



January 10, 2019

Via Email and U.S. Mail

Rebecca Feiden
Executive Director, State Public Charter
School Authority
2080 East Flamingo Road
Suite 230
Las Vegas, NV 89119

Members of the Board of the State Public
Charter School Authority
2080 East Flamingo Road
Suite 230
Las Vegas, NV 89119

RE: Nevada Connections Academy follow-up information from December 13, 2019 Authority Meeting

Dear Ms. Feiden and Members of the Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of NCA at the Authority board meeting on December 13, 2019. As a follow-up, I am providing the data analysis that I referenced in responding to your questions and additional information of note.

At the December 13 meeting, I spoke about the analysis I did showing that students at NCA perform better the longer they were at the school. This is consistent with the body of academic research showing a temporary (1-2 year) dip in academic performance when a student changes schools.¹

For 2018-19, I looked at the growth and proficiency scores of NCA students, broken down by year enrolled (1st year, 2nd year and 3rd year or longer). I included only those students in my analysis who are included in the calculation for the state report card.²

¹ Rumberger, Russell W. (2015). Student Mobility: Causes, Consequences, and Solutions. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved 11/12/19 from <http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/student-mobility>.

² The NSPF 2018-2019 school ratings process applied Year-in-School (YIS) criteria to all NSPF Indicators/Measures, with the exception of Graduation Rates, Advanced Diploma, and three other cohort based Measures (Credit Requirements (MS), Post-Secondary Preparation Participation (HS), and Post-Secondary Preparation Completion

Looking at the 18-19 growth scores, in each case, the Median Growth Percentile (MGP) for NCA students stayed the same or increased by year 2 at NCA and increased significantly by year 3 at NCA.

2018-19 Growth (MGP) Score by Number of Years Enrolled - NCA Elementary School				2018-19 Growth (MGP) Score by Number of Years Enrolled - NCA Middle School			
		ELA	Math			ELA	Math
Length		MGP	MGP	Length		MGP	MGP
1 year		24.5	25.5	1 year		43	33
2 years		35	32	2 years		43	33
3+ years		41	51	3+ years		62	47

Regarding the analysis of NCA students' 18-19 proficiency scores by year enrolled, I included all students tested at NCA (not just students counted in the state report card) and looked at all tested grades across elementary, middle, and high school. As you can see, the results show that NCA students performed better the longer they are at NCA regardless of the subject area.

2018-19 NCA Proficiency Score by Number of Years Enrolled - ES, MS, & HS						
		ELA		Math		Science
Length		% Proficient		% Proficient		% Proficient
1 year		41.4%		20.2%		19.7%
2 years		46.6%		20.1%		25.9%
3+ years		48.5%		27.0%		30.8%

The proficiency analysis for the 17-18 school year is below.³ Here, too, NCA students performed better over time.

(HS)). For Math, ELA, and Science Proficiency and Math and ELA MGP, to meet the YIS criteria a student had to be enrolled in the school for greater than or equal to 120 school days between the first day of school and April 15 of the same school year. See NDE's *Nevada School Performance Framework Technical Manual*, 2018-19 School Year, at pp. 10 - 11.

³ Pearson OBL routinely calculates proficiency scores by year enrolled for all Connections Academy schools each year and this data was already available. I undertook the analysis of NCA students' median growth scores for 18-19 because it was of interest to me in the context of NCA's renewal.

2017-18 NCA Proficiency Score by Number of Years Enrolled - ES, MS, & HS						
		ELA		Math		Science
Length		% Proficient		% Proficient		% Proficient
1 year		37.8%		20.2%		19.0%
2 years		49.1%		26.7%		33.3%
3+ years		47.3%		27.4%		37.7%

On another topic, I would like to address 9th grade credit sufficiency as the topic came up during NCA's presentation. Under the NSPF, for students to count in the 9th grade credit sufficiency metric, they must be enrolled in a school for greater than or equal to 91 days. For the 2018-19 school year at NCA, the first and second semester were not of equal length, with the second semester being longer than the first semester by a few days. As a result, any student who enrolled at NCA within the first three days of the second semester and stayed for the remainder of the year was included in NCA's credit sufficiency calculation. There were 20 such students that enrolled during this brief time period in the 2018-19 school year that were missing enough credits upon their arrival that it was impossible to earn a full five credits for the year. These 20 students all arrived with between 0 and 1.5 credits. While the intent of the 91-day rule may be to include only those students who have been at the school during the first semester, I think it important to note that is not always how it works in practice.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on behalf of NCA and present my analysis.⁴ Should you have any questions, or desire additional information, you may contact me at matthew.wicks@pearson.com.

