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**BEFORE THE STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY
STATE OF NEVADA**

In Re:
Nevada Connections Academy Notice
Closure or Possible Board Reconstitution

DECLARATION OF DAVID HELD

I, David Held, hereby declare under penalty of perjury as follows:

1. I am the parent of a 9th grade student with Nevada Connections Academy ("NCA"), who has been with NCA for over four years. I make this declaration in support of NCA relative to closure proceedings before the State Public Charter School Authority held on May 25, 26, and 27, 2017, and continued to an unspecified date in 2017.

2. The matters set forth in this declaration are based on my own personal knowledge. If called upon to testify, I am competent to testify to the matters set forth herein.

3. Nevada Connections Academy has and continues to be an amazing resource for our son's education. He has always enjoyed learning. In a typical public school he often ran into trouble due to the fact that he would understand a lesson quickly and needed to wait sometimes as long as a week or two for the rest of the class to understand before they would move on. By that point he was so bored that he was talking and disrupting the class and becoming a problem. His GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) teacher stated that he would most likely thrive in a homeschool and/or online environment and that is exactly what has happened with his online schooling at NCA. The first year we used NCA he was able to work at his own pace with challenging work always being provided for him. He was able to make friends that were like-minded and get to know them in online chats and on field trips that NCA offers.

1 4. In my son's second year with NCA he was continuing to receive straight A's and
2 he requested to learn Japanese. In ~~his~~ brick and mortar school he was not able to choose his
3 language Spanish was the only one available, and it was his least favorite class. Nevada
4 Connections Academy went out of their way to make it possible and, ultimately we decided to
5 wait one more year ~~and~~ at that time they provided him with a Japanese language ~~class~~, is
6 now his favorite class. He has an A in the class and is looking forward to a trip to Japan next)
7 where he will be able to use what he has learned.
8

9 5. By this time we were already ~~very~~ much in love with Nevada Connections
10 Academy and the educational opportunities it was providing for our son. We would have fought
11 for this continued school choice even then, but where NCA became even more critical to us ~~w~~
12 about halfway through his ~~second~~ year with them. At that point our son was diagnosed with a
13 brain condition called Chiari Malformation and we found out later that he also has two other
14 conditions, Hydrocephalus and Syringomyelia. We were told that he was going to need brain
15 surgery. The school bent over backwards and did everything to make sure that he was able to
16 his work done.
17

18 6. My son had five brain surgeries in the second semester of the sixth grade year
19 March 10, April 21, May 15, May 19 and May 22. In a typical ~~brick~~ mortar school he
20 would not have been released by his doctor to attend. He would have ended up missing all
21 the entire second half of his sixth grade year. Because Nevada Connections Academy was a
22 work so well with my son and ~~his~~ ~~needs~~ even with ~~needing~~ five surgeries he still graduated
23 straight A's rather than falling a semester behind.
24


25 7. Unfortunately my son has required three more surgeries since then. Again his
26 doctor would not have released him to attend a brick and mortar school, he ~~would~~ ~~not~~ be
27 in an environment where we could not control the germs he would be exposed to. Because
28

1 flexibility and the amazing staff at Nevada Connections Academy my son has managed to
2 through all eight brain surgeries and still have his ~~sub~~ love for school and education.

3 8. So just to recap, in an ordinary brick-and-mortar school my son would now be a
4 full year behind and I can tell you heartbroken over that. Instead, he is well ahead of schedule
5 speaking a second language, and a straight A honor student who is eager to get to his school
6 work every single day. That is not something that comes from just any online school, that is a
7 direct result of the amazing teachers and management that helped take care of him through a
8 it with understanding and compassion.

9
10 9. For my son this is our only school choice to serve his needs and provide his
11 education that is so critically important to him and all of us. Interference with NCA's ongoing
12 operations would cause my son irreparable harm by interfering with his education and our school
13 choice. On behalf of my son and my family and the more than 3,000 students served by NCA
14 ask that the State Public Charter School Authority stop interfering with the continued operation
15 of Nevada Connections Academy

16
17 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Nevada that the
18 foregoing is true and correct and was executed this 9 day of June, 2017, in Henderson
19 Nevada.

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21 
22 _____
23 DAVID HELD

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