach in their needs and will clearly and concisely communicate the policies and expectations for students and parents as outlined in the NCVA parent/student handbook. The advisor and teacher will conference with the lead teacher and the Academic Administrator as needed for assistance.

**Step 2:** In the event a student becomes non-compliant with work completion and/or live class attendance, the advisor/teacher team will work together to give your family additional support. Advisors and teachers will call the learning coach and student to offer suggestions and plans to get back on track. If there is no response from the learning coach and/or the student does not get back on track, the student's curriculum will be locked until a meeting with the Academic Administrator (principal) is held. If deemed necessary by administration, a wellness check may be implemented by the Sheriff's Department to ensure the safety of your student. Once the team and family meet, the curriculum will be unlocked, and the student is placed on probation with the opportunity to work and meet the expectations set forth by the Student Support Team. If the student continues to be non-compliant, administrative withdrawal may occur.

**Step 3:** If the non-compliance issue continues and is not resolved or sufficiently addressed within a reasonable timeframe following the conference, the advisor will notify the NCVA Administration; and at this point, the student is considered non-compliant. The NCVA Administration will send a letter and copy of the non-compliance report to the parent via email notifying the parent that the student is being removed from NCVA along with the appropriate appeal language to the Head of School. A copy of the letter and disengagement reports will be placed in part of their school record. The NCVA Administration will include language in that letter informing the parent of his/her legal obligation to enroll his/her student(s) in the local public school, private school, or notify the district of his/her intent to home-school, per state requirements.

**Step 4:** Pending any appeal by the parent/learning coach, the NCVA Administration will initiate the withdrawal process per Session Law 2014-100, Section 8.35(b)(3).

There are exceptions to this process in which the steps could progress more quickly than the timeline outlined above. Such examples might include truancy (60 hours of missing attendance), inappropriate language/behavior to other students/staff, not attending state testing, repeated cases of non-compliance or other situations that must be rectified instantly.

## **APPENDIX B – Class Connect**

Class Connect is a rich collaborative environment for online meetings. Teachers will use this tool throughout the year with students and parents. This will provide real time, remote one-on-one, small group, or large group teaching or training.

*Important Note: While students are engaged in live web conferencing sessions, the NC Virtual Academy Student Code of Conduct is in effect.*

Abusive language, profanity, harassment, racial, religious, or ethnic slurs, cheating, disruptive behavior, unauthorized access, false information, or threats constitute a violation of the student code and are subject to disciplinary action including suspension and expulsion.

To get the maximum benefit from Class Connect, all users should have speakers attached and turned on. Class Connect can be accessed with dial-up or high-speed Internet access. Additionally, all students are required to have a working microphone and their camera turned on during class connect sessions.

### Tips for Participating in a Class Connect Session

#### 1. Preparation

- Find a comfortable place with no distractions.
- Test out your microphone, camera and speakers. Students ARE REQUIRED to have a working microphone and camera.

#### 2. In Session

- In logging into the system, the student's OLS name will automatically appear.
- Test out your microphone, camera and speakers. Students ARE REQUIRED to have a working microphone and camera.
- Participate in the session by responding to polls and providing feedback to the moderator.
- Attend live sessions and be an active participant.
- Remember to raise your hand when you have a question or comment when using your microphone.

- Use Direct Messaging to send messages to other participants and the moderator during the session.
- Remember that running other applications on your computer (such as internet browsers) can slow your connection to Class Connect.
- Students must login no later than the first 5 minutes of the live session.

## APPENDIX C – Graduation Requirements

High School Graduation requirements are determined by the NC Department of Public Instruction. Follow the link below to view graduation requirements for:

- Future-Ready Course of Study for students who entered grade 9 between the school years of 2014-2015 to 2019-2020.
- Future-Ready Course of Student for students who will enter grade 9 in the 2020-2021 school year.
- Occupational Course of Study

<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/high-school-graduation-requirements>

## APPENDIX D – Attendance FAQs

**When can I log attendance?** The Learning Coach is able to log student attendance from your first day of school until the last day of school.

**Where do I need to log my child’s attendance and how often?** Student attendance hours are logged on the attendance screen on the parent’s OLS and must be entered daily by the Learning Coach.

**Why should I log attendance?** In addition to meeting the legal attendance requirements for NCVA, logging attendance provides you and your child with a log of the work accomplished.

**How many hours should my child log if he/she enrolled after the start of school?** Hours are prorated based on a student’s start date. Students who start after the first day of school should follow the daily or weekly attendance guidelines outlined in the Instructional Time section of this handbook, logging at least 6 hours of instruction per day.

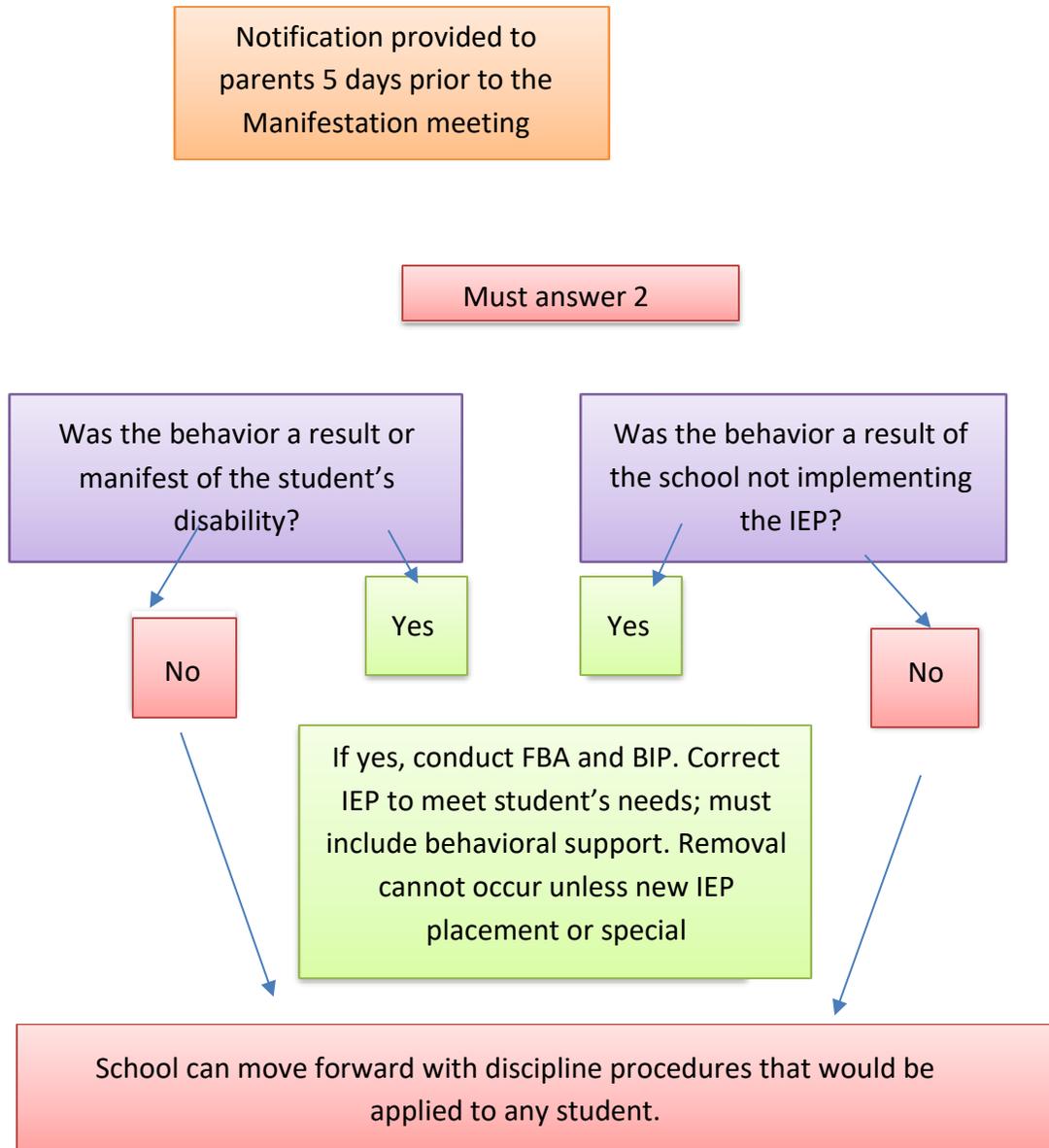
**Is there a maximum number of hours a day a student can log?** Families should log no more than 10 hours of attendance day. Notify your teacher of each circumstance requiring more than 10 hours of instructional time.

