Nevada Virtual Academy

Clarifying Responses to Charter Authority

Please find Nevada Virtual Academy's ("NVVA") response to the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority's ("Authority") April 5, 2018 Clarifying Questions. NVVA provides its response to these questions in the spirit of cooperation and as part of its continuing efforts to be responsive to the termination proceedings the Authority initiated on February 21, 2018. However, NVVA strongly believes that these proceedings are unlawful and provides this submission while reserving its rights to challenge the Authority's actions.

NVVA has outlined its concerns more fully in the Complaint it filed with the First Judicial District on April 5, 2018 (Case No. 180-C-000881B), as well as in the letter it attached to its initial submission on April 2, 2018. Broadly, NVVA contends that the basis on which the Authority has initiated these proceedings is in clear violation of the laws of the State of Nevada and in breach of the school's charter contract with the Authority. Forcing NVVA to undergo this onerous process will cause irreparable harm to the school. Indeed, it is causing families and teachers alike to question their future at the school – throwing NVVA's planning for the next school year into chaos during a critical registration period. Moreover, at this time of year, our educators, parents, and students should be focused on high participation in state testing and outcomes for our students, not worried about whether their school will be closed. The SPCSA's unlawful actions are harming NVVA, not helping the school and its students.

With respect to the Authority's Clarifying Questions, responding to the numerous question/points of clarification posed by the Authority in barely more than a week imposes an undue burden on the school and in some circumstances, requires the school to collect and synthesize data that it does not track as a matter of course. In addition, some of the information requested by the Authority assumes that the plan proposed by NVVA will fail. *See* Clarifying Questions, 3(c)(ii).

As you may recall, one of NVVA's many objections to these termination proceedings is that the SPCSA is using stale data. As the Clarifying Questions demonstrate, the agency is also referring to stale law. For instance, under section 2(b) of your Clarifying Questions, you ask for the school to respond to the question pursuant to a specific provision in the ESEA, which is a federal education law that expired and was reauthorized in 2015 by the ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act). The citation you make to the ESEA actually was not in the original law, but it is in the ESSA. Therefore, the school will respond to the question pursuant to the ESSA, current federal law, based on what we believe you meant to clarify in your Clarifying Questions. However, we must point out that your request for "strong evidence" runs counter to the federal law that you purport to cite. As you will note, there are different levels of evidence that satisfy law (strong, moderate, or promising evidence) or in the alternative, a school may demonstrate a rationale based on high quality research findings or positive evaluation and an ongoing effort to examine the effects. Again, NVVA will attempt to be responsive to your questions, but the school will avail itself of the broader definition of "evidence-based" set forth in the ESSA, which is the relevant federal law.

NVVA objects to the form and volume of the Clarifying Questions. Nevertheless, it has provided answers to each of the questions as best it is able given its access to the relevant data and the short time frame in which the Authority has required it respond. As always, NVVA is willing to discuss and address the Authority's concerns further, outside of the context of this unnecessary and unlawful termination proceeding.

Question 1:

The language from page 32 implies that NVVA-ES staff continues to employ these strategies, and that they are not new to the NVVA-ES programming. Please clarify whether or not these are new strategies implemented for the first time in the 2017-2018 school year. Additionally, please provide SPCSA with the following information for each strategy:

a. The rationale and any research that backs the implementation of these strategies for virtual school students and families.

b. How each identified student and family support is monitored for effectiveness.

NVVA's Response:

All three programs referenced were developed to improve student outcomes by increase student engagement and retention for students and families who need more support with student learning in a virtual/blended environment. As will be detailed below, all three programs are in their first year of full implementation at NVVA. Each of these programs is based on either high quality research findings or positive evaluations, and we are monitoring each of these strategies to determine their effectiveness in improving student outcomes and will adjust, as needed. As you know, charter school laws are intended to give as much flexibility as possible to charter schools to try new things and innovate. Thus, federal law allows for a reasonable rationale and ongoing monitoring for the effectiveness of these efforts; not the higher level of scrutiny you have indicated in requiring strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study. We trust that you agree that charter schools should be given great flexibility in this regard and that the SPCSA will be supportive of schools trying new things without the "strong evidence" that you have sought on the front end.

The Family Academic Support Team (FAST) was a pilot program at NVVA in 2016-17 with its first year of full implementation during the current 2017-18 school year. FAST involves a team of trained school professionals who work with families to overcome academic, social, emotional, medical, and/or community challenges. This holistic approach includes early intervention, support services, and connecting families with wraparound services. In Appendix A, please note that this program originated at Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA), another school that K12, our education service provider, manages. We share this with you to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program when implemented at that school and the monitoring that occurred after implementation to determine its effectiveness, and as the report mentions, identified ways to improve upon the program. NVVA commits to doing

similar research to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the FAST program being fully implemented this year and will make adjustments to optimize the effectiveness of the program and student outcomes. Moreover, the program's effectiveness as it relates to each student in the program will be monitored throughout the school year to determine the appropriate level of interventions and supports in place to assist the student in engagement and outcomes.

The Parent/Learning Coach Support program has been a part of the programming model, utilized by our vendor, K12, but this is the first school year in which this model is being fully implemented by NVVA's academic advisors. As the SPCSA is aware, NVVA's platform and instructional model includes involving learning coaches, who are essential partners in the student's education. NVVA is committed to ensuring these learning coaches receive all of the training and supports they need to improve student engagement and outcomes. This includes using K12's Parent University and providing training to learning coaches so they are equipped to succeed. NVVA is committed to studying parent-related variables beginning with partial data from 2016-17 and will supplement with 2017-18 data.

After-School Activities, through the newly developed Family Engagement Coordinator (part of FAST), is in its first full year of implementation during the 2017-18 school year. This program provides continuous after school, face-to-face academic activities to encourage on-going learning and resources for families. Literacy Nights, STEM (math/science) Night, Book Fairs, and family social events serve to bring families together for on-going learning activities. You are no doubt familiar with much of the research that shows that after-school activities improve student confidence, engagement, and outcomes. See a couple representative findings from the Harvard Family Research Project:
http://www.sedl.org/pubs/sedl-letter/v20n02/afterschool_findings.html

and research from the After-School Alliance:
http://afterschoolalliance.org//documents/Evaluation_Backgrounder.pdf

While NVVA has a reasonable rationale for believing these activities would benefit NVVA students, the school is committed to studying the performance of similar NVVA students who participated in after-school activities and those who did not during this school year, which is the first year of implementation.

Question 2:

Within the Curriculum and Instructional Design section (pgs. 32-33), the Authority is requesting additional information on the proposed changes put forth by NVVA.

a. Please provide a description of how each of the proposed curriculum and instructional design changes differ from those previously implemented. This includes the On-Line School curriculum, differentiated instruction - specifically the Class Connect Sessions, updated/responsive Literacy Plan in conjunction with McRel Consulting, Blended/Pathway Changes, Response to Intervention (RtI), and summer programming.

b. For each of the proposed curriculum and instructional design changes listed above, please provide independent, strong evidence (as defined in section 8101(21)(A) of the ESEA) for why these methods were chosen and why they are likely to be more successful than those previously implemented for students.

