

**Nevada City School of the Arts
Charter Governance Council
Meeting Agenda**

Thursday, November 21, 2024

13032 Bitney Springs Rd, Building 8, Room 815 (Lori's Room), Nevada City, California

Call Order: 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Public Forum: *Members of the public who wish to comment during the Board meeting will be limited to three (3) minutes. If an interpreter is needed for comments, they will be translated to English and the time limit shall be six (6) minutes. The Board of Directors may limit the total time for public comment to a reasonable time.*

Plaudits:

Action Items

1. Approve Agenda

Consent Agenda

2. Approve October 10, 2024 Meeting - *See attached*

Reports

3. Director's FYI Report – Holly Pettitt – *See attached*
4. Board and Committee Reports
 - a. Nomination & Recruitment
 - b. Finance

Discussion Items

5. Discuss Facilities Financing and Future - *Presentation from Grow Schools*
6. Discuss Rewriting the NCSA Mission and Vision Statement - *See attached*
7. Discuss 1st Interim Budget Revisions - *Handout*
8. Discuss Director Succession

Action Items

9. Approve B-3 Asset Protection Monitoring Report - *See attached*
10. Approve 2023-2024 Ends Policy Report - *See Attached*
11. Approve Policy #302 Title IX Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination & Bullying - *See attached*
12. Approve Policy #307 Non Discrimination Statement (Change Contact Information) - *See attached*
13. Approve Policy #610 Purchasing Policy Revisions - *See attached*
14. Approve Policy #608 Accounting Policies & Procedures - *See attached*

Adjournment 6:30 p.m.

Access to Board Materials: A copy of the written materials which will be submitted to the School Board may be reviewed by any interested persons on NCSA's website along with this agenda following the posting of the agenda at least 72 hours in advance of this meeting.

Disability Access: Requests for disability-related modifications or accommodations to participate in this public meeting should be made 24 hours prior to the meeting by calling (530) 273-7736. All efforts will be made for reasonable accommodations. The agenda and public documents can be modified upon request as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Thursday, October 10, 2024
13032 Bitney Springs Rd, Building 8, Staff Room, Nevada City, California

Call Order: 5:04 p.m.

Roll Call: LeeAnne Haglund, Lauren Hesterman, Meshawn Simmons, Jaylee McGregor, Jon Lefeber, Abby Oas, Andrew Todd (5:09) and Qayyuma Didomenico (5:07)

Absent: Elissa Spencer

Guests: Holly Pettitt, and Melissa Brokenshire

Public Forum: Members of the public were invited to address the Governance Council regarding issues for future agendas. Comments were limited to 3 minutes.

Plaudits: Carabeth for AGC, Dre for Sierra Harvest shoutout, student shout out to Tobie, Jacqui Lugar for holding it down, Jai holding a lot of discipline responsibility, Jacky Luna for supporting speeches, big shout out to CJ Taylor for finding a work around the internet defunkle with the NU cyber attack

Action Items

1. Approve Agenda
Motion: Meshawn Simmon
Unanimous assent

Consent Agenda

2. Approve September 12, 2024 Meeting
Motion: Abby Oas 2nd: Lauren Hesterman
Unanimous assent

Reports

3. Director's FYI Report – Holly Pettitt
4. Board and Committee Reports
 - a. Nomination & Recruitment
 - b. Finance

Discussion Items

- ## 5. Discuss 1st Interim Changes - *Handout*

Action Items

6. Approve 2024-25 Certificated Salary Schedule (Increase Sub Rate)
Motion: Lauren Hesterman 2nd: Qayyuma Didomenico
Unanimous assent
7. Approve Raven Springs Lease to Art Space (Discuss Summer Rental)
Motion: Jon LeFeber 2nd: Meshawn Simmon
Unanimous assent

Closed Session

8. Student Discipline For Students A, B and C
- a. Meshawn Simmon moved to approve the voluntary stipulated expulsion enforcement for student A. Jon Lefer seconds this motion to approve.
- 8 yes, 0 No, 1 Absent - Motion approved

- b. Andrew Todd moved to approve the voluntary stipulated expulsion enforcement for student B. Qayyuma Didomenico seconds this motion to approve.
8 yes, 0 No, 1 Absent - Motion approved
- c. Jaylee McGregor moved to approve the voluntary stipulated expulsion enforcement for student C. Lauren Hesterman seconds this motion to approve.
8 yes, 0 No, 1 Absent - Motion approved

Adjournment 6:18 p.m.

Submitted by: Abby Oas, Board Secretary

10/10/24

Approved by the NCSA Charter Council

LeeAnne Haglund, Board Chair

Date

Abby Oas, Board Secretary

Date



Director FYI Report

November 20, 2024

This report details highlights of the month, operational achievements and items that the Board may like to know and helps to satisfy compliance with our B-6 Communication to the Board policy as well as indicates progress toward our Ends. It is organized by the following:

1. Relevant financial information.
2. School level issues that help the board see the big picture.
3. Public events (activities and gatherings both on and off premises) of a nature that may affect the perception of the School in the community.
4. Internal and external changes like significant modifications to the normal pattern of school business.
5. Progress towards Ends Policies and LCAP

Plaudits

- To Michelle Kalos RSP at LC for her work on helping teachers modify their curriculum.
- To Nancy and Katie for their amazing support for Ms. Kruger's 2nd grade class. They have taken on teaching math and reading as a way to support the teacher and the students.
- To Megan Williamson Valerie Bringoff for their work on Independent studies - there are an abundance of these so students can make up absences and increase our attendance rate. It is a lot of work for them, but they are doing a tremendous job.
- To all the teachers who have been so gracious in taking on the GiveThx program. It was extra work, but they are doing a wonderful job.

Financial Information

- We will be giving an overview of our current budget situation at the meeting.

Facilities Update

B3

- The water heater for the west wing is back on. The water fountain at the purple art room is now working. And the light is green.

B8

- The rainbow art room's window was replaced but broke during installation; Moule will return on the eighth, and at that time, they will look into Irene's broken window.

B9

- The bird nests on the second floor have been removed, and we are preparing to install bird netting to prevent more nests.
- The right side oven in our kitchen has stopped working. We are contacting the service to get it repaired.

Overall

- The new “Raven Springs” sign is almost done and is going to be so awesome!! Lighting for the new road sign has also been ordered.
- Hunt Propain will be taking one of the 1000-gallon tanks from building three. We will be credited for any gas in the tank at the time of its removal. That will happen on Nov 27.
- Ian reports that e-coli in the ditch is still at record levels despite the cooler weather. Also, water use is very high.
- Joseph and Ian are preparing for a mandated cross-connection control survey. It is proving difficult to find anyone willing to take on the survey due to the amount of connections and us being a school.

Events

- Clothing Swap this week.
- The 7th and 8th Grade girls basketball teams are doing so well! Both have been undefeated up to this point (11/15/24).

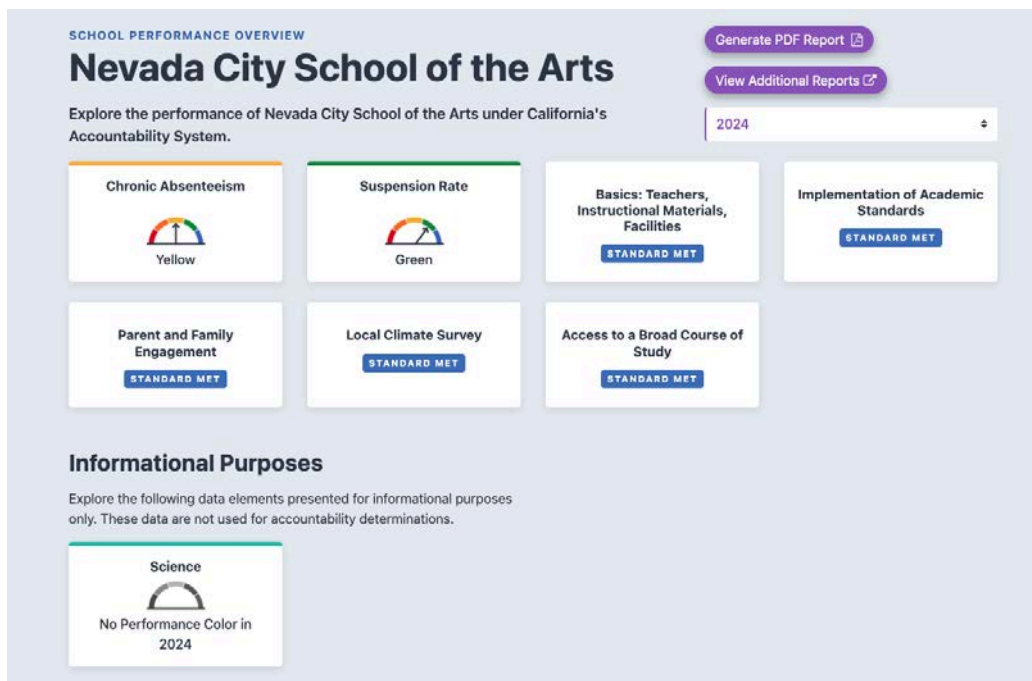
Arts Based Choice for Education

- We begin our Prospective Parent meetings in December.
- I am currently working on Charter Renewal. I have no concerns about getting re-approved, it is just a long process and a lot of updating.

Academic, Arts & Social Emotional Achievement

- Dashboard results are in for Chronic Absenteeism and Suspension rates. Please note that we did well and reduced both indicators by a lot. Academic results won't be out until 11/20/24 - so I can share those at the meeting. As long as we improved at all academically, and because every student took the CAASPP test, we should be out of differentiated assistance.

2024 Dashboard results



2023 Results



Safe, Respectful and Equitable Conditions for Learning and Working

- Kindergarten is having a rough time with some tough new kids. Lots of staff are supporting down there.
- We are hiring several new aides
- Our two newest teachers need more support, so we hired an Instructional Coach to

support them. Her name is Carolyn Cramer - she is a retired superintendent from Clear Creek and is incredibly helpful!

- We will be hearing from the [Grow Schools](#) - Charter School Capital about purchasing the facility, providing funds to upgrade the facility, and leasing it back to us.

Contributor and Collaborator to the Greater Community

- Koćim Pakan Festival went pretty well. Not a huge turn out, but the folks who came enjoyed it. Food was fabulous. We are considering doing this again in spring and having a burn then as well.

Nevada City School of the Arts' mission is to cultivate an inclusive and equitable learning environment where every student is inspired to achieve academic excellence, develop a positive identity, and build productive relationships, through a rich, arts-integrated education. We are committed to empowering each student to thrive creatively, think critically, and engage meaningfully with the world.



School Director's Monitoring Report

Executive Limitations Policy: **B3 – Asset Protection**

Charter Governance Council Meeting: **November 21, 2024**

I report overall compliance with this policy.

Unless indicated otherwise all data covers the period from October, 2023 to November, 2024 and is accurate as of **November 18, 2024**.

