

NEVADA CITY
SCHOOL
OF THE
ARTS



Family Handbook



13032 Bitney Springs Road Bldg. 8
Nevada City, CA 95959
Phone: 273-7736
Fax: 273-1378
www.thencsa.com

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Charter Description.....	4
Mission Statement.....	4
Statement of Philosophy	5
Academic Curriculum	6
Arts and Music Curriculum	6
Social Curriculum.....	7
Academic Assessment	8
The Campus	8
Governance and Decision-Making at NCSA	8
Nevada County Superintendent of Schools & the NCSA Charter	8
Charter Governance Council	9
School of the Arts Educational Foundation	9
The Staff.....	9
The Faculty.....	10
Administrative Staff.....	10
Parent Involvement	11
Enrollment	11
The School Community.....	12
The Compact.....	13
Complaints Concerning Charter School Employees.....	14
For Students and Parents - The Essentials.....	16
Administration of Medication.....	16
Attendance	16
After School Care.....	18
Break Times.....	18
Change of Address	18
Classroom Visitations and Volunteers	18
Conferences.....	18
Cubbies	18
Daily Schedule	18
Early Pick-Up	18
Emergency School Closures:	19
Fire and Earthquake Drills	19
504 Rehabilitation Act	19
Homework.....	19
Illnesses and Accidents.....	19
Items from Home:	19
Lice	20
Report Cards	21
Student Success Team.....	21
Transfers/Exit	21

Volunteering.....	21
Student Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policy.....	22
Expectations	22
Dress Code:.....	22
Students are expected to wear clothing, accessories and shoes:.....	22
Discipline Policy and Process	23
Minor Infractions.....	23
Moderate Infractions.....	23
Consequences.....	23
Bottom Line Behaviors	24
Consequences.....	24
Sexual Harassment Policy - Students	24
Suspension Procedures	24
Authority to Expel	26
Expulsion Procedures	26
Right to Appeal	26
Electives Guidelines for 6 th -8 th Grade Students	27
“You’ve Been Noticed” Forms and Referring to Restitution.....	27
Restitution.....	28
8 th Grade Graduation Requirements	30
6 th and 7 th Grade Passing Requirements	30
After School Events and Special Performances	31
Field Study Policies and Procedures	31
Supervision by Parent Chaperones.....	33
Daily School Schedule	35



Welcome to the Nevada City School of the Arts. We are a public charter school serving Kindergarten through 8th grade students throughout Nevada County. The shared vision of our school is to provide a rigorous academic environment, using art as a lens to shape curriculum.

This handbook has been developed to answer frequently asked questions and to provide important information about the school – its organizing principles, its programs, and its staff.

Charter Description

The State of California Charter Schools Act of 1992 provided a petition process for the creation of 100 charter schools. A Nevada City teacher and parent wrote a petition that was approved in 1994 for a school integrating the arts into a strong academic program. The Nevada City Elementary School District was the sponsor for NCSA's charter from 1994 to 1996. In order to facilitate an increase in enrollment, the school's sponsorship shifted to the Twin Ridges Elementary School District in 1996. In 2008, NCSA changed sponsors from Twin Ridges to the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools.

We are public school. Although charter schools vary from one to the next in terms of their individual mission or educational approach, or their administrative organization, this new type of school is publicly funded and features the following characteristics:

- Committed to innovative and accelerated learning for students
- Governed by a combination of education-based and community-based management
- Maintains a healthy working relationship with its sponsor
- Receives a per-pupil allocation from the state known as the ADA (Average Daily Attendance)
- Requires no tuition
- Requires no inter-district transfer permits
- Meets all state and local health and safety regulations
- Open to families from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds
- Provides more options to parents to choose the school that best meets the needs of their children and family

Mission Statement

Nevada City School of the Arts, an open enrollment Kindergarten through 8th grade public school, is a democratic community which:

- **Nurtures** artistic expression as another way of knowing the world;
- **Inspires** learners to develop passion for lifelong learning;
- **Challenges** learners to acquire superior habits of mind, effective communication skills, and to produce academic excellence;
- **Engages** learners in accepting increasing levels of responsibility while developing respect and compassion for themselves and their world.

Statement of Philosophy

A school of the arts make us whole and inspires our pursuit of excellence. The Arts—Music, Dance, Theater, and the Visual Arts—are crucial to the complete education of a child. Their practice, understanding and appreciation are essential to human experience and learning itself. Research shows that the Arts in education promote brain growth and increase success in all academic areas. The Arts, however, are more than a means to an academic end. They point a way to live a balanced and reasonable life and engender a commitment to excellence. The Arts are not simply a means; they are an end in themselves. The Arts make us human and whole.

A school of the arts uses art as a lens for understanding the world. A beginning to such an artistic approach to education is to see the Arts in all things. By initiating and infusing our study of things with the Arts we come to use the Arts as a lens for understanding the world. Such a 'way' of approaching things offers deeper paths into the meaning and complexity of our world. In the Language Arts we find connections between the visual, the musical and the linguistic. In Mathematics we see more clearly the patterns and harmonics of form and number. In Science we find a kinship between the artistic and the scientific process. In History, we see the human drama in dense brushstrokes of image and sound, song and story, bringing it to life. Seeing ourselves and the world through the Arts allows us to be touched by the beauty, the power and wonder of all things.

A school of the arts nurtures habits of heart and mind. Beyond the understanding and appreciation of art is its practice. To practice art means to nurture the space and focus in ourselves that allows the Arts to emerge. Awareness, enthusiasm, discipline and a commitment to furthering our art are all essential qualities we prize. And in a world that emphasizes passivity, the Arts cultivate an active sense of living. Imagine and create much, use their hands, feel their bodies, read much, watch TV little, have hobbies and passions. In this manner, we seek to inspire a passion for learning, a discipline and commitment supported by reflection, self-assessment, critical and creative thinking. These habits of heart and mind unfold in a developmental arc, from the concrete toward the abstract, the simple to the complex. Attention to the appropriateness of activity and media, content and form, helps nurture a deeply imaginative practice of the Arts that seeks its own truth.

A school of the arts connects us to body and spirit, nature and culture. To practice the Arts also means to connect with the subject of our art - to be in our bodies and open to our spirit, to be inspired and connected with nature and to draw on the repository of tradition that is imbedded in global culture. In all that, there is growing awareness of interconnection. We become conscious of our feelings and emotions, our dreams and aspirations. We assess the impact and relationship between things. We honor this awareness of interconnection by considering the attitudes we hold, the way we treat others, the things we buy, the food we eat, and the activities in which we engage. We examine the ecological and the social impact of what we do, seeing the worth of all creatures and all people.

A school of the arts develops collaboration, respect, compassion, and conciliation. If we are interconnected, then we are already collaborators. This is basic to the experience of the artistic process - to be in relationship, to work with others, to communicate with an audience. In the same spirit, we promote a collaborative spirit among students and teachers, parents, and staff. Parents, students, teachers and staff all share the responsibility of governing the school. Volunteers make the rich opportunities of the school possible, in countless activities ranging from classroom and office help to field studies and fundraising. As collaborators, we think the best of each other, resolving conflict in ways that are open

and compassionate, healing and conciliatory. This extends from the playground to the council meeting, with all members seeking to model action that serves the good of all.

A school of the arts empowers us to be of service and make a difference. This collaborative community-mindedness leads directly to citizenship and service. The Arts are expression but also discourse. Part of what a School of the Arts can offer to the community is the solace and insight that they bring. We see our role as facilitators of the Arts in the community, enriching it with dance and theater, exhibitions and performances, collaborating with other artists, promoting and assisting the vision of arts-based education with other educational entities. And if the Arts can awaken compassion for others, then a fundamental expression of our artistic purpose should be to seek ways to help in the most basic of manners. Food for the hungry, clean rivers for the fish, visits to the elderly, the planting of trees, and the donating of money to good causes all have their place in this spirit of service. For if we understand how the world has given to us, we then naturally wish to return those gifts.