Sincerely,

/s/ Matthew Wicks
 Director of School Accountability
 Pearson Online & Blended Learning

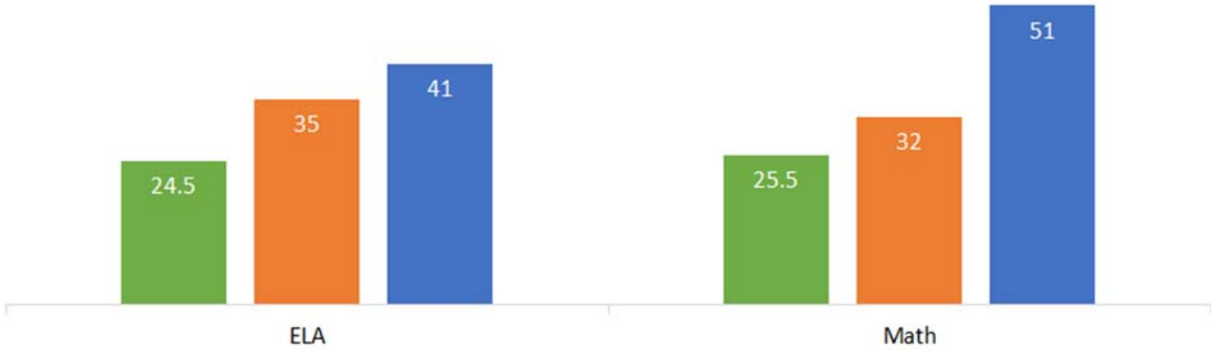
⁴ To clarify the record regarding the performance of NCA's elementary school relative to the other schools in the Authority's portfolio. NCA's elementary school had the second lowest Math growth score of the elementary schools in the SPCSA's district, not the lowest which was stated at the meeting on December 13.

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Scott Harrington
Dr. Chris McBride, Superintendent

NCA 2018-19 Growth (MGP) Score
by Years Enrolled
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

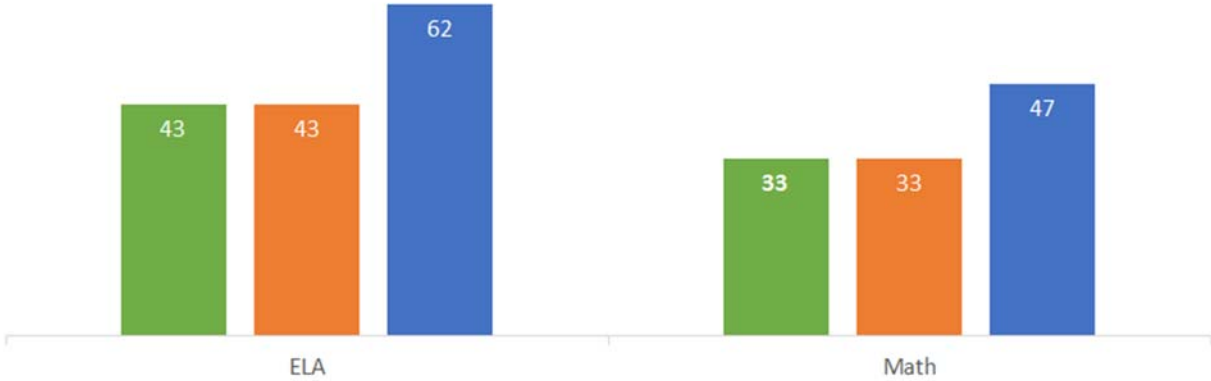
■ 1 Year ■ 2 Years ■ 3+ Years



*Only those students included in the state report card were included in the calculation.