I certify that the information contained in this report and attachments is true.

Signed , School Director

Attachments: Insurance MOU, Evidence of Coverage, and Fixed Asset Policies and Procedures

B3 - The School Director shall not allow assets to be unprotected, unreasonably risked, or inadequately maintained.

Interpretation:

In the sub-policies below, the board has fully interpreted this policy for all assets deposits in financial institutions. For bank assets see the Operational Definition and Data here. For other assets, see each individual section below for further interpretations, operational definitions and data.

Operational Definitions:

- a. The School's funds should be fully insured with limited exceptions. Compliance will be achieved by evidence that all cash holdings are:
 - less than \$250,000 in an FDIC or NCUA insured institution; or
 - more than \$250,000 in a single primary checking account in an institution that has the highest rating from a national rating service

Data:

- a. All cash accounts (except petty cash) owned by Nevada City School of the Arts and Raven Springs LLC are held in financial institutions which are insured by the FDIC. No bank account will carry a balance over the FDIC insured amount. We have a money market "Sweep" account set up for NCSA & Raven Springs LLC that is always moving money around daily to ensure that not one bank account is over the insured \$250,000 amount.

I report compliance with this policy B3a.

B3.1 The School Director will not allow equipment and facilities to be inadequately insured, or otherwise unable to be replaced if damaged or destroyed, including coverage for any losses incurred due to business interruption.

Interpretation:

The School will have in place insurance that would be considered usual and normal for a school of our size in our region. Raven Springs LLC is included in the school's insurance policy and the cost is divided between the two for accounting purposes.

Operational Definitions:

- a. The School and Raven Springs LLC will have sufficient insurance to cover property, inventory, vehicles and interruption of school or business operations.
- b. A reliable 3rd party will assess our insurance coverage to determine its adequacy.

Data:

a.

Category	Insurer	Coverage amount
General Liability	CharterSAFE JPA	\$5,000,000
Automobile Liability	CharterSAFE JPA	\$5,000,000
Excess Reinsurance	CharterSAFE JPA	\$50,000,000
Crime	CharterSAFE JPA	\$1,000,000
Property (<i>See attached exposure list</i>)	CharterSAFE JPA	\$44,546,250

- b. CharterSAFE provides group self-insurance and risk management services designed specifically for California's charter schools. In the beginning, individual charter schools were forced to buy overpriced and sometimes deficient insurance coverage. To remedy this situation, 63 schools came together in 2004 to form a Joint Powers Authority risk pool, ensuring the availability of affordable and superior coverage. [See attached CharterSAFE Memorandum of Coverage – the full document is available upon request](#)

CharterSAFE JPA has reviewed this coverage and indicated that they appear adequate for our school. They annually review insurance coverages obtained by >100 school districts inside California and 500 charter schools outside of California and review claims trends and payouts to identify what coverages and limits are appropriate for our members. They usually market the coverage to many carriers to do the due diligence on behalf of the members. [See attached Evidence of Coverage](#)

I report compliance with this policy B3.1.

B3.2 The School Director will not allow unnecessary exposure to liability or lack of insurance protection from claims of liability.

Interpretation:

“Unnecessary exposure to liability” refers to insurable risks that could have been prevented by knowledge of and adherence to labor laws and personnel regulations, safety procedures for staff and students, and all policies and procedures of the School.

Adequate liability insurance reasonably protects the School’s assets in the case of a legal judgment against the School.

Operational Definitions:

- a. The School has written policies regarding harassment, equal opportunity, progressive discipline, and safety.
- b. Insurance coverage for school liability insurance and Directors and Officers liability is deemed sufficient by School’s insurance broker CharterSAFE.

Data:

- a. Policies: The School’s Employee Handbook details our policies for harassment, equal opportunity and progressive discipline. Employment policies will be updated and reviewed by the School’s attorney – Young, Minney and Corr. They will be presented to the board in January.

The Safety Manual details all of the aspects of the School’s safety program. The Safety Manual was updated in November 2023 and reviewed by a safety consultant, Chris Espedal – Nevada County Superintendent of School’s Safety Coordinator. In addition, we have added a procedure for Wildfire Shelter in Place and Evacuation as reviewed by Fire Chief Clayton Thomas from Penn Valley Fire along with practicing a campus evacuation drill. We have revised our shelter in place plans for imminent wildfire on campus. We have also purchased, implemented and practiced with a new Emergency Software, Raptor, allowing us the ability to easily communicate with staff and account for children. As of the 2023/24 school year we have added the Nevada County Sheriff contact to Catapult so they will be notified if an emergency occurs through the system as well as 911.

Insurance: The School carries the specified liability coverage and was deemed customary and reasonable by the School’s insurance broker. The board may also wish to see *the attached Evidence of Coverage*.

- b.

Category	Insurer	Coverage amount
Directors & Officers, Employment Practices, & Fiduciary Liability	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence
General Liability - Employment Practices	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence
Employee Benefits Liability	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence
Educators Legal Liability	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence

Childhood Sexual Assault Liability	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence
Law Enforcement Activities Liability	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence
Excess Reinsurance for everything listed above	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$50,000,000/Occurrence
Student Accident & Volunteer Accident	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$50,000/Injury
Pollution Liability & 1st Party Remediation	See Attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$1,000,000/Occurrence
Terrorism	See attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$5,000,000/Occurrence
Cyber Liability	See attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$1,000,000/Occurrence
Deadly Weapons Protection	See attached CharterSAFE JPA MOU for full explanation of coverage	\$500,000/Event

I report compliance with this policy B3.2.

B3.3 The School Director shall not allow inadequate security of premises and property.

Interpretation:

We will have procedures for security of cash handling, payables, payroll, fixed assets, and our building security. In addition, we will have no material losses due to inadequate security.

Operational Definitions:

- a. Documented procedures will be reviewed by management and outside experts (auditors) on a periodic and as-needed basis.
- b. We will keep written material concerning any breaches of security and will notify outside auditors of changes to be made.
- c. Any losses will be documented. Losses greater than \$1,000 are considered material.

Data:

- a. Summary of procedures (detail available for inspection)

Type	Documentation exists?	Expert Review?	Log kept? Y/N
Cash handling	Yes	11/2024 Auditors	Yes Accounting Policies and Procedure
Payables	Yes	11/2024 Auditors	Yes Purchasing procedures
Payroll	Y (outside service)	11/2024 Auditors	Yes
Fixed assets	Yes	12/2023 Auditors & Board Member	Yes Fixed Asset Policies and Procedures
Building Security	Y (security report at Facilities Mtg.)	11/2024 Facilities Team Residents on Property	Monthly report

- b. In this reporting period, there were no “breaches of security” and therefore no reason to notify our auditors.
- c. No losses above \$1,000 to report in this reporting period.

I report compliance with this policy B3.3.

B3.4 The SD will not allow data, intellectual property, or files to be unprotected from loss, theft or significant damage.

Interpretation:

Sensitive school information is given adequate protection.

Operational Definitions:

- a. Paper records will be kept in locked files.
- b. Electronic records will be regularly backed-up.
- c. Access to sensitive school information will be determined and restricted by job description.
- d. There will be no reports of failure to protect data.
- e. Precautions will be in place to protect key intellectual property if such intellectual property exists.

Data:

- a. **FYI** - Sensitive printed information including employee and student records and other data are kept in locked filing cabinets. We are still in the process of scanning personnel files so they are stored electronically, in addition to printed in a locked cabinet & office. We moved the student cumulative records to Building 9 for added security.
- b. Computer data is stored in the google share drive that is backed up daily and stored in the cloud. We have a server hard drive that we no longer store data on, it is now in place for printers and hardware needed to be stored on the network only.
- c. Access to sensitive school information is determined and restricted by job description. Only Human Resources/Credentialed Staff have access to confidential employee records/student records.
- d. There have been no reported instances of employee files being left unprotected.
- e. We have no intellectual property at this time, but if and when we do, we will have it copyrighted.

I report compliance with this policy B3.4

B3.5 The School Director shall not allow improper usage of staff and students' personal information.

Interpretation:

No staff, student, or parent should ever worry that their personal information is collected unnecessarily or is used improperly. This is an integral part of maintaining a trusting relationship with our stakeholders.

Operational Definitions:

- a. The School has in place clear guidelines for what information we collect from students, parents and staff, who has access to the information, and proper usage of the information.
- b. No parent or staff member will submit a valid complaint regarding the use of their personal information.
- c. All complaints (valid or not) and any infractions of this policy will be investigated and reported to the board.

Data:

- a. Our Personnel Policies and School Policies (available upon request) define the limits for collecting and using personal information.
- b. No parent or staff member submitted a valid complaint regarding the use of their personal information
- c. None to report.

I report compliance with this policy B3.5

B3. 6 The School Director shall not allow uncontrolled purchasing or purchasing subject to conflicts of interest.

Interpretation:

School assets are protected via a complete set of purchasing controls for all aspects of purchasing.

Operational Definitions:

- a. The School will have [purchasing policies](#) in place that define our procedures and controls.
- b. The auditor's notes or management letter included in the annual independent auditor's report will contain no significant criticism regarding receipt, processing or disbursement of funds.
- c. No material violations should occur. Material violations are those that, according to existing procedure, require an employee to be placed on probation or terminated due to the violation, or are included in the annual audit report.

Data:

- a. The School's [Purchasing Policies](#) and [Accounting Policies & Procedures](#) limit the purchase of supplies and capital items according to an employee's position and address conflicts of interest and other possible improprieties. These policies are available for inspection upon request. They have been reviewed and revised as of November 2024 and will be approved in January 2025.
- b. The 2023/24 audit by Christy White & Associates is currently in progress. This is not due until December 15th, but we plan to have a full report by the end of November.
- c. The Audit for FY 23/24 will be presented in December and thus far has no exceptions or findings.

I report compliance with this policy B3.6

B3.7 The School Director shall not allow lack of due diligence in contracts.

Interpretation / Operational Definitions:

Prudent investigation and evaluation will determine risk to the school assets when entering into contracts. This investigation and evaluation may include management team, legal counsel, industry experts, school consultants and others as necessary.

In addition, “due diligence in contracts” requires that the School Director and other management staff will not sign any long-term contracts over \$50,000 without review by the school’s board and legal counsel providing input.

Data: Evidence of due diligence investigating risk to school assets is presented on a per contract or acquisition basis. We presented the Building 3 modernization and HVAC work for buildings 3 & 8 contract for work during the 2024 summer. The board approved of the construction bid and financing from TriCounties Bank.

I report compliance with this policy B3.7

B3.8 The School Director shall not allow damage to the School's public image.**Interpretation:**

The school will maintain its position as a trusted educational agency for the county. Evidence of this trust will be maintenance of our student base. Also, because negative publicity could lead to decreased trust, there should be an absence of negative publicity in local media or other public arenas.