**Do I log attendance for the actual time the lesson took or just the default time that comes up on the OLS/LMS?** The default time is given as a guide for time to spend in each subject per day. If you consistently observe your student completing lessons before accumulating the required amount of time, you may benefit from setting a time limit to each subject, rather than expecting one lesson per day.

**What should I do if my student is ill?** Send an email to your child’s teacher(s) to communicate the student is ill. Any OLS/LMS progress that the student can comfortably achieve- such as reading from the literature selection- is encouraged. Attendance needs to be marked accordingly. If no work can be completed by the student due to illness, mark the day as non-attendance. The student should make up the hours and progress on a different day.

## APPENDIX E – Manifestation Determination Process

*The purpose of this review is to determine whether or not the child's behavior that led to the disciplinary infraction is linked to his or her disability.*



**Special Circumstances:** If the alleged behavior involved weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury—the child may be removed from their current placement for up to 45 days to an alternate placement.

**When should you conduct a Manifestation Determination Review?** Under NC guidance, a manifestation determination must occur within 10 days of any decision to change the child’s placement because of a violation of a code of student conduct.

**When should an FBA be conducted?** If a current FBA is available, it should be reviewed in regard to the behavior exhibited and in creating a new BIP to support the student. If no FBA has been conducted, permission to conduct an FBA should be obtained as soon as possible.

**Who should be invited? And Notification?** The same individuals that attend an annual IEP meeting should also attend a Manifestation meeting. In most cases students are not in attendance. Parents/Guardians should be notified 5 days prior to the conference. This timeline can be shortened if the parents/guardians request an earlier date. If this occurs, it should be thoroughly documented within the conference notes.

**What is discussed?** The IEP team must answer 2 questions regarding the behaviors exhibited:

- Was it a manifestation of the child’s disability, *or*
- Was the behavior a direct result of the LEA’s failure to implement the child’s IEP?

**How do determine the answer to the two questions?** IDEA states that the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the child’s IEP team must review “all relevant information in the student’s file, including the child’s IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents” as part of conducting a manifestation determination [§300.530(e)(1)]. This list is not exhaustive, according to the Department. It may include other relevant information in the child’s file, including placement appropriateness, supplementary aids and services, and if the behavior intervention strategies were appropriate and consistent with the IEP. (71 Fed. Reg. 46719)

**What if the answer is YES for failing to implement the IEP?** The LEA has an affirmative obligation to take immediate steps to ensure that all services set forth in the child’s IEP are provided, consistent with the child’s needs as identified in the IEP. (71 Fed. Reg. 46721) The student would continue in current placement. However, the parent and LEA can agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan. [§300.530(f)(2)]

**What if the answer is YES for being directly related to the disability?** The IEP team must consider:

- Functional behavioral assessment (FBA)—Has the child had one? Does one need to be conducted?
- Behavioral intervention plan (BIP)—Does the child have one? If so, does it need to be reviewed and revised? Or if the child does not have one, does one need to be written? [§300.530(f)]
- The IEP team must also address a child’s misbehavior via the IEP process as well. As the Department explains:
- The student should return to the placement from which he or she was removed with the implementation of the behavioral strategies identified in a child’s IEP, including strategies designed to correct behavior by imposing disciplinary consequences, is appropriate... even if the behavior is a manifestation of the child’s disability. (71 Fed.Reg. 46720-21)

However, the parents and school can agree to change the child’s placement as part of the modification of the BIP.

**What if the IEP Team answered NO to both questions?** The school has the authority to implement the same discipline and duration to the student as their nondisabled peers.

**What if the school held a Manifest at 10 days, then upon returning to school the behavior or another behavior is exhibited by the same student?** Upon creating a BIP, the behavior and the consequence for the behavior should be clearly outlined within the plan. If school removal is part of the behavior plan it should NOT be counted as an out of school suspension.

If a new behavior is exhibited that requires an out of school suspension a new manifestation determination meeting should be held. The same process as outlined above should be followed.

## **APPENDIX F – Title IX and Non-Discrimination Notice**

The North Carolina Virtual Academy (NCVA) is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of sex discrimination against students and employees.

Discrimination includes any gender-based disparate treatment, harassment, hostile environment, violence, or retaliation as prohibited by state and federal law. This policy provides guidelines for addressing instances or alleged instances of school-related sex discrimination. NCVA reserves the authority to deal independently with sex discrimination regardless of whether a complaint has been lodged in accordance with the complaint procedure set forth below.

### **DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION**

NCVA shall notify applicants for admission and employment, students, parents/guardians of school students, employees (including by materials related to admission and employment), that the School does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The notification shall be made in the form and manner required by law.

#### ***Title IX Sex Discrimination/Harassment: General Policy***

##### **General Terms**

The School is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and violence, as required by law. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to the Civil Rights Act provides that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

This policy and its associated procedures (see School policy, "Title IX Sex Discrimination / Harassment: Procedures," a/k/a "T. IX Complaint Procedures") shall apply in all instances to prohibit and address allegations of such misconduct.

##### **Prohibited Behavior**

The School and the law strictly prohibit the following behaviors, collectively referred to as “misconduct” under this policy.

