



# NEUSE CHARTER SCHOOL

**2025-26 Student & Family Handbook**

**NCS Board Approved July 29, 2025**

**Revised and Approved: September 23, 2025**

## **NCS Leadership**

**Dr. Melissa Blackwell - Superintendent**

**Mrs. Amanda Highfil - Director of Business**

**Mr. Tyler Grady - Upper Academy Director**

**Mrs. Samantha Dunn - Lower Academy Director**

**Mrs. Jamie Johnson- Director of Exceptional Children**

**Mr. Brad Williams - Director of Information Technology**

**Ms. Karen Wynns - K-12 Assistant Academy Director**

*Neuse Charter School educates K-12 students through a personalized approach to growth and achievement. High expectations and a focus on diverse perspectives provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in a global society.*

## **FROM THE NEUSE CHARTER SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

We welcome you to Neuse Charter School (NCS) for the 2025-26 school year. Our team is excited to have you join us. The staff at NCS is a team of caring, competent, and dedicated individuals. We work hard to provide all students with the best possible learning climate, environment, and curriculum.

We believe that education is a shared responsibility and that the successful operation of a school depends on the cooperation of everyone involved: students, parents, and staff. The mission of NCS is to create a partnership among the members of this triad. Each of us is responsible for doing our part to make our school a place where we can work, learn, and have fun together.

NCS is a reflection of all of us. Our policies are intended to provide a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning. Our faculty and staff look forward to sharing their academic expertise, special programs, and extracurricular activities with you. We encourage you to get to know your school's staff, programs, activities, and schedule.

This handbook overviews our school's mission, guidelines, and services. It is an essential reference book describing what we expect and how we do things. Read it carefully, discuss it with your family, and let it act as a guide for all parts of the school. It has been written to provide students and parents with the information that will make this year purposeful and rewarding. Keep this handbook close by because you will use this information throughout the school year. You will be asked to sign an electronic acknowledgment form to confirm you have received and read this handbook.

On behalf of the entire NCS family, welcome again, and best wishes for a great school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Melissa Blackwell, Superintendent

Mrs. Amanda Highfil, Director of Business

Mrs. Samantha Dunn, Lower Academy Director (K-5)

Mr. Tyler Grady, Upper Academy Director (6-12)

Mrs. Jamie Johnson, Director of Exceptional Children

Mr. Brad Williams, Director of Information Technology

Mrs. Karen Wynns, K-12 Assistant Academy Director

*NCS may, at any time, in its sole discretion,  
modify or vary from anything stated in this handbook, with or without notice.*

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***Important Notice:***

*It is understood that this handbook cannot cover every aspect relating to the functions, procedures, and policies at Neuse Charter School (NCS). Therefore, because NCS is a North Carolina Charter School, any situation not explicitly referred to in this handbook will fall under the guidelines set forth by the NC Department of Public Instruction Policies & Procedures.*

## School Essentials

### Mission

Neuse Charter School educates K-12 students through a personalized approach to growth and achievement. High expectations and a focus on diverse perspectives provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in a global society.

### Vision

We, the NCS community, believe that through a positive, safe, and creative learning environment, students will emerge as respectful, responsible citizens of a global community.

### Leadership Team

Dr. Melissa Blackwell, Superintendent  
Mrs. Amanda Highfil, Director of Business  
Mrs. Samantha Dunn, Lower Academy Director  
Mr. Tyler Grady, Upper Academy Director  
Mrs. Jamie Johnson, Director of Exceptional Children  
Mr. Brad Williams, Director of Information Technology  
Mrs. Karen Wynns, K-12 Assistant Academy Director

All of the Leadership Team members can be reached at 919-626-2300 or via email at the first initial of their first name, then last name @neusecharterschool.org (ie, [mblackwell@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:mblackwell@neusecharterschool.org)).

### Academic Calendar/ School Day

Please see the [school's website](#) for the NCS current academic calendar.

Drop off: 7:20 AM - 7:43 AM  
School Hours: 7:45 AM - 3:00 PM  
Pick up: 3:00 PM - 3:15 PM

### Arrival and Dismissal

NCS does not provide transportation to and from school. It is the responsibility of the parents/ guardians to get their children to and from school on time using the appropriate drop-off and pick-up procedures. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action for the student and/ or notification of the court system and truancy officer.

Upon arrival, students should be dropped off in their designated area. When picking a student up at dismissal time, please use the appropriate carpool lanes. Authorized adults for pick-up should remain in their vehicles at all times. Please see our website for a detailed explanation of arrival and dismissal procedures.

In the afternoon, NCS will not open the gates for pick-up until 2:30 PM. Please do not line up before this time, as the line blocks street traffic and can create a dangerous situation if NCS needs to get emergency vehicles onto campus. The enforcement of this may be monitored by local law enforcement.

Any students not picked up by the end of carpool will be taken to after-school care provided by [Ivy Camps USA](#). Ivy Campus will charge a daily rate of \$22 for their services for any students not picked up in carpool, and parents will be required to pay for that service at the time of pick up. Parents will also be required to park and walk in with a valid ID to check their child out from Ivy Camps.

Students should not be dropped off or picked up in the surrounding area of the school, including but not limited to Grace Community Church, Emerge Ortho, The Landings, or any side streets.

### *Car Line Procedures*

Every family will be issued two carpool tags. Those authorized to pick up students in carpool must have the school-issued carpool tag in the car to pick up a child. Please hang your school-issued carpool tag from your rearview mirror. If you have a change in who is picking up your child, please email [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org) to notify us of the change. If there is no carpool tag, the adults will be asked to park and come inside to show their State ID before being allowed to pick up the child. This process ensures that every child goes home with the right person.

If a student will be carpooling with another family, totalling 5 or more students, the parent should email [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org) to request a Vanpool Tag that will be available within 3 business days.

### *Parent Carpool Expectations*

- For the safety of our students, drivers must refrain from using cell phones while the carpool line is in motion.
- Drivers must refrain from smoking and/or vaping while on campus at all times, including while in the carpool line.
- All drivers must remain in the car at all times.

### *Student Driver Process*

Students wishing to drive to and from school must have a special Student Driver Tag obtained by completing the [Student Driver Form](#), submitting proof of license and insurance, and paying the applicable driver fee. Students should understand that driving on campus is a privilege, and the tag can be revoked at the discretion of the School administrators and/or the School Resource Officer at any time. If the tag is revoked for any reason, the fees are non-refundable.

### *Student-Athlete Driver Eligibility*

NCS requires that students who drive to and from campus have a student driver pass issued through the front office, as noted above. NCS will also allow student-athletes to drive to and from athletic events via the following process:

1. Student-athletes must complete the [Student Driver Process](#) and be issued an NCS Student Driver Tag in the main office.
2. A student-athlete may only drive up to three (3) other students per season, as established at the start of that season.
3. The parents of both the driving and riding student-athletes must give permission for the athletic season via the [Student-Athlete Transportation Form](#).
4. The driving/ riding privileges may be revoked at any time for any reason.
5. Team coaches will monitor this policy, not the Athletic Directors. For student-athletes not adhering to the policy, there will be repercussions up to and including removal from the team. As a reminder, removal during one season may make a student-athlete ineligible for the next season's sports.

Additionally, there may be times when a student-athlete must ride with a staff member, coach, or another parent. Each student-athlete who rides with another adult who is not his/her parent/ guardian must have completed the [Student-Athlete Transportation Form](#) giving consent to ride.

### *Walker Passes*

NCS, while understanding it is the parent's right and prerogative to allow their individual children to walk to and from school, strongly discourages this practice for the safety of our students and their families. However, if a particular family still wants their child/ children to walk to or from school, NCS will require each family to follow the guidelines listed below and sign a physical copy of the [Walker Pass Waiver and Release](#) and return it to the main office or email it to [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org). Children must have this form completed, initiated, and signed by ALL parents/ guardians before they will be allowed to walk to/from school or other after-school locations. For safety reasons, we strongly recommend that your child not walk alone.

The appropriate Academy Director or designee will review the application and approve or deny the request. If approved, the student will receive a Walker Pass tag that must be carried at all times in order to walk off campus. Without the tag, a parent, guardian, or emergency contact may be called to pick up the student.

### Guidelines

- Students in the Upper Academy may walk home or to their NCS-sponsored sport event within a one-mile radius of the campus.

- Students in the Lower Academy may only walk home when they are walking to a location within a one-mile radius of the campus and are accompanied by another student in grades 6-12 or an adult who picks them up and walks with them.
- Students who can provide proof of an active SRAC membership may walk to SRAC. Upper Academy students may walk alone. Lower Academy students must walk with an Upper Academy student if walking to SRAC.
- Students must utilize sidewalks where available and follow traffic guidelines from the NCDOT.

Walker Passes may be revoked at the discretion of NCS at any time and for any reason.

### *Third Party Transportation Providers (Uber/Lyft)*

NCS does not condone students leaving campus in third-party car services (outside of child after-school care providers) and, specifically, ridesharing services whose policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them, such as Uber and Lyft. While some ride-sharing services may permit minors to ride without an adult, NCS does not permit the use of such services, will not allow any student to be picked up or dropped off in a third-party car service, such as Uber or Lyft, and will turn away such ride-sharing services from the school.

### **Student Information System: Infinite Campus**

Parents can see their children's academic improvement, daily homework assignments, projects, discipline records, and attendance records through the school's Student Information System portal. Upon providing proof of identification, parents will be provided a username and password, which will provide access to their student's records. We strongly encourage parents to visit this system daily to stay informed of their student's progress, as this system is the definitive authority on grades.

### **Lunch/ Nutrition Program**

NCS does not provide a lunch program and does not serve food on-site. If your child arrives at school without food, NCS will try to contact a parent to bring food to the student.

Students must bring lunch each day or may purchase lunch through the [MyHotLunchbox](#) program. Lunch through this vendor must be purchased at least a day in advance. This is an outsourced vendor program that NCS does not operate. If you have any questions about the program, please reach out to [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org), and NCS staff will direct you to someone who can answer your questions.

If a student has an order from [MyHotLunchbox](#) and is absent that day, we will hold the lunch in the refrigerator for one additional day, but if the student doesn't return on the second day, the lunch will be given away or disposed of.

DoorDash or other food delivery services are not permitted on campus. Unauthorized food deliveries will be held in the main office and will be available for pick up by the student or parent at the end of the school day. Repeat offenders will receive disciplinary action.

Leaving school grounds at lunchtime is a privilege available to those with Student Driver passes or Juniors and Seniors with permission to ride with approved student drivers. However, there are some guidelines that all students must follow.

- Students must have signed parental permission to leave campus at lunchtime.
- Students must return to school in time for the 5th period. Excessive tardiness to the 5th period will result in the suspension of off-campus privileges.
- Students who are assigned silent lunch due to lateness to school are expected to stay at school during lunch and serve the assigned consequence. Flagrant disregard for this section of the [attendance policy](#) will result in suspension of off-campus privileges and disciplinary measures for violation of school policies.
- While off campus, all school rules and policies are in effect. Students are still on 'school time' and are expected to follow the [Code of Conduct](#).
- The administration can revoke this privilege for infractions of the [Code of Conduct](#).

## **Student Deliveries**

To protect the integrity of the classroom environment, we do not accept the delivery of flowers, food, or gifts for students in the main office. Parents who deliver items for students (lunches, athletic equipment, etc.) should be aware that we do not deliver items to students; students may pick up items in the office at lunch and after school. Every effort should be made to refrain from dropping off forgotten items. Only lunches, athletic uniforms on game days, and eyeglasses will be accepted in the front office. Homework, iPads, musical instruments, and additional coats or umbrellas will not be accepted unless extenuating circumstances exist. We believe in encouraging student responsibility and would ask parents not to return to the school with forgotten items. Additionally, NCS is not liable for any items or the cost of any items delivered to NCS that are not delivered to the student during the school day.

