

0045

U.S. Department of Education

Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE**

**CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM NON-SEA PLANNING, PROGRAM DESIGN, AND
IMPLEMENTATION**

CFDA # 84.282B

PR/Award # U282B080045

Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT10058500

There were problems converting one or more of the attachments. Please see list below. *etc*

Closing Date: JUL 31, 2008

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This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, c1, e2, e3, etc.).

U282B080045

Number: 404...04
Expiration Date: ...09

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424		Version 02
* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application		* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision
		* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): _____ * Other (Specify): _____
* 3. Date Received: 07/31/2008	4. Applicant Identifier: Nevada Connections Academy	
5a. Federal Entity Identifier: _____	* 5b. Federal Award Identifier: _____	
State Use Only:		
6. Date Received by State: _____	7. State Application Identifier: _____	
8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:		
* a. Legal Name: Nevada Connections Academy		
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): (b)(4)	* c. Organizational DUNS: 788106693	
d. Address:		
* Street1:	5690 Riggins Court, Suite C	
Street2:	_____	
* City:	Reno	
County:	_____	
* State:	NV: Nevada	
Province:	_____	
* Country:	USA: UNITED STATES	
* Zip / Postal Code:	89502	
e. Organizational Unit:		
Department Name: _____	Division Name: _____	
f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:		
Prefix: Ms.	* First Name: Mickey	_____
Middle Name:	_____	
* Last Name: Revenaugh	_____	
Suffix:	_____	
Title: Vice President	_____	
Organizational Affiliation: Connections Academy		
* Telephone Number: 917 834 5768	Fax Number: 425-740-0867	
* Email: mrevenaugh@connectionsacademy.com		

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

X: Other (specify)

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

Public Charter School

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

U.S. Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.282

CFDA Title:

Charter Schools

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-061608-001

* Title:

Charter Schools Program CFDA 84.282B (Planning, Program Design and Implementation

13. Competition Identification Number:

84-282B2008-1

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Nevada - entire state

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Nevada Connections Academy Charter Implementation Grant

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant

2

* b. Program/Project

1, 2, 3

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

07/01/2008

* b. End Date:

06/30/2010

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	150,000.00
* b. Applicant	0.00
* c. State	5,854,826.00
* d. Local	0.00
* e. Other	0.00
* f. Program Income	0.00
* g. TOTAL	6,004,826.00

* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?

 a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on

07/31/2008

 b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review. c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes", provide explanation.)

 Yes No

Explanation

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

 ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix:

Ms.

* First Name:

Mickey

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Revenaugh

Suffix:

* Title:

Vice President

* Telephone Number:

917-834-5768

Fax Number:

425-740-0867

* Email:

mrevenaugh@connectionsacademy.com

* Signature of Authorized Representative:

Mickey Revenaugh

* Date Signed:

07/31/2008

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

*** Applicant Federal Debt Delinquency Explanation**

The following field should contain an explanation if the Applicant organization is delinquent on any Federal Debt. Maximum number of characters that can be entered is 4,000. Try and avoid extra spaces and carriage returns to maximize the availability of space.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUDGET INFORMATION

NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 06/30/2005

Name of Institution/Organization: Nevada Connections Academy

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Table with 7 columns: Budget Categories, Project Year 1(a), Project Year 2 (b), Project Year 3 (c), Project Year 4 (d), Project Year 5 (e), Total (f). Rows include Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Construction, Other, Total Direct Costs, Indirect Costs, Training Stipends, and Total Costs.

*Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?
(2) If yes, please provide the following information:
(3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUDGET INFORMATION

NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 06/30/2005

Name of Institution/Organization:
Nevada Connections Academy

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS

Budget Categories	(b)(4)
1. Personnel	
2. Fringe Benefits	
3. Travel	
4. Equipment	
5. Supplies	
6. Contractual	
7. Construction	
8. Other	
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	
10. Indirect Costs	
11. Training Stipends	
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

<p>* SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL</p> <p>Mickey Revenaugh</p>	<p>* TITLE</p> <p>Vice President</p>
<p>* APPLICANT ORGANIZATION</p> <p>Nevada Connections Academy</p>	<p>* DATE SUBMITTED</p> <p>07/31/2008</p>

Standard Form 424B (Rev. 7-97) Back

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352

Approved by OMB

0348-0046

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. Initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> SubAwardee * Name: Nevada Connections Academy * Street 1: 5690 Riggins Court, Suite B Street 2: * City: Reno State: NV: Nevada Zip: 89502 Congressional District, if known: 2		
5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:		
6. * Federal Department/Agency: Department of Education	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: Charter Schools CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.282	
8. Federal Action Number, if known:	9. Award Amount, if known: \$	
10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant: Prefix * First Name Mickey Middle Name * Last Name Revenaugh Suffix * Street 1 Street 2 * City State Zip		
b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a) Prefix * First Name Mickey Middle Name * Last Name Revenaugh Suffix * Street 1 Street 2 * City State Zip		
11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure. * Signature: Mickey Revenaugh * Name: Prefix * First Name Mickey Middle Name * Last Name Revenaugh Suffix Title: Telephone No.: Date: 07/31/2008		

Authorized for Local Reproduction
Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct

description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1890-0007. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** Director, Grants Policy and Oversight Staff, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW (Room 3652, GSA Regional Office Building No. 3), Washington, DC 20202-4248.

Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

Nevada Connections Academy - GEPA.pdf	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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Response to Section 427 of GEPA

Nevada Connections Academy seeks federal Charter Schools Grant Program funds for charter school implementation activities. In addition to meeting all federal and state laws regarding civil rights and nondiscrimination in its use of these funds, Nevada Connections Academy will strive to fulfill Section 427 of GEPA by:

- ensuring equitable access to applicants for staff positions by providing information about the position through diverse sources, including those consulted by minority applicants and those with disabilities.
- keeping adaptive technologies and other aids in mind when conducting student outreach and tutoring.
- ensuring that students who need adaptive testing environments for NHSPE are provided with such.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	
Nevada Connections Academy	
* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
Prefix: Ms.	* First Name: Mickey Middle Name:
* Last Name: Revenaugh	Suffix:
* Title: Vice President	
* SIGNATURE: Mickey Revenaugh	* DATE: 07/31/2008

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
REQUIRED FOR
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANTS

1. Project Director:

Prefix:	* First Name:	Middle Name:	* Last Name:	Suffix:
Dr.	Craig		Butz	

Address:

* Street1:	5690 Riggins Court, Suite C
Street2:	Nevada Connections Academy
* City:	Reno
County:	
* State:	NV: Nevada
* Zip Code:	89502
* Country:	USA: UNITED STATES

* Phone Number (give area code) Fax Number (give area code)

775-826-4200	775-826-4288
--------------	--------------

Email Address:

cbutz@connectionsacademy.com

2. Applicant Experience:

Novice Applicant Yes No Not applicable to this program

3. Human Subjects Research

Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project Period?

Yes No

Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

Yes Provide Exemption(s) #:

No Provide Assurance #, if available:

Please attach an explanation Narrative:

	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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Project Narrative

Abstract Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1235-Nevada Connections Academy - Program Abstract.pdf**



PROGRAM ABSTRACT

Nevada Connections Academy (NCA) is an innovative distance learning public charter school whose mission is to maximize academic achievement for students throughout Nevada who need an alternative to the traditional classroom. NCA is currently authorized to serve students in grades 4-12 and has requested a charter amendment to also serve grades K-3.

NCA students engage in a rigorous, Nevada standards-aligned curriculum that is rich in print, enhanced by technology, and tailored to their individual learning needs, working outside the traditional classroom under the guidance of Nevada certified teachers with whom they interact via technology. NCA students attend their public charter school from home or a supervised community location. Each student has a Personalized Learning Plan and an entire team – consisting of licensed teachers, counselors, and specialists as well as a Learning Coach, typically a parent or extended family member.

NCA has already begun proving its effectiveness in enabling all of its students to meet Nevada's challenging academic achievement standards, having made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at all levels in school year 2007-08, its first year in operation. NCA is now requesting Charter Implementation Grant funds to develop intensive academic support for at-risk high school students, pursue regional accreditation, bolster professional development for its teaching staff, and otherwise extend its program to improve educational results for Nevada students.

Project Narrative

Project Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1242-Nevada Connections Academy Part III Narrative - FINAL.pdf**



PART III: PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Selection Criteria

- i. **The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices (20 points).**

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, the grade levels or ages of students to be served, and the curriculum and instructional practices to be used.

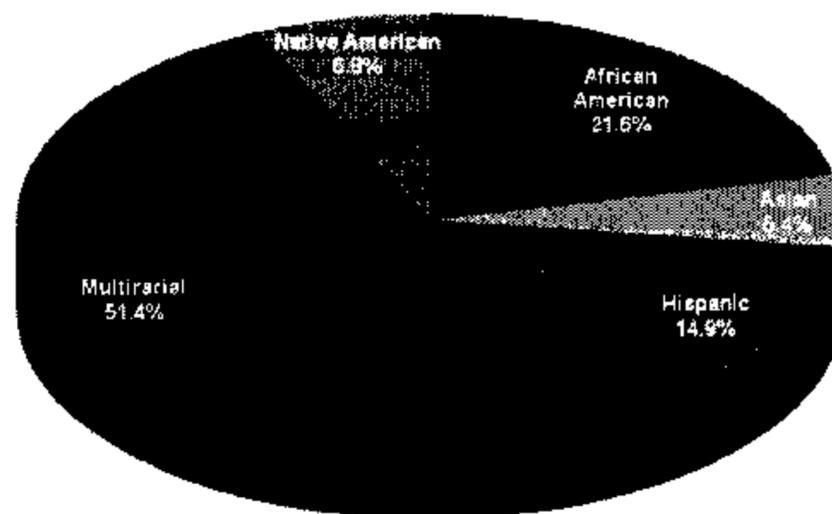
Nevada Connections Academy (NCA) is an innovative distance learning public charter school whose mission is to maximize academic achievement for students throughout Nevada who need an alternative to the traditional classroom.