Operational Definitions:

- Our number of students will be within 5 students (+-) from the same time last year.
- Our total number of lottery applications for the year will be within 10 students +- as it was at the same time last year.
- In the past 12 months, there will be no valid negative stories about our school in local news media outlets.

Data:

a. Enrollment

	9/15/19	9/15/20	9/15/21	9/15/22	9/15/23	9/15/24
# of Students	453	424	421	433	461	482

b. Lottery Applications

12 months ending:	4/30/18	4/30/19	4/30/20	10/22/21	10/22/22	10/22/23	10/22/24
Applicati on count	244	160	140	349	376	382	329

c. News Stories - A listing of stories is below.

12 months ending:	10/19/24
# Social Media Posts	100++
# Negative Posts	0
# of news stories found	3

Social Media

Facebook - We have a private NCSA group with 834 members, a public NCSA page with 1.1K followers, and an NCSA Alumni page with 227 followers each page has 100's of posts per year. I don't have any negative posts on any of the pages to report. Our Instagram has 566 followers

We have 42 reviews on our NCSA page, 0 negative

I report compliance with this policy B3.7

Ends Report

Charter Governance Council Meeting: **November 20, 2024**

I report reasonable accomplishments of the Council Ends Policies.

I certify that the information contained in this report is true.

Signed 

At the end of this report are the answers to the questions raised at the August 2019 Intensive. I keep these in the report for reference and for newer board members.

Introduction:

This report details NCSA's efforts to accomplish the Council approved Ends Policies. The Council's Ends describe the desired outcomes that ought to result from NCSA's activities; they state the purpose of our school and provide standards for gauging success. In some cases, this report refers to plans and activities designed to support accomplishment of the Ends, but we must remember that Ends are ultimately about outcomes and not how they were achieved. With Ends, success must be seen as a series of purposeful steps which are driven by long term plans.

Monitoring Ends requires establishing a baseline or history for comparison and reliable and credible metrics. In many cases, the metrics and baselines have been established and we can see NCSA's progress (or lack thereof) towards the End. In other instances, this report attempts to better define the appropriate metric based on its relevance to the policy and the resources required to gather the data. **One of the Council's key roles here is to judge the reasonableness of the interpretations and metrics so that staff and I can understand if we are on the correct path.** These Ends policies were adopted in May of 2017.

I anticipate an everchanging process between Ends reporting and multiyear/annual Strategic planning that each year will refine our ability to understand what constitutes successful accomplishment of the Ends, how to measure that, and how to develop the means that will get us there.

Some interpretations have more developed metrics and well-established baselines than others. What I have noticed is that each year I continue to refine what our goals and metrics should look like based on the ever-changing nature of education. But a system is emerging that will allow the Council's Ends to truly and effectively guide the work of NCSA.

A - Global Ends Policy:

Nevada City School of the Arts exists so that students, families, staff and the greater community have:

1. an arts-based choice for elementary education.
2. an educational institution that facilitates academic, artistic, and social- emotional achievement.
3. safe, respectful, and equitable conditions for learning and working.
4. a collaborator and contributor to the greater community.

A1. Nevada City School of the Arts exists so that students, families, staff and the greater community have *an arts-based choice for elementary education*.

Interpretation

1. I interpret “***arts-based***” to mean that the academic education we provide should have clearly defined arts integration practices. Academics should be infused with each form of art - dance, visual, music and performance - so that student learning is more meaningful. Students should leave NCSA having been exposed to art in all its forms and are therefore able to understand how art influences our world. Ultimately, they should be able to artistically communicate their understanding of a subject to an audience.
2. I interpret “**choice**” to mean we are a school of choice, not a local district and any child can apply to our school without needing an inter-district transfer. I interpret “**greater community**” to mean the residents of Nevada County.
3. I interpret “*elementary education*” to mean an education for 420-460 students from Transitional Kindergarten through eighth grade.

Operational Definitions

1. Arts-Based Education
 - a. 100% of grade levels will have a clearly defined plan of how arts integration is embedded in each unit within the curriculum maps, that includes either visual art, music or performance.
 - b. Benchmark assessments at the end of 2nd, 5th, and 8th grades will indicate how well students have learned and can use the artistic concepts taught over the previous three years.
 - c. All teachers will receive Arts Integrated, Project Based Learning or Universal Design in Learning professional development every other year.
 - d. Middle School Student & Parent Surveys administered in March will indicate that students and parents are satisfied with their arts-based education.

2. Choice

- a. NCSA will continue to have more applications than available spaces for students ensuring we continue to be a program of choice for the greater Nevada County area.

3. Elementary Education

- a. We will have full enrollment in all grades - TK-8th. Full enrollment is equal to or greater than 480 students.

Data:

1. Arts-based education

- a. Curriculum Maps & Arts-Integrated Units: 100% of grades TK-8 have made progress on their curriculum maps. Each grade has a map that is 90-100% complete. Teachers received training during the 23-24 school year in Curriculum Representation Design and several of them completed fully developed units and submitted those for payment. They received \$200 per completed unit. Please see these examples of Unit Plans. [8th Poetry](#), [TK Lunar New Year](#), [4th Sylvia & Aki](#), [8th Sound Unit](#).
- b. Benchmark Arts Assessment:
This is a [Link to the 5th Grade Assessment](#) with samples. This link is to 2nd Grade, and to the [8th Grade Graduation Presentations](#). All assessments were completed this year for 2nd, 5th & 8th.
- c. Training - 5 teachers participated in UDL but no arts training was provided to staff this year. In 25/26 we are planning on training the entire staff in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). In 24/25 we are continuing to offer UDL to those who want to take it. Currently 3 teachers are enrolled in that training and Angie is participating in the administrator version.
- d. Middle School & Parent Survey:
 - i. Parent Survey (Q 7 on Parent Satisfaction Survey 2022)
 1. Visual Arts - 94% Satisfaction +7%
 2. Performing Arts - 90% +20%
 3. Music Program - 75% +2% -
We have seen a lot of growth in Visual and Performing Arts satisfaction. Music is still struggling. We are trying to find another part-time music teacher, but they are not easy to come by. Covid really decimated the program and it is slow progress trying to build it back up.
 - ii. Middle School Survey
 1. 87% are satisfied with their arts education.
 2. 71% of the students who participate in music are satisfied.
 3. 82% of the students who perform are satisfied.

2. Choice

a. Lottery Applications:

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024
Applications	159	244	216	138	261	307	275
Open spaces	63	69	56	66	72	50	90

3. Elementary Education

a. Historical and Current Enrollment

Date	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	22/23	23/24	24/25
TK	13	15	16	15	16	22	28	30
K	40	39	42	44	40	40	42	44
1	40	42	42	44	42	40	42	44
2	40	41	42	44	43	40	42	44
3	40	41	42	44	42	40	42	44
4	40	41	49	52	52	44	44	44
5	41	42	50	52	48	50	50	50
6	52	51	53	55	46	60	60	60
7	50	52	53	53	52	59	60	60
8	51	50	52	52	47	41	60	54
Total	407	414	441	455	428	436	470	474

We are full (except in 8th and TK) with waitlists in every grade. We added a second TK class of 20, but 10 did not show up so now we are at 30. We also added another 2 students per grade in K-3rd in order to make the budget work. The teachers agreed to the increase in class sizes.

A2. Nevada City School of the Arts exists so that students, families, staff and the greater community have an educational institution that facilitates academic, artistic, and social-emotional achievement.

Interpretation

1. I interpret “*Academic Achievement*” to mean our students’ overall ability to access and utilize the skills and standards taught in our main lesson classes from grades TK through 8th grade.
2. I interpret “*Artistic Achievement*” to mean our students’ ability to use art as a means of expressing their understanding of the larger world.
3. I interpret “*Social-Emotional Achievement*” to mean our students’ ability to self-regulate as well as show compassion, understanding and respect for others across all differences.

Operational Definition

1. Academic Achievement Metrics

- a. Current data suggests that, on average, every year student scores increase by 2.8 percent overall. While 3% may seem ambitious, this is an Ends goal which should be aiming for higher than what is expected.
- b. End-of-the-year (EOY) student scores for 1st-5th grade, on the iReady Reading local assessment, will increase by at least 3%.
- c. End-of-the-year (EOY) student scores for 6th - 8th grade, on the local Writing by Design (WBD) assessments will increase by at least 3%.
- d. End-of-the-year (EOY) student scores for 1st- 5th grade students on the iReady assessment will increase by at least 3%.
- e. Increase Middle School CAASPP ELA scores by 3% overall
- f. Increase Middle School CAASPP Math scores by 3% overall

2. Artistic Achievement Metrics

- a. 2nd Grade will increase arts assessment scores by 3%
- b. 5th Grade will increase arts assessment scores by 3%
- c. 8th Grade will increase arts assessment scores by 3%

3. Social Emotional Achievement Metrics

- a. The percentage of middle school students who indicate that they are happy at school will increase each year.
- b. The number of students who report participating in mindfulness activities will increase each year.
- c. The number of TK-5 teachers who report holding Positive Discipline based class meetings every week will increase each year.

Number/Percentage of students receiving some type of support services.

Percentages							
All Students	504	IEP	RTI Read	RTI Math	RTI Counseling	Counseling	NSLP
454	16	57	33	41	19	17	227
Grade	504	IEP	RTI Read	RTI Math	RTI Counseling	Counseling	Total
TK		4%					4%
Kindergarten		7%	10%				17%
1st Grade	5%	2%	22%		2%		29%
2nd Grade	5%	10%	19%	24%	2%		45%
3rd Grade		25%	15%	15%	8%	3%	48%
4th Grade	2%	9%	9%	18%		9%	32%
5th Grade	6%	18%	4%	16%	4%	6%	37%
6th Grade	5%	14%		16%	2%	4%	32%
7th Grade	3%	12%			7%	5%	19%
8th Grade	6%	17%			11%	6%	26%
TLC Class		33%			33%	33%	67%
ALL Grades	4%	13%	7%	9%	4%	4%	30%
Number of Students receiving ANY support			135		NSLP Total Percentage as of 10/2/23		50%

1. Academic Achievement

FYI 30% of all students at NCSA receive academic support through IEPs, 504s or MTSS (MultiTiered System of Support). This varies by grade (see table above).

Grade Level	Assessment	% At or Above Standard <u>Spring 2023</u>	% At or Above Standard <u>Spring 2024</u>	% Increase (Decrease)	Compliant
1st-5th	Reading	73%	74%	+1	No
6th-8th	Writing	53%	59%	+6%	Yes
1st-5th	Math	54%	63%	+9%	Yes
		2023	2024		
6th-8th	ELA CAASPP	60.7%	61%	1%	No
6th-8th	Math CAASPP	43%	40%	-3%	No
8th	CAST	67%	59%	-8%	No

CAASPP Scores decreased a bit more in math in 23/24, but remained the same in ELA. I contribute the results in math to having a new teacher in 7th and 8th and trying out shorter math classes. 7th grade math scores significantly decreased from the prior year because the amount of students not meeting the standard doubled (11% to 22%).

iReady scores increased. This is in large part because we CAASPP tested early in order to support stronger testing for iReady in May. However, that did not work well for CAASPP testing, so we will have to return to CAASPP testing in May.

