

# New Mexico Public Education Commission



## 2022 Charter School Renewal Application Part B: Progress Report

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## Instructions

Please read the entire Charter School Renewal Application Kit before preparing documents. In an effort to help applicants understand the requirements of the Renewal Application, the CSD will hold a minimum of two technical assistance workshops. Applicants will be notified of the dates, times, and locations of the workshops.

Enter applicant responses in boxes below. Answer all questions unless the question indicates that applicants should answer only under certain conditions (e.g., rating on a Performance Framework indicator requires explanation, etc.). Narrative responses should be verifiable through documents submitted or observable evidence at the renewal site visit, and will be scored according to the rubric in the main 2022 Charter Renewal Application document.

## School Information

<b>Name of School:</b>	<b>New Mexico Connections Academy</b>
<b>Authorizer:</b>	<b>New Mexico Public Education Commission</b>
<b>Current Charter Term:</b>	<b>2018-2023</b>

## Academic Performance

### Student Outcomes

#### 1. Academic Performance

The school reports on its academic performance during the term of the contract, including achieving its goals, student performance outcomes, state standards of excellence and accountability requirements set forth in the Assessment and Accountability Act.

School response:

In response to the statutory questions raised when contemplating a Charter School Renewal decision, New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA) has met and/or exceeded the standard in all 4 areas.

*(1. committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures set forth in the charter contract; 2. failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of the department's standards of excellence or student performance standards identified in the charter contract; 3. failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; 4. violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.)*

NMCA has achieved the standards and targets stated in the charter contract, is organizationally and fiscally viable, and has been faithful to the terms of the contract and applicable law.

Specifically, when contemplating the academic performance that NMCA has demonstrated during the current charter term, the results have been not just encouraging, but heartening. All areas that have been able to be assessed consistently over the current term are trending upward, NMCA is meeting its internal goals, and has met or exceeded the goals outlined in the charter contract. NMCA is proud of the work that has been done since the end of contract negotiations to this point in the charter term. This work, as documented and witnessed by the Charter Schools Division (CSD) for the past four years, has allowed for NMCA to weather a challenge to its very existence and, in a short period of time, become a model online option for over 1400 New Mexico families.

As home to one of the largest public charter school populations in the state of New Mexico, NMCA understands and accepts the huge responsibility before us. Creating educational opportunities to the incredibly diverse clientele that we serve is the driving force behind the work that we have done and will continue to do. As will be explained further in this application, NMCA has created an educational environment for all students in our state. From the high-achieving gifted student and the "home-schooled" rodeo champion to the struggling high school dropout and the bullied middle-schooler, NMCA is working to meet all of their needs and prepare them for an ever-changing world.

This is not to say that there have not been some challenges during this current charter term. Although NMCA was able to provide a seamless, uninterrupted educational experience for our families during the COVID pandemic, our entire community felt and dealt with many of the same issues facing brick-and-mortar schools. Notwithstanding the challenges with our staff having to readjust their lives to deal with their own family lockdowns, NMCA also experienced an increase

in students adjusting to the 'new normal' and the school has had to increase our efforts to communicate with students, and assess our students' well-being during this unprecedented time. As has been documented, but is certainly worth highlighting, is the other challenge of becoming a mid-year option for many families trying to navigate their way through the pandemic closures. NMCA saw an increase in enrollment during the pandemic and had to make organizational adjustments to properly manage this increase and its impact on the school's resources. What is important to note is that, in spite of an unexpected change to our school's population, NMCA continued to see gains in the outcomes that we had identified as success.

Among those successes are: increase in overall course completion school-wide, increases in reading and math proficiency across grade levels, enrollment and reenrollment trending upward, increased graduation rates, increased college acceptance, and increased attendance. All of this data is available on request and can be accessed during the renewal site visit.

Unfortunately, as with all other public schools in the state, NMCA cannot speak to its full-term performance related to the state standards of excellence and accountability requirements as there is insufficient data upon which to found a rating because of the suspension of state-mandated testing for two of the four years that can be reported for this charter term. Because of this lack of external data, we have provided our own internal formative assessment data in subsequent sections of the application and have also provided state assessment projections based on the norm-referencing of our internal assessment to the state standards.

In addition to the challenges that all schools have faced during the pandemic, NMCA has also experienced challenges unique to our school model and has taken steps to address those challenges. One of the most significant factors that NMCA has focused on since its inception is the high number of "off-cohort" students who choose NMCA as their educational option. These students come to us at all times of the school year and have significant gaps in both their knowledge and their high school graduation credits. In an effort to maximize the success that these students experience at our school, NMCA has provided support structures and specific staff members to engage with this student population and ensure that they are on track to credit recovery and, ultimately, graduation. Because this population has typically been transient in nature, our "off-cohort" counselors, advisors, and teachers have taken deliberate actions to engage with these students and their families and have created support systems within each grade level to quickly identify when students are falling behind in their course work and to connect them with the appropriate avenue for getting "caught up." These avenues can include working with a reading or math interventionist, attending Live Lesson tutoring sessions, and working with the classroom teacher to create a plan for assignment completion, all of which are among a continuum of interventions provided by NMCA staff.

Overall, NMCA has met the academic expectations previously defined by the Public Education Commission and the PED, and has met all expectations as outlined in the current charter contract term. With the unexpected influence of the COVID pandemic on both the state's ability to deliver state-wide assessments and the PED's ability to make objective comparisons of schools, NMCA has determined its own metrics to evaluate our impact on student academic progress. As the Renewal Application will demonstrate, NMCA has not only seen its student enrollment continue to rise it has also seen student engagement increase. New Mexico Connections Academy is looking forward to the outcomes that will come the longer we implement our targeted strategies and structures of support.

### 1.a. Student Outcomes

1.a. How has the school measured student proficiency and growth, including action taken in the absence of state summative assessments in 2019-20 and 2020-21? Describe interim and formative assessments used, and the results of those assessments. Include a detailed narrative that addresses the actions taken to improve student outcomes, and the success of those actions. Schools may take the opportunity to include data in support of the narrative. If providing data to support the school's narrative, provide it in **Appendix A-1 Academic Data**. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit.

School response:

Many in our educational community continue to try to define the school experience exclusively through the lens of academic assessments. While the ultimate goal of any school is to improve the learning of students, it is not the only goal. There is so much more to the educational experience than test scores. Especially given the nature of the variety of students who choose to attend NMCA and the many different reasons that they come to our school, we are constantly working to ensure that students feel a connection to our school and feel comfortable and confident when engaging with our teachers, the curriculum, and other students. Because of this approach to building our community, we believe that our efforts over the past charter term have allowed us to surpass our goals of student engagement and overall academic success.

Over the past charter term, including the difficult years of the pandemic, NMCA has been able to deliver instruction, engage families, and complete annual assessments without interruption. Because of the nature of the technology platforms that we utilize, we were able to assess our students three times per year and have utilized this data to identify the needs of individual students, as well as, to identify learning gaps that may need to be addressed for small groups of students, and ultimately to discover potential school-wide improvements to positively impact our student performance. Over the past three years, NMCA has made a focused attempt to staff the school with student support individuals, both on the social emotional side as well as the academic side. These positions have included math and reading interventionists, an elementary school counselor, an off-cohort Advisor, a family intervention social worker, and a Learning Coach Support Specialist. Not only have these positions allowed for us to meet the required expectations in the state's Multi-Layered Systems of Support (MLSS), but it has also positively impacted our student assessment data as well as our course completion rates for all students. As the diagram in **Appendix A-3** shows, our systems are set up to support the individual student, and we are on a journey to find the best adult actions necessary to keep students at the center of our focus.

As NMCA has been able to provide more direct student support, we have discovered the value of the formative assessment data to help provide both classroom teachers, and content area specialists, individual learning gaps for students through the detailed information provided by these assessments. The Renaissance STAR assessment provides school-wide, grade-level, classroom, and individual data for all of our students. Our staff uses the data to identify students in need of improvement and this, in turn, initiates a variety of adult actions designed to help support each student to perform at their best. While each student provides their own individual challenges, the staff has created a structure of support that can include: small-group re-teaching by a classroom teacher, small-group tutoring with a reading or math interventionist, individualized one-on-one tutoring, as well as, Learning Coach support, just to name a few. A

more comprehensive description of the adult actions provided for students in need of support was created by our staff as the PED rolled out the MLSS information. Those specific actions are detailed in **Appendix A-4: NMCA MLSS Intervention Chart and Continuum**.

Although many of the initiatives that have been discussed above have only been implemented for a short amount of time, the initial student success data is overwhelmingly encouraging. The focused attempts at identifying our goals for the school, and then the deliberate efforts made to both staff positions and create working support structures has allowed for us to meet the goals that we set at the beginning of this charter term. Although the data has continued to trend upward, NMCA is not content with any students struggling to succeed and will continue to refine our practices in our efforts to allow for all students to reach their potential.