A school of the arts teaches us the art of living. In the end we seek not so much to create artists, as to nurture an artistic attitude and practice. A life immersed in the Arts leads naturally to the successful practice of the art of living. To go into the world with tools of heart and mind able to meet any challenge, with vision and understanding sufficient to see deeply into things, with creativity, resourcefulness, honesty, courage and compassion enough for the many uncertainties of life — this is what we seek for our children, our community and our world.

Academic Curriculum

The academic curriculum follows the State of California Standards and Frameworks for each grade level. Depth and focus are central to the curricular design with students frequently working in large blocks of time on projects to provide the necessary connections essential for comprehensive learning. Our Main Lesson academic program has demonstrated a high level of student performance based on numerous assessments including the STAR Test and performance assessments scored with rubrics.

Instruction in History, Science and Language Arts is thematically based while Mathematics instruction is more discrete. By sixth grade students are grouped by ability in Math, allowing some students to complete Algebra by the end of seventh grade and take our Geometry class in 8th Grade.

The arts are woven into the academic curriculum and enrich student work through the visual arts, drama, dance, and music. Opportunities to view, as well as make art are integrated into the everyday life of the school. Teachers arrange field studies for their classes to visit natural environments, artist studios, museums, art galleries, music, and drama productions. Artists from various disciplines teach classes to share their ideas and creativity.

Arts and Music Curriculum

Our goal as a school of the arts is to provide a comprehensive arts curriculum where students have the opportunity to create art, understand its cultural and historical context, respond to, and make critical judgments about art. We originally designed our arts program to offer a discipline-based arts education or (DBAE) curriculum. When DBAE was created there were no arts standards for California. Now, however, DBAE is no longer used in schools, so all of our arts instruction is based upon the current Visual and Performing Arts California Standards (VAPACS).

All students, from Kindergarten through 8th grade, receive weekly instruction with our specialists in Music, Movement and Art. This instruction varies in form. Main Lesson Art takes place in the classroom

with collaboration between Main Lesson teachers and the Artists in Residence. For example, a botany unit may begin with the study of botanical illustrations or a history unit on ancient China may begin with the study of calligraphy or screen painting. Music and Movement instruction are provided by specialists twice weekly. In the lower grades (K - 5th) Foundation Art lessons provide instruction in fine arts, drama, and dance. Upper grade students (6th -8th) also choose from a variety of electives such as watercolor, jazz dance, aikido, drama elements, and 3-Dimensional art. Two Showcases a year and art shows at and outside of school provide the opportunity for students to share their leaning with the public.

Parents should be advised that in the course of the student's art studies, examples of classic nude art by Masters may occasionally be encountered in art reference books used by instructors.

Music - The music program at NCSA, designed to enrich our core academics, is based on the philosophy and practice of Orff Schulwerk, a dynamic approach to music education developed by the composer Carl Orff and his colleague, Gunild Keetman. This approach begins with the premise that every child is innately musical and naturally loves to play, sing and dance. Children not only learn hundreds of songs, many set dances and instrumental pieces from all over the world on Orff instruments, but they also add their own ideas to each experience through improvisation, composition and choreography.

In addition to our general music classes, we provide training in musical instruments from 1st through 8th grade. In 1st and 2nd grade, students learn to play the flutophone, a stepping stone to the recorder. In 3rd and 4th grade they may choose between the recorder and fiddle or clarinet. In 5th grade their choices expand to include guitar and Taiko drumming.

In our middle school program, every student chooses one instrument to study and has the option of joining one of our performing groups. We have an amazing pool of talented local musicians who teach in our music program. Currently we provide small group music lessons twice weekly in cello, piano, guitar, bass guitar, and brass. Our performing groups include Jig and Jam (a Celtic influenced group), Jazz Ensemble, and Taiko Drumming.

Our choral program includes a 3rd –5th grade choir, and a middle school choir that performs in the Nevada County Choral Festival each November. We also sing every week at our K-8th grade school assembly.

Our students perform in a wide variety of venues, including our annual Winter Revels program (for 3rd–5th grades), a Winter and Spring Showcase in the middle school, Success Night, assemblies, Egypt Night, Shakespeare plays and a wide variety of programs designed by our main lesson teachers.

Social Curriculum

The social and emotional health of students is valued at NCSA. Each main lesson teacher works to establish a classroom community which supports each child. Teachers use the tenets of Ruth Charney's *Teaching Children to Care* and a conflict resolution program called "Talk It Out". The aim is to foster inter-and intra-personal strength in an atmosphere of acceptance and caring.

Dimensions of Learning, based on over 30 years of research in the learning process, is another model used at NCSA. In this model, learning involves the interaction of five dimensions of thinking. The dimensions are:

- Ⓢ Positive attitudes and perceptions about learning
- Ⓢ Thinking involved in acquiring and integrating knowledge
- Ⓢ Thinking involved in extending and refining knowledge

- Ⓢ Thinking involved in using knowledge meaningfully
- Ⓢ Productive habits of mind

Classroom instruction promotes and develops these dimensions so that students become constructive learners with enhanced capacity to take responsibility for their own learning and assess their own growth.

Academic Assessment

Our student evaluations are based on teacher designed rubrics that accompany student projects in both the academic and arts classes. The rubrics provide a description of various qualitative levels of the student's performance compared to various rubric elements. For instance, an oral history report may have one rubric for research, one for writing, one for history, and one for oral presentation.

In addition, students take the state mandated STAR test each spring. The scores on this test confirm the comparative success of our curriculum as upper grade NCSA students post scores that are some of the highest achievement scores in the State and in the Country. Parents should be aware that we do not "teach to the test," nor do we necessarily teach exactly what the Standards dictate at each given grade level. Because of this, our scores on state tests appear low in the early grades, but continue to increase each year. By the 8th grade, 75% - 85% of our students are at the proficient or advanced levels in Math, Language Arts and Science.

The Campus

In 1998 the school moved to a 24,000 square foot building at the Bitney Springs Charter Park, previously the site occupied by the Grass Valley Group. This property is a wooded natural environment sprinkled with ponds and walking trails. The quiet natural setting supports environmental studies and reflection. Yuba River Charter School occupies two other buildings on the property.

The building we lease has high ceilings and masses of windows. The entrance leads to a sky-lit atrium where art is displayed. Classrooms are very large as is the music room, art room and dance room which features a shock-absorbing dance floor. We have two small playgrounds - one exclusively for Kindergarten and one for all other classes.

Governance and Decision-Making at NCSA

The Nevada City School of the Arts Charter is governed by 2 entities which are ultimately accountable to the State of California taxpayers:

- 1) Charter Governance Council
- 2) Nevada County Superintendent of Schools

Nevada County Superintendent of Schools & the NCSA Charter

Charter schools in the state of California must currently be sponsored by a district or a county office of education. NCSA is sponsored by the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools (NCSoS). By state definition, however, a charter school is a district unto itself. Therefore, NCSA is technically a separate school within the NCSoS. This distinction is important as it means the Charter Council of NCSA carries governance responsibilities similar to those of a regular Board of Trustees. As the sponsor, however, the NCSoS has the ultimate responsibility to the state with regard to fiscal and legal compliance, and can veto any decisions NCSA may wish to make if they feel we are out of legal compliance.

The NCSoS Board and Superintendent act as resources to NCSA, providing business and support services according to an agreed upon contract. The NCSoS Board, recognizing the spirit and intent of the Charter law, does not impose its own vision on our school, and approves all decisions made by the Charter Council. Currently, six charter schools are sponsored by NCSoS - collectively we are referred to as the Nevada County Charter Cooperative (NCCC). Representatives from these schools, including NCSA, meet monthly to discuss the overall vision of the Charter Cooperative as well as provide support to one another as colleagues and partners in the Charter School arena.