1. **Sex discrimination (unequal treatment).** Sex discrimination **typically involves some form of conduct that denies** a student equal participation in or the benefits of any education program or activity or denies an employee equal workplace access or opportunity of the student's or employee's gender, respectively.
2. **Sexual harassment.** Sexual harassment, a form of discrimination, is any sexually-oriented conduct aimed at or negatively impacting a person, and which conduct is motivated by the victim's gender. Such conduct can take many forms, including verbal, nonverbal, physical, or other behaviors that fall under one or more of the following categories:
  - a. **Quid Pro Quo Harassment.** Typically involves a person in authority conditioning education or workplace benefits on the victim's willingness to engage in some type of sexual conduct. This kind of exchange or transaction in benefits for sexual favors involves a *quid pro quo* (i.e., "you do something for me, I do something for you.")
  - b. **Hostile Environment Harassment.** Typically involves some form of unwelcome and unpleasant conduct; conduct that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive to a reasonable person that it effectively denies a person equal access to the School's education program or activity or some regular workplace benefit or opportunity. Examples of sexual harassment, if motivated because of a victim's gender, may include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - i. Implied or express threats, aggression, or interference with normal conduct or movement,
    - ii. Deliberate, unwelcome touching of a sexual nature,
    - iii. Requests, express or implied, for sexual favors or activity,
    - iv. Taunting, agitating, or criticizing, including the use of epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, or lewd statements,
    - v. Flirtations, advances, or propositions.
  - c. **Sexual Violence.** This includes sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking within the School or affecting a School program or activity, and defined as follows.
    - i. **Sexual assault** is any non-consensual sexual act prohibited by law.
    - ii. **Dating violence** is violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. Such a relationship is determined based on its length, type, and frequency of interaction.
    - iii. **Domestic violence** includes such things as violent sexual crimes by a current or former spouse or intimate partner, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts by law.
    - iv. **Stalking** means engaging in the course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress.
3. **Retaliation.** Retaliation involves any action against an individual because the individual has made a report or complaint; has testified, assisted, or participated (or refused to participate) in a sex discrimination/harassment investigation, proceeding, or hearing. Retaliation can take many forms, including, but not limited to, intimidation, threats, coercion, disciplinary action, or discrimination.

### **Addressing Misconduct Under This Policy.**

The School has the authority to independently address misconduct whenever aware of its existence, regardless of whether a complaint has been filed or whether the conduct violates any other School policy. When misconduct occurs under this policy, the School Title IX Complaint Procedures shall be as follows. Any person believing they are a victim of misconduct is urged to file a complaint with the School's Title IX Coordinator.

## **Publication and Notice of Policy and Procedures**

This policy and the associated T.IX Procedures shall be posted prominently on the School's website and in the School's office. The School shall also notify applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, and persons providing applicant referrals for employment that the School does not discriminate based on one's sex in its educational programs or activities under Title IX. The notification shall be made in the form and manner required by law or regulation.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

For purposes of this policy and the related T.IX Procedures, if any person normally responsible for some role or duty in the complaint process is the alleged perpetrator of misconduct, then that person's supervisor or another comparable person of authority shall serve in the alleged perpetrator's role. In the case of allegations against the Head of School, the School's Executive Director or School Board president (or designee who is not a subordinate of the Head of School) shall serve in place of the Head of School.

## **Available Assistance**

Any individual, who believes they may have experienced any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment, or who believes that they have observed such actions taking place, may receive information and assistance regarding the School's policies and reporting procedures from any of the following:

### **The School's Title IX Coordinator:**

Nicholas Cioffi  
HR & Finance Office Administrator  
4220 NC Hwy 55, Suite 130  
Durham, NC 27713  
(919) 346-0121 x1024  
[ncioffi@ncvacademy.org](mailto:ncioffi@ncvacademy.org)

The United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights: 1-800-421-3481

## ***Title IX Sex Discrimination/Harassment: Complaint Procedures***

These procedures ("Title IX Procedures") apply to instances of alleged or reasonably suspected discrimination or harassment, based on gender, against any person under the control of the School according to the School's Title IX Non-discrimination/Harassment Policy ("Title IX Policy"). The School reserves the right to interpret and apply these procedures ("Title IX Procedures") consistent with the Title IX Policy and subject to the law.

## **I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **General Information and Assistance**

Any individual who believes they are a victim of gender-based discrimination or harassment under the School's Title IX Policy is encouraged to contact the School's Title IX Coordinator.

**Key Terms and Designations:** The following terms and role designations apply to these procedures:

- **Complainant:** A person filing a complaint according to these procedures. (Any reference to a Complainant may include the Complainant's parent, advisor, or other assisting person)

- **Respondent:** The alleged perpetrator of prohibited conduct under the School’s Title IX Policy. (Any reference to a Respondent may include the Respondent's parent, advisor, or assistant to Respondent.)
- **Title IX Coordinator (or T.IX Coordinator):** A School employee assigned the responsibility to coordinate the complaint process.
- **Investigator / Preliminary and Final Investigative Reports:** An Investigator is a person assigned to investigate a valid complaint on behalf of the School and to issue both Preliminary and Final Investigative Reports (or “Preliminary Report” and “Final Report”) for the Adjudicator’s consideration. The Investigator is not a decision-maker in the complaint process but may present recommended findings of fact, conclusions, and corrective actions in the Reports. The **Preliminary Report** is the initial draft report prepared by the Investigator following investigation of the complaint and issued to the parties for their review and responses, to be considered by the Investigator before preparing the **Final Report**.
- **Adjudicator / Initial Determination:** The person assigned, on behalf of the School, to review the Final Investigative Report and supporting record, make further inquiry as needed, and determine the validity of the complaint in the form of a written **Initial Determination**.
- **Appeal Officer/Panel / Appeal Determination:** The person or panel of persons assigned, on behalf of the School, to review (1) an appeal challenging an Initial Dismissal Decision by the Executive Director (or designee); or (2) an appeal challenging an Initial Determination by an Adjudicator. If an appeal is granted, the Appeal Officer/Panel will issue to the parties, as the respective circumstances require, a written Appeal Decision (as to the Initial Dismissal Decision) or Appeal Determination (as to the Initial Determination), upholding, modifying, or reversing the prior decision or determination, respectively.
- **Standard of Evidence / Clear and Convincing Evidence:** The degree of proof required to uphold allegations of a Respondent's misconduct and culpability. The School requires that all Report findings and recommendations and all Determinations of culpability be supported by **Clear and Convincing Evidence** to overcome the presumption of the Respondent’s non-culpability.

### Interim Support Measures

In response to a formal or informal complaint, the School shall offer Supportive Measures available to the Complainant and the Respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator will provide a written explanation of interim support measures available and inquire to determine what corrective actions the Complainant may be seeking. If the Complainant identifies an interim support measure not already provided by the School, the School will consider whether it can provide such measure with minimal burden to the Respondent or others. The following are examples of interim support measures:

- Academic accommodations, including change in classes, testing, or assignments,
- Medical and mental health services, including counseling,
- Modifications to education conditions (for students) including extracurricular activities, field trips, on or off-campus activities, or (for employees) work conditions,
- A “no contact” directive pending the outcome of an investigation; such a directive serves as notice to both parties that they must not have verbal, electronic, written, or third-party communication with one another,
- Providing an escort to ensure a student Complainant can move safely between school programs/ activities,
- Transportation accommodations
- Assistance identifying an advocate to help secure additional resources or assistance, including off-campus and community advocacy, support, and services/

## Privacy Protections

The School will never use or allow questions or evidence protected by a legally recognized privilege (e.g., attorney-client, doctor-patient), unless the person waives the privilege in writing, or such use is otherwise required, legally.