After state summative assessments were canceled for the 2019-2020 school year, New Mexico Connections Academy decided to begin administering the Renaissance STAR360 Benchmark assessments three times a year in order to obtain student data on achievement and growth. Assessments were given in both Reading and Math and, unlike state summative assessments that are only given at some grade levels, the benchmark assessments have been administered for all grade levels. Administration of the benchmark assessments began in the 2020-2021 school year and continued in the 2021-2022 school year.

The Renaissance assessment provides an Achievement Percentile which is nationally normed across all students utilizing Renaissance. An achievement percentile of 50 indicates a student is performing at national average. In addition, Renaissance provides a projection if a student would likely perform proficient on the New Mexico state summative assessment. The tables in **Appendix A-1** show the achievement performance by grade level for NMCA for school years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

### **1.b. Mission-specific or School-Specific Goals**

Report on the school's performance in relation to the school- or mission-specific goals in the negotiated performance framework. Performance reports related to school or mission specific goals should be supported by raw data (masked to protect PII) and provided in **Appendix A-2 Mission Goal Data**. The school should report on the performance in each year of the contract term.

Schools that have not met their school- or mission-specific goals in each year of the contract term should provide a narrative that addresses the improvement actions taken and the success of those actions. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting the school or mission specific goals and maintaining that performance level. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit.

School response:

New Mexico Connections Academy has met and/or exceeded the school-specific goals in the negotiated performance framework for the current term.

As articulated in the performance framework, NMCA's school-specific goals read as follows:

*80% or more of students in grades 4 through 8, enrolled on both the 40th and 120th day, will complete the grade level **AND** 70% of students in grades 9 through 12, enrolled on both the 40th and 120th day, will earn a minimum of 6 credits (or, if taking fewer than 6 credits, students will complete all credits in which they are enrolled).*

While the full data is provided in **Appendix A-2**, here is a snapshot of the results:

**4-8 grade completion percentages**

**SY 18-19 – 87%**      **SY 19-20 – 94%**      **SY 20-21 – 94%**      **SY 21-22 – 95%**

**9-12 grade credit completion percentages**

**SY 18-19 – 72%**      **SY 19-20 – 76%**      **SY 20-21 – 83%**      **SY 21-22 – 86%**

The ultimate measure of success for NMCA is the successful completion of online courses. As referenced in other sections of this application, the online curriculum that our students complete has proven to prepare students for the next grade level and for any post-secondary avenue our students choose to pursue.

NMCA has taken deliberate steps to make improvement in these goal areas and the results are encouraging. As demonstrated throughout this application, the school's focus on meeting the individual needs of our diverse population will continue and, it is clear that the work that we have done over this current charter term has positively impacted our student outcomes.

**2. Organizational Performance**

**2.a. Educational Program**

How is the school implementing the distinctive educational program described in its contract (Performance Framework Indicator 1.a.)? The response should address the ways in which the school is implementing the family, teacher, and student-focused terms of its contract. Please discuss any innovations the school has implemented in support of its mission and educational program.

School response:

New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA) provides a comprehensive education program that meets the Public Education Commission's academic standards as identified in its contract.

The mission of NMCA is to help each 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade student, throughout the state of New Mexico who needs an alternative to the traditional classroom for a particular time period, maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program, access to high quality NM-certified teachers, and high parental involvement. Our mission also includes a school-with-in-a-school model with a focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

The vision for NMCA is to reach students in grades 4-12 throughout New Mexico for whom an innovative, flexible, and personalized learning approach provides the best pathway to school success. NMCA provides a uniquely individualized, future-ready learning program for each student who may need an individualized program for a particular period of time in a way that cannot be offered in the traditional classroom model. NMCA combines the best in virtual education with real connections among students, families, teachers, and the community to promote academic and emotional success for every learner.

NMCA implements the proven Pearson virtual school model, incorporating its recognized and award-winning curriculum focusing on and supporting academic achievement for all students. The virtual learning model and the curriculum provided by Pearson, as described in this renewal application, are currently implemented in 50 virtual schools in 30 states throughout the country. The students and families of NMCA benefit from the best practices culled from implementing this proven core model of virtual learning over the past 20 years.

As stated in our mission, NMCA serves students throughout New Mexico eligible to enroll under New Mexico law, including general education students, students with special needs, at-risk students, gifted students, and English language learners. NMCA also serves highly mobile students and helps students be successful when a full-time virtual school is needed and preferred.

Through this unique model, NMCA is dedicated to providing a high-quality, full-time virtual option to children of all backgrounds. NMCA is uniquely able to provide these services for a diverse array of students who may benefit from a quality option to the traditional brick-and-mortar classroom, including:

- Children in rural communities who lack access to challenging classes and Advanced Placement®(AP)/Honors courses within their current existing public-school options;
- Students whose families seek more involvement in their child's education;
- Students who are medically homebound due to illness or disability;
- Students who are immunocompromised and are concerned about health conditions outside of the home environment;
- Exceptional students who are far ahead of, or far behind, their peers in school;
- Students pursuing artistic or athletic interests or career development opportunities requiring a schedule that can be modified as is necessary;
- Students who require a flexible school schedule;
- Students with special learning needs;
- Students who have been bullied;
- Students who are at risk of academic failure, who may particularly benefit from intensive, personalized instruction;
- Students who desire a comprehensive, robust full-time virtual school experience; and
- Students who, due to fear and anxiety caused by COVID-19, require a safe and healthy environment in which to learn.

Students learn best when lessons match their interests and abilities. Access to a wide variety of courses, some of which are not offered in many traditional schools, provides students with an opportunity to explore their interests and enhance their abilities. NMCA's program offers students the chance to build their individual strengths and interests in a familiar and safe setting while still connected to a larger learning community. Here are a few of the driving forces behind our unique approach to education and what makes our virtual online school stand out:



- **High-quality Curriculum** – Our curriculum and instruction meet standards at the state and national level while also integrating the best materials, texts, and resources available.
- **Exceptional Teachers** – Our dedicated teachers are at the foundation of the school experience. Teachers are certified and highly qualified in New Mexico and are trained to excel in online teaching. Students have opportunities to work 1:1 with teachers for personalized instruction.
- **Individualized Learning** – Each student has unique abilities and performs better when receiving individualized attention in a nurturing learning environment. Teachers identify individual students’ interests, learning preferences, and skills and encourage personal development, giving each student the best opportunity to succeed. An individualized learning approach means that students can accelerate their pace on material they grasp easily and receive extra attention in areas of weakness.
- **Parent-Supported Learning** – A parent, guardian, or other responsible adult serves as their student’s virtual school Learning Coach, choosing to be closely involved in their child’s daily education and take on an active role in supporting and encouraging their child. The Learning Coach is supported with resources and training to encourage caregivers in the learning process.
- **Easy-to-Use Technology** – Through the Education Management System (EMS), an online learning platform, parents/guardians and students can easily access curriculum, review grades, and schedule lessons. The EMS is user-friendly and provides students with access to a collaborative learning experience anywhere they can connect to the Internet.
- **Socialization and Community** – LiveLesson<sup>®</sup>, a real-time, interactive web-conferencing tool, allows students to meet regularly in a virtual setting and gives classmates the opportunity to share ideas, compare experiences, and have fun learning together. Students can also meet others with similar interests through online clubs and activities. NMCA also offers in-person gatherings, activities, and field trips so that students have a chance to interact outside of the virtual classroom.

New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA) staff and leadership believe that NMCA is an innovative, cutting-edge school and an engaged community fostering student success. Our strengths lie in our commitment to each other and to our students and families. This focus keeps the mission at the forefront of the work and promotes an aligned and focused team mindset and processes which has the school moving in a unified and intentional direction. Additionally, each teacher team has developed their own focuses aligned to the overall mission and these teams measure their effectiveness in relation to the implementation of shared values and common practices. School leadership models collaboration and continuous improvement in every meeting and incorporates surveys and data collection in those school decisions where relevant. The administration has deliberately asked for “collective commitments” from all teacher teams that are connected to the school’s collective vision and the focus areas that have been identified school-wide. The administration has also asked the teams to use continuous improvement practices (meeting protocols with process reflections, identification of improvement

opportunities, e.g.) to evaluate their efforts towards the collective commitments and, ultimately, towards improved student performance.

One of the most important areas of focus is in reference to the involvement of our families in the development of our direction and priorities. The NMCA team feels that we can achieve an even more consistent and comprehensive level of involvement over the next charter term. We have begun discussing ways that our caretakers, learning coaches, and students can participate during the development and review stage of our school improvement planning process. The NMCA multicultural community includes families from all urban and rural areas of New Mexico and all socioeconomic positions all of which pose additional challenges in terms of “bringing our school together” around a common vision and mission. However, there is room for improvement in the effectiveness of our school’s community involvement. It is one thing for families to know and understand the direction and goals of the institution, and quite another to build a sense of community and common direction from such a varied parent and student population around these goals. NMCA is committed to continuously evaluating and improving the learning environment and ultimate experience for our students and their families.

