

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - MOY

School Improvement and Transformation Monitoring Visit Summary Report

School: New Mexico Connections Academy	LEA: New Mexico Connections Academy
School Leader: Sandy Beery, Executive Director	Supt/PEC Director: Sandy Beery
SIT-M Team Leader: Lizette Ridgeway	Date: January 24, 2025
School NM Vistas Designation: CSI - Graduation	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA) has implemented several initiatives to improve data usage, student support systems, and staff collaboration through consistent protocols. The school successfully established two new positions: a dedicated Senior Student Support Specialist and a Data Entry Specialist. These roles have been instrumental in strengthening support systems and ensuring that student data is used effectively to meet individual needs.</p> <p>The Senior Student Support Specialist has focused on providing targeted interventions for struggling seniors, helping them meet on-track graduation requirements. Inspired by this work, similar strategies are now being applied to students in grades 9–11. These efforts include supporting students who are not in special education but benefit from case management to address emerging academic challenges.</p> <p>The Data Entry Specialist, hired in January 2025, has streamlined data entry processes and helped standardize documentation and protocols. Weekly grade-level meetings, led by advisors and counselors, are now guided by a consistent protocol to review student data, identify those needing additional support, and develop specific action plans. These meetings focus on students at risk of falling behind and ensure that interventions are tracked effectively.</p> <p>Additionally, NMCA successfully implemented new processes for advisory teachers, the Senior Student Support Specialist, the 9th–11th Grade Student Support Specialist, and content teachers to monitor students identified for support and develop tailored plans. These protocols have also been integrated into bi-weekly content team meetings, promoting consistent data use across staff teams.</p> <p>School leaders have participated in external convenings to explore effective practices, including weekly data reviews, which have been adopted to strengthen the school’s systems for monitoring student progress. These efforts reflect NMCA’s commitment to continuous improvement and building effective structures to support students’ academic success.</p>	

School Progress

Three-year Trend Data

Graduation

4-year

Cohort of 2019 – 39.9%

Cohort of 2020 – 41.3%

Cohort of 2021 – 42.6%

Cohort of 2022 – 56.0%

Cohort of 2023 – 63.2%

Cohort of 2024 Goal – 72%

Cohort of 2025 Goal - 75%

5-year

Cohort of 2019 – 45.7%

Cohort of 2020 – 45.1%

Cohort of 2021 – 49.0%

Cohort of 2022 – 63.6%

6-year

Cohort of 2019 – 47.1%

Cohort of 2020 – 47.0%

Cohort of 2021 – 48.2%

Specific actions completed and data demonstrating progress since SIT-M BOY

- **The school plans to analyze course completion and engagement data to identify specific student populations, such as ELs or students with special education needs, who may require additional support.**

NMCA has strengthened its approach to analyzing course completion and engagement data to better identify and support students who require additional interventions, including English Learners (ELs) and students receiving special education services. A robust credit and cohort tracking system is now in place, allowing staff to filter data by cohort, review students' credit progress, and determine how many credits they are behind. This system also provides insight into student support needs, with current data indicating that 58 of the 234 cohort 2024 students receive special education services.

Since the SITM-BOY visit, NMCA has standardized the process for monitoring struggling students across all grade levels. Grade-level advisors and counselors now systematically track students needing support, collaborate with teachers to develop individualized intervention plans, and hold Academic Support Meetings (ASM) with students, parents, and teachers of the failing courses. Each grade-level team follows a consistent meeting structure to analyze student data, identify areas of concern, share

intervention strategies, and assign action steps to be completed before the next meeting.

In addition to grade-level interventions, content teams reviewed first-semester data to identify areas for curriculum revision, assessment development, differentiation, and accommodations. They also prioritized outreach to students who failed the first semester, ensuring they were contacted within the first 10 days of the new semester to help them get back on track.

Through these efforts, NMCA has established a more structured and data-driven approach to identifying and supporting students at risk of falling behind, ensuring that interventions are timely, targeted, and effectively monitored.

- **The school leader plans to have cohort data, disaggregated subgroup data, and targets for students on track for course completion.**

NMCA has strengthened its tracking and progress monitoring systems to ensure students remain on track for course completion and graduation. The school leader has implemented a comprehensive approach to cohort data analysis, disaggregated subgroup tracking, and target setting for student progress.