## **Personal Items and Lockers**

### *Personal Items*

NCS will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students. We expect students to leave at home those belongings that are not necessary for their education. Any personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe, inappropriate for school, or interfering with students' educational focus will be confiscated and held in the office or remain in the possession of a staff member until the parents retrieve them. Such items may be subject to search. NCS shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in its possession.

## *Lockers*

Students will have the opportunity to apply to use a locker at different times of the year. Information about lockers will come out during the school year. All items stored in lockers on campus are subject to search at any time.

## **Missing Items/ Lost and Found**

If a child has misplaced his/her item, the student should check with his/her teacher and the area where he/she last remembers having it. Items found around campus will be placed in the High School Commons and the Auxiliary Gym for one week, after which items will be donated. NCS is not responsible for lost or misplaced items, nor does NCS have a dedicated Lost and Found program. It is expected that students will keep track of their personal belongings. NCS also encourages parents/ guardians to write the name of the child in jackets, coats, lunch boxes and water bottles.

## **Educational Program**

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is required by NCS, and any form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the [Code of Conduct](#). Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Working with another person(s) without permission
- Copying someone else's work
- Sharing your work with others without teacher permission
- Unauthorized use of notes or books on examinations, tests, or quizzes
- Giving or receiving information on examinations, tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, lab assignments, homework assignments, or any other work without teacher approval
- Forging a parent's signature
- Plagiarism.

Any act of academic dishonesty could result in loss of credit for the assignment and/or other disciplinary action.

### **Consequences for Cheating and Plagiarizing**

*1st offense:* Teacher/ Student conference; parent contact; 1 day of Silent Lunch; opportunity to redo assignment for 50% credit due the following day or at a time scheduled by the teacher if it involves re-taking a quiz or exam.

*2nd offense:* Teacher/ Student/ Parent conference; a zero for the assignment; Silent Lunch until the student completes a written reflection about academic integrity.

*3rd offense:* Office referral, which may include after-school detention or out-of-school suspension.

## A.I. Usage Policy

NCS will follow the NCDPI established AI policies and guidelines found on the [NCDPI website](#).

## Homebound

Please refer to the [Homebound Services](#) guide.

## Homework and Project Policy

### *Homework*

Teachers may assign homework that will foster individual learning and growth that is appropriate for the subject area and grade level and is intended to be completed outside of school hours. If students or their parents have questions about homework, kindly contact the teacher who assigned it. Staff email addresses are available on the [NCS website](#) and may be posted in the Student Information System portal.

#### K-2 Homework Expectations:

- No more than 30 minutes per night
- Homework is a practice of the standards taught during the day
- Tracked and checked for completion
- **Parent Expectation**: Support and guidance

#### 3-5 Homework Expectations:

- No more than 45 minutes per night
- Opportunity for a personalized approach, such as additional skill practice based on individual needs throughout the year
- Tracked and checked for completion that contributes to the graded area
- **Parent Expectation**: Support and guidance while encouraging independence

#### Middle School Homework Expectations:

- No more than 1 hour per night
- Graded for completeness and proficiency
- Tracked and checked for completion that contributes to the graded area
- **Parent Expectation**: Expect independence, but check in daily to ensure completion

#### High School Homework Expectations:

- No more than 90 minutes per night (*does not apply to AP, NCVPS, or CCP courses*)
- Graded for completeness and proficiency
- Tracked and checked for completion that contributes to the graded area
- **Parent Expectation**: Expect independence, but check in weekly to ensure the student is on track

## *Projects*

Projects are research-based and collaborative opportunities to creatively showcase student learning. Teachers will assign relevant and appropriate school projects. Additionally, teachers will encourage interdisciplinary projects that combine multiple subjects to reflect how academic subjects are interconnected in real life.

### **K-2:**

- One project per year
- Project completion will take no more than 4 weeks
- Project completion time will be split between classroom instruction and home support
- A rubric will be provided for each project to be returned upon completion with grade and feedback

### **3-5:**

- Two projects per year
- Project completion will take no more than 4 weeks
- Project completion time will be split between classroom instruction and home support
- A rubric will be provided for each project to be returned upon completion with grade and feedback

### **Middle School:**

- No more than one project per class per semester
- Project completion will take a minimum of 1 week and no more than 4 weeks
- Project completion time will be split between classroom instruction and home support
- A rubric will be provided for each project to be returned upon completion with grade and feedback

### **High School:**

- No more than one project per class per semester
- Project completion will take a minimum of 1 week and no more than 4 weeks
- Project completion time will be split between classroom instruction and home support
- A rubric will be provided for each project to be returned upon completion with grade and feedback

## **Latework Policy**

Assignments turned in late will be graded as follows for grades 3 through 12:

- 1 day late - 10% grade deduction,
- 2 days late - 20% grade deduction,
- 3 days late - 30% grade deduction,
- 4-5 days late - 50% grade deduction, and
- 6 or more days late - zero on the assignment.

## Schedule Changes

Each student's schedule is carefully planned and developed based on the student's academic history and demonstrated abilities. Modifications to the student's schedule can only be made if requested within the first ten days of the school year via the [Schedule Change Request](#) form. Any requests made after this time may be deemed as disruptive to the routine already established and, therefore, may not be honored. The Academy Director will make the final decision for all student placements, and any changes will be made based on the academic reason for the requested change, student data, and space availability in a class.

Please check your student's schedule carefully during the first week of school to ensure the schedule is correct. Please refer to the Upper Academy [Course Catalog](#) for additional guidance on high school courses, course requests, course changes, and course reimbursements.

## Withdrawal Procedures

If a parent would like to withdraw their child from NCS, they must complete the online [Student Withdrawal Form](#) or the paper form located in the main office. Parents are required to list their student's next school on the form at the time of withdrawal. If the student will be homeschooled, the state-issued homeschool identification number must be provided for the student to be withdrawn. A records request from a new school for any enrolled student will be considered a withdrawal request; if an official records request is received, NCS will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the request has been received and will place a 24 hour hold on the request prior to sending the records to confirm that the student is withdrawing from NCS.

## Transcripts

Official transcripts may be requested via the [Transcript Request Form](#). Please allow 3 days' advance notice. Parents, a student who is eighteen years of age or older, and other K-12 schools where a former student has enrolled may request the student's record. Neuse Charter School may charge for copies of records, including certified copies of transcripts. No fees will be charged for copies of records to be mailed directly to a K-12 school that a student is subsequently applying to or attending (G.S.115C-384).

## Student Files

NCS will adhere to all federal laws relating to maintaining student files. The following information regarding the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) comes from the U.S. Department of Education website.

FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when the student reaches the

age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. NCS is not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. NCS may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that NCS correct records they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If NCS decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if NCS still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, NCS must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows NCS to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School administrators with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to state law.

## Grading Scale

The long-term success of our students at NCS is of the utmost importance. In keeping with the NCS mission to develop productive citizens who take responsibility for their future, our grading policy requires student accountability. We believe our students should be expected to put forth their best effort daily in the classroom. For consistency and fairness within the school, we believe it is essential to have a clear set of grading expectations understood by students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Each grade level will communicate its grading policy to the students and parents at the beginning of the year.

NCS adheres to the 10-point grading policy:

A: 100%-90%

B: 89%-80%

C: 79%-70%

D: 69%-60%

F: 59% and below

I: Incomplete

All Honors-level courses will be awarded .5 Quality Points when calculating a student's GPA. All AP courses and CTE/CCP courses approved on the NC Articulation Agreement will be awarded 1 Quality Point when calculating GPA.

### Grade Calculation: Upper Academy Only

Semester 1 Grade (S1) = Quarter 1 (Q1) and Quarter 2 (Q2) average (50% each).

Semester 2 Grade (S2) = Quarter 3 (Q3) and Quarter 4 (Q4) average (50% each).

Final Grade (F1) = Semester 1 (40%), Semester 2 (40%), and Exam (E1) (20%)\*.

\*If a student meets the criteria for exemption from the teacher-made (non-EOC) final exam, then the final year grade will be calculated from Semester 1 (50%) and Semester 2 (50%).

### Final Exam Exemptions

Students may be exempted from final exams based on the criteria below.

#### *9th-11th Grade Students*

Students will be exempted from the final exam/project if they meet all of the following criteria:

- No student will be exempted from an EOC, AP, or CCP course where the final exam is required by an outside entity (ie, NCDPI, College Board, community college, etc).
- No unexcused absences in the course during the first semester,
- No suspensions all year (excluding suspensions due to tardiness), and
- Must have the following correlation to grades and absences:

Final Grade in Course	Total number of <b>unexcused absences</b> in the class during the second semester as of 4/27/26
95-100	3 or fewer
90-94	2 or fewer
85-89	1 or fewer
80-84	0 absences

Please note that students CAN opt to take the final if they choose, but if they take it, the grade will count.

#### *12th Grade Students*

Students will be exempted from the final exam/project if they meet all of the following criteria:

- No student will be exempted from an EOC, AP, or CCP course where the final exam is required by an outside entity (ie, NCDPI, College Board, any community college, etc).
- No unexcused absences in the course during the first semester,
- No suspensions all year (excluding suspensions due to tardiness), and
- Must have the following correlation to grades and absences:

Final Grade in Course	Total number of <b>all absences</b> in the class during the second semester as of 4/27/26
90-100	8 or fewer
80-89	2 or fewer

Please note that students CAN opt to take the final if they choose, but if they take it, the grade will count.

## North Carolina Standard Course of Study

Please review the [North Carolina Standard Course of Study](#) (NCSCOS) for NC public schools.

## Technology Acceptable Use Policy

While at NCS, students will have access to a variety of technology. It is the expectation of NCS that all school-owned tablets and laptops remain at school. While we do not ask our families to provide or pay for their devices, we do ask that all students and parents sign and adhere to this Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

Students are offered access to the NCS network for creativity, communication, research, and other tasks related to the academic program. All use of computers, iPads, furnished or created data, software, and other technology resources as granted by NCS are the property of the school and are intended for school business and educational use. Students are to use the computer network responsibly. Using the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for their actions in accessing and using the school's computer network and technological resources.

### *Privacy*

NCS reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic and to retrieve and review any data composed, sent, received, or stored using its network or Internet connections, including e-mail. Users do not enjoy any expectation of privacy when using any technology or transmissions originating within or around School property. Furthermore, students should have no expectation of privacy in any location or on any network while utilizing school-issued technology.

### *Materials and Language*

Use of or accessing profane, abusive, pornographic, obscene, and/or impolite materials or language is not permitted. Accidental access should be reported to the instructor immediately. Intentional circumvention of web filtering is prohibited, including but not limited to VPN sites, browser extensions, etc.

### *Installing/Copying*

Students are not to install or download any hardware, software, shareware, or freeware onto any media, devices, or network drives. Software installed by anyone other than the network administrator will be removed, and disciplinary action will follow. Downloading of non-work-related files is permitted only with an instructor's permission. Students may not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. Please refer to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the consequences of copying the work of another student. All copyright laws must be respected. Use of any other organization's network or technology resources via the network requires the instructor's permission and must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

### *Access*

Users may not access the computer network without proper authorization. Attempting to access the network without proper authorization and hacking is expressly prohibited. Users are to use their own username and password when using a school device or student account. Users must log off shared devices when they are finished with their work and are not to log on to a device for someone else or tell others their password. Students are to notify the instructor if someone else is thought to know his/her password.

