



2021-2022 School Year Plan

## **In-Person Learning:**

### **Health and Safety**

Nevada Connections Academy (NCA) is a program of full-time distance education. Though we provide school virtually, there will be staff members at our main office located in Reno, Nevada. We will also be holding various field trips and events throughout the year.

In order to best protect staff who may be working in the office, office staff will remain on a rotation schedule until further notice. This will ensure that no more than one staff member is at the office at a time. If more staff need to be present, we will observe CDC and state protocols regarding social distancing and mask mandates.

Janitorial staff will continue to do a regular deep cleaning. Wipes are placed in high touch places and required signs have been posted throughout the building. The office will be cleaned and sanitized three days per week. However, if we have an illness in the office we will have the office deep cleaned immediately that evening.

Nevada Connections Academy plans on providing some in-person/field trip opportunities during the upcoming school year. During the in-person events, NCA will follow all CDC and local health authority recommendations and guidance to ensure compliance as well as the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and family members. Hand sanitizer will be provided, masks will be available for those that would like to wear one and wipes will be accessible for all.

We will also be providing virtual events to ensure that participation in events is still available for students and families who may not feel comfortable attending in-person.

In order to protect the health and well-being of all staff, in person events are currently optional for staff that having continuing concerns regarding COVID-19. For in-person meetings (i.e. back to school professional development, etc.) staff who continue have COVID-19 concerns are provided with a virtual option.

## **In-Person Learning:**

### **Student and Staff Wellbeing**

Although we provide full time distance education for all students, our student's social, emotional, mental and physical health needs are one of our top priorities.

In order to meet students' social, emotional, mental and physical health needs, NCA provides a variety of supports. To begin, all students are placed with a homeroom teacher who has been trained and receives continuous bi-weekly professional development training to address better support student needs and provide resources and strategies. Students are placed on a monthly, bi-weekly or weekly call rotation depending on their academic and/or social need. Students may request to increase call frequency if they desire. Homeroom teachers also provide LiveLessons for students to attend. This helps give students a sense of community and belonging.

Grade level academies will be implemented at the start of the 21-22 School Year. Each grade level will work together to create events (virtual and in person), discuss ways to increase student engagement and ensure that a sense of community is felt not only within the grade level academy but throughout NCA as well.

Additionally, if greater level of supports are needed, students are identified by counselors/teachers. These supports include but aren't limited to: Child Welfare, SEL Mentors, increased call frequency from homeroom teacher and calls from administration. Each case is looked at individually and the proper supports are put in place based on the needs of the individual student.

## **In-Person Learning:**

### **Accelerating Student Learning**

Though our students attend virtually and did not have to transition as hastily as those in a traditional brick and mortar school, we are aware of the following:

- Students who enrolled at NCA due to COVID restrictions
- Students who were directly impacted by COVID whether that be contracting COVID themselves or having someone in their family or friends contract the virus.
- Students who have lost someone due to COVID.

We are prepared to re-engage our students, detect barriers and/or concerns and identify academic learning gaps. The following will be utilized throughout the school year:

- Data from the 20-21 School Year will be utilized to identify students needing extra support from the start of the year.
  - **Reading Support** – Students who obtained a reading score on the Renaissance Star 360 Assessment that fell in the bottom tenth percentile will be placed in an extra support group with our Literacy Coach.
  - **Onboarding** – Newly enrolled 10<sup>th</sup> graders will be sectioned into an Onboarding Section with our Onboarding Specialists. Students will remain in this section until our Onboarding Specialist has determined they are prepared to work independently. *Important Note:* 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment is closed so there will be no new 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders this school year. 9<sup>th</sup> grade onboarding will take place in their homeroom since all 9<sup>th</sup> graders will be new to NCA.
  - **At Risk Students** – Students identified through our data reports that provide number of credits earned and number of failed courses, will be placed into a separate section for extra support from our Onboarding Specialist. They will receive re-onboarding help and academic guidance to increase their chances of success.
- Benchmark Assessments – Students will complete the Renaissance Star 360 Assessment during the fall, winter and spring testing windows.
  - Data obtained from these assessments throughout the year will be analyzed frequently. Adjustments will be made to the sections detailed above as needed.
- Counseling LiveLessons – Our counseling team will be holding monthly counseling lessons to help support our students socially and emotionally. Lesson topics will also include: credit tracking, transcript reading, planning for graduation and college & career readiness.

## **Distance Education:**

### **Students unable to participate in person**

Students unable to participate in person would not be impacted being that we are a virtual school. All students will be receiving an education virtually. In addition to completing their lessons through their daily planner, they will be invited to participate in the following:

- Phone calls with their homeroom and content area teachers
- LiveLessons (held virtually) with their homeroom and content area teachers
- Virtual Field Trips
- Virtual Grade Level Assemblies
- Clubs and extra-curricular activities (chosen by the student) held virtually
- Benchmark Assessments where students will attend virtually and will be monitored by their homeroom teacher
- Other events and activities held virtually that will be planned throughout the year

## **Distance Education:**

### **Emergency Closure**

If restrictions were increased and schools were to return to virtual education, NCA would run as normal. No changes would need to be made to the day to day operations and student learning as we are a full-time virtual school.

In regards to field trips and events, all in-person events would be canceled until further notice. Events and field trips would take place virtually. The main office would also be completely closed if state restrictions prohibit in person interaction.

## **Distance Education:**

### **Supporting Students**

The following supports are in place for students at all times throughout the school year:

**Technology** – Upon enrollment, students and families can decide to use a school provided computer. They may also choose to opt out if they have a personal device. Students are informed that their device must be a desktop, laptop or tablet. Lessons may not be completed on their cell phone. If they initially choose to decline the school provided technology, they may choose to adjust this at any point in the school year. Families with more than one student enrolled at NCA may also request to have more than one computer sent in order to provide one on one technology. Families may also qualify for internet subsidies twice per year.

**Special Education** – Each student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) has designated Case Manager to work with them throughout the school year. The Case Manager will hold necessary IEP meetings, regular phone calls with the family and LiveLesson supports based on the student's IEP goals. Students with IEP's will also be sectioned into general education classes where they will have access to general education teachers, curriculum, LiveLessons and support. Students who may be eligible to receive Special Education services will be discussed with our Manager of Special Education Services.

**EL Services** – During the enrollment process, students identified as English Language Learners will populate on a report. This report can be pulled by administration and or English Language Specialist. Our EL Specialist sets up regular calls, holds LiveLessons and provides ongoing support to all identified EL students.

**Nutrition Services** – Though we do not have a cafeteria and we do not provide food to our students, if a student and their family needs nutrition services, we will provide them the necessary information to get them the needed resources.

**McKinney Vento Students** - During the enrollment process, students with unstable living environments are flagged for our McKinney Vento Liaison to review and assess. Our MV Liaison will reach out to each family flagged to offer support and resources. Regular calls will be scheduled if necessary.