The School cannot unilaterally access or consider a party's records if those records are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, or other recognized professional and made to provide treatment to the party. These records can only be accessed with a party's voluntary written consent. The School must keep confidential the identity of Complainants, Respondents, and witnesses, except as required by FERPA, or as required by law, or as necessary to carry out a Title IX proceeding.

During the complaint process, questions, or evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior – even with the Respondent accused of sexual harassment, and even in the cases where the Respondent already possesses evidence about sexual history -- are not deemed relevant.

## Informal Resolution

After a formal complaint is filed, the School may, in its discretion, offer and facilitate informal resolution options if the parties mutually agree. However, informal resolution may not be offered or allowed when involving student complaints against an employee Respondent. A party has the right to withdraw from informal resolution and resume the complaint process.

## Complaint Dismissals

The law *requires* the School to dismiss a complaint when the alleged misconduct

- fails to meet the definition of sexual discrimination or harassment (per the Title IX Policy);
- did not occur in a School educational program or activity; or
- did not occur in the United States,

When a complaint is dismissed, the School may still address the alleged misconduct in a separate proceeding if it may have violated some other law or school policy. The School, in its discretion, *may* dismiss a complaint when

- the Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing of a request to withdraw the complaint,
- the Respondent is no longer enrolled in (if a student) or employed by (if an employee) the School, or
- Specific circumstances prevent the School from gathering the necessary evidence to sufficiently investigate and determine an outcome.

If the Title IX Coordinator believes there is substantial reason to dismiss a complaint, the Coordinator shall make a written request to the Executive Director (or designee) to review it. The Executive Director will decide whether to dismiss the complaint. If the complaint is initially dismissed, the Title IX Coordinator shall, on behalf of the Executive Director, promptly notify the parties in writing of the initial dismissal and the reasons.

Either party may appeal an initial dismissal decision by submitting a written request for appeal to the Title IX Coordinator within five (5) days of that initial decision. If the initial dismissal is not appealed in a timely or proper manner, the dismissal decision shall become final.

The Title IX Coordinator shall forward a timely request to a designated Appeal Officer or Panel, according to the Appeal process set forth further below in these procedures. Furthermore, the Target Deadlines in these

procedures (set forth below) shall be calculated based on the date of the complaint filing, shall be adjusted by adding ten (10) additional days to the calculations.

### **Complaint Process Officials: Fairness / Conflicts of Interest**

All officials involved in the complaint process (“Complaint Officials”) shall be objective, neutral, fair, and adequately trained and skilled in the conduct of their respective duties. No Complaint Official may serve in more than one role in any single complaint process.

A complaint official shall not serve in a complaint process if s/he has an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest; this includes being a subordinate or close colleague of an employee who is a party or is a family relative of a party. A Complaint Official (or prospectively appointed official) is duty-bound to notify the T.IX Coordinator of any such conflict. The Executive Director (or designee) shall serve in the T. IX Coordinator’s place if the conflict of interest involves the T.IX Coordinator.

In any instance where a Complaint Official or potential Complaint Official has a conflict of interest or is a party in the complaint process, the T.IX Coordinator shall appoint a qualified alternate for such role. The Executive Director (or designee) shall serve in place of the regular T.IX Coordinator when the Coordinator has a conflict of interest.

Whenever the Executive Director has a conflict of interest or is a named party in a complaint process, the Board Chairperson (or designee) shall serve in the Executive Director's place, as needed. In such instances, the T.IX Coordinator shall serve under the close supervision of the Executive Director (or designee) in carrying out the Coordinator duties. (This measure is necessary to avoid undue influence or bias if the T.IX Coordinator is a subordinate of the Executive Director.)

### **Content of Investigative Reports and Determinations**

Any conclusions or determinations made in the complaint process, whether in the Investigator's Reports or Adjudicator or Appeal Determinations (including a Final Determination), should include the following elements (in whatever form and scope deemed appropriate):

- a) **An executive summary** of the primary allegations, applicable school policies allegedly violated, conclusions drawn regarding culpability, and recommended corrective actions if necessary.
- b) **Complaint procedures** completed at that point in time, including a summary of primary investigative measures.
- c) **Findings of fact** relative to the allegations
- d) **Analysis and conclusions** relative to the allegations and school policies violated or not violated.
- e) **A summation** regarding the ultimate determination of culpability.
- f) **Any recommended or required corrective actions**; these include remedies for the Complainant or disciplinary sanctions for Respondent (if the Respondent is culpable). Any remedies should address how the Complainant's access to education (in the case of a student) or workplace equity (in the case of an employee) will be restored or preserved, as necessary, with an accompanying rationale.
- g) **Any applicable and subsequent procedural rights of the parties** within the complaint process.

## II. COMPLAINT PROCESS STEPS

### Process Overview, Target Deadlines, and Extensions/Delays

**Timing / “Days.”** The following chart provides a step-by-step overview of the complaint process stages, with detailed descriptions indicated below. All steps should be completed as promptly as possible, but no later than a target deadline, unless there is good cause for delaying a deadline. The decision to postpone a deadline may be made by the Title IX Coordinator or the complaint official presiding over the current process stage. Reference to a “day” or number of days shall refer to a School business day unless otherwise noted. In the timeline chart below, a deadline marked with an asterisk indicates a calculation based on a calendar day, not a School business day. The date the School received actual notice of a complaint (formal or informal) constitutes the “Complaint Date” (Day 0). Target Deadlines calculated from the complaint date shall be adjusted by **adding ten (10) days when a party appeals an initial dismissal decision.**

### Complaint Stage Target Deadlines\*\*

Date of complaint filing (i.e., the date that the School has actual notice of the complaint) Complaint Date (“C”)

- **C + 0** - T. IX Coordinator meets with Complainant to discuss the complaint, review rights, policies, processes, supportive measures, how to formalize the complaint, etc.
- **C + 1 (Day)** - Formal complaint finalized and signed if, after initial discussions and review, Complainant or T.IX Coordinator believe grounds exist to proceed with Complaint. *(Note: The Complainant shall have the right to formalize a Complaint even if T. IX Coordinator believes the matter should be referred for dismissal determination.)* T.IX Coordinator evaluates if grounds to dismiss Complaint *may* exist and whether to forward the Complaint for a dismissal determination by the Executive Director. *(Such referral and determination may also occur subsequently, as appropriate.)\*\**
- **C + 3** - If applicable, dismissal referral (by T. IX Coordinator) and Determination by Executive Director *(Note: referral for and dismissal may also occur later in process as new information arises or circumstances allow; the right to appeal any dismissal shall be made within 10 days of a Dismissal Determination.)\*\**
- **C + 7** - Assignment of Investigator, Adjudicator, Initial Notice of Complaint to Parties Final Investigation Report issued. Adjudication process initiated.
- **C + 30\*** - Adjudicator review of Final Investigative Report, the opportunity for parties to submit questions, further inquiry (as needed), Initial Determination issued.
- **C + 45** - Right to Request Appeal Adjudicator Determination + 5
- **C + 60\*** - Appeal Determination

\*\*If a Complaint is referred for dismissal, initially dismissed, appealed, and the initial dismissal is overturned on appeal and allowing the Complaint to proceed, all timelines shall be adjusted based on the number of days required for the dismissal and appeal process. Complaint process target deadlines may be postponed for good cause. In such instances, the parties and other affected persons shall be notified of the postponement and its reasons. Good cause for a delay may include such things as an excusable absence of a party or witness due to illness, an unavoidable scheduling conflict; a law enforcement process affecting the complaint process; the need to provide accommodation; instances when students or non-administrative employees are not at the School and such individuals are necessary to but not available in the Complaint process (e.g., teacher workdays, summer vacations, other breaks in classes and workdays).