Charter Governance Council

Our Charter Governance Council is responsible for the school's operations. This body makes all fiscal, personnel and policy decisions for the school. As the recipient of state monies, the Charter Governance Council is subject to the Brown Act and must post all agendas publicly.

The Council is composed of thirteen individuals: The School Director (non-voting member), two teacher representatives, eight parent representatives, the Arts Coordinator and one community member. The parent representatives to the Council are nominated and then appointed by the board. Two-year terms are staggered to maintain continuity.

Presently, the Charter Governance Council meets at least monthly in the late afternoon. All parents, students, and educators are welcome to participate in the Public Forum and in the identification of governance issues for the Council's attention. The agenda for each meeting is posted in the atrium at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time.

School of the Arts Educational Foundation

The School of the Arts Education Foundation (SAEF) is a non-profit corporation whose objective is to support the vision and mission of the school. It is the clearinghouse for all fundraising activities at the school, whether for individual classes or for the entire school. As a non-profit entity, SAEF is able to receive tax-deductible donations, manage activities that serve the school, and apply for grants available only to foundations. Principal efforts include providing:

- ④ Financial support to the school's general fund
- ④ Scholarships for students to ensure that all can participate in field studies
- ④ Auxiliary financial support to purchase quality materials for academic and arts instruction
- ④ Funds for acquiring needed technology and various fixed assets for the school

SAEF's board of directors is comprised of parents who work closely with NCSA's Governance Council and committees to identify and respond to the school's immediate and long-term funding needs.

The Staff

The teaching-learning process is where we find the true spirit of the school, what defines and anchors its purpose. Through the skills and efforts of our teachers, bringing their own personal strengths and approaches to bear, this spirit comes to life, and is sustained and nurtured.

The Faculty

The **Main Lesson Teachers** are all trained, experienced, and credentialed teachers. Each grade level K through 8th has a main lesson teacher who is ultimately responsible for the academic, social and emotional education of the children in their classes.

Instructional Assistants work with main lesson teachers to provide support with small group instruction and clerical work.

The **Arts Program Instructors** are practicing professional artists from our community who provide both an introduction to the arts and in-depth programs for advanced creative work. They include:

The **Artists-in-Residence** work in conjunction with the teaching staff to create studies in art studies and lessons that are both foundational and integrated with the academic program.

The **Movement Specialist** develops and implements the physical education and athletic program. This includes, through the instruction of age-appropriate games and movement exercises, the fostering of cooperative social skills, good sportsmanship, and a healthy attitude toward competition.

The **Musician-in-Residence and Music Specialists**, in order to foster both a love and understanding for music, works with students to: (a) impart musical skills necessary to make music, (b) develop their knowledge of music for communication with others and creating a healthy sound environment, and (c) stimulate musical intelligence to strengthen the mind and body, and support emotional and spiritual well-being.

We also hire additional artists and musicians as **Electives Instructors** who work part time to enhance our upper and lower grades electives and music programs.

The work of all our teachers includes:

- Ⓢ Providing an organized and effective learning environment
- Ⓢ Implementing the curriculum; ensuring excellence in academic and arts instruction
- Ⓢ Determining and accommodating the individual needs of students
- Ⓢ Evaluating the child's progress and communicating with parents at specified intervals, or as necessary
- Ⓢ Welcoming and supervising the efforts of parent volunteers

Administrative Staff

The **School Director** oversees the overall functioning of the school to enhance learning for all students at NCSA and is actively involved with Charter Council, School of the Arts Education Foundation, and Student Council. Duties of this position include representing the interest of NCSA to the NCSoS Board of Trustees and to the community at large. Areas of governance responsibility which are assigned by the Council are:

- Ⓢ Fiscal and Facility
- Ⓢ Marketing and promotion
- Ⓢ Personnel (evaluation, job recruitment, etc.)

- Ⓢ Legal processes (policy and procedure development, etc.)
- Ⓢ Curriculum/Instructional Programs

The **Business Manager** is responsible for creating and revising the school's budget, offering guidance to the Council on best accounting practices, managing receipts and disbursements of funds, ordering and keeping track of school materials and supplies.

The **Office Administrator** supervises the daily functions and communications of NCSA. These include managing the school's communications needs, maintenance of student records and forms, and coordination of school meetings and conferences.

The **Arts Coordinator** assures the smooth functioning of our arts classes and elective program. This involves participating in the teacher recruitment process, communicating pertinent information (including school policies) to art teachers, managing arts materials inventory needs, creating class schedules, monitoring arts class instruction; managing program-related paperwork, producing student performances, and coordinating student art shows in the larger community.

The **Receptionist** handles the front desk, assists parents with questions, and supports the back office.

The **Enrollment/Attendance Coordinator** orients new families to the school, manages wait lists and lotteries and keeps attendance records.

Parent Involvement

Families are the heart of Nevada City School of the Arts. The involvement of parents/guardians in their children's education has been proven to be one of the most important factors in the educational process. The success of NCSA's mission likewise depends on active participation and assistance from the adults of students' families. Each family is asked to contribute financially to SAEF and to support the education of their children as delineated in the Family/School Compact.

There are many ways parents can furnish time, expertise, and experience to the school that contributes to their children's education. Elected parent representatives serve on the Charter Governance Council, and SAEF. Classroom helpers provide extra instructional support. Class parents help coordinate field trips and class gatherings. Parents can help with small construction projects and cleaning of the school. Volunteers are also needed to work in classrooms, substitute for the front office and aides, run book fairs and fundraisers, answer the telephone and do clerical work.

Our school would not function without the help of the parent body.

Enrollment

Applications for enrollment are accepted throughout the year. Class size is limited, so the following criteria are used in placing prospective students:

1. Students already enrolled in the site-based program NCSA
2. Siblings of those already enrolled at the site based NCSA
3. Children of staff and teachers working at NCSA
4. Siblings/Children of Alumni of NCSA
5. Students enrolled in the Home Study program (after one year of continuous enrollment)

6. Students in the prior year's lottery and who remain active on the waitlist.
7. Lottery draw (The Lottery Draw takes place every March)

The School Community

Being a member of the NCSA community means everyone is considered a person with a heart and a mind who has something to contribute to the school. We are a three-part community. Students, parents and staff will all work together to help students' learning experience be the best it can be. Students and Parents will sign the last page of this handbook agreeing to their part as a member of this community. As a member of NCSA, each person is also asked to abide by our Compact.

The Compact

COMMUNITY PLEDGE (for teachers, students and parents)

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Ⓢ Make every effort to ensure the optimal health and safety of all our children
- Ⓢ Communicate in a problem-solving manner with students, staff and parents.
- Ⓢ If I have a concern, I will express it as soon as possible directly to the person(s) involved, before contacting other staff, students or parents
- Ⓢ Act as if others mean well and assume their intentions are positive.
- Ⓢ Ask questions for clarification, before making assumptions.
- Ⓢ When differences arise, use existing channels and conflict resolution tools outlined in this handbook.
- Ⓢ Live a rich and balanced life.

STUDENT PLEDGE:

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Ⓢ Come to school willing to learn and work hard.
- Ⓢ Bring necessary materials, completed assignments and homework.
- Ⓢ Finish assigned homework and read everyday or evening after school.
- Ⓢ Know and follow school and class rules, treating all members of the NCSA community with respect.
- Ⓢ Communicate respectfully with my parents and teachers about school experiences so that they can help me to be successful in school.
- Ⓢ Agree to solve problems with the conflict resolution techniques I have been taught or by seeking adult help.
- Ⓢ Limit my time watching TV, videos and video games.