The school has already made directed efforts to more effectively engage the Learning Coaches and Caretakers by directing certain staff members to initiate a continuous improvement process around the effective engagement of families in their children’s education. Last year, NMCA created a position to specifically support the Learning Coaches (most typically the student’s parent) as they work to keep their students on track for success. This Learning Coach Support Specialist has initiated a variety of structures and activities designed to engage Learning Coaches in specific trainings, meetings, and social media groups. These efforts include assessing and revamping Learning Coach training content, hosting family Zoom meetings to solicit feedback around their needs and challenges navigating within the virtual environment, as well as, providing teacher teams with strategies to utilize with Learning Coaches and Caretakers.

NMCA believes that a fully-engaged Learning Coach who has tools available for supporting the student, is a key component in the school’s delivery model and with this in mind is committed to providing clear direction and support to all families who enroll in the school. With this focus on the Learning Coach and a plan for engaging families in general, NMCA has implemented strategies and initiatives embedded in the institutional culture of the school that have seen student performance improve as a result.

NMCA’s instructional methods, educational philosophy, and program include unique elements from our Educational Service Provider (ESP), Pearson. Pearson provides specific educational products and services, always with the oversight and approval of the NMCA Governing Council. Pearson is committed to continual improvement and accordingly, its systems and techniques are routinely updated to incorporate best practices and lessons learned. Pearson continually improves its offering to ensure the needs of students and families are being met. As an ESP, Pearson is able to provide a robust system of, not only delivering the online platform and curriculum, but also providing online, digital support processes that allow for our staff and our students to maximize their success within the online environment. Below is a list of some of the most important aspects of the Educational Plan for NMCA:

- ***Student Performance Reporting:*** Reports provide real-time student performance data on assessments. The reports identify the student score and the performance against each item. For some courses, objective level performance data is also provided. Teachers can use this data to determine which students need more help with

a particular concept. Teachers may then participate in individual or small group tutoring virtually with these students targeting specific skills.

- **Collaboration among Students:** Using technology-enabled LiveLesson sessions, teachers group students in break-out rooms to allow collaboration. Teachers then "visit" each room to observe student collaboration, redirect, etc. This audio/video web conferencing tool allows teachers the flexibility to group students, conduct small group instruction, utilize a whiteboard for illustration, and allows students to work together in a collaborative space. Additionally, for each section of students that a teacher teaches in a course, the teacher creates a section message board. On the section message board, teachers assign additional collaboration opportunities or have students work together in the virtual space to share information, post documents, and respond to one another. Students are graded on both the content of the projects and their participation in collaborative activities.
- **Curriculum-Based Assessments:** Teachers conduct curriculum-based assessments (CBAs) via telephone conversation or through one-on-one LiveLesson sessions, as a quick and effective way to gather information on students' understanding of concepts. CBAs are used to validate a student's understanding of concepts against the collected formative data within the EMS and identify areas where they may need additional support or practice. CBAs also assist teachers in verifying that students are doing their own work, pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts, and verify that student learning is on track.
- **Education Management System (EMS):** The Pearson Online Classroom is the platform for organizing and supporting NMCA's entire educational environment. This web-based software delivers assignments and tracks activities (whether conducted virtually or offline) while monitoring the completion of individual lessons as well as mastery of discrete skills and knowledge, all under the watchful eye of administrators, teachers, and Learning Coaches. The EMS operates within a secure, robust technology infrastructure protecting data from loss and intrusion while maintaining a safe environment. Students, teachers, administrators, and Learning Coaches access the EMS to organize, document, and interact, ensuring a high level of engagement. The EMS is continually updated and improved upon for the success of schools and families. All new releases and updates of the EMS are automatically provided.
- **Interactive Reviews:** Interactive reviews are additional practice opportunities embedded in the curriculum and serve to give students targeted feedback on concepts and skills.
- **Learning Coach:** A parent, extended family member, or similarly qualified adult designated by the parent/guardian works in-person with the student as a Learning Coach under the guidance of the credentialed teacher. The Learning Coach and student interact with the teacher via telephone, email message, LiveLesson sessions, and in-person meetings. NMCA provides a unique login and ongoing training, support, and resources to help the Learning Coach carry out this important role.
- **LiveLesson® Session:** A real-time, interactive web conferencing tool, LiveLesson sessions allow teachers to work synchronously and directly with students using voice-over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing. LiveLesson

sessions are recorded so students can watch or review at their convenience, providing students and families the flexibility they desire.

- **Multi-layered Instruction:** The school employs a multi-layered instruction framework based upon the Response to Intervention (RTI) model that deeply links curriculum, standards, assessments, and interventions that have a direct impact on student mastery and resulting standardized test performance. Through this model every student has access to the resources they need to be successful: Layer I - Core Curriculum with Differentiation, Layer II - Targeted Instructional Supports, and Layer III - Intensive Instructional Supports. Student Support teams that can include General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Content-area Interventionists, Counselors, and Social Workers meet regularly to develop an intervention plan and strategies for improvement for students who need more frequent, targeted learning support.
- **Graduation Plan:** Within the EMS, the Graduation Planning tool assists school staff and families to define and track graduation requirements tailored to the diploma type and student post-graduation goals.
- **Renaissance Star 360®:** The most comprehensive pre-K–12 interim and formative assessment suite available, Renaissance Star 360® delivers the valid, reliable screening, progress monitoring, and student growth data educators need to make informed decisions. Renaissance Star 360 enables greater student growth as teachers lead students toward mastery of state-specific learning standards for reading, math, and early literacy.
- **State Testing:** As a public school, students participate in required state testing including summative assessments such as the NM-MSSA and the NM-ASR as well as the SAT for 11th grade students. NMCA provides regional testing sites across the state to ensure that all students have an opportunity to complete the state testing requirements.
- **Student Engagement Process:** NMCA tracks and reports ongoing student progress based on quantitative data generated by the EMS. Staff members analyze attendance, pace, performance, progress, assessment completion and the rate and frequency of teacher contact. Student status for pace, performance and progress is displayed for teachers in the EMS on the People Page and Teacher Dashboard. Additionally, Learning Coaches have real-time access to their student's attendance, progress and performance data through the EMS.
- **Synchronous Contact:** In a virtual school setting, synchronous contact is defined as a real-time interaction between teachers and students. Synchronous communication through LiveLesson sessions is a catalyst for providing interaction and builds relationships between teachers and students. Teachers schedule LiveLesson sessions, in addition to other synchronous interaction (e.g., phone calls, text messages) for students and document all synchronous contact with a student within the EMS as well as on a Master Contact Sheet that is accessible to all teachers at the school.
- **Teacher:** NMCA is comprised of highly qualified, New Mexico-licensed teachers, as required by law, who are also specially trained in virtual delivery and personalized instruction, and maintain meaningful relationships with their students. Teachers work

from either a teaching/learning center or a remote location to deliver instruction to a virtual classroom of students through highly interactive, technology-facilitated communication tools. Moreover, teachers provide quality, timely feedback on assignments and assessments.

- **Tutorials:** Tutorials are interactive, asynchronous graphic/video/audio tutorials, and are incorporated into lessons to provide students a dynamic, fun, and engaging way to learn the concepts they need in order to master learning objectives and standards.
- **Email:** The email system is securely located within the EMS and is referred to as WEBmail. Students and teachers use it to communicate with each other, protecting them from spam, contact from those outside of the EMS, and other mainstream email issues.

As mentioned previously, NMCA operates both synchronously and asynchronously to provide as much flexibility for students and families as needed.

NMCA's educational program provides an asynchronous model that uses synchronous support. In synchronous learning, students and teachers work together at the same time in the same virtual place (e.g., LiveLesson rooms). Typical synchronous instruction involves teacher-facilitated lessons, group projects, and class discussions. In asynchronous learning, students work at their own pace and place, completing coursework within defined time limits. Students and instructors are not necessarily interacting in real time during asynchronous learning.

Schoolwork that students perform on their own time typically includes:

- Viewing pre-recorded virtual classroom sessions at home;
- Reviewing course materials online or offline;
- Completing assignments; and
- Collaborating with other students via secure message boards.

Some students thrive with one-on-one attention while others crave the space to work through problems independently at their own pace. Offering a combination of the two learning approaches allows NMCA to create a more personalized learning experience that supports different learning styles.

There are many benefits to asynchronous learning. Through asynchronous instruction and materials, students are provided the flexibility to:

- Learn at their own pace, place, and peak times, unconstrained by others' schedules;
- Work at their own level, moving as quickly or slowly through course materials as needed;
- Review difficult materials as often as needed; and
- Explore resources that may be unavailable in the traditional classroom.

There are also several benefits to synchronous learning. Interactivity is the key to synchronous instruction, allowing students to:

- Demonstrate their knowledge and practice their communication skills;
- Ask questions to deepen their understanding; and
- Build relationships with their teacher and fellow classmates.

And allowing teachers to:

- Engage students in discussions, problem solving, and group projects;
- Focus class time on bridging skills gaps; and
- Build one-on-one relationships with students.