NVVA's Response:

As detailed in the table below, NVVA has utilized data to evaluate and modify existing elementary programs to better serve student needs. Specifically, with new administrative staff and a full year of blended instruction experience to evaluate, the school could identify specific areas for improvement.

Program	**How it Differs from Previous Year**
OLS	a. Scope and sequence previously not implemented with fidelity. b. There is quite a bit of research to show that a program used with fidelity will have better results than not. When the ESSA reviews a curriculum, ensuring fidelity of implementation is one of their checkpoints (See Appendix B). https://doi.org/10.1080/0022027850170207
Differentiated Instruction	a. Students are identified with an instructional level. Students receive differentiated sessions depending on their instructional level. b. Differentiated Instruction helps teachers meet the needs of diverse learners, meet state mandates, and be more effective in teaching all students. MAP is used to help identify instructional levels and skills for differentiated instruction. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/REL_20134000.pdf
Literacy Plan w/McRel	a. Previous literacy plans were not fully implemented. McRel was not involved with NVVA--ES until this school year (See Appendix C). b. A schoolwide literacy plan is an essential blueprint for improving student achievement. A literacy plan will help to guide decision making around instruction, programming, and resource allocation. McRel assists with goal-making and planning. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/study/81452
Response to Intervention	a. RTI was not previously done with fidelity across the grade levels. b. RTI helps to identify struggling students that may struggle due to causes other than learning disabilities. RTI will help students to obtain the

	appropriate instruction and interventions. The state of Nevada has chosen to implement an RTI requirement state wide: http://www.doe.nv.gov/Special_Education/Response_to_Intervention/ or https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/rti_reading_pg_021809.pdf
Summer Programming	a. There was no K-5 summer program last summer. b. Summer school programs are designed to provide remediation and enrichment. There is quite a bit of research that shows summer learning helps increase achievement. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/appalachia/pdf/REL_2014015.pdf

Question 3:

NVVA provided historical academic achievement and performance data for the elementary school within the performance review section (pgs. 11 – 19). However, little information was provided on the annual performance and growth goals that NVVA proposes to achieve to meet or exceed SPCSA and state expectations moving forward. Staff located two goals within the submission: NVVA students in K – 3 will increase proficiency levels by 12% each year after 2018 spring scores; and NVVA students will increase proficiency levels in [sic] 9% in Reading on the SBAC in grades 3 – 8 (pg. 41). To evaluate the quality of NVVAs programmatic changes and the ability of the school to meet or exceed SPCSA and state expectations, the Authority is requesting additional information.

a. Please outline the clearly measurable annual performance and growth goals that the school proposes to meet or exceed the state expectations for student academic growth in accordance with the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) adopted by the Nevada. You may add or delete rows as needed in the table below.

b. Articulate how the school set a baseline, the staff member(s) responsible for monitoring goals, and how the school will meet the state standard in each of these areas in accordance with the NSPF: individual students, student cohorts, sub-groups and the entire school – throughout the school year and at the end of the academic year.

c. In addition to mandatory state and Authority testing, SPCSA staff noted that the school intends to leverage MAP and Summit Math interim assessments for internal purposes to analyze student learning needs. Please clarify the following:

i. What evidence does the school have that strong results on these assessments will be predictive of the same in the state assessment battery?

ii. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide and classroom levels. For example, if the Tier I-III interventions/responses described within the Literacy Plan on pages 43-44 fail to produce significant results and/or improvement, contextualize the level of results that would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

iii. A description of the professional development that teachers will receive on reading instruction is provided on pages 44 – 45. No information is provided, however, on the frequency and amount of training NVVA teachers will receive. Please provide more clarity on the amount of literacy training NVVA teachers will receive on an annual basis.

- **iv. In the table below, identify specific interim performance goals and assessments that you will use to confirm that the school is on-track to meet annual NSPF targets each year.**
- **v. Describe the process for collecting and storing data in Infinite Campus. Please explain how the school plans to ensure that student data will be tracked by school personnel and Learning Coaches.**

NVVA's Response:

With initial NSPF data points released during the 2017-18 school year, Nevada Virtual Academy has established baseline measurements to evaluate and work towards incremental progress under each category.

Since the 2016-2017 Elementary NSPF was incomplete, the school needs all factors, including 5th grade Science, before it can reasonably set proficiency goals and await to see if the state changes its percentage levels. With that being said, the school has laid out scenarios in which its growth in categories mirrors that of the state's ESSA goals of 2-3 percentage point growth in Math and ELA. Looking through the categories below, there are several ways that the school can reach 3-Star ranking within three years, with the caveat that nothing else changes within the framework itself.

Pooled Proficiency= 34%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
4/20 Points					
2%		36%	38%	40%	7/20 Points
3%		39%	42%	45%	9/20 Points

RBG3 ELA SBAC= 39.7%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
3/5 Points					
2%		42%	44%	46%	3/5 Points
3%		43%	46%	49%	3/5 Points

Math SBAC MGP= 41.5		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
3/10 Points					
2%		43.5	45.5	47.5	4/10 Points
3%		44.5	47.5	50.5	5/10 Points

ELA SBAC MGP= 37		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
2/10 Points					
2%		39	41	43	3/10 Points
3%		40	43	46	4/10 Points

MATH SBAC AGP= 28.3%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
2/7.5 Points					
2%		30%	32%	34%	3.5/7.5 Points
3%		31%	34%	37%	4.5/7.5 Points

ELA SBAC AGP= 36.2%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
1/7.5 Points					
2%		38%	40%	42%	2/7.5 Points
3%		39%	42%	45%	3/7.5 Points

ELPA= NA		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
NA					
2%		NA	NA	NA	NA
3%		NA	NA	NA	NA

Prior Non-MATH SBAC AGP= 21.8%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
3/10 Points					
2%		24%	26%	28%	5/10 Points
3%		25%	28%	31%	6/10 Points

Prior Non-ELA SBAC AGP= 23.9%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
1/10 Points					
2%		26%	28%	30%	2/10 Points
3%		27%	30%	33%	3/10 Points

Chronic Absenteeism= 21.6%		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
0/10 Points					
4%		18%	14%	10%	7/10 Points
5%		17%	12%	7%	8/10 Points

Climate Survey= No		2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	
0/2 Points					
YES		YES	YES	YES	2 Points

2% Growth= 38.5/90= 42.8

3% Growth= 47.5/90= 52.8

There are multiple factors that the school closely monitors, including incoming students' proficiency rates, if there will be an increase in ELPA students so that the school meets the minimum student requirement for points, and possible upcoming changes in framework categories, that could affect the school's trajectory towards 50+ points on the framework. Hopefully the accountability measures remain steadfast over the next few years so that the school can better observe patterns of

success as well as properly recognize measures that aren't increasing, identify root causes and work towards altering the trends.