FAMILY/PARENT PLEDGE:

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Ⓢ Communicate the importance of learning to my child
- Ⓢ Ensure that my child arrives on time and attends school every day and gets adequate sleep, regular medical attention and proper nutrition
- Ⓢ Limit my child's time watching TV, videos, and video games, and supervise the content
- Ⓢ Provide a quiet time and place for homework every day after school
- Ⓢ Read to and/or encourage my child to read every day
- Ⓢ Regularly monitor my child's progress in school
- Ⓢ Read the Monday note every week and respond accordingly in a timely fashion
- Ⓢ Participate as much as possible in school activities, including volunteering at least 5 hours monthly, attending parent-teacher conferences, and attending parent meetings
- Ⓢ Follow the guidelines given to me by the teacher for volunteering in the classroom, including respecting the privacy of each child
- Ⓢ Give the teacher respect as a professional to be consulted
- Ⓢ Model and coach my child on how to approach the teacher directly to resolve a problem, if possible, before I get involved
- Ⓢ When I need to become involved, observe the timeframes and appointment schedules set by the teachers

STAFF PLEDGE:

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- ④ Provide a comfortable, safe and caring learning environment
- ④ Create a classroom atmosphere with high expectations for student achievement and responsibility
- ④ Teach classes through dynamic and challenging lessons that promote a love of learning
- ④ Provide meaningful homework assignments to reinforce and extend learning
- ④ Support the involvement of parents in my classroom and in the greater NCSA community
- ④ Communicate with families about student progress and upcoming events that require parent involvement
- ④ Let families know how best to contact me during the school week
- ④ Participate in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning

Complaints Concerning Charter School Employees

If a parent, staff member or student wishes to lodge a formal complaint they must adhere to the following council approved policy.

The Director or designee shall determine whether a complaint should be considered a complaint against the charter school and/or an individual employee, and whether it should be resolved by the charter school's process for complaints concerning personnel and/or other charter school procedures.

To promote prompt and fair resolution of the complaint, the following procedures shall govern the resolution of complaints against charter school employees.

1. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible stage. Whenever possible, the complainant should communicate directly to the employee in order to resolve concerns.
2. If a complainant is unable or unwilling to resolve a complaint directly with the employee, he/she may submit a written complaint to the employee's immediate supervisor or to the School Director.
3. All complaints related to charter school personnel other than administrators shall be submitted in writing to the School Director or immediate supervisor. If the complainant is unable to prepare the complaint in writing, administrative staff shall help him/her to do so. Complaints related to the School Director shall be initially filed in writing with the Charter Governance Council (CGC) President or designee.
4. When a written complaint is received, the employee shall be notified by the School Director within five days.
5. A written complaint shall include:
 - a. The full name of each employee involved.
 - b. A brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it.
 - c. A specific description of any prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the employee and the failure to resolve the matter.
6. Staff responsible for investigating complaints shall attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the parties involved within 30 days.

7. Both the complainant and the employee against whom the complaint was made may appeal a decision by the School Director or immediate supervisor to the CGC, who shall attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the person involved within 30 days. Parties should consider and accept the CGC's decision as final. However, the complainant, the employee, or the Director may ask to address the CGC regarding the complaints.
8. Before the CGC's consideration of a complaint, the School Director shall submit to the CGC a written report concerning the complaint, including but not limited to:
 - a. The full name of each employee involved
 - b. A brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it, sufficient to inform the CGC and the parties as to the precise nature of the complaint and to allow the parties to prepare a response.
 - b. A copy of the signed original complaint
 - c. A summary of the action taken by the School Director, together with his/her specific finding that the problem has not been resolved and the reasons.
9. The CGC may uphold the School Director's decision without hearing the complaint.
10. All parties to a complaint may be asked to attend a CGC meeting in order to clarify the issue and present all available evidence.
11. A closed session may be held to hear the complaint in accordance with law.
12. The decision of the CGC shall be final.

Any complaint of child abuse or neglect alleged against a charter school employee shall be reported to the appropriate local agencies in accordance with law, CGC policy and administrative regulation.

For Students and Parents - The Essentials

The following is a list of commonly used words, phrases, or activities at NCSA. Please read carefully and feel free to ask questions for clarification of any staff member.

Administration of Medication

No child is allowed to ingest or apply any type of over-the-counter or prescription medication at school. This includes homeopathic remedies and vitamins. Students must have a prescription and directions for use from a physician. These medications must be stored in the office and will be dispensed under supervision. When on a field trip, be sure to get the proper paperwork completed for any medications a child may need. You may request and Medication Administration form from the office.

Attendance

We ask that every family respect the requirement that all students attend school on a daily basis. Schools only receive funds for students when they are present or on independent study. Of course, we do not want children who are ill to attend school, but every time a parent *chooses* to keep a student away from school it costs the school \$37/day. Independent studies can be set up if necessary for family emergencies. Please plan family outings during times school is not in session.

Illnesses that interfere with learning or may be contagious constitute excused absences as do religious observations and a death in the family. All other absences are considered unexcused. We are required to report more than 3 unexcused absences to the County School Attendance Review Board.

PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE ANY DAY THEIR CHILD DOES NOT ATTEND. If parents cannot call, please send a note explaining the absence on the day of return.

Tardies: Students will be marked tardy if they arrive late to school. If students are more than 15 minutes late, they must get a late slip from the front office and give to their teacher.

Student Attendance Review Board (SARB): California compulsory education law requires that everyone between 6 and 18 years of age attend school. Some students, however, violate compulsory education laws and have a pattern of continued absences. Although truancy and excessive absenteeism are not new problems, they create costly, long-term problems for students, schools, and the community.

SARBs create a safety net for students with persistent attendance or behavior problems by maximizing the use of all available resources and services and avoiding unnecessary duplication of resources. Students are referred to SARB if they have persistent attendance and behavior problems in school and when the normal avenues of classroom, school, and district counseling do not resolve the situation. Although the goal of SARB is to keep students in school and provide them with a meaningful educational experience, SARBs do have the power, when necessary, to refer students and their parents or guardians to court.

The Nevada County SARB is held at the courthouse and is convened by Chairperson Holly Hermansen, County Superintendent of Schools. The Board is composed of school representatives and members of the community at large, including representatives from law enforcement, social services, probation, mental health, and the District Attorney's Office. Members work collaboratively to diagnose the problem and recommend alternative solutions to alleviate circumstances that contribute to specific truancy, attendance, or behavior problems.

Independent Study: We encourage parents to ask for an Independent Study Agreement when they know their child will be absent. Please ask the Attendance Clerk to begin the paperwork. By completing this paperwork students do not fall behind in their work and the school does not lose revenue.

After School Care

Our Magic Castle Club provides after school care from 12:30-4:30 Monday thru Thursday. Magic Castle is not open on Fridays or the first and last week of school. To enroll students must fill out an application packet and turn in all paperwork before students send their child to the program. All Payments are due in full at the end of the month. When a family's balance reaches 60 days past due, NCSA will notify the family that their student(s) will no longer be allowed to attend Magic Castle unless payment is received within 30 days (when the account is 90 days past due.) Unfortunately, NCSA does not have the financial resources to provide after school care free of charge. As a result, this policy is being implemented so that Magic Castle can remain open for the benefit of all of our families and students.

Break Times

During break times, students should have time to eat and use the restroom. Students need to stay in areas that are supervised by the adult in charge. Students should pass quietly in the halls so that they don't disrupt other classes. As soon as students have used the restroom, they should return to the eating/recess area. EATING is only allowed in classrooms or at the outside eating areas. No eating in the halls or atrium.

Change of Address

Please report ANY changes in address, email, phone number, emergency contact or legal restraints to the school office immediately. We must have valid contact information at all times in case of an emergency.

