Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Virtual Public Charter School Pilot Program

SL 2014-100 (SB 744), Section 8.35(g)

DRAFT

Date Due: November 15, 2020
Report #
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2020-2021

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION VISION: Every public school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MISSION: The mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is to use its constitutional authority to guard and maintain the right of a sound, basic education for every child in North Carolina Public Schools.

ERIC DAVIS
Chair: Charlotte – At-Large

JILL CAMNITZ
Greenville – Northeast Region

TODD CHASTEEN
Blowing Rock – Northwest Region

ALAN DUNCAN
Vice Chair: Greensboro – Piedmont-Triad Region

REGINALD KENAN
Rose Hill – Southeast Region

DONNA TIPTON-ROGERS
Brasstown – Western Region

DAN FOREST
Lieutenant Governor: Raleigh – Ex Officio

AMY WHITE
Garner – North Central Region

J. WENDELL HALL
Ahoskie – At-Large

DALE FOLWELL
State Treasurer: Raleigh – Ex Officio

OLIVIA OXENDINE
Lumberton – Sandhills Region

J.B. BUXTON
Raleigh – At-Large

MARK JOHNSON
Secretary to the Board: Raleigh

JAMES FORD
Charlotte – Southwest Region

NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Mark Johnson, State Superintendent :: 301 N. Wilmington Street :: Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825

In compliance with federal law, the NC Department of Public Instruction administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to:
Joe Maimone, Chief of Staff
6307 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6307 / Phone: (919) 807-3431 / Fax: (919) 807-3445

Visit us on the Web: www.ncpublicschools.org 0819

DRAFT

Table of Contents

Background 4
Historical Context 5
NC Virtual Charter School Legislation 6
Part I: Student Enrollment and Withdrawals 9
- NC Cyber Academy Enrollment and Withdrawals 10
- NC Virtual Academy Enrollment and Withdrawals 11
- Withdrawal Rates and Finite Enrollment 12

Part II: Course Offerings 15
- NC Cyber Academy Course Offerings 15
- NC Virtual Academy Course Offerings 17

Part III: Student Performance and Accountability Data 19
- NC Cyber Academy Student Performance 21
- NC Virtual Academy Student Performance 22
- NC Cyber Academy and NC Virtual Academy Comparative Data 25
- Subgroup Performance 26
- NC Cyber Academy Subgroup Performance 27
- NC Virtual Academy Subgroup Performance 27
- Graduation Rates 28

Part IV: Implementation, Administration, and Funding 29
- Virtual Charter Teacher Data 29
- Student Demographics 33
- Race/Ethnicity 33
- Gender 35
- Economically Disadvantaged Students 36
- Students with Disabilities 36
- Virtual Charter School Funding 37

Part V: Recommendations 41
Appendix 43

Report to the JLEOC:

Virtual Charter Schools Pilot Program

November 15, 2020

Background

North Carolina Session Law 2014-100[1] (SB 744, Budget Bill) required the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a pilot program to authorize the operation of two virtual charter schools serving grades K-12. The legislation authorized the pilot program to begin with the 2015-2016 school year and continue for a period of four years, ending with the 2018-2019 school year. Prior to the end of the four-year pilot, Session Law 2018-5[2] (SB 99, Budget Bill) extended the pilot program for an additional four years. The virtual charter schools pilot program is now authorized to continue through the 2022-2023 school year. Along with the pilot extension, reporting requirements were revised and are as follows:

The State Board shall report on the initial implementation of the pilot program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee (JLEOC) by November 15, 2016, and on the findings from (i) five years of operation of the pilot program by November 15, 2020, and (ii) seven years of operation of the pilot program by November 15, 2022.

At a minimum, the report shall include the following:

(1) The number of students who have enrolled in courses offered by the schools.

(2) The number and types of courses offered by the schools.

(3) The withdrawal rate of students after enrollment.

(4) Student performance and accountability data.

(5) Information on implementation, administration, and funding for the pilot program.

(6) Recommendations on the modification, continuation, and potential expansion of the program.

[1] https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/PDF/S744v9.pdf
[2] https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/PDF/2017-2018/SL2018-5.pdf

Historical Context

The Charter Schools Act of 1996[3] authorized North Carolina's system of charter schools. This legislation imposed a statewide cap of 100 charter schools. In 2011, the General Assembly lifted the cap[4] and directed the SBE to review and approve quality charters. In 2012, the SBE began working on a policy to address a new type of charter school that serves students via online programs. The SBE passed this policy on "virtual charter schools" in January 2013[5].

In August 2015, the two virtual charter schools, NC Connections Academy[6] and NC Virtual Academy opened after successfully completing the Ready to Open process. Session Law 2014-100 § 8.35(f) indicates the virtual charter schools are subject to presentation of data to the SBE. The SBE, in part of its oversight of the virtual pilot charter schools, required each school to provide implementation updates at several regularly scheduled meetings during the 2015-16 school year. Following the implementation of the pilot's first year, and continuing today, the SBE relies on the expertise of the Charter Schools Advisory Board (CSAB) and the work of the Office of Charter Schools (OCS) to monitor the operations and academic performance of both virtual charter schools.

Both virtual charter schools are currently in their sixth year of operation. Since the initial implementation of the virtual charter pilot program, the schools have experienced many changes including increased enrollment, changes in leadership, and changes in operations.

At its May 13, 2019 Special Called Meeting, the SBE voted to approve NC Connections Academy's amendment request to terminate its partnership with the Educational Management Organization (EMO) Pearson OBL and change its name to NC Cyber Academy, effective June 30, 2019. The approval to terminate the management relationship with Pearson OBL included a stipulation that NC Cyber Academy board representatives and leadership provide monthly update presentations at regularly scheduled CSAB meetings, along with any requested information from CSAB, SBE, or OCS. Since this approval, NC Cyber Academy has complied with this stipulation and provides monthly data and presentations.

This legislative report outlines the progress of NC Cyber Academy (NCCA) and NC Virtual Academy (NCVA) throughout the initial five years of the pilot program.

DRAFT

[3] https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/PDF/1995-1996/SL1995-731.pdf
[4] https://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2011/Bills/Senate/PDF/S8v8.pdf
[5] https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SB_Meetings/ViewMeeting.aspx?S=10399&MID=768
[6] NC Connections Academy has since changed its name to NC Cyber Academy.

NC Virtual Charter School Legislation

Session Law 2014-100, as amended by Session Law 2018-5, established and extended the virtual charter schools pilot program.

Section 8.35(a) directed the SBE to establish a pilot program to authorize the operation of two virtual charter schools serving students in kindergarten through twelfth grade with student enrollment to begin with the 2015-2016 school year. The original pilot was slated for four years, to end with the 2018-2019 school year, but is now extended through the 2022-2023 school year.

Section 8.35(b) states that the virtual charter schools participating in the pilot program shall be subject to the statutes and rules applicable to charter schools pursuant to Article 14A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes with the following exceptions:

(1) The maximum student enrollment in any participating school shall be no greater than 1,500 in its first year of operation and may increase by twenty percent (20%) for each participating school up to a maximum student enrollment of 2,592 in the fourth year of the pilot. The State Board of Education may waive this maximum student enrollment threshold, beginning in the fourth year of the school's operation, if the State Board determines that doing so would be in the best interest of North Carolina students.

(2) The maximum overall ratio of teachers to students for kindergarten through eighth grade shall be 1:50, and for ninth through twelfth grade shall be 1:150.

(3) A student who regularly fails to participate in courses may be withdrawn from enrollment pursuant to procedures adopted by the virtual charter school. The procedures adopted by the virtual charter school shall ensure that (i) fair notice is provided to the parent and student and (ii) an opportunity is provided, prior to withdrawal of the student by the school, for the student and parent to demonstrate that failure to participate in courses is due to a lawful absence recognized under Part I of Article 26 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes and any applicable rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

Section 8.35(c) establishes requirements, in addition to the operating requirements applicable to a virtual charter school participating in the pilot program pursuant to Article 14A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. Those requirements are as follows:[7]

(1) The school shall maintain an administrative office within North Carolina. In addition, the school shall maintain at least one testing center or meeting place within each of the eight State Board of Education districts where the participating students reside, to allow educators and administrators from the school to meet students and parents. When utilizing the testing center or meeting place for test administration, the school is permitted to do the following:

a. Administer tests to multiple grade levels at the same time and location.

b. Contract with a test administrator who is not employed by the board of directors of the school and meets the following criteria:

[7] These requirements were amended effective with the 2016-2017 school year per S.L. 2016-94.

1. Holds a valid, North Carolina educator license.
2. Passes a criminal history check as defined in G.S. 115C-332(a)(1) performed by the school.
3. Is trained on test administration in accordance with the North Carolina Testing Program.

(2) If the school contracts with a third party for the provision of administrative staff, such staff fulfilling the equivalent positions of superintendent, principal, or business officer shall be residents of North Carolina.

(3) All teaching staff shall carry the appropriate State certification to instruct any course and shall receive professional development in virtual instruction pursuant to the school's application to the State Board of Education to participate in the pilot program within 30 days of the employee's date of hire. At least eighty percent (80%)[8] of the teaching staff shall reside within North Carolina.

(4) The school shall have a withdrawal rate below twenty-five percent (25%). A student who meets any of the following criteria shall not be counted in measuring the school's withdrawal rate:

a. A student enrolled in a school with the intent expressed prior to enrollment of only being enrolled for a finite period of time within the school year. The school shall keep a written record of a student's stated intent for finite enrollment.
b. A student who is withdrawn from the school pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of this section.
c. A student who is no longer qualified under the laws of this State for admission to a public school in North Carolina, including due to the student relocating to another state.
d. A student who (i) withdraws from the school for a family, personal, or medical reason and (ii) notifies the school of the reason for withdrawal. The school shall keep a written record of a student's stated reason for withdrawal under this sub-subdivision.
e. A student who withdraws from the school within the first 30 days following the date of the student's enrollment.

(4a) A count of school attendance shall be taken at least once during each semester for funding purposes.

(5) The school shall ensure that each student is assigned a learning coach. The learning coach shall provide (i) daily support and supervision of students, (ii) ensure student participation in online lessons, and (iii) coordinate teacher-led instructional sessions and State assessments.

Section 8.35(e) directs the State Board of Education to provide State funding to a virtual charter school participating in the pilot program as provided in G.S. 115C-218.105(a) and G.S. 115C-218.105(b). Funding shall not include the allocation for low-wealth counties supplemental funding

[8] Original legislation required ninety percent (90%).

and the allocation for small county supplemental funding. Virtual charters participating in the pilot program shall be subject to the requirements in G.S. 115C-218.105(c)-(e). The amount of local funds provided to the participating schools pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.105(c) shall be the lesser of seven hundred ninety dollars ($790.00) per pupil or the amount computed in accordance with G.S. 115C-218.105(c).

Section 8.35(f) states that failure to comply with the provisions of this section may result in deferment or termination of enrollment expansion, or termination of a pilot. Schools participating in the pilot program are subject to presentation of data to the State Board of Education at the call of the Chair of the State Board with a minimum of 21 days' notice.

DRAFT

Part I: Student Enrollment and Withdrawals

Student enrollment at both virtual charter schools has steadily increased since operations began in the 2015-2016 school year. The pilot legislation caps enrollment at 2,592 students. Section 8.35(b)(1) of the legislation reads, "The maximum student enrollment in any participating school shall be no greater than 1,500 in its first year of operation and may increase by twenty percent (20%) for each participating school up to a maximum student enrollment of 2,592 in the fourth year of the pilot. The State Board of Education may waive this maximum student enrollment threshold, beginning in the fourth year of the school's operation, if the State Board determines that doing so would be in the best interest of North Carolina students."

Therefore, the legislation gives the SBE the authority to waive the maximum student enrollment threshold beginning with the 2018-2019 school year. The SBE granted an enrollment increase request from NCVA in July 2019. The approval allowed NCVA to increase enrollment up to 20% for the 2019-2020 school year. On June 4, 2020, the SBE approved NCVA's request to maintain enrollment above the statutory maximum for the 2020-2021 school year. The approval allowed maximum enrollment to remain at 2,945 students. The SBE also included a stipulation that any enrollment requests above the statutory maximum, following the 2020-2021 school year, will be subject to the school meeting academic growth.

SL 2020-97 was recently approved allowing enrollment expansion for the 2020-2021 academic year. The specific text of the allowance reads as follows:

- VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT SECTION 3.2.(a) Notwithstanding Section 8.35(b) of S.L. 2014-100, as amended by Section 7.13 of S.L. 2018-5, the two virtual charter schools participating in the pilot program pursuant to Section 8.35 of S.L. 2014-100, as amended, shall be permitted to increase student enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year only as follows: (i) North Carolina Cyber Academy shall be permitted to increase its enrollment by 1,000 students and (ii) North Carolina Virtual Academy shall be permitted to increase its enrollment by 2,800 students. A virtual charter school permitted an increase in student enrollment pursuant to this section shall give enrollment priority to students for the 2021-2022 school year who were enrolled in the school for the 2020-2021 school year prior to the date this act became law.
- SECTION 3.2.(b) The virtual charter schools shall provide an interim report by March 15, 2021, and a final report by November 15, 2021, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, on the impact of the increase in student enrollment permitted by Session Law 2020-97 House Bill 1105 subsection (a) of this section, including data on where students had been previously enrolled by local school administrative unit, charter school, or nonpublic school, the grade level of students, the withdrawal rate of students after enrollment, and any student performance and accountability data.

Enrollment and withdrawal data is obtained from NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Division of School Business. Withdrawal data includes withdrawals coded W1 (Transfer), W2 (Early Leave), W3 (Death), and W4 (Early Completion). Cumulative enrollment *decreases* from month 5 to month 9 are due to error corrections. Most withdrawals for both virtual charter schools fall under the W1, or transfer, category.

DRAFT

NC Cyber Academy Enrollment and Withdrawals

Over the course of the pilot program, NCCA has grown from a student enrollment (Membership Last Day, Month 9) of 1,353 to 2,253, which is a **cumulative enrollment increase of sixty-six and one-half percent (66.5%).** The cumulative withdrawals (Month 9) have varied over time with a low of 507 withdrawals in the 2017-2018 school year and a high of 719 withdrawals in the 2018-2019 school year. It is worth noting that NCCA underwent a widely publicized and contentious separation from its original Educational Management Organization (EMO), Pearson OBL, during the 2018-2019 school year[9], which is likely to have impacted student enrollment.