## Detailed Process Stages and Requirements

- 1. Filing and Formalizing a Complaint:** Any person who believes s/he is a victim of prohibited conduct under the T. IX Policy (the "Complainant") is urged to report the matter to the T.IX Coordinator promptly. Once the School has actual knowledge of misconduct under its Title IX Policy, it shall respond as promptly as feasible, normally within one day. Actual knowledge means notice of or allegations received by the Title IX Coordinator, a school official with authority to institute corrective measures or any school employee. Complaints may be informal and formal. An informal complaint is any notice to the School, by any reasonable means of communication (e.g., email, personal communication, written notice), of an allegation of misconduct under the Title IX Policy. A formal complaint is a detailed description of an informal complaint set forth in a standardized form provided by the School, completed by and signed by the Complainant or the Complainant's parent/guardian or advisor, or signed by the Title IX Coordinator.
- 2. Initial Response / Meeting with Complainant:** When the complaint is filed, the T.IX Coordinator shall meet promptly with the Complainant. The Coordinator will inform the Complainant of the right to file a formal complaint and how to do so, review the complaint process, answer the Complainant's questions, and provide Complainant with a copy of the T.IX Policy and Procedures.
- 3. Investigator and Adjudicator Appointment:** The Title IX Coordinator shall appoint an objective, trained, competent, and unbiased Investigator and Adjudicator to the matter within seven days.
- 4. Notice of Complaint:** The Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the complaint filing to the relevant parties and the Investigator. Such notice shall include the following:
  - a. The names of the Complainant and the Respondent,
  - b. A brief summary of the essential allegations of wrongdoing,
  - c. A more detailed account of the relevant allegations and facts, including critical dates, actions, witnesses, and individuals with relevant knowledge,
  - d. The presumption of non-culpability of the Respondent,
  - e. The range of possible remedies and disciplinary sanctions following any determination of culpability,
  - f. The standard of evidence that will apply to investigative findings, recommendation, and any determination,
  - g. Notice of any School code of conduct provision prohibiting the making or facilitating any false statements or evidence in a grievance or complaint process
  - h. That the parties may
    - i. have an advisor of their choice,
    - ii. request to inspect and review the available evidence and a copy of relevant code of conduct,
    - iii. participate, by mutual written agreement, in informal resolution when not involving a student allegation against an employee, and
    - iv. appeal an initial complaint dismissal or Initial Determination
- 5. Investigation / Preliminary and Final Investigation Report:** The Investigator shall begin to investigate the complaint as promptly as practicable, but normally no more than ten (10) working days from the date the School receives notice of the complaint. The Title IX Coordinator and Investigator shall have the complete cooperation of all persons during the investigation. The investigation should be completed as promptly as possible, but no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date the School has notice of the complaint, unless there is good cause for a delay. The Investigator shall meet with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the Complainant, Respondent, and any witnesses to the alleged misconduct conduct, or other persons who may have relevant knowledge or information. The Investigator shall not interview the Respondent without giving the

Respondent reasonable time to prepare for such an interview, following initial notice of the complaint. The investigation shall be carried out as discreetly and confidentially as possible. The Investigator will objectively evaluate all relevant evidence and make all necessary credibility determinations. Following a reasonably thorough investigation, the Investigator will prepare a Preliminary Report and simultaneously issue copies to the parties of the Report and evidence on which it relies. The Investigator shall notify the parties that they may have up to ten (10) days to submit to the Investigator written responses to the Initial Report, including any questions they wish the Investigator to ask of the other party or consider. The Investigator will promptly provide a copy of each party's response to the other party after s/he receives both responses or after the ten-day response period, whichever comes first. The Investigator shall objectively, equitably, and diligently consider and address the parties' written responses. The Investigator shall prepare a Final Investigative Report, modifying the Initial Report as warranted by any party responses or other relevant considerations. The Final Report will be provided simultaneously to the parties, the Title IX Coordinator, and the Adjudicator within thirty (30) calendar days from the complaint notification date, unless good cause requires a postponement. The Investigator's Preliminary and Final Reports shall address the required Report elements previously set forth in these procedures.

- a. **Adjudicator Determination.** The complaint shall be resolved in a written Initial Determination issued by the School's appointed Adjudicator, no sooner than ten (10) days after the Investigator issues the Final Report. The Initial Determination may reasonably adopt or incorporate any portion of the Investigator's Final Report and address the required Determination elements previously set forth in these procedures.

## 6. Appeals

**Initial Dismissal Decision Appeals.** A party has the *right* to appeal an Initial Dismissal Decision by the Executive Director. In such instances, the matter shall be handled according to the procedures set forth previously. (See "Complaint Dismissals")

**Initial Determination Appeals.** A Party also has a right to appeal any Initial Determination by the Adjudicator, but only in the following circumstances and by showing with reasonable evidence, (1) a substantial procedural irregularity that affected the determination outcome; (2) new and relevant evidence that was not reasonably available when the determination was made; or (3) the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, or Adjudicator had a demonstrable conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome. An appeal of an Initial Determination may also be *allowed in the discretion of the Executive Director* (or designee) if s/he believes other compelling reasons require such appeal. An appeal request must be submitted in writing to the Title IX Coordinator within five (5) days following the Initial Determination, as the case may be, and shall clearly and concisely set forth the basis for a right to appeal, including all supporting evidence. Failure to submit a timely and substantively compliant appeal request shall constitute a waiver of any right to appeal. The Title IX Coordinator will appoint an Appeal Officer or Panel to serve as an impartial decision-maker. The Hearing Officer/Panel shall review the parties' appeal submissions, the existing complaint process record, and any other relevant and available information deemed appropriate. The Appeal Determination shall be issued as promptly as possible, but no later than sixty (60) calendar days from the original complaint date, subject to any postponement for good cause. The Appeal Determination shall address the required Determination elements previously set forth in these procedures. There shall not be a right to any live, in-person hearing unless the Appeal Officer/Panel believes circumstances compel such a live hearing. Upon receipt of a proper Initial Determination Appeal request, the Title IX Coordinator will issue a written notice to each of the parties that includes the following:

- A copy of the appeal request and supporting documents

- The applicable appeal procedures, including the identity and role of the Appeal Officer/Panel
- The right of the parties (a) to submit to the Appeal Officer/Panel and written, relevant questions a party wishes to address to the other party or a witness, (b) to receive the answers to questions submitted, and (c) to allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.
- Relevant questions include only those that address whether grounds for appeal exist and their implications for the appeal determination.
- A party is entitled to an explanation for any rejection of the party's submitted question.