Classroom Visitations and Volunteers

Parents and community members are invited and encouraged to take part in our classrooms, work in the office and on the playground. Adults who volunteer on a regular basis need to have a current TB test on file in the school office. In addition, any adult who plans to chaperone an overnight field trip must be fingerprinted through our school. Volunteers are not covered by the school's liability insurance.

Conferences

Parent/Student/Teacher conferences are held twice a year during the Fall and Spring. In addition, any time parents have a concern, they should call their child's teacher and schedule a time to talk. The Director is always available to meet in a conference if parents wish.

Cubbies

Students will have a 12 x 12 cubby in their homeroom for belongings. All students are on the honor system to leave other students' belongings alone and should never borrow something from another student without permission.

Daily Schedule

Students will receive a daily class schedule from their teacher at the beginning of each year.

Early Pick-Up

If parents need to pick up their child for any reason before dismissal time, they **MUST** stop by the front desk and sign him or her out in the record book. Parents will be given a note from the office to give to the teacher. ***Teachers may not release a child until they receive a note from the office.***

Emergency School Closures:

If snow (or other) conditions cause travel on the roads to be unsafe, the school will be closed or delayed. Any such emergencies will be announced via the Connect-Ed automated phone system as well as announced on the Radio (KNCO 830AM and KVMR 89.5 FM). Please refrain from calling the school.

Fire and Earthquake Drills

These are held so students will know how to line up calmly and quietly and where to go/what to do in case of a real fire or earthquake. We encourage parents to practice this at home. The school also has an emergency evacuation plan that is available in the office.

504 Rehabilitation Act

Accommodations to classroom and curriculum may be made for 504-eligible students as identified by the Student Success Team. Qualifying students must have mental or physical impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities.

Homework

It takes some students more or less time than others to complete their homework. On the average, we try to assign no more than 10 to 15 minutes *of focused homework* per night per grade level (e.g., 6th grade = 60 minutes). Of course, if students have left class work or projects undone, students may have more near deadlines. If students seem to be doing too much homework every night, please tell their teacher so we can make an adjustment for students.

Illnesses and Accidents

The office will notify parents if a student becomes ill or injured. The school nurse is at NCSA twice a month for screenings (vision, hearing, scoliosis) and checking for compliance for immunizations and physical examinations.

The school office must have the name and phone number of a reliable emergency contact and parents' current work, home and cell phone numbers.

Items from Home:

Food: We encourage healthful eating and ask parents to send nutritious foods with their children to school. Please do not bring foods high in sugar. No soda or energy drinks! **Gum is absolutely banned on the entire school campus, on field studies and performances of campus.** For safety reasons, no glass containers should be brought to school.

Lost and Found: We keep a bin for lost and found and put the clothes out once a month. Please carefully look over the array when it's out. We will donate unclaimed items to a thrift store every quarter. We always return clothing with name labels, so write their name somewhere inside their clothes, especially dance clothes and shoes.

Supplies: We ask students to bring basic supplies to school. A list of required supplies is posted on our website under **Student Resources**. Try to purchase materials before school starts if at all possible.

Toys: It is best to leave personal belongings at home to avoid loss and disruption. K-3rd graders may bring toys, but only with the teacher's permission. Electronic games are to be left at home. iPods or MP3 players may not be used at school. Skateboards, scooters and rollerblades may not be used on campus.

Recycling and Composting: We recycle used paper, cardboard, plastic and aluminum and compost ALL edible items. Please do not put these items in the trash. There are recycling bins in each classroom and out by the eating areas. For safety reasons, please do not bring glass containers to school. Please put all food - no containers! - in the compost bins.

Lice

Lice are an unfortunate reality in any school. NCSA has adopted the following policy as it pertains to lice:

The Governing Board believes that the school's head lice management program should emphasize the correct diagnosis and treatment of head lice in order to minimize disruption of the education process and to reduce the number of student absences resulting from infestation. In consultation with the school nurse, the School Director or designee may establish a routine screening program to help prevent the spread of head lice.

School employees shall report all suspected cases of head lice to the school nurse or designee as soon as possible. The nurse or designee shall examine the student and other students who are siblings of the affected student or members of the same household.

If a student is found with active, adult head lice, or nits (eggs) he/she shall be excluded from attendance. If the student's level of infestation is minor, and is found to have no active lice, the student may be sent home at the end of the day. The parent/guardian of an excluded student shall receive information about recommended treatment procedures and sources of further information. The student shall be allowed to return to school the next day and shall be checked by the nurse or designee before returning to class. Once he/she is determined to be free of lice and/or nits, the student shall be rechecked weekly for up to six weeks by school staff.

The School Director or designee shall send home the notification required by law for excluded students. (Education Code 48213)

A student with a chronic case of head lice should be reported to the school attendance review board (SARB). A "chronic" case is a student found infested during three separate months in a school year or for six consecutive weeks.

The School Director and school nurse shall work with the parents/guardians of any student who has been deemed to be a chronic head lice case in order to help minimize the student's absences from school.

When two or more students in any class have been identified as having a head lice infestation, all students in the class shall be examined. In consultation with the school nurse, the School Director may also send information about head lice home to all parents/guardians of the students in that class. Staff shall maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice and excluded from attendance.

Each year staff shall be trained by a school nurse on how to check for lice and nits. A record of such training will be kept in the school office.

If more than three children in the school are found to have lice, the school will take the following action

with regard to cleaning.

- Notify custodians that extra cleaning is needed.
- Bag and remove all items that can harbor lice.
- Thoroughly vacuum all areas that children’s heads may come into contact with (i.e., carpets, couches, etc.) for two weeks after a case of lice has been discovered.
- Complete monthly head exams (these should be done on Fridays) and document these checks on attendance rosters.

The Center for disease control does not recommend the school will not use any pesticides on any furniture or carpets that children come into contact with.

Report Cards

Report cards will go home at the end of each trimester for grades K-5 and every semester for grades 6-8. Student achievement is measured in relation to school content standards in each subject. Habits of Mind are also assessed. At the end of the school year, parents receive reports of assessments used to measure the achievement of Standards.

Student Success Team

Whenever a teacher, student or parent feels a child is not reaching their potential and a conference has already been held with the teacher, an SST meeting can be called to gather the teacher, the Resource Specialist, the School Director, the School Psychologist and the parents to brainstorm solutions. If this team recommends further testing, the School Psychologist and Resource Specialist provide assessments for special programs such as RSP (Resource Specialist Program) or 504 accommodations.

Transfers/Exit

Parents need to let the office know as soon as possible when students withdraw from the school. The office will mail school records when we receive a request from the new school. *Parents should be aware that NCSA considers receipt of a Student Cumulative File request as an official exit from the school. Students will be dropped from the rosters when such a request is received by the office.*

Volunteering

Many of the special activities in the classroom cannot be done without parent volunteers. While the teachers absolutely depend on and appreciate volunteers, there are some guidelines for volunteering students should know about before doing so.

- ④ Check in with the teacher to see what his/her needs are
- ④ If students are doing something clearly inappropriate or something that makes parents uncomfortable, tell/ask the student(s), “That is not appropriate”, or “Are students making the best choice”, or “Is that helping or not?” Parents should tell the teacher about problems that arise with an individual student or if they have trouble with a group
- ④ If the teacher is busy and cannot direct students to something specific, try to support all the students.