Teachers can record class discussions and instructional sessions, making them available as asynchronous resources to reinforce learning or accommodate student scheduling conflicts. Together, these two approaches provide teachers and students the best of real-time and any-time learning.

In addition to the individualized support provided for our general education students, NMCA provides a full continuum of services required by law for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). This continuum of services includes support in the general education classroom through inclusion practices, where a general education teacher and a special education teacher team-teach in Live Lessons and can include individualized or small-group instructional support for any student demonstrating a need. The continuum also can involve special education teachers “pulling out” students with IEPs for more directed instruction where the special education teacher can provide additional instruction, more academic practice, supplemental assignments, and a variety of instructional strategies designed to specifically target and address the learning challenges that these students bring to the classroom. NMCA has special education teachers trained to address students with dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia. These teachers work specifically with research-based programs designed to address these underlying learning challenges and prepare their students to be successful in the general education curriculum. NMCA also offers tailor-made educational pathways for the most challenged students with special education teachers who work exclusively with this population. NMCA also offers a selection of gifted classes in math, science, and language arts. With individualized lessons, special courses for gifted learners, and specialized teachers, an environment is created where talents are nurtured, and potential is realized. The gifted and talented experts also create programs for “twice-exceptional” students, those who are gifted but also have other special education needs. During the current charter term, NMCA has not had a complaint regarding the delivery of IEP services for any of our special education students.

As we have discovered during the COVID pandemic, many students and families have experienced a variety of crises ranging from social isolation to grief over the loss of a family member and everything in between. These traumatic life events can severely impact a child’s ability to learn and can add additional stressors to the Learning Coach and Caretakers. With this in mind, NMCA has increased the number of counselors on our staff and now has a dedicated counselor for all high school grade levels and two counselor who work with the elementary and middle school grade levels, respectively. Our counseling team has built in processes and protocols to help deal with the mental health issues many of our students and families are facing and have provided a slew of resources for students including, but not limited to: group counseling sessions, individual counseling sessions, referrals to mental health supports in their local community, health care referrals in their local community, school-wide

“assemblies” (held on Zoom) focused on specific aspects of mental health and social emotional content, as well as college and career preparedness and counseling.

NMCA has also bolstered its Student Welfare supports by engaging two social workers specifically to support families who are in immediate crisis, or who have a history of trauma in the home. These social workers collaborate with the student support teams in “staffing” meetings to ensure that all available resources are accessible and utilized by these families in distress. NMCA follows all expectations regarding attendance and truancy and has worked over the current charter term to streamline processes that allow for the most immediate and effective outreach and impact.

Because of the commitment that NMCA has made to continuous improvement in all areas of our organization, the results from our students have been trending upward and we expect that trend to continue. Some of the most telling data comes from student course completion and graduation rates. These results have been encouraging as the adult actions that have been implemented during this charter term have positively impacted these rates. Course completion and rates are as high as they have been since the school’s inception and continue to climb. While there is still work to do and other specific data points that will inform our practices, NMCA is now positioned to serve as a model for other virtual schools in the state and in the nation.

## **2.b. Financial Compliance**

How is the school managing its finances (Performance Framework Indicators 2.a-f.)?

For each year in which the school had a significant deficiency, material weakness, or repeated finding(s) identified in the external audit, the school must provide a narrative explaining the improvement actions made to meet financial compliance requirements and the effectiveness of those actions in improving financial compliance. Success should be identified by specific changes in practice and changes in the audit findings in subsequent years. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward achieving and maintaining financial compliance. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the site including renewal site visit.

If the school’s Board of Finance was suspended at any time during the term of the contract, the school must provide a narrative explaining the actions taken on the school’s own initiative to correct financial compliance and regain the Board of Finance Authority and the success of those actions. The school must also describe the current status of the Board of Finance and continuing actions to ensure the same financial challenges do not reoccur. Success should be identified by specific changes in practice. The narrative must be supported by evidence to be reviewed during the renewal site visit.

School response:

New Mexico Connections Academy has worked hard to develop both the financial resources and the fiscal processes necessary to support the unique learning environment that the school offers. As has been documented in other sections of this application, NMCA has instituted a continuous improvement model in all areas of the organization, including financial management. This focus on improvement and the corresponding actions initiated by our staff has allowed for

NMCA to effectively and efficiently safe-guard the organization's resources, as well as deliver a supportive educational experience for our students and their families.

Over the course of this current charter term, NMCA has provided a Corrective Action Plan for FY19, FY20, and FY21. These corrective actions have addressed one repeat finding and one significant deficiency in our financial audits. The Corrective Action Plans for those audits can be found in in **Appendices C-1, C-2, and C-3**. All of the issues that were identified have been addressed with the school's business manager and processes and procedures have been implemented to address the particulars of each finding and the actions taken to resolve them. Among the most important actions that the business manager has taken is to institute a comprehensive 'checks and balances' system that will have payroll and contract reconciliation happen at the end of each payroll period to ensure that the contracts and the payouts for each individual staff member match. Additionally, NMCA has put into place a multi-step review process that will inspect and make necessary changes to the accounts payable accruals as well as to the year-end Fund Budget balance to ensure that all accounts are properly identified and reported in a timely manner to the Public Education Department. NMCA expects that with these changes made, there will be no repeat findings in the future.

New Mexico Connections Academy has maintained its Board of Finance designation for the current charter term.

### **2.c. Governance Responsibilities**

Describe how the school has met governance responsibilities during the term of the contract (Performance Framework Indicators 3.a.). Specifically, identify any time when membership on the governing body fell below the requirements in their by-laws or the statutory minimum of five members. Identify the amount of time any vacancies were open and identify any board members who did not complete required training hours in any year of the contract term. For any governance requirements the school was unable to meet, provide a narrative describing the improvement actions the school implemented to move toward full compliance. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting all governance requirements. The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the renewal site visit.

School response:

New Mexico Connections Academy has met all of the compliance requirements of its governance responsibilities over the course of the current charter term. As evidenced in our annual site-visit reports, the Governing Council has maintained the requisite number of board members, has met the training hours requirements annually, and has followed all reporting requirements to the Public Education Department.

NMCA's Governing Council has maintained its Board of Finance designation throughout the school's existence.

There were some discrepancies in previous years regarding the training hours for one Governing Council member, however, after consulting with the individual board member it was determined that the training hours were completed and the records updated to reflect that. The Governing Council members have been consistent in meeting these training hours requirements throughout the current charter term.



Specific information regarding the NMCA Governing Council is available for review at the renewal site visit, if necessary.

#### 2.d. Equity and Identity

How is the school protecting the rights of all students (Performance Framework Indicator 4.a.)? How is the school complying with the Martinez-Yazzie mandate to provide culturally and linguistically relevant instruction and to support and validate students' cultures, identities, and sense of belonging?

School response:

NMCA has not had a complaint rise past the school's administration during the current charter term. That is, the school has been able to address all family concerns internally, without escalation. The school's commitment to "customer service," along with the responsive culture of support that our curriculum vendor provides, NMCA has been able to display the agility and responsiveness that continues to protect and affirm the rights of all of our students. NMCA has not only met all of the expectations that PED has required of all schools, but our work with our Equity Council has been highlighted by PED's leadership. NMCA provides all of the statutorily-mandated student supports as required of all public schools in New Mexico. The Equity Council has reviewed short cycle assessment data, as well as survey data taken from the school stakeholders, they also discussed the experiences of the students from the perspective of those in attendance at Equity Council meetings. The Equity Council came to consensus that the overall focus of their work needs to be on meeting individual student needs. This feedback from the Equity Council spearheaded actions by the administration to add additional staff to bring down class sizes, add additional grade level advisors to help build relationships with students, and to add additional counselors and a school social worker. The school is in the process of refining these systems through continuous review and improvement. We are targeting all students below grade level or below proficiency and maximizing small group and one to one instruction to ameliorate the deficiencies.

Another area of focus at NMCA is the concept of affirming individuals' identity through our interactions and teaching practices. NMCA staff have been exploring the issues of personal identity and cultural affirmation through a variety of professional development opportunities. . In addressing these issues the school accessed the Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico for training regarding how to utilize LGBTQ+ inclusionary language and practices with students, families, and staff. For the past three years, NMCA staff has also undergone the study and implementation of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies into the academic setting. The school began an SEL initiative during the 19-20 school year which included the review of current student engagement data, as well as the review of teacher practices and the data related to their individual student and family contacts. The school provided every staff member with the book *All Learning is Social and Emotional: Helping Students Develop Essential Skills for the Classroom and Beyond* and designed team activities to discover and implement effective SEL strategies across the school through grade level/content area common practices and procedures. Staff have also had after hour "SEL open houses" for families to attend. This SEL focus has continued for the next two years (20-21 and 21-22) and the NMCA Administration introduced this priority during the back-to-school professional development work as teacher teams created common commitments and mutual accountability processes for the implementation of various SEL practices and approaches. These common commitments have been revisited quarterly with the Leadership Team (Lead Team) and then with teacher teams to

continue to monitor and revise the SEL practices they have implemented. Along with these team commitments, the school provides monthly professional development to the full staff that has included completing the course: *Powers of Resilience, Social Emotional Learning for Adults* through the organization Conscious Discipline. This online course, provided by Dr. Becky Bailey, led our staff through monthly individual and team reflections on their interventions with students, their approaches to their LiveLesson interactions, and, in some cases, their grading practices and support structures for students. These professional development opportunities will continue to be a priority for NMCA as we continue to address the social and emotional learning needs of our students.