**Corrective Actions.** In cases involving a determination of Respondent's culpability, the School shall take appropriate corrective actions to designed to prevent the misconduct from recurring, and restores and preserves the Complainant educational or workplace rights (as the case may be). Corrective actions include (a) appropriate remedies for the Complainant and (b) any appropriate disciplinary sanctions. Examples of such corrective actions are as follows.

**A. Remedies.** Remedies for a Complainant may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing an escort to ensure that the Complainant can move safely between classes and activities,
- Ensuring the Complainant and perpetrator do not share classes or extracurricular activities,
- Moving the Respondent or Complainant (if the Complainant requests to be moved) to a different classroom or location,
- Providing services including medical, counseling, and academic support services, such as tutoring,
- or Training or retraining school employees on the School's responsibilities to address allegations of misconduct and how to conduct Title IX investigations,
- Developing materials on sexual discrimination and harassment, which should be distributed to all staff and students,
- Conducting bystander intervention and sexual discrimination and harassment prevention programs with students or staff,
- Conducting a School climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that the School is free from sexual misconduct, and using that information to inform future proactive steps that the School might take,
- Targeted training for a group of students if, for example, the sexual harassment created a hostile environment (i.e., on an athletic team),
- When the School cannot conduct a full investigation into a particular incident (i.e., when it received a general report of sexual violence without any personally identifying information), it should consider remedies for the broader student population in response.

**B. Disciplinary Sanctions.** Disciplinary sanctions against a culpable student or employee Respondent may include the following:

- **For Student:** verbal warning, written warning, interim suspension, restitution, suspension, expulsion, required training, counseling, required completion of a probationary period without additional infractions, or requiring the Respondent to stay away from and not communicate with the Complainant in and during any School setting or activity.
- **For the employee:** verbal or written warning or reprimand, placement on a closely supervised action plan or probationary status, change of duties, salary penalty or reduction, suspension without pay, dismissal, reporting to law enforcement (in instances of illegal or potentially illegal activity related to the misconduct).

**C. The T.IX Coordinator Oversight.** The T.IX Coordinator is responsible for facilitating and documenting (a) the implementation of any remedy and (b) disciplinary sanctions carried out by appropriate School officials. If the Coordinator suspects or know of a failure to implement required remedies and sanctions fully, the Coordinator will submit a written notice of concerns to the Executive Director.

**Title IX Sex Discrimination/Harassment: Student Formal Complaint**

**Instructions.** If you believe that you have been the victim of sexual harassment or other sexual discrimination (hereafter, collectively “harassment”), please fill out this form, sign where indicated below, and submit it by hand delivery, electronic mail, or U.S. mail using the contact information listed for the School’s Title IX Coordinator (listed at bottom) or to any other school supervisor or employee.

This formal complaint form is intended for use by the alleged victim of Title IX sexual harassment (referred to in Title IX Regulations as the “complainant”). Under Title IX and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a parent or legal guardian may sign a complaint form and otherwise act on behalf of a minor in the formal complaint process, or by the School Title IX Coordinator.

Under federal law, only an alleged victim of sexual harassment who is currently participating or attempting to participate in the School’s education program or activity (such as an enrolled student, an employee, or an applicant for employment or admission) has the right to use the formal complaint process to initiate an investigation. The School will process all formal complaints in accordance with the law and related School policies. Please print or type when completing this form.

Name of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the complainant participating in or attempting to participate in a School education program or activity? (See instructions.) Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If you are a parent or guardian filling this form out on behalf of a minor complainant, please provide your contact information below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

You have the right to be represented by an advisor during the complaint process. The advisor may be, but does not have to be, an attorney. If you will be represented by an attorney or other advisor in presenting your complaint, please identify the person and provide the contact information below. If unknown at this time, you may provide this information at a later time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any additional individuals that you intend to bring with you to any meetings or interviews associated with this complaint and provide their contact information below. You may add additional pages or provide this information at a later time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the facts and circumstances of the alleged sexual harassment causing this complaint. (Give specific, factual details. Attach additional sheets if necessary and indicate below how many additional pages will be attached to ensure complete receipt of your complaint.)

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In a Title IX formal complaint process, the person who is alleged to have committed the sexual harassment is called the "Respondent." Please provide the name(s) of the person or people you allege to be the Respondent(s) responsible for the alleged sexual harassment. If applicable, please include each Respondent's title or position (if any employee) or name and grade (if another student):

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When and where did the alleged sexual harassment occur? Please provide specific dates, times, and locations, if possible, of each occurrence.

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Please explain how the alleged sexual harassment has impacted you. This could include physical injuries as well as impacts on your ability to access or benefit from the School's education program or activities.

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Please provide the names, titles/grades, and contact information of anyone who may have witnessed or knows of the alleged conduct.

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If you have reported these allegations to another person, please state to whom you reported the alleged sexual harassment and provide their contact information (if known).

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Title IX does not require complainants to attempt to resolve complaints of sexual harassment informally before filing a formal complaint. Nonetheless, if you have reported these allegations to a School employee, please state when, to whom, and what response you received. Please list below any evidence that you believe is relevant to your allegations. This could include audio or visual media, physical objects, online materials, text messages, voicemail messages, screen captures, emails, or any other item you are attaching or intend to make available for the purpose of this complaint. If known, please also identify any information in the School's possession that you believe to be relevant to your allegations and would like the School to review (such as emails or security camera footage).

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Please provide any other information that would be helpful for the School in reviewing your allegations.

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Please describe the outcome or remedy you seek for this complaint.

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Please provide below your physical or digital signature.

Complainant name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

If complainant is under 18, parent/guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of filing: \_\_\_\_\_

If this formal complaint is being signed by the School's Title IX Coordinator instead of a complainant:

Title IX Coordinator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title IX Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of filing: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notice to Complainant:** This document is a legal record of the allegations of sexual harassment that you have reported to the School in order to request a formal investigation. Please keep a copy of this completed form and any supporting documentation for your records. Please also review your rights and responsibilities as set for the in the School's Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy (Harassment Policy) and the related Complaint Procedures (Procedures), which are available on the School website at: <https://ncva.k12.com/title-ix-non-discrimination.html>

Any questions or concerns that you may have during this process may be directed to the School's Title IX Coordinator. If, after reviewing your complaint form, the Title IX Coordinator finds that the allegations are not appropriate for a Title IX sexual harassment formal complaint process but should be investigated by the School under a different policy or procedure, your formal complaint form will be forwarded to the appropriate School personnel in accordance with School policies. You have the right to appeal the dismissal of your formal complaint, as explained in the Procedures.

**Title IX Coordinator Contact Information:**

Nicholas Cioffi  
HR & Finance Office Administrator  
4220 NC Hwy 55 Ste 130  
Durham, NC 27713  
(919) 346-0121 x1024  
ncioffi@ncvacademy.org

**NCVA Title IX Coordinator**

Nicholas Cioffi  
HR & Finance Office Administrator  
4220 NC Hwy 55 Ste 130  
Durham, NC 27713  
(919) 346-0121 x1024  
ncioffi@ncvacademy.org

***If grievance procedures are needed in another language, please notify the school office.***

## APPENDIX G—McKinney–Vento Act

### *Parent/Student Rights for Those in Experiencing Homelessness*

North Carolina Virtual Academy (NCVA) shall provide an educational environment that treats all students with dignity and respect. Every student experiencing homelessness shall have access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth, including homeless unaccompanied youth, applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available.