3ci. Predictability of:

a) MAPs - https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2015/12/Linking-the Smarter-Balanced-Assessments-to-NWEA-MAP-Assessments-DEC15.pdf
b) Summits interim assessments are not used at the K5 level. Only used for MS Mathematics.

3cii) School-Wide Corrective Actions for students falling short of benchmarks are as:

a) Referral to the RtI process for monitoring and interventions.
b) Assigned to Blended Pathway for extra support.
c) Adjusting the student's Instructional Level and assign class connect session based on their IL.

3ciii) Professional Development Activities that address literacy (reading) have and will occur as follows:

a) Face to Face Professional Development Trainings in October, December, and March of the school year.
b) Monthly School PDs.
c) Weekly Professional Development Hours in which staff have trainings with Instructional Coaches and through ASCD best practices.
d) Quarterly face to face PD with Literacy Task Force and consulting group (McRel).

3civ) NVVA operates under a Charter Contract, which sets forth performance goals and assessments.

3cv) Nevada Virtual Academy has continuous enrollment. The Registrar's Office ensures all student data is entered into Infinite Campus and is up to date. The School Based Enrollment Coordinator enters all required information within the Infinite Campus system, including student demographics, parents/guardians, and household information. Nevada Virtual Academy uses attendance reports that are pulled from the SIS and uploaded weekly by student and course. Only negative attendance is entered into Infinite Campus. Other State Reporting elements such as IEP, EL, and FRL are entered and flagged by our Records Manager and monitored by NVVA Operations. NVVA Operations ensures compliance and data accuracy by ensuring students are properly recorded Master Register on Validation Day, documented on

monthly Gains and Losses Reports, and by ensuring accurate attendance for reporting of quarterly ADE and Chronic Absenteeism. NVVA Operations works with the enrollment team and school counselors to ensure incoming students' information, such as high school transcripts, are entered correctly into the system. These transcripts can be printed, updated and shared with students and families. Currently, Nevada Virtual Academy students and Learning Coaches have access to TotalView School, the primary student information system. Learning Coaches are able to view the students course schedules, view their weekly plan, and are able access up to date student progress.

Question 4:

Please describe the costs associated with the proposed changes outlined within NVVAs improvement plan. Specifically, present a budget narrative that includes a detailed description of assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs that may be associated with a new educational program or delivery.

NVVA's Response:

NVVA will not incur any excessive costs associated with new implementation of these factors for the 2017-2018 school years, since it was already set in the budget for the year before the NSPF was released. Currently there are no excessive increases in the 2018-2019 budget in regard to this improvement plan at the time of initial budgeting.

APPENDIX A

Family Academic Support Team Report

The Family Academic Support Team: Helping Families Overcome Challenges to Academic Success

The Family Academic Support Team (FAST) program began in 2010 at Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA). School leaders recognized that a significant number of students were not meeting academic goals for a variety of non-academic reasons—social, emotional, medical, and otherwise. To address these challenges to student engagement, and to give students a better chance at academic success, GCA took steps to support families by counseling them in behaviors conducive to academic success, and by linking them to available resources such as community health care and social services. GCA is one of the largest K_{12}-managed public schools, serving an enrollment of almost 11,700 students in 2013–2014. Of those students, 65% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (compared to 59% at the state level), and 12% receive special education services (compared to 11% at the state level).

At GCA, members of the Family Academic Support Team implement and closely monitor an engagement protocol to ensure a student gets back on track as soon as possible. The team is often led by a member certified in social work who secures community resources to address family crises such as homelessness, teen pregnancy, adjudication, or other causes for intervention.

Goals of the FAST Program

GCA's FAST program aims to achieve a number of goals, including:

• Help students stay on track by providing early interventions, organizing wraparound supports, and coordinating focused engagement strategies.

• Help students work through non-academic issues in order to foster engagement and academic success.

• Develop community partnerships in order to better support students and families with issues related to homelessness, psychological or social counseling, teen parenting needs, or similar challenges.

• Help foster student connectedness, and nurture student motivation.

ROLES AND REFERRAL PROCESS

When GCA teachers and staff members observe family difficulties or signs of student disengagement, they alert the Family Academic Support Team. Depending on the nature of the difficulty, the student and family might be contacted by one of the following team members:

• The Family Support Liaison (FSL) supports students and Learning Coaches who are non-compliant or disengaged.

• The Family Resource Coordinator (FRC) deals with family issues or juvenile justice issues, and often engages community resources to address these issues by facilitating appropriate intervention.

• Family Engagement Coordinators develop and coordinate family-to-family opportunities for students to come together and work academically on a regular basis, usually within specific regions and grade ranges.

• The Compliancy Liaison deals with issues of truancy.

• The School-Based Enrollment Coordinator ensures a smooth enrollment process for all families (new, returning, and transferring). Most students who participate in the FAST program are served by a Family Support Liaison (FSL) who focuses on academic engagement. A smaller number—roughly about one quarter as many—are served by the Family Resource Coordinator (FRC) whose focus is more on social issues. Some students are served by both an FSL and FRC, but most are served by one or the other.

To engage FAST services for a student, a teacher or school staff member completes a referral to the FAST team. The Lead Family Support Liaison or Family Resource Coordinator assigns the referral to specific team members according to the reason for the referral. The FSL works with the Learning Coach (whose participation

is required) to develop a “Back on Track” plan. Teachers continue to support the student academically as the FSL supports the Learning Coach and student to address needs outlined in the plan.

Students might be referred for FAST service for a variety of reasons, including:

FSL Referrals

• Conflict between parents and the student

• Lack of communication: no response to calls, e-mails, or USPS letters

• Absence from required conferences

• Need to improve Learning Coach skills (for example, in OLS navigation, electronic communications, logging attendance, managing time, managing multiple children)

• Repeated absence from required Class Connect sessions

• Lack of participation in required testing

• Reports of the student working unsupervised

FRC Referrals

• Family crisis

• Bullying

• Runaway

• Severe student health concerns

• Financial hardship

• Homelessness

• Threat of suicide

• Suspected abuse or neglect

• Teen pregnancy Compliance Liaison Referrals

• Truancy

Growth of FAST

Since its inception in 2010, GCA’s FAST program has served an increasing number of students in each successive school year, with the total served in 2013–2014 more than triple the number served in 2010–2011. In the 2012–2013 school year, GCA extended FAST services from grades K–8 to high school. The number of students served by FAST who remain enrolled has grown steadily year by year. (See Table 16.)

TABLE 16: Students Served by GCA's FAST

	2010–2011	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Total Enrollment	5,427 in K–8 (as of April 2011)	7,265 in K–8 (as of April 2012)	9,948 in K–12 (as of April 2013)	11,691 in K–12 (as of April 2014)
Grades Served by FAST	K–8	K–8	K–12	K–12
Number of Referrals	565	911	1,111	1,930
Referrals Who Remained in GCA	272	775	802	1,278

%AAP = percentage at or above proficiency

Since GCA's innovation of the Family Academic Support Team, there has been a gradual rollout of the program to other K12-managed schools.