While NMCA meets all of the statutory requirements for all of our students, we have also taken steps to ensure the engagement of some targeted populations that have typically been underserved.

NMCA students come from a variety of different backgrounds with unique needs. Students who have diverse needs such as those supporting a family, professional athletes and performers, previously home- or private-schooled, medically homebound, those on the spectrum, those who are bullied, or those who simply desire the flexibility online education can provide.

NMCA provides student support services to address the various needs of students at different levels. Additionally, NMCA supports students in the general education program as well as in the special education program, including students who are exceeding or struggling academically. NMCA also supports students who are at-risk, English Learners, and Gifted & Talented students through a multi-layered system of support.

NMCA's student body includes a significant portion of students who are academically far ahead of or far behind their peers in school. In an online environment, students working below or above grade level are shielded from the negative social attention that struggling and gifted students often face in a brick-and-mortar environment. Instead, students are able to concentrate on intensive learning through a more personalized approach to learning.

NMCA serves students in rural communities who need access to a rigorous, full-time, high-quality school with certified teachers. Families with working students also may need access to other educational options. A virtual school like NMCA provides another option for these families. Through technology, NMCA offers a wide variety of high-quality classes to students who are currently limited in their coursework by geography or ability of local school districts to staff hard to fill positions necessary for a student's successful college admission or entry into the workforce.

Online schools are a good fit for students who have unique scheduling demands due to their desire to accelerate their education, or combine work, internships, and other personal pursuits with their schooling. Students may also be in search of an opportunity to learn in a manner more conducive to their learning preference outside of the traditional classroom.

New Mexico Connections Academy is, through its designed educational delivery model and its commitment to continuous improvement, supporting and validating our students' cultures, identities, and sense of belonging.

## 2.e. Tribal Consultation

Pursuant to the Indian Education Act, NMSA 22-23A-1 et. seq, and Subsections C and D of the Charter School Act, NMSA 22-8B-12.2, if the school is located on tribal land or serves a high percentage of Native American students, describe how the school complied with the requirements of ongoing consultations with tribal authorities.

School response: Not Applicable

## 2.f. Other Performance Framework Indicators

For any Performance Framework indicator for which a school received a “Does Not Meet Standard” or a repeated “Working to Meet Standard” rating over the term of the contract, the school should provide a narrative to address improvement actions it has made to correct those findings. The purpose of the narrative is to demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting organizational performance expectations. Implementation of the described improvement actions should be verifiable through evidence at the renewal site visit.

If the school has received any Office of Civil Rights (OCR) complaints, formal special education complaints or NM Attorney General complaints, the school must identify those, provide all communications (redacted to protect PII) related to those complaints in **Appendix B-1 Complaint Communications**, and describe the current status of the complaint process. If any of those complaints have been resolved and resulted in a finding that the school violated any law, the school must provide a narrative describing the required compensatory and corrective actions required and their status in implementing those actions. The implementation of such actions must be verifiable through evidence during the renewal site visit.

School response:

With respect to the statutory questions raised when contemplating a Charter School Renewal decision, New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA) has met and/or exceeded the standard in all 4 areas:

*(1. committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures set forth in the charter contract; 2. failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of the department's standards of excellence or student performance standards identified in the charter contract; 3. failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; 4. violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.).*

NMCA has demonstrated progress in all areas of the organization, has seen increases in student academic performance, has met all legal and financial compliance expectations, and has governed the school to a new level of performance. Based on the latest CSD Annual Site-Visit Report, as well as the Part A section of this application, NMCA is on track to meet, or has met, or has exceeded, all of the standards set by the Public Education Commission. The three areas that were rated as “Working to Meet” standard in Part A are:

- 1.f Does the school implement an Educational Plan for Student Success (NMDASH)?
- 2.a. Is the school meeting financial reporting and compliance requirements?
- 4.b. Does the school meet attendance, retention, and recurrent enrollment goals for the students?

NMCA agrees with one of these indicators as receiving a rating of ‘Working to Meet’ as we are actively working to improve in the areas of attendance, retention, and recurrent enrollment as

has been articulated in our educational plan. However, NMCA does not agree that the school has not met the expectation of financial reporting and compliance. As a result of the last annual site visit from the CSD, NMCA provided detailed information that CSD requested to address any deficiencies that they had identified in that area. The CSD has this information and has not changed the rating as a result of the evidence provided. NMCA asked directly at the site visit if this evidence would demonstrate compliance in this area and were told that the rating would be changed. It is surprising to us that this rating was also given in Part A of the application. As far as the implementation of the NMDASH, we are surprised to see this rating change from previously “Not Applicable” to “Working to Meet,” as NMCA has received no indication from PED that we are out of compliance with any expectations for an additional educational plan.

Because NMCA has met or exceeded all but one of the performance indicators, and has taken deliberate action in response to the annual site-visit reports, audit reports, parental and staff satisfaction surveys, as well as other organizational feedback, we will take this opportunity to highlight a few of the adult actions taken to move our school in a positive direction during this current term:

- NMCA has taken significant steps to reduce the number and significance of any audit findings that have been assessed over the current charter term. Our business manager has taken deliberate steps to ensure a separation of duties, provided specific training to staff to address all financial processes and protocols, trained a team of administrative assistants to review all documents associated with the financial expenditures of the school, and has streamlined the accessibility of forms and protocols for all areas of the school’s finances.
- NMCA is committed to creating an environment of support and continued success and to improving educational experiences and academic outcomes for students and their families. One of the ways in which we gather and listen to feedback is through our annual Parent Satisfaction Survey (PSS). Each year, a third-party organization surveys parents to get their feedback on our program and to help identify what we are doing well and how we can improve. The following data represents additional positive results from the parent satisfaction survey results for 2021-22:
  - 93.2% of parents gave the Connections Academy program an “A” or “B” grade.
  - 95.2% of parents would recommend Connections Academy.
  - 97% of parents agree that their child is satisfied with the Connections Academy program.
  - 91.7% of parents agree that their child(ren)’s lessons are engaging.
  - 91.6% of parents are satisfied with special education services,
  - 96.1% of parents agree that the curriculum is high quality.
  - 97.2% of parents are satisfied with the helpfulness of Connections Academy teachers.

NMCA can provide the complete results of the 2021-22 PSS, if requested, at the renewal visit.

- NMCA has focused on hiring and maintaining a highly qualified and highly engaged staff to champion the vision of becoming the premier online school in the state. Consistent with its focus on continuous improvement and stakeholder feedback, NMCA annually

surveys the staff to get input for a multitude of staff satisfaction indicators. The results have been overwhelmingly positive and include the following highlights:

Highest 3 Scores

- o 97% - My school provides a safe environment for students to learn.
- o 94% - My school makes a positive difference in the lives of our students.
- o 92% - I know what I need to do to be successful in my role.

Highest 3 Scores vs. Previous Year's Scores (change)

- o 74% - The leadership team at my school does a good job involving staff in decisions that affect them. (+10)
  - o 90% - My school leader sets a clear direction for my school. (+8)
  - o 82% - I am satisfied working with my immediate manager. (+6)
- During the 20-21 school year, NMCA underwent an independent accreditation evaluation conducted by Cognia (formerly West ED) and were fully accredited based on their nationally-normed criteria.

While NMCA has worked to improve its rating for all indicators and has demonstrated the school's commitment to the contract established with the Public Education Commission, NMCA has not yet reached its potential and is on a quest to provide the best online educational experience available in the state. As evidenced in the improvements made during this current charter term, NMCA consistently engages in continuous improvement practices and has shown progress in all areas of the organization since the school's last renewal.

After state summative assessments were canceled for the 2019-2020 school year, New Mexico Connections Academy decided to begin administering the Renaissance STAR360 Benchmark assessments three times a year in order to have student data on achievement and growth. Assessments were given in both Reading and Math and unlike state summative assessments that are only given at some grade levels, the benchmark assessments have been administered for all grade levels. Administration of the benchmark assessments began in the 2020-2021 school year and has continued in the 2021-2022 school year.