Overall, I am disappointed in our test scores this year. We will work with the teachers next year to talk about how we can improve. As I have said, math will be a focus next year so I am hopeful scores will increase in that area. The good news is that we are officially out of Differentiated Assistance.

2. Artistic Achievement - Baseline 2022

- 2nd Grade - 76% are at or above grade level +6%
- 5th Grade - 55% are at or above grade level -8%
- 8th Grade - 89% are at or above grade level + 11%

3. Social Emotional Achievement

a. **Middle School students who report being happy at or glad to be a part of NCSA.**

Year	% Satisfied	% Increase (Decrease)	Goal Met?
2017-2018	77%		Baseline
2018-2019	87%	10%	Yes
2021-2022	74%	- 13%	No

2022-2023	76%	+2%	Yes
2023-2024	72%	-4%	No

- b. In 2022-2023 only% of students reported that teachers use Mindfulness in grade 5 and 80% indicated they do in Middle School (primarily because 7th/8th has Core every week and they actively teach it). In 2023-2024, 91% of 4th and 5th graders reported using mindfulness and 73% of middle school students said they had benefited from learning about mindfulness.
- c. Class meetings began in January 2019. In 2021/22, 80% (20 out of 25 teachers) reported using class meetings in their classrooms either daily, weekly or monthly. We did not ask this question in 2022-2023, but we are planning a whole school training in Positive Discipline and will make observing the class meetings a priority in 23/24. This year, Angie was able to observe every classroom holding class meetings. Success! and all the middle school teachers held academic circles pretty regularly. We will be trained on class meetings again at the beginning of 24/25 through the Responsive Classroom model..

A3 - Nevada City School of the Arts exists so that students, families, staff and the greater community have safe, respectful, and equitable conditions for learning and working.

Interpretation

1. I interpret the goals of “safe” and “respectful” in this Ends policy as essentially another way of expressing the values stated in the Board’s B4 (Student and Parent Treatment) and B5 (Staff Treatment and Compensation) limitations policies. So, if NCSA is operating within the constraints expressed in those policies, then we will achieve “safe, respectful ... conditions.”
2. I interpret “equitable conditions for learning and working” to mean that we are aware of the abilities, identities and races of our students, families and staff and actively work to create an environment that supports all school members thereby ensuring that students, families and staff get what they need in order to access their fullest potential at NCSA. NCSA’s Equity Statement is as follows:
 - a. *NCSA is committed to creating a school culture where all members of different gender identities, sexual orientations, religions, races, ethnicities, and physical and developmental abilities are welcomed, valued, and celebrated. We are dedicated to proactively identifying and addressing biases, practices, policies, and institutional barriers that perpetuate injustice and inequality in our school. Anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices will be guideposts that allow us to consistently reflect on our policies and curriculum ensuring they are promoting equity and representation for all students. In doing so, our goal is to foster the development of positive identities for all students, promote their abilities to build productive and genuine relationships with people across differences, and work towards ensuring equal access to opportunities and achievement for all students. We want our students to be able to understand stereotypes and their counternarratives, along with systems of oppression and learn how to intervene and interrupt injustice when confronted with it. We believe that all our lives are enriched when communities are equitable and inclusive.*

Operational Definition

1. Safe and Respectful Conditions
 - a. The most recent B4 and B5 monitoring reports will demonstrate compliance.
2. Equitable Conditions
 - a. Classified and Certificated wages should be within 5-7% of the county average.
 - b. NCSA shall provide 8 hours or more of equity training to 1 or more staff members every year.
 - c. The number of referrals will decrease each year, as well as the percentage per sub group.
 - d. Less than 3% of 4th-8th grade students should be suspended each year.
 - e. The number students suspended who have disabilities, are non-white or economically disadvantaged, or male should not exceed that of white, non-disabled, non-disadvantaged, female peers.

- f. 100% of classrooms should reflect racial, ability and identity diversity in curriculum taught, books, posters, and classroom décor.

Data

1. Safe and Respectful Conditions (no data for 2020 or 2021)

The Board agreed that the B4 report and the B5 report will be used to demonstrate compliance.

B-4 Report	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-2024
B-4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B4.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B4.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B-5 Report				
B5 (Trainings)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
B5.1 (Policies)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B5.2 (Inconsistency)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B5.3 (Records)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
B5.4 (Comp. & Benes)	No	No (Benefits only)	N/A*	Yes
B5.5 (Dir. Comp)	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes

*We did give a raise to all staff.

2. Equitable Conditions

- a. *In July 2022, Certificated Staff were given a 5% raise and had 2 extra inservice days added to their calendar school year bringing them within 3% of the county average. Classified staff were given a 6% raise. In 2023, Certificated and Classified were given a 4% COLA increase +plus their step =7%. In 2024 salaries stayed the same. We plan on completing a comprehensive study in the Spring.*

Year	Certificated (Steps 1 and 20)	% +/- County Avg.
2018-19	44K - 71K	-7%
2019-20	46K - 80K	-2%
2020-21	47K - 82K	-6%
2021-22	47K - 82K	-6%
2022-23	55K - 87K	-3%
	Classified	
2018-19	\$12.00 - \$32.00	-1%
2019-20	\$13.00 - \$33.00	-2%
2020-21	\$14.50 - \$37.00	+7%
2021-22	\$15.00 - \$37.81	+6%
2022-23	\$15.50 - \$37.81	+2%

- b. *Equity and inclusion training should be offered to staff each year - the Director should take at least 8 hours of training every year.*

Year	Organization	Hrs.
2017-18	Common Vision	8
2018-19	Eastern Educational Resource	16
2019-20	SFCESS/iGroups	8
2019-2020	iGroups with Staff - "What it Means to be White	
2020-2021	Abolitionist Challenge (H, A, S, A)	8
2020-2021	iGroups - "How to be an Anti-Racist"	9
2021-2022	Equity Institute (Ron, Angie, Holly)	40
2022-2023	Courageous Conversations (Carrie & Brittani)	40
2022-2023	Curriculum Representation - 12 Staff & Holly	10
2022-2023	IIRP Restorative Practices - Whole Staff and additional training for Jenn, Scott and Holly	16
2022-2023	SEL Cooperative - Irene, Jenn, Scott and Kim B.	40
2023-2024	Courageous Conversations - Holly, Andrea, Gabriel, Lori, Dani	40
2023-2024	African American Multigenerational Trauma and Implementing Models of Change - Jai and Qausu -	10
2023-2024	IIRP Restorative Practices - Jai and Qausu	6
2023-2024	Curriculum Representation Design - All teachers except 2.	15
2023-2024	Universal Design for Learning Emily, Andrea, Erin and Caari	40

- c. **Referral Data:** *The number of referrals will decrease each year -*

Year	# Students	# of Referrals	+/- Increase (Decrease)
2019-20	460	154	
2021-22	438	77	(-50%)
2022-23	451 (3% increase in students)	165	54%
2023-2024	464	61	(-13%)

2023-2024 - We added 3 additional staff to support this and we have trained every staff member who works directly with students in Positive Discipline. Our Youth Advocate began a Restorative Justice program that helped reduce suspensions significantly and held students more accountable for their behavior. We are continuing to refine this program and also eliminate referrals for 24/25. Students

now complete behavior reflections which are facilitated by staff and repairs are held within 24 hours.

Referral Data 2023-2024

2023-2024 Demographics	Total Students 464	% of Total Pop	61 Referrals	% of referrals
Other than White	115	25%	17	28%
White	349	75%	44	72%
Socio-Economic	234	50%	61	100%
Special Ed.	72	16%	20	33%
Male	215	46%	47	77%
Female	247	54%	14	23%
Non-Binary	2	.4%	0	0%

- Concerned that ALL referrals were students who qualify for FRL.

2022-2023 Demographics	Total Students 451	% of Total Pop	165 Referrals	% of referrals
Other than White	110	24%	17	23%
White	341	75%	56	76%
Socio-Economic	221	49%	37	50%
Special Ed.	69	15%	17	23%
Male	225	50%	53	73%
Female	224	50%	20	27%
Non-Binary	2	0.4%	0	0%

- d. **Suspension Data:** Less than 3% of 4th-8th grade students should be suspended each year.

Year	#of Students	# Suspended	% Total
2017-18	406	6	2.5% Total
2018-19	441	7	2.5% Total
2019-20	449	6	2.2%
2021-22	417	15	6.0%
2022-23	438	22	5.7%
2023-24	464	15	3.0%

- e. *Of those suspensions, less than 25% should be students with disabilities, less than 11% non-white and less than 50% economically disadvantaged.*

Suspension Data by Demographic

2023-2024	15 Suspensions	%
Other than white	3	2%
White	11	73%
Socio-Economic	7	49%
Special Ed	5	33%
Male	12	80%
Female	3	20%
Non-Binary	0	0

Because we focused our efforts on creating a restorative justice program in the middle school we were able to reduce suspensions by 30%. We still need to work on building a more supportive culture for our male students and our students with disabilities - both groups are over suspended. Our creation of the Wellness Committee, lead by Scott Mertz, and including Jenn G, Jenn D., Jai and Qausu will focus on creating a positive school culture and I believe will help further reduce discipline incidents.

- f. *100% of classrooms should reflect racial, ability and identity diversity in curriculum taught, books, posters, and classroom décor.*

We still have a ways to go. We need more representation in the classrooms and want to bring in more assemblies and guest speakers who are diverse, but we are definitely making progress on curriculum. All the teachers attended the CRD training. I will be asking Jai and Qausu to track some data around classroom diversity for this year.

A4 - Nevada City School of the Arts exists so that students, families, staff and the greater community have a collaborator and contributor to the greater community.

Interpretation

1. I interpret “*collaborator*” to mean that we work with or lease to local businesses and organizations to further artistic pursuits in Nevada County
2. Our primary purpose is to educate students so that they are successful in high school and beyond. Therefore, I interpret “*contributor*” to mean our students are able to successfully graduate from 8th grade. Additionally, because we own 316 acres, we should be looking at ways to “*contribute*” portions of our land to support the greater community.

Operational Definition

1. Collaborator
 - a. NCSA will make leases with artists or arts organizations a priority.
 - b. NCSA will make leases with local non-profit organizations a second priority.
2. Contributor
 - a. All NCSA students will conduct themselves in a manner that reflects community values, respects diverse individuals, and aligns with behavior expectations outlined in NCSA’s School Policies.
 - b. NCSA 8th graders will demonstrate knowledge, application, and proficiency in their studies of American citizenship as well as cultural, global and environmental awareness by passing US History with a 3 or better.
 - c. 100% will graduate from 8th grade each year. Of those students the percentage of those who graduate with a 3 or better each year will increase.