Results at GCA

FAST was implemented at GCA in 2010, with the first two years spent refining the model. To understand the effects of the FAST program, we can compare academic growth results for students served by FAST to results from a similar group of students—in this case, GCA students whose needs are similar to FAST participants but who are on a waiting list to receive FAST services (due to limited resources to expand the program).

Research from the third and fourth years of program implementation indicates that, in most cases, those students participating in FAST are making greater growth than comparable students who are on a waiting list to receive FAST services.

In Figure 20 and the accompanying Table 17, the category identified as "FAST Engaged" comprises all FAST participants served by a Family Support Liaison (FSL), which includes not only students served by an FSL only but also students served by both an FSL and FRC (Family Resource Coordinator).

• From the 2012–2013 school year to the 2013–2014 school year, for GCA students in grades 4–10, FAST Engaged students achieved positive growth on state tests of Reading, English Language Arts, and Mathematics.

• Examining average growth in scaled scores from 2012–2013 to 2013–2014, we find that in all subjects the growth of FAST participants exceeded that of students on the waiting list for FAST. Not included in the data is a small subgroup of students who were not served by a Family Support Liaison but instead only by a Family Resource Coordinator (FRC), a counselor who typically deals with issues of family disruption. These 18 students served only by a Family Resource Coordinator did not achieve positive academic growth results, though this is perhaps understandable given that the focus of the FRC is less on academic progress than on helping the student and family through a time of severe stress or crisis.

FIGURE 20: Change in Scaled Score (SS) from 2012–2013 to 2013–2014, Grades 4–10

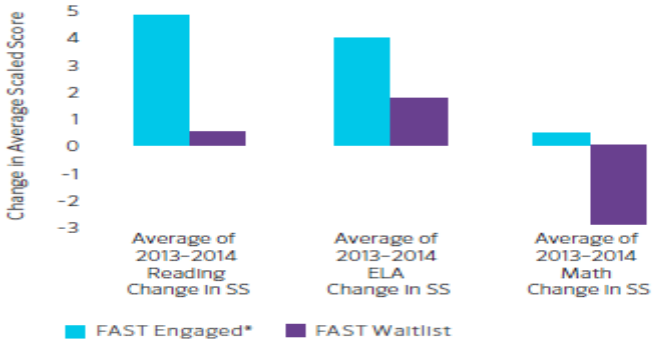


TABLE 17: Change in Scaled Score (SS) from 2012–2013 to 2013–2014, Grades 4–10

	Average of 2013–2014 Reading Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 Reading Change in SS	Average of 2013–2014 ELA Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 ELA Change in SS	Average of 2013–2014 Math Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 Math Change in SS
FAST Engaged*	4.77	201	3.94	200	0.42	198
FAST Waitlist	0.49	53	1.69	51	-2.91	46

*FAST Engaged: Includes students served by FSL only, and students served by both FSL and FRC.

Figure 21 and the accompanying Table 18 show results for FAST Engaged and FAST Waitlist students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. For this subgroup, examining average growth in scaled scores from 2012–2013 to 2013-2014, we again find that in all subjects the growth of FAST participants exceeded that of comparable students on the waiting list for FAST.

FIGURE 21: Growth for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible: Change in Scaled Score (SS) from 2012–2013 to 2013–2014, Grades 4–10

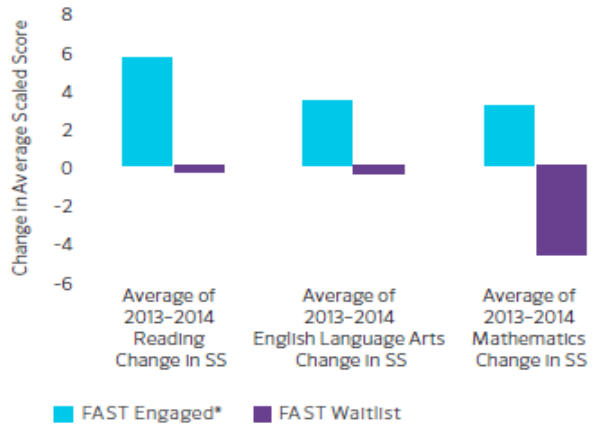


TABLE 18: Growth for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible: Change in Scaled Score (SS) from 2012–2013 to 2013–2014, Grades 4–10

	Average of 2013–2014 Reading Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 Reading Change in SS	Average of 2013–2014 ELA Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 ELA Change in SS	Average of 2013–2014 Math Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 Math Change in SS
FAST Engaged*	5.64	169	3.39	168	3.11	166
FAST Waitlist	-0.34	44	-0.42	43	-4.68	38

*FAST Engaged: Includes students served by FSL only, and students served by both FSL and FRC.

Table 19 presents data showing that, compared to the whole group of FAST Engaged students, the subgroup of FAST Engaged students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch achieved even greater growth in Reading and Math.

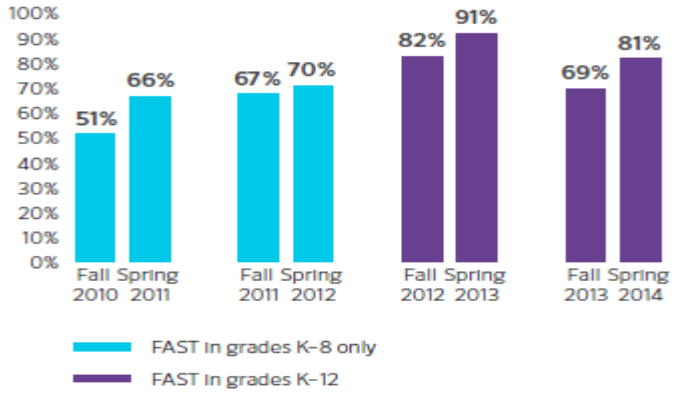
TABLE 19: GCA All FAST Engaged Compared to FRL-Eligible FAST Engaged

	Average of 2013–2014 Reading Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 Reading Change in SS	Average of 2013–2014 ELA Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 ELA Change in SS	Average of 2013–2014 Math Change in SS	Count of 2013–2014 Math Change in SS
All FAST Engaged*	4.77	201	3.94	200	0.42	198
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch / FAST Engaged*	5.64	169	3.39	168	3.11	166

*FAST Engaged: Includes students served by FSL only, and students served by both FSL and FRC.

In its first two years, the GCA Family Academic Support Team served only grades K–8. FAST services were extended to high school in the 2012–2013 school year. Figure 22 presents data showing that post-FAST GCA high school passing rates are higher than pre-FAST passing rates.

FIGURE 22: GCA High School Passing Rates



Gallup Student Poll Results

In 2013–2014, GCA students in grades 5–12 participated in the Gallup Student Poll, a national survey that "measures student hope for the future, engagement with school and well-being—factors that have been shown to drive students' grades, achievement scores, retention, and future employment."[12] GCA reported affirmative results at higher than national levels in all categories. (See Table 20.) These positive results, while not directly attributable to the FAST program, are likely due in part to GCA's focus on providing strong support to students and families.