The Renaissance assessment provides an Achievement Percentile which is nationally normed across all students utilizing Renaissance. An achievement percentile of 50 indicates a student is performing at national average. In addition, Renaissance provides a projection if a student would likely perform proficient on the New Mexico state summative assessment. The following tables shows the achievement performance by grade level for NMCA for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

### Math Performance Levels

Key: BOY=Beginning of Year, MOY=Middle of Year, EOY=End of Year, A.P.=Average Achievement Percentile, S.P.=State

Grade	20-21 BOY		20-21 MOY		20-21 EOY		21-22 BOY		21-22 MOY		21-22 EOY	
	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.
4	54.8	35.8%	70.9	56.9%	61.7	51.2%	52.1	33.3%	52.6	27.8%	53.2	31.0%
5	55.9	34.9%	60.4	37.2%	56.4	43.6%	44.7	24.5%	51.1	21.2%	51.6	18.9%
6	43.9	18.6%	51.6	27.1%	54.2	42.1%	49.2	19.8%	51.6	29.9%	44.7	23.0%
7	46.3	21.1%	57.0	35.0%	52.6	41.7%	45.8	20.8%	45.8	22.2%	45.8	19.1%
8	45.2	19.5%	53.7	34.4%	53.2	41.25	51.1	24.5%	49.5	27.2%	46.3	24.1%
9	48.4		49.5		52.1		44.1		42.5		43.6	
10	48.9		48.4		52.1		49.8		47.9		45.2	
11	48.7		46.8		54.8		45.2		45.8		45.2	
12	44.7		45.2		52.6		45.2		44.1		44.1	
Overall	47.9	22.9%	51.1	35.9%	53.7	42.7%	46.8	23.4%	46.8	25.7%	45.2	22.7%

Proficiency (projected)

### Reading Performance Levels

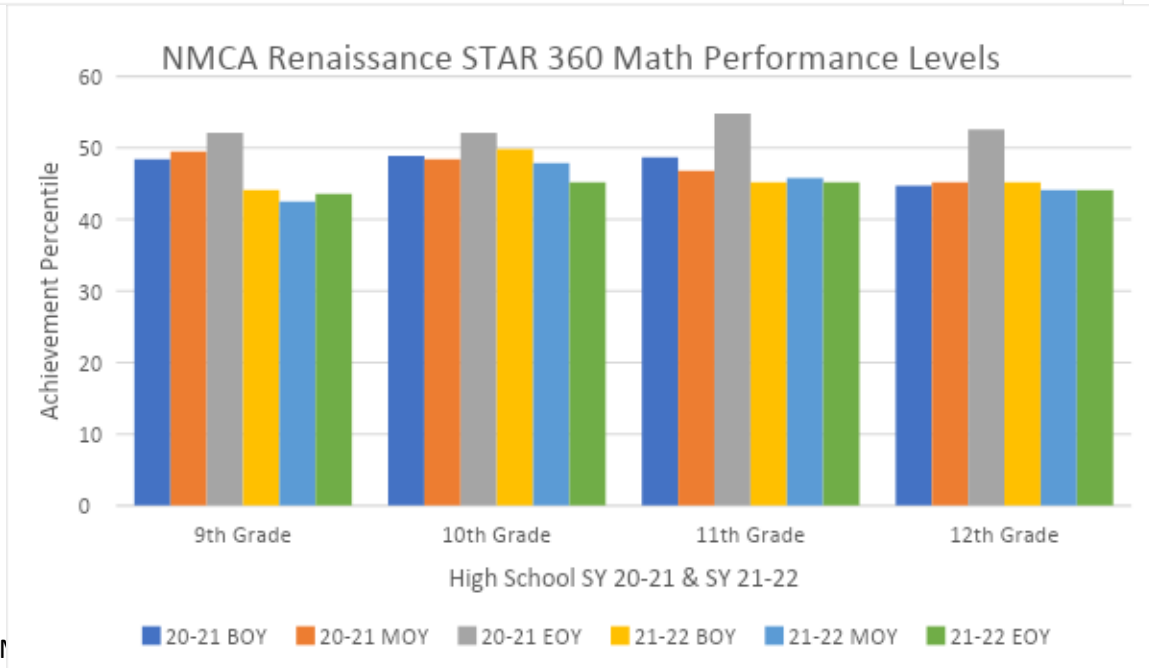
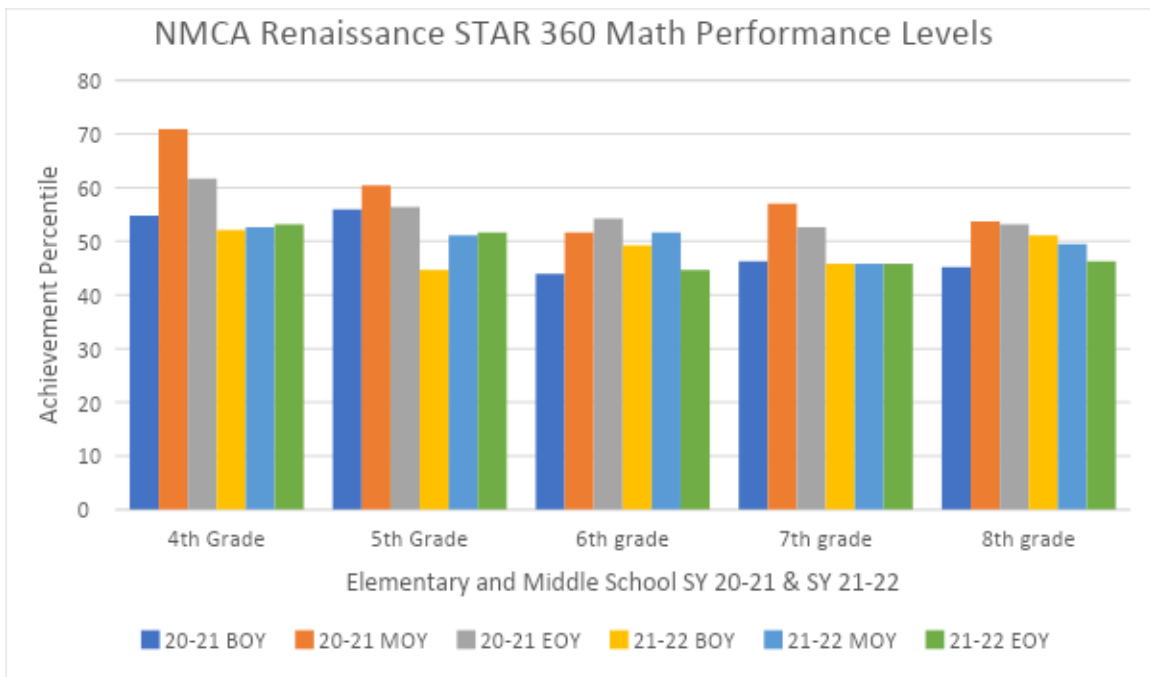
Grade	20-21 BOY		20-21 MOY		20-21 EOY		21-22 BOY		21-22 MOY		21-22 EOY	
	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.	A.P.	S. P.
4	57.0	56.6%	64.2	66.7%	63.2	65.2%	48.9	43.9%	50.8	40.4%	50.3	42.9%
5	57.5	65.1%	58.7	62.8%	62.0	65.0%	54.2	53.1%	40.8	48.1%	51.6	49.1%
6	46.8	44.0%	44.1	42.4%	42.5	43.4%	53.7	58.1%	52.6	56.6%	46.8	46.8%
7	48.4	59.3%	51.1	66.1%	51.6	63.6%	46.3	48.8%	45.2	48.5%	43.6	44.5%
8	40.4	37.8%	44.7	48.4%	43.6	47.4%	47.9	54.2%	45.8	50.0%	43.6	44.9%
9	44.7		42.5		42.5		40.7		39.0		38.3	
10	41.6		39.9		40.7		42.8		40.7		39.0	
11	42.5		41.9		40.7		39.6		39.0		38.3	
12	37.7		37.7		39.0		39.6		39.0		39.6	
Overall	44.1	50.0%	43.6	56.3%	44.1	54.9%	43.6	52.5%	43.0	49.7%	40.7	45.3%