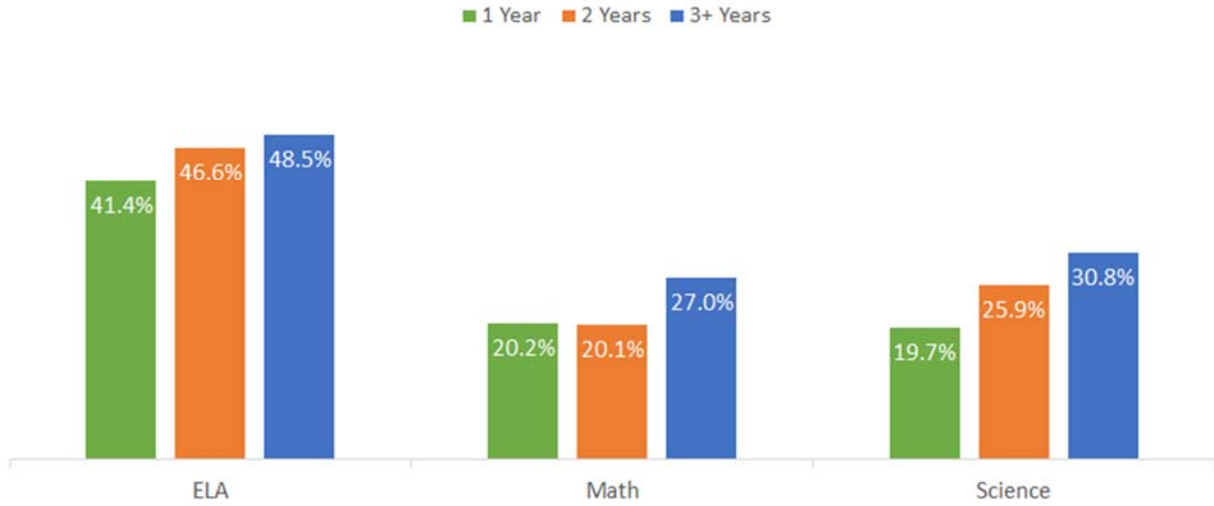
NCA 2018-19 Growth (MGP) Score
by Years of Enrollment
MIDDLE SCHOOL

■ 1 Year ■ 2 Years ■ 3+ Years



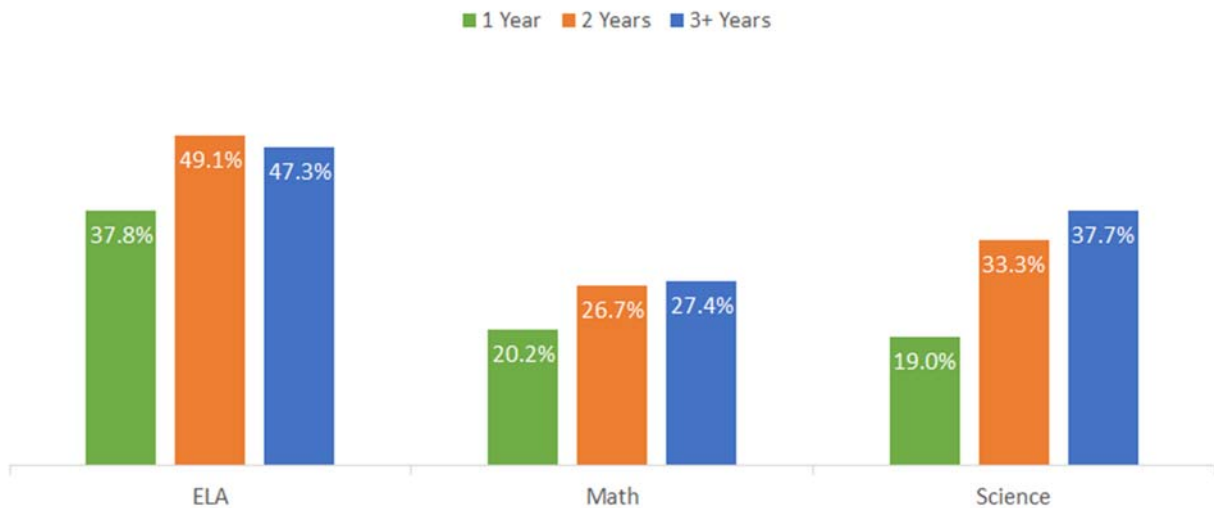
*Only those students included in the state report card were included in the calculation.

NCA 2018-19 Proficiency Score by Years Enrolled All Grades Tested



*All students tested at NCA were included in the calculation.

NCA 2017-18 Proficiency Score by Years Enrolled All Grades Tested



*All students tested at NCA were included in the calculation.