Figure 1: NC Cyber Academy Enrollment 2015-2020

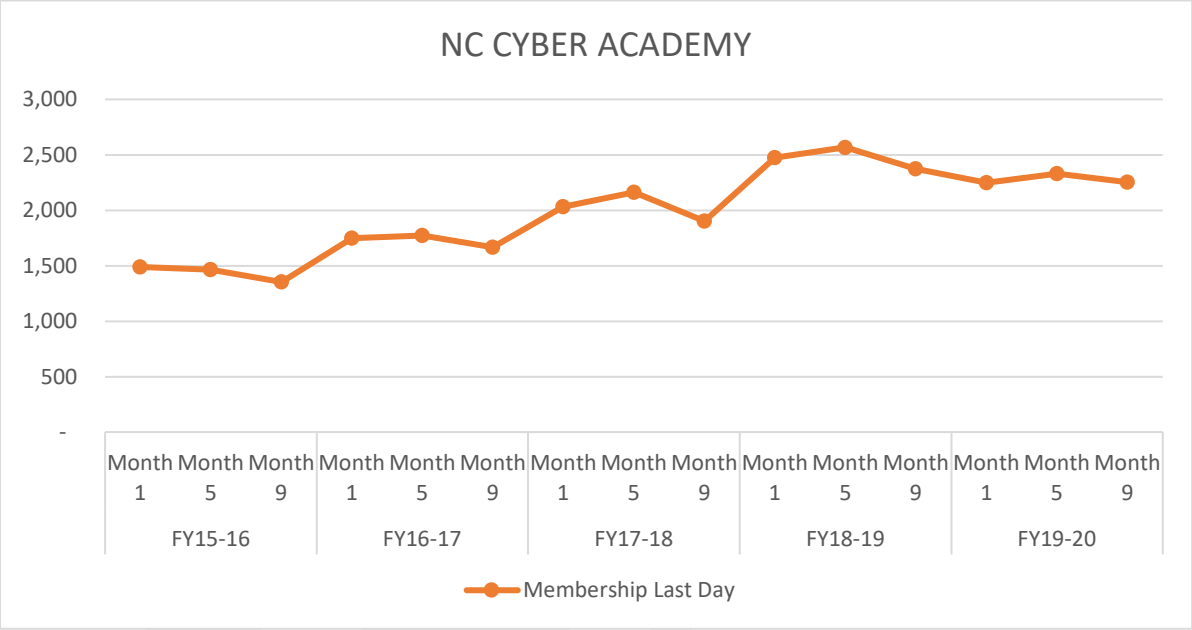
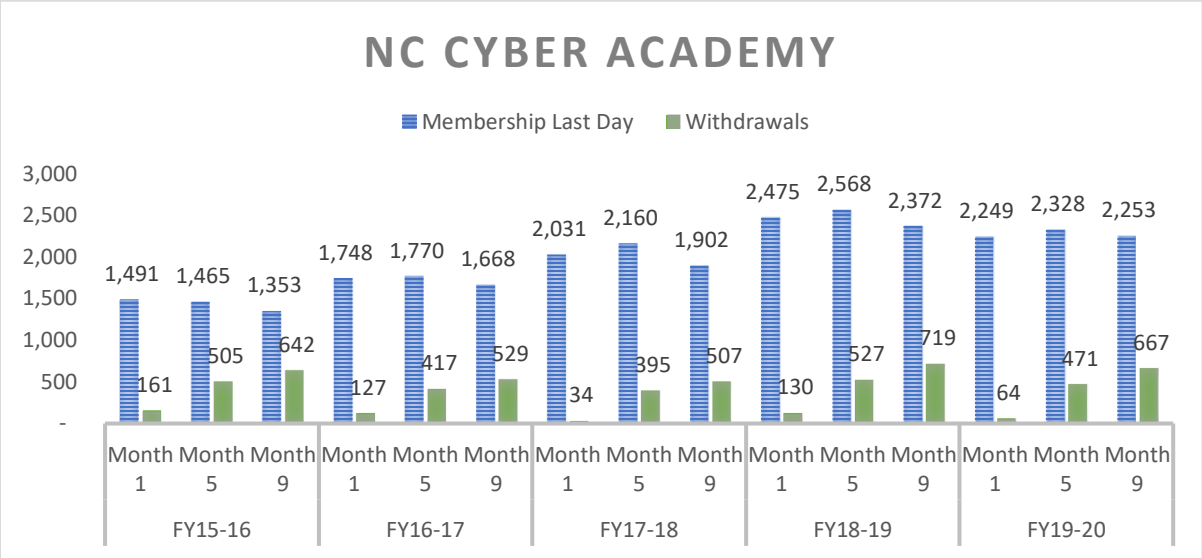


Figure 2: NC Cyber Academy Enrollment and Cumulative Withdrawals 2015-2020



[9] The separation from Pearson OBL was formally approved by the SBE at its May 13, 2019 called meeting.

NC Virtual Academy Enrollment and Withdrawals

Over the course of the pilot program, NCVA has grown from a student enrollment (Membership Last Day, Month 9) of 1,283 to 2,430, which is a **cumulative enrollment increase of eighty-nine point four percent (89.4%).** The cumulative withdrawals (Month 9) have varied over time with a low of 586 withdrawals in the 2015-2016 school year and a high of 650 withdrawals in the 2018-2019 school year.

Figure 3: NC Virtual Academy Enrollment 2015-2020

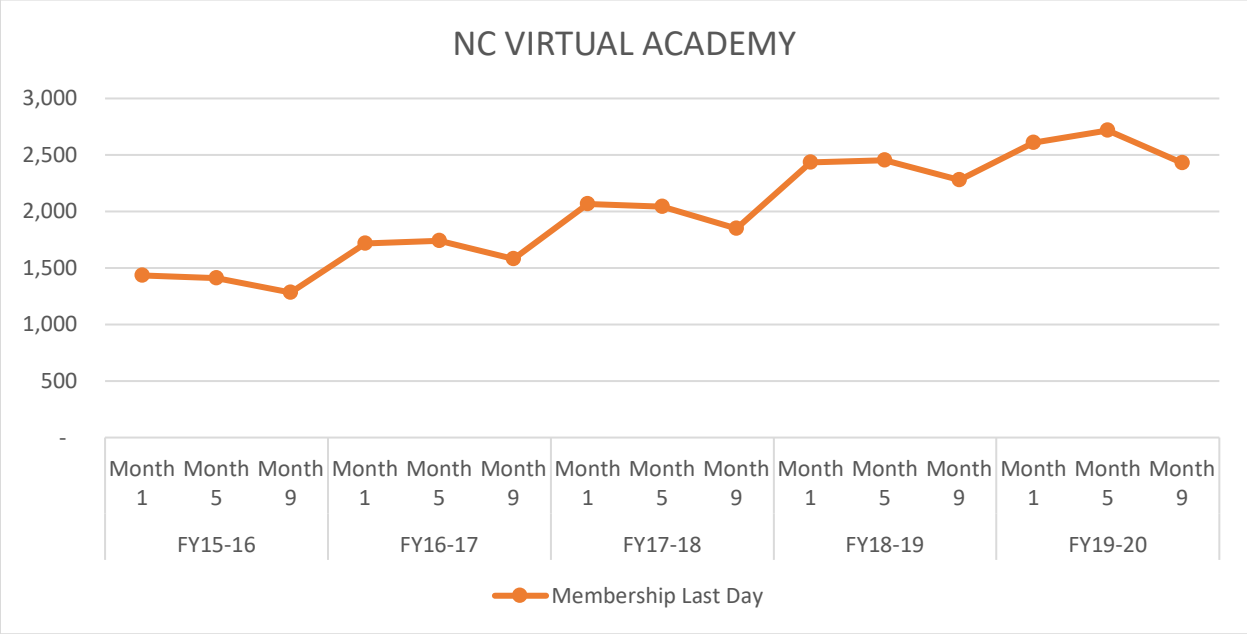
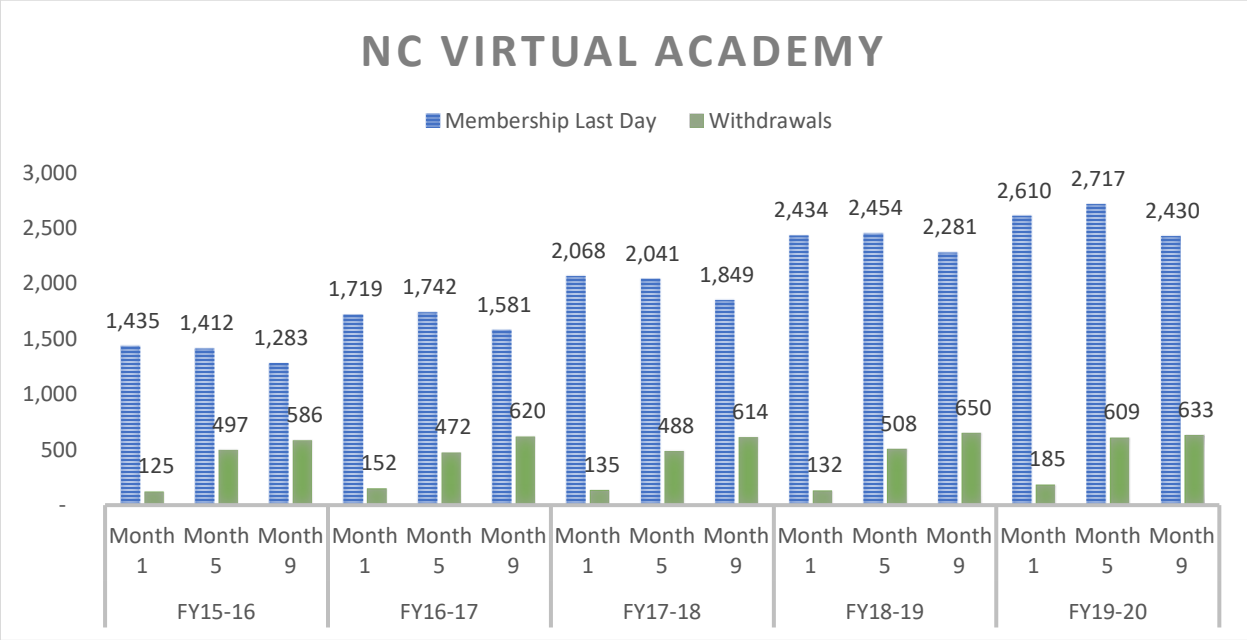


Figure 4: NC Virtual Academy Enrollment and Cumulative Withdrawals 2015-2020



Withdrawal Rates and Finite Enrollment

Session Law 2014-100 § 8.35 outlines that each virtual public charter school shall have a withdrawal rate below twenty-five percent (25%). Additionally, a student enrolled in a school with the intent expressed prior to enrollment of only being enrolled for a finite period of time within the school year shall not be counted in the measured withdrawal rate. The school shall keep a written record of a student's stated intent for finite enrollment.

Session Law 2016-94 made four (4) specific changes to the virtual charters withdrawal rate beginning with the 2016-17 school year which includes additional exclusions. The additional exclusions shall not be counted in measuring the virtual charters withdrawal rates:

(1) Students who regularly failed to participate in courses who are withdrawn under the procedures adopted by the school.

(2) Students no longer qualified under State law to attend a North Carolina public school, including relocation to another state.

(3) Students who: (i) withdraw from school because of a family, personal, or medical reason, and (ii) notify the school of the reason for withdrawal.

(4) Students who withdraw from school within the first 30 days following the date of enrollment.

As seen in the data below, the four additional withdrawal rate exemptions make it much more likely the virtual charter schools will meet the requirement that the schools maintain a withdrawal rate below twenty-five percent (25%).

DRAFT

The virtual charter schools are responsible for maintaining records of student withdrawals that fall under these five exempted categories. Based on these records, the two virtual charter schools showed varying numbers of finite enrollees, with NCVA having a significantly higher number than NCCA. NCCA did not have finite enrollment data for three of the operating years. In terms of the four additional categories of exempted withdrawals, the largest percentage of exempted withdrawals fell within the fourth category: students who withdraw from school within the first 30 days following the date of enrollment.

Table 1: NC Cyber Academy Enrollment and Withdrawal Rates

	FY15-16			***FY16-17***			***FY17-18***			***FY18-19***			***FY19-20***		
Month	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9
Membership Last Day	1,491	1,465	1,353	1,748	1,770	1,668	2,031	2,160	1,902	2,475	2,568	2,372	2,249	2,328	2,253
Enrollments Cumulative	1,652	1,971	1,995	1,875	2,187	2,197	2,065	2,555	2,504	2,605	3,095	3,091	2,313	2,799	2,920
Withdrawals Cumulative	161	505	642	127	417	529	34	395	507	130	527	719	64	471	667
Finite Enrollees			25			-			-			46			-
Exempted Withdrawals[10]			N/A			36			277			213			113
Withdrawal Rate all Enrollees			32%			31%			20%			23%			23%
Withdrawal Rate Minus Exempted Withdrawals[11]			31%			22%			9%			15%			19%

*Percentages are rounded.

[10] *Exempted withdrawals* equal the total number of withdrawals that fall under the exemptions allowed in calculating the withdrawal rate (not including finite enrollees which are illustrated separately). Session Law 2016-94.

[11] *Withdrawal rate minus exempted withdrawals* is calculated by deducting finite enrollees and exempted withdrawals from the cumulative withdrawal figure and calculating the withdrawal rate.

Table 2: NC Virtual Academy Enrollment and Withdrawal Rates

	FY15-16			***FY16-17***			***FY17-18***			***FY18-19***			***FY19-20***		
Month	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9	M1	M5	M9
Membership Last Day	1,435	1,412	1,283	1,719	1,742	1,581	2,068	2,041	1,849	2,434	2,454	2,281	2,610	2,717	2,430
Enrollments Cumulative	1,560	1,909	1,870	1,871	2,214	2,201	2,203	2,529	2,463	2,566	2,962	2,931	2,795	3,326	3,063
Withdrawals Cumulative	125	497	586	152	472	620	135	488	614	132	508	650	185	609	633
Finite Enrollees			158			237			207			135			40
Exempted Withdrawals[12]			N/A			365			388			360			350
Withdrawal Rate all Enrollees			31%			28%			25%			22%			21%
Withdrawal Rate Minus Exempted Withdrawals[13]			23%			<1%			<1%			5%			8%

*Percentages are rounded.

[12] *Exempted withdrawals* equal the total number of withdrawals that fall under the exemptions allowed in calculating the withdrawal rate (not including finite enrollees which are illustrated separately). Session Law 2016-94.

[13] *Withdrawal rate minus exempted withdrawals* is calculated by deducting finite enrollees and exempted withdrawals from the cumulative withdrawal figure and calculating the withdrawal rate.

Part II: Course Offerings

A variety of courses are offered at each of the virtual charter schools and course options have changed over the years since the pilot began. Both schools report evolving course offerings based on the desire and needs of their students.

The tables below illustrate the course offerings for the 2020-2021 school year. Each virtual charter school was asked to provide a synopsis of how the course offerings have changed since the schools began operation in 2015.

NC Cyber Academy Course Offerings

Table 3: NC Cyber Academy Course Offerings 2020-2021
*** indicates an honors option**

Elementary Courses (K-5)	Middle School Courses (6-8)	High School Courses (9-12)
Art	Advanced English Language Arts	African American History
Arts and Crafts	Coding I and II	American History I*
English Language Arts	Culinary Arts I and II	American History II*
Health	Digital Art and Design I and II	American History: Found Prin. Civics/Econ*
Math	Digital Citizenship	Animation
Physical Education	Earth/Environmental Science	AP Biology
Recorders	English Language Arts	AP Calculus AB
Science	Great Minds in Science	AP English Language & Composition
Scratch Coding	Health & Physical Education	AP English Literature & Composition
Social Studies	Journalism I and II	AP Environmental Science
	Math	AP Human Geography
	NC Math 1, 2, and 3	AP Psychology
	Science	AP Statistics
	Social Media: Our Connected World	AP United States Government and Politics
	Social Studies	AP United States History
	Spanish I and II	AP World History: Modern
	Studio Art I and II	Applied Science
		Art History I
		American Sign Language I, II
		Astronomy
		Biology*
		Business Law
		Career Management
		Careers in Architecture & Construction
		Chemistry Honors
		Chinese I, II
		Creative Writing
		Earth/Environmental Science*
		Engineering Design and Product Development
		English I, II, III, IV*
		Fashion and Interior Design
		Financial Management

		Fire and Emergency Services Forensic Science I Foundations of Information Technology Foundations of NC Math 1, 2, 3 French I, II, III Health and PE Grades 9-12 Human Dev. and Parenting Intro to Biotechnology Intro to Business Intro to Careers in Arts, A/V Technology & Communications Intro to Careers in Health Intro to Careers in Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics Intro to Communications and Speech Intro to Computer Science Intro to Culinary Arts & Hosp I Intro to Health Science Intro to Human Services Intro to Information Tech Support & Services Introduction to Art Introduction to Careers in Finance Introduction to Coding Introduction to Mathematics I Latin I, II Business Computer Information Systems College and Career Readiness Literacy and Comprehension II Marine Science Microsoft Office Specialist NC Math 1, 2, 3, 4* Personal Development Personal Finance Physical Science Physics Honors Pre-Calculus Honors Preparation I, II, III, IV (Occupational Course of Study) Programming, Web, and Software Dev. Psychology Public Safety and Law Enforcement Small Business Entrepreneurship Sociology Spanish I, II, III Strategies for Academic Success Strategies for Online Learning Success Veterinary Science: Care of Animals World History* World Religions

Course offerings have expanded dramatically at NCCA throughout the pilot. NCCA began

operations as an EMO-managed school with course offerings determined through the EMO Pearson OBL. NCCA is now self-managed and course offerings are determined by the school leadership in coordination with the school's nonprofit board of directors. During the 2019-2020 school year, NCCA offered the following course options in grades K-12: core academic (i.e., math, English/language arts, social studies, science), a limited number of advanced placement (AP) courses, a limited number of career technical education (CTE) electives, and other electives such as foreign language, American sign language (ASL), and art courses. High school students could enroll in dual enrollment courses at the NC community college system.