- ***The grade levels or ages of students served:*** NCA is currently authorized to serve students in grades 4-12 throughout the State of Nevada, and has requested a charter amendment to also serve grades K-3.
- ***How the program enables all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards:*** NCA has already begun proving its effectiveness in enabling all of its students to meet Nevada's challenging academic achievement standards, having made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in school

year 2007-08, its first year in operation (see below for special activities focused on high school achievement). Following its launch in Fall 2007, NCA deployed its nationally accredited curriculum and unique teaching model with a diverse student body of approximately 350. More than a third of these students qualified for free or reduced price meals, 24% were members of minority groups (see chart below), and 11% had special learning needs. NCA

administered Nevada’s state standardized tests to 97.5% of its students during the state testing window at proctored testing locations throughout the state near students’ homes, with achievement results sufficient to

Of Minority Students at NCA



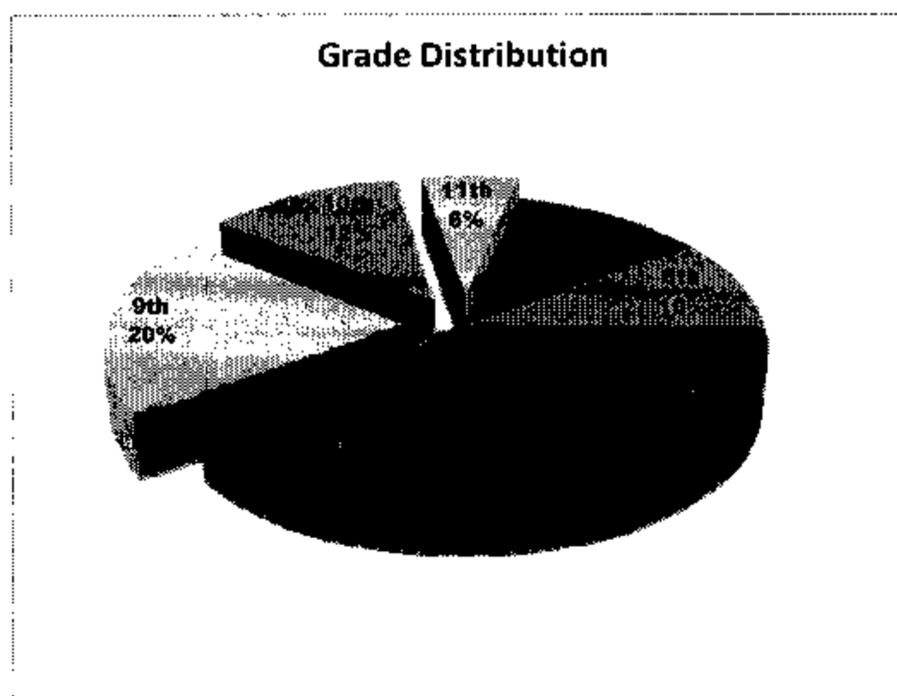
make AYP across the board. In its second year of operation and beyond – the period covered by this Implementation Grant request – NCA will be dedicated to sustaining and improving upon its outstanding academic achievement results while its student population grows and further diversifies. Through the requested grant, NCA expects to focus on continuous improvement of program quality and results, seeking accreditation from the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools, providing focused academic assistance for its students, and integrating additional professional development opportunities for its staff.

- ***Special priority – How the program supports activities and interventions aimed at improving the academic achievement of secondary school students who are at greatest risk of not meeting challenging State academic standards and not completing high school.***

Grant Application – Non-SEA CFDA 84.282B - Planning, Program Design and Implementation

Although NCA serves students in the elementary, middle and high school grades, more than a third of its students – 38.6% – are in grades 9 and up, with ninth grade alone representing 20% of the total student population (see chart, below). NCA’s high school students choose this distance education setting because they are not thriving in a traditional classroom; they

are in essence self-reported as being at risk of not meeting state standards and potentially not finishing high school. Their demographics reveal other risk factors as well: 34% of NCA high school students qualify for free or reduced priced meals;

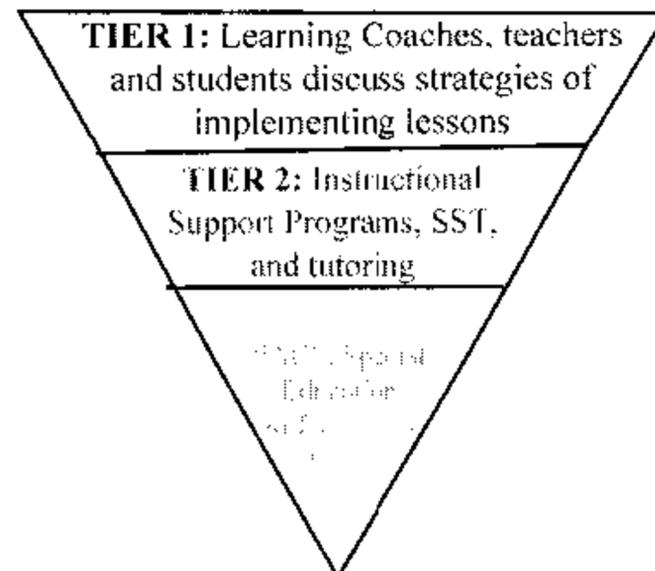


14% are “over-age” for their grade by two or more years; 7% have special education needs requiring an Individualized Education Plan, including several with autism and emotional disabilities. The NCA high school program is notably even more diverse than the NCA at the lower grades, with 50% more African American students and 15% more Hispanic/Latino students. NCA proposes to bolster its high school students’ achievement prospects by identifying those at greatest risk of not passing the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination (NHISPE) and therefore not successfully completing high school. The staff will schedule multiple special synchronous online and face-to-face sessions with these students around the state, and deploy carefully selected curriculum materials to ensure that these students do ultimately pass the exam and master the high school academic program. For details, please see Part II Section C.

Grant Application – Non-SEA CFDA 84.282B - Planning, Program Design and Implementation

- ***The curriculum and instructional practices used:*** NCA students engage in a rigorous, Nevada standards-aligned curriculum that is rich in print, enhanced by technology, and tailored to their individual learning needs, working outside the traditional classroom under the guidance of Nevada certified teachers with whom they interact via technology. NCA uses the Connections Academy virtual public school curriculum as part of its contractual relationship with Connections Academy, LLC, whose services are provided under the direction of the NCA Governing Body. The Connections Academy curriculum has been shown to be effective based on standardized test scores in other states and is accredited by the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA).¹

The Connections Academy program is explicitly designed to meet the diverse and unique learning needs of a wide range of students. For example, Connections Academy has pioneered in the online learning world a multi-tiered intervention model (see graphic) that ensures that the curriculum is much more than a list of courses. Students who may not be successful in the standard program, Tier 1, receive additional



support via the supplemental and alternative programs in Tier 2 and Tier 3 as highlighted in the adjacent chart. (“SST” refers to the Student Support Team within NCA’s staff, which meets regularly to discuss instructional strategies for struggling learners. “PACE” is Program

¹ The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation was created in 1996 by the regional associations which accredit schools and universities in the United States to provide customized accreditation protocols and standards for schools that cross the regions and for national and international schools around the world.

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for All Children to Excel, an intensive direct instruction strategy using LiveLesson to improve performance of students scoring below proficiency on state and internal tests.) Part of the current grant request is to purchase and/or develop additional curriculum resources to meet this wide array of diverse learning needs.

The NCA curriculum provides a developmentally appropriate combination of technology with print and hands-on materials for each grade level, as described in detail below. The curriculum also integrates a variety of proprietary and highly effective technology tools.

These include:

- *Learning Management System (LMS)*: The platform for organizing and managing the entire NCA educational environment is the online Learning Management System or LMS. This proprietary, web-based software allows NCA to deliver every assignment and track every activity, monitoring the completion of individual lessons as well as mastery of discrete skills and knowledge. With this system, NCA is able to provide an unprecedented level of time-on-task detail. The LMS operates within Connections Academy's very secure and robust technology infrastructure which protects all data from loss and intrusion while maintaining a safe environment in which students, parents, and teachers can interact with each other.
- *Teachlets™*: Highly interactive, asynchronous proprietary tutorials at the beginning of most NCA lessons that incorporate graphics, video, and audio to show students the concepts and ideas they will need to complete the lesson. Teachlets are provided online but also included on CD as a backup and to aid students working with dial-up Internet connections.
- *LiveLesson™*: A real-time web conferencing tool that allows teachers to work synchronously with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared

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web surfing; the teacher's workstation includes a webcam so that students may see the teacher's face, and both teacher and students use headsets to allow for voice exchanges. (Students may also choose to equip their computers with webcams.) LiveLesson is based on Adobe Connect Professional and adapted for integration into the LMS.

- *Webmail:* The proprietary private email system included in the LMS. Because this webmail system is "closed," NCA students, parents and teachers may only use it to communicate with each other, and are protected from spam, contact from strangers, and other mainstream email issues.

Elementary/Middle School Curriculum: NCA uses the developmentally appropriate Connections Academy elementary/middle school distance education curriculum that integrates textbooks, lesson plans and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including Prentice Hall, Zaner-Bloser, the Calvert School and others, along with technology-based content from "best of breed" providers such as BrainPop, SkillsTutor, Compass, and United Streaming. The curriculum is updated regularly, with Governing Body approval, based on a rigorous analysis of student performance on state standards as measured by state testing results and internal assessments.

Foreign language instruction begins early at NCA, with Spanish and French available to students in the elementary and middle school grades. Advanced middle school students also have the option to take French, German, Latin or Mandarin Chinese. Language courses integrate proven-effective online materials with a unique audio feature that allows teachers to hear and grade actual student speech. Courses may also include LiveLesson instruction for maximum student-to-teacher and student-to-student interaction.

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The NCA curriculum also includes unique electives such as Home Life, which provides fun skill-building projects in which the whole family can participate, and Frog and Toad Quest, which provides students an opportunity to monitor frog and toad populations across the state and around the nation in conjunction with scientists from the National Wildlife Federation and U.S. Geological Survey. The Educational Technology and Online Learning elective integrates both the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) articulated by the International Society for Technology in Education and the types of information and communications technology skills promoted by the Partnership for 21st Century Learning.

High School Curriculum: NCA provides a comprehensive high school program with three levels of academic coursework: Basic, Standard, and Honors. While all three levels are designed to meet state standards and provide students a rigorous curriculum, the three levels will enable differentiation based on student needs and career goals. Students who may have missed some foundational coursework will find that Basic courses help them master new material time-efficiently, while honors courses provide advanced students with opportunities to participate in extension projects, investigations and activities that require integrated skills application and higher-level thinking and understanding. Connections Academy also offers 18 Advanced Placement courses, from AP Algebra to AP Spanish and French. Course selections are made in close consultation with students and their parents. The NCA high school curriculum currently consists of more than 150 courses, including a wide variety of electives and intensive foreign language instruction from Spanish through Mandarin Chinese. Students must complete 22.5 credits in the courses required by Nevada in order to graduate.

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The NCA high school curriculum involves more online experience than the elementary/middle school program, as appropriate for secondary school learners. The Nevada Content Standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital and print versions of textbooks from major publishers enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/conferencing tools, and team projects. The NCA’s high school program also includes substantial teacher-directed instruction through synchronous and asynchronous e-learning tools, as well as graded asynchronous online discussions to promote collaboration and interaction among students. The NCA high school curriculum meets and exceeds all Nevada credit requirements for a high school program and prepares NCA students to pass the Nevada High School Proficiency Examinations (NHSPE).