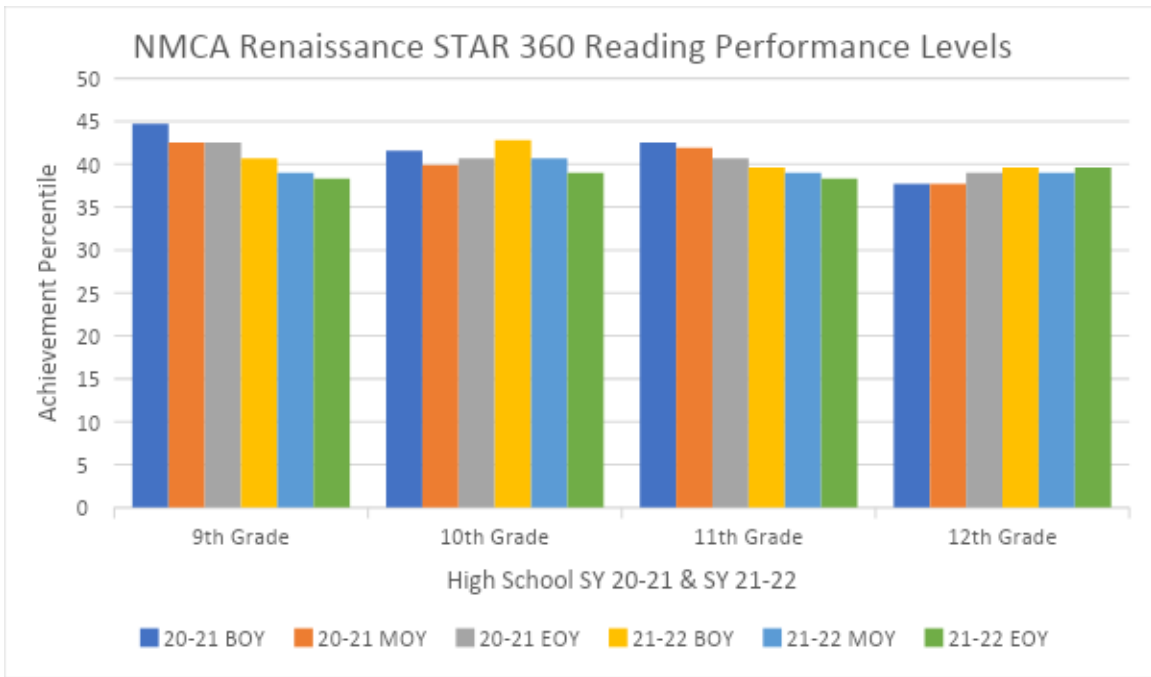
Key: BOY=Beginning of Year, MOY=Middle of Year, EOY=End of Year, A.P.=Average Achievement Percentile, S.P.=State Proficiency (projected)

**Growth Levels – Median Student Growth Percentile**

Grade	Math		Reading	
	BOY->EOY 20-21	BOY->EOY 21-22	BOY->EOY 20-21	BOY->EOY 21-22
4	55.5	19.0	56.0	46.5
5	56.0	31.0	73.0	47.0
6	58.0	36.5	60.5	22.0
7	36.5	42.0	48.0	50.0
8	37.0	39.5	47.5	34.0
9	45.0	40.0	55.0	50.5
10	41.0	46.0	46.0	38.0
11	43.0	40.0	42.0	34.0
12	38.5	46.0	58.0	39.0
Overall	42.0	40.5	51.0	40.5

Key: BOY=Beginning of Year, EOY=End of Year



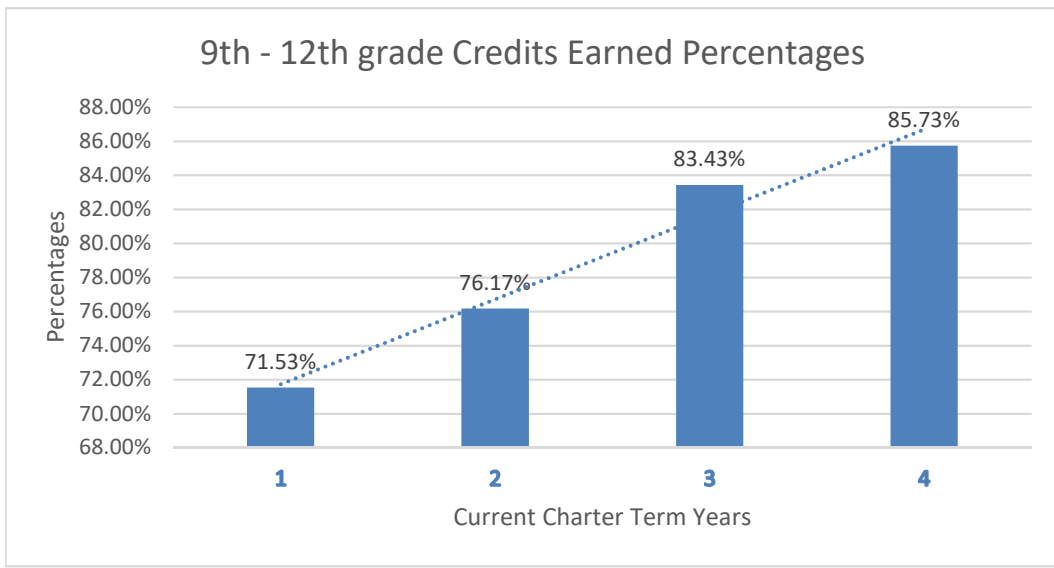
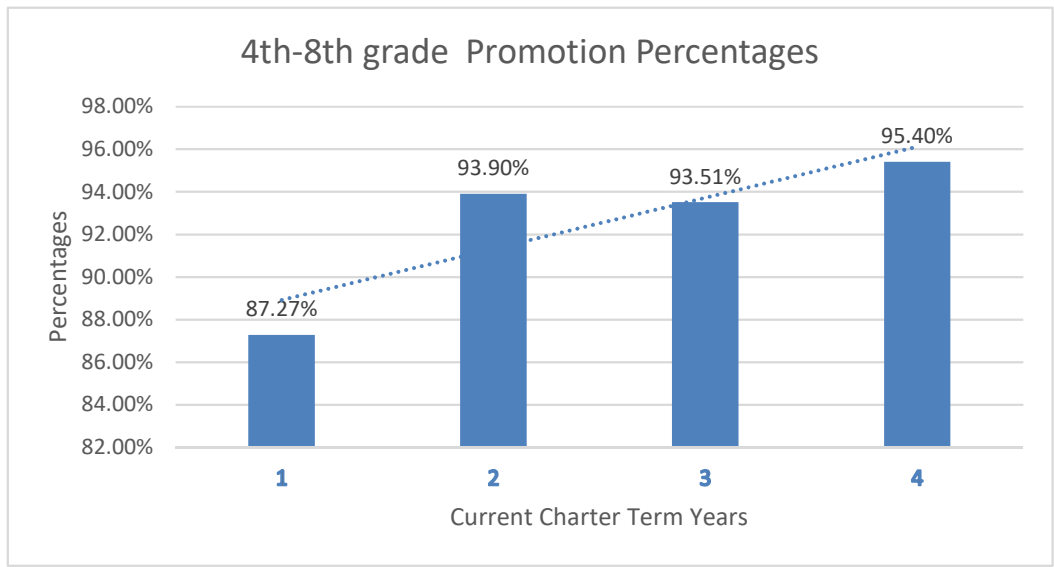