The NCCA leadership team collected feedback from parents, students, principals, and teachers about course offerings. These NCCA stakeholders requested more courses during the traditional school year and during the summer to offer students a greater array of college and career learning options. During summer 2020, NCCA offered credit recovery courses to high school juniors and seniors. Summer enrichment and remedial courses were also offered to students in grades 3-8. NCCA opened the 2020-2021 school year with an expanded list of courses, including multiple honors, AP, and CTE courses. The expanded CTE courses will allow more students to become CTE concentrators and earn an industry-recognized credential in various CTE program areas. NCCA has also expanded Occupational Course of Study offerings to students with disabilities. Additionally, NCCA is offering a new middle school course designed to improve students' social emotional learning. The goal in offering more courses is to provide each student a greater array of learning pathways as they pursue college and career ready graduation requirements.

NC Virtual Academy Course Offerings

Table 4: NC Virtual Academy Course Offerings 2020-2021
*** indicates an honors option**

Elementary Courses (K-5)	Middle School Courses (6-8)	High School Courses (9-12)
English Language Arts General Music Math Physical Education Physical Education and Health Science Social Studies/History Spanish (for AIG enrichment) Visual Arts	English Language Arts Fundamentals of Music Health and Physical Education Math Math I (8th grade) Pre-Algebra (7th grade) Science Social Studies Spanish Visual Arts	Adaptive Curriculum American History I * American History II* AP Calculus AP Environmental Science AP Language and Composition AP Literature AP United State History Art Appreciation Biology* Career Management Chemistry* Civics & Economics* College and Career Promise Creative Writing Culinary Arts & Hospitality Database Concepts Digital Imaging and Design Digital Photography 1

		Earth/Environmental Science English I, II, III, IV* Entrepreneurship Fashion and Interior Design Foundations of Math I Fundamentals of Music Geography Healthful Living Honors Pre-Calculus Intro to Computers JAVA Programming Marketing Math I, II, III, IV* MS Word and PPT Music Appreciation Occupational Course of Study Physical Science Psychology Reaching Your Academic Potential Service Learning Sociology Spanish 1 Spanish 2 World History*

Throughout the past five years, NCVA courses have evolved as the demand and interest for a wide variety of options has increased. In addition to offering the required courses as mandated by the Department of Public Instruction, NCVA has increased the elective, exceptional children, and enrichment opportunities for students in grades K-12. Additionally, NCVA has grown to offer Honors or Advanced Placement options for all courses in Middle and High School as well as providing Spanish as an enrichment class for advanced learners in Elementary School. In Middle School, students have the option of taking advanced math courses (Pre-Algebra in 7th grade and Math 1 in 8th grade) to receive high school math credit. Throughout the years, NCVA has created a strong occupational course of study program, as well an adaptive program, to meet the needs of the Exceptional Children's department. Additionally, NCVA participates in the Career and College Promise (CCP) program, partnering with community colleges across the state for Junior and Seniors to receive Dual Credit. The CCP program at NCVA is one of the most popular options for Junior and Seniors as many graduate high school with more than a semester of college credit. Finally, for courses that are not taught by NCVA certified teachers, the students have the option to take a class through NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS). NCVA utilizes NCVPS courses mostly in high school for students who want a foreign language other than Spanish. NCVA students have completed French, Latin, American Sign Language, and Japanese through NCVPS.

DRAFT

Part III: Student Performance and Accountability Data

The virtual charter schools are subject to the same accountability requirements as all brick and mortar charter schools under General Statutes Chapter 115C, Article 14A. Such requirements include the following:

- A charter school shall conduct the student assessments required by the State Board of Education. § 115C-218.85(a)(3).
- If a charter school earned an overall school performance grade of D or F, the charter school shall provide notice of the grade in writing to the parent or guardian of all students enrolled in that school. § 115C-218.65.
- Reading Proficiency and Student Promotion requirements. § 115C-218.85(b).

The NCDPI Accountability division reports assessment data for both virtual charter schools as the schools are subject to the state accountability and testing requirements. A brief explanation of the state accountability system as it pertains to Academic Growth and School Performance Grades (SPG) is included below.[14]

DRAFT

[14] Source: NCDPI 2018-2019 Accountability Framework Background Brief https://files.nc.gov/dpi/documents/accountability/reporting/19_backgroundpacket.pdf

Academic Growth

Academic growth is an indication of the progress that students in the school made over the previous year. The standard is roughly equivalent to a year's worth of growth for a year of instruction. Growth is reported for each school as Exceeded Growth Expectations, Met Growth Expectations, or Did Not Meet Growth Expectations as measured by EVAAS, a statistical tool North Carolina uses to measure student growth when common assessments are administered.

School Performance Grades (SPG)

Since 2013-14, student performance data have been used to assign letter grades to North Carolina public schools as required by the North Carolina General Assembly. The grades are based on each school's achievement score (80 percent) and each school's students' academic growth (20 percent).

The total school performance score is converted to a 100-point scale and then used to determine a school performance grade of A, B, C, D or F. The final grade is based on a 15-point scale:

A: 85-100
B: 70-84
C: 55-69
D: 40-54
F: Less than 40

All public schools will receive a letter grade overall and for each student subgroup (Asian, American Indian, Black, Hispanic, Two or More Races, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners). Subgroup performance is reported when the number of scores in a particular group is at least 30 for one or more parts of the accountability model.

K-2 schools will receive letter grades of the schools to which they send the highest percentage of students. Schools approved to use the state's alternative accountability model will be assigned a letter grade only for the purposes of identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools and Targeted Support and Improvement schools, as required by federal statute.

The indicators for elementary and middle schools differ from the indicators for high schools as presented in the chart and explanation below:

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL INDICATORS			HIGH SCHOOL INDICATORS	
			ASSESSMENTS	**OTHER MEASURES**
· 3rd Grade ELA	· 3rd Grade Math	· 5th Grade Science	· NC Math 1/Math 3	· 4-year Graduation Rates
· 4th Grade ELA	· 4th Grade Math	· 8th Grade Science	· English II	· Successful completion of high-level math courses
· 5th Grade ELA	· 5th Grade Math	· NC Math 1	· Biology	· Growth (NC Math 1/NC Math 3 and English II)
· 6th Grade ELA	· 6th Grade Math	· Growth	· ACT	· English Learner Progress
· 7th Grade ELA	· 7th Grade Math	· English Learner Progress	· ACT WorkKeys	
· 8th Grade ELA	· 8th Grade Math			

Student performance data has shown troubling consistency since the pilot began. Both virtual charter schools are considered continually low-performing under charter school accountability legislation. **Low-performing charter schools** are those that earn an overall school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. § 115C-83.15.[15] A **continually low-performing charter school** is a charter school that has been designated as low-performing for at least two of three consecutive years.[16] For the entirety of the pilot program both virtual charter schools have earned an overall school performance grade of D and a growth score of "not met expected growth" and therefore are continually low-performing charter schools. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and waiver of year end state assessments, 2019-2020 state accountability data is unavailable.

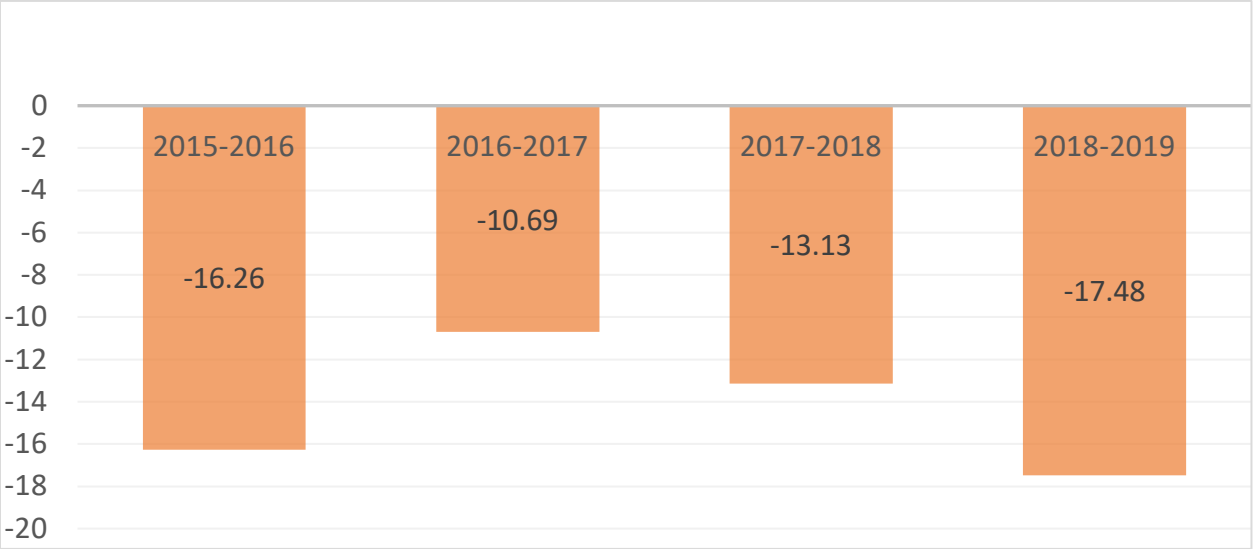
[15] 115C-218.94(a)
[16] 115C-218.94(b)

NC Cyber Academy Student Performance

Table 5: NC Cyber Academy Student Performance Grade and Growth Status

	Performance Grade	Growth Status	Growth Index
2018-2019	D	Not Met	-17.48
2017-2018	D	Not Met	-13.13
2016-2017	D	Not Met	-10.69
2015-2016	D	Not Met	-16.26

Figure 5: NC Cyber Academy Growth Index



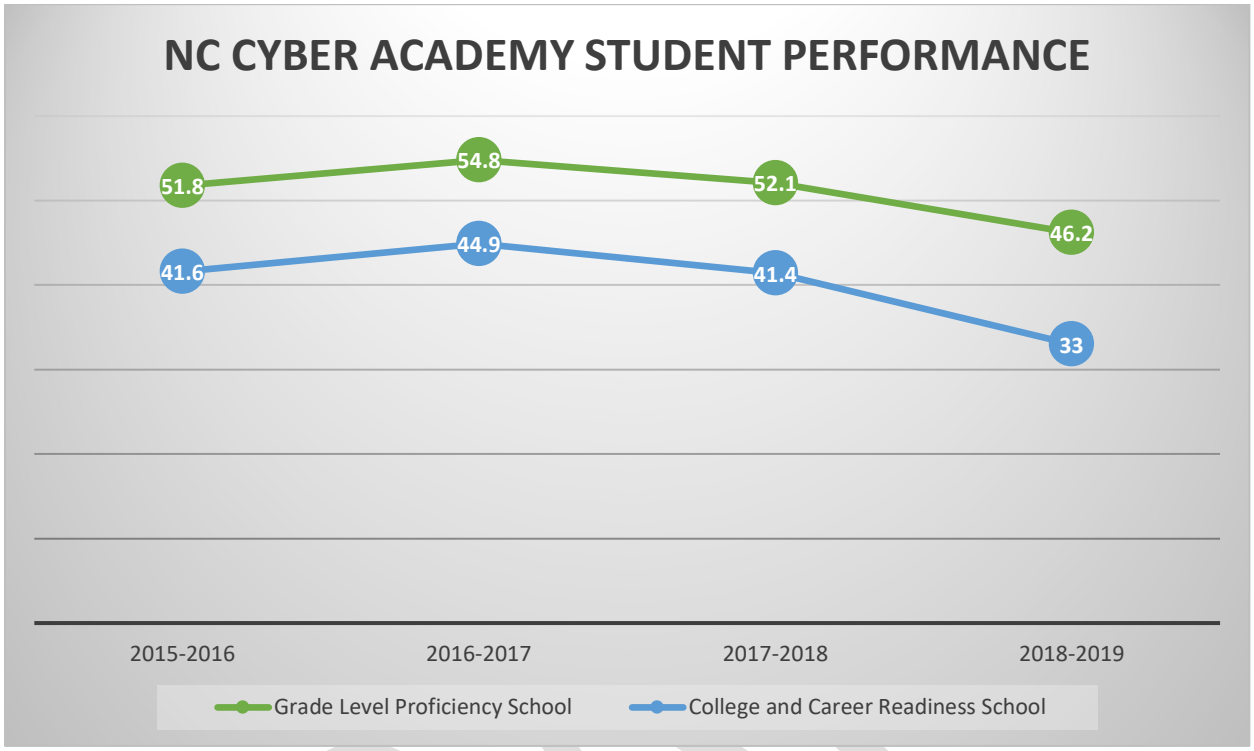
The growth trends for NCCA showed improvement at the second year of assessment, but steadily declined during the following two years.

Table 6: NC Cyber Academy Student Grade Level Proficiency and College and Career Readiness

The percentage of students that scored Level 3 and above (Grade Level Proficient - GLP) or Level 4 and above (Career and College Readiness - CCR) on the End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) assessments is outlined below.

	Grade Level Proficiency			College and Career Readiness		
	School	State	+/-	School	State	+/-
2018-2019	46.2	58.8	-12.6	33.0	44.5	-11.5
2017-2018	52.1	58.8	-6.7	41.4	49.2	-7.8
2016-2017	54.8	59.2	-4.4	44.9	49.2	-4.3
2015-2016	51.8	58.3	-6.5	41.6	48.8	-7.2

Figure 6: NC Cyber Academy Student Performance Trends



The data above shows that the GLP and CCR mirrors the growth data for NCCA. The GLP and CCR trends showed improvement at the second year of assessment, but steadily declined during the following two years. For each year of the pilot, in both GLP and CCR, NCCA performed below the state average.

NC Virtual Academy Student Performance

Table 7: NC Virtual Academy Student Performance Grade and Growth Status

	Performance Grade	Growth Status	Growth Index
2018-2019	D	Not Met	-9.48
2017-2018	D	Not Met	-6.75
2016-2017	D	Not Met	-9.46
2015-2016	D	Not Met	-16.36

Figure 7: NC Virtual Academy Growth Index Over Time

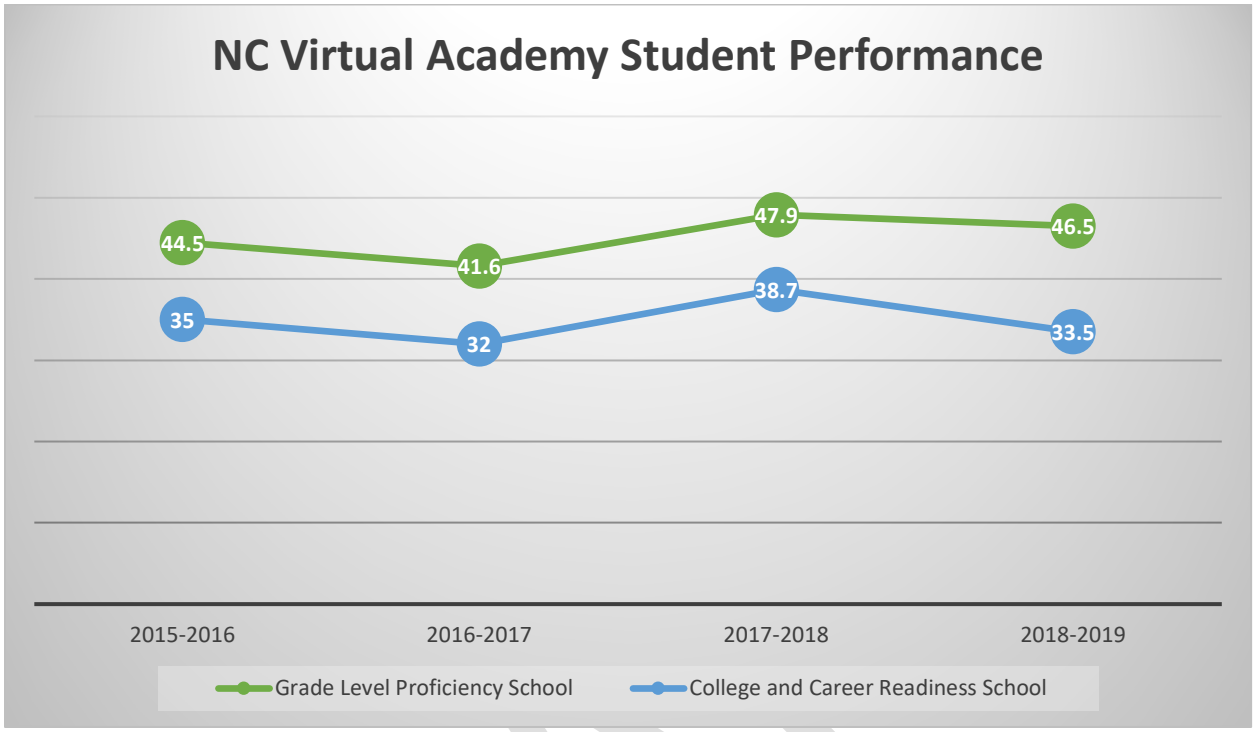
The growth trends for NCVA showed steady improvement through the first three years of assessment, and then declined in the fourth year of assessment.