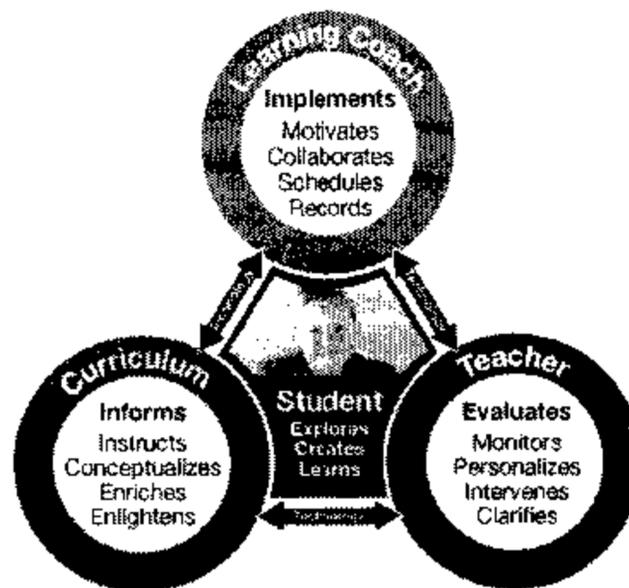
K-12 Socialization and Community: In addition to working with the curriculum materials described above, NCA students have the opportunity to participate regularly in both face-to-face and virtual community activities. Face-to-face activities include field trips and community outings facilitated by NCA Community Coordinators – parent volunteers whom the school supports in organizing such activities for families who live nearby. NCA’s technology-based community activities include virtual group projects, online bulletin boards/forums (such as “Math Problem of the Week”), book chats, teacher-led discussions, learning-focused webmail, and student clubs ranging from chess to yearbook. All of the collaborative online activities and communications tools are restricted for use only by members of the NCA community; parents can feel comfortable that their children are experiencing this technology safely within the “walled garden” of NCA.

The Unique Role of Technology: Technology plays an important facilitating role in the NCA curriculum, so the school strives to ensure that its students have full access to

technology tools. To the extent permitted by the school’s budget, supplemented by the current grant request, families participating in NCA receive a loaned computer with a printer and an Internet service subsidy. All necessary software and technology support is provided along with the computers. Given the balance of modes and media for learning at NCA, actual time online for students (as compared to Learning Coaches and teachers) varies according to each student’s developmental level, learning needs, and learning styles. Students in the elementary grades may spend 15 - 25% of time online; students in grades 6 - 8 may range from 25-50+% of time online, and students in grades 9-12 may spend up to 75% of their school time online.

Instructional Methods: NCA’s instructional model is known as Personalized Performance Learning. This model provides a learning environment that is well supported by a partnership of parents and teachers and by a sophisticated technology component. Key aspects of the instructional model are as follows:

- *The Learning Triad:* Instruction at NCA to surrounds each student with the resources needed for success. Each student is part of a “learning triad” as illustrated at right.
- *The Personalized Learning Plan:* The centerpiece of instruction at NCA is the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP), which provides for individualized instruction tailored to the learning needs of each child. The PLP is an extensive document developed at the beginning of the school year by the Nevada-certified



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teacher in consultation with the student and the student’s parents/guardians. This PLP is built from a combination of baseline assessments of both academic skills/knowledge and learning modalities, information gathered from the parents, and input directly from the student.

Learning needs that go beyond the purely academic (such as study habits and interpersonal skills) are addressed in the PLP as well. The PLP then guides the student’s course through the state standards-aligned curriculum. All daily lesson plans are provided to students and families online, directing them step-by-step through use of the comprehensive set of textbooks, trade books, manipulatives, and consumables that NCA ships to them.

- *A Complete Learning Team:* At NCA, student learning benefits from committed educators and involved parents who provide total support for the student’s PLP.
 - Nevada-certified, highly qualified teachers: Each NCA student has a Nevada-certified teacher specially trained in the Connections Academy curriculum and instructional method. Working full-time in NCA’s professional office/teaching center, teachers will have an average student load of approximately 50. Teachers work closely with each student on a one-on-one basis using the technology. The teacher is responsible for evaluating assignments and work products, providing instructional assistance, assigning and scoring assessment activities, and providing feedback on the child’s performance. Based on a student’s demonstrated mastery of the material, teachers add, expand or replace assignments; they also grade students in each subject for the regular student report cards and make promotion or retention decisions. Depending on the need of the learner, teacher contact with the student and Learning Coach – most often via telephone and webmail – may be as frequent as several times a day, and at minimum once every

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week. Teachers do not wait to be contacted; they are proactive participants in their students' learning plans. In addition, NCA families are always welcome to visit the school office/teaching center during business hours to meet with their teachers in person.

- **Face-to-face Learning Coaches:** Each NCA student has a Learning Coach—a parent or other responsible adult designated by the parents—who works with him or her in person under the guidance of the Nevada-certified professional teacher. Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the NCA concept. Whether a parent's role is as a Learning Coach, or as someone providing oversight to the Learning Coach, all parents/guardians are intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis. Each Learning Coach has his/her own username, password, homepage and technology tools such as webmail, an electronic To Do list, and constant, real-time access to his/her student's Planner of lessons and gradebook. The school provides ongoing training and support to help Learning Coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to do so. In the elementary grades, the Learning Coaches are directly involved with students' day-to-day learning, under the guidance of professional, certified teacher(s) with whom they communicate at least weekly via telephone or LiveLesson web conferencing (and whom they can contact as often as needed via telephone or webmail). In high school, parents play an important oversight role, but students work more independently with their teachers as appropriate to their ability to take on increasing responsibility for their learning.
- **Expanded educational support:** The NCA principal coordinates the work of the teachers, using data from the LMS to target curriculum and instructional resources toward specific

student needs. Supporting the principal and teachers in their work are Connections Academy curriculum specialists who are highly trained in distance education methodologies and specific subject areas. Curriculum specialists are available by telephone and email to the NCA teachers for assistance in addressing particular curriculum topics or in customizing curriculum for particular student needs.

In effect, each NCA student has a team of experts working together to leverage the school's myriad resources – technological, instructional, and interpersonal – for his or her success.

What the Research Says: The primary building blocks of the NCA instructional model are parent involvement; individualized instruction; and high-quality teaching. Education research has shown that these touchstones of Personalized Performance Learning directly correlate to top student achievement.

For example, decades of research show that parent participation is very closely related to student achievement. In *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement*², Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla document concrete benefits of parent involvement for students, including higher grades and test scores, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children's I.Q. scores. At NCA, parents are closely involved in their child's education.

Students benefit from instruction that is differentiated in terms of pace, content, sequence and style. Among many studies on this topic, Margaret Haertel and her colleagues show in

² Henderson, A., & Berla, N. (Eds.). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. National Committee for Citizens in Education, Center for Law and Education, Washington, DC, 1994.

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“What Helps Students Learn?”³ that “curriculum and assessment tailored to student ability and academic background” to assure “an appropriate level of task difficulty for students and an appropriate instructional pace” is a proven achievement tool. At NCA, instruction is individualized for every student, every day.

Teacher quality counts as much in virtual learning environments as in traditional classrooms. While past research on the impact of good teaching, such as the 2000 study by Harold Wenglinsky⁴ of the Educational Testing Service, occurred before distance learning schools were available as study sites, more recent research focusing specifically on virtual learning echoes the critical importance of teacher quality. For example, 2005’s *A Synthesis of New Research on K-12 Online Learning*⁵ shows that the unique ability of an online teacher to communicate one-on-one with students and offer personalized feedback – as teachers at NCA will – is key to student success in virtual learning environments.

³ Wang, Margaret C., Haertel, Geneva D., and Walberg, Herbert J., “What Helps Students Learn?” Educational Leadership, 1993.

⁴ Wenglinsky, Harold, How Teaching Matters: Bringing the Classroom Back Into Discussions of Teacher Quality, Educational Testing Service, 2000.

⁵ Smith, Rosina, Clark, Tom, and Blomeyer, Robert, A Synthesis of New Research in K-12 Online Learning. Learning Point Associates/North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, Naperville, IL, 2005

- ii. **The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school (10 points).**

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of how the State's law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and exempts the charter school from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools. The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy the charter school will have over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.

Nevada's Charter School Law (NRS 386.500 to 386.610) provides for either an LEA Board of Trustees or the State Board of Education (via action by its Charter Subcommittee) to sponsor charter school; in the case of the State Board of Education, which is the sponsor or NCA, the law specifies that the State Board and/or the State Department of Education be "responsible for the evaluation, monitoring and oversight of the charter school."

The Nevada Charter School Law does provide for some flexibility in staffing of charter schools, requiring that 70% of teachers in a charter school be licensed, although unlicensed teachers may teach only in specified fields. The law does provide for substantial autonomy in budgeting and expenditures, albeit within clearly defined parameters for pupil accounting, sponsor fees, and reporting. In terms of daily operations, the Nevada Charter School Law does not provide for any blanket waiver of education laws and regulations, and from a practical standpoint charter schools are subject to the same laws and regulations as traditional public schools, plus laws and regulations specific to charter schools.

iii. **The extent of community support for the application (20 points).**

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the charter school, and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.

The NCA staff and Governing Body have worked diligently to develop support for the charter school throughout the community of Nevada as a whole by informing families and others about the school and ensuring that students across the state have access to its unique distance education program.

How parents and other members of the community are informed about the charter school:

As demonstrated by its current demographics (see page 1-2 of this narrative), NCA actively recruits families that represent the full cultural, demographic and socioeconomic range of the Nevada. To do so, NCA uses a variety of means to inform families about its services and provide them an opportunity to enroll their students, including:

- ***Mail outreach:*** NCA conducts periodic direct mail and email campaigns to introduce the school to families with children throughout Nevada. In a typical mailing, NCA sends out a postcard or an email inviting parents to attend an Information Session (see below), visit the website, and/or contact the call center.
- ***Information sessions:*** NCA conducts ongoing in-person and virtual information sessions for families throughout Nevada. NCA uses these sessions to provide a complete array of information about its program, including curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.

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- **Website:** NCA maintains a website (www.connectionsacademy.com) that contains information about the charter school, its Personalized Performance Learning approach, and its curriculum. The site also contains a regularly updated set of Frequently Asked Questions and their answer; application information and procedures; and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.
- **Telephone/e-mail information service:** NCA maintains a toll-free information line (800-382-6010) and an email information service (info@connectionsacademy.com) to answer parents' questions about the charter school.
- **Media outreach:** NCA takes full advantage of the Nevada media's interest in distance education, education reform, and local community events to ensure frequent mentions for NCA in the press. School staff and parents have appeared in radio, television, and print media coverage, often to promote information sessions but just as often to counter common myths about virtual schooling.
- **Community and youth services partnerships:** As part of its outreach process, NCA provides information about the school to community, family, and youth-serving organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs; reaches out to residential facilities; and seeks partnerships with parent groups, health-related organizations; and organizations for young performers and athletes.
- **School district referrals and outreach:** NCA takes every opportunity to brief school administrators and guidance personnel on NCA as an alternative for students who might benefit from individualized instruction in a non-classroom setting.
- **Word of mouth:** Current NCA parents serve as a vital source of information about the

school, helping to dispel misconceptions and actively referring other families to attend.