TABLE 20: Gallup Student Poll Results—Fall 2013

	n	Hope	Engagement	Well-Being
U.S.	>600,000	54%	55%	64%
GCA	=1148	57%	58%	66%

[12] Gallup Student Poll, http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com/home.aspx, accessed Nov. 26, 2014.

APPENDIX B

Research for K12 Curriculum

Summary of the Research Foundation for K12 Curricula
Research on How Students Learn

Research has consistently shown that the most effective instruction is based on what is known about how students learn and how subject area knowledge develops. K12 uses research on learning that encompasses all major categories of research described in recent summaries by the National Research Council and major professional research and practice groups (e.g., the American Psychological Association, the National Reading Panel, the National Math Panel, the American Educational Research Association), as well as hundreds of papers, books, and articles by cognitive science researchers.

For example, the National Research Council (2005) has organized two volumes of research on learning around three fundamental principles, which we have taken as organizing principles for curriculum development:

1. Instruction must engage students' prior knowledge, because "new understandings are constructed on a foundation of existing understandings and experiences" (p. 4). This means it is important to assess what prior knowledge students have and either build on that knowledge or remediate as necessary before introducing new content. Further, it has been found that many student have serious misconceptions or partial understandings, particularly in science and math, that must be addressed during instruction. Consistent with these and other widely-replicated research findings, K12 has adapted a variety of strategies for accounting for prior knowledge, including pre-testing and providing instruction on pre-requisites in lessons, taking care to build on knowledge that students mastered in previous grade levels, and teaching for mastery so that each topic learned provides a foundation for future learning (rather than needing to be reviewed repeatedly/multiple times in future grade levels). Misconceptions are addressed through subject-specific methods, as discussed later.
2. Both factual knowledge and conceptual understanding are necessary to support the kind of learning that provides a foundation for future learning and competence in novel situations: "knowledge of facts and knowledge of important organizing ideas are mutually supportive" (p. 7) and both must be taught effectively. To address this challenge, K12 has developed frameworks for organizing curricula around the "big ideas" (see below) in a subject area and for teaching for the integration of conceptual understanding and factual knowledge across the curriculum.
3. Metacognition, or self-monitoring of learning and thinking, is a key characteristic of effective learning. Instruction on metacognition is critically important for lower achieving students, who tend to be much less aware of how to overcome obstacles to their own learning than higher achieving students. To improve students' awareness of and ability to evaluate their own learning, K12 incorporates research-tested supports for metacognitive thinking into its courses and has also developed an academic skill course

that explicitly teaches metacognitive skills. Some of the metacognitive strategies we use include:

– Frequent assessments (usually at the end of each lesson, unit, and semester, and sometimes within or at the beginning of lessons) and self-assessments (Thorndike, 1913; Chi, 2009, Ericsson et al., 2003).
– Modeling of self-monitoring behaviors (Palincsar & Brown, 1984).
– Comprehension questions before, during, and after instruction (National Reading Panel, 2000; Paris & Stahl, 2005).
– Prompts to think about whether one understands an explanation or is making progress in solving a problem (Whimbey & Whimbey, 1975).
– Self-explanations (Trying to explain a concept or how to solve a problem improves learning even if the explanation is not graded [Aleven & Koedinger, 2002; Chi, 2009]).
– Strategies for remembering information, which younger and lower achieving students need to be taught (Keeney et al., 1967).

Research on the Structure of Expert Knowledge

One of the most important theories in cognitive science is also one of the least applied in education. This is the theory that expert knowledge is organized around big ideas.

Memory and classification studies have repeatedly shown that human memory is not best conceived as a storehouse of a large number of discrete pieces of information unconnected to each other (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 1999) but as an organized structure of interrelated pieces of information. Extensive research on differences between the knowledge of experts and novices in many different fields has further shown that the long-term memory of someone who has mastered a subject area appears to be highly organized around a relatively small number of core principles (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 1999; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986; Hiebert & Carpenter, 1999; Glaser & Chi, 1988; Niemi, 1996). For someone who has advanced knowledge in a domain, every element of that knowledge is connected to other elements in a highly organized structure, with the core principles, or “big ideas”, dominating and organizing the others.

Unfortunately, curricula and instruction do not always reflect what is known about subject area knowledge and how it develops. Too often, students are taught in a way that leads them to believe that learning means acquiring a huge number of unrelated and essentially meaningless facts and skills. K12, however, has worked with subject area experts including mathematicians, scientists, historians, writers, and others, to identify big ideas and map the relationships among big ideas, facts and skills in each subject area. These analyses are used to organize curriculum development and to help students to see the “big picture” reflecting all the connections among different kinds of knowledge in a subject area. Big ideas are highlighted and explicitly taught using a variety of research-proven methods (e.g., Chi,, 2009; Clark, 1998; Mayer, 2008; Merrill, 2000, 2008):

– Clearly state, explain, and exemplify the idea through illustrations, objects, situations, simulations, etc.
– Give students opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the big idea in a variety of situations.
– Give examples and non-examples; show when the idea applies and when it doesn't.
– Show how to use the idea to understand and explain phenomena (e.g., how can counting be used to solve addition and subtraction problems; how can the multiplicative identify be used to find equivalent fractions).
– Demonstrate how the idea can be used to solve problems and justify solution procedures.
– Show how other ideas, facts and skills connect to the big idea. Show "concepts maps" of the structure of knowledge as it develops and enable students to modify these maps or build their own.

Research on General Instructional Principles

For both online and offline instructional activities K12 draws on empirically-tested general principles of instruction, including multimedia design principles. Evaluation and Research and Instructional Design staff have created summaries of these principles and course development teams are trained on the principles and how to apply them before and during course production (as discussed in a later section).

Our research on general strategies is organized by types of knowledge, since different strategies are required to teach different types of knowledge. Major categories of knowledge, which we have derived from the work of numerous cognitive science researchers, include the following: conceptual understanding, memorized facts and skills, problem solving strategies, and metacognition. We also use empirically-validated techniques to build student motivation to learn.

To teach for conceptual understanding, we use the methods described above for teaching big ideas. Several research-based strategies are implemented to help students overcome misconceptions related to big ideas (e.g., Klahr, 2000; Minstrell & Kraus, 2005; White, 1994; Vosniadou et al., 2001;White & Frederickson, 1998):

• Introduce known examples and bridging analogies.
• Create cognitive conflict, e.g., students predict what will happen in a situation, then see that the prediction is wrong. Then show students how to resolve this conflict.
• Present analogies and visual models.
• Use computer-based microworlds.