Table 8: NC Virtual Academy Student Grade Level Proficiency and College and Career Readiness

The percentage of students that scored Level 3 and above (Grade Level Proficient - GLP) or Level 4 and above (Career and College Readiness - CCR) on the End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) assessments is outlined below.

	Grade Level Proficiency			College and Career Readiness		
	School	State	+/-	School	State	+/-
2018-2019	46.5	58.8	-12.3	33.5	44.5	-11.0
2017-2018	47.9	58.8	-10.9	38.7	49.2	-10.5
2016-2017	41.6	59.2	-17.6	32.0	49.2	-17.2
2015-2016	44.5	58.3	-13.8	35.0	48.8	-13.8

Figure 8: NC Virtual Academy Student Performance Trends

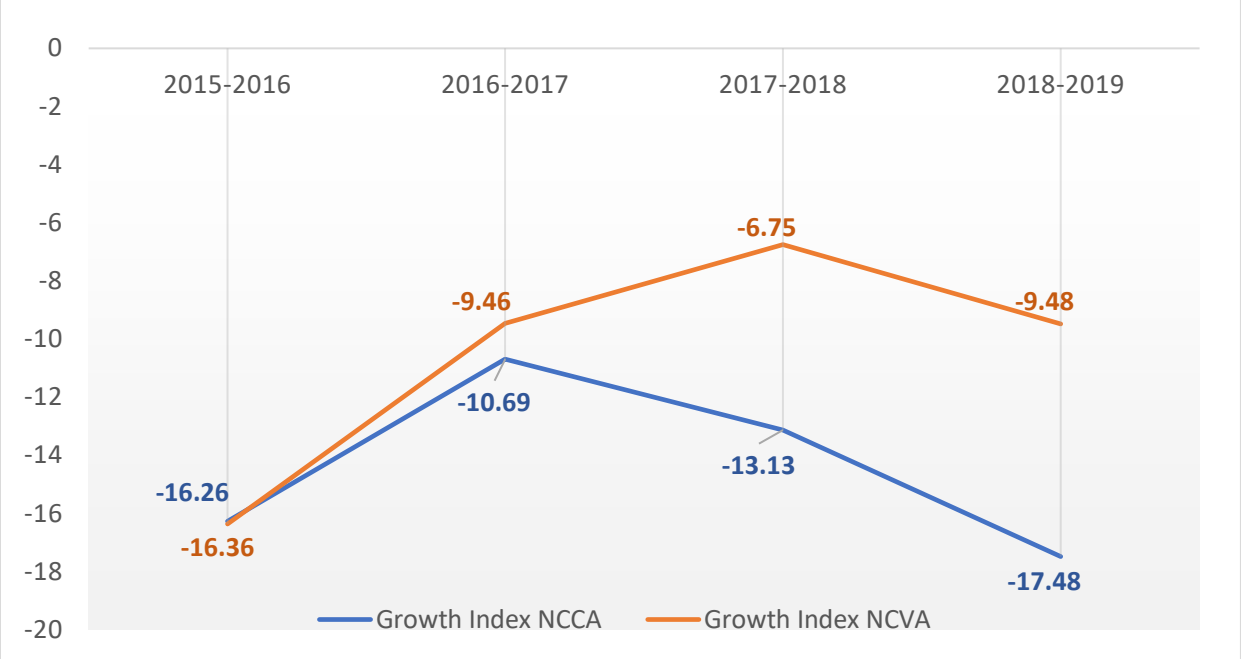


The figure above shows that the GLP and CCR student performance has remained fairly consistent with slight deviations throughout the four years of available state assessment data. For each year of the pilot, in both GLP and CCR, NCVA performed below the state average.

NC Cyber Academy and NC Virtual Academy Comparative Data

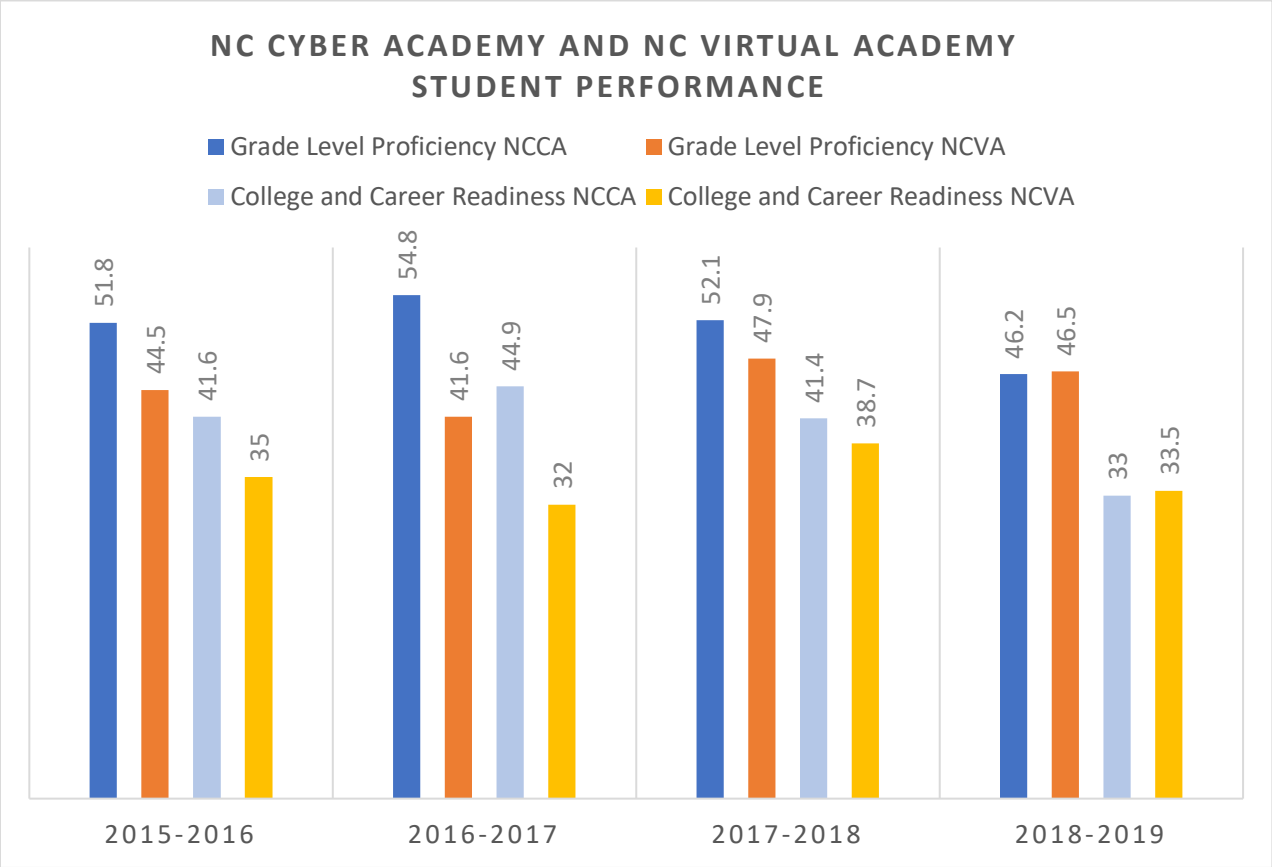
Growth trends for the two virtual charter schools mirror each other closely. Both schools showed growth improvement in the second year of assessment. Following the second year of assessment, NCCA's growth data has declined by a total of six point eight percent (6.8%). NCVA showed continued improvement in the third year of assessment and then declined in year four.

Figure 9: NC Cyber Academy and NC Virtual Academy Growth Comparison



The first year of the pilot evidenced a very similar growth score for the two virtual charter schools. During the second year, the schools maintained similar growth scores with NCVA showing slightly better performance. During the two following years (years three and four of the pilot), the schools increased the difference between growth scores with NCVA showing higher growth.

Figure 10: NC Cyber Academy and NC Virtual Academy Student Performance Trends



Both virtual charter schools struggle to meet state averages and move out of the low-performing designations. With the exception of the 2018-2019 school year, NCCA has slightly outperformed NCVA in GLP and CCR student performance. When comparing the highest performance ratings for both schools, the differences between the two schools total only six point nine percent (6.9%) for GLP and six point two percent (6.2%) for CCR.

Subgroup Performance

NC DPI Accountability began reporting subgroup data in 2018 with the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability model. Subgroup data that met state standards (i.e. non-low-performing) is shaded green. Growth data is obtained from the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) and is blank (shaded grey) when there is not enough data on the tested students to derive a growth status.

NC Cyber Academy Subgroup Performance

Table 9: NC Cyber Subgroup Performance Data

Subgroup	2017-2018		2018-2019	
	Growth	SPG	Growth	SPG
American Indian		I		F
Asian		B		B
Black	Not Met	D	Not Met	D
Economically Disadvantaged	Not Met	F	Not Met	F
English Learners		D		F
Hispanic	Not Met	D	Not Met	D
Two or More Races	Not Met	D	Not Met	D
Students With Disabilities	Not Met	F	Not Met	F
White	Not Met	C	Not Met	D

NCCA subgroup data shows two subgroups met state standards: the Asian subgroup for both 2017 and 2018 school years received a school performance grade of B and the White subgroup's 2017 SPG.

NC Virtual Academy Subgroup Performance

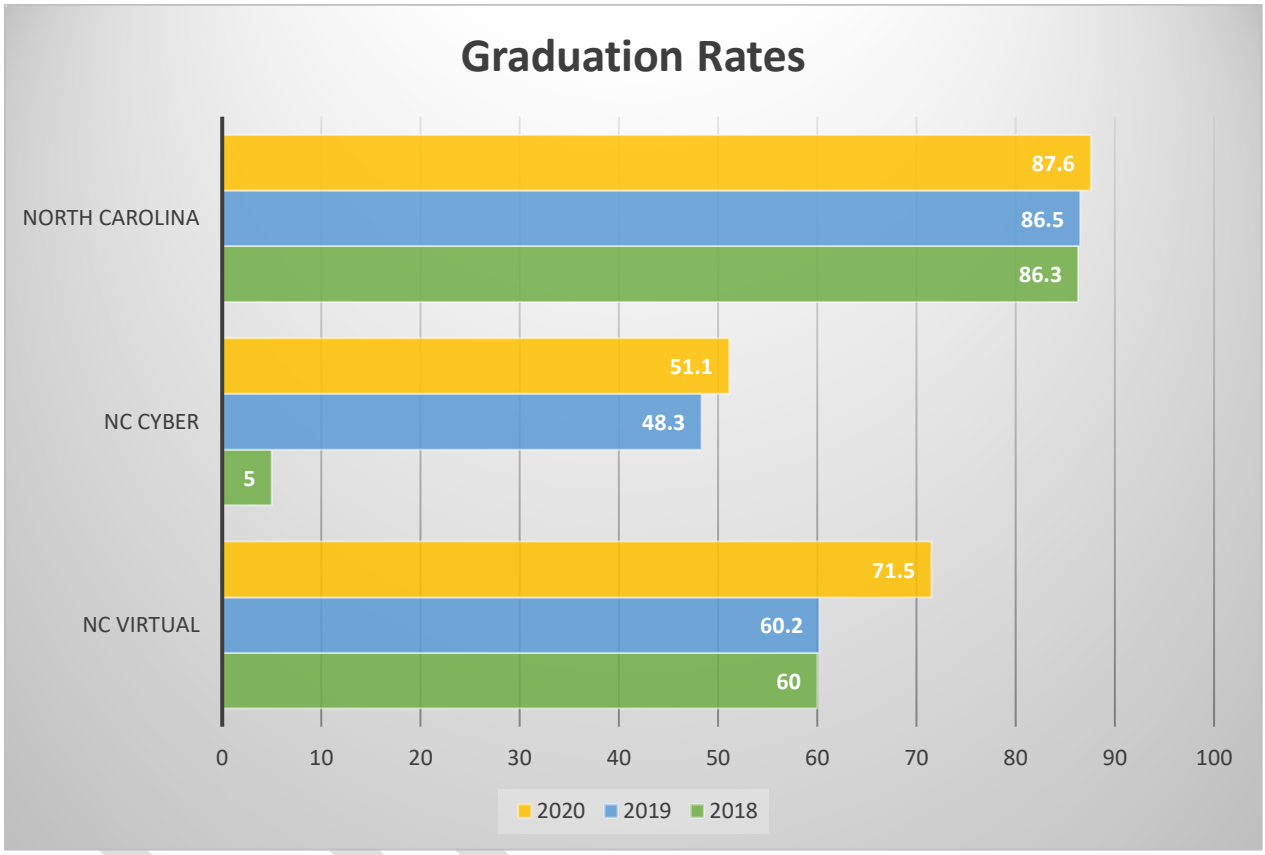
Table 10: NC Virtual Subgroup Performance Data

Subgroup	2017-2018		2018-2019	
	Growth	SPG	Growth	SPG
American Indian		I		I
Asian		I		C
Black	Not Met	D	Not Met	D
Economically Disadvantaged	Not Met	D	Not Met	D
English Learners		F		D
Hispanic	Met	D	Not Met	C
Two or More Races	Met	C	Not Met	D
Students With Disabilities	Met	F	Met	F
White	Not Met	D	Not Met	D

NCVA subgroup data shows that the following subgroups met state standards: Asian subgroup SPG of C for the 2018 school year; Hispanic subgroup Growth in 2017 and SPG in 2018; Two or More Races subgroup met Growth and received a C SPG in 2017; and Students With Disabilities met Growth in 2017 and 2018.

Graduation Rates[17]

Figure 11: NC Cyber Academy and NC Virtual Academy Graduation Rates



The four-year graduation rate at the two virtual charter schools trailed the state average each year data was available. Although NCCA did not enroll 12th graders in school year 2017-2018, the school enrolled a total of twenty (20) students that would have been expected to graduate in 2018 (based on when the students entered ninth grade for the first time), which is how the graduation rate is calculated.

The numbers above reflect a national trend. Nationally, the 2017-2018 four-year graduation rate was 49.9% for virtual charters as opposed to the 84% national average.[18]

[17] The 2020 data correction window for graduation rates is still open. There might be slight changes to the final numbers.

[18] Molnar, A., Miron, G., Elgeberi, N., Barbour, M.K., Huerta, L., Shafer, S.R., Rice, J.K. (2019). *Virtual Schools in the U.S. 2019*. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved September 3, 2020, from http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/virtual-schools-annual-2019.

Part IV: Implementation, Administration, and Funding

Virtual Charter Teacher Data

Due to the virtual environment, the pilot legislation placed teaching residency requirements on the virtual charter schools. Effective July 1, 2016, S.L. 2016-94 amended the ninety percent (90%) NC teacher residency requirement for the virtual charter schools to eighty percent (80%)[19].

Furthermore, the pilot legislation requires that all teaching staff "carry the appropriate State certification to instruct any course and shall receive professional development in virtual instruction … within 30 days of the employee's date of hire."[20] In contrast, G.S. §115C.218.90 outlines employment requirements for teachers in charter schools. At least fifty percent (50%) of teachers in brick and mortar charter schools must hold teacher licenses. Additionally, all teachers teaching in the core subject areas of mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts must be college graduates.