Data

1. Collaborator
 - a. Currently NCSA has signed leases with the following 10 artists/arts organizations:

Lessee	Type of Business	Square Footage
Five Flavors & Herbs	Holistic Healing arts	2,540
Travis Sol Tiny Homes	Tiny Home Manufacturing	5,500
DS Welding	Welding	6,000
Cell Tower Lease	Land Lease for cell tower	1,000
Miners Foundry	Event Storage	160
Cosmic Shark Clothing	Apparel	600
CATS	Theater Company Storage	250
CATS	Theater Company Storage	250
Jason Casey	1980’s Online Apparel Shop	250
Curious Forge	Maker Space	20,000
Sk8 Box	Indoor Skate Park	2,000

b. Non-Profit Organizations

Lessee	Type of Business	Square Footage
Nevada City Rancheria (Nisenan)	Native American Tribe	1,000
JPA - Charters	Special Education Services	950

2. Contributor

- a. First, only one 8th grader was suspended this year (he ended up disenrolling). Another one was caught vaping and did a drug education course and we held a restorative circle around it. Discipline overall for 8th was pretty good! This year, I also asked students to name the 3 most important traits of a person who contributes positively to society. [Here are their responses.](#) I appreciated their responses and was actually pleasantly surprised by them.
- b. All 8th graders passed US History with a 3 or better.
- c. 100% of NCSA 8th Graders graduated from 8th grade last year.

Responses to Questions Raised at the 8-17-19 Intensive

1) Please explain what an “arts integrated unit” is.

A Unit plan is like a map that guides instruction within a unifying theme. Teachers plan a sequential set of steps or interrelated lessons that are focused on activities, teaching strategies, skills and assessments aligned with standards and clearly defined objectives. A Unit Plan organizes thinking and identifies students’ needs while identifying resources, methods and processes to reach an identified learning objective. A unit can span across weeks and be comprised of several lessons or be completed within a few days and just a couple of lessons. In sum, a unit’s purpose is for a teacher to plan and reflect on what students need to learn, how to learn it and a timeline for learning it.

For example, last year the 5th grade team developed a unit plan that encompassed 6 different subjects: Science, Math, Social Studies, Language Arts, Visual Arts and Music. All of them were developed under a common theme: Stories of American Diversity in the context of the origins of the United States of America. Within this theme, two essential questions were created to guide instruction: *What contributions has this diversity given to the foundations of the American Tradition? What was the role of privilege and oppression in the context of Diversity in Colonial America?*

This unit was developed to be taught in a 4-month period of time. Some disciplines expected to utilize the entire period of time, while some only required a couple of weeks. For example, Social Studies determined that in order to achieve its objective, the lessons would be taught throughout the entire four months. Conversely, Music only required a total of five lessons (equaling 5 weeks). Nevertheless, all disciplines developed a series of lessons within this unit with a clear common objective, strategies for learning and assessment of the students. As a result of this collaboration and organization, teachers were able to deeply analyze not only what the desired outcome should be, but also the actual results. This year, after doing more in-depth learning on issues of equity, diversity and integration, the team is revising and editing the objectives of the unit with the intent of improving student understanding.

2) How does an arts education enhance academic achievement and rigor?

After researching this, there is no definitive correlation between academic achievement and art, in that studying the arts don’t necessarily make you “smarter”. However, there is a great deal of research regarding being involved in the arts and increased problem-solving ability, creativity, and staying in and graduating from school. The following information is from a presentation that Julie Baker made to the Nevada County Arts Council.

The arts help teens enjoy - and stay in - school:

- As research studies demonstrate, students with a low participation in the arts have a dropout rate of 22 percent, but their peers with a high participation in the arts have a dropout rate of only 4 percent! For example, a recent report from the Center for Arts Education found that New York City high schools with the most access to—and support for — arts education have the city’s highest graduation rates.

The arts help with academic achievement and college prep:

- The College Board has found that students who take classes in the arts for four years in high school scored substantially higher on the SATs, on average more than 100 points higher, than students with six months or less training in the arts.
- A student involved in the arts is four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement.
- Low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are twice as likely to graduate college as their peers with no arts education.

Arts keep students engaged in school life:

- Singing in a choir, participating in a dance show, acting or putting on a theatre production, creates a sense of community and place for students. A place where students find their tribe. A safe place to express themselves while working towards something concrete.
- Students engaged in performing arts also exhibit confidence in public speaking, an important life-long skill.
- Research finds that the arts can be a vital tool for success in school because they provide positive, enjoyable, creative pathways for teenagers to express their feelings and ideas. This is particularly important at an age when kids are worried about the future and feeling conflicted about many intractable issues, particularly dependence/independence.
- Exposure to the arts spur curiosity, which helps develop lifelong learners.
- The arts also expose students to community and civic engagement opportunities.

Arts education can be a gateway to the future:

- A key and often overlooked benefit of exposure to the arts is that it fosters out-of-the-box thinking skills. These skills, such as creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and collaboration, are precisely what we need to build a stronger workforce, a report from the Partnership for 21st Century Learning found. The arts help students develop the kind of problem-solving skills that employers are looking for in a highly competitive workforce.
- 72% of business leaders say that creativity is the number one skill they are seeking when hiring. Source, Americans for the Arts.
- 93% of Americans believe that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education. Source, Americans for the Arts.
- “Arts education develops creativity, one of the top five skills employers prize for the 21st century. Source, Excerpted from Preparing Students for the Next America, published by the Arts Education Partnership

The arts help with campus safety:

- The arts foster a place where kids can collaborate and engage positively with others.

- Studies show teens with an arts rich curriculum become more tolerant of differences because the arts can immerse them in unfamiliar cultures that span other times and other countries.

The arts provide mental and other health benefits for teenagers: <https://www.newportacademy.com/resources/empowering-teens/creativity-and-mental-health/>

- Being creative even reduces anxiety. And, as a result, it makes us happier. Research proves that creativity and mental health are definitively linked.
- Moreover, creative activities help teens build authentic connections with self and others. Consequently, they are better able to form positive relationships.
- Boredom and disengagement have been linked to poor health behaviors. This includes drug and alcohol use, smoking, and unhealthy eating. Hence, learning creative, analog activities may serve as preventive factors.
- Creative arts activate many mechanisms. Moreover, they provide alternative routes for self-expression. This is helpful for teens who feel uncomfortable with talk therapy or find verbal expression difficult. As a researcher noted, “Teens know the buzzwords, and the talk therapy process can be impacted by that,” “The creative process doesn’t allow for that kind of manipulation to happen.”

3) What type of interventions do we use for academics?

- a. We use iReady for reading and math intervention
- b. We use a variety of accommodations and differentiation strategies for differing levels of students. Several of our teachers are participating in the UDL (Universal Design Learning) method which is designed to provide students with:
 - Multiple means of representation to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge
 - Multiple means of expression to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know
 - Multiple means of engagement to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation
 - 5th period Fridays (6th & 7th)
 - Supported Studies
 - Study Hall (6th)
 - Standards Based Grading approach allows students to continue to improve on the standard and retake assessments so we are grading them based on their actual knowledge not whether they have great organization and can follow rules.

An Arts education is one of those alternative ways of reaching students.

- c. when done as in years past.
- d. Teachers are paying closer attention to what is on the test and specifically preparing students for it.
- e. Teams focus on RTI strategies at 1 team meeting per month.
- f. Standards Based Grading

4) **How do you measure an arts education?** *See California Alliance for Arts Education definition of a high-quality arts program below.*

The elements of a high quality visual and performing arts program may be divided into the following focus areas. Indicators of quality in each focus area may be described as follows:¹

Standards-Based Curriculum

- The district has a sequential curriculum based on the Visual and Performing Arts Standards adopted by the State of California.
- The visual and performing arts program and standards-based curriculum are clearly articulated throughout the grade levels offered in the district.

Instruction and Methodology

- Instruction is focused on guiding students to standards-based grade-level proficiency in the arts.
- All arts disciplines are offered during the regular school day and are available to all students.
- Instructional methodologies provide individual, small-group and large-group opportunities to study the arts.
- Each arts discipline is delivered as a discrete sequential subject, with its own body of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking.
- Arts disciplines are authentically integrated into other curricular areas whenever possible.
- The student-to-teacher ratio in each of the arts is appropriate for the delivery of effective instruction.
- The resources and facilities available for each of the arts disciplines are appropriate for the delivery of effective instruction.

Student Assessment

- Assessments capture evidence of the students' ability to identify, create, describe, compare, analyze, interpret and evaluate their own work and the work of others in relation to the arts standards.
- Assessment in the arts is standards-based and appropriately reflects the essential skills and knowledge that are specific to each art form.

Professional Development

- Those primarily responsible for providing instruction in the arts (multiple subject teachers and arts specialists) as well as those who provide supplemental arts instruction (e.g., teaching artists, volunteers) receive ongoing professional development that is focused on strategies for delivering a standards-based arts education program.
- School and district leaders actively seek out and implement effective professional development models and practices that are appropriate to their local context.

5) **How does what we do at NCSA compare to other schools?**

This depends on what is meant by “other” schools. We are the only ones who have an extensive arts program in the county. However, I did an online search about Arts Education and found that there are not a lot of schools who do what we do, but there are a few and it’s hard to tell how well they do. Creative Arts Charter in SF seems to do what we do, but it is difficult to tell based on a website. While it appears that we are doing arts integration well, we could be even more effective if our teachers were trained better.

6) **How does equity increase rigor and achievement?**

<https://www.waterford.org/education/equity-vs-equality-in-education/>

Equity means offering individualized support to students that addresses possible barriers, like poverty or limited transportation.

Equity in schools is the answer to supporting every student, not just those from disadvantaged backgrounds. **When schools provide their students with resources that fit individual circumstances, the entire classroom environment improves.**[12] Not only that, but the importance of equity extends to our society as a whole. In equitable communities, everyone has the opportunity to succeed regardless of their original circumstances.

On a surface level, the benefits of inclusive and equitable classrooms extend to academic achievement. **Schools with the smallest achievement gaps between demographics have the highest overall test scores.** [13] This means that when the most disadvantaged student scores improve, students from more privileged backgrounds improve, too. When schools are mindful of different backgrounds and provide the right resources, all students are prepared to learn and help each other succeed.

Equity can also strengthen a student’s health and social-emotional development. In a study involving over 4,300 students in Southern California, **the children who felt safer, less lonely, and reported less bullying also had higher diversity levels in their classes.** [14] Being equipped to promote diversity and provide for students from all backgrounds makes for an environment where students feel comfortable and have better emotional regulation. Additionally, equitable communities are linked to better health and longer average lifespans. [15]

Surrounding communities benefit from equity in schools as well. **Equity is linked to stronger social cohesion, meaning that individuals connect with each other better and are more compassionate.**[16] It also leads to long-term economic growth.[17] This means that promoting equity in schools can be one of the best and most effective social investments.

Equity in education
is a global issue
influenced by many
factors.