### *Data Protection*

Users must not attempt to damage or destroy equipment or files. Though NCS makes efforts to ensure the safety and integrity of data, NCS makes no warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, for its service. NCS will not be responsible for any damage to data.

### *Storage*

Users are to delete their files and materials they no longer need. Students should not store personal documents, images, videos, or other digital material on school devices or school-maintained accounts (Google Drive, OneDrive, O365, Canvas, etc.).

### *Passwords*

Students are reminded not to share passwords with anyone except a parent or guardian. Students should not use login IDs and passwords belonging to other students, faculty, or staff members.

### *Email*

All email correspondence on the NCS system, the laptop/iPad, or in the student's assigned email account is the property of NCS. Documents and other files created by the students and located on the laptops or the NCS computer system are also the property of NCS.

### *Data Sharing*

Students may not transfer, email, or air drop photographs or videos. Such instances will be addressed according to the [Code of Conduct](#).

### *Consequences for Violating the Technology Acceptable Use Policy*

The following consequences will apply if a student violates this policy. Any of the below consequences may be enforced alone or in conjunction with one another by NCS against the violating student.

- Revocation or limitation of electronic device access privileges;
- Temporary or permanent confiscation of the student's electronic device;
- Disciplinary action as provided for in the discipline policy; and/or
- Any other sanctions or remedies provided by the law.

### *Internet Safety*

It is the policy of the Board to: (a) prevent user access via its technological resources to, or transmission of, inappropriate material on the Internet or through electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access to the Internet and devices or programs connected to or accessible through the Internet; (c) prevent other unlawful online activity; (d) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (e) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

### *Technology Policy Definitions*

**Technology Protection Measure:** The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.

**Harmful to Minors:** The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

**Child Pornography:** The term “child pornography” means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where:

- the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or
- such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

**Sexual Act; Sexual Contact:** The terms “sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings given to such terms in [section 2246 of title 18, United States Code](#).

**Minor:** For purposes of this policy, the term “minor” means any individual who has not attained the age of 17.

### *Inappropriate Network Usage*

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) will be used to block or filter access to inappropriate information on the Internet and World Wide Web. Specifically, blocking will be applied to audio and visual depictions deemed obscene or to be child pornography or harmful to minors. Student access to other materials that are inappropriate for minors will also be restricted. The Board has determined that audio or visual materials that depict violence, nudity, or graphic language that do not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose are inappropriate for minors. The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Director of Instructional Technology, shall make a determination regarding what other matters or materials are inappropriate for minors. School personnel may not restrict Internet access to ideas, perspectives, or viewpoints if the restriction is motivated solely by disapproval of the views involved.

A student or employee must immediately notify the Director of Instructional Technology and Academy Director if the student or employee believes that a website or web content that is available to students through the school system’s Internet access is obscene, constitutes child pornography, is “harmful to minors” as defined by CIPA, or is otherwise inappropriate for students.

Due to the dynamic nature of the Internet, sometimes Internet websites and web material that should not be restricted are blocked by the Internet filter. A student or employee who believes that a website or web content has been improperly blocked by the school system’s filter should bring the website to the attention of the Academy Director. The Academy Director shall confer

with the Director of Instructional Technology to determine whether the site or content should be unblocked. The Academy Director shall notify the student or teacher promptly of the decision. The decision may be appealed through the school system's grievance procedure.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled during use by an adult for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

All users of the school system's technological resources are expected to comply with the requirements established in the student [Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#). Users are prohibited from: (a) attempting to gain unauthorized access, including "hacking" and engaging in other similar unlawful activities; and (b) engaging in the unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identifying information regarding minors.

### *Education, Supervision, and Monitoring*

To the extent practical, steps will be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the school system's online computer network, especially when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications. It is the responsibility of all school personnel to educate, supervise, and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the [Children's Internet Protection Act](#), the [Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act](#), and the [Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act](#).

Procedures for disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures are the responsibility of the technology director or designated representatives.

The Director of Instructional Technology or designated representatives shall provide age-appropriate training for students who use the school system's Internet services. The training provided will be designed to promote the school system's commitment to educating students in digital literacy and citizenship, including:

1. The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the student technology acceptable use policy.
2. Student safety with regard to safety on the Internet, appropriate behavior while online, including behavior on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response; and
3. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Following this training, the student must acknowledge that he or she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of this student [Technology Acceptable Use policy](#).

The Superintendent shall develop any regulations needed to implement this policy and shall submit any certifications necessary to demonstrate compliance with this policy.

## Student Events and Field Trips

### *School Event Eligibility*

Students may not attend a school-sponsored event (clubs, field trips, overnight trips, dances, athletic games, etc.) if they have any outstanding fees due, including but not limited to technology, device repairs, club dues, athletic fees, etc. The Upper School Academy Director will not sign any prom date forms for other schools for students with outstanding fees. Seniors will not be eligible to walk at graduation unless all fees have been paid.

### *Field Trips*

Field trips are an important part of enhancing a student's learning experience. NCS provides field trip opportunities that provide academic value or community-building time for our students. Field trips and overnight trips are a privilege at School. Please review the eligibility requirements below prior to paying for a field trip or signing a permission slip.

- No school student will be permitted to leave a field trip early except in the case of an emergency or unless requested by a member of the NCS staff for disciplinary reasons.
- All students must remain with the group for the duration of the field trip.
- Due to the responsibilities of a chaperone to supervise the students in their care, we are not able to accommodate bringing additional children (i.e., siblings) who are not in the designated class or course.
- Students and families should be aware that any student who chooses to participate in a school-sponsored field trip is subject to a search of their room or belongings if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student may be in violation of school policy or law. Local law enforcement may also be called to investigate if there is a belief that the student's behavior violated the law.
- Pursuant to G.S. 115C-76.110, during any activity or event authorized by the school, students shall not share sleeping quarters with a member of the opposite biological sex, except under the following circumstances:
  - The parent or legal guardian of all students sharing the sleeping quarters have provided written permission to the School
  - The member of the opposite biological sex is the student's immediate family member.
- Students involved in serious disciplinary action will lose the opportunity to participate in future field trips scheduled in the same school year.
- Students who have demonstrated an inability to follow the rules or are struggling with academics in the classroom may be prohibited from participating. The administration will make this determination on an individual basis. Any fees or deposits paid earlier are non-refundable if the student is deemed unable to participate.

- Students who receive an out-of-school suspension (OSS) during the school year will not be eligible to participate in any field trips for the rest of the school year, and any fees or deposits previously paid are non-refundable.
- Personal devices, including cell phones, laptops, kindles, e-readers, tablets, and iPads, are not permitted on overnight trips unless otherwise directed by the Academy Director. This rule is in place to protect all of our students. Staff chaperones will confiscate personal devices brought on trips. The items will be returned 10 days after the trip is complete.
- As a charter school without bus transportation, parents will often be required to provide transportation for field trips. Staff are asked to refrain from transporting students due to liability issues.
- Money paid to NCS is non-refundable if the student decides not to attend the trip.
- Some field trips allow parents to attend. If there is any possibility that an adult may be alone with a student who is not their child, they will be asked to complete an NCS Background Screening ([Background Check Form](#)) at the cost of \$15. This screening will be valid for all trips and volunteer service for three years, except for those parents/ guardians driving other students. Those parents/ guardians must have an annual Background Screening per NCS's liability insurance carrier.
- For all field trips, participants will be expected to follow these rules:
  - Abide by the [Code of Conduct](#) and Discipline Plan while on the field trip.
  - Follow the [NCS Dress Code](#).
  - Complete the online [Field Trip Permission Form](#) by the specified date and pay any related, non-refundable fees.

### *Eligibility for Field Trips*

1. Students in 3rd through 12th grades must be in good academic standing.
  - a. Student may not be failing any classes (F1 grade – cumulative grade for the year). Grades will be checked two weeks prior to field trips/overnight trips.
  - b. If a student is failing any classes at that time, they may not be able to attend the trip or school event.
2. Students must meet the following behavior requirements:
  - a. Student may not have accrued more than three write-ups during the school year for any reason, and
  - b. Student may not have any out-of-school suspensions.
3. Student must meet the following attendance requirements:
  - a. Students may not have more than 15 absences (excused and unexcused), and
  - b. Students may not have more than 8 unexcused tardies or early dismissals.
4. The permission slip must be received by the due date.
5. Payment must be made on time per the due dates scheduled for the field trip and overnight trip information.
6. Students may not have any outstanding fees due, including but not limited to repairs related to intentional damage, club dues, athletic fees, etc.

No refunds will be given for students who become ineligible to attend the trip due to one of the reasons above. All final decisions regarding student participation on overnight trips are at the discretion of the administrative team.

### *Field Trip Parent and Student Expectations*

Field trips are optional for all students. Students not in good academic and behavioral standing will not be able to attend trips as they are offered. Deposits and payments made towards trips are nonrefundable, as vendors are paid well in advance of trips and will not refund the money to the school. Student accommodations will be made on trips per the student's IEP, 504, and/or medical plan, but special accommodations for non-allergy dietary requests, rooming preferences, and parent or student desires will not be honored.

### *Deadlines and Payments*

Throughout the year, NCS holds several sponsored events and field trips. Parents will be required to RSVP by the designated date for their child to be able to attend. In addition, payment for the field trip must be made by the deadline. If a parent RSVP's that their child will be attending the trip, they will be liable for the full cost of the trip. There are no refunds, and full payment will be expected by the payment deadline, as NCS is expected to pay for tickets well in advance of field trips and cannot get a refund. All permission slips are required for the student to be able to attend the trip. There will be no exceptions to this. All payments will be made via the school's payment portal, [EZ School](#).

### *Financial Assistance*

If there is a financial hardship in the family, the parent/guardian should contact the School Counselor to request a financial assistance application. The School Counselor will communicate directly with the parent/guardian regarding financial assistance that can be provided for each event, fee, or trip. Requests for financial assistance must be received at least two weeks prior to the payment deadline to allow for adequate planning. Any partial payment required for those with financial assistance will still be due by the payment deadline.