More than 92% of NCA parents say they would recommend the school to other families they know.

How students are given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school: Through its recruitment/marketing and application guidance activities, NCA discloses full details about its program and encourages families to carefully consider its unique demands before applying. NCA also provides tools (such as an online self-quiz and contact with an enrollment counselor) to help parents decide whether NCA is truly the right fit for their children and themselves. All Nevada students who do wish to attend NCA have an equal opportunity to do so, regardless of where they live in the state.

To apply for enrollment for their children, parents must complete a simple application form online or on paper. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to attend information sessions prior to enrolling in NCA to receive a complete array of information about its program, including its curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.

NCA families extensive training prior to the start of the school year. This is particularly important for families whose children have only been in a traditional public school setting or for those who have had limited exposure to technology. The training includes a thorough orientation to the Learning Management System and practice lessons for the students. Families also receive a book on virtual schooling that provides guidelines on everything from setting up a classroom in the home to how to handle more than one student.

NCA does not discriminate against pupils on the basis of race, color, or creed, in its

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education programs or activities, including its admissions policies and procedures, though the school’s enrollment/admissions process does includes rigorous screening for verification of residency (address check, etc.).

NCA has in place a Lottery Policy approved by the Nevada Department of Education which states, “Nevada Connections Academy enrolls students in the order in which students’ applications are received, up to the point at which the school reaches its projected enrollment from the charter application or an enrollment cap that cannot be below the original enrollment projection, whichever is greatest. Both the enrollment projection and the enrollment cap are based on the school’s current annual operational capacity to deliver the instructional program as described in the charter. Both the enrollment projection and the enrollment cap shall be determined annually. The schedule of the lottery will be set annually by the governing body. The lottery will include all students who submit an enrollment application and have been placed in grade level. Based on available openings, NCA will utilize a random number generator to select students from this group list within the categories listed below:

4-6

7-8

9-11⁶

⁶ The lottery policy will be revised before the 2008-09 school year to include grade 12.

iv. **The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school (10 points).**

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the charter school and how these grant funds will be used, including how these funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the Secretary, in meeting these objectives.

In its charter application approved by the Nevada State Board of Education in March 2007, NCA set the following ambitious Academic and Non-Academic Objectives which the school is already in the process of meeting and which will be significantly advanced by the requested grant funds.

- **Academic Objective 1–Student Progress:** NCA students will demonstrate ongoing progress during the school year as measured by attendance, participation, and performance.
 - **Attendance** (as logged by the Learning Coach and verified by the teacher): Students will average a **90%** attendance rate over the course of the school year. Attendance is recorded electronically with appropriate controls in the LMS and verified as accurate and legitimate by teacher professional judgment based on actual student work products. The attendance rate is reported each month to the Governing Body.
 - **Participation** (completion of lessons, assessments and portfolio items in timely manner and at an appropriate pace for a particular student): Students will average an **80%** participation rate over the course of the school year. The participation rate is reported each month to the Governing Body.

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- **Performance** (mastery of concepts across all core academic subjects, measured on internal assessments, including quizzes, tests and portfolios): Students will average a 75% performance rate over the course of the school year. The performance rate is reported each month to the Governing Body.

How charter grant funds will be used to meet this objective: NCA will use charter grant funds to expand its outreach efforts, which always include explicit explanation of program expectations and protocols; this can be expected to pay off in improved attendance and participation. In addition, the extensive professional development activities proposed in this charter grant application, along with additional tiered curriculum, will help improve student performance as captured by the third metric mentioned above.

- **Academic Objective 2–Student Annual Growth:** At least 75% of NCA students will demonstrate satisfactory academic growth within each year in the school, as measured by the Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP) pre- and post-test.

How charter grant funds will be used to meet this objective: Charter grant funds used for additional curriculum, expanded technology resources and teacher professional development will both increase the number of students who achieve satisfactory growth and amplify the growth of students who achieve this benchmark.

- **Academic Objective 3–Achievement Scores:** NCA students will perform equal to or better than comparable Nevada public schools on the Nevada Proficiency Program and the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination. The school intends to meet Adequate Yearly Progress

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(“AYP”) as defined by the Nevada Department of Education beginning in Year 1; by Year 5, the school will aim to exceed statewide averages on required tests.

How charter grant funds will be used to meet this objective: Charter grant funds invested in teacher professional development as well as expanded curriculum and student technology resources will allow NCA to sustain its AYP record achieved in year 1; the concentration of efforts on the NHSPE will raise the school’s overall achievement profile.

- **Non-Academic Objective 1–High-Quality Teaching:** NCA will provide its students with excellent, highly qualified teaching focused on the needs of each learner; 100% of the teachers will be Highly Qualified as defined under No Child Left Behind and at least 90% of parents each year will express satisfaction with their children’s teacher.

How charter grant funds will be used to meet this objective: Expanded professional development opportunities provided through the grant funds – including the creation of professional learning communities – will improve to quality of teaching at NCA while promoting retention of high-quality staff.

- **Non-Academic Objective 2–School Community:** NCA will create a measurable sense of community within the virtual school environment by having Community Coordinators and monthly field trips in place, such that parents will rate school events at least a 3.0 on a 4 point scale.

How charter grant funds will be used to meet this objective: Expanded community outreach will help develop sustainable expectations about the NCA school community while

deepening relationships among families and between each family and the school.

- **Non-Academic Objective 3–Family Satisfaction:** NCA families will be satisfied with their children’s school experience and will rate their school such that it measures at least 3.0 in overall program satisfaction on a 4 point scale.

How charter grant funds will be used to meet this objective: All of the proposed grant activities – from expanded professional development to improved focus on NHSPE, from additional technology and curriculum resources for students to achievement of regional accreditation with its focus on continuous improvement – will result in a more satisfying school experience for NCA families.

v. **The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives (20 points).**

Nevada Connections Academy has a well thought out and accountable strategy for assessing achievement of the objectives detailed in Section iv, using sophisticated technology tools and protocols as described below.

- **Academic Objective 1–Student Progress**

How NCA’s achievement of this objective will be assessed: Student attendance, participation and performance data are tracked in real-time and granular detail through the NCA Learning Management System, which includes built-in tools for analyzing and reporting this data in an actionable way. These data are reported continuously through a “student status” dashboard on the parent, student and teacher homepage and aggregated monthly for reporting to the Governing Body, and rolled up annually for overall measurement of this goal.

- **Academic Objective 2–Student Annual Growth.**

How NCA’s achievement of this objective will be assessed: NCA measures annual student academic growth by utilizing a pre-test/post-test model requiring students to take the Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP). The LEAP program consists of two parts, reading and mathematics.

- **Satisfactory Growth in Reading:** The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) is administered to students in grades 2-8, using the Lexile scoring system to match the child’s level of reading skill with reading materials that are at an appropriate level of

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difficulty. For students who are not proficient in the pre-test, satisfactory growth equates to an increase of 100 Lexile points in grades 2 through 5 and an increase of 50 Lexile points for students in grades 6 through 8. For students who are proficient in the pre-test, satisfactory growth means maintaining their proficiency status.

- **Math:** For the math portion, a valid and reliable Connections Academy assessment is administered to all students in grades K-8. Students have made satisfactory gains if they increase their pre-assessment score by 10 percent and/or if they score a minimum of 75% on the post assessment.

- **Academic Objective 3–Achievement Scores**

How NCA’s achievement of this objective will be assessed: NCA students participate in the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program, including the Nevada High School Proficiency Exam. The school’s results are reported and ranked as part of the state’s implementation of No Child Left Behind, including the measurement of Adequate Yearly Progress. NCA is very proud to have made AYP at all grade levels in its first year of school operations, and anticipates exceeding statewide proficiency exam results by Year 5 of school operations.

- **Non-Academic Objective 1–High-Quality Teaching:**

How NCA’s achievement of this objective will be assessed: Using Nevada’s accepted definition of “Highly Qualified,” NCA ensures that 100% of its teachers meet this definition and reports on this metric monthly to its Governing Body. In addition, parents’ satisfaction with their child’s teacher is an important topic in the Parent Satisfaction Survey administered

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early each spring through a third-party research firm with results reported to all stakeholders; NCA has as its goal that 90% of parents each year will express satisfaction with their children's teacher.

- **Non-Academic Objective 2–School Community**

How NCA's achievement of this objective will be assessed: The NCA LMS keeps track of the number and location of both the Community Coordinators and the field trips available to students and parents; these metrics are reported monthly to the Governing Body and are part of the evaluation framework for the school leadership. In addition, the annual third-party Parent Satisfaction survey includes several questions about school community activities, with results calculated and reported annually to all stakeholders.

- **Non-Academic Objective 3–Family Satisfaction**

How NCA's achievement of this objective will be assessed: Overall parent satisfaction is measured through the annual third-party Parent Satisfaction survey, with results reported to all stakeholders and uses are part of the evaluation of school leadership.

- vi. **The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students during and after the period of Federal financial assistance (10 points).**

As of the end of its first school year, 2007-08, Nevada Connections Academy has already begun to demonstrate its ability to meet its objectives (see table below). With this record of progress to date, combined with talented staff and robust tools for tracking all relevant student data, NCA presents an excellent likelihood of continuing to meet its objectives and further improving its students' educational results during and after the grant period.

Objectives	Results 2007-08 School Year
Academic Objective 1: Student Progress	Attendance Goal = 90% Final Average = 100% Participation Goal = 80% Final Average = 98% Performance Goal = 75% Final Average = 72%
Academic Objective 2: Student Annual Growth	Goal = 75% of Students Make Satisfactory Progress Reading Result = 98% Made Satisfactory Progress Math Result = 82% Made Satisfactory Progress
Academic Objective 3: Achievement Scores	Goal for 2007-08: School Makes AYP Result: School Made AYP at Elementary, Middle and High School Levels
Non-Academic Objective 1: High-Quality Teaching	Goal: 100% Highly Qualified Teachers Result: 62% Highly Qualified (corrective action

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	<p>underway)</p> <p>Goal: 90% Parent Satisfaction with Children’s Teachers</p> <p>Result: 88.6% Parent Satisfaction</p>
<p>Non-Academic Objective 2:</p> <p>School Community</p>	<p>Goal: 1 field trip per month</p> <p>Result: 1 field trip per month average</p> <p>Goal: Satisfaction with school events, 3 on scale of 4</p> <p>Result: 3.1 on a scale of 4</p>
<p>Non-Academic Objective 3:</p> <p>Family Satisfaction</p>	<p>Goal: Overall satisfaction rating of 3 on scale of 4</p> <p>Result: 3.4 on a scale of 4</p>

- vii. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement (10 points).**

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.

Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the NCA concept. Parents and other members of the community have been involved with the school from planning through implementation.

Planning: Planning for the school that was to become Nevada Connections Academy began in 2006 with the Committee to Form the Charter School, a group of teachers, parents and community leaders brought together by their desire for a high-quality distance education charter school that could serve students in grades K-12 throughout Nevada. While longstanding distance education charters such as Odyssey Charter School provided good choices for families in certain communities, these schools included a regular face-to-face component that made them unworkable for families outside their geographic range. In addition, no existing charter offered the Connections Academy program, which members of the Committee had researched and selected as their preference among available virtual school options. Several parent members of the Committee placed their children in a Connections Academy pilot program to gain first-hand experience with the program, and several teacher members visited other Connections Academy-affiliated schools and offices to research the program. Ultimately the Committee submitted the charter application for Nevada Connections Academy in August, 2006, followed by a charter grant application at the invitation of the Nevada Department of Education. Upon approval of the charter in March 2007, the Committee of teachers, parents and community members became the

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Governing Body of the charter school and directed all Planning Activities, including development of contracts and selection of the Reno office location.

Program Design: Prior to the opening of school in August 2008 and through the early months of school year 2007-08, the NCA Governing Body – made up of parents; licensed Nevada teachers not teaching at the school; and community members – directed school program design. Key activities included recruitment, review and hiring of a head of school and other key staff; preparation of the Reno headquarters office; acquisition of curriculum materials and student technology; and intensive training for Governing Body members.

Implementation: The parent-teacher-community Governing Body continues to direct program implementation at NCA, setting policies regarding all aspects of school operations, overseeing staff, spearheading initiatives with the authorizer (such as an amendment to add K-3), and developing budgets.

Even beyond those parents on the Governing Body, all NCA parents are deeply involved with the school's implementation. Whether a parent's role is as a Learning Coach working daily with one or more students, or as someone providing insights and guidance to a Learning Coach, all parents/guardians are intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis at NCA. The Learning Management System ensures that all parents have access to complete, real-time data about their children's learning. The school offers ongoing training and support to help Learning Coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to do so. The opportunity for meaningful, intensive involvement in their children's education is part of what draws families to NCA.

Another important arena for parent/community involvement at NCA is the work of the

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Community Coordinators. Community Coordinators are parent/Learning Coach volunteers who arrange field trips and other face-to-face activities for NCA students. Community Coordinators serve by region and develop extensive networks of community contacts within their local areas to ensure lively, educational events – such as field trips and outings – at least once per month. Community Coordinators also facilitate group projects, often in concert with community-based or charitable organizations, for students to participate in face to face as well as virtually. For example, Community Coordinators organized Colorado Connections Academy students to create care packages for service members in Iraq, while Community Coordinators and teachers in Arizona helped students organize aid for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Park clean-ups, walkathons, and community celebrations are among the many opportunities students have to learn skills while doing good. NCA Community Coordinators are planning similar projects for NCA students.

- viii. **The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director; and the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that traditionally have been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (10 points).**

NCA has a talented team of education professionals dedicated to carrying out the project activities described in this proposal, including several national leaders in the field of online learning for grades K-12. Key to the school's staffing priorities is promoting diversity.

Project Personnel: The following high-quality individuals are responsible for ensuring that NCA fulfills its ambitious objectives; resumes for these key team members are included in Other Attachments.

- Dr. Craig R. Butz is Executive Director of NCA. Prior to joining NCA, Dr. Butz was the long-time director of Odyssey Charter School, an online charter school based in Las Vegas with an enrollment of 1450 students in grades K-12. Dr. Butz holds a PhD in Special Education, a Masters in school administration, and certification in adapted special education. He writes and presents widely on topics relating to online learning.
- Gerald Krummel is Assistant Principal of NCA. Mr. Krummel previously served on the leadership team of Oregon Connections Academy, where he also taught social studies and physical education while simultaneously serving as a member of the Oregon House

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of Representatives (a position he was elected to in 1999 and which he resigned to work at NCA).

- Jamie Castle is President of the NCA Governing Body. Ms. Castle is a licensed Nevada K-8 public school teacher and reading specialist with an extensive experience in integrating technology into the learning experience.
- Mickey Revenaugh is Vice President of Connections Academy LLC, where she provides technical assistance to Connections Academy-affiliated schools in grant development and management. Ms. Revenaugh previously worked on the national E-rate program and was an editor-in-chief at Scholastic, and currently serves as a Board member of the North American Council for Online Learning.

Staffing for Diversity: NCA has staffing policies and procedures in place to ensure that it recruits broadly for all staff positions, encouraging applications for employment from persons who are members of underrepresented groups. Particularly in Nevada, where rapid population growth has created chronic teacher shortages, schools like NCA must cast a broad net to ensure that all staff positions are filled by qualified and dedicated individuals; recruiting for diversity helps advance this goal.

- ix. **The contribution the charter school will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve to State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards (20 points).**

NCA has already begun to make a significant contribution to educating students who are educationally disadvantaged in the traditional classroom setting due to their unique learning styles and needs. NCA's first-year enrollment goal of 250 was exceeded by more than 40% as families seeking a high-quality alternative enthusiastically selected NCA; for many of these families, especially those in remote rural parts of the state, NCA is the first education choice alternative their students have ever had. The demographics of NCA students attests to the broad appeal of this option, and the school's achievement of AYP in its first year attests to its ability to produce academic results with a diverse and sometimes challenging school population. The grant funds requested in this application will deepen NCA's ability to respond to differentiated student academic needs, and its special focus in the coming year on assisting its high school students to pass the NHSPE will make a lasting contribution for participating families as well as the state of Nevada as a whole.

Application Requirements

- i. Describe the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, the grade levels or ages of students to be served, and the curriculum and instructional practices to be used;**

For a thorough discussion of the Nevada Connections Academy educational program, including the grade levels it serves, the curriculum and instructional practices it uses, and how these are enabling all students to meet challenging State achievement standards, please see **Selection Criterion i**, shown on pages 1-13.

ii. Describe how the charter school will be managed;

The operating structure of NCA is similar to a traditional educational environment, with a school principal who supervises administrative staff and teachers who implement the curriculum according to the policies and procedures approved by the Governing Body. The principal also acts in an information and advisory capacity to the Governing Body, and is responsible for implementing Governing Body policies in the day-to-day operation of the school. Under Governing Body direction, business matters, including development of budgets, creation of financial systems, and fiscal and student attendance reporting, is carried out by the education management organization.

The Governing Body of NCA consists of seven (7) members, including three (3) Nevada teachers as required by state law. The Governing Body oversees the operation of the charter school and is legally accountable for its operations. The Governing Body sets policy and hires contractors, including those providing the school's management, curriculum, technology and instructional services. Additionally, the Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems fulfill NCA's obligations to the Nevada Department of Education and the Nevada State Board of Education.

The Governing Body annually elects a President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and may also choose to elect one or more Vice Presidents, each for a term of one year. The Governing Body meets monthly in open, public session to fulfill its duties, and may from time to time create subcommittees or task forces to carry out special tasks. In selecting replacement or

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future Governing Body members, the existing Governing Body members will vote on new Governing Body members, with a majority required for acceptance. While ensuring that the Governing Body retains its required composition under NRS 386.549, the existing Governing Body will evaluate the prospective new members' commitment to the school's mission credibility, integrity within the community and professional, educational, and practical experience.

The NCA Governing Body contracts certain school operations to an education management organization. The NCA Committee to Form the Charter School (which became the Governing Body upon award of the charter), having determined that it wanted to provide a comprehensive charter school serving students all over the state, set out in spring 2006 to find a provider that met certain key criteria, including:

- accreditation and other indicators of quality program
- teacher-centric model
- ability to meet statutory teacher-student contact requirements virtually
- focus on accountability
- track record in operating medium-sized virtual schools (200-1500 students).

The Committee considered several alternatives throughout spring and summer 2006 before provisionally selecting Connections Academy, LLC, which stood out based on:

- its accreditation by the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA), a recognized accreditor of virtual school programs;
- the central role of certified, professional teachers in its instructional model
- its technology tools such as web conferencing and secure webmail for verifiable

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student contact

- its sophisticated use of data to meet accountability requirements from attendance through test scores
- the size of its schools in other states, which reflect the Committee’s desire for responsible growth.

Ultimately approved as a contractor by the Governing Body – following negotiations in which the Governing Body is represented by its own legal counsel – Connections Academy, LLC provides several basic categories of service to NCA:

- Distance Learning curriculum, including both online and offline (print and hands-on) materials and lesson plans
- Teacher training and other instructional support services to the teaching staff employed by NCA
- Learning Management System technology, including software and technical support
- Student/family hardware and technical support
- Marketing and outreach
- Back office services including payroll, accounting, enrollment/SIS.

- iii. **Describe the objectives of the charter school and the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives;**

For a complete discussion of NCA's objectives and its methods for determining progress toward those objectives, please **Selection Criteria iv, v and vi**, shown on pages 19-27.

iv. Describe the administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency;

NCA is authorized by the Nevada State Board of Education, which has ultimate oversight over the charter school's fulfillment of its objectives and compliance with the terms of its charter. The Nevada Department of Education provides the staff liaison function for the State Board of Education in this regard, coordinating communication and reporting from the NCA Governing Body.

- v. **Describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school;**

Please see **Selection Criterion vii** on pages 28-30 for a complete discussion of how parents and other members of the community have been and continue to be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of NCA.

- vi. Describe how the authorized public chartering agency will provide for continued operation of the charter school once the Federal grant has expired, if that agency determines that the charter school has met its objectives;**

NCA seeks charter implementation grant funds specifically for important programmatic needs beginning with Year 2 of its operations.

In 2008-09, NCA will add Grade 12 and educate its first graduating class. This build out of the high school program makes it essential that the school seek regional accreditation and develop a suite of supportive academic services – including face-to-face interventions and additional curriculum resources – focused on the Nevada High School Proficiency Exam, particularly for at-risk students. Grant funds will allow the school to achieve both of these important goals with lasting effects.

In addition, the proposed grant will help fund substantial professional development for the NCA staff, including creation of self-sustaining professional learning communities and deepening of skills in teaching in a virtual learning environment. These professional development activities are expected to assist in staff retention, thus amplifying the investment of grant funds.

The requested implementation grant will ensure that the school can provide a loaned computer and printer to all families; if the school’s operating budget will not allow this broad provision of loaned technology after the grant expires, the school will

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focus its loaned technology on families with a demonstrated economic need (e.g. qualifying for free or reduced price lunch).