Since many different researchers (e.g., Clark, Mayer, Sweller) have demonstrated that worked examples are the best way to show students how to solve problems, we have

made extensive use of worked examples to teach problem solving across grade levels and curricula. The basic components of a worked example are: (1) a problem, (2) an expert solution with each step shown, and (3) an explanation for each step. For more complex

problems, we apply a research-inspired scaffolding approach: students review examples of expert problem solving, then try to solve partially worked examples, working up gradually to solving whole problems. Following the worked examples, students practice solving problems, moving from accuracy to speed (if necessary) and automaticity (in some cases).

Strategies for improving metacognition are described at the end of the section on How Students Learn above. Our strategies for building motivation draw on the finding that the real motivation for learners is learning and that the ability to demonstrate improvement in a skill provides motivation (Merrill, 2006). Since learners of all ages are more motivated when they can see the usefulness of what they are learning (Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1998; McCombs, 1996; Pintrich and Schunck, 1996), we also reinforce throughout our curricula how important concepts and skills will be necessary both for future learning and in many kinds of activities beyond school.

Research on Teaching Specific Topics and Addressing Possible Misconceptions

In addition to synthesizing research on learning and instruction that applies across subject areas, the Evaluation and Research team (or in some cases content specialists) puts together summaries of research on teaching strategies and misconceptions related to specific instructional objectives or topics, such as "Demonstrate that addition and subtraction are inverse operations" or "Identify the theme of a story." Some examples of this type of research for different subject areas are given below.

Design of the reading program, for instance, is consistent with key findings of the National Reading Panel (2000):

- Results of a meta-analysis show that "systematic phonics produces significant benefits for student in kindergarten through 6th grade and for children having reading difficulty" (p. 9). Accordingly, K12's reading program has a strong and systematic phonics component, and it focuses as well on skills that low-achieving 3rd-5th graders often lack, according to literacy researchers such as Loiusa Moats: that is, phonological awareness, syllabification, morphology, and reading fluency.
- "Guided repeated oral reading …had a significant and positive impact on word recognition, fluency, and comprehension across a range of grade levels" (p.12) The K12 reading program provides frequent opportunities for students to read aloud from poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and dramatic texts.
- "Teaching a combination of reading comprehension techniques is the most effective" (p. 15). K12's instructional methods include question generation, summarization and use of organizers, mirroring techniques recommended by the National Reading Panel.

K12's math program builds on extensive research on the effectiveness of standards-based curriculum and instruction, and particularly research on teaching low-achieving students to high standards. In this respect, the design of our math curriculum is consistent with recommendations of TIMSS researchers (e.g., Schmidt, 2004), the National Math Panel (2008) and findings presented in Improving Student Achievement in Mathematics: Part 1: Research Findings (EDO-SE-00-10, 2002). These findings include:

- Appropriate use of manipulatives, pictorial representations, symbolic operations, problem solving and cooperative learning all increase achievement in mathematics (Johnson, 2001). K12's program makes extensive use of all of these instructional strategies.
- Many studies show that when students develop mathematical ideas and concepts and use them to solve problems, they have a stronger understanding of the connections between mathematical ideas and their applications, become stronger problem solvers, and do better in advanced math classes. The K12 math program provides multiple opportunities for students to analyze unfamiliar situations and build and apply mathematical ideas in a wide variety of contexts; this is the kind of experience that low- achieving students in particular are unlikely to get in traditional curricula and instruction.

Research tied to specific learning objectives in particular plays an indispensible role in curriculum development. Below are a few examples of the hundreds of topic-specific research findings that have been implemented in lessons on particular objectives:

High school physics research findings:

- Students tend to think that during a collision the body with greater speed, mass, or rigidity applies a greater force on the other; on the other hand, if a body is slowing down it applies less force (Camp and Clement, 1994).
- Many students believe that hard objects exert greater forces than soft objects. Active objects exert more force than passive ones. Rigid object exert larger forces than fragile objects (Lattery, 2005).

Strategies to help students overcome these difficulties:

- Help students see collisions as spring problems; i.e., two non-rigid objects deforming under mutual interaction (Lattery, 2005).
- Point out that in a truck-car collision, the force exerted by the car on the truck is equal to the force exerted by the truck on the car (Zitzewitz et al. 2002).
- Demonstrate 'springy' (elastic) collisions using trolleys, one of which has its spring- load released so its spring can "soften the collisions" (Alternatively, use air-track gliders with repelling magnets attached.) Direct a single trolley at a second, stationary trolley. The first trolley stops, the second moves off at the speed of the first. Momentum is conserved. Now try a light trolley colliding with a heavy one, and vice versa. What pattern is seen? A light trolley bounces back from a heavier one (its momentum is negative); a heavier one moves on, but at a slower speed Zitzewitz et al. 2002).

High school history research findings:

- Students find it difficult to evaluate the intentions and purposes of the authors of

primary source documents, which is a critical skill in understanding history (Vansledright and Limon, 2006). They tend to accept anything found in a book as "true".

• As Wineberg (2001) noted, this type of knowledge and reasoning is unlikely to appear on its own and needs to be explicitly addressed during instruction.

Strategies to help students overcome these difficulties:

• Explicit instruction and direction on how to do source work and how evidence is evaluated in history can help students to assess the status of sources and to make judgments about their reliability.

Algebra II research findings:

• Some students do not realize that if a variable appears twice in an equation, it has the same value in each place in which it appears. Students who gave a correct solution to (x – 3)(x – 5) = 0 checked their solution by substituting x = 3 into (x -3) and x = 5 into (x – 5), concluding that because 0 x 0 = 0, their solution was correct (Vaiyavutjamai, et.al., 2005).

Strategies to help students overcome these difficulties:

• Emphasize that the zero product property implies that a quadratic equation may have two distinct solutions. The property states that ab = 0 if and only if a = 0 or b = 0. Emphasize the "or". Both numbers may be solutions but they cannot both simultaneously satisfy the equation (unless both are 0). Students may see that x2 – 5x + 6 = 0 implies that (x – 2)(x - 3) = 0 implies that 2 and 3 are solutions and then attempt to check the solutions by substituting 2 in for the first x and 3 for the second x (Vaiyavutjamai, et.al., 2005).

Elementary math research findings:

• Students are prone to misinterpret the equal (=) sign as an operational symbol rather than a relational one, perhaps because the equal sign is commonly used in the following way: 5+3 =___.

• Students see the equal sign as a signal they should "do" something with 5 + 3. Rather than seeing 5 + 3 = 8 as an equivalence relationship.

Strategies to help students overcome these difficulties:

• Use multiple representations of the equal sign during instruction: 5 +____= 10

5 + 5 = ____

____= 6 + 4

8 = 8

6 + 3 =____+ 7

Finally, K12 regularly invites widely-cited cognitive researchers to conduct presentations and training sessions for Product Development and other K12 divisions. In the last year, internationally recognized researchers Richard Clark and Richard Mayer have presented separately on research-based principles for designing good online and offline instruction,

and Michelline Chi has discussed the applications of research on expertise to the design of curricula and instruction. The work of these researchers (along with many others) has

been integrated into a series of instructional guidelines used by our development teams. We have used Mayer's research on the positive effects of multimedia on learning (Clark & Mayer, 2003) to infuse the K12 curricula with the most effective types of interactive technology.