Organization for
Economic
Co-operations and
Development

Ten Steps to Equity in Education

Design

- limit early tracking and streaming and postpone academic selection
- manage school choice so as to contain the risks to equity
- in upper secondary education, provide attractive alternatives, remove dead ends and prevent dropouts
- offer second chances to gain from education

Practices

- identify and provide systematic help to those who fall behind at school and reduce year retention
- strengthen the links between school and home to help disadvantaged parents help their children to learn
- respond to diversity and provide for the successful inclusion of migrants and minorities within mainstream education

Resourcing

- provide strong education for all, giving priorities to early childhood provision and basic schooling
- direct resources to students with the greatest need
- set concrete targets for more equity, particularly related to low school attainment and dropouts

“Education plays a key role in determining how you spend your adult life - a higher level of education means higher earnings, better health, and a longer life.”



TITLE IX, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, DISCRIMINATION, AND BULLYING POLICY

Discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors, which interfere with students' ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, Nevada City School of the Arts ("NCSA" or the "Charter School") prohibits any acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying altogether. This policy is inclusive of instances that occur on any area of the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities, regardless of location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means.

As used in this policy, discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are described as the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication or cyber-bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, based on the actual or perceived characteristics of disability, pregnancy, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, ancestry, race or ethnicity, immigration and citizenship status, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, age, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. In addition, bullying encompasses any conduct described in the definitions set forth in this Policy. Hereafter, such actions are referred to as "misconduct prohibited by this Policy."

To the extent possible, NCSA will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond, address and report on such behaviors in a timely manner. NCSA school staff that witness acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.

Moreover, NCSA will not condone or tolerate misconduct prohibited by this Policy by any employee, independent contractor or other person with whom NCSA does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This Policy applies to all employees, students, or volunteer actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. NCSA will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of such misconduct prohibited by this Policy and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying Coordinator ("Coordinator"):

Angie Defeyter

Assistant Principal

Email: angie.defeyter@ncsota.org * Phone: 530-273-7736 x 1018



Definitions

Prohibited Unlawful Harassment

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments or slurs.
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with school because of sex, race or any other protected basis.
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment.
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected classes above.

Prohibited Unlawful Harassment under Title IX

Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et. seq*; 34 C.F.R. § 106.1 *et. seq*) and California state law prohibit harassment on the basis of sex. In accordance with these existing laws, discrimination on the basis of sex in education institutions is prohibited. All persons, regardless of sex, are afforded equal rights and opportunities and freedom from unlawful discrimination in education programs or activities conducted by NCSA.

NCSA is committed to providing an educational environment free of sexual harassment and considers such harassment to be a major offense, which may result in disciplinary action.

Sexual harassment consists of sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, education, academic status, or progress; (b) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment, educational or academic decisions affecting the individual; (c) the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; and/or (d) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the educational institution.

It is also unlawful to retaliate in any way against an individual who has articulated a good faith concern about sexual harassment against themselves or against another individual.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
 - Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.
- Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as:
 - Sexually oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
 - Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an individual for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.



- Subjecting or threats of subjecting a student to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making the student's academic performance more difficult because of the student's sex.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the educational environment, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing or possessing any such material to read, display or view in the educational environment.
 - Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the educational environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic.
 - Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an individual by sex in an area of the educational environment (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this Policy.

Prohibited Bullying

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act. Bullying includes one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that may constitute sexual harassment, hate violence, or creates an intimidating and/or hostile educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable pupil* or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
2. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
3. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
4. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by NCSA.

*"Reasonable pupil" is defined as a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises care, skill and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Electronic act means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:



1. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
2. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A “burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in the definition of “bullying,” above.
 - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of “bullying,” above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
 - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of “bullying,” above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
3. An act of “Cyber sexual bullying” including, but not limited to:
 - a. The dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in definition of “bullying,” above. A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
 - b. “Cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
4. Notwithstanding the definitions of “bullying” and “electronic act” above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

NCSA has adopted the following procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying.

1. Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

NCSA advises students:

- a. To never share passwords, personal data, or private photos online.
- b. To think about what they are doing carefully before posting and by emphasizing that comments cannot be retracted once they are posted.
- c. That personal information revealed on social media can be shared with anyone including parents, teachers, administrators, and potential employers. Students should never reveal information that would make them uncomfortable if the world had access to it.
- d. To consider how it would feel receiving such comments before making comments about others online.

NCSA informs Charter School employees, students, and parents/guardians of NCSA’s policies regarding the use of technology in and out of the classroom. NCSA encourages parents/guardians to discuss these policies with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with such policies.



2. Education

NCSA employees cannot always be present when bullying incidents occur, so educating students about bullying is a key prevention technique to limit bullying from happening. NCSA advises students that hateful and/or demeaning behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable in our society and at NCSA and encourages students to practice compassion and respect each other.

NCSA educates students to accept all student peers regardless of protected characteristics (including but not limited to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identification, physical or cognitive disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration status) and about the negative impact of bullying other pupils based on protected characteristics.

NCSA's bullying prevention education also discusses the differences between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and includes sample situations to help students learn and practice appropriate behavior and to develop techniques and strategies to respond in a non-aggressive way to bullying-type behaviors. Students will also develop confidence and learn how to advocate for themselves and others, and when to go to an adult for help.

NCSA informs NCSA employees, students, and parents/guardians of this Policy and encourages parents/guardians to discuss this Policy with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with this Policy.

3. Professional Development

NCSA annually makes available the online training module developed by the California Department of Education pursuant Education Code section 32283.5(a) to its certificated employees and all other NCSA employees who have regular interaction with pupils.

NCSA informs certificated employees about the common signs that a student is a target of bullying including:

- Physical cuts or injuries
- Lost or broken personal items
- Fear of going to school/practice/games
- Loss of interest in school, activities, or friends
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Anxious/sick/nervous behavior or distracted appearance
- Self-destructiveness or displays of odd behavior
- Decreased self-esteem

NCSA also informs certificated employees about the groups of students determined by NCSA, and available research, to be at elevated risk for bullying. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth ("LGBTQ") and those youth perceived as LGBTQ; and
- Students with physical or learning disabilities.



NCSA encourages its employees to demonstrate effective problem-solving, anger management, and self-confidence skills for NCSA's students.

Grievance Procedures

1. Reporting

All staff are expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, to intervene as soon as it is safe to do so, call for assistance, and report such incidents. The Board requires staff to follow the procedures in this policy for reporting alleged acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Any student who believes they have been subject to misconduct prohibited by this Policy or has witnessed such prohibited misconduct is encouraged to immediately report such misconduct to the Coordinator:

Angie Defeyter
Assistant Principal
Email: angie.defeyter@ncsota.org * Phone: 530-273-7736 x 1018

Complaints regarding such misconduct may also be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report to the Coordinator. Oral reports shall also be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on an anonymous report.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy or other verbal, or physical abuses. Any student who feels she/he is a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the School Director, Coordinator, a staff person or a family member so that she/he can get assistance in resolving the issue in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.

NCSA acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. All reports shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process. This includes keeping the identity of the reporter confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by the Coordinator or administrative designee on a case-by-case basis.

NCSA prohibits any form of retaliation against any reporter in the reporting process, including but not limited to a reporter's filing of a complaint or the reporting of instances of misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the reporter.

All supervisors of staff will receive sexual harassment training within six (6) months of their assumption of a supervisory position and will receive further training once every two (2) years thereafter. All staff will receive sexual harassment training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment as required by law.

2. Investigation



Upon receipt of a report of misconduct prohibited by this Policy from a student, staff member, parent, volunteer, visitor or affiliate of NCSA, the Coordinator or administrative designee will promptly initiate an investigation. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than seven (7) school days. If the Coordinator, or administrative designee determines that an investigation will take longer than seven (7) school days, he or she will inform the complainant and any other relevant parties and provide an approximate date when the investigation will be complete.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Coordinator or administrative designee will meet with the complainant and, to the extent possible with respect to confidentiality laws, provide the complainant with information about the investigation, including any actions necessary to resolve the incident/situation. However, in no case may the Coordinator or administrative designee reveal confidential information related to other students or employees, including the type and extent of discipline issued against such students or employees.

All records related to any investigation of complaints under this Policy are maintained in a secure location.

3. Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

4. Uniform Complaint Procedures

When harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying is based upon one of the protected characteristics set forth in this Policy, a complainant may also fill out a Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") complaint form at any time during the process.

5. Right of Appeal

Should the reporting individual find the Coordinator's resolution unsatisfactory, he/she may follow the Dispute Resolution Process found in the Student/Family Handbook.



TITLE IX, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, DISCRIMINATION & BULLYING COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur? _____

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements; what did you do to avoid the situation, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I hereby authorize NCSA to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further understand that providing false information in this regard could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Signature of Complainant Date: _____

Print Name

To be completed by the Charter School:

Received by: _____ Date: _____

Follow up Meeting with Complainant held on: _____



NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Nevada City School of the Arts ("NCSOTA" or the "Charter School") does not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, citizenship, immigration status, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, pregnancy status, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code.

NCSOTA adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA").

NCSOTA is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, or national origin); The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the IDEA; and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA (mental or physical disability).

NCSOTA also prohibits sexual harassment, including cyber sexual bullying, and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race or ethnicity, religion, religious affiliation, creed, color, citizenship, immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation.

NCSOTA does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including discrimination, intimidation, or bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which NCSOTA does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender. NCSOTA will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted. The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in NCSOTA's programs or activities. NCSOTA prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or who participates in a complaint investigation.

Inquiries, complaints, or grievances regarding harassment as described in this section, above, should be directed to the NCSOTA Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") Compliance Officer:

Angie Defeyter, Assistant Principal, 530-273-7736 x1018 angie.defeyter@ncsota.org



PURCHASING POLICIES

Nevada City School of the Arts (NCSA) personnel shall adhere to the following purchasing policies, as established by the Charter Governance Council (CGC) at a duly held meeting on November 21, 2024:

Budget Approval

Budgeted expenditures are approved during the budget adoption and revision process, as required by the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools (NCSoS.) The annual “adopted” budget is generally adopted in June for the following year, with revisions in November and February. The adopted budget and each revision must be approved by the Business Manager, the School Director, and the CGC on a timely basis and in accordance with NCSoS and State requirements and deadlines.

Payroll Expenditures

The following NCSA personnel are authorized to approve payroll expenditures, as documented on employment contracts and other personnel forms, provided that such expenditures are within the parameters of the approved budget then in effect, or are within the limits described below:

Holly Pettitt, School Director
Melissa Brokenshire, Business Manager

The CGC shall approve all employment contracts through the budget approval process. Such approval may occur after the beginning of the contract start date, provided that the expenditures which occur prior to the approval date are within the parameters of the approved budget then in effect.