Table 11: Percent of Licensed Teachers[21]

Percent of Licensed Teachers	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	Average of All Other Charters
2016	100%	100%	80.2%
2017	90.6%	100%	81.1%
2018	76.9%	100%	81.4%
2019	61.8%	100%	83.6%
2020	96.6%	100%	82.4%

Additionally, S.L. 2014-100 §8.35(b)(2) outlines a maximum overall ratio of teachers to students in the virtual charter schools. Specifically, for kindergarten through eighth grade the ratio is 1:50, and for ninth through twelfth grade the ratio is 1:150. Brick and mortar charter schools are not required to maintain a specific teacher to student ratio and the ratios vary in these schools depending on the grade level, educational plan, and its mission.

Staff distribution data for each school as compared to all charter and all public school units is displayed below for each year of the pilot program. The two virtual charter schools employ a higher percentage of teachers as compared to brick and mortar charters and traditional public districts.

[19] The residency requirement reads, "At least eighty percent (80%) of the teaching staff shall reside within North Carolina." S.L. 2014-100 as amended by S.L. 2016-94.
[20] S.L. 2014-100, § 8.35(c)(3).
[21] Source: NCDPI Educator Recruitment and Development Division.

Table 12: Staff Distribution 2016 – Rate[22]

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	86.4%	94.1%	72.6%	59.8%
Administrators	8.5%	2.0%	5.6%	6.6%
Professionals	5.1%	3.9%	3.0%	7.7%
Others	0%	0%	18.8%	25.9%
Total Staff	59	51	9,154	165,227

Table 13: Staff Distribution 2017 – Rate

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	87.7%	94.4%	73.0%	60.0%
Administrators	9.6%	1.4%	5.4%	6.6%
Professionals	2.7%	4.2%	3.2%	7.9%
Others	0%	0%	18.4%	25.5%
Total Staff	73	71	10,343	164,664

Table 14: Staff Distribution 2018 – Rate

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	88.6%	94.9%	73.1%	59.9%
Administrators	8.0%	1.0%	5.8%	6.8%
Professionals	3.4%	4.1%	3.7%	8.0%
Others	0%	0%	17.4%	25.3%
Total Staff	88	98	11,211	164,488

Table 15: Staff Distribution 2019 – Rate

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	94.9%	93.9%	70.4%	59.8%
Administrators	3.6%	0.9%	6.0%	6.8%
Professionals	1.5%	5.2%	4.2%	8.4%
Others	0%	0%	19.4%	25.0%
Total Staff	138	115	12,136	164,062

[22] *Professionals* include Guidance, Psychological, Librarian/Audiovisual, and Consultant/Supervisor positions. *Others* include Teacher Assistants, Technicians, Clerical/Secretarial, Service Workers, Skilled Crafts, and Unskilled Laborers.

Table 16: Staff Distribution 2020 – Rate

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	81.7%	95.3%	70.6%	60.1%
Administrators	12.8%	0.7%	6.1%	7.0%
Professionals	5.5%	4.0%	3.8%	8.5%
Others	0%	0%	19.5%	24.4%
Total Staff	109	149	12,802	162,710

Table 17: Staff Distribution 2016 – Count

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	51	48	6,649	101,434
Administrators	5	1	441	8,939
Professionals	3	2	296	13,422
Others	1	1	1,768	41,432
Total Staff	59	51	9,154	165,227

Table 18: Staff Distribution 2017 – Count

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	64	67	7,545	101,406
Administrators	7	1	497	8,976
Professionals	2	3	343	13,453
Others	1	1	1,958	40,829
Total Staff	73	71	10,343	164,664

Table 19: Staff Distribution 2018 – Count

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	78	93	8,203	100,860
Administrators	7	1	575	9,064
Professionals	3	4	434	13,825
Others	1	1	1,999	40,739
Total Staff	88	98	11,211	164,488

Table 20: Staff Distribution 2019 – Count

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	131	108	8,609	100,447
Administrators	5	1	626	9,019
Professionals	2	6	559	14,285
Others	1	1	2,342	40,311
Total Staff	138	115	12,136	164,062

DRAFT

Table 21: Staff Distribution 2020 – Count

Staff	NC Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	All Other Charters	All Public Districts
Teachers	89	142	9,049	100,432
Administrators	14	1	690	9,152
Professionals	6	6	533	14,615
Others	1	1	2,530	38,511
Total Staff	109	149	12,802	162,710

DRAFT

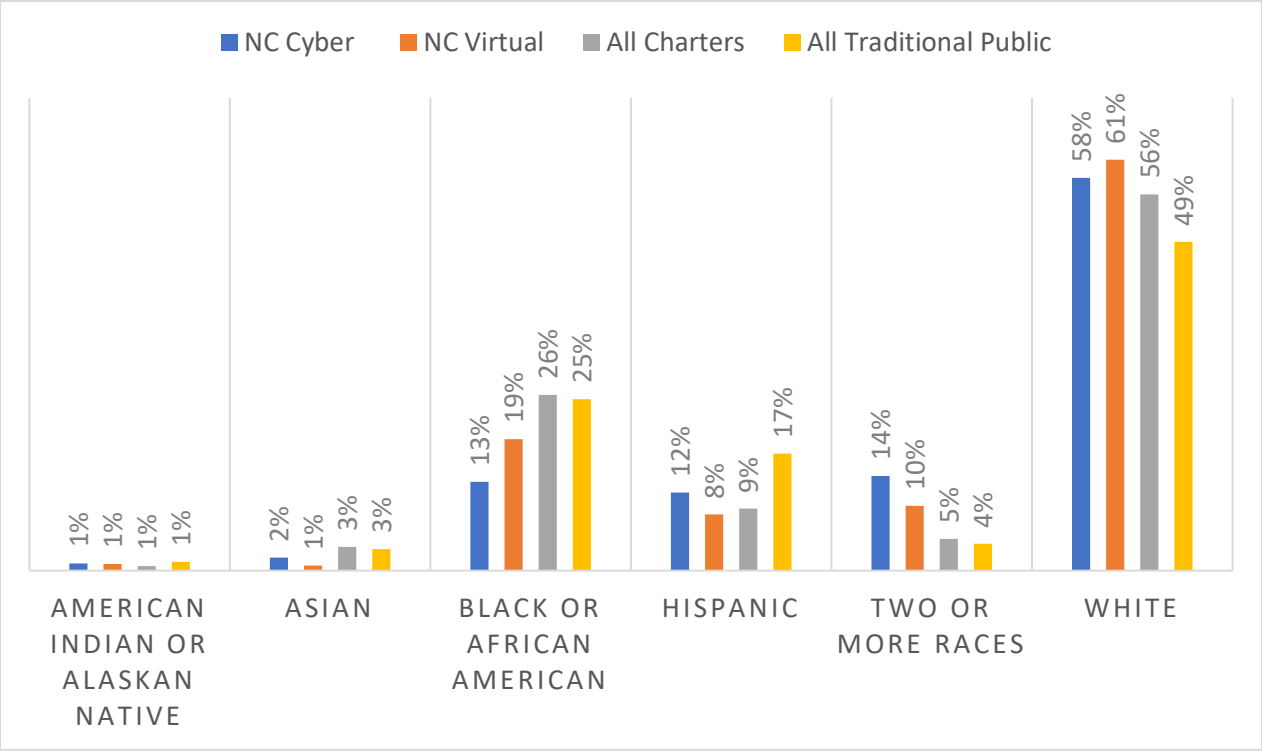
Student Demographics

Student demographic data is retrieved from the Common Education Data Analysis and Reporting System (CEDARS), NC's PreK-13 State Longitudinal Data System. The system is composed of various DPI source data collection systems, a student and staff identification system, a centralized data repository, and associated reporting and analysis tools.

Race/Ethnicity[23]

Over the course of the pilot program, the racial and ethnic composition at the two virtual charter schools have closer mirrored the demographic composition of charters and traditional publics. The largest differences in demographics appeared in the first year of operation, specifically with traditional publics educating more Black or African American students and more Hispanic students, while the virtual charter schools enrolled more white students. While traditional public schools continue to educate more Black or African American and Hispanic students, the percentage difference between the virtual charters and traditional publics has decreased. The following figures illustrate the percentage distribution of racial and ethnic composition at each virtual charter school as compared to all charters and all traditional public schools throughout the first four years of the pilot program.

Figure 12: 2016 Percentage Distribution of Race/Ethnicity Demographics



[23] All data for the Race/Ethnicity section is sourced from an October 1st snapshot date for each year 2016 through 2019 in CEDARS. *All charters* include the two virtual charters and *all traditional public* excludes all charters, including the virtual charters.

Figure 13: 2017 Percentage Distribution of Race/Ethnicity Demographics

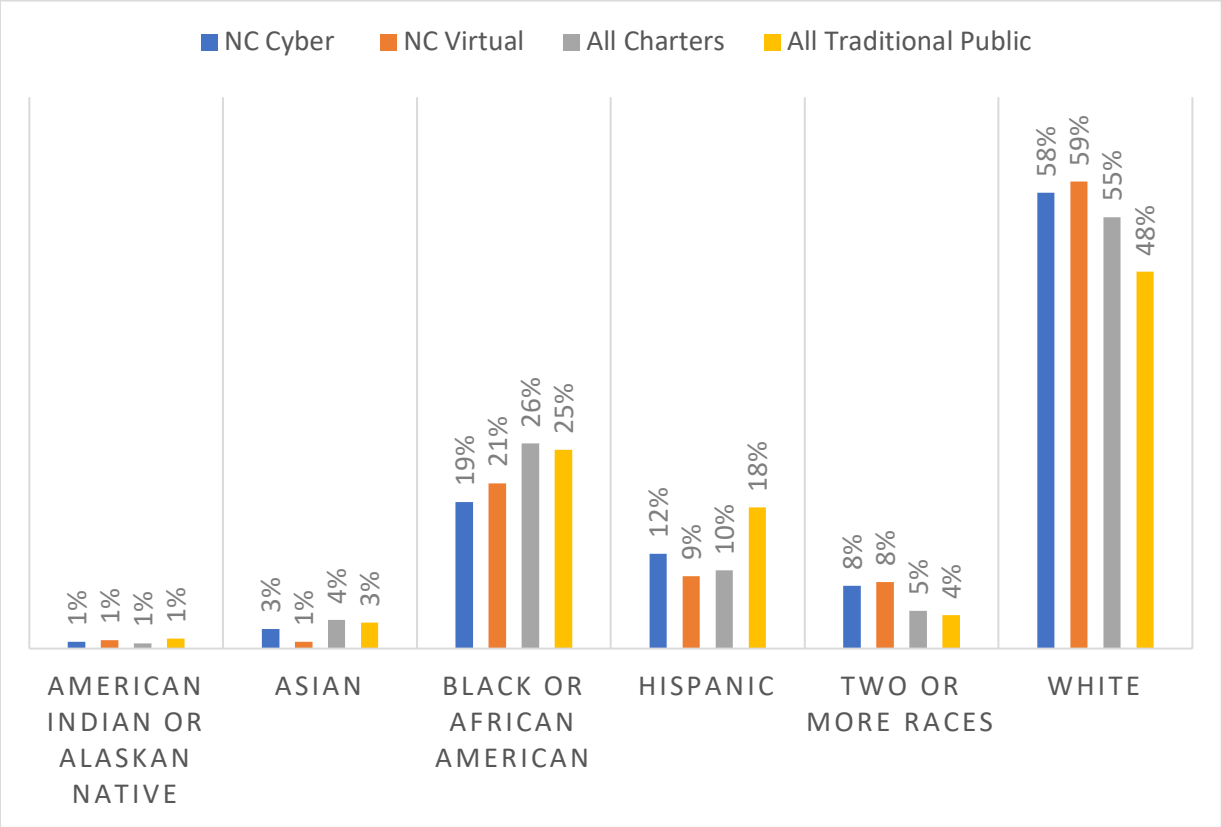


Figure 14: 2018 Percentage Distribution of Race/Ethnicity Demographics

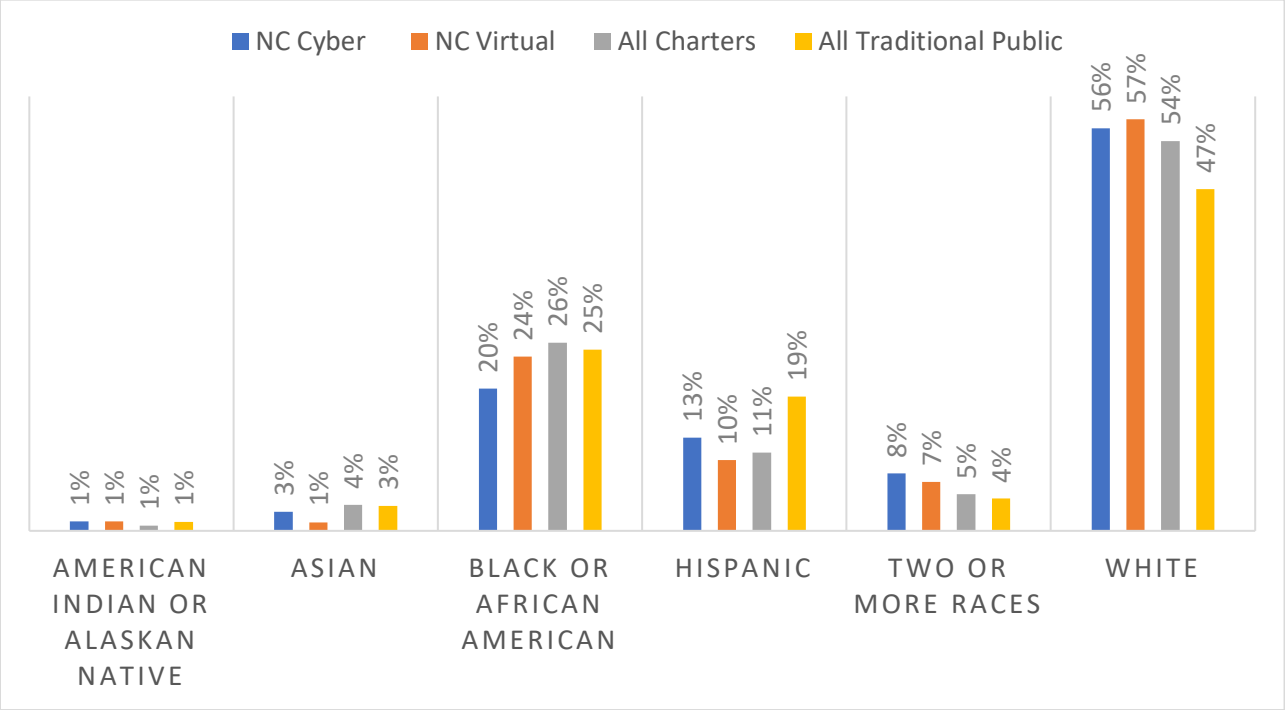
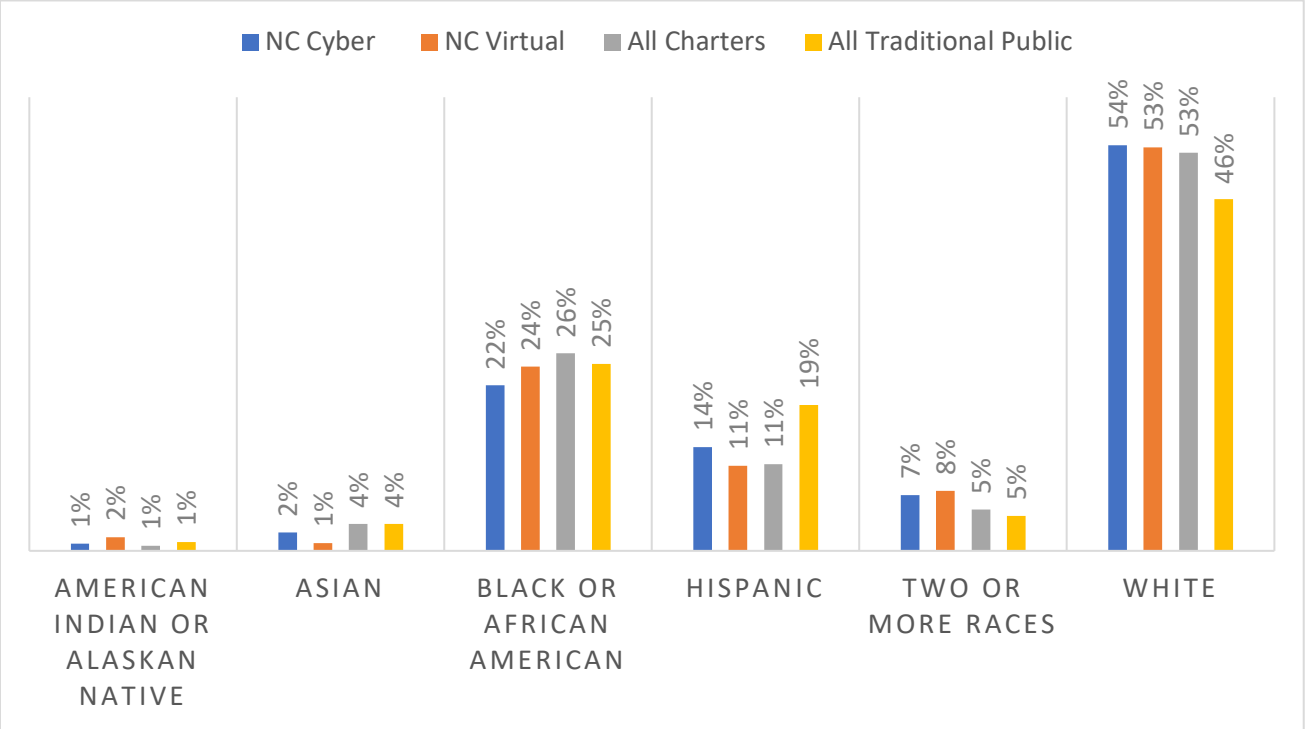


Figure 15: 2019 Percentage Distribution of Race/Ethnicity Demographics



In reviewing demographic changes over time, the two virtual charter schools have moved closer to the demographic averages seen in traditional public schools although both NCCA and NCVA continue to enroll fewer Black and Hispanic students when compared to traditional public schools.