Student Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policy

The community at NCSA believes that it is important to treat each person with respect. We try to make sure we are considerate of each other so that everyone can fulfill their roles. Students can learn, teachers can teach, and staff can work in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Teachers will help students learn to do their part with instruction in ways to solve problems with conflict resolution. Classes will meet together regularly to explore ways to keep things comfortable for everyone. We want students to develop the confidence and skills they need to stand up for themselves. In the next couple of pages students will see the rules we ask students to follow:

Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Ⓢ Come to class on time
- Ⓢ Speak with polite language and without profanity
- Ⓢ Treat each person with respect and without teasing or put-downs
- Ⓢ Remain within bounds and within sight of adult supervision
- Ⓢ Use the restrooms appropriately
- Ⓢ Walk quietly in the halls and on the sidewalk
- Ⓢ Play without physically aggressive behavior (such as play-fighting or wrestling)
- Ⓢ Take care of their own trash and recycling
- Ⓢ Eat only at the designated eating areas or in classrooms
- Ⓢ Follow the dress code
- Ⓢ Refrain from chewing gum

Dress Code: Students are expected to dress in a manner that will allow them and others to focus un-self consciously on their studies. While we do support creativity, it is important to respect others and ourselves. Students out of dress code will call home and may be asked to wear a cover-up for the day.

Students are expected to wear clothing, accessories and shoes:

- Ⓢ That show respect for and are not offensive to another person's race, ethnicity, religion or gender.
- Ⓢ In which they can safely run and play. Shoes for movement days must have closed toes and backs.
- Ⓢ That do not advertise or show drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, or profanity, or weapons.
- Ⓢ That appropriately cover their body (no short shorts, halter tops, mini-skirts or overly loose pants). Midriffs must be covered so that normal movement and sitting down does not expose skin or undergarments.

Discipline Policy and Process

Part of our job as educators is to teach students to be responsible, to be respectful, to be safe and to be kind to others. However, there are times when a student may have a lapse in judgment and make a poor choice. We have defined these and broken them into three categories below. In addition, the consequences for the poor choices are detailed below each category.

Minor Infractions

- chewing gum
- talking in class when inappropriate
- running in halls
- forgetting materials/homework
- distracting students
- out of supervision - within school building
- minor swearing - not directed at an individual

Consequences

These types of behaviors simply warrant a written reminder, a.k.a., a “You’ve Been Noticed” (Y.B.N) form (Detailed description below). *If a student receives three (5) of these forms* they may be referred to the **Restitution Committee** (also detailed below) to explain how they intend to make up for the time and effort lost to those who are reminding them of the rules and to make up for their lack of respect of the rules.

Moderate Infractions

- 5 or more referrals for the same behavior
- littering, (regular occurrences)
- bullying
- gossiping with intent to harm
- vulgar language directed at an individual
- disrespect toward any adult on campus
- roughhousing/minor physical altercation
- significantly disrupting the learning process (*the teacher should have tried other interventions first*).
- Out of supervision - outside building (this may result in a suspension if it is a significant safety issue).

Consequences

Often times these moderate behaviors will be handled by the classroom teacher who will choose the consequence appropriate to each child. However, teachers may choose to refer a student to the *Restitution Committee* if the teacher feels behavior warrants more counseling or the student has repeated the offense several times.

If a student is continually referred to the Restitution Committee and does not appear to be willing to change his/her behaviors, a **Behavior and/or Academic Contract** will be created within the

Student Success Team (SST) process. If the student violates any portion of that contract he/she may be referred to the county's 3-R program for the remainder of the year.

Bottom Line Behaviors

- causing/attempting to cause physical harm - intentional or unintentional (depends on circumstances)
- vicious gossip/bullying/cyber-bullying
- verbally/physically disrupting school activities or direct defiance of an adult
- drug use/possession
- weapon on campus
- theft
- harassment/sexual harassment

Consequences

These behaviors may result in an immediate suspension/removal from the classroom or expulsion from school. Depending upon the circumstances, there may be times when the director does not feel a suspension is warranted, or times that the suspension should be followed by restitution so the child has a chance to redeem himself/herself. Parents may meet with the director if they disagree with the consequences, but they must also understand the ultimate decision lies with the director.

Sexual Harassment Policy - Students

It is the policy of Nevada City School of the Arts to maintain an environment that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment is a form of sexual discrimination under Title IX of the Education Amendments of the Civil Rights Act of 1972 and is prohibited by state and Federal Law.

The Education Code provides that a student may be suspended from school or recommended of expulsion if the superintendent or principal of the school determines that the pupil has committed sexual harassment. For purposes of this policy, the conduct must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive as to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment or to have a negative impact upon academic performance.

Any incident shall be reported to any school official. The school official shall immediately report the matter to the school director and an immediate investigation shall commence as provided for in appropriate administrative regulations.

The following procedures are required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J):

Suspension Procedures

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

- a. Conference

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the School Director or the School Director's designee with the student and his or her parent and,

whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the School Director. The conference may be omitted if the School Director or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense.

This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

a. Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of the suspension, an administrator or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

b. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of Placement/Expulsion by the School Director or School Director's designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the School Director or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Authority to Expel

A student may only be expelled by the Charter Governance Council following a complete hearing.

Expulsion Procedures

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the School Director or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

- a) The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- b) A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
- c) A copy of the School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- d) Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- e) The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- f) The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- g) The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- h) The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

Right to Appeal

- a) Students expelled by the NCSA Charter Governance Council may send a written appeal to the County Board of Education.

The school director may recommend for expulsion any student who has been suspended three or more times in the same year, or five times in two consecutive years.

Electives Guidelines for 6th-8th Grade Students

Participation in our studio arts electives at NCSA is a privilege reserved for students who truly wish to honor the discipline and respect the instructors.

By participating in electives at NCSA students agree to the following expectations and the consequences for not meeting those expectations.

- Ⓢ **Respect** – I will show respect for the teacher, for the students, and for the materials and equipment.
- Ⓢ **Focus** – I will focus on the projects.
- Ⓢ **Timeliness** – I will be on time to each elective class.
- Ⓢ **Courtesy** – I will show courtesy to my teacher and fellow students by behaving appropriately during class.

Consequences

If my behavior does not meet the above expectations, I understand I may have the following sequence of consequences:

- Ⓢ Verbal Warning
- Ⓢ Self Time Out: A few minutes outside class to decide if I can return and meet the expectations for the remainder of class and a written referral.
- Ⓢ Excused to the office for the remainder of the period to:
 - ✓ Call my parent(s) and explain that I did not show respect for the privilege of taking electives at NCSA.
 - ✓ Compose a letter of apology to my elective teacher.
- Ⓢ Meet with elective teacher to determine if I should be allowed to return to the next class.

In the event that a student consistently fails to meet expectations, he/she may be permanently removed from the elective.

“You’ve Been Noticed” Forms and Referring to Restitution

We describe our referral process as “You’ve Been Noticed” since we want students to know that their behavior does matter at our school. The following is the basic process of how a student receives a “Y.B.N” slip.

1. Students should receive a warning by their teacher. If the behavior is seen by another staff member, a “You’ve Been Noticed” will be written up. The reason students won’t receive warnings from another staff member is simple. Often students are warned several times by different people for the same behavior, but no one realizes it except the student. The main teacher is the keeper of all referrals so only he/she knows whether the student has repeated the same offense or not.
2. Y.B.N. forms should also be used for positive behaviors. Three positive Y.B.N.’s and the child’s name is listed in the Canvas.

3. Students may be referred to the **Restitution Committee**. The student will be expected to appear on the Thursday after the offense has been committed. Students will be reminded to attend that morning.
4. Students may eat while they wait for restitution. Failure to show up will result in further restitution.
5. Parents will be notified via telephone (automated phone system) that their students have been requested to appear. Parents may attend the Restitution as a means of support for the student but are asked to not interfere with the process.
6. If a child needs to appear at restitution more than 3 times for similar issues/concerns, a Student Success Team (SST) will be scheduled in order to discuss and create a behavior contract for the student. Any violation of the behavior contract may result in a SARB referral and the possibility that the student will not be allowed to remain at NCSA.

Repeated negative behaviors may also result in suspension and/or expulsion given the circumstances and the nature of the offenses.