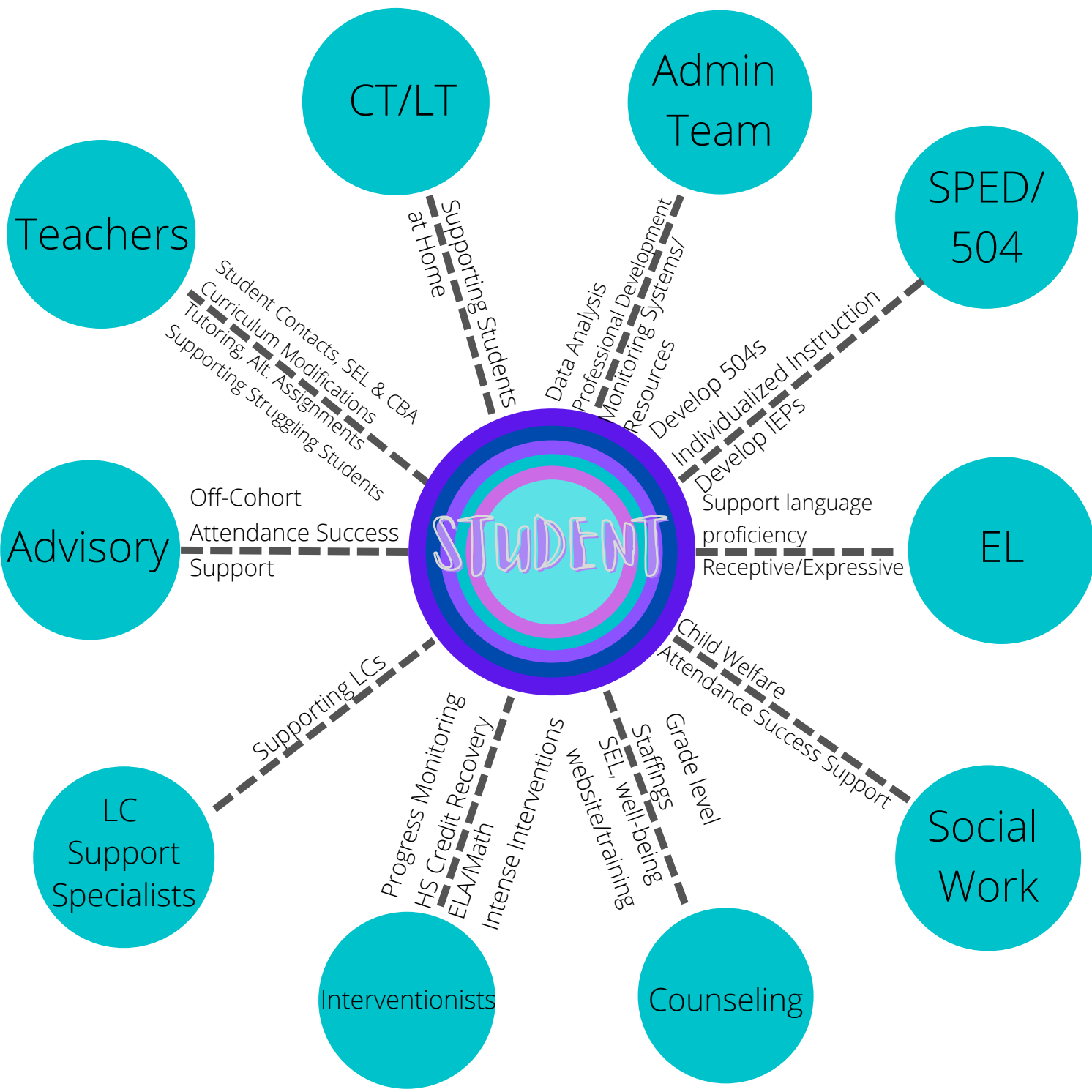




**Appendix A-2 NMCA Mission -Specific Goals SY18/19-SY21/22**

	1819	1920	2021	2122
Grades 4-8 enrolled on day 40 and day 120:	275	295	447	435
Number of above that were promoted:	240	277	418	415
Goal Percentage:	87.27%	93.90%	93.51%	95.40%
Grades 9-12 enrolled on day 40 and day 120:	562	596	724	722
Number of above that earned at least 6 credits, or all credits attempted:	402	454	604	619
Goal Percentage:	71.53%	76.17%	83.43%	85.73%





CT/LT

Admin Team

SPED/504

Teachers

Advisory

EL

Social Work

Counseling

Interventionists

LC Support Specialists

STUDENT

Student Contacts, SEL & CBA  
Curriculum Modifications  
Tutoring, Alt. Assignments  
Supporting Struggling Students

Supporting Students  
at Home

Data Analysis  
Professional Development  
Monitoring Systems/  
Resources

Develop 504s  
Individualized Instruction  
Develop IEPs

Support language  
proficiency  
Receptive/Expressive

Child Welfare  
Attendance Success Support

Grade level  
Staffings  
SEL, well-being  
website/training

Intense Interventions  
Progress Monitoring  
HS Credit Recovery  
ELA/Math

Off-Cohort  
Attendance Success  
Support

Supporting LCs

## NMCA Intervention Information

### Big Questions:

What is the difference between the “Layers of Intervention” in the classroom, outside of the classroom, and with Intervention teachers?

***See MLSS Intervention Chart***

What is the ‘continuum of interventions’ in the online setting?

***See MLSS Intervention Chart & Continuum of Intervention Examples***

What is the difference between ‘differentiation’ and ‘intervention’?

At its most basic level, ***differentiation*** consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction.

-[www.readingrockets.com](http://www.readingrockets.com)

**Interventions** are specific, targeted, limited (time-bound or finite) instructional support for small-groups that are intended to remediate deficits and allow for students to perform successfully in the Layer 1 program.

-with language from NCRTI

\*If a parent requests testing prior to the initiation of Interventions please contact the SAT Coordinator.

**Multi-Layered System of Support (MLSS) Intervention Chart**

Type of Intervention	Location/Vehicle	Person Responsible	Examples of Strategies
<p>Layer 1</p> <p><b><i>“universal”</i></b> <b><i>“on-going”</i></b></p>	<p>In the classroom (LL) w/ whole class</p>	<p>Classroom teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Online curriculum</li> <li>● Procedures, processes, and supports for all students</li> <li>● Differentiation ('periodic')</li> <li>● CBAs</li> <li>● Checks for Understanding (CfUs)</li> <li>● Assessments (Quizzes, tests, portfolios)</li> <li>● Corrections Form</li> <li>● Monitoring all student progress</li> <li>● Individual student and/or parent contact</li> </ul>
<p>Layer 2</p> <p><b><i>“strategic”</i></b> <b><i>“time-bound”</i></b></p>	<p>In the classroom (LL) w/ small group(s)</p> <p>Outside of the classroom (LL) small-group tutoring</p>	<p>Classroom Teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Time-bound interventions (6-8 weeks)</li> <li>● Small-group skill practice</li> <li>● Reduced assignment load</li> <li>● Individualized systems of accountability (increased communication, reward system e.g.)</li> <li>● Increased progress monitoring</li> </ul>
<p>Layer 3</p> <p><b><i>“intensive”</i></b> <b><i>“targeted”</i></b></p>	<p>Outside of the classroom small-group tutoring</p> <p>Outside of the classroom individualized tutoring</p>	<p>Intervention Teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research-based targeted intervention plan (e.g., phonics program, dyslexia program, math recovery program)</li> <li>● Increased progress monitoring</li> <li>● Increased parent and/or student communication</li> </ul>

## CONTINUUM OF INTERVENTIONS EXAMPLES

CLASSROOM TEACHER

INTERVENTION TCHR

<i>Student Issue examples</i>	<i>Layer 1 examples</i>	<i>Layer 2 examples</i>	<i>Layer 3 examples</i>
<b>Low reading fluency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tips for picking out main idea poster in LL room</li> <li>• “After-class” tutoring on specific reading assignment</li> <li>• Extension activities for students who performed poorly</li> <li>• Corrections Form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small-group tutoring with vocabulary development, context clue practice, reading conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word-decoding 8-week program</li> <li>• “Orton-Gillingham” dyslexia program</li> <li>• “Read 180” 6 week online reading program</li> <li>• Individualized tutoring</li> </ul>
<b>Low math performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension activities with math facts/number sense games</li> <li>• Corrections Form</li> <li>• “After-class” tutoring on specific math concept/problems</li> <li>• PEMDAS poster in LL room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small-group tutoring with number sense development, additional practice and repetition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Math Whiz” 8-week program</li> <li>• Imagine Math 6-week program</li> <li>• “Class Hero” 1-9 week math programs</li> </ul>
<b>Not turning in assignments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Planner checks for all students</li> <li>• Time-management assignments</li> <li>• Deadline extensions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual student communication requiring acknowledgement from LC or parent (“Initial the agenda”)</li> <li>• If appropriate, reducing assignment expectation while still assessing for mastery</li> <li>• Requiring use of an assignment completion chart (reward system)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one or small-group weekly assignment completion LL</li> <li>• Twice-per-week communication with student and LC</li> <li>• Reward system</li> </ul>

Other questions:

What is the plan for helping students complete all of the outside/small-group intervention expectations and their regular curriculum?

What communication is crucial between classroom teachers and interventionists?

- i.) Knowledge of what interventions/ strategies have been implemented and tried.
- ii) Documentation of interventions/ strategies attempted with student.

Where do teachers go to get help with appropriate interventions? (**See Layer 2 Intervention Ideas**)

- i) Skill-gap specific (remediation strategies)
- ii) Alternative ways to demonstrate mastery of standards
- iii) Reduced assignment load

How do classroom teachers know when to turn the student over to the SST or when to initiate another intervention?

- i) After 6-8 weeks of remediation/ targeted intervention has occurred and been documented.
- ii) OR, if a student has a specific disability/ impairment where the interventionist may be able to provide more appropriate strategies and the ST does not qualify for SpEd services (Examples: Dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, etc.)

How do students demonstrate mastery of standards when they are excused/waived from some of the assignments that teach and assess these standards?

- i. Alternative means of assessment (teacher created/ modified assessments)

## Layer 2 Intervention Strategies

Student Issue	Strategies/Vehicles	Examples
Not following directions/ Off-task	Self-monitoring Protocols Reward systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student Checklists</li> <li>● Student Charts</li> <li>● Earned 'free' time</li> <li>● Earned 'mic rights'</li> </ul>
Content deficits* <i>(Typically determined by assessment data - utilizing 'skill-gap analysis')</i>	Small-group tutoring One-on-one tutoring Supplemental assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Shared reading</li> <li>● Reading conferences</li> <li>● Targeted skill development               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Note-taking</li> <li>○ Number-sense reinforcement</li> <li>○ Vocabulary development</li> <li>○ Writing workshops</li> <li>○ Additional skill practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>● 'Enrichment' activities</li> </ul>
Attendance	Communication protocols Reward systems LC Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased/enhanced communication</li> <li>● Goal-setting &amp; regular progress review</li> </ul>
Assignment completion	Self-monitoring protocols Communication protocols Reward systems Time management systems Organizational tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student Checklists</li> <li>● Student Charts</li> <li>● Truncated assignments</li> <li>● Student Planner use</li> <li>● Goal-setting &amp; review</li> </ul>

Resources: <https://w3.setbc.org/students/Pages/Student-Resources-Library.aspx>  
<https://www.pbisworld.com/tier-2/>  
<http://chartjungle.com/>  
<https://www.interventioncentral.org/>