Gender

Table 22: Gender Percentages

Snapshot Date	Gender	NCCA	NCVA	All Charters	All Traditional Public
10/1/2016	Female	55.88%	52.00%	49.87%	48.62%
	Male	44.12%	48.00%	50.13%	51.38%
10/1/2017	Female	57.09%	51.11%	50.07%	48.58%
	Male	42.91%	48.89%	49.93%	51.42%
10/1/2018	Female	57.09%	52.60%	50.06%	48.58%
	Male	42.91%	47.40%	49.94%	51.42%
10/1/2019	Female	56.16%	52.83%	49.95%	48.56%
	Male	43.84%	47.17%	50.05%	51.44%

As seen in the data above, the two virtual schools enroll a higher percentage of female students as compared to both all charters and all traditional public schools.

Economically Disadvantaged Students

Table 23: Economically Disadvantaged Student Data

Snapshot Date	NCCA	NCVA	All Charters	All Traditional Publics
12/1/2016	46.36%	66.65%	33.75%	50.32%
12/1/2017	17.65%	24.39%	23.17%	44.40%
12/1/2018	17.68%	26.97%	23.48%	46.68%
12/1/2019	13.01%	21.60%	20.75%	41.37%

Economically disadvantaged student data includes free and reduced lunch participation (National School Lunch Program), Community Eligibility Provision, and direct certification.

Economically disadvantaged student population numbers have varied significantly over the years of the pilot at both virtual charter schools. NCCA saw a high of 38.18% in 2016 and a low of 13.78% in 2020. NCVA enrolled a high of 54.65% EDS students in 2017 and a low of 19.67% the following year.

Students with Disabilities

Table 24: Students with Disabilities Data

Snapshot Date	NCCA	NCVA	All Charters	All Traditional Publics
12/1/2016	9.99%	10.61%	9.79%	12.26%
12/1/2017	10.50%	13.63%	10.14%	12.29%
12/1/2018	11.88%	12.83%	10.24%	12.34%
12/1/2019	12.78%	13.34%	10.59%	12.41%

Over the course of the pilot program, the percentage of Students with Disabilities (SWD) enrolled at both virtual charter schools has increased. The most current data shows that both virtual charter schools enroll more SWD when compared to all charters and all traditional public schools.

DRAFT

Virtual Charter School Funding

The legislation establishing the virtual charter school pilot program mandates that the SBE shall provide State funding to a virtual charter school participating in the pilot program as provided in G.S. § 115C-218.105(a)(1).

Legislation provides three (3) differences in funding for the virtual charter schools and the traditional public schools and charter schools:

1. Virtual charter schools are funded based on a dollars per Average Daily Membership (ADM), ***but*** excludes the per pupil share of low wealth and small county;

2. Traditional charters are funded based on 1st month ADM, but virtual charter schools are funded based on month 1 and month 5 Membership Last Day; and

3. Traditional charters receive a per pupil share of the local current expense of the LEA in which the student resides. For virtual charters this amount is capped at $790.

Table 25: NC Cyber Academy Funded Students Per Year

	FY15-16	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
MLD Month 1	1,488	1,747	2,031	2,476	2,249
Adjustment for month 5	(23)	23	129	92	79
Final Funded	**1,465**	**1,770**	**2,160**	**2,568**	**2,328**
Head Count of Exception Children		142	187	241	306
Headcount Transfer	90	56	41	52	(10)
Total EC Headcount	**90**	**198**	**228**	**293**	**296**

Table 26: NC Virtual Academy Funded Students Per Year

	FY15-16	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
MLD Month 1	1,433	1,718	2,068	2,449	2,610
Adjustment for month 5	(21)	24	(27)	5	107
Final Funded	**1,412**	**1,742**	**2,041**	**2,454**	**2,717**

DRAFT

Head Count of Exception Children	-	164	192	266	304
Headcount Transfer	135	(9)	(11)	(9)	(8)
Total EC Headcount	**135**	**155**	**181**	**257**	**296**

As detailed below in **Tables 27 and 28**, state funding has increased substantially for both virtual charter schools, in alignment with the enrollment increases illustrated above. NCCA state funding totaled over seven and one-half million dollars ($7,650,416**)** during the first year of the pilot program. At the conclusion of the fifth year, state funding had nearly doubled to over fourteen million dollars ($14,381,277). Due to the similarities in student enrollment numbers between the two virtual charters, NCVA state funding shows similar trends. State funding for NCVA during its first year of operation totaled over seven and one-half million dollars ($7,543,164) and at the conclusion of the fifth year, state funding totaled over sixteen million dollars ($16,522,523).

Table 27: NC Cyber Academy State Funding

Base Allocation per ADM	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
MLD[24] 1	7,402,237	8,787,639	10,525,076	13,446,323	12,589,634
Adjustment for 2nd semester	(115,898)	117,187	677,795	506,608	448,817
Final Funded State base allocation	7,286,339	8,904,826	11,202,871	13,952,931	13,038,451
Other State Base Funding	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Funded State EC[25]		581,226	795,414	1,045,564	1,295,454
EC Transfers[26]	340,881	215,347	161,443	220,891	(42,241)
Total EC	340,881	796,573	956,857	1,266,455	1,253,213
Limited English Proficiency				46,302	50,581.00
NCVPS		(6,838)	(4,040)	(3,217)	(12,769)
Total Other State Base	340,881	789,735	952,817	1,309,540	1,291,025
Total State Base	**7,627,220**	**9,694,561**	**12,155,688**	**15,262,471**	**14,329,476**
Other State Allocations	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Fines and Forfeitures	17,496	51,920	9,467	58,356	30,122
Indian Gaming - Textbooks	5,700	6,778	7,852	18,912	16,735
Reading Devices			6,230	1,340	4,720
CTE			-	-	224
Benefit Adjustment		56,114	-	-	-
Home Base Reduction	-	-	-	-	-

[24] MLD = Membership Last Day
[25] EC = Exceptional Children
[26] The headcount transfer is when an EC student comes or goes to a school within the first 60 days of school and DPI receives notification of such transfer.

Other	23,196	114,812	23,549	78,608	51,801
	FY15-16	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Total State Funding	**7,650,416**	**9,809,373**	**12,179,237**	**15,341,079**	**14,381,277**
Other PRCs -Restricted Funds	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Summer Reading Camps	-	-	-	-	-
Behavioral Support	-	-	-	-	1,100
Test Result Bonus- 3rd Grade Reading	-	-	4,010	-	-
Test Result Bonus- other	-	-	161	-	539
CRF- Student Computers and Devices	-	-	-	-	33,326
CRF - Personnel Computers and Devices	-	-	-	-	5,557
Total Other PRCs*	**-**	**-**	**4,171**	**-**	**40,522**
	FY15-16	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Total Funding	**7,650,416**	**9,809,373**	**12,183,408**	**15,341,079**	**14,421,799**
*The unused balances are removed for these PRCs if not used at the end of the year. This amount represents the amounts used.					
Summer Camp funds carryover. The balances are removed at the end of the year and reallotted the next year.					

Table 28: NC Virtual Academy State Funding

Base Allocation per ADM	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
MLD 1	7,111,138	8,652,142	10,734,418	13,341,728	14,647,509
Adjustment for 2nd semester	(105,821)	122,282	(141,864)	27,533	607,891
Final Funded State base allocation	7,005,317	8,774,424	10,592,554	13,369,261	15,255,400
Other State Base Funding	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Funded State EC		671,275	816,682	1,154,025	1,286,987
EC Transfers	507,433	(36,679)	(45,371)	(39,046)	(33,750)
Total EC	507,433	634,596	771,311	1,114,979	1,253,237
Limited English Proficiency				-	-
NCVPS		(6,033)	(36,087)	(55,138)	(51,703)
Total Other State Base	507,433	628,563	735,224	1,059,841	1,201,534
Total State Base	**7,512,750**	**9,402,987**	**11,327,778**	**14,429,102**	**16,456,934**
Other State Allocations	**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Fines and Forfeitures	17,496	50,008	1`	59,419	33,132

DRAFT

	Indian Gaming - Textbooks	5,495	6,665	7,995	18,706	18,407
	Reading Devices	8,800	-	5,850	3,210	14,000
	CTE	123	-	-	-	50
	Benefit Adjustment		55,182	-	-	-
	Home Base Reduction	(1,500)	-	-	-	-
	Other	30,414	111,855	13,845	81,335	65,589
		FY15-16	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
Total State Funding		**7,543,164**	**9,514,842**	**11,341,623**	**14,510,437**	**16,522,523**
Other PRCs -Restricted Funds		**FY15-16**	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
	Summer Reading Camps	-	12,378	45,799	72,020	-
	Behavioral Support	-	-	-	-	-
	Test Result Bonus- 3rd Grade Reading	-	-	-	-	-
	Test Result Bonus- other	-	-	-	-	377
	CRF- Student Computers and Devices	-	-	-	-	50,102
	CRF - Personnel Computers and Devices	-	-	-	-	8,352
	Total Other PRCs*	**-**	**12,378**	**45,799**	**72,020**	**58,831**
		FY15-16	**FY16-17**	**FY17-18**	**FY18-19**	**FY19-20**
	Total Funding	**7,543,164**	**9,527,220**	**11,387,422**	**14,582,457**	**16,581,354**

Table 29: State Funding - Average Per Pupil

	FY15-16	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20
LEA	$ 5,659.19	$ 5,766.20	$ 5,955.23	$ 6,254.78	$ 6,415.33
Charter Schools	$ 5,088.90	$ 5,176.52	$ 5,339.71	$ 5,606.41	$ 5,753.92
Virtual Charter Schools	$ 4,926.33	$ 5,005.12	$ 5,163.73	$ 5,420.81	$ 5,560.72

Both NCCA and NCVA are funded the same per ADM. They are both located in Durham and they are allotted Durham's $ per ADM less some amounts not given to any charter school.

DRAFT

Part V: Recommendations

Virtual schools have been an enthusiastically debated and discussed topic for many years. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated this debate as much of the country's student population was forced online as schools across the nation closed their doors. This report provides an overview of the state data available for both North Carolina virtual charter schools established under the pilot program.

It is important, however, that North Carolina legislators and public school stakeholders understand the research focused on full-time virtual learning options such as NCCA and NCVA prior to making legislative or policy recommendations regarding the virtual charter school pilot program's expansion, modification, or continuation. The recommendations presented in this report are in response to data presented herein and a review of relevant literature regarding full-time virtual learning. The students of North Carolina deserve quality educational choices. These recommendations are written with the hope that improved data and additional reporting will provide the critical information needed to make future decisions regarding the virtual charter school pilot program.

The most recent national survey of full-time virtual learning, *Virtual Schools in the U.S. 2019*,[27] was issued in May 2019 by the National Education Policy Center[28] at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Overall, the report found that enrollment at full-time virtual schools continues to grow despite poor academic performance. This aligns with North Carolina data on virtual charter enrollment and academic performance. The overview of national literature reviewed in *Virtual Schools in the U.S. 2019* establishes that virtual schools perform at lower rates compared with face-to-face instructional models. In fact, the charter school advocacy organizations National Association of Charter School Authorizers, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, and the 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now issued *A Call to Action to Improve the Quality of Full-Time Virtual Charter Public Schools*[29] in 2016 explicitly calling on state leaders to make policy changes needed to improve the "disturbingly low performance" of full-time virtual charter schools. This call for action expressed the organizations' support for full-time virtual learning options, but also the concern that continued expansion of low-performing virtual learning options has the potential to overshadow the positive impact virtual learning can have on many students.

Full-time virtual schools enrolled nearly 300,000 students, nationally, in the 2017-2018 school year. Forty-six point five percent (46.5%) of those virtual options were virtual charter schools, yet virtual charter schools account for seventy-nine point one percent (79.1%) of enrollment with an average enrollment of 1,011 students per school.

[27] Molnar, A., Miron, G., Elgeberi, N., Barbour, M.K., Huerta, L., Shafer, S.R., Rice, J.K. (2019). *Virtual Schools in the U.S. 2019*. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved September 3, 2020, from http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/virtual-schools-annual-2019.

[28] https://nepc.colorado.edu/

[29] *A Call to Action to Improve the Quality of Full-Time Virtual Charter Public Schools* (June 2016). Retrieved September 3, 2020, from http://www.publiccharters.org/sites/default/files/migrated/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VirtualReport_Web614.pdf.

The two virtual charter schools must show academic improvement in the remaining three years of the pilot program. The COVID-19 pandemic poses challenges in collecting academic data needed to accurately evaluate academic performance. However, the importance of academic performance improvement on the part of the virtual charter schools should be a top priority for all stakeholders. Furthermore, the *Virtual Schools in the U.S.* 2019 study found that "there is little research to describe the virtual or blended student experience, which has resulted in a lack of understanding of the actual instructional model, the nature of the curriculum, and the type and amount of support employed by these schools."[30] As a result, the following recommendations are presented:

(1) Both virtual charter schools shall submit a report to the CSAB and SBE, using available internal data such as check-in data or other formative assessments, showing areas of academic growth and challenge during the 2019-2020 school year for which state accountability data is unavailable. This report should be presented to the CSAB at its February 2021 meeting.

(2) During the 2021-2022 school year, both virtual charter schools shall submit a report to the CSAB and SBE regarding the student experience at each school. The report shall include, at a minimum, information regarding: the instructional model(s) employed at each school; time spent actively online by students and teachers; the curriculum and software utilized at each school; student and family supports provided; sample daily student schedules of instructional days; learning coach requirements and support; and data regarding the amount of asynchronous and synchronous instruction. The report shall also include data on mobility rates among each school's student population. In addition, both virtual charter schools shall conduct in-depth surveys of teachers, students, and families regarding stakeholder opinions on (at a minimum) school academics, culture, and support. Survey results should include questions regarding the amount of daily time spent on instruction by students and support by learning coaches. The report and accompanying survey results should be provided to the Office of Charter Schools by July 1, 2022 for inclusion in the November 15, 2022 final legislatively required report on the virtual charter pilot program. The CSAB strongly recommends that this report and the accompanying surveys be facilitated and written by an external evaluator with expertise in virtual learning.