Restitution

Purpose:

To develop/teach a personal sense of responsibility in students within our school community and in life. The student must take responsibility to figure out an appropriate recompense for his/her poor choices. The emphasis is on compensating the victim for harm done. The message a student should learn is "Students can make it right by fixing it." This fosters self-responsibility and self-esteem.

The Essential Characteristics of Restitution

- Ⓢ It is tied to a higher value or mission
- Ⓢ It strengthens the person who has offended
- Ⓢ It is a satisfactory amend to the person harmed (victim)
- Ⓢ Effort is required from the offender
- Ⓢ Little incentive to repeat the offense
- Ⓢ No resentment, guilt, criticism, anger by the adult helper or victim*

**Given the age/circumstance this may be difficult for the victim - this will be modeled and taught, but may require time.*

How Restitution Works

A student is referred for restitution to the Restitution Committee by his/her teacher or the school director. *(See Discipline Policy)*

The committee can be facilitated by a small group made up of a teacher, staff and/or the school director. Restitution meetings will be held as needed for the entire year in order to meet with students who are in need of completing restitution.

**When possible parents will be notified that their child will go through the restitution process. Parents are welcome to attend in order to lend support, but not to argue the process or speak for their child. A child may also request the assistance of an adult they trust to help them.*

Upon arrival to restitution, the school director or teacher explains to the student that this process is designed to help them not to scare them or to make them feel guilty. They are told that the end result will not be a punishment, but that they will be the one who creates the restitution on their own. This concept will also be reinforced in their classrooms by their classroom teacher.

** In some situations the restitution will occur immediately following an incident therefore not allowing time for prior parent contact.*

The following questions are asked of the student:

1. Describe what you did to get referred to the Restitution Committee.
2. How did your actions help others? Help the person harmed? Help our community?
3. How did your actions interfere with _____'s right to respect, safety (emotional/physical), or their right to be treated with kindness?
4. Why does that person have the right to be respected, to be safe and to be treated with kindness?
5. Would you like the chance to fix this situation or make it better?
6. What can you do for the person(s) hurt?*
7. How will you know this worked?

****Students are given general examples of how they can fix the mistake or offer restitution:**

- ⓐ Fix it (if something was broken)
- ⓑ Pay back - (give back what was taken/broken/harmed)
- ⓒ Say two positives about the person harmed (only if sincere)
- ⓓ Give your time or handmade gift to the person

The student is then given the rest of the day and the evening to come up with an appropriate restitution. They are given the form to take home to their parents with the same questions just asked of them. They should fill the form out with the parents and the parents are encouraged to *help** come up with their restitution.

**The parents should NOT think of the restitution for the students, nor should they complete it for the student or give the money to pay it back. The effectiveness of this process relies on the student expending thought and effort on the restitution. If the parents undermine this process it will be entirely ineffectual.*

The student returns the next day with their idea of restitution. They meet with the teacher or school director and explain their idea. The teacher/school director helps facilitate the restitution, by bringing the victim and offender together. The teacher/school director works with the victim by preparing them for acceptance and/or forgiveness.

8th Grade Graduation Requirements

Academic

- 90% of all class and homework completed at passing level
- No incompletes in any classes including Main Lesson Arts.
- A score of 2.5 or better on designated assignments/units. Some examples are, but definitely **NOT** limited to, the following: Science Expo, Research Report, Poetry Unit, Main Lesson Arts projects
- An average of 2.5 in core academics with a 2 or better in all core academic subjects (science, math, English, and social studies).
- A score of 80% or better on the Constitution Test
- 10 hours of community service
- All requirements must be met two weeks prior to graduation. If students do not meet requirements, they will not be allowed to finish the year with their class, they will be referred to the Student Attendance Review Board, and they will not graduate nor be allowed to participate in the Graduation Ceremony.
- Graduation Performance ready to be performed one week prior to the ceremony
- These requirements are subject to negotiation for students with 504 or IEP designations.

Behavioral Expectations

In order to participate in graduation, students may have no outstanding restitutions. Students on behavior contracts must successfully complete them. Students with excessive referrals or behavioral problems will be required to attend an SST (Student Success Team) meeting with teachers prior to graduation.

Field Studies

It is up to the teachers' discretion whether a student should attend any field study if they are far behind in their academics or they have less than a 2 in any class.

Students with excessive behavioral issues must have an SST meeting with teachers before attending overnight field studies, and may have the privilege of attending revoked.

6th and 7th Grade Passing Requirements

Academic:

7th Grade – 90% of class and homework turned in

6th Grade – 90% of class and homework turned in

Both: All designated major assignments to be completed, including Main Lesson Arts projects.

Grade Promotion

Students in the 5th through 8th grades are entitled to only one “social” promotion (moving up a grade without completing the requirements) but will be placed on an academic and behavioral contract for the duration of the following year. If the student does not meet passing requirements for the second year, a recommendation for retention in the grade will be issued.

After School Events and Special Performances

When our students are in front of the public at events such as the above, it is even more important that students be on their best behavior. The NCSA staff has made the following clarifications of expectations: **Teachers will review behavioral expectations with students before each special event.**

Polite behavior will be emphasized, as will the boundaries of supervision. Students who behave inappropriately may be asked to sit out and miss part of an event, if in the judgment of the supervising teacher their behavior was in serious defiance of the rules. **In other words, a higher expectation of behavior applies to special events.**

After School and Evening Events

Students must remain with their parents at these events and may not play outside on the playgrounds unless an adult has agreed to supervise a small group of them.

Field Studies

Field studies at NCSA are chosen to enhance the curriculum and are therefore an integral part of each child's education. Trips range from short local visits to longer field studies in other California environments. Trips range in cost and the fees are supported with fundraising. Trips are open to all children regardless of ability to pay. **No child** will be taken on a field trip without written permission.

A higher standard of student behavior expectations apply. If a student has had repeated referrals or problems at school, his or her parent may be required to attend the field study in order for the student to participate. If a child violates any of the standard rules and expectations during a field study, parents may be asked to come and take their child home if deemed necessary by the classroom teacher. The following is a list of parent behavior expectation while attending a field study. Field studies are designed to enrich the student's education experience. It is essential that any parent who attends a field study agree to follow the expectations below in order to ensure a successful and educational trip.

Field Study Policies and Procedures

Our field studies are directly supported by parental involvement which in turn allows us offer extended opportunities to experience the natural and cultural context of our local area and places further afield. That said, *Nevada City School of the Arts reserves the right in its sole discretion to select the chaperones that accompany school staff and students on field studies.*

Local Field Studies

Students must have written permission from their parent or legal guardian in order to participate in trips requiring transportation away from school. The school shall provide an alternative educational experience for students whose parents/guardians do not wish for them to participate in a trip.

Parents will be notified at the beginning of the year of all day long field trips for their students' class. **They will be asked to sign ONE permission slip for the year for local trips.** Parents may request separate permission slips for each local trip.

Overnight Field Studies - Separate permission slips are required for all overnight trips.

Parents will be given at least four weeks advance notice of an overnight trip. The purpose of this notice is to inform parents of any special items, such as sleeping bags or other gear that they may need to purchase or borrow in order to outfit their child for the trip, and to notify parents of the cost of the trip

so that they may budget for their financial contribution. Parents are expected to notify their teacher as soon as possible if they will be unable to contribute the amount required to cover the cost of their child's participation. This is in order to determine whether sufficient scholarship funds are available or whether special fundraising will be required.

Teacher Responsibilities

At the beginning of the school year, teachers shall obtain Medical Information and Consent to Treat Forms from all students.