Graduation Projections for Spring 2025

- 230 students are projected to graduate in four years, with three currently in the “*yellow*” category, requiring additional credit recovery. All students in the four-year graduation cohort are currently accounted for, with no unidentified students outside of projected graduation timelines. Newly enrolled students are consistently placed in their correct cohorts upon enrollment.
- Four students are in the “*red*” category and not projected to graduate in four years. Three of these students receive special education services and are on alternative graduation plans, with continued enrollment until age 22.
- 12 students will be 5th-year graduates.
- One student will be a 6th-year graduate.

Progress Monitoring Through Advisory ASM Data

- NMCA actively tracks student progress through Academic Support Meetings (ASM). This data-driven approach allows NMCA to identify students at risk of falling behind and implement timely interventions. The continued refinement of tracking and progress monitoring processes ensures that students receive the necessary support to stay on track for academic success. The school provided the following data as evidence of progress:
 - **4th–6th Grade:** 23% (23 of 99 students) were identified for ASM support, with **70% achieving success** as measured by passing at least two core classes in the first semester to avoid potential retention.
 - **7th–8th Grade:** 13% (37 of 286 students) received ASM support, with **50% achieving success**, also defined as passing at least two core classes in the first semester.
 - **9th–12th Grade:** 23% (146 of 633 students) were supported through ASM, with **77% achieving success**, defined as passing at least five courses in the first semester.

SITM-MOY Benchmark Goals and Progress

- **Graduation Rate: The number of unresolved cohort students regarding their withdrawal code in STARS/NOVA will decrease each state reporting period.**

Since the SITM-BOY visit, New Mexico Connections Academy has made progress in analyzing course completion and engagement data to identify and support specific student populations, such as English Learners (ELs) and students with special education needs. A key focus has been tracking students who withdraw to determine whether they successfully enroll at their receiving school. The school has also reviewed its graduate portal lists to ensure accuracy, as prior discrepancies revealed that approximately half of the students listed had already graduated.

Currently, unresolved students primarily fall within the five- and six-year cohort categories. While the school previously had access to data on potential dropouts in the spring, this information is now only available in the fall. However, the state's data has become increasingly accurate, resulting in significantly smaller error margins. NMCA has also identified and addressed issues within its own system. By conducting more granular data fixes and utilizing internal audit processes, the school aims to improve the accuracy of its records and refine its data systems.

Looking ahead, NMCA is focused on increasing its graduation rate. While the school recognizes the challenges of serving students who often do not re-enroll elsewhere if they leave, leaders are optimistic about achieving a graduation rate above 66.7%. These efforts highlight the school's ongoing commitment to leveraging accurate data to support student outcomes and meet benchmark goals.

- **English Language Arts (ELA): 85% or more of 11th-grade students will complete their ELA courses each semester.**

Progress: 98% - 11th grade 94% - 9-12 grade

- **Mathematics: 92% or more of 11th-grade students will complete their math courses each semester.**

Progress: 96% - 11th grade 91% - 9-12 grade

- **Science: 92% or more of 11th-grade students will complete their science courses each semester.**

Progress: 98% - 11th grade 95% - 9-12 grade

Summary of Progress

The leadership and staff at New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA) have demonstrated a commitment to implementing high-impact action steps and following through on their improvement plan. The data and progress shared during the SITM-MOY visit indicate an upward trajectory, with notable gains observed over the last several years. While continued effort is required, the progress achieved thus far positions NMCA to potentially meet the

criteria necessary for exiting designation. All students in the four-year graduation cohort are accounted for at this time, with no unidentified students outside of projected graduation timelines. Current data reflects that 230 out of 234 (98.2%) of the four-year cohort students are on track to graduate in 2025.

Next Steps

Based on the review of first-semester data, and in addition to continuing systems of support currently being provided, the two student support specialists have identified targeted actions to implement during the second semester.

- **9th–11th Grade Student Support Specialist:** A structured identification system is in place with established criteria and a tracking system to monitor student progress and intervention steps. Moving forward, the 9th–11th Grade Student Support Specialist will increase one-on-one tutoring for students identified through this system.
- **Senior Support Specialist:** Following a review of seniors on the ASM list, 10 students who failed classes in the first semester have been identified as needing more intensive support. These students will now have mandatory weekly check-ins with the Academic Support Teacher. While students may engage through text messages or phone calls, they will be required to participate in at least one Google Meet session each month.

These targeted interventions aim to provide additional academic support and ensure students remain on track for success.