As shown in the six-year budget submitted with the charter application, the school is fully self-sufficient following expiration of the charter grant.

- vii. **If the charter school desires the Secretary to consider waivers under the authority of the CSP, include a request and justification for waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school and a description of any State or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that will be waived for, or otherwise not apply to, the school;**

As a new charter school in Spring 2007, Nevada Connections Academy was very fortunate to have been approved for a post-award Charter School Program planning sub-grant through the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), followed by phase I of the Implementation sub-grant in Fall 2007. Prior to the NDE exiting as an SEA grantee for the Charter School Program, NCA had begun working closely with NDE on preparation for the next and final phase of this grant. NCA's final phase grant activities were to be aimed at continuing to improve student achievement, especially for high school students as the school added 12th grade and rounded out its offering for students seeking a quality virtual school alternative. These activities are the same as those detailed in this grant application.

Now that it must apply as direct federal grantee for this final implementation phase, NCA is aware that technically it could be viewed as seeking to receive more than one grant under Charter Schools Program statute, which is prohibited under section 5202(d)(2).

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NCA very respectfully requests that the Secretary consider a waiver of section 5202(d)(2) for NCA on the basis that the school is in effect simply seeking the final phase of its existing grant, which is by necessity only available from a new grantor.

viii. Describe how the grant funds will be used, including how these funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the Secretary;

As detailed in Part II, Section C, Nevada Connections Academy respectfully requests a Charter School Implementation Grant as a non-SEA applicant under CFDA 84.282B for the following activities:

- **Focused academic guidance and support for at-risk high school students.** Staff will target those NCA students who are at greatest risk of not passing the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination (NHSPE) and therefore not successfully completing high school. Grant funds will help staff provide these students with multiple special synchronous online and face-to-face sessions , along with carefully selected curriculum materials to ensure that these students do ultimately pass the exam and master the high school academic program.
- **Student technology assistance:** Access to a computer and an Internet connection is necessary for students to benefit from the NCA curriculum and instructional program. NCA is requesting grant funds to ensure technology assistance for all students who need it.
- **Additional curriculum materials:** While NCA provides a complete and comprehensive curriculum to its students from its regular operating budget, it is often a challenge meeting the very specific needs of students who are struggling or who need extra assistance to prepare for high-stakes standardized assessments such as the

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HSPE. To that end, NCA is requesting grant funds for additional tiered, remedial, and test prep curriculum supplies.

- **Staff recruitment and development:** NCA is requesting grant funds to broaden its recruitment of staff and to provide additional professional development experiences, including those focused specifically on teaching in an online environment.
- **School accreditation:** NCA will be pursuing regional accreditation by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS) during the coming school year, and requests grant funds to help defray the costs of this process.
- **Professional learning communities:** The NCA faculty wishes to develop online/in-person learning communities of educators in like fields for continuing professional development and support, and is requesting funds for consulting and related training services in this regard.
- **Outreach to underserved student populations:** While NCA's current and anticipated student body is diverse by every measure – socioeconomically, ethnically, geographically and in terms of prior academic achievement – there are many families throughout Nevada who are not yet aware of this high-quality, individualized option but whose students greatly need such an alternative for their long-term educational success. NCA therefore requests grant funds to inform more Nevada families about the NCA opportunity.

The school does not anticipate receiving any other funds directly from programs administered by the Secretary.

- ix. **Describe how students in the community will be informed about the charter school and be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school;**

As a distance education charter school, NCA has the entire state of Nevada as its community. See **Selection Criteria iii** on pages 15-18 for a complete description of how students across the Nevada are informed about NCA and be given an equal opportunity to attend.

- x. **Describe how a charter school that is considered an LEA under State law, or an LEA in which a charter school is located, will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and**

As an LEA for purposes of implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), NCA is committed to effectively serving children with disabilities. NCA's distance education curriculum and instructional model open up a vast range of possibilities and options for the delivery of special education and related services to eligible students. Services for students with disabilities at NCA include:

- consultative support that provides modification and accommodation to the general education curriculum;
- direct special education support to a student which may be provided via the telephone, Internet, LiveLesson, as well as in person;
- direct related service support (for example, speech-language, occupational or physical therapy, psychological counseling, among others) provided in homes, community sites and therapist offices;
- parent training, autism support, parent groups, student support groups, and itinerant hearing or vision support consistent with the student's IEP.

Furthermore, the individualization that distance education fosters, along with the one-on-one learning environment, impacts on the supports that students may need to participate in the general education environment. While a student in a brick-and-mortar

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school may need to be removed from a busy classroom in order to focus, in a distance education charter school that same student may need little or no special education support to progress satisfactorily in the general education curriculum.

The NCA teaching staff includes a Special Education Coordinator whose role is to facilitate the implementation of the students' IEPs. The Special Education Coordinator consults with the general education teachers so that the general education teachers may provide direct instructional support to special education students. Consultation provided by the Special Education Coordinator includes adjustments to the learning environment, modifications of instructional methods, adaptation of curricula, and the use of appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of individual students. Direct special education is provided by the Special Education Coordinator consistent with students' IEPs via telephone, Internet, LiveLesson, and in person.

As a public school NCA, through its policies and procedures, complies with all applicable requirements of IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. Seq. (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504) as well as NRS 388.440 to 388.520; NRS Chapter 395 and NAC 388.150 to 388.450. NCA provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying and evaluating students; planning educational programs; conducting IEP team meetings; arranging for the provision of any necessary related services through charter school staff and contractual arrangement with private providers and/or, where feasible, district schools; and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts.

- xi. If the eligible applicant desires to use grant funds for dissemination activities under section 5202(c)(2)(C), describe those activities and how those activities will involve charter schools and other public schools, LEAs, developers, and potential developers.**

Not applicable to NCA.

Project Narrative

Other Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1237-Craig Butz Vita.pdf**

Attachment 2:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1238-Craig Butz Vita.pdf**

Attachment 3:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1239-Krummel, Gerald Resume.pdf**

Attachment 4:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1240-Jamie Castle Resume.pdf**

Attachment 5:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1241-Mickey Revenaugh Resume.pdf**

**Vita of
Craig W. Butz, PhD**

**57 Meadowhawk Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89135
(702) 561-9191
cbutz@connectionsacademy.com**

Current Position

2008- Present Regional Coordinator State Relations
Connections Academy
Director
Nevada Connections Academy

Public School Experience

2002-2008 Executive Director – Odyssey Charter Schools
Las Vegas, NV
Responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the
Odyssey Charter School (an online school) with enrollment
of 1450 students in grades K-12. Approximately 200 of
our students are individuals with special needs.

2000-2002 Principal- Odyssey Charter School
Las Vegas, NV

1995-2000 Adapted Physical Education Specialist
Clark County School District
Las Vegas, NV
Taught Physical Education to students with a wide range of
disabilities

1989-1995 Adapted Physical Education Specialist
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles, CA
Taught Physical Education to students with a wide range of
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Education

- 2007 Completed coursework for Board Certified Behavior Analyst, University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV) Exam in March 2008
- 2004 Doctor of Philosophy Special Education
University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV)
Las Vegas, Nevada
Dissertation: Parent and Student Satisfaction with Online Education at the K-12 Level
Areas of Study: Gifted Education and Emotional Disturbance
- 1994 Master of Arts in Educational Administration
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Carson, California
- 1992 Adapted Physical Education Specialist Credential
California State University at Long Beach (CSULB)
Long Beach, California
- 1989 Bachelor of Education
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Canada
Major: Physical Education
Minor: French

Certificates and Licenses

State of Nevada General: K-12 Physical Education
Special: Adapted Physical Education
Special: K-12 School Administrator

University Experience

Courses Taught

2005 UNLV-ESP 753- Administration and Supervision of Special Education Programs (Summer) University of Nevada at Las Vegas, Department of Special Education

2006 NMSU-SPED 507- Low Incidence Disabilities (Online, Spring) New Mexico State University, Department of Special

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Scholarship

Refereed Journals

Butz, J., Miller, S. P., & Butz, C. (2005). Effective use of post-organizers on preservice teachers' content knowledge and understanding of effective teaching behaviors. *The Teacher Educator*, 41(1), 1-15.

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Non-refereed Reports

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Butz, J. & Butz, C. *Positive behavioral support: Applications across settings in an innovative educational program* at the International Conference on Positive Behavioral Supports in Orlando FL (March, 2003)

Butz, C., Sandall, M., & Lary, L. *Factors related to student success in online learning*, at Virtual High School Conference in Denver CO (October, 2002)

Butz, C. *Board training for Explore Knowledge Charter Academy* (June 2002).

Butz, C. & Malin, C. *Educational practices for young gifted children* at the A Vision for the Future Conference sponsored by Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV (February, 2001).

Butz, C. *Board training for Sierra Nevada Charter School* (November, 2001).

Grant Writing Activities

Charter School Start-Up Grant for Odyssey Charter School with Vee Wilson & Michele Robinson (funded \$150,000 per year for three years). Total: \$450,000 United States Department of Education (2000-2002)

Charter School Start-Up Grant for Odyssey High School with Vee Wilson (funded \$150,000). Total: \$450,000 Nevada Department of Education (2001-2004)

Remedial Grant for Odyssey High School (funded \$10,000). Nevada Department of Education (2003)

Remedial Grant for Odyssey High School (funded \$7,000). Nevada Department of Education (2004)

Service

2007	Keeping Pace with K-12 Online Learning Research Team Member
2007-Present	Member of Nevada State Charter School Leadership Team
2001-Present	President of Nevada Association of Private, Charter, and Parochial Schools
2001-Present	Member of Board of Directors of Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
2004-2005	Member of Distance Education and E-Learning Advisory Group through Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories
2002	Proposal reviewer- U.S. Department of Education, Transitions to Teaching Proposals
2004	Proposal reviewer- U.S. Department of Education Faith and Community-based Initiative Program
2006	Proposal reviewer- Nevada Department of Education Charter School Grant Program

Professional Memberships

2006	Nevada Honor Code Development Committee
2005 & 2006	Nevada State Improvement Plan Development Committee
2000-Present	Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
1996-2000	Nevada State Education Association (NSEA)
2001-Present	Nevada Charter Schools Association (NCSA)
2002-Present	National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

References

Dr. Kyle Higgins
Professor of Special Education
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
702-895-3105

Dr. Tom Pierce
Professor of Special Education (Department Chair)
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
702-895-3105

Dr. Susan Miller
Professor of Special Education
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
702-895-3105

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Butz, C. *Odyssey Charter Schools: Bringing face-to-face into online education*, at the Oregon Online Learning Institute in Portland, OR (June, 2003)

Butz, J. & Butz, C. *Positive behavioral support: Applications across settings in an innovative educational program* at the International Conference on Positive Behavioral Supports in Orlando FL (March, 2003)

Butz, C., Sandall, M., & Lary, L. *Factors related to student success in online learning*, at Virtual High School Conference in Denver CO (October, 2002)

Butz, C. *Board training for Explore Knowledge Charter Academy* (June 2002).