(3) Accountability data for the two virtual charter schools be separated from aggregated data of "all charters" for state accountability reporting purposes. There are several reasons for this recommendation. First, virtual charters were established and extended through a legislative process as opposed to the authorization and renewal process of which all brick and mortar charter schools participate. Additionally, virtual charter schools are critically different from face-to-face instructional brick and mortar charter schools and therefore merit separate data analysis and consideration.

[30] Molnar, A., Miron, G., Elgeberi, N., Barbour, M.K., Huerta, L., Shafer, S.R., Rice, J.K. (2019). *Virtual Schools in the U.S. 2019*. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved September 3, 2020, from http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/virtual-schools-annual-2019.

Appendix

Both virtual charter schools were given the opportunity to respond to this report. In addition, the schools' School Improvement Plans (SIPs) were requested. Responses received and SIPs are attached in the following pages.

DRAFT

4220 NC Highway 55, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27713-2226
Phone: 919.346.0121
Fax: 919.324.6597

http://ncva.k12.com

DATE: September 11, 2020

TO: Joint Legislative Education Oversite Committee Members
State Board of Education Members
Charter School Advisory Board Members

FROM: Lauren Acome, Head of School *Lauren Acome*

RE: JLEOC Virtual Report by the Office of Charter Schools

We thank the Joint Legislative Education Oversite Committee Members [JLEOC], State Board of Education Members [SBE], and the Charter School Advisory Board Members [CSAB] for extending to the North Carolina Virtual Academy (NCVA) an opportunity to review this version of the draft report and include a response from our perspective.

Since its inception, NCVA has made significant changes. We have invested in new academic initiatives, instructional and assessment programs, teacher hiring and training, and student support services to improve academic outcomes. Under new leadership, NCVA experienced significant academic and operational improvement in 2019-2020, not reflected in the draft report. We readily admit that our goal is to continue to improve academically; however, we wish to point out successes at the school.

- NCVA test participation is greater than 95% of our students, exceeding the state average.
    - As the law requires one testing location in each of the eight State Board educational districts, NCVA hosted sixteen different sites throughout the state. The average drive per family to a testing center was less than 20 miles.
- NCVA High School students participated in state End-of-Course assessments in December of 2019. Overall, NCVA saw remarkable improvement in scores:
    - 19 percentage point increase in Math 1 from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.
    - 8 percentage point increase in Biology from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.
    - 16 percentage point increase in Math 3 from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.
    - English 2 scores not received due to re-norming year.
    - December 2019 NVCA Math 1 scores exceed the 2018-2019 state average by 9 percentage points.
    - Students scoring at the proficient level on the ACT increased by 7 percentage points from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. NVCA outperformed the 2018-2019 state average both years.
- NCVA administers the MAP NWEA math and reading assessment, a state-approved alternate assessment per NCDPI, three times a year to monitor student growth and progress.
    - Elementary School: NCVA students demonstrated significant growth in 7 of the 8 NWEA assessments from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.

NORTH CAROLINA VIRTUAL ACADEMY

4220 NC Highway 55, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27713-2226
Phone: 919.346.0121
Fax: 919.324.6597

http://ncva.k12.com

- Middle School: NCVA students demonstrated significant growth in 6 of the 6 NWEA assessments from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.
- High School: NCVA students demonstrated significant growth in 5 of the 6 NWEA assessments from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.
- At the end of this letter both state and internal assessment data from 2019-2020 are attached. The data included validates the substantial improvement made over the past school year.

- NCVA graduation rate for 2019-2020 was 71.5%, an 11.3 percentage point increase from 2018-2019.
- NCVA had clean financial audits with no finding or identified material weaknesses for each year of operation.
- K12, Inc. conducts an in-depth satisfaction survey each fall and spring. Listed below are end of the year satisfaction ratings for NCVA families:
  - 2015-2016: 91% of families were satisfied with their overall NCVA experience.
  - 2016-2017: 93% of families were satisfied with their overall NCVA experience.
  - 2017-2018: 95% of families were satisfied with their overall NCVA experience.
  - 2018-2019: 90% of families were satisfied with their overall NCVA experience.
  - 2019-2020: 95% of families were satisfied with their overall NCVA experience.
- NCVAs withdrawal rate has improved throughout the years due to increased communication during enrollment, orientation, and onboarding of students and learning coaches.
- NCVAs re-registration rate has increased throughout the years. Below is the previous three years of re-registration data, a broad indicator of family satisfaction.
  - 2017-2018: 88% of students re-registered for the 2018-2019 school year.
  - 2018-2019: 91% of students re-registered for the 2019-2020 school year.
  - 2019-2020: 92% of students re-registered for the 2020-2021 school year.

NCVA is committed to improving the academic achievement of our students. We are making progress, as is noted in our state and internal assessment data from 2019-2020 and performing well compared to demographically similar school districts. Several changes have been implemented to improve our academic performance. Some of those items are outlined below:

- The student-teacher ratio in Class Connect Sessions has decreased to 20:1 for more targeted, individualized instruction.
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities focus on data-driven instruction.
- Data-driven instructional model - Teachers conduct thorough data analysis after each interim and benchmark assessment
- A master Schedule was created to allow for additional instructional time as well as EOC Prep, small -group interventions, and tutoring hours.
- Math and Reading Curriculum specialists were employed to work with teachers on curriculum mapping and aligning coursework and classroom assessments to the state standards.

4220 NC Highway 55, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27713-2226
Phone: 919.346.0121
Fax: 919.324.6597

http://ncva.k12.com

While the draft report references the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado as well as the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, and the 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now's *A Call to Action to Improve the Quality of Full-Time Virtual Charter Public Schools* in 2016, we are uncertain as to their inclusion as neither report examines the North Carolina specific context leading to a question of relevance.

The report by NACSA, NAPCS, and 50CAN is not collaborative. Very few, if any, charter school boards, educators, operators, parents, or teachers in online charter schools were part of this report. Additionally, the report relies almost exclusively on old data (before 2012). It does not account for several critical factors unique to full-time online schools, including persistence and performance over time, date of enrollment, the effect of mobility, and the reasons why children leave their local school. Families often choose online schools because they are fleeing a school or situation that was not working for their child, or other reasons – bullying, special needs, medical issues, social or emotional challenges, safety concerns, academic problems, among others. For many families, online schools are the *only* available public-school choice they have.

We want to note that The 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now, which signed on to the 2016 report with the NAPCS and NACSA, recently came out with a new report called "Fund Everything" and explicitly endorse removing all caps/barriers to virtual charters. Their change in position demonstrates the critical expertise online schools are providing to the nation right now. Traditional districts are learning that online schooling is hard, and we believe our experience with this type of schooling is providing a quality option for families.

"Families should have the option to enroll their student in an online district school program outside of their neighborhood boundaries or in an online charter school or private school program anywhere in the country. There should not be any unnecessary restrictions to these online transfers, such as state enrollment caps, and the flexibility of these options should be protected. Jurisdictional waivers at the state level and interstate agreements between governors should be pursued to maximize the number of choices." https://50can.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/08/Fund-Everything-2020.pdf

While policy is necessary, the most critical work we are doing every day is on behalf of the students we serve. We understand the academic challenges, and we have made significant changes in recent years to meet these challenges. We look forward to continuing the data analysis and contributing to policy discussions to best measure virtual charter school performance in North Carolina.

4220 NC Highway 55, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27713-2226
Phone: 919.346.0121
Fax: 919.324.6597

http://ncva.k12.com

HIGH SCHOOL EOC DATA

YEAR		HIGH SCHOOL				
		MATH1	ENGLISH2	BIOLOGY	MATH3	ACT
NCVA SY1819		33.10%	65.50%	35.60%	21.50%	59%
NCVA SY1920		52.38%	N/A	42.86%	36.71%	66.20%
DURHAM SY1819		31%	52%	53%	38%	46.70%
NCVA SY1920		52.38%	N/A	42.86%	36.71%	66.20%
STATE SY1819		41%	59%	59%	47%	55.80%
NCVA SY1920		52.38%	N/A	42.86%	36.71%	66.20%

- 19% increase in Math 1 from SY1819 to SY1920
- 8% increase in Biology from SY1819 to SY1920
- 16% increase in Math 3 from SY1819 to SY1920
- NCVA High School is on a block schedule and administered first semester state exams in December 2019.

4220 NC Highway 55, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27713-2226
Phone: 919.346.0121
Fax: 919.324.6597

http://ncva.k12.com

NWEA MAP RIT GROWTH SY1819 compared to SY1920

Grade	Year	Math Growth	Reading Growth	Math Growth	Growth	Reading Growth	Growth
11th	SY18-19	59/114=51.7%	47/113=41.5%	52%		42%	
11th	SY19-20	90/146= 61.6%	84/146=57.5%	62%	↑10%	58%	↑ 16%
10th	SY18-19	74/140=52.8%	72/138=52.1%	53%		52%	
10th	SY19-20	125/188= 66.4%	107/188=56.9%	66%	↑13%	57%	↑ 5%
9th	SY18-19	124/194=63.9%	115/193=59.5%	64%		60%	
9th	SY19-20	147/213= 69%	125/213=58.6%	69%	↑5%	59%	● -1%
8th	SY18-19	142/247=57.4%	138/247=55.8%	57%		56%	
8th	SY19-20	201/253=79%	173/253=68.3%	79%	↑22%	68%	↑ 12%
7th	SY18-19	146/262=55.7%	143/262=54.5%	56%		55%	
7th	SY19-20	178/250=71.2%	165/250=66%	71%	↑15%	66%	↑ 11%
6th	SY18-19	157/246=63.8%	133/246=54%	64%		54%	
6th	SY19-20	194/250=77.6%	159/250=63.6%	78%	↑14%	64%	↑ 10%
5th	SY18-19	119/181=65.7%	111/181=61.3%	66%		61%	
5th	SY19-20	200/262=76.3%	190/262=72.5%	76%	↑10%	73%	↑ 12%
4th	SY18-19	144/194=74.2%	139/194=71.6%	74%		72%	
4th	SY19-20	167/218=76.6%	157/218=72%	77%	↑3%	72%	NULL
3rd	SY18-19	140/170=82.3%	126/170=74%	82%		74%	
3rd	SY19-20	170/200=85%	161/200=80.5%	85%	↑3%	81%	↑ 7%
2nd	SY18-19	120/163=73.6%	115/163=70.5%	74%		71%	
2nd	SY19-20	149/183=81.4%	138/183=75.4%	81%	↑7%	75%	↑ 4%

Every child...Every class…Every day

4220 NC Highway 55, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27713-2226
Phone: 919.346.0121
Fax: 919.324.6597

http://ncva.k12.com

NWEA-EOG conversion SY1920 NWEA-EOG Conversion study

Year	3rd		4th		5th			6th		7th		8th		
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Science	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Science
SY1516 actuals	55.4	40.8	48.7	27.7	55.1	30.7	47.6	56.7	25.1	51.5	29.6	59.8	25.6	65.4
SY1617 actuals	51.6	38.6	53	23.5	48.9	17.6	48.5	58.4	20.8	61.1	25.1	50.9	19.2	57.8
SY1718 actuals	50.6	42.1	49.7	30.2	52.7	28.8	56.5	67.9	20.9	68.5	31.5	59.2	27.7	71.1
SY1819 actuals	47.6	28.8	45.9	26.5	48.3	26.7	51.7	67.6	37.7	70.5	39.3	53.8	26.7	78.5
SY1920 based on NWEA EOG Conversions	66.3	63.1	58.9	39.7	59.0	39.9	N/A	66.5	44.5	66.7	41.2	68.9	39.9	N/A
compared to SY1819	*up 18.7*	*up 34.3*	*up 13*	*up 13.2*	*up 10.7*	*up 13.2*		*down 1.1*	*up 6.8*	*down 3.8*	*up 1.9*	*up 15.1*	*up 13.2*	
SY1819 Durham	44.7	52	48.5	47.1	44.6	46.6	68.8	51.8	48.6	49.4	45.7	47.6	43.9	68.5
SY1819 State Averages	56.8	64.3	57.3	57.3	54.6	60.2	72.6	60.0	58.8	58.8	58.4	55.6	52.6	78.6

NCVA School Improvement Plan
2020-2021

Mission: NCVA is a community of students, families and educators dedicated to expanding educational choice through innovative and technology rich instructional practices, and accountable for developing each student's full potential for academic and post- secondary success.

K12, Inc. Mission: To transform learning for every student through inspired teaching and personalized learning.

2019-2020 School Data:

HIGH SCHOOL EOC DATA

YEAR		HIGH SCHOOL				
		MATH1	ENGLISH2	BIOLOGY	MATH3	ACT
NCVA SY1819		33.10%	65.50%	35.60%	21.50%	59%
NCVA SY1920		52.38%	N/A	42.86%	36.71%	66.20%
DURHAM SY1819		31%	52%	53%	38%	46.70%
NCVA SY1920		52.38%	N/A	42.86%	36.71%	66.20%
STATE SY1819		41%	59%	59%	47%	55.80%
NCVA SY1920		52.38%	N/A	42.86%	36.71%	66.20%

NWEA MAP RIT GROWTH SY1819 compared to SY1920

Grade	Year	Math Growth	Reading Growth	Math Growth	Growth	Reading Growth	Growth
11th	SY18-19	59/114=51.7%	47/113=41.5%	52%		42%	
11th	SY19-20	90/146= 61.6%	84/146=57.5%	62%	↑10%	58%	↑ 16%
10th	SY18-19	74/140=52.8%	72/138=52.1%	53%		52%	
10th	SY19-20	125/188= 66.4%	107/188=56.9%	66%	↑13%	57%	↑ 5%
9th	SY18-19	124/194=63.9%	115/193=59.5%	64%		60%	
9th	SY19-20	147/213= 69%	125/213=58.6%	69%	↑5%	59%	● -1%
8th	SY18-19	142/247=57.4%	138/247=55.8%	57%		56%	
8th	SY19-20	201/253=79%	173/253=68.3%	79%	↑22%	68%	↑ 12%
7th	SY18-19	146/262=55.7%	143/262=54.5%	56%		55%	
7th	SY19-20	178/250=71.2%	165/250=66%	71%	↑15%	66%	↑ 11%
6th	SY18-19	157/246=63.8%	133/246=54%	64%		54%	
6th	SY19-20	194/250=77.6%	159/250=63.6%	78%	↑14%	64%	↑ 10%
5th	SY18-19	119/181=65.7%	111/181=61.3%	66%		61%	
5th	SY19-20	200/262=76.3%	190/262=72.5%	76%	↑10%	73%	↑ 12%
4th	SY18-19	144/194=74.2%	139/194=71.6%	74%		72%	
4th	SY19-20	167/218=76.6%	157/218=72%	77%	↑3%	72%	NULL
3rd	SY18-19	140/170=82.3%	126/170=74%	82%		74%	
3rd	SY19-20	170/200=85%	161/200=80.5%	85%	↑3%	81%	↑ 7%
2nd	SY18-19	120/163=73.6%	115/163=70.5%	74%		71%	
2nd	SY19-20	149/183=81.4%	138/183=75.4%	81%	↑7%	75%	↑ 4%

NWEA-EOG conversion SY1920 NWEA-EOG Conversion study

Year	3rd		4th		5th			6th		7th		8th		
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Science	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Science
SY1516 actuals	55.4	40.8	48.7	27.7	55.1	30.7	47.6	56.7	25.1	51.5	29.6	59.8	25.6	65.4
SY1617 actuals	51.6	38.6	53	23.5	48.9	17.6	48.5	58.4	20.8	61.1	25.1	50.9	19.2	57.8
SY1718 actuals	50.6	42.1	49.7	30.2	52.7	28.8	56.5	67.9	20.9	68.5	31.5	59.2	27.7	71.1
SY1819 actuals	47.6	28.8	45.9	26.5	48.3	26.7	51.7	67.6	37.7	70.5	39.3	53.8	26.7	78.5
SY1920 based on NWEA EOG Conversions	66.3	63.1	58.9	39.7	59.0	39.9	N/A	66.5	44.5	66.7	41.2	68.9	39.9	N/A
compared to SY1819	*up 18.7*	*up 34.3*	*up 13*	*up 13.2*	*up 10.7*	*up 13.2*		*down 1.1*	*up 6.8*	*down 3.8*	*up 1.9*	*up 15.1*	*up 13.2*	
SY1819 Durham	44.7	52	48.5	47.1	44.6	46.6	68.8	51.8	48.6	49.4	45.7	47.6	43.9	68.5
SY1819 State Averages	56.8	64.3	57.3	57.3	54.6	60.2	72.6	60.0	58.8	58.8	58.4	55.6	52.6	78.6

Goal Summary: For the 2020-2021 school year, NCVA will focus on seven continuous improvement goals that closely align with North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's school improvement goals. This strategic plan is a work in progress and will continue to be developed and implemented through the work of the NC Star Committee this year. Overall, the strategic plan focuses on five categories: Effective Core Instruction, Data-Driven Instruction, Targeted Instruction, Student Engagement, and Professional Development. As a school, we will use the Academic Excellence Framework to meet our goals for the school year. The Academic Excellence Framework will guide NCVA in developing a comprehensive academic plan, organized according to seven guiding standards designed to improve student outcomes: Culture, Assessment, Instruction, Staffing, Data-Driven Instruction, Observations & Feedback, and Professional Development. With a relentless focus on continuous improvement, NCVA's strategic plan, driven by the Academic Excellence Framework contain the essential components for the planning process leading to school improvement and student achievement.