## **Testing and Assessment Program**

### *State Testing*

All students in grades 3rd-11th will take the North Carolina required state tests. These tests include the following:

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- Reading BOG (takes place before the 20<sup>th</sup> day of school)
- Reading EOG
- Math EOG

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Reading EOG
- Math EOG

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Reading EOG
- Math EOG
- Science EOG

#### 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Reading EOG
- Math EOG

#### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Reading EOG
- Math I EOC
- Science EOG

#### High School

- Math 1 EOC
- English 2 EOC
- Biology EOC
- Math 3 EOC

#### ESL Students Only (Grades K-12)

- ACCESS

### *Testing Transparency*

In accordance with Section 1112(e)(2)(a) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), NCS must provide information regarding the assessments that will be administered this year. To measure student growth and proficiency and maintain a focus on educational equity and excellence, all students are required to take annual statewide assessments. To provide assessment transparency, the various assessments listed below are administered to our students throughout the school year.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Timeline*</b>	<b>Dates</b>
MAP	Reading, Math	K-2	Monitor academic growth and achievement	BOY and EOY	September, April
WIDA Screeners	Language	K-12	State assessment to determine eligibility for EL services	Within the first 30 days	September
CogAT	AIG	All 3rd graders; New 8th graders	Determine AIG identification	Within the first quarter	September

ACCESS	Language	K-12	State assessment to evaluate basic language proficiency for English Learners.	MOY	January
BOG3	ELA	3	Rta legislature state assessment to determine a baseline for student proficiency of 3rd-grade reading standards	In the first 20 days students are in the building.	August
RtA	ELA	3 - 4	Assessment for 3rd graders who do not pass. RTA legislature	After EOG testing, after summer school, and late fall if not yet passed	May and June
NC Check-Ins 2.0	ELA, Math, Science	3-11	Checks progress towards mastery of NC SCoS	3x a year	October-April TBD
EOG	ELA/Math /Science-5 &8	3-8	State-mandated assessments	Last 10 days of the school year	May
PSAT 8/9		8-9 (some Duke TIP 6-7)	Optional for a fee: practice for SAT, qualify for CCP program	MOY	March/April
EOC	Math I, Math III, English 2, Biology	8-12	State-mandated assessments	Last 5 days of the semester	May
CTE Exams	Specific to the course taken	9-12	State-mandated assessment for CTE courses	Last 5 days of the semester	May
AP Exams	Specific to the course taken	9-12	Determine college credit for courses	First two weeks of May	May
PSAT NMSQT		10-11	Optional for a fee: practice for SAT,	MOY	October TBD

			qualify for CCP program		
PreACT/CCR AA Grade 10	ELA/Math /Science	10	State-mandated assessments	MOY	Oct-mid Dec window
ACT	ELA/Math /Science	11	State-mandated assessments	MOY	February
CCRAA Grade 11	ELA/Math Science	11	Alternate Assessment for ACT	MOY	February
ASVAB		11-12	Optional: military entrance	MOY	October
ACT WorkKeys	CTE	12	Determine proficiency on CTE standards for concentrators	MOY	February/March

## Student Promotion and Accountability

### *K-8th Grades*

Neuse Charter School's goal is for all students to make adequate progress each year and acquire the skills necessary for the next grade level. To realize this goal, students at risk of academic failure and who are not successfully progressing toward grade promotion will be identified and provided additional academic support. Parents of students who are at risk of not acquiring the skills necessary to move to the next grade level will be informed at least quarterly through conferences, interim reports, and report cards. All parents of students being considered for retention in their current grade will be notified at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter each year.

A student's academic grades, cognitive ability, age, physical maturity, emotional and social development, national, state, and local assessment results, and teacher recommendations are all considered when making retention decisions. Every effort will be made to work with the student and parents/guardians to remediate the student's difficulties before he/she is retained. Students must successfully complete a majority of the required academic subjects to be promoted.

1. Any student failing 3 or more core classes for an academic year may be retained at that grade level.
2. Any student failing 2 core subjects in a given year may be retained:
  1. if a student fails both Math and English Language Arts classes, then the student is automatically placed on the potential retention list;
  2. if a student fails EOGs in two or more subjects, then that student may be retained.

3. Any probationary student who fails the same 2 core subjects in a subsequent year will automatically be retained.

### *Teacher Judgment for Promotion*

The teacher must provide compelling, verifiable evidence when student performance on appropriate grade-level assessments is not believed to be indicative of daily classroom performance. Teacher judgment factors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Previous retentions
- Level of text at which the student is independently successful
- Observations
- Checklists
- Student portfolios
- Classroom assessments
- Current grades based on mastery

### *K-8th Student Progression Charts*

The Student Progression charts show identified performance levels related to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and End of Grade assessments, as well as other assessments and indicators. All grade levels can take into consideration multiple factors concerning promotion and retention, including performance in all areas, as well as social and emotional readiness. The chart guides teachers and administrators to appropriately support students who may be eligible for retention. The teacher, parent, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) representative, and Academy Director will work together to ensure a plan is in place to prevent retention during the school year, but the Academy Director makes the ultimate decision for promotion or retention.

NWEA RiT score levels indicated on the K-8 Student Progression Charts are based on the most recent end-of-year national norm calculations (2020). Students above grade level score above the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile; students on grade level score between the 40<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> percentile; students below grade level (needs short-term intervention) score between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> percentile; and students below grade level (need intensive intervention) score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile.

NCS may use other screening instruments in collaboration with the above criteria to determine promotion or retention.

### *End of Year Mastery Goals*

#### **KINDERGARTEN**

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 157+	Promote

	NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 160+  MCLASS 450+	
At Grade Level	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 150-156  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 155-160  MCLASS 420-449	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 145-150  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 149-154  MCLASS 419-406	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = less than 145  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = less than 149  MCLASS 405 or below	Retention Considered

### **FIRST GRADE**

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 175+  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 180+ MCLASS 480 +	Promote
At Grade Level	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 168-175  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 173-180  MCLASS 441-479	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 162-168  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 168-173	Promote with Support Plan

	MCLASS 427-440	
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = less than 162  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = less than 168 MCLASS 426 or below	Retention Considered

## SECOND GRADE

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score = 189+  NWEA Map Math RiT Score = 193+ MCLASS 474 +  Lexile Level = 500+	Promote
At Grade Level	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score=182-189  NWEA Map Math RiT Score= 186-193  Lexile Level = 400-499  MCLASS 439-473	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score=175-182  NWEA Map Math RiT Score=180-186  Lexile Level = 300-399  MCLASS 421-438	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	NWEA Map Reading RiT Score= less than 175  NWEA Map Math RiT Score= less than 180  Lexile Level = Less than 300  MCLASS 420 or below	Retention Considered

**THIRD GRADE - NC Read to Achieve Legislation Considered**

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 4-5  Lexile Level = 700+  MCLASS 467 +	Promote
At Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 3  Lexile Level = 600-699 MCLASS 442-466	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 2  Lexile Level = 500-599  MCLASS 424-441	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 1  Lexile Level = Less than 500  MCLASS 423 or below	Retention Considered

**FOURTH GRADE**

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 4-5  Lexile Level = 800+	Promote
At Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 3	Promote

	Lexile Level = 750-799	
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 2 Lexile Level = 700-749	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 1 Lexile Level = Less than 700	Retention Considered

#### **FIFTH GRADE**

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 4-5 Lexile Level = 800+	Promote
At Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 3 Lexile Level = 750-799	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 2 Lexile Level = 700-749	Promote with Support Plan

Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 1  Lexile Level = Less than 700	Retention Considered
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**SIXTH GRADE** - *must pass each semester with a grade of “60” or higher in the core subject areas*

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 4-5  Lexile Level = 900+	Promote
At Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 3  Lexile Level = 850-899	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 2  Lexile Level = 800-849	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 1  Lexile Level = Less than 800	Retention Considered

**SEVENTH GRADE** - *must pass each semester with a grade of “60” or higher in the core subject areas*

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 4-5 Lexile Level = 900+	Promote
At Grade Level	EOG ELA & Math: Level 3 Lexile Level = 850-899	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 2 Lexile Level = 800-849	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	EOG ELA & Math: Level 1 Lexile Level = Less than 800	Retention considered

**EIGHTH GRADE** - *must pass each semester with a grade of “60” or higher in the core subject areas*

Student Mastery Level	Measurement Criteria	Promotion Decision
Above Grade Level	EOG ELA: Level 4-5 EOC Math 1: Level 4-5 Lexile Level = 1000+	Promote

At Grade Level	<p>EOG ELA: Level 3 EOC Math 1: Level 3</p> <p>Lexile Level = 950-999</p>	Promote
Below Grade Level (needs short-term intervention)	<p>EOG ELA: Level 2 EOC Math 1: Level 2</p> <p>Lexile Level = 900-949</p>	Promote with Support Plan
Below Grade Level (needs intensive intervention)	<p>EOG ELA: Level 1 EOC Math 1: Level 1</p> <p>Lexile Level = Less than 900</p>	Retention Considered

### *K-3rd Grade Reading Deficiency and Parental Notification*

Pursuant to North Carolina's Read to Achieve law (RtA), the parent(s) of any 3rd grade student who exhibits a deficiency in reading, based on statewide assessments conducted at the beginning of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, or based on teacher observations, must be immediately notified in writing. The following information must be provided:

1. A description indicating the nature of the difficulty in learning and lack of achievement in reading;
2. A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that will be provided to the student, which are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency;
3. A description of the current services provided to the student. If the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, the child must be retained unless he/she is exempt from mandatory retention for Good Cause as described in [House Bill 950/S.L. 2012; 142 Section 7A](#).

Students may also show proficiency for the next grade level in one of the following reading measures:

- BOG passed with a 3, 4, or 5 in the fall of the student's 3rd grade year
- Score of a 725 Lexile in Mclass Dibels 8 by the end of student's 3rd grade year
- 
- EOG passed with a 3, 4, or 5 in the spring
- EOCC passed with a 3, 4, or 5 in the spring
- Pass the RtA test that will be given to all students who do not meet one of the above criteria.
  - If not passed in May, students will be given another opportunity at the end of Summer School.
  - Students who are considered RtA at the start of the next school year will be provided the opportunity to retake the RtA test in October.

### **Graduation Requirements/ High School Credits**

Students earn credits for courses in accordance with the NCS and North Carolina graduation requirements. Any student who receives a passing grade in a course will earn credit for that course. When students fail a course required for graduation, they may qualify to retake the class to recover the failed credit. NCS shall allow a pass or fail grade for each credit recovery course that meets the criteria below. Credit recovery delivers a subset of the Standard Course of Study or blueprint of the original course in order to specifically address deficiencies in a student's mastery of the course and target specific components of a course necessary for completion. The pass/ fail will not affect the student's GPA. When credit recovery is exercised, the original record of the course being completed and failed will remain on the transcript.

Again, this is used for limited circumstances, such as students who need to be out on medical leave/ homebound for a small section of the course or a student who failed due to a lack of understanding in a limited section of the course. This should not be used when a student does not understand mastery of the full course material or puts forth little to no effort toward the year-long course. In those cases, the student should retake the entire course the following academic year.

Please note that failure of a course can alter a graduation date. NCS requires 24 credits to graduate; therefore, failing even one course can cause a student to graduate a year behind their original date. Additionally, if a student fails a sequential course, such as a Math or English course, they must retake that course the following year, potentially delaying their graduation date. Any exception to the 24 credits for graduation must be approved by the Superintendent. At no time can a student graduate from NCS with credits lower than the state requirement of 22 credits, as determined by the NCDPI.

Students will be placed into courses based on the credits that they have previously completed. Any high school credits earned during middle school can be retaken with a parent's written request. Refer to the Upper Academy [Course Catalog](#) for full credit and course details.

### **Academic Honors/ Class Rankings**

Academic honors, class rank, and grade point averages are calculated and rounded off to four decimal places of the weighted grade point average.

Calculations are based on the following:

- Junior Marshals: Top six ranked Juniors based on the end of Semester 1 GPA for semester-based classes and Quarter 3 GPA for year-long courses.
- Valedictorian: Top Senior based on the end of Semester 1 GPA for semester-based classes and Quarter 3 GPA for year-long courses.
- Salutatorian: Second Senior based on the end of Semester 1 GPA for semester-based classes and Quarter 3 GPA for year-long courses.
- Latin Honor Awards: Seniors with a GPA of 3.5 or above based on the end of Semester 1 GPA for semester-based classes and Quarter 3 GPA for year-long courses.

See the Upper Academy [Course Catalog](#) for more information.

### **Exceptional Children Programs**

The mission of NCS's Department of Exceptional Children is to ensure that children and youth with disabilities develop educationally, socially, emotionally, and vocationally through the provision of a free, appropriate education and related services in the least restrictive environment.

Through the Individual Education Program (IEP) process, NCS offers a free, appropriate public education to each of its students with special needs. This includes delivering the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) courses to our high school students if determined to be appropriate by the student's IEP Team. Further information about occupational course of study courses can be found at the [OCS website](#) maintained by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) is the federal law. [Article 9, Section 115C](#) of the North Carolina General Statutes is the state law concerning the education of students with disabilities.