A student is considered homeless if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. A student may be considered eligible for services under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act if he or she is presently living:

- In temporary shared housing, a shelter, or transitional living program,
- At a bus station, park, car, or abandoned building,
- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason,
- Living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations,
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters,
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings,
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings,
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances,
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances.

Identified students under the law will be eligible for immediate enrollment or placement on the wait list if it is determined to be in the best interest of the student, depending on grade level space available. Documentation and immunization records cannot serve as a barrier to enrollment in the school.

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children. If you have or know of a child who could benefit from such a program, please contact the North Carolina Virtual Academy Homeless Liaison, Paige Adams, at [padams@ncvacademy.org](mailto:padams@ncvacademy.org) or call (919) 346-0121 ext. 2030 for more information.

For more information visit the National Center for Homeless Education at <https://nche.ed.gov/>. For detailed information on homeless youth identified in North Carolina, please visit <https://hepnc.uncg.edu/about/>

### ***State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth:***

Lisa Phillips – (337)315-7491 | [lphillip@serve.org](mailto:lphillip@serve.org)

*A professional human translator may be requested at any time by contacting NCVA directly at (855)669-3660.*

## APPENDIX H – Migrant Education Program

NCVA will identify, support, and accurately report all students who qualify for the North Carolina Migrant Education Program. The mission of the North Carolina Migrant Education Program is to help migrant students and youth meet high academic challenges by overcoming the obstacles created by

frequent moves, educational disruption, cultural and language differences, and health-related problems. We are committed to meeting the needs of all children. If you have or know of a migrant student at NCVA or have questions about the program, please contact the North Carolina Virtual Academy Migrant Program Coordinator, Paige Adams, at [padams@ncvacademy.org](mailto:padams@ncvacademy.org) or (919) 346-0121 ext. 2030.

### **North Carolina Migrant Education Program Information**

<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/federal-program-monitoring/title-i-part-c-migrant-education-program>

## **APPENDIX I – Foster Care**

The foster care provisions of Title I under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) require state educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) to work with child welfare agencies to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care.

The legislation places emphasis on the need to provide educational stability for children in foster care, as well as on collaboration between SEAs, LEAs, and child welfare agencies to ensure that students in foster care have the same high-quality educational opportunities to achieve at the same high levels as their peers. These provisions emphasize the importance of limiting educational disruption by keeping children who move in foster care (due to entering the foster care system or changing foster care placements) in their schools of origin, unless it is determined to be in their best interest to change schools. These provisions also ensure that if it is not in their best interest to remain in their schools of origin, children in foster care are enrolled in their new schools without delay.

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children. If you have or know of an NCVA student who is in foster care, please contact the North Carolina Virtual Academy Foster Care Liaison, Paige Adams, at [padams@ncvacademy.org](mailto:padams@ncvacademy.org) or call (919) 346-0121 ext. 2030 for more information.

### **North Carolina Foster Care Program Contact Information**

Office Phone: 336-315-7400

Email: [ncfoster@serve.org](mailto:ncfoster@serve.org)

Visit [North Carolina Foster Care Education Program](#) for resources associated with the Every Student Succeeds Act: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children and in Foster Care.

## **APPENDIX J - Title 1 Information**

Title I, Part A is a federal program that provides financial assistance to public schools with high numbers or percentages of poor children, as demonstrated by Free and Reduced Lunch numbers. These funds help ensure that all children are making progress toward meeting State academic content and student academic achievement standards. The information below is the board-approved and federally compliant Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

### **200 – School Operation**

#### **220: Parent and Family Engagement Policy**

Title I, Part A is a federal program that provides financial assistance to public schools with high numbers or percentages of poor children, as demonstrated by Free and Reduced Lunch numbers. These funds help ensure that all children are making progress toward meeting State academic content and student academic achievement standards. North Carolina Virtual Academy (NCVA), in

receiving Title I funds, strives to involve parents and family members in regular and meaningful communication addressing student achievement and ensuring that parents play a crucial role in their child's learning. Parents and family members can fulfill that role through active involvement and full partnerships by being included, as appropriate, in decision-making to assist in the education of their child. Expectations for parents or Learning Coaches are clearly stated in the "I Will" section of the Parent/Student Handbook.

We will involve families of children served in Title 1, Part A in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent. NCVA will carry out programs, activities, and procedures to offer opportunities for parents to participate in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. The role of Family Engagement Specialist is critical in this function.

In compliance with Section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the NCVA agrees to implement required statutory requirements to involve parents in:

- Planning and development of pertinent components of the Title I plan by selecting parents to attend NC Star Committee updates. In addition, all parents will be invited to complete a pulse check survey seven times a year this will help inform improvements and program developments.
- Reviewing, on an annual basis, the Title I Program, including the evaluation of the parent and family engagement policy and school-parent compact, by inviting all families to an annual Title 1 presentation that will be held virtually this information will also be available via visuals and recordings for families unable to attend live. This review will address and identify the following: barriers to the greater parent and family participation, needs of parents and family member to assist with the learning of their children, and strategies to support successful and school and family interactions.
- Using results from the Annual Review, the Head of School will meet with the NC Start Committee in order to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policy. This meeting will occur live but will also be recorded so that families unable to attend can view it or families that need more time to understand the information have the option to watch. The meeting will contain limited language and lots of visuals to help support those with limited language or low literacy skills.
- To address any identified barriers by having the Title 1 Coordinator invites feedback and make changes or bring information back to the NC Start Committee. This meeting will occur live but also be recorded so that families unable to attend can view it or families that that need more time to understand the information have the option to watch. The meeting will contain limited language and lot of visuals to help support those with limited language or low literacy skills.
- Encouraging parents to be actively involved in their child's education at school by training parents to be Learning Coaches (LC) and inviting families to attend both in person and virtual trainings. LC's will be trained at the start of the year then have various opportunities for additional learning throughout the year. This is organized by our Family Engagement Specialist who ensures that advisors train all LC's a minimum of once monthly.
- Creating shared responsibility for high student academic achievement through

Parent School Compact that will be signed by the student, parent, and school leader which will outline responsible of both parents and teachers in the education of children.