Core Function:	Dimension A – Instructional Excellence and Alignment				
Effective Practice	**Curriculum and instructional alignment**				
KEY **A2.04**	**Instructional Teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level taught.**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	**Resources/Tracking**
Initial Assessment:	Grade and Content level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) will meet weekly to analyze student performance data based on multiple formative assessment data points. Through PLC's each content area will develop pacing guides and unit planning documents with support from NCVA and K12 instructional coaches that is aligned with the NCSCOS.				NCVA Documents
How it will look when fully met:	All PLC's will create, revise, and share standard aligned lessons and curriculum maps that are differentiated, innovative, and rigorous. Within unit and lesson planning, teachers will utilize student performance outcomes and instructional best practices to create targeted and personalized learning experiences. PLCs will be able to effectively answer the following questions: What did students learn?, How do we know they learned it?, How do we know what they learned?, How are we enriching the learning experience for students who have mastered the standard?, How are we re-teaching/intervening for students who have not mastered the standard?		Lauren Acome (Head of School)	ongoing through SY2021	NCVA Documents
Actions:					
	PLC's will meet weekly to create common unit plans aligned with NCSCOS. NCVA leadership will allocate professional development time and funds for PLC curriculum days across core content areas.		Kelly Shanahan Sarah O'Shea Marcia Simmons (Principals)	ongoing through SY2021	NCVA Documents
Notes:	A PLC meeting schedule as well as meeting minutes template (to be completed by each PLC weekly), and meeting recordings will be housed in the shared One Drive. These minutes are accessible and reviewed by leadership on a weekly basis. Curriculum maps, pacing guides, and lesson plans are also housed in the shared One Drive. Lesson plans must be submitted to the AA every Friday to ensure alignment between what is being taught daily and the NCSCOS.				
	The Instructional leadership and Curriculum Specialists will conduct weekly observations and walk-through's providing feedback and coaching, as well as sharing core instructional best practices. Leadership will track weekly observations in a shared document, housed in our Shared One Note in the Data Driven Instruction roll-up plan.		Lauren Acome	8/17/2020-5/20/2021	

DRAFT

Notes:	Completed walkthrough/observation form is placed into each teachers' folder in the Admin's OneNote. Feedback is shared with teachers via email and discussed in bi-weekly 1:1 with Principals.				
	PLC's will create plans to provide extra time and support to students that are struggling to demonstrate mastery of the essential skills and understandings. Teachers will assign tutorial time (FEV Tutor) for students who are not demonstrating academic success and will monitor their attendance at tutorials.		Kelly Shanahan Sarah O'Shea Marcia Simmons	8/17/2020- 5/20/2021	NCVA Documents
Notes:	Master Schedule was created to optimize small group instruction for struggling learners. Mastery Meeting/Remediation time was built into the schedule each day and instructional time has been increased. Anyone can join a classroom session through a Class Connect invite, provided by the teacher and/or administration. FEV tutoring weekly reports/data spreadsheet will be housed in the shared One Drive.				

Core Function:		**Dimension A – Instructional Excellence and Alignment**				
Effective Practice		**Student Support Services**				
KEY	**A4.01**	**The school implements a tiered instructional system that allows teachers to deliver evidence-based instruction aligned with the individual needs of students across all tiers.**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	**Resources/Tracking**
Initial Assessment:		NCVA teachers will focus on Tier 1 of the MTSS levels of support and will be delivering quality core instructional practices. Teacher's will have bi-weekly 1:1 meetings with their Principal to look at individual student data as well as whole classroom data to plan instruction and remediation opportunities. NCVA's Student Support Team (Advisors) will meet with leadership bi-weekly to monitor student's grades and progress to create individualize success plans for each student.				DDI tracker 1:1
How it will look when fully met:		Master Schedule, instructional delivery, and data analysis processes will reflect effective core academic and social/emotional learning experiences for all students. Consistent reflection on student data will provide intensive supports/interventions for targeted students during strategic intervention times within the weekly schedule.		Lauren Acome	5/20/2021	
Actions:						

DRAFT

	The Student Support Team, led by Lea King, will monitor student progress in grades, attendance, and engagement on a weekly basis. This team will communicate weekly with parents, students, and teachers, to ensure a supportive school environment.		Lea King	8/17/2020 (ongoing)	NCVA weekly RDM tracker
Notes:	The student support team will use the RDM tracker to document teacher referrals, student grades, attendance, and engagement every week. Advisors record communication notes in Total View School for each student as well as maintain an individual spreadsheet of communication for each caseload. Student Support Administrator will pull reports in Oracle to show Advisor contacts to be made available to school leadership.				
	Teachers will give frequent formative assessments to understand students' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers will use this data for targeted, small group instruction.		Lauren Acome	(ongoing)	
Notes:					
	Teachers and support team will utilize NWEA assessments and NC Check-ins to schedule students for targeted, small group instruction. Teachers and leadership will monitor growth throughout the year on NWEA assessments.		Lauren Acome	3x/year	Academic Tracker
Notes:	Student growth on NWEA assessments and NCSCOS standards will be housed in the Academic tracker.				

Core Function:		**Dimension A – Instructional Excellence and Alignment**				
Effective Practice		**Student Support Services**				
KEY	**A4.16**	**The school develops and implements consistent, intentional, and on-going plans to support students transitions for grade-to-grade and level-to-level.**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	**Resources/Tracking**
Initial Assessment:		The Student Support Team (Advisors) will create a proactive approach to supporting students and learning coaches through routinely monitoring of student progress, attendance, and engagement. We will use the Academic tracker to house formative assessment data gathered for students across grade levels to share as a team as students transition from one course to another.				

DRAFT

	The tracker will also assist with planning, placing, and supporting students in small, targeted groups.				
How it will look when fully met:	MTSS Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and the new Advisor model will be fully implemented with appropriate student tracking systems to ensure transition plans are in place.		Lauren Acome	Ongoing SY2021	
Actions:					
	Leadership team will spend professional development time being trained in effective use of the Academic tracker. Will ensure complete understanding to effectively incorporate data tracking in multiple areas.		Lauren Acome	9/15/2020	
Notes:					
	Advisors will complete 200 connections calls each in the first month of school. Advisors will create make monthly connections with students and learning coaches.		Lea King	Ongoing SY2021	NCVA weekly RDM tracker
Notes:	Advisors record communication notes in TVS for each student as well as maintain an individual spreadsheet of communication for each caseload. Student Support Administrator will pull reports in Oracle to show Advisor contacts to be made available to school leadership.				
	MTSS team will routinely track student data to ensure proper placement in MTSS groups and appropriate interventions and small group instruction is taking place. MTSS Interventionists will work closely with teachers in small group instruction to provide remediation and intervention for struggling students.		Mariel Richter	Ongoing SY2021	MTSS One Drive
Notes:	MTSS Lead created a shared One Drive to house all MTSS documents. Interventionist use the spreadsheet for each grade level to progress monitor weekly student data, goals, and lesson plans.				

Core Function:		**Dimension B – Leadership Capacity**				
Effective Practice		**Strategic planning, mission, vision**				
KEY	**B1.03**	**A leadership team, consisting of the HOS, principal, teachers who lead the instructional teams, and other professional staff meets regularly to review implementation of effective practices.**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	
Initial Assessment:		Current leadership team meets weekly to review teacher, student, and school data as well as implementation of effective instructional practices. PLCs meet weekly; bi-weekly all staff				

DRAFT

	meeting; bi-weekly MTSS meetings; monthly NC Star Committee Meeting (SIT – HOS and Executive Director to chair committee)				
How it will look when fully met:	Leadership team, MTSS, PLCs, and NC Star Committee will meet regularly to engage in a formal process review, implementation of effective classroom instruction, targeted instruction, data-driven instruction, student engagement, and professional development.		Lauren Acome	Ongoing SY2021	
Actions:					
	Leadership team will meet weekly to participate in data dives to drive instructional practices and decision making for the school.		Lauren Acome	8/17/2020 (ongoing)	NCVA Leadership Notebook
Notes:	Leadership team will use the data-roll up plan to drive conversations during meetings. Curriculum Specialists will participate in data meetings bi-weekly. Documentation of data meeting minutes will be housed in the SY1920 Leadership One Drive.				
	Principals will meet bi-weekly with staff members 1:1 to disaggregate student data and discuss effective instructional practices. HOS will hold weekly 1:1 with Principals to examine current data, trends, and instructional best practices.		Kelly Shanahan Sarah O'Shea Marcia Simmons	8/17/2020 (ongoing)	DDI tracker 1:1
Notes:	Administrators have created a Data Driven Instruction (DDI) tracker for each teacher, that will be housed in the one drive. Principals will use this tracker to provide observation feedback, data digs, and 1:1 meeting notes. Individual teacher trackers can be shared at any time by their Principal.				
	NC Star Committee will meet monthly to create a comprehensive school improvement plan. Will work closely with the Academic Committee in the creation of the SIP.		Lauren Acome	SY201 (monthly)	
Notes:					

Core Function:		**Dimension B – Leadership Capacity**				
Effective Practice		**Monitoring instruction in school**				
KEY	**B3.03**	**The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly and provides timely, clear, constructive feedback to teachers.**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	
Initial Assessment:		NCVA will develop a walkthrough tool for teachers that will be utilized by the leadership team to provide feedback for teachers so they can reflect upon their instructional practices. Administrators will attend weekly PLC meetings and conduct classroom observations. We will create a walkthrough schedule with our instruction support team (Interventionist, Curriculum				

DRAFT

	Coordinators, SPED Director) so we can inform teachers about the specific ways that they can support math and literacy instruction, utilize various digital instructional tools, a differentiate instruction for students.				
How it will look when fully met:	Staff will participate regularly in walkthroughs to provide coaching and feedback during PLC planning, focusing on data analysis as well as effective instructional practices. Principals will closely monitor teacher growth and PDP plans, emphasizing student growth, targeted - small group instruction, and student engagement/relationships.		Lauren Acome		
Actions:					
	Walkthrough form created to provide immediate feedback for teachers, allowing teachers to become reflective of their instruction.		Lauren Acome	COMPLETE	
Notes:					
	Each administrator will complete walkthrough observations to provide feedback to teachers in addition to regularly scheduled evaluative observations as outlined by NCEES.		Kelly Shanahan Sarah O'Shea Marcia Simmons Lauren Acome	SY2021 (ongoing)	DDI tracker 1:1
Notes:	Administrators have created a DDI tracker for each teacher, that will be housed in the one drive. Principals will use this tracker to provide observation feedback to allow for teacher reflection. Both Principal and teacher will have access to this document.				

Core Function:		**Dimension C – Professional Capacity**				
Effective Practice		**Quality of Professional Development**				
KEY	**C2.01**	**The school regularly looks at school performance data and aggregated classroom observation data and uses that data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs.**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	
Initial Assessment:		NCVA will utilize EOG/EOC benchmark and formative assessment data (NWEA, GoFormative, NC Check-Ins) as well as EVAAS growth measures to drive instructional decisions, specifically regarding targeted instruction. All teachers will compile classroom and grade level assessment data in a common spreadsheet to track student growth and performance across grade levels, content areas, and standards. Weekly staff meeting and professional development days will be utilized to provide professional development and				

DRAFT

	coaching in the areas of effective core instruction, targeted small group instruction, data-driven instruction, and student engagement.				
How it will look when fully met:	The school will look at school performance data and aggravated classroom data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs. Student achievement data will reflect growth and teacher observation data will reflect improvement in effective instructional practices and student learning.		Lauren Acome	8/17/2020 (ongoing)	
Actions:					
	NCVA will improve its master schedule to create optimal conditions for improving core instruction.			COMPLETE	
Notes:	Instructional time for each class has been lengthened. Core content courses will be structured at the same time(s) to promote targeted small groups of instruction across the same content through frequent analysis of formative assessment data. Structure of the master schedule will promote targeted re-teaching opportunities within the school day. Mastery Meetings/Remediation time has been added to the instructional day.				
	Teachers will develop formative assessments to supplement NWEA benchmark and NC Check-In assessments.			SY2021 (ongoing)	
Notes:	Teachers are required to create 2 (ES) or 3(MS/HS) formative assessments a week using GoFormative. Teachers will use the data from the formative assessments to group students based on need for remediation and reteaching as well as to differentiate instruction. Per weekly lesson plans, formative assessments will align with NCSCOS standards as outlined in curriculum maps and pacing guides.				
	Professional Development Committee will work closely with the leadership team to ensure that Professional Development focuses on data driven instruction, targeted instruction, effective core instruction, and student engagement.			SY2021 (ongoing)	
Notes:					

Core Function:		**Dimension E – Families and Community**				
Effective Practice		**Family Engagement**				
KEY	**E1.06**	**The school regularly communicated with parents about its expectations and the importance of the curriculum (what parents can do at home to support their children's learning).**	**Implementation Status**	**Assigned To**	**Target Date**	
Initial Assessment:		NCVA will provide multiple opportunities for students and parents to partner with and participate in various school and community events. NCVA will continue to prioritize school to home communication to communicate with parents (synchronously) a minimum of once				

DRAFT

	per week to ensure that parents are actively involved and are able to support their child's education.				
How it will look when fully met:	At full implementation, parents will be well informed about the instructional practices occurring in their child's classroom through multiple avenues including but not limited to Blackboard Connect, Zoom, teacher emails, NCVA website and school outings. NCVA will serve as an integral part of our communities throughout the state.		Lauren Acome	SY2021 (ongoing)	
Actions:					
	Family Engagement Coordinator and the Outing committee will increase the number of outings to 1/month. Outings will be held in all regions of the state and will focus on three different activities: adventure, academic, and assistance (community service). Outings will be virtual due to COVID-19 for the time being.		Lea King Jillian Davenport Lauren Acome	Monthly	
Notes:	9 Outings have been scheduled for the remainder of the school year. POCs have been identified to plan various outings in each region. High School will hold HS only outing to promote attendance. Student attendance will be tracked using Testing Nirvana. Data will be shared out each month to track student/family/community engagement.				
	Advisors will make weekly connection calls with their students and learning coaches. Teachers and Leadership team will make 5 family connection calls a week to build relationships with families.		Lea King Lauren Acome	5/20/2021	
Notes:	Advisors record communication notes in TVS for each student as well as maintain an individual spreadsheet of communication for each caseload. Student Support Administrator will pull reports in Oracle to show Advisor calls and attempts to be made available to school leadership.				
	Advisors and leadership team will do home visits when necessary to build relationships and support struggling students.		Lauren Acome	SY2021 (ongoing)	
Notes:					

DRAFT