### ***Special Education Services***

NCS employs certified Special Education teachers to provide services to classroom teachers who serve special education students as needed. NCS shall comply with federal and state law to ensure that all students with disabilities are provided with a free, appropriate public education (FAPE).

Students with special needs have safeguards and rights under federal and state laws and cannot be excluded from their educational programs without following federally mandated procedures. NCS recognizes the importance of working with students early to prevent misbehavior and to provide appropriate behavioral intervention plans and goals through the IEP process.

### *Who Does This Program Serve?*

Children with disabilities include those with autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, developmental delay, serious emotional disability, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, specific learning disabilities, speech and/or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment.

### *What is an IEP?*

The IEP, Individualized Education Program, is a written document developed for each public-school child eligible for services. The IEP is created through a team effort and reviewed at least once a year.

Before an IEP can be written, a child must be eligible for special education. By federal law, a multidisciplinary team must determine that (1) the child has a disability and (2) the child requires special education and related services to benefit from the general education program. NCS's Exceptional Children programs are designed to support students with disabilities as they acquire academic, social, and functional skills.

For more information: [NCDPI Exceptional Children's website](#).

### *Suspensions*

Students with special needs cannot be suspended from school for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year without following specific procedures. Services must be provided starting with Day 11, and the IEP team must meet to determine if a manifestation determination has occurred.

NCS will first try to intervene with student behavior in the school setting. Repeated problematic behavior will be addressed early through the IEP process; teams will analyze the behavior through a Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA) and then develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and/or behavioral goals.

### *Change of Placement*

A change in placement for disciplinary reasons occurs if:

- The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days or
- The student has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern (students sent home early) that totals more than 10 school days in a school year.

On the date of the decision to remove a student who has a change of placement for disciplinary reasons, NCS must notify parents of that decision and provide due process ([Parent Handbook](#)). A manifestation determination must be completed within 10 school days. An FBA and BIP must be completed or reviewed if already completed.

Any change in special education placement must be documented on:

- IEP: either by amendment or a new IEP
- Prior Written Notice (PWN)

When a special education placement changes through the IEP process (for example, to modified day or homebound), the new placement does not count as a school removal and is not counted as a suspension. If a student has a change in placement, the IEP team is required to meet every 30 days to ensure the placement is still appropriate.

The student will need to have the same staff process PWN and IEP addendums to return to the original placement when or if that is appropriate.

Examples of changes that the IEP team might consider based on behavior:

- Separate to modified day
- Regular to homebound services
- Homebound services to regular
- Separate to regular (when students are placed from max-resource to inclusion support)

### *Manifestation Determination*

The Manifestation Determination is to be completed by the student's IEP Team and must occur within 10 school days of removal when there has been a change of placement.

After reviewing all relevant information in the student's file (IEP, observations, parent information), the team must decide if the behavior was a manifestation of the disability by determining:

- If the conduct was caused by the child's disability
- If the conduct was the result of the Public School Unit's (PSU) failure to implement the IEP, the PSU must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.

### *Day 11 Requirements*

Starting with the 11th day of removal, NCS must:

- Provide services. No exceptions. Which services are provided and who determines appropriate services depend upon IEP contents, whether there has been a change of placement for disciplinary reasons, and the results of any manifestation determination.
- Determine if a change of placement is for disciplinary reasons.

If the change in placement is due to disciplinary reasons:

A. On the day of the incident, send the Student/Family Handbook and Invitation

## B. Conduct a Manifestation Determination

If the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability based on the Manifestation Determination, then the student may be suspended, similar to a general education student.

If the behavior is a manifestation of the disability based on the Manifestation Determination, then the student must be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the parent and school agree to a change of placement. Also, an FBA must be conducted unless it is already completed (current IEP and current school year). If completed, the FBA should be reviewed as needed. Finally, A BIP must be created to address the behavior violation. If the BIP has already been developed, it should be reviewed and modified as necessary to address the behavior.

### *Weapons/Drugs/Serious Bodily Injury*

If the offense involves weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, proceed using the 11-day requirements. These violations are clearly defined; the standard for serious bodily injury is very high. The only difference in procedure is that if the manifestation determination shows the relationship between the behavior and the disability, the Academy Director may remove the student to an alternative setting for up to 45 school days. If the behavior is not related, the student may be removed, similar to a regular student. In both cases, Manifestation Determination, FBA, BIP, and services defined by IEP are required.

### *Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)*

Functional Behavior Assessments are to be completed on all students with special needs and behavior difficulties. They are also required if a change of placement is made for disciplinary reasons. If an FBA has already been developed, it should be reviewed and modified as necessary to address the behavior.

NCS will be proactive and perform an FBA before the student accumulates the 10th day of removal. If there is a disciplinary change of placement and an FBA has already been completed, a new FBA is not required for each removal; however, the FBA will be reviewed regularly.

### *Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIP)*

Behavior Intervention Plans are to be completed for all students with special needs and behavior difficulties. They are also required if a change of placement is required for disciplinary reasons. If a BIP has already been developed, it will be reviewed and modified as necessary to address the behavior.

The most practical way to deal with repetitive, inappropriate behavior is to develop a BIP as part of the IEP. Behavioral plans are recommended for any student with special needs who has problems with behavior, even if the behavior is not judged to be related to the disability.

## *Exclusion*

NCS utilizes exclusion as a disciplinary consequence under its Code of Conduct and abides by the due process required under [N.C.G.S. § 115C-218.60](#) and its Charter Agreement. Procedures by which students can be excluded from the charter school are outlined in the school's discipline policies and Code of Conduct.

## *When Exclusion Is Required*

If a student's behavior is so severe that the student needs to be removed from school, NCS may exercise the following options:

- NCS Administrators may suspend a special needs student for up to 10 school days in a school year, as any student. Suspension on Day 11 will trigger a Manifestation Determination meeting.
- Students who are considered for long-term suspensions or for whom a pattern is determined must have a Manifestation Determination.
- If the behavior is not related to the disability, the student may receive normal disciplinary action (suspension). However, the student will need a continuation of special education services.
- If the behavior is related to the disability, the student may NOT be suspended.
- At all stages, the IEP team may meet to determine an alternative placement. The new placement would then not be considered as a removal or suspension. The team will need to meet again to change placement back to the original school setting when or if a change is warranted.

All disciplinary removals are counted as suspensions unless the IEP team meets for that situation and changes the student's special education placement.

## *Due Process and Students' Responsibilities & Rights*

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To be caring and honest,
- To do his or her best to learn and master all he/she can,
- To respect school rules, regulations, and policies,
- To be sure that personal expressions do not interfere with the rights of others,
- To follow state law and school policies concerning substance abuse,

### **STUDENT RIGHTS**

- To adhere to due process procedures,
- To feel safe in the school environment,
- To take full advantage of the learning,
- To work in an environment free from disruptions,
- To express his or her opinions, ideas, thoughts, and concerns,
- To have a healthy environment that is smoke, alcohol, and drug-free,
- To use school resources and facilities

- To respect and protect the personal and property rights of others and NCS,
- To treat all members of the community with full respect, fairness, and courtesy,
- To abide by all the expectations of NCS and its community,
- for self-betterment under appropriate supervision,
- To expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from all members of the community,
- To be informed of all expectations and responsibilities,
- To take part in a variety of school activities, AND
- To have the right to due process.

All students at NCS are entitled to the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, and their rights will not knowingly be denied by the required code of conduct or by any disciplinary actions taken by NCS. Any student who exhibits any of the unacceptable student behaviors or Conduct Violations listed in this handbook or is added to this list at a later date will suffer immediate consequences. These consequences range from notification of parents, removal from peers, after-school detention, suspension, expulsion, and criminal prosecution. In all instances, NCS's policies and procedures governing the due process for suspensions and expulsions will follow. All students at NCS have the right to feel physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe. Therefore, if at any time a student feels he/she is the subject of harassment, hazing/bullying, threats, or other intimidating behavior, they should immediately speak to an Academy Director about the problem. The situation will be investigated as soon as possible.

Similarly, if a student is concerned about the safety of another student who seems to be the subject of harassment, hazing/bullying, or threats, they should immediately speak to an Academy Director about the problem. The situation will be investigated as soon as possible.

### *Child Find*

NCS participates in Project Child Find, an effort coordinated with the Exceptional Children Division of the State Department of Public Instruction, to locate and identify children and youth ages birth through 21 with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services. NCS informs parents and/or guardians of the services available from NCS and other state and community agencies. The children who qualify for these services have been diagnosed with or are suspected to have intellectual, physical, or emotional disabilities and are unable to benefit from a regular school program without special assistance. School identifies these students through our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) as well as from parent and teacher referrals and provides the following help:

- A complete evaluation, and if appropriate and within the guidelines of eligibility in NC, eligibility in one of the 14 disabling conditions;
- An IEP for children with a disability; and

- A referral to other agencies when needed.

### *Contact Information for EC Services*

If you suspect your child may have a disability, please contact the NCS Director of Exceptional Children, Mrs. Jamie Johnson.

## **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) is a civil rights law that protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination. Section 504 protects qualifying students by prohibiting them from being excluded from public schools or denied the benefits of public schools because of their disability.

### *What Is a 504 Plan?*

A 504 plan provides equal access to educational services for students with a qualified disability. It is designed to make appropriate changes to the classroom environment or the delivery of instruction to provide the student with equal access to the educational curriculum. This plan is individualized to the needs of the student.

### *What Is Considered a Disability under Section 504?*

A student must have a physical or mental impairment. The Department of Education describes “physical or mental impairment” as follows:

1. any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive, genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
2. any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, or specific learning disabilities. [34 CFR 104.3\(j\)\(2\)\(i\)](#).

The disabling condition must substantially limit one or more major life activity: A “major life activity” includes (but is not limited to) learning, concentrating, thinking, communicating, reading, walking, seeing, breathing, eating, lifting, bending, and primary bodily functions/systems (neurological, immune, respiratory, etc.)

### *Contact Information for 504*

If you suspect your child may have a qualified disability and could possibly be in need of a 504 Plan, please contact the Upper Academy School Counselor.

## Academically or Intellectually Gifted Students

### *NCS' Vision for the Local AIG Program*

Neuse Charter School strives to provide a program to meet the needs of the whole gifted child: academically, socially, and emotionally. We recognize a responsibility to meet the needs of learners who demonstrate unique academic and intellectual ability while seeking to provide an academically challenging and rigorous program. We also recognize that these students, who have unique abilities, have mastered many of the grade-appropriate curricular standards, comprehend material quickly, and can think more abstractly and analytically than the average age-appropriate student. We desire a program that will meet the needs of this unique learner through various content areas and to different degrees. We also desire to create a talent development program to allow all students access to enrichment opportunities. This requires support and partnership between NCS, a student's family members, and the community to enable these Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) advanced learners to recognize their gifts and talents. We strive to support advanced learners through the use of scaffolded and differentiated structures that are recognized within the field of AIG. These will assist our unique learners in developing their natural interests, gifts, and talents and building pathways to access college for all students.

### *K-12 AIG Identification Process*

#### K-2 Talent Development

Students in K-2 are exposed to our Talent Development opportunities. Talent Development allows students the opportunity to be exposed to multiple avenues to display their creativity and problem-solving skills. These opportunities are created in partnership with our Enhancement Team as well as the School-Based Committee for Gifted Education (SBCGE).

#### 3rd-8th Grade Identification Process

Neuse Charter School administers the CogAT (Cognitive Aptitude Test) to all students in grades 3-8 every other year. Students who attain a composite score at or above the 85th percentile classroom performance observations, and qualitative observations that target gifted behaviors in the classroom, will be considered for referral to the SBCGE. The SBCGE will proceed to determine if the student should be identified.