Butz, C. & Malin, C. *Educational practices for young gifted children* at the A Vision for the Future Conference sponsored by Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV (February, 2001).

Butz, C. *Board training for Sierra Nevada Charter School* (November, 2001).

Grant Writing Activities

Charter School Start-Up Grant for Odyssey Charter School with Vee Wilson & Michele Robinson (funded \$150,000 per year for three years). Total: \$450,000 United States Department of Education (2000-2002)

Charter School Start-Up Grant for Odyssey High School with Vee Wilson (funded \$150,000). Total: \$450,000 Nevada Department of Education (2001-2004)

Remedial Grant for Odyssey High School (funded \$10,000). Nevada Department of Education (2003)

Remedial Grant for Odyssey High School (funded \$7,000). Nevada Department of Education (2004)

Service

2007	Keeping Pace with K-12 Online Learning Research Team Member
2007-Present	Member of Nevada State Charter School Leadership Team
2001-Present	President of Nevada Association of Private, Charter, and Parochial Schools
2001-Present	Member of Board of Directors of Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
2004-2005	Member of Distance Education and E-Learning Advisory Group through Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories
2002	Proposal reviewer- U.S. Department of Education, Transitions to Teaching Proposals
2004	Proposal reviewer- U.S. Department of Education Faith and Community-based Initiative Program
2006	Proposal reviewer- Nevada Department of Education Charter School Grant Program

Professional Memberships

2006	Nevada Honor Code Development Committee
2005 & 2006	Nevada State Improvement Plan Development Committee
2000-Present	Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
1996-2000	Nevada State Education Association (NSEA)
2001-Present	Nevada Charter Schools Association (NCSA)
2002-Preesent	National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

References

Dr. Kyle Higgins
Professor of Special Education
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
702-895-3105

Dr. Tom Pierce
Professor of Special Education (Department Chair)
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
702-895-3105

Dr. Susan Miller
Professor of Special Education
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV
702-895-3105

Gerald A. Krummel

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TEACHING INTERESTS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

General Physical Education, Weight Training,
Physical Fitness, Aquatic Games, Individual and Team Sports

SOCIAL STUDIES

U.S. History, Political Studies, Government

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletic Trainer

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
Salt Lake City, UT

B.S., 1975
Cum Laude

Physical Education
Health Education

LEWIS AND CLARK COLLEGE
Portland, OR

M.A.T., 1980

Physical Education
Thesis Option

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE-EDUCATION

Substitute and Part-time teaching, 1999-2000

Part-time teaching in blended classroom of 6th, 7th and 8th graders for Physical Education and Social Studies at The Gardner School, Vancouver, WA.
Substitute teacher for Lake Oswego, West-Linn-Wilsonville, Oregon City, Canby and Gladstone School Districts.

College Instructor

Lewis and Clark College, Portland, OR 1977-86.
Team taught Prevention and Care of Athletic Injuries for undergraduate students who majored or minored in Physical Education; Developed and taught graduate level course in Advanced Athletic Injury Management, served as head athletic

trainer for the Athletic Dept. Course work included recognition of injury, first aid care, accessing emergency medical services, and rehabilitation. Athletic trainer responsibilities included team medical care and rehabilitation of injuries for 22 sports, coordination of travel arrangements, administering athletic training budgets and injury insurance benefits.

Western Oregon State College, Monmouth, OR 1986-88.

Taught undergraduate courses in the Physical Education Dept. Courses included Athletic Injury Management and Care and Advanced Athletic Injury Care and Rehabilitation. Course work included recognition of athletic injury, first aid care, accessing emergency services and rehabilitation, administration of the athletic training program. Served as head athletic trainer for the Athletic Dept. Athletic training responsibilities included care and rehabilitation of injuries for 13 men's and women's intercollegiate teams, overseeing the remodeling construction of the athletic training facility, management of the athletic training budget.

Portland Public Schools, 1975-1977.

Athletic Trainer Specialist. Teacher on Special Assignment. Coordinated athletic training services for Roosevelt, Lincoln, Jefferson, Jackson and Wilson High Schools, 1975-76.

Madison, Marshall, Washington, Benson and Monroe High Schools added to the program for the 1976-77 school year.

Physical Education, Portland Public Schools, Summer School, 1976.

Team taught summer PE for at risk students to earn their High School Diploma.

Taught sections in weight training, aquatic games, and team sports.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE-GOVERNMENT

State Representative, Oregon House of Representatives, District 26, 1999-Present.

House District includes Wilsonville, Sherwood, Gaston and unincorporated Southern Washington County. As state representative I have provided leadership and advocacy on issues such as business retention and jobs creation, transportation, healthcare and education. I am currently the chair of the House Committee on Audits and a member of the Committee on Water and the House Committee on Information Management and Technology. Other committee assignments have included the Committees on Smart Growth and Commerce, Trade and Economic Development, Health and Human Services, Transportation and Government Efficiency.

Mayor, City of Wilsonville, OR 1991-1997.

Provided leadership for the city of Wilsonville on local government issues including land use and transportation. Oversaw the largest expansion of the city's

waste water treatment plant and planning for development of the water treatment plant on the Willamette River; worked with the West Linn-Wilsonville Schools in the construction of Wilsonville High School; worked with local businesses to ensure a business friendly environment; provided leadership in the development of the City of Wilsonville West Side Planning Task Force. Served as the city spokesperson in other forums including Metro, Clackamas County Cities Association, Washington County Cities Association and League of Oregon Cities. Served as President of the Oregon Mayors Association in 1995, advocating local government issues before the state legislative assembly. Provided the leadership and drive to begin discussions regarding commuter rail for from Beaverton to Wilsonville between the cities in Washington County and ODOT.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE-BUSINESS

Senior Account Executive, SAGE, Inc., Amarillo, TX 2001-Present.

Part of a nationwide sales and marketing team bringing the BRICKServer and BRICKServer2 Secure Web Server Appliance to market. Tasked with developing and managing accounts in the Pacific Time Zone.

Private Practice Athletic Trainer, West Salem Family Practice, Salem, OR 1990-1999.

Provided physical medicine/ athletic training services for the patients of this busy family practice clinic.

Sales Representative, 3M Company, Orthopedic Division, St. Paul, MN 1989.

Sales Representative for the Lenox Hill Brace Product after corporate buyout. Territory included Oregon and Northern California.

Sales Representative/Office Manager, Lenox Hill Brace, NY, NY 1988-1989.

Opened and managed knee brace office for Lenox Hill Brace in Portland, OR until the sale of Lenox Hill to 3M.

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

State of Oregon, Teachers Standards and Practices Commission, 1975-78; 1998-Present
Endorsement areas are Physical Education K-12, Social Studies 5-12. Designated "highly qualified teacher" (HQT) for purposes of Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).
License Number 304223.

NATA-BOC Certified Athletic Trainer, 1975-Present. Certification Number 70084.

State of Oregon Registered Athletic Trainer, 1999-2003.

JAMIE CASTLE

OBJECTIVE

Working in a teamwork environment teaching K-3 or hold a literacy specialist position.

EDUCATION

PDEs - Reading Activities, Hyper Studio in the classroom, Interact Online, Inspirations, Fostering Literate Communities, Minerals in society, MARS, Facilitating and participating in a MACE study group integrating FOSS

College Credit - Weather in Education, ESL assessment, Literacy Workshops, pursuing my masters this coming year through Lesley University in Technology in Education

Eastern Washington University Cheney, Washington

Bachelor of Arts, Reading Education with a minor in Math

GPA: Major 3.6/4.0 Overall 2.8/4.0

Spokane Falls Community College

Spokane, Washington

Associate of Arts Degree

WORK EXPERIENCE WITH CHILDREN AND TECHNOLOGY

Literacy Specialist at Lucile S. Bruner Elementary School Las Vegas, NV

Tested and pulled out children from fourth and fifth grade giving small group instruction in reading and writing.

Tested children grades two and three for the Voyager Passport program.

Teacher at Lucile S. Bruner Elementary School

Las Vegas, NV

Taught grades K for two years and grade three for 5 years.

Assistant System Operator for Trylinx Bulletin Board

Learned how to use the software World Group by Galactavomm. I monitored bulletin board users. Made emotes for the system as well made sure everything was running smoothly online.

Percussion-naut Patriots:

Spokane, WA.

Taught marching and jife playing

Express Program District 81

Express Teacher, Before and after school program

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PREVIOUS FIELD EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION

Literacy Specialist

Teacher: Taught grades Kindergarten, and Third grade.

Teacher Aide, Librarian Helper, Playground Assistant

EXTRA-CLASS ACTIVITIES I COULD DIRECT OR ASSIST

Marching, Musical Programs, Crafts, and Volleyball, Familiarizing my

Colleagues with technology, Snow Skiing

EMPLOYMENT

2005 Carson City School District

Worked as a substitute teacher for the 2005 school year.

1998- 2004 Clark County School District Las Vegas, NV

Worked as an AM kindergarten teacher at Antonello Elementary school and a PM kindergarten teacher at Bruner Elementary School (1998-1999, 2004). Worked as a 3rd grade educator (1999-2004) at Bruner Elementary School. Worked as a Literacy Specialist at Bruner Elementary School (2004)

1994-1998 Lakeland Village CIRV Program. Spokane WA

Volunteer to work with Developmentally Delayed adults. Provide them with social activities and helping to better their atmosphere..

Plaque for over 1000 hours in service to Lakeland Village

1995-1997 Integra Service Providers Spokane WA

Group home for Mental Health Developmentally Delayed teenagers.

Provide them with social activities, teaching living skills and providing them a safe environment to live..

1989 -1990 Tutored a nine year old in Reading

Provided a plan of comprehension and vocabulary exercises.

1989- 1990 Medical Lake Elementary School Medical Lake, WA

Worked as a classroom aide and playground aide. Taught Art lessons and worked one on one with reading groups.

1986 Program Coordinator for Medical Lake Parks and Recreation

Gained experience in developing and directing the summer program for the Youth of Medical Lake.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIIPS

Nevada Reading Association

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Lakeland Village CIRV Program [College-In-Residence Volunteer]

Completed over 1000 hours of volunteer service to the clients of Lakeland Village Developmentally Disabled Community.