- Provide technical assistance to ensure that staff, families, and stakeholders are able to be involved in education and activities by assigning every family to an advisor that reaches out throughout the year to offer support frequency of how often families are contact will be based on the level of support that family needs as measured through academic data, log in metrics, and parents surveys.
- Building dual capacity for involvement with a focus on providing assistance and/or materials to families as well as educating teachers how to value and reach out to parents as equal partners by ensuring that all staff members work to make enduring connection calls throughout the year which is tracked as well as providing trainings for LCs. In addition, families will be provided with materials needed to be successful (ex: computers, printers, etc.)
- Developing effective parent involvement activities through a Parent Alliance that discusses data on a yearly basis by have parents attend a NC Star Committee update to hear about current data and initiatives at our school. We, as a school, will strive to make sure families understand topics that are important in developing the shared responsibility for high student academic achievement. These topics may include:
  - State academic content standards by grade level,
  - State student academic achievement results,
  - State and local academic assessments to demonstrate proficiency or growth,
  - State requirements of Title I, Part A,
  - How to monitor their child's progress.
- Further, the school will work with parents and family members to build capacity for involvement by providing:
  - Information on state standards, assessments, requirements of Title I, monitoring their child's progress, and working with educators.
  - Materials, resources and training to help parents work with their children to improve academic achievement in clear and understandable manners.
- This Parental Involvement Policy has been developed by including the following groups: teachers, administrators, families, and the board members. NCVA will distribute this policy to all family members of participating Title I children.

**TITLE I SCHOOL – PARENT COMPACT**

**School** – The school understands the importance of the school experience to every student and their role as educators and models. Therefore, the school agrees to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of their ability:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the challenging State academic standards (required)
- Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum –
  - frequent reports to parents on their children’s progress,
  - reasonable access to staff,
  - ensuring regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand.
- Treat each child with dignity and respect.
- Strive to address the individual needs of the student.
- Acknowledge that parents are vital to the success of child and school.

**Parent** – The parent understands that participation in his/her student's education will help his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, the parent will continue to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of his/her ability:

- Supporting their child’s learning
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use of extracurricular time,
- Create a home atmosphere that supports learning.
- Ensure students are logged into live classes.
- Ensure attendance is being monitored and logged.
- Review all school communications and respond promptly.

**Student (all school discretion to include items below)** – The student realizes education is important. He/she is the one responsible for his/her own success. Therefore, he/she agrees to carry out the following to the best of his/her ability:

- Get to classes on time every day.
- Develop a positive attitude toward school.
- Be responsible for completing work on time.
- Be cooperative by carrying out the teacher’s instructions and ask for help when needed.

Please sign and date below to acknowledge that you have read, received, and agree to this School-Parent Compact. Once signed, please return the form to your child’s teacher. We look forward to our school-parent partnership!

School Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX K Acceptable Use of Computers**

NCVA recognizes the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve state-required testing and enhance the administration and operation of its schools. To this end, NCVA encourages the responsible use of computers; computer networks, including the Internet; and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of NCVA.

Because the Internet is an unregulated, worldwide vehicle for communication, information available to staff and students is impossible to control. Therefore, the NCVA Board of Directors adopts this policy governing the voluntary use of electronic resources and the Internet in order to provide guidance to individuals and groups obtaining access to these resources on any and all equipment used by NCVA students and parents/legal guardians/learning coaches for testing-related uses.

### ***NCVA Rights and Responsibilities***

It is the policy of NCVA to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all online network activities by staff and students. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, student, or other individual to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules and policies of the network. Within this general policy, NCVA recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the well-being of students in its charge. To this end, NCVA retains the following rights and recognizes the following obligations:

- To log network use and to monitor fileserver space utilization by users and assume no responsibility or liability for files deleted due to violation of fileserver space allotments.
- To remove a user account on the network.
- To monitor testing activities. This may include real-time monitoring of network activity and/or maintaining a log of Internet activity for later review.
- To provide internal and external controls as appropriate and feasible. Such controls shall include the right to determine who will have access to NCVA-owned or leased equipment and, specifically, to exclude those who do not abide by NCVA's Acceptable Use Policy or other policies governing the use of school facilities, equipment, and materials in relation to testing. NCVA reserves the right to restrict online destinations through software or other means.
- To provide guidelines and make reasonable efforts to train staff and students in acceptable use and policies governing online testing.

### ***Staff Responsibilities***

Staff members who supervise students, control electronic equipment, or otherwise have occasion to observe student use of said equipment shall make reasonable efforts to monitor the use of this equipment to assure that it conforms to test security requirements laid out by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and NCVA.

Staff will be trained on the platform being used for testing so that effective monitoring, instruction, and assistance may be achieved.

### ***User Responsibilities***

Use of the electronic testing provided by NCVA is a privilege that offers a variety of benefits. This resource is offered at no cost. In order to maintain the privilege, users agree to comply with all of the provisions in this policy.

### ***Acceptable Use***

- All device use will be restricted to activities directly relating to the test administration.
- Students and staff are prohibited from discussing the test or specific test items or content with anyone, including on social media.
- Network and test administration accounts (including- but not limited to- NCTest Admin and PearsonAccess<sup>next</sup> accounts) are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
- All information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
- Exhibit exemplary behavior using the equipment as a representative of your school and community. Be polite!
- From time to time, NCVA will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network and equipment are consistent with the acceptable use practice.

### ***Unacceptable Use***

- Giving out personal information about another person, including home address and phone number, is strictly prohibited.
- Any use of the network for non-test related activities is prohibited.
- Use of the network/equipment for non-testing related business shall be cause for disciplinary action.
- Any use of the network for personal business, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the equipment/network.
- No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others. Hardware and/or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
- Any tampering or efforts to infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
- The unauthorized installing, copying, or deleting of any software, including shareware and freeware is prohibited.
- Downloading, copying, otherwise duplicating, and/or distributing copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is prohibited.
- Use of the network for any unlawful purpose is prohibited.
- Establishing network or Internet connections to communications, including voice and/or video (relay chat), is prohibited.

### ***Disclaimers***

NCVA cannot be held accountable for the information that is retrieved via the network. Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (18 USC 2510 et seq.), notice is hereby given that there are no facilities provided by this system for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. System administrators have access to all transmissions and will monitor messages.

Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

NCVA will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions.

NCVA makes no warranties (expressed or implied) with respect to any costs, liability, or damages caused by the way the user chooses to use his or her access to the equipment and network.

NCVA reserves the right to change its policies and rules at any time.

Anyone found tampering with testing-related hardware, software, or networks may lose the ability to use NCVA equipment.

***User Agreement (to be signed by all adult users and student users above grade 5)***

I have read, understand, and will abide by the above Acceptable Use Policy when using computer and other electronic resources owned, leased, or operated by NCVA for testing purposes. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be initiated.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

***Parent/Legal Guardian Agreement (to be signed by parents/legal guardian of all students)***

As parent or guardian of [please print name of student] \_\_\_\_\_, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that this access is designed for testing purposes. NCVA has taken reasonable steps to control access to the Internet but cannot guarantee that all controversial information will be inaccessible to student users. I agree that I will not hold NCVA responsible for materials acquired on the network. I hereby give permission for my child to use network resources, including the Internet, which are available through NCVA for testing purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/ Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## REQUIRED SIGNATURE PAGE

You have just reviewed the North Carolina Virtual Academy Parent Student Handbook, covering all the important rules, regulations, and procedures for which you are responsible during this school year. Your success at the Academy is equal to your effort and desire.

We have read and reviewed the North Carolina Virtual Academy PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK. In signing, we indicate an awareness and understanding of the school practices and procedures set forth herein and our willingness to abide by them.

**Student ID Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LC Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LC Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adopted: August 7, 2023**

**Revised: August 11, 2023**