#### 3rd-12th Grade Identification Process

If a student in grades 3-8 does not qualify for AIG using the above-outlined criteria, they are referred to the SBCGE, which evaluates several factors to determine eligibility for differentiated services through our AIG program. Students are identified as AIG (Academically and

Intellectually Gifted), AG (Academically Gifted), or IG (Intellectually Gifted) in reading and/or math.

### *Differentiated Learning Opportunities*

NCS supports instructional practices for the advanced learner. This includes a variety of models that will help provide a continuum of services for students. Kindergarten, First, and Second grade staff will use differentiated centers (where appropriate), the flexible grouping of students by both need and interest, and periodic SBCGE staff collaboration for push-in support. Third, Fourth, and Fifth grade staff will use cluster grouping to allow for differentiated centers (where appropriate), the flexible grouping of students by both need and interest for activities, and periodic staff collaboration/co-teaching (when available). Middle school staff will employ advanced-level/ compacted coursework (Mathematics and English Language Arts), the flexible grouping of students by both need and interest for activities in the regular education classroom, and a small group extension/ enrichment class. These varied strategies will help increase rigor, depth, complexity, sophistication, and abstractness for gifted learners throughout the day.

### **Outside Providers and Dual Enrollment**

NCS prohibits outside providers from providing services to students on campus unless the outside provider is contracted directly with NCS to provide such services. Dual enrollment in any program during the regular school day is also prohibited unless expressly authorized by State Law or approved by the Board of Directors.

### **Drivers' Education and Driving Privileges**

#### *Driver's Education Classes*

If your student is at least 14 ½ years old, they may register to take Driver's Education in Johnston County Public Schools or via an approved private driving school. Residency in an outside county does not determine Driver Education eligibility; where the student attends school is the determining factor. Because NCS is in Johnston County, students attending our school typically take Driver's Education through [Smithfield-Selma High School](#). Students are responsible for any and all fees assessed by the Johnston County school for participation in the course.

#### *Driver's Eligibility Certificate*

Once students have completed both the classroom piece and the driving portion, they can apply for a Learner's Permit at the DMV when they turn 15 years old. Students who plan to get their driving permit must obtain a Driver Eligibility Certificate from the Front Office. They must bring a birth certificate and a driver's education certificate when requesting an eligibility certificate, and should allow at least 3 business days to get the eligibility certificate, as we need to confirm that the student is in good standing and has the certificate signed by the Academy Director or designee.

### *Driver Eligibility to Park on Campus*

Students are eligible to park on campus provided they have completed the [Student Driver Process](#) and meet the following guidelines; however, it should be noted that parking on campus is a privilege, and spots are limited.

Students must make adequate academic progress (passing at least 70% of the maximum possible courses each semester and meeting promotion standards established by NCS).

Any out-of-school suspensions, multiple violations of the [Code of Conduct](#), or outstanding financial obligations may result in immediate loss of driving privileges for the remainder of the semester or academic year.

Student drivers requesting a parking spot are required to complete the [Student Driver Form](#) and upload all required documents:

1. A copy of proof of insurance for the car or cars they will use while parking on campus.
2. A copy of the student's driver's license.
3. A copy of the Driver's Ed completion certificate (the school may have it on file from when the Driver Eligibility Certificate was given). Students who have not taken Driver's Ed cannot park on campus (regardless of their age).
4. Pay the fee for the parking pass. Please note that parking pass fees are nonrefundable, non-transferable, and there is a \$10 charge to replace a lost pass.
5. Parking passes will not be given to students with an outstanding financial obligation.
6. Students who park on campus without a valid parking permit will face disciplinary consequences.
  - 1st offense: \$10 daily parking fee.
  - 2nd offense: \$20 daily parking fee.
  - 3rd offense: Suspension of driving privileges until a parent conference is held.

Please note: To protect the health and safety of all our students and staff, student vehicles parked on school property are subject to search by any authorized school personnel or law enforcement agencies when there is a reasonable suspicion that a student may be in violation of school policy or law. See Student Search and Seizure Policy, below, for more information.

In addition to the requirements above, student drivers must adhere to the following policies:

- Student drivers must observe all North Carolina General Statutes and all School driving rules; this includes obeying all traffic laws, signs, and noise ordinances, not speeding or making excessive noise by spinning wheels or playing loud music.
- For student drivers under 18 years of age, all state laws shall be followed, including those laws addressing the number of underage students and passengers allowed per driver. Student drivers under 18 are not to use a device (i.e., cell phones, tablets, GPS Nav systems, iPod/device sound systems) while the car is in motion.

- Student drivers cannot sit in their vehicles during the school day. Written permission from the Office must be obtained to enter their vehicles during the day to retrieve forgotten items.
- Student drivers must notify the administration immediately if they are involved in an accident on school grounds. This includes any minor damage to another vehicle. Students causing an accident on campus may have their parking permit revoked.
- Student drivers must park in their designated space or notify the main office if someone is in their space, preventing them from parking there. Students should also note the space they parked in if it is not in their assigned space.
- Students and their parents are specifically reminded to be vigilant regarding the contents of their vehicles when they are on school property. The student driver shall not keep illegal, dangerous, or inappropriate items in the vehicle. These include, but are not limited to: alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco products, or weapons. NC law prohibits and deals harshly with weapons and illegal substances in vehicles on school property.
- Passengers in vehicles must always adhere to seat belt laws on school property.
- Careless or reckless driving may result in the suspension of campus driving privileges.
- Driving habits should demonstrate defensive driving techniques and extreme caution.

### *Dropout Prevention/Driver's License Legislation*

[North Carolina House Bill 769](#) became effective December 1, 1997, and reflects a coordinated statewide effort to motivate and encourage students to complete high school. This legislation requires that a student's driving permit or license be revoked if a student cannot maintain adequate progress or drops out of school. Adequate progress is defined as passing 70% of all courses and is determined by first- and second-semester grades for schools on block scheduling. In rare cases, there may be circumstances beyond the control of the student or his/her parents that qualify as a hardship. If a hardship exists, the student may request a waiver. If the waiver is granted, the legislation would not affect the student. Hardship cases are rare and are reserved for extreme situations. Hardship review forms are available in the main office.

### *Lose Control, Lose Your License Legislation*

[North Carolina Senate Bill 57](#), which became effective July 1, 2000, requires that a student's driving permit or license be revoked for one year if a student is given a suspension for more than 10 consecutive days or an assignment to an alternative educational setting for more than 10 consecutive days for one of the following reasons:

- The possession or sale of an alcoholic beverage or an illegal controlled substance on school property.
- The possession or use of a weapon or firearm on school property that resulted in disciplinary action under G.S. 115C-391 (d1) or that could have resulted in that disciplinary action if the conduct had occurred in a public school.
- The physical assault on a coach or other school personnel on school property.

School property is the physical premises of the school, school vehicles, or other vehicles under the school's control or contract used to transport students, and school-sponsored or school-related activities that occur on or off the physical premises of NCS.

Unlike the "Dropout Prevention/Driver's License" law that only affects students under the age of 18, the "Lose Control" law does not stop at age 18. It is possible for a student to have his or her license suspended as a 17-and-a-half-year-old and not be eligible to drive for a full calendar year, reaching 18-and-a-half before again being eligible to drive.

## Students

### Equal Educational Opportunities

NCS provides equal education opportunities for all students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ethnic origin, sex, gender, gender identity, natural hair style, cultural or economic background, or disability. Furthermore, no student, on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, or parenthood, will be excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity conducted by the school. NCS will treat its students without discrimination with regard to course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance, and extracurricular activities. NCS adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under all state and federal laws, including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments, [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), and the Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997, including identification, evaluation, and provision of an appropriate education. Please review [Title IX Policies](#) and [Non-Title IX Policies](#).

Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or, preferably, in writing to any of the following individuals:

- The Academy Director or Assistant Academy Director;
- For Title IX harassment and discrimination, contact the Title IX Coordinator and review the [Title IX policy](#).
- For non-Title IX harassment and discrimination, including bullying, Title VI, and disability discrimination, contact the Academy Director and review the [non-Title IX policy](#) as well as the [Title VI policy](#).

### Enrollment Process

See the [Admissions and Enrollment Policy](#).

### Immunizations

North Carolina law requires immunizations for every child. Every parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis is responsible for ensuring their child(ren) receives the required immunizations. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis to provide the

immunization record of each school-age child to the school no later than 30 days after the child enters school, or the child will be suspended from school until a valid immunization record can be provided.

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2015, the following are required immunizations per [NCDHHS](#):

#### Kindergarten Required Vaccines

Vaccine	Number of Doses Required Before School Entry*
Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis	5 doses*
Polio	4 doses*
Measles	2 doses*
Mumps	2 doses*
Rubella	1 dose*
Haemophilus Influenzae type B (Hib)	4 doses*
Hepatitis B (Hep B)	3 doses*
Varicella (chickenpox)	2 doses*

\*Please contact your child's healthcare provider for further information.

#### 7th Grade Required Vaccines

Adolescents should be current on all the vaccines required for kindergarten entry. In addition:

- Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) – 2 doses
  - One dose for individuals is required upon entering the 7th grade or by 12 years of age, whichever comes first.
  - Booster dose for individuals is required to enter the 12th grade or be 17 years of age, beginning August 1, 2020.
  - If the first dose is administered on or after the 16th birthday, the booster dose is not required
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) – Tdap
  - A booster dose of Tdap is required for individuals who have not previously received Tdap and are entering 7th grade or by 12 years of age, whichever comes first.
  - School Entry from 6th to 7th Grade

If you have specific questions regarding your child, please contact the school nurse, your child's health care provider, or your local health department.

## Homeless/ McKinney Vento

The [McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act](#) is the primary legislation dealing with the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Act is also known as Title X, Part C of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

The term "homeless children and youths" is defined by the McKinney-Vento Act as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)), and includes:

- a. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;\*
- b. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
- c. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- d. migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (a) through (c).

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment, or having missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- Enroll in the local attendance area school or continue attending their school of origin (the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled), if that is the parent's, guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's preference.
  - If the school district believes the school selected is not in the student's best interest, then the district must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its position and inform him/her of the right to appeal its decision.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested by the parent, guardian, or local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth.
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the student's needs.

These rights are established under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. To qualify for these rights, children and youth must be considered homeless according to the [McKinney-Vento definition](#).

Parent Resources regarding the NC Homeless Education Program (NCHEP) can be found [here](#). Student Resources regarding the rights of children experiencing homelessness can be found [here](#).

NCHEP is dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth experiencing homelessness have access to the public education to which they are entitled under the federal McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act. NCHEP works towards this goal by ensuring that North Carolina's state policies are in compliance with federal law, by providing technical assistance to North Carolina's local homeless education liaisons, and by providing informational and awareness materials to educators and other interested community members throughout North Carolina.

Please refer to the [McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Policy](#).

School McKinney-Vento Liaison: Mrs. Donna Michael, Lower Academy School Counselor.

## **Athletics**

Please see the [Athletic Policy](#) for information about the Athletic Program and participation. All students, K-12, are encouraged to attend athletic events and support their fellow students. Students in grades K-7 must have a parent/ guardian/ responsible adult attend with them.

## **Student Code of Conduct and Behavior**

The purpose of the [Code of Conduct](#) at NCS is to build a community of honor and trust among administrators, teachers, students, parents, and staff.

School students are good citizens who value honor and demonstrate integrity in all that they do. They help community members by having a positive attitude and respecting other people and school property.