Processes for Implementing Research

To insure that research-tested strategies are effectively implemented throughout K12's courses, development typically begins with an analysis of the structure of knowledge in the subject area, identification of big ideas, and a synthesis of relevant state standards.

After these analyses are completed, precise learning objectives are written to reflect state standards, big ideas, and research on learning and misconceptions. These objectives are then organized into a scope and sequence that guides production. High priority master objectives, representing the most important and difficult to master concepts in the course, are also identified, and additional resources are devoted to teaching them.

Before course production begins, development teams are trained to make sure that they understand the big ideas, how to teach them, and how to structure the course around them, and are familiar with relevant instructional design strategies and principles.

To guide development of specific lessons and units, the Evaluation and Research team leads pre-production discussions of relevant research, focusing on:

- Empirically-tested methods for teaching ideas and skills covered in the lesson or unit
- Any misconceptions associated with the ideas, and methods for addressing them
- Research on how students develop understanding of key ideas

Finally, research and content specialists review lessons to monitor whether the recommended research strategies have been effectively incorporated.

K12 Empirical Studies

In addition to reviewing and synthesizing cognitive science research and working with course development teams to implement it, the K12 Evaluation and Research team also conducts studies to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of our instructional products.

Following is a sampling of key findings and actions based on those findings:

Re-sequencing Course Content: Re-sequencing curricula to ensure that important content is covered before state tests led to significant improvements in state test scores.

Consequently, 50 K12 math courses were re-sequenced, and content sequencing is carefully considered in all new K12 courses.

Big Ideas Lessons: Lessons that explicitly taught grade 4 fractions big ideas led to higher posttest scores than lessons that taught the same content with less emphasis on the big ideas. The fractions lessons are now incorporated into K12 math, and the general strategy will be used to teach other Big Ideas.

Diagnostic Testing and Instructional Recommendations: We obtained evidence suggesting that giving students periodic diagnostic tests and providing learning coaches and teachers with instructional strategies based on results positively impacts state test scores. Results informed the decision for K12 schools to develop assessments using Scantron's Achievement Series, and use the results to guide student learning plans.

Software to Improve Learning of Math Facts: Pretest-posttest and progress tracking data indicated that performance on recalling multiplication facts can be significantly improved (in as little as a few hours) using an approach that presents problems to students depending on how they performed on past trials and how fast they answered certain problems. These principles are currently being applied as K12 develops games and other learning tools to help student learn facts, skills, and procedures that need to be memorized.

Focused online practice with feedback: We found a significant positive correlation between state test scores and the number of online practice sessions in reading and math. Lesson shells have been built into K12's online school to increase use of the online practice program, and all K12 virtual schools monitor use, particularly by low achieving students.

Analysis of test data to evaluate and improve K12 programs: We analyze student performance on state tests and Scantron tests that are administered periodically during the school year in order to determine which aspects of our program are most effective or could be strengthened, and these analyses enable us to improve existing and future courses.

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APPENDIX C

Updated Literacy Plan

Literacy Plan K8
2018

Nevada Virtual Academy (NVVA), a Virtual Charter School partnered with K12, has created a community of life-long learners with high quality instruction through the Pathways Program-virtual, blended, or independent learning platforms. Serving a variety of students through NVVA's online program and the *Pathway Initiative* to receive the most support based on their individual needs.

The mission of Nevada Virtual Academy, is to make a difference by meeting the unique needs of our diverse students, preparing them for college or career in the 21st century through high quality instruction in our virtual platform.

Core Beliefs:

- NVVA teachers provide targeted instruction through Pathways: virtual, blended, and independent
- NVVA teachers work with families to ensure students' academic needs are met
- NVVA teachers monitor students' progress and growth
- NVVA teachers work with students to ensure mastery
- NVVA teachers utilize a variety of strategies online and in face to face platforms meeting students' needs every day
- NVVA teachers collaborate to unwrap NVACS, instruction, assessment, and interventions
- NVVA Family Academic Support Team (FAST) enrollment team and counselor ensure student success with outreach and communication
- NVVA administration oversees instruction and provides feedback for a continuous cycle of instructional best practices improvements

Literacy Plan Goals

The Literacy Task Force at NVVA is committed to high quality literacy education for all students. We will accomplish this by providing teachers with researched based resources/education, empowering parents, and using our platform in creative ways to reach varied levels of students.

1) Parents will be informed of their child's reading level in all grades K-8 throughout the school year.

2) Individual literacy plans, and support will be provided for families/guardians of students who have been identified as a struggling reader through face to face or virtual sessions.

3) Increased levels of participations and engagement by families are expected for student success and achievement.

4) Students in grades K-3 will meet their RIT score growth targets on the MAP assessment in Reading. Fall testing in August/September to spring testing in May of each year must equate to *one-year growth* in reading.

5) NVVA students in K-3 will increase proficiency levels consistent with the state.

6) NVVA students will increase proficiency levels consistent with the state in Reading on the SBAC in Grades 3-8.

7) All students not performing at grade level at each assessment period will receive targeted interventions

8) Reading instruction will be taught by highly qualified reading instructors.

9) All teachers will participate in a data driven staff development model in reading instruction best practices, as well as extensive staff development in implementation.

LITERACY PLAN

Nevada's Read by Grade Three Act (SB 391), was designed to dramatically improve student achievement by ensuring that all students will be able to read proficiently by the end of the third grade. Aligning with the nine principles of the Nevada State Literacy Plan and in compliance with the Read by Grade Three guidelines, NVVA has implemented best literacy practices to ensure student academic achievement. Through assessment, communication, instruction, intervention, and professional development, NVVA will ensure increased student achievement in literacy.

Assessment Goals

Our goal is for all students to be at or above grade level on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Screener and MAP Growth assessments. Based on the outcomes of the assessments, students may qualify for additional support through our Response to Intervention (RtI) program. Additionally, students identified as struggling readers will be provided with an individualized literacy plan created in partnership with the parent, teacher, literacy specialist, and school principal. Through high quality core instruction and differentiation, students will be supported to make growth based on grade level expectations and individual student goals. Data analysis of both the screening and diagnostic measures, informs teachers to provide classroom and tiered instruction to meet students' literacy needs. Furthermore, students will demonstrate reading proficiency throughout the primary grades and by grade 3. The following is a brief explanation of the types of assessments used to measure student proficiency and qualify students for additional interventions.

Screening

For Kindergarten, the State Board approved the developmentally appropriate Brigance III Kindergarten Entry Assessment to serve as the required 30-day Kindergarten screener. The winter assessment benchmark in kindergarten will then serve as the beginning point for the required use of the MAP Growth assessment. Students in grades 1-3 will be assessed with the MAP Growth test providing teachers with baseline data. Additionally, as new students enroll in NVVA, the literacy specialist will administer the MAP Growth tests during face to face sessions, outside of blended times. Data from these screenings will be used to identify the literacy needs of students and qualify them for additional literacy interventions.