Non-Payroll Expenditures Approval

The following NCSA employees are authorized to approve expenditures as follows:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Type of Expenditure</u>	<u>Limit</u>
School Director	Any type – within budget	Budget
	Any type – not in budget	\$50,000
School Business Manager	Routine Expenditures - 1	\$1,800, up to budget
	Any type – emergency only - 2	\$1,000
Main Lesson Teachers	Classroom supplies	Budget
	Field studies	Budget
	Art and elective supplies	Budget
Music Teacher	Music supplies	Budget
	Electives services (instrument repair, etc.)	Budget
Movement Teacher	Movement supplies	Budget
	After-school sports supplies	Budget
Resource Teacher	Resource Center supplies	Budget
Assistant Principal	Class supports/supplies	\$250, up to budget
Development Director	Advertising	Budget

¹ Routine expenditures include utilities, janitorial and administrative supplies, copier lease payments, and other expenditures which are defined as “routine” by the School Director.

² In absence of the School Director only.



Custodian	Fundraising (AGC, Jog/Read, grants, etc.)	Budget
Facilities Coordinator	Janitorial supplies	Budget
Admin Secretary	School Maintenance supplies	\$250.00, up to budget
	Admin/tech supplies	\$100.00, up to budget

Any expenditures that are outside the parameters described above require director approval for purchase or payment and inclusion in the next budget revision to the board.

In addition, the CGC shall regularly review reports presented to the finance committee. On a monthly basis, the Business Manager or Finance Committee Member shall present to the CGC a budget vs. actuals report from the preceding calendar month.

General Checking, Savings & Sweep Accounts

NCSA has an established checking, savings and sweep account at Tri-Counties Bank in Grass Valley, California, for the purpose of depositing funds received from the state, federal and local entities and will used for general payables and operation costs. The sweep account has been established to move money around in money market accounts to keep balances below the \$250,000 FDIC insured limit. There is one savings account that is an interest-bearing account to receive all Title funds until spent to report any interest earned to the Federal government. The accounts are in the name of "Nevada City School of the Arts".

Funds in these accounts, are reconciled monthly by the accountant in the business office, approved by the Business Manager and reviewed by the School Director.

Authorized signers on this account shall consist of:

Holly Pettitt, School Director
Melissa Brokenshire, Business Manager
Angie Maxson, Assistant Principal

Each disbursement check from the general checking account greater than \$1,000.00 shall require two signatures.

Payroll Cash Account

NCSA is authorized to establish and maintain a payroll checking account at Tri-Counties Bank in Grass Valley, CA for the purpose of funding semi-monthly payroll. The account shall be in the name of "Nevada City School of the Arts" and reconciled monthly by the accountant in the business office, approved by the Business Manager and reviewed by the School Director.

This account shall be maintained with a balance transfer equal the amount of payroll expenses bi-monthly.

Authorized signers on this account shall consist of:

Holly Pettitt, School Director
Melissa Brokenshire, Business Manager



Petty Cash

NCSA may disburse funds from the general checking account for purposes of maintaining petty cash at the school, up to a maximum balance of \$1,000. Petty cash shall be maintained in the school safe, or in another securely locked location, at all times.

Credit Card

NCSA may obtain a business credit card in the name of the Nevada City School of the Arts, up to a maximum, combined, limit of \$22,500.

Each credit card will bear the name of the individual authorized to use the card. NCSA is authorized to obtain credit cards bearing the name of the School Director, the School Business Manager, the Property Manager, the Facilities Coordinator, the Food Services Director, the Aftercare Director and the Development Director.

In order to prevent unauthorized expenditures, use of a credit card by someone other than the individual named on the card (i.e., sharing credit cards) is expressly prohibited.

Class Budgets

All classroom budgets will not carryover from fiscal year to fiscal year and will need to be spent in the year the budget was approved. Receipts for expenses shall be submitted quarterly and will have an end of the year cutoff date in May.

Staff Computers

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent, transparent and equitable set of guidelines regarding the purchase and replacement of computers within the school. NCSA has established a purchasing price of \$1,200 to purchase a new computer for staff. This computer can be Mac or PC whichever is preferable to the employee. All computers purchased will be recorded in an asset listing and will have a replacement cycle of 5 years.



Nevada City School of the Arts



ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



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I. Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to describe all accounting policies and procedures currently in use at Nevada City School of the Arts and to ensure that the financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles; assets are safeguarded; guidelines of grantors and donors are complied with; and finances are managed with accuracy, efficiency, and transparency.

All Nevada City School of the Arts' staff with a role in the management of fiscal and accounting operations are expected to comply with the policies and procedures in this manual.

These policies will be reviewed annually and revised as needed by the staff and approved by the School Director, Business Manager and Treasurer of the Board of Directors.



II. Division of Responsibilities

The following is a list of personnel who have fiscal and accounting responsibilities:

Board of Directors

1. Reviews and approves the annual budget and budget revisions
2. Reviews annual and periodic financial statements and information, including School Director's monitoring reports
3. Reviews School Director's performance annually and establishes the salary
4. School Director, Assistant Principal and the Business Manager will be appointed by the board to be authorized signers on the bank accounts
5. Reviews and approves all service contracts, equal to and over **\$50,000**
6. Reviews and advises School Director on reporting of Executive Limitations Policies
7. Determines whether the organization should have an audit and approves a contract with proposed auditor suggested by School Director and Business Manager

School Director

1. Reviews and approves all financial reports including cash flow projections and updates
2. Sees that an appropriate budget is developed annually
3. Reviews and advises staff on internal controls and accounting policies and procedures
4. Reviews and signs all issued checks equal to and over **\$1,000** and/or approves check signing procedures
5. Reviews and approves all service contracts up to **\$50,000**, but not over.
6. Reviews and approves all non-budgeted expenditures
7. Reviews and approves all grant submissions
8. Reviews all bank statement and bank reconciliations approved by Business Manager
9. Is on-site signatory for all bank accounts
10. Oversees the adherence to all internal controls

Business Manager

1. Approves all program expenditures within budgeted amounts
2. Reviews and monitors program budgets
3. Approves payroll processing and is responsible for all personnel files
4. Reviews and recommends all Personnel Policy revisions, as suggested by attorney
5. Approves and reviews cash flow and bank balances
6. Reviews and approves all reimbursements, purchase requisitions and fund requests within budget



7. Processes all inter-account bank transfers
8. Assists School Director with the development of annual and program budgets
9. Approves all incoming and outgoing invoices
10. Reviews all petty cash funds provided by Accountant
11. Monitors and manages all expenses to ensure most effective use of assets
12. Monitors grant reporting and appropriate release of temporarily restricted funds
13. Oversees all revenue and expense allocations
14. Monitors and makes recommendations for asset retirement and replacement
15. Reviews, revises, and maintains internal accounting controls and procedures
16. Reviews all financial reports

Accountant

1. Overall responsibility for data entry into accounting system and integrity of accounting system data
2. Reviews invoices and prints checks for signature
3. Maintains general ledger and account reconciliations, including employee benefits, as needed
4. Prepares monthly and year-end financial reports for Business Managers approval
5. Reconciles all bank accounts
6. Reviews Field Studies Budgets with Accounting Technician
7. Reviews and monitors all expense & revenue coding for accuracy
8. Audits Bi-monthly payroll input by Payroll Technician
9. Prepares and processes payroll journal entry into QuickBooks and STRS reporting to NCSoS
10. Manages and oversees all personnel health benefits

Accounting Technician

1. Processes invoices, inputs expenses into accounting software and prepares checks for signature
2. Reviews budget for accurate expense account coding per most recent approved budget
3. Mails vendor checks
4. Manages Purchasing and receiving
5. Receives and opens all incoming accounting department mail, excluding bank statements
6. Receives checks, cash, and credit card payments and inputs into accounting software for deposit
7. Manages Accounts Receivable and sends out monthly statements to customers (donors)
8. Processes monthly timesheets for first review before payroll entry
9. Assists Business Manager with leases



III. Chart of Accounts and General Ledger

Nevada City School of the Arts has designated a Chart of Accounts specific to its operational needs and the needs of its financial statements. The Chart of Accounts is structured so that financial statements can be shown by natural classification (expense type) as well as by functional classification (program vs. fundraising vs. administration). Account #'s are representative of object codes relating to SACS (Standardized Account Code Structure for government accounting). Class #'s are representative of resource codes for tracking of restricted and unrestricted funds. Department #'s are representative of the function/goal codes for tracking of program administration. The Accountant is responsible for maintaining the Chart of Accounts and revising as necessary with the approval of the Business Manager. The Chart of Accounts is attached to this manual as an addendum.

The general ledger is automated and maintained using our accounting software. All input and balancing is the responsibility of the Accountant with final approval by the Business Manager.

The Business Manager should review the general ledger on a periodic basis for any unusual transactions.



IV. Cash Receipts

Cash receipts generally arise from:

1. Apportionments and Grants, including State and Federal Funding
2. In-Lieu property taxes from local basic-aid school districts
3. Direct donor contributions
4. Fundraising activities

The principal steps in the cash receipts process are:

The Receptionist receives incoming mail and forwards it unopened to the Accounting Technician. The Accounting Technician opens and distributes the mail. The Accounting Technician enters all checks into the accounting software and stamps all checks "for deposit only". The checks are kept in a locked safe until deposited.

Daily, the Accounting Technician receives all cash, checks and credit card payments, enters them into the accounting software and prepares a deposit slip. The accountant reviews the deposit and takes it to the bank for deposit. A printed deposit slip is attached to the deposit. The deposits are put in a file with a printed deposit summary, any back up documentation and the deposit receipt from the bank.

All cash received will be counted, verified, and issued a receipt by the Receptionist(s) and/or Accounting Technician. The cash will immediately be posted using the appropriate allocation by the Accounting Technician. A receipt will be given to the paying party and a copy kept for internal purposes. The cash will be kept in a locked, secure location and deposited within 24 business hours.



V. Inter-Account Bank Transfers

Twice monthly the Business Manager will transfer the payroll funds from the General Checking Account to the Payroll Account. The amount is determined by the Payroll Journal Entry prepared by the Accountant.

Once quarterly the Accountant will process ACH payments through the state payroll taxes (SUI & SDI) EDD (Employment Development Department) website. This is completed through an ACH transfer set up securely on the EDD website.

Business Manager will transfer funds to and from Raven Springs and NCSA general checking accounts for bill payments or revenue pass through.



VI. Cash Disbursements & Expense Allocations

Cash disbursements are generally made for:

1. Payments to vendors for supplies and services
2. Taxes/license fees
3. Staff training and development
4. Memberships and subscriptions
5. Meeting expenses
6. Employee reimbursements
7. Marketing/promotional materials
8. Program supplies and services

Checks are processed weekly. Invoices submitted to the Accounting Technician by Monday will be processed and paid by Friday of the same week. Checks can be prepared manually within one day, but this should be limited to emergency situations.

Requests for cash disbursements are submitted to Accounting in three ways:

1. Original invoice
2. Purchase request (submitted on approved form)
3. Employee reimbursement request
4. Credit card purchases with receipts provided by authorized credit card holder

All invoices must have an account code written on them and approved by the requestor prior to being submitted to accounting.