### *Definitions*

- Honor: Having high moral standards of behavior; being judged by other people as possessing good qualities or character.
- Integrity: Possessing the quality of being honest and fair.
- Lying: Purposefully being dishonest or misleading to a fellow student, teacher, or administrator.
- Cheating: Receiving unauthorized help on work, copying another person's work or answers on assessments, asking other students to provide information, such as questions

posed or material covered on tests, quizzes, or other assignments already taken or completed by the other student.

- **Plagiarism:** Intentionally using another person's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without proper citation. Ignorance of proper citation procedures is not an acceptable excuse for failing to cite sources. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and includes:
  - Excessive parental assistance with homework or projects.
  - Forgery or falsification of documents.
  - Lying, outwardly and/or by omission.
  - Aiding others who are violating the NCS Code of Conduct.
  - Taking property that does not belong to you without permission.
  - Not abiding by the NCS technology rules and/or guidelines.
- **Stealing:** Taking another person's belongings or ideas (plagiarism) without permission or providing proper citations.
- **Disrespectful of People or Property:** Being rude, defiant, or unkind to another person; vandalism or misuse of school property.
- **Inappropriate Use of Technology:** Loading unauthorized programs or viewing non-approved websites on school devices.

### *Purpose and Description of the Code of Conduct*

Neuse Charter is committed to giving every student the opportunity to reach his or her full potential by providing a rigorous academic program, character education, and meaningful parental participation. In order to fulfill this mission, we must provide a positive, safe, and orderly environment for our students, staff, and families. NCS believes that a standard and consistently applied code of conduct is a critical tool in building that environment. It reflects what NCS believes to be reasonable expectations of conduct for all members of our student body.

The importance of a code of conduct is reinforced in North Carolina state law (G.S. 115C-288), which states, "The principal shall have the authority to exercise discipline over the pupils of the school under policies adopted by the local board of education in accordance with G.S. 115C-390.11 through G.S. 115C-390.12."

The Code of Conduct identifies those behaviors that are detrimental to our goal of a positive, safe, and orderly environment. Specifically, it identifies behaviors that interfere with the learning process or disrupt the educational environment for any student at any time. The identified consequences are designed to deter students from engaging in behavior that is counter to the mission and, in the event that violations do occur, discourage students from committing further violations.

The Code of Conduct is divided into five classes of violations. The classes are groupings of violations of similar severity. Because of their similarity, each class of violations contains comparable consequences. While these consequences reflect what NCS believes to be fair and

reasonable for that class of violations, NCS also recognizes that there are times when mitigating or aggravating factors may result in a change in consequences. Administrators or their designees have the authority to assign any alternate reasonable consequence based on either mitigating or aggravating factors. Finally, repeatedly engaging in behaviors in any single class of violations will result in consequences from a higher class. This is intended to reinforce the importance of learning from mistakes.

### *General Information*

This section contains information designed to address common questions and confusion about the Code of Conduct. Further clarification on these issues will help parents and students successfully navigate the Code of Conduct requirements.

The Code of Conduct applies to all students at any time they are present on campus, at any school event, or during any school-sponsored activity, including school events or activities that are held off campus. Additionally, it applies to students at any time or any location whose behavior interferes with the learning process, causes serious safety concerns, or disrupts the educational environment. Certain rules apply specifically to different grade levels. If that is the case, it is noted in the violation. Otherwise, the violations apply to all students.

School administrators will follow investigatory procedures and make a reasonable attempt to contact parents after it has been concluded that a violation has occurred. During the investigation, students will be interviewed in order to determine what may have occurred. A student will be notified of the consequences of a violation as long as notification of the student does not pose a risk to the safety and security of other individuals on campus. When your child is at NCS (or any other school), he/ she is our responsibility as schools serve in loco parentis. This means that NCS has the right to impose discipline, speak with your child, or take any steps necessary in performing our duties and obligations as a public school.

If a student is suspended from school, the student may not be present on the NCS campus, at any school function, or at any school-sponsored event, whether on or off campus, without the permission of school administration.

Unfortunately, during the school year, conflicts will arise between students. NCS expects students to settle conflicts without engaging in a physical altercation. If there is a fight between two students, both students will be held accountable for the incident. If a student is attempting to engage another student in a fight, it is our expectation that the other student will make every reasonable attempt to walk away and notify a staff member.

Lockers, desks, school-issued technology, and other school property remain the property of NCS at all times. They are subject to search at the discretion of the Academy Director, Superintendent, or their designee based on reasonable suspicion.

Corporal punishment is not permitted at NCS, but there may be times when school employees need to use reasonable force to control behavior or to remove a person from the scene. These situations include:

- To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within a student's control
- For self-defense
- For the protection of other people or property
- To maintain order on school property, in the classroom, or at a school-related activity on or off school property.

## **Social Media Citizenship Standards & Expectations**

Students should understand that as members of the NCS community, they represent NCS at all times. When using social media sites, including but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vine, and Snapchat, they must do so responsibly and are accountable for their actions at all times. Students should also understand that when using social media, they are bound by the rules of student behavior as outlined in the NCS student handbooks. NCS will only intervene in a student's use of social media if a parent, teacher, coach, administrator, or student reports an issue that is harmful to the health and well-being of the NCS community.

### *Cyber-Bullying*

NCS prohibits cyber-bullying, an act involving the use of information and communication technologies, including but not limited to e-mail, text messages, blogs, instant messages, personal Web sites, on-line social directories and communities (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Wikipedia, YouTube), video-posting sites, and online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate or repeated hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to defame, harm, threaten, intimidate, or harass students, staff members, or NCS during or outside School hours and on or off School premises. Cyberbullying, in the form of student-to-student or student-to-teacher, will be handled as any other form of physical or emotional bullying. Students should expect the NCS administration to take note of and, if necessary, take disciplinary action in response to information communicated digitally that:

- conveys a physical threat toward a student, teacher, or administrator;
- advocates for the immediate violation of any laws or school rules;
- defames or denigrates individuals affiliated with the NCS community;
- impersonates any member of the NCS community;
- suggests that one's blog, website, or other digital communication is sponsored by or affiliated with NCS.

For violations of the policy, see [Student Code of Conduct and Behavior](#).

## **Destruction of School Property**

A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause substantial damage, as determined by school administrators, to school property or steal or attempt to steal school property either on school grounds or during a school activity, function, or event off of school grounds. Damage or theft involving school property will result in disciplinary action up to and including exclusion from school. The parents or guardians will be required to pay for the property the student has damaged or destroyed. Students with outstanding fines will be prohibited from all non-required activities (i.e., athletics, dances, parking, field trips, etc.). Additionally, students who have damaged school property more than twice may not be allowed to use school property for the remainder of the school year.

## **Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations**

To participate in any after-school extra-curricular activity, including music performances, plays, athletics, etc., students must arrive in time to be counted present during the school day (11:15 am). Students must be present on that school day to participate. Students staying for after-school activities will be expected to follow the following rules, or they may be banned from all after-school activities:

- Students must sign up for the after-school activity ahead of time.
- Students may not stay after school to wait for another student.
- Excessive tardiness/absence from an after-school activity may result in automatic withdrawal from the activity.
- Students must stay with a teacher or other staff member at all times.
- Students must abide by the NCS [Code of Conduct](#) while participating in the activity.
- Students' school activity privileges will be canceled if discipline becomes a problem.
- Students must clear the school building immediately following any after-school activities.
- Students must arrange for transportation to arrive promptly at the end of the activity.

All children must be picked up from any NCS program or event at the designated time the program or event ends. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Failure to pick up your children by the end of the event may result in NCS staff or administration contacting the authorities. Additionally, per the [NCS Fee Structure](#), the parent/ guardian will be charged accordingly for each minute the child is late to be picked up, and the fee must be paid in order to continue participation in after-school events.

### *Starting a New Club at School*

NCS offers many opportunities for students to become involved in clubs and other extracurricular activities. However, students may decide to form a new club on campus to meet their particular goals. For a new club to be established, the following procedures must be adhered to:

1. Acquire sponsorship from a staff member. Every club must have a faculty member willing to serve as the advisor/sponsor for the club. The faculty member must agree to attend all club meetings.
2. Recruit members. Each club must have at least five members to be recognized as a club.
3. Develop the club's vision/objective. The club's vision must be aligned with the NCS mission. The club must also clearly state its objective and be academic in nature.
4. Present the club's vision to the administration for approval via the [Request for Club Form](#). Approval or denial will be communicated to the student within 10 business days.
5. A club application may be denied for the following reasons:
  - a. Serving the same or similar purpose as another club that currently exists;
  - b. Requiring mandatory fees from members;
  - c. Requiring transportation off campus;
  - d. Requiring off-campus duties to be functional or to fulfill the club's purpose;
  - e. Requiring activities that must obtain permission slips;
  - f. Requiring physical fitness waivers or medical clearance;
  - g. Is not aligned with the mission of the school; and/or
  - h. Is not academic in nature.

Clubs are allowed to fundraise within the [Fundraising Guidelines](#) approved by NCS.

NCS shall comply with the federal Equal Access Act, which guarantees inclusion and non-discrimination with respect to extracurricular clubs. NCS does not discriminate nor sanction the views/objectives/vision of any club.

## **Student Dress Code**

The purpose of the dress code is to identify appropriate attire for all of our students when attending any school-related event (excluding athletic events). In keeping with our school mission, the Board and NCS administration believe attire should be modest, not offensive to others, and not disruptive to the learning environment while on school property or out at a school event or field trip. We believe it is important for all of our students to learn the importance of presenting themselves well, and that they should begin learning those habits while at school. Students must exert a certain amount of judgment when choosing clothing to wear to a school event.

Students out of compliance will be offered temporary replacement clothing if available, and/ or must call home so proper clothing can be brought to campus. Students will be allowed to wait in the Front Office until proper clothing arrives. Persistent dress code violations will result in further disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or exclusion. Adjusted dress codes may be permitted for special events such as spirit week, athletics, storybook character days, etc. No indecent or other inappropriate messaging that causes disruption will be allowed on school premises for both students and adults, including parents and guests.

**Tops:**

- No lewd, obscene, or vulgar messages or illustrations (including community members)
- No indecent or other inappropriate messaging (including community members)
- No advertisements of illegal products or services (including community members)
- No spaghetti straps or strapless tops.
- No clothing that exposes bare midriffs, backs, or plunging necklines
- No tank tops with straps that are less than 1" or don't cover undergarments

**Bottoms:**

- No pajama pants of any kind
- No biker shorts as outerwear
- Shorts must be fingertip length
- No jeans or pants with holes above the fingertips length
- No sagging shorts or pants
- No bandanas, flags, or other indicators of potential gang affiliation (including community members)

**Shoes/foot coverings:**

- Heeled shoes must not be higher than 2 inches
- No bedroom slippers
- Close-toed shoes are preferred and are required for students during PE and Weightlifting classes.

**Facial jewelry:**

- Earrings
- Small nose studs

While hats, hoods, durags, beanies, and any type of head covering are permitted, please be aware that they must follow the above guidelines regarding appropriate wording and branding and not pose a distraction to the learning environment. Teachers have the ability to check for headphones hidden under headwear. If a student violates a classroom teacher's rule with headphones hidden under headwear, teachers are permitted to enact a rule banning that student from wearing headwear in their classroom.

Additionally, blankets and other bedding items are not permitted.