Diagnostic

Students in grades 1-3 are required to take the MAP Growth benchmark assessments in fall, winter, and spring. Kindergarten students will begin taking MAP Growth assessments during the winter benchmark session. The MAP Growth test is an adaptive computerized screening assessment that measures growth from one period of time to another. Interim assessments will also be administered to students using the MAP Screener which will provide teachers and students of ongoing progression. Moreover, these assessments specifically match students' performance based on how well they perform on each item versus assessing them at their grade level. NVVA teachers analyze this data to identify deficiencies in learning and implement interventions needed to close the achievement gaps, particularly in literacy. Finally, students in grades 3-8 will take the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test that is based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics for the spring benchmark. This test utilizes computer-adaptive tests and performance tasks allowing students to demonstrate their abilities.

Progress Monitoring

Nevada Department of Education (NDE) had identified the 40th percentile rank on the MAP Growth Reading Assessments as its Read by Grade 3 Indicator. Students in grades K-3 who have scored at or below the 40% mark on the MAP Growth Reading assessment will be identified as "struggling readers" and qualify for additional support and intervention identified in SB 391. These students will receive an individualized literacy plan that will be shared between student, teacher, parent, and literacy specialist. Students will begin the RtI process by receiving Tier II interventions. Progress monitoring of students' skills will be assessed through the MAP Skills Check to ensure proficiency is evident as a result of targeted intervention. If, however, those students who have received Tier II targeted instruction and still fall below MAP Growth Reading Assessments will be referred to Tier III and receive additional intensive intervention.

Communication

Nevada Virtual Academy works with families to communicate the academic progress of their children. Families are referred to as 'Learning Coaches' and assist with the academic instruction of their student. NVVA teachers and Learning Coaches work together to ensure students' academic needs are met. NVVA will promote literacy activities, like family nights and Nevada Reading Week, that will focus on increasing student literacy development. NVVA teachers communicate with families through email, connection calls, NVVA Facebook page, student progression specifically, MAP Growth and MAP Skills-Check reports, student-parent conferences, and weekly newsletters from classroom teachers and the Family Engagement Liaison, to name a few. NVVA families are provided with information about reading instruction, assessment information, testing strategies, and are provided literacy support through workshops and trainings. As previously noted, families of students who have been identified as a struggling reader are also informed of additional opportunities of support. An example of this can be found in the blended platforms, teachers interact and engage with families to meet students' needs through support and collaboration in the virtual and blended learning platforms.

Reading Instruction

At NVVA, is committed to provide a high-quality literacy and educational experience for students and families incorporating the nine principles of the 2015 Nevada State Literacy Plan (NSLP). NVVA teachers use student data to drive their instruction and create learning goals for students. NVVA teachers engage in best practices like the Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO), to provide differentiation that targets instruction to enhance the teaching and learning experiences for all learners, regardless of their learning platform. Additionally, NVVA teachers and in collaboration with Learning Coaches, provide a balanced literacy approach using authentic researched based instructional strategies for reading and writing built on the five essential components of literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reading instruction will align with the nine literacy guiding principles of the NSLP (2015)- *demonstrate independence, build strong content knowledge, respond to demands of audience, task, and discipline, comprehend and critique, understand other cultures and perspectives, privilege evidence, care about precision, look for and craft structure, and use technology and digital media strategically.* Finally, all students are provided tiered instruction to meet their individual literacy needs.

Interventions

Tier I: Core instruction

Reading instruction begins in Kindergarten with a multi-tiered approach using asynchronous, synchronous and blended platforms. Using a balanced literacy framework, Tier I instruction is provided to students through K12's online curriculum and grade level content provided by the

classroom teacher. NVVA teachers engage in researched based best practices by providing whole and small group lessons to support and target students' instructional needs.

Tier 2: Strategic Intervention

Students who have scored at or below the 40% mark on the MAP Growth Reading assessment and identified as "struggling readers", qualify for additional support and intervention. Students will be referred to the RtI process whereby an individual literacy plan will be created to support students' needs. Families will be provided information regarding their child's individual literacy plan and be provided with literacy information to support their child at home. This plan will provide the appropriate intervention to be implemented by the teacher for a duration of eight weeks in addition to students Tier I instruction. Students will receive an additional 30 minutes of support for three days in groups not exceeding ten students. NVVA teachers will ensure that students receive targeted intervention to ensure mastery of specific skills and will progress monitor students to ensure the effectiveness of the intervention. After the intervention has been implemented, a follow up meeting will be held to determine the next steps for the student.

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

Students who continue to score below the 40% mark on the MAP Growth Reading assessment or who have not had success in receiving Tier II intervention, are referred to Tier III and receive more intense direct intervention services. Families will be provided information regarding their child's individual literacy plan and be provided with literacy information to support their child at home. This plan will provide the appropriate intervention to be implemented by the teacher or literacy specialist for a duration of eight weeks. Students receive individualized instruction with targeted strand instruction from the classroom teacher or the literacy specialist for additional 30 minutes of support for four days in groups not exceeding three students. Students in Tier III receive one on one intervention with the literacy specialist during face to face blended times or one on one during virtual blended times with their teacher. Additionally, students may be instructed with Mark12, an intensive intervention reading curriculum provided by K12. NVVA teachers and the literacy specialist will ensure that students receive targeted intervention to ensure mastery of specific skills and will progress monitor students to ensure the effectiveness of the intervention. After the intervention has been implemented, a follow up meeting will be held to determine the next steps for the student.

Professional Development

NVVA educators are committed to excellence and mastery of reading of all students. NVVA leaders are committed to support the growth and development of NVVA teachers in all reading instruction. In compliance with Nevada's Read by Grade Three Act (SB 391), the literacy

specialists will train and support teachers in grades K-4 to ensure there is a common alignment in the supports students will receive and provide teachers with tools necessary to meet the needs of students identified as struggling readers. Further training for teachers will focus on the following topics: the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF), Nevada Academic Standards (NVACS), Nevada State Literacy Plan (NSLP), evidence based instructional practices and intervention in literacy, implementing required reading assessments and using data to improve student literacy achievement. In addition to providing literacy training and support to NVVA teachers, the literacy specialist will provide training and support workshops for NVVA Learning Coaches with best practices to support their student's literacy development. Moreover, NVVA teachers will participate in other professional development focusing on improving and increasing literacy development in students like, MAP webinars, book studies, professional learning community (PLC) times, and peer observations.

Summary

NVVA is committed to the motto: "Every Student, Every Day!" to ensure 100% of our students reading at or above grade level by the end of grade three. With continuous review of student data, ongoing collaboration with NVVA Learning Coaches, evaluation of student progress in any tier of instruction, improvements made to instructional practices and a commitment to professional development, NVVA teachers and leaders will close the achievement gap and successfully increase student literacy development and achievement. This literacy plan will serve as a guide to achieve said goals.