Every employee reimbursement or purchase request must be documented on the approved form with travel authorization, receipts, nature of business, and program allocation before approving for reimbursement as follows:

Lodging - an itemized receipt from the hotel detailing all charges, the person(s) for whom the lodging was provided, and the specific business purpose.

Meals and Entertainment – an itemized receipt must be provided showing the cost of food, beverage, and gratuities, including the names of every person for whom food or beverage was provided, and the specific business purpose.

Other Expenditures – an invoice or receipt and/or packing slip from the vendor detailing all supplies or services purchased (including the class/department for supplies or services) and the specific business purpose.



The Accounting Technician processes all payments and:

1. Verifies expenditure and amount
2. Verifies appropriate allocation information
3. Verifies that there is room in the budget, if over budget sends to Business Manager and School Director for approval
4. Enters them into the Accounts Payable module
5. Prepares weekly Accounts Payable report
6. Submits payables, with attached backup documentation, to the Accountant for review
7. Mails check and appropriate backup documentation
8. Files all backup documentation with paystub attached in the appropriate file

The Accountant reviews all payments and:

1. Verifies account codes are correct
2. Verifies amounts are within budget
3. Verifies bank balances and prepares a weekly Accounts Payable Cash Flow Summary
4. Submits payables with all backup documentation to the Business Manager
5. Prints checks approved by the Business Manager
6. Submits checks, with attached backup documentation, to the Business Manager for signature. All checks equal to and in excess of **\$1,000** require a second signature from the School Director or an authorized staff member (Arts Director)

The Business Manager approves all payments and:

1. Reviews account coding
2. Reviews if in budget, if not submits payable to the School Director for approval
3. Approves weekly Accounts Payable Cash Flow Summary
4. Signs checks



VII. Credit Card Policy and Charges

All staff members who are authorized to carry an organization credit card will be held personally responsible in the event that any charge is deemed personal or unauthorized. Unauthorized use of the credit card includes: personal expenditures of any kind; expenditures which have not been properly authorized; meals, entertainment, gifts, or other expenditures which are prohibited by budgets, laws, and regulations, and the entities from which Nevada City School of the Arts receives funds.

The receipts for all credit card charges will be given to the Accounting Technician within two (2) weeks of the purchase along with proper documentation. The Accounting Technician will verify all credit card charges with the monthly statements. All charges will be entered into the account's payable module by the Accounting Technician with applicable allocation information for posting. A copy of all charges will be attached to the monthly credit card statement when submitted to the Business Manager and authorized card holder for approval and signing.

All credit card usage will be provided to the School Director for review and approval.



VIII. Accruals

To ensure a timely close of the General Ledger, Nevada City School of the Arts may book accrual entries. Some accruals will be made as recurring entries. QuickBooks accounting software is set as accrual basis so most entries in QB are already set to an accrual accounting mode.

Accruals to consider:

1. Monthly interest earned on bank accounts, certificates of deposits, apportionments and allocations from state & federal funding not received by end of year, etc.
2. Recurring expenses, including employee payroll accrual, prepaid insurance, depreciation, health benefits, etc.



IX. Bank Account Reconciliations

1. All bank statements are given unopened to the Accountant. The Accountant reviews the statements for unusual balances and/or transactions and for timely reconciliation completes: a comparison of dates and amounts of deposits as shown in the accounting system and on the statement, a comparison of inter-account transfers, an investigation of any rejected items, a comparison of cleared checks with the accounting record including amount, payee, and sequential check numbers.
2. The Accountant will verify that voided checks, if returned, are appropriately defaced and filed.
3. The Accountant will investigate, void and reissue any checks that are outstanding over six months.
4. The Accountant will attach the completed bank reconciliation to the applicable bank statement, along with all documentation.
5. The reconciliation report will be reviewed, approved, dated, and initialed by the Business Manager.



X. Petty Cash Fund

Petty cash funds are maintained by the organization. The funds are to be used for miscellaneous or unexpected purchases and the same approval procedures apply as mentioned in the cash disbursement section.

1. The petty cash fund will not exceed \$100 for receptionist(s) and is kept in a locked file cabinet.
2. The Accountant oversees the petty cash fund.
3. All disbursements made from petty cash are acknowledged in writing by the receiving party.
4. Once a month a petty cash reconciliation report is submitted to the Accounting Technician. The Accounting Technician verifies all receipts and cash balance. All receipts are processed through payables to replenish the petty cash.
5. No checks will be cashed by the petty cash fund.



XI. Property and Equipment

Property and equipment includes items such as:

1. Office furniture and equipment
2. Computer hardware
3. Computer software
4. Building & Land improvements

It is the organization's policy to capitalize all items which have a unit cost equal to or greater than three thousand dollars (\$3,000). Items purchased with a value or cost less than three thousand dollars (\$3,000) will be expensed in the period purchased.

The depreciation period for capitalized assets is as follows:

Computer Hardware	3 years
Computer Software	3 years
Office Equipment	5 years
Office Furniture	5 years
Building Improvements	10 years
Land Improvements	10 years

1. A Fixed Asset Log is maintained by the Accountant and Business Manager including date of purchase, asset description, purchase/donation information, cost/fair market value, donor/funding source, identification number, life of asset.
2. The Log will be reviewed by the Business Manager.
3. Annually, a physical inspection and inventory will be taken of all fixed assets and reconciled to the general ledger balances.
4. The Business Manager shall be informed in writing of any change in status or condition of any property or equipment.
5. Depreciation is recorded at least annually. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the related assets. Any impaired assets discovered during the inventory will be written down to their actual value.



XII. Personnel Records

1. All personnel files contain the following documents: an application and/or resume, date of employment, position and pay rate, authorization of payroll deductions, W-4 withholding authorization, and termination data where applicable, a signed confidentiality agreement, a signed acknowledgement of receipt of Personnel Policies, an emergency contact form, and other forms as deemed appropriate by the Business Manager.
2. All employees will fill out an I-9 form and submit the allowable forms of identification to the Payroll Technician.
3. The completed I-9 forms will be kept in a secure location separate from the personnel files and stored electronically in the payroll portal.
4. All personnel files are to be kept in a secure, locked file cabinet, in addition to a secure electronic drive and are accessed only by authorized personnel.



XIII. Payroll Processing

1. Timesheets are to be provided to all staff on the approved form and submitted bi-monthly via clipboards to each building's staff room, or agreed general location available to the employee.
2. Timesheets are to be kept on a daily basis and completed in ink – unless prepared electronically.
3. Any corrections to timesheets are to be made by making a single line through the error and writing in the correction. Correction fluid and/or tape are not allowable.
4. Timesheets are to be signed and dated by the employee by the date due for submission to the Accounting Technician.
5. Any changes to the standing information of the payroll register from the prior period including addition of new employees, deletion of employees, or changes in base pay rate must be accompanied by an Employee Change Form and signed by the supervisor or employee before the change can be made.
6. The Payroll Technician will input payroll in a timely manner and record sick time and any other information deemed necessary to properly reflect time worked or sick time taken.
7. The Payroll Technician will review timesheets and payroll entries then submit them to the Accountant for auditing before processing payroll.
8. Paychecks will be direct deposited, mailed or distributed by the Payroll or Accounting Technician on the paycheck date.
9. If the employee requests that their check be turned over to a third party, the request must be made in writing prior to distribution.
10. Employees may choose direct deposit to a designated bank account. Their paycheck is deposited directly into the designated account on the payroll date. The employee will receive a verification stub.
11. The Accountant will prepare all data sheets, The Business Manager will review and the School Director will approve all data sheets. The Payroll Technician will enter all new or changed data sheets into payroll.
12. The Business Manager will review payroll expenditures and allocations monthly or at budget revision cycles.
13. All quarterly federal and state payroll reports will be prepared and filed appropriately by the Accountant and audited by the Business Manager.
14. All W-2 statements are issued to employees prior to January 31st of the following year for the prior calendar year through Coastal Payroll software.



XIV. End of Month and Fiscal Year-End Close

1. The Business Manager will review and sign off on all month- and year-end journal entries. They will be printed and filed for audit trail purposes.
2. At the end of each month and fiscal year end, the Business Manager will review all balance sheet accounts including verification of the following balances: cash accounts match the bank reconciliations, fixed assets accounts reflect all purchases, write-downs and retirements, accounts receivable and payable accounts match outstanding amounts due and owed.
3. The income and expense accounts review will include reconciliation to amounts received and expended and verification that payroll expenses match the payroll reports including federal and state payroll tax filings.
4. Once the final monthly and fiscal year-end financial statements are run, reviewed, and approved by the Business Manager and School Director, no more entries or adjustments will be made into that month or year's ledgers.
5. At the end of the fiscal year, an outside CPA will prepare the annual Return for Organization Exempt from Income Tax (IRS Form 990). The return will be presented to the School Director, Business Manager, and the CGC Board for their review and approval. The CPA will then file the return with the Internal Revenue Service by the annual deadline.
6. All other appropriate government filings including those required by the state tax board and attorney general's office will be completed and filed with the appropriate agency.



XV. Financial Reports

The Accountant will prepare the monthly and annual financial reports for distribution to the Business Manager. The reports will include: balance sheet, statement of income and expenses, budget versus actual report for each program which has an established budget, a budget versus actual report for the organization, accounts receivable aging, accounts payable register and aging, cash flow projection, expenditure report and any other requested reports.

Periodic and annual financial reports will be submitted to the Board of Directors for review and approval.



XVI. Fiscal Policy Statements

1. All cash accounts (except petty cash) owned by Nevada City School of the Arts will be held in financial institutions which are insured by the FDIC. No bank account will carry a balance over the FDIC insured amount.
2. All capital expenditures which are up to and exceed **three thousand dollars (\$3,000)** will be capitalized.
3. Employee or public personal checks will not be cashed through the petty cash fund.
4. No salary advances will be made under without prior approval from the School Director.
5. No travel cash advances will be made except under special conditions and pre-approved by the School Director.
6. Reimbursements will be paid upon complete expense reporting and approval using the official Nevada City School of the Arts purchase requisition form. Reimbursements to the School Director will be authorized by the Business Manager.
7. Any donated item with a value exceeding **(\$50)** will be recorded and a letter acknowledging the donation will be sent to the donor within **two weeks** of the receipt of the donation.
8. The School Director, Business Manager and Assistant Principal are the signatories on Nevada City School of the Arts' bank accounts. Disbursements exceeding \$1,000 require a second signature by an authorized signer. Checks over **\$50,000** require approval from the Board of Directors if not already an approved budgeted expense.
9. Bank statements will be reconciled monthly. All bank statements and reconciliations will be given to the Business Manager for review.
10. Correction fluid and/or tape will never be used in preparing timesheets or any accounting documents.
11. Accounting and personnel records will be kept in locked file cabinets in the finance office and only parties with financial and/or HR responsibility will have access to the keys.