Before each trip, the teacher primarily responsible for the trip shall:

- 1) Submit the Field Trip Request form to the Director at least one week before parent notification is required.
- 2) Upon receiving approval for the trip, send the Field Study Permission Form or Overnight Field Study Permission Form to parents, along with a copy to the office. Where the information is more extensive than can reasonably be included on the Permission Form, an explanatory letter should also be sent which specifies the destination and routes to be taken, the educational purpose of the trip, the specific itinerary, including time and place of departure and return and estimated time and location of other stops, and any other special details of interest to parents.
- 3) Ensure that Driver Registration Forms and Parent Chaperone Agreements are completed and turned in by all drivers and parent chaperones, and that these forms are on file with the school office.
- 4) Provide each driver with:
 - a copy of the itinerary, scheduled stops and a list of cell phones for other drivers
 - names and phone numbers of whom to call should they get lost or separated
 - copies of the Medical Information and Consent to Treat forms for all students under their supervision.
 - a copy of this Field Studies Policy and Procedure document
- 5) Give the school office a list of all students attending the trip and in which vehicle each will be riding. In addition, provide the office with a list of absent students and non-participating students (with the name of the teacher responsible).
- 6) Check out a first aid kit from the office and take it with you on the trip, checking it back immediately afterwards.
- 7) Set up a phone tree to inform parents of late arrivals, etc.

During the trip, allow no student to leave the field trip without written parental permission, specifying when the child may leave and with whom.

Siblings, School Age Relatives and Home Study Students' Attendance on Field Studies

It is the policy that NCSA does not allow school age siblings or their school age relatives on field studies. Siblings may **only** be considered for trips if not bringing the sibling would represent a significant hardship (i.e., the student would not go without the parent, and the parent could not go without bringing a younger sibling). ***Due to significant liability and disruption of the educational process, parents who must bring children under the age of 3 may not attend as a chaperone and will not be included in the reservation process, i.e. discount rates, reservations for rooms, sites, etc.***

Parents must request special dispensation from the school director in order to bring a sibling.

Home Study students *of the same grade* as the site-based students on the trip may attend field studies if a parent (or an adult deemed responsible in writing by the parent), or the home study teacher attends the trip and if this has been agreed upon by the site-based teacher in advance. The home study teacher and the parent must contact the site-based teacher two weeks prior to ANY field study they plan to attend.

Supervision by Parent Chaperones

Before the trip teachers shall provide adult chaperones with clear information regarding their responsibilities. For overnight trips, a Parent Meeting will be held prior to the trip. ***Any adult who attends a field study is considered a chaperone and will be held accountable to all rules and policies.***

In all cases, chaperones shall:

- 1) Be sure the teacher knows where you and your assigned students are at all times.
- 2) When you are assigned a supervision duty, please be sure to keep all students under your care within your sight. Make sure you inform students of the guidelines of the activity and the physical boundaries. If you must leave your supervision area, be sure to have another adult cover the area.
- 3) As stated above, students are expected to abide by the Expectations for Student Behavior at all times on a field trip. Parents/Chaperones are asked to hold students responsible for behavior within these guidelines. Do not hesitate to remind students of the appropriate behavior. Be positive and friendly.
- 4) If a student, repeatedly acts inappropriately, even when reminded, a short time-out from the activity may be necessary, or they may need to “shadow” you so that you can help them model appropriate behavior.
- 5) IF ANY SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOR OCCURS that needs more discipline, contact the teacher immediately. It is important that any reprimand or consequence come from the teacher.

In accordance with Nevada City School of the Arts policy, non-parent/guardian and non-student relative volunteers shall be fingerprinted for criminal record clearance if they have are chosen to chaperone children. In addition, parents/guardians and student relatives who supervise students on overnight field trips shall be fingerprinted as well.

Parent Chaperone Agreement for Field Studies

- 1) Students on approved trips are under the jurisdiction of the Nevada City School of the Arts Charter Governance Council and are subject to the School’s rules regarding health and safety.
- 2) Chaperones shall be assigned a prescribed group of students and shall be responsible for the continuous monitoring of these students’ activities.
- 3) Before the trip, teachers shall provide any adult chaperones who may accompany the student with clear information regarding their responsibilities.
- 4) Chaperones shall not consume alcoholic beverages or use controlled substances, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, for the duration of the trip.
 - 4a) Teachers and chaperones shall not smoke in the immediate presence of students or while actively supervising students. If a parent or teacher needs to leave the students in order to smoke, they must report directly to the teacher and “hand-off” those students whom they are supervising. This must not interfere with an activity to the extent that it places undue burden on the teacher.

- 5) Before trips of more than one day, the teacher shall discuss with staff, parents/guardians and students the rules for the trip. For non-certified adults who will assist in supervising students on the trip, the teacher will also hold a meeting to explain how to keep appropriate groups together and what to do if an emergency occurs.
- 6) All teachers and any chaperone supervising students independently should be in possession of a copy of the Medical Information and Consent to Treat Forms for the students under their direct supervision.
- 7) In accordance with NCSA policy, non-parent/guardian and non-student relative volunteers shall be fingerprinted for criminal record clearance if they have contact with children. In addition, parents/guardians and student relatives who supervise students on overnight field trips shall be fingerprinted as well.
- 8) Sometimes parents have suggestions for changes to the teacher's plan for a field study. Although teachers are open to discussing new ideas, they have spent many hours planning for the trip and must balance the social, emotional and intellectual needs of all the students in the class. Decisions made by the teacher are final with regard to field trip activities.
- 9) If a parent's behavior threatens the health, safety, or welfare of the students, parents or teacher/staff while on the field study, the teacher or other school staff reserve the right to excuse that parent from the remainder of the field study.

Drivers

Parents who transport any students not in their immediate family are required to:

- 1) Register with the school for such purposes and have a valid driver's license and current liability insurance at or above the minimum amount required by law. (Recommended: liability of \$100,000/\$300,000 bodily injury and \$50,000 property damage or a combined \$300,000 single limit of liability). A copy of your license and insurance must be on file with the school.
- 2) Check the safety of your vehicle; tires, brakes, lights, horn, suspension, etc. We no longer inspect cars, but expect you to do the safety check before you take students in your car,
- 3) Carry only the number of passengers for which you have working safety belts,
- 4) Require each passenger to use his or her seat belt.
- 5) Follow the indicated itinerary and avoid any unlisted stops.
- 6) Follow all traffic laws and drive within the speed limit.
- 7) Keep the student CONSENT FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT forms with you at all times.
- 8) Keep a copy of the phone tree and phone contact number for emergencies or late arrival.

Authority of the Driver: Students transported in a private vehicle for a school function shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the vehicle. The driver/chaperone shall be held responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle and will assume direct responsibility for the orderly conduct of the students while they are in the vehicle. NCSA's Expectations for Student Behavior are in effect at all times during a field trip.

Daily School Schedule

Kindergarten

8:30 Class begins
9:45 Snack break
12:30 Dismissal

1st - 3rd Grades

8:30 Classes begin
9:45 Recess
10:00 Classes resume
12:00 Lunch
12:30 Classes resume
2:30 Dismissal

Multiage Class

8:30 Classes begin
9:45 Recess
10:00 Classes resume
12:00 Lunch
12:30 Classes resume
2:30 Dismissal

4th and 5th Grades

8:30 Classes begin
9:45 Recess
10:00 Classes resume
12:00 Lunch
12:30 Classes resume
1:45 Recess
2:00 Classes resume
3:15 Dismissal

6th through 8th Grades

8:30 Classes begin
10:15 Break
10:25 Classes resume
12:30 Lunch
1:05 Classes resume
3:15 Dismissal

Minimum Day Dismissal

8:30 Classes begin
10:15-10:25 6-8th Break
9:45-10:00 1st-5th Break
10:00 Classes resume
11:30 1st-3rd Lunch (no lunch for 4th -8th)
12:30 Kindergarten Dismissal
12:40 Dismissal of all other Grades