REFERENCES

Deborah Howard Principal at Bruner Elementary School

(702)799-0620

Deborah Gugino Assistant Principal at Ronzone Elementary School

(702)799-4780

Patricia Cobb Assistant Principal at Bruner Elementary School

(702)799-0620

Placement File is available at Eastern Washington Career Services, MS 120

526 – 5th Street, Cheney, WA 99004-2431

(509) 359-2221

MICKEY (MARTHA J.) REVENAUGH

(b)(6)

mrevenaugh@connectionsacademy.com

PROFESSIONAL MISSION

To provide dynamic education enterprise leadership through:

- Impassioned commitment to core mission.
- Wide-ranging and nuanced communications skills.
- Knack for motivating staff and maximizing resources.
- Persuasive public and media presence.
- Belief in building partnerships in which everyone wins.

EXPERIENCE

Connections Academy, Baltimore, MD

Vice President, State Relations, August 2001-present. Co-founder and management team member for leading provider of virtual public school curriculum, technology, and school management services (see www.connectionsacademy.com). Connections Academy provides a complete technology-managed, online/offline K-11+ learning experience for tens of thousands of students nationwide who need a public school alternative to the traditional classroom, including homebound, exceptional, and excluded students; young athletes and performers; returning homeschoolers; and children in institutions. Direct responsibilities include legislative and governmental relations; development of contract and charter school opportunities in key states; interaction with education leaders, policy-makers, the media and the public; overseeing grant-writing operations; and shaping the virtual school offering to meet local imperatives.

Mindsurf Networks, Baltimore, MD/McLean, VA

Vice President, Product Planning and Research, October 2000-August 2001. For a cutting-edge startup focused on mobile one-to-one computing for K-12 schools, provided education-focused strategy and oversaw both impact and market research. Played a major role in product definition and communication of value proposition to the market; helped identify key content partners and guide development of teacher-created content. Directed three major studies by independent research firms in Spring 2001. Wrote, edited, and shaped numerous marketing pieces including demo and video scripts, research summaries, and bylined articles, and represented the company to the media.

HiFusion, McLean, VA

Vice President for Education, December 1999-October 2000. As lead education strategist for K-12 Internet startup, defined online education features for students, teachers, and school leaders; developed partnerships with relevant content providers; created training materials for sales staff and end users; promoted the company mission through public appearances and authored articles; worked closely with technology, design, marketing, and sales teams to assure successful deployment of Internet service and tailored portals connecting school and home. Spearheaded development of HiFusionBlast universal broadcast messaging product and coordinated multi-site beta test.

Broadband Networks Inc., State College, PA

K-16 Director of Marketing, Sept.-Nov. 1999. Conceptualized, launched, and maintained first-ever end-user focused marketing campaign for interactive videoconferencing and distance learning company. Planned and implemented national advertising campaign, trade show schedule, direct marketing strategies, and public relations rollout involving extensive use of online media. Tripled school and district sales leads within three-month period.

Schools and Libraries Division/USAC, Washington, DC

Vice President for Outreach and Education, Dec. 1997-Aug. 1999. Spearheaded all communications operations for non-profit startup to implement \$2.25 billion annual "E-rate" program designed to connect every school and library in America to the Internet. Implemented hundreds of group presentations and satellite teleconferences nationwide. Created print and electronic information services for applicants, business partners, the media, and the public. Networked with state and national education organizations to amplify program impact. Facilitated work of national task force focusing on program's future.

Scholastic Inc., New York City

Editor in Chief, Instructor (1993-1997), Electronic Learning (1995-1997), and Middle Years (1993-1996) magazines. Oversaw the nation's leading professional magazines for elementary, middle school, and technology-using educators, with a combined circulation of more than 350,000. Launched and maintained magazine websites, and heightened publications' visibility through frequent media and conference appearances. Won awards for editorial excellence from EdPress and Folio in 1993-1996.

Editorial Director/Editor, Sponsored Educational Materials, 1990-1993. Conceptualized, developed, and implemented educational programs for kids on behalf of corporate partners such as AT&T, American Express, Fuji, and Proctor & Gamble.

Editor in Chief, America's Agenda, 1992-1993. Edited award winning thrice-yearly magazine on education reform delivered to an audience of 175,000 top opinion leaders in business, government, and education. Played a major role in the magazine's launch in 1990.

Editor in Chief, Teaching and Computers, 1987-1990. Produced groundbreaking monthly magazine for computer-using elementary teachers, with a circulation of 45,000. Received multiple EdPress awards for editorial excellence. Served as Senior Editor, 1986-1987.

Association on American Indian Affairs, New York City

Public Education and Indian Education Specialist, 1984-1986. For national non-profit Native American advocacy organization, produced member newsletter, annual report, and other publications; provided technical assistance to tribal representatives on education policy.

New Manhattan Review, New York City

News Editor, 1983-1987. Coordinated staff of reporters to provide news coverage for community newspaper of Lower Manhattan. Conceived, assigned, and edited news stories and features every biweekly issue; wrote six features per year.

City University of New York, New York

Editor, The CUNY Voice, 1983-1984. Produced professional monthly newspaper distributed to students in all City University campuses in the five boroughs of New York. Coverage included issues such as university financing, tuition, student rights, and cultural diversity. Developed a network of editors from all campus-based student newspapers.

Action for a Better Community, Rochester, NY

Program Developer, 1982-1983. For non-profit community action agency, developed grant proposals, assisted in project monitoring, and prepared a five-year plan for the total organization.

Director, Home Energy Assistance Program/Energy Crisis Intervention Program, 1981-1982. Oversaw financial assistance program to help families meet their energy needs. Conceptualized, scripted, and collaborated in production of award-winning television documentary, "Energy Costs and the Poor."

Rochester Patriot, Rochester, NY

Managing Editor, 1979-1981. Served as sole paid editorial staff for biweekly alternative newspaper specializing in investigative political, consumer, and environmental reporting, as well as lifestyle and feature coverage. Wrote, edited, and participated in design and production.

Freelance and Consulting

Writing, 1975-present. Articles have appeared in *Distance Learning, Threshold, Scholastic Administr@tor, Curriculum Administrator, Upgrade, Educational Leadership, Technology and Learning, THE Journal, Technology Planning & Management, eSchool News, BookTalk, PTA Today, New York Newsday, Smith Alumnae Quarterly, Upstate Magazine, Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, New Haven Advocate, New Haven Register.*

Public Relations/Marketing, 1996-present. Served as national spokesperson for Toshiba/National Science Teachers Association ExploraVision competition, making hundreds of radio and television appearances each year. Assisted singer/songwriter Wendy Wall and her Wildbird Records label in development of website and guerilla marketing campaign. Produced marketing materials for Grunwald Associates technology consultants. Provided marketing consultation for PBS TeacherLine.

Content Development/Project Management, 1997-present. Produced online and offline content for Microsoft Classroom Teacher Network (Productivity in the Classroom and New Teachers' Corner); Microsoft Encarta Lesson Collection; Gateway Computer consumer catalog; MCIWorldCom Foundation Marco Polo Project.

EDUCATION

Stern School of Business, New York University: MBA, May 2003.

Yale University: Bachelor of Arts in American Studies, 1979. Graduated Summa Cum Laude with Distinction in the Major. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Smith College: 1975-1977. Major in American Studies. Dean's List, both years.

Coursework in creative writing and screenwriting, the New School University and The Writer's Voice, New York City.

Budget Narrative

Budget Narrative

Attachment 1:

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PART II, SECTION C - BUDGET NARRATIVE

Nevada Connections Academy respectfully requests a Charter School Implementation Grant as a non-SEA applicant under CFDA 84.282B in the amount of \$150,000 to be expended within the allowable grant period beginning in school year 2008-09. NCA requests these funds for activities related to its objectives, all of which are focused on improving student achievement, ensuring that the school's diverse students meet State academic content standards and ultimately graduate from high school. NCA's grant activities and related funded requests are as follows.

- **Focused academic guidance and support for at-risk high school students.** Staff will identify those NCA students who are at greatest risk of not passing the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination (NHSPE) and therefore not successfully completing high school. The staff will schedule multiple special synchronous online and face-to-face sessions with these students around the state, and deploy carefully selected curriculum materials to ensure that these students do ultimately pass the exam and master the high school academic program. Support requested for this activity includes \$10,000 for staff travel for intensive face-to-face student support sessions; \$10,000 for curriculum supplies; and \$5,000 for contracted services (staff development, curriculum design, assessment), for a total of **\$25,000** for this high-priority activity.
- **Student technology assistance:** Access to a computer and an Internet connection is necessary for students to benefit from the NCA curriculum and instructional program.

Grant Application – Non-SEA CFDA 84.282B - Planning, Program Design and Implementation

Although the school endeavors to provide loaned technology to all participating families, budget constraints make it difficult to commit to providing this technology to any families other than the neediest, based on income and existing home technology. To ensure that NCA can provide loaned technology to a broader number of students who desire this assistance, NCA requests **\$20,000** to acquire the use of computer and related equipment dedicated to student technology assistance.

- **Additional curriculum materials:** While NCA provides a complete and comprehensive curriculum to its students from its regular operating budget, it is often a challenge meeting the very specific needs of students who are struggling or who need extra assistance to prepare for high-stakes standardized assessments such as the HSPE. To that end, NCA requests grant funds for additional tiered, remedial, and test prep curriculum supplies totaling **\$20,000**.
- **Staff recruitment and development:** Ensuring that students meet state academic and achievement standards requires deployment of highly skilled faculty, including those who have mastered the latest and best pedagogy for teaching in an online charter school environment. To this end, NCA requests \$10,000 in contracted services for staff recruitment, \$5,000 in contracted services for staff training, and \$20,000 for staff travel to the National Charter Schools Conference, the Virtual School Symposium of the North American Council for Online Learning, and other quality conferences, for a total of **\$35,000**.
- **School accreditation:** To ensure that all of its students, and especially its high school students, have access to the highest quality curriculum and program, NCA will be pursuing school accreditation by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools

Grant Application – Non-SEA CFDA 84.282B - Planning, Program Design and Implementation

(NAAS) during the coming school year. This regional accreditation will build on the national accreditation of the Connections Academy program as a whole. The accreditation process includes fees and related expenses both for the accreditors themselves and for a consultant to help the school prepare for the accreditors' visit. NCA respectfully requests **\$10,000** in grant support for this purpose.

- **Professional learning communities:** The NCA faculty wishes to develop online/in-person learning communities of educators in like fields for continuing professional development and support. The school requests **\$20,000 in contracted services** for a consultant and related training services in this regard.
- **Outreach to underserved student populations:** While NCA's current and anticipated student body is diverse by every measure – socioeconomically, ethnically, geographically and in terms of prior academic achievement – there are many families throughout Nevada who are not yet aware of this high-quality, individualized option but whose students greatly need such an alternative for their long-term educational success. NCA therefore requests \$20,000 for targeted outreach to these student populations - \$15,000 for contracted services such as mailings and media campaigns and \$5,000 in direct staff travel for a total of **\$20,000**.

NCA's total implementation grant request for all of these activities is **\$150,000**.