**Some examples of attire that cannot be worn:**

- Mesh shirts, sheer, or see-through clothing
- Attire with a slogan or symbol that disrupts the educational process
- Clothing that displays any suggestive or objectionable material
- Clothing advocating drug, alcohol, or tobacco use
- Clothing with inappropriate or suggestive language and/or pictures

- Clothing that defames, degrades, or is offensive to a gender, race, color, religious group, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, a physical or mental impairment, or culture
- Leggings or yoga pants, unless worn under a shirt
- Jeans and pants with holes above the fingertips
- Pants worn that are excessively sagging
- Pajamas
- Clothing that allows undergarments to be visible
- Halter tops and strapless tops
- Pants with writing across the backside
- Facial piercings (beyond earrings and nose studs)

This list is not all-inclusive and is subject to change at the Administration's discretion. Failure to comply with the NCS dress code is a violation of the [Code of Conduct](#).

### *Special Event Attire Guidelines*

NCS recognizes the need for guidelines regarding attire for special events such as dances or inductions. Students (and their guests) must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Excessive cleavage is not allowed.
- Dresses must not have a slit that comes higher than mid-thigh.
- Dress length must be at least natural fingertip length - both front and back.
- No bare-skin midriffs permitted.
- Pants should be sized appropriately and should not sag below the hips.
- Shirts must remain buttoned up to the second button from the collar at all times.

If students have questions regarding the attire they would like to wear for an upcoming event, they may bring a photo of the front and the back of the outfit to their grade level Academy Director for approval prior to purchasing their special event attire.

### *Consequences for Dress Code Violations*

Failure to comply with the NCS dress code is a violation of the Code of Conduct. Please see the [Code of Conduct](#) for the full list of consequences; however, the following are specific to violations of the dress code only:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent Contact, verbal warning, and dress code corrected; the violation will be logged, and proper clothing required.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent Contact, assignment of silent lunch, the violation will be logged, proper clothing required.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense or Additional Offenses: Parent Contact, Parent/Teacher/Student conference, and students assigned a consequence, dress code violation corrected, the violation will be logged. Additional disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Academy Director.

## Search and Seizure Policy and Procedures

This policy applies to searches conducted on school grounds, in school facilities, or at school-sponsored events. This policy does not apply to technology, which is addressed through other policies.

To maintain order in the school and to protect the welfare of students and the school community, school administrators have the authority to conduct reasonable searches of students and to seize students' unauthorized materials. Any searches or seizures must be conducted in accordance with the standards described in this policy and any other applicable legal requirements. All school administrators carrying out a search or seizure are expected to be knowledgeable about the legal rights of students and the appropriate procedures for conducting the search or seizure. A search must be justified at its inception, permissible in scope, and conducted using narrowly tailored methods to be minimally intrusive. School administrators shall make reasonable and good-faith efforts to investigate allegations of misconduct before a student search is conducted.

In addition, the Superintendent, the Academy Directors, and their designee(s) are authorized to conduct searches of students and their belongings (including lockers, desks, backpacks, book bags, lunch bags, cars, and jackets) if the authorized school administrator has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated a school policy or state or federal law. School administrators recognize federal constitutional rights through the process and must establish reasonable suspicion before conducting a search of a student or a student's possessions. Such searches do not include a search of a student's physical person or any requirement to disrobe other than to remove clothing layers such as jackets, sweaters, and sweatshirts. Pursuant to GS 115C-391.2, all searches will be conducted by one school administrator and one adult witness, both of whom shall be the same sex of the student as defined by their birth certificate.

### *Searches Based on Individualized Reasonable Suspicion*

A student or the student's possessions may be searched when a school administrator has reasonable suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the particular student has violated or is violating a specific law, expectation, or school rule. This reasonable suspicion must be based upon specific and articulable facts, which have been acquired through reliable and/or corroborated information from employees, students, law enforcement officers, or other credible sources, or upon visual or other evidence (e.g., the smell of alcohol or marijuana, an alert from a metal detector or drug dog) viewed in light of the totality of the circumstances and the school administrator's professional judgment. The scope of the search must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search, and the methods used to conduct the search must be narrowly tailored to be minimally intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and nature of the infraction. Reasonable suspicion is not required if a student's parent or guardian freely and voluntarily consents to the search of their person or possessions.

In accordance with the standards described above, the Board authorizes the following types of searches based on reasonable suspicion:

#### Searches of Personal Effects

School administrators may search a student's desk, locker, and/or personal effects, including but not limited to purses, book bags, and clothing not currently being worn by the student. School administrators may also request that the student empty their pockets, remove shoes, and outerwear. School administrators may also search a student's personal electronic devices.

#### Searches of Motor Vehicles

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not by right. NCS retains the authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspect student automobile exteriors on school property. School administrators may search the interior of a student's vehicle based on reasonable suspicion. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

#### "Pat-down" Searches

A school administrator may conduct a frisk or "pat-down" search of a student's person. A school administrator must conduct the search in private with an adult witness present. Both the school administrator conducting the search and the adult witness must be the same sex as the student.

#### More Intrusive Personal Searches

More intrusive personal searches are discouraged and will be used only in very limited circumstances. A personal search is more intrusive when it extends beyond a student's personal effects and outer clothing and potentially exposes intimate body parts and/or undergarments. Such intrusive personal searches will be permissible only if: (1) the school administrator has reasonable suspicion that a search of a particular student will yield dangerous contraband (e.g., drugs or weapons); (2) the school administrator has reasonable suspicion that the student has hidden the contraband in their undergarments. This search must be conducted in private by a school administrator of the same sex as the student, with an adult witness of the same sex present, and only with the prior approval of the Superintendent or designee, unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay that might be caused by following these procedures.

Body cavity searches and searches that require a student to completely disrobe are strictly prohibited.

#### Metal Detectors and Breathalyzers

Except as provided in the Section below, a metal detector may be used to search a student's person and/or personal effects. A school administrator must conduct the search, which will be done privately, when feasible. In addition, a breathalyzer test may be administered based on

reasonable suspicion that a specific student is under the influence of alcohol or has recently consumed alcohol. A school administrator must conduct the breathalyzer test and will be done in private, when feasible.

### *Suspicionless General Searches*

In an effort to maintain a safe, drug-free, and weapon-free learning environment, school administrators may conduct certain types of general, suspicionless searches in the school. All general searches must be conducted in a minimally intrusive, nondiscriminatory manner (e.g., all students in randomly selected classrooms, every third individual entering a school-sponsored extracurricular activity, etc.) and may not be used to single out a particular individual or category of individuals. The searches must be conducted in accordance with standardized procedures established by the Superintendent or designee. When conducted in accordance with the standards described above and any corresponding procedures, the Board authorizes the following types of general suspicionless searches.

#### Searches of Desks and Lockers

School administrators may conduct routine searches of student desks and lockers. Student desks and lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of NCS. However, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their desks and lockers. Student desks and lockers may not be used to store illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials.

A student's personal effects found within a desk or locker, such as a backpack, gym bag, or purse, may be searched only in accordance with the guidelines for individualized searches of personal effects described above.

#### Point-of-Entry Metal Detector Searches

Due to the problem of weapons in schools, school administrators may use metal detectors to conduct general point-of-entry searches of students and other persons for weapons.

#### Use of Trained Dogs

With the prior approval of the Superintendent, and in conjunction with local law enforcement, school administrators may use trained dogs (canines) to locate illegal materials. All dogs must be accompanied by a certified and authorized trainer who is responsible for the dog's actions and who is able to verify the dog's reliability and accuracy in sniffing out illegal material. Trained dogs may sniff lockers, desks, book bags, motor vehicles, and other inanimate objects. Dogs may not be used to sniff students or other persons under any circumstances. Except as set forth above, no students should be present during a dog search. Before a search occurs in a classroom, students will first be moved to a location outside the classroom.

### *Seized Items*

Contraband- property that is illegal for a person to acquire or possess under statute, ordinance, rule, policy, or that NCS determines to be illegal to possess because of the property's involvement in an offense shall be considered "contraband." NCS reserves the right to impose discipline related to such search/seizure, and may involve law enforcement.

Any illegal contraband seized by school administrators shall be promptly turned over to the proper law enforcement authorities.

### *Failure to Cooperate*

A student's failure to cooperate with a reasonable search or seizure as provided in this policy will be considered a violation of the [Code of Conduct](#) and will subject the student to appropriate consequences.

### *Notice of Search & Seizure*

School Academy Directors shall take responsible steps to provide notice of this policy to students and parents at the start of each school year.

## **Attendance**

School attendance is crucial to every child's progress and success; however, we do understand that there are times when a child must miss school. NCS recognizes two kinds of absences and tardiness: excused and unexcused. Please read through the definitions of each carefully so that it is understood what the students' and parents'/guardians' responsibilities are. Also, students need to be very aware of their responsibilities regarding homework, quizzes, and tests when they have an excused absence and the consequences for unexcused absences.

Regular and consistent attendance for all students is required. In addition to a minimum academic grade of 60, teachers may include attendance as a component of students' grades in order to receive credit for a course. However, no student shall receive a failing grade based solely on attendance. Any student who has more than 4 unexcused absences per semester, may be required to complete additional assignments in order to be granted credit for the course. In addition, students may not be permitted to make up assignments missed due to unexcused absences.

Students must be present for at least half of the instructional day to be counted present for the day.

Any student who does not attend school on the first two days is automatically withdrawn unless excused via express written permission from NCS administration.

Please note that if your student is enrolled in courses through a local community college, their attendance policies may differ from NCS, and for each class they are enrolled. NCS does not have oversight to excuse or unexcuse absences for community colleges, nor does NCS have the authority to overwrite a course failure due to attendance in those community college courses.

### *Excused Absences*

NCS accepts only the following as excusable reasons for absence from school. Parents or guardians must complete the [Absence Questionnaire](#) in the morning on any day their child is not attending. The excuse shall be filed as part of the student's school record.

- **Illness**: The student is ill and unable to attend school. If the student has been to a medical provider for such an absence, NCS reserves the right to request medical documentation from that provider.
- **Death in the Family**: Death in a student's immediate family necessitates an absence. In the case of serious illness, students are required to present medical documentation to validate the absence(s) as excused within five days of the student's return to school. A parent or guardian must call or email the office to explain the situation and the estimated time of absence. When returning to school, students must bring an explanatory note from their parent/ guardian and doctor. If the medical absence is going to be an extended leave, the parent/ guardian needs to reach out to the Academy Director or Business Office to pursue the possibility of [Homebound Services](#). Additionally, in the case of a death in the family, an obituary is required to excuse over three days.
- **Court Order**: A court order by a governmental agency mandating a student's absence from school is excused. The parent or guardian must call or email the office to explain the situation and estimate the time of absence. A copy of the court-ordered documentation must be submitted upon return to school.
- **Quarantine**: When the local health officer or the State Board of Health orders the student to be isolated, the parent or guardian must call or email the office to explain the situation and estimate the time of absence. Documentation must be provided before the student can return to school.
- **Special or Recognized Religious Holidays**: Religious observances required by the faith of the student or the student's parents. The parent or guardian must call or email the office to explain the situation and the estimated time of absence. Academy Directors are authorized to excuse some absences each academic year for such observances. When returning to school, the parent/ guardian must complete the [Absence Questionnaire](#).
- **Educational Opportunity**: When it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity, a student may obtain an excused educational absence. The Academy Director must grant approval for such an absence before the absence by completing the appropriate form. Educational opportunities include, but are not limited to college visits, attendance at a student summit, volunteer work, academic competitions, etc. To submit for this opportunity, please complete the [Family Educational Trip Form](#). This form must be submitted five school days before the trip. The student may only have approval for one trip per year, and only five school days

will be excused unless there is an override by the Academy Director for either of these parameters.

- **Absence Related To Deployment Activities:** A student's absence is considered excused if their parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting to visit said parent or legal guardian.
- Other absences are to be determined by and at the discretion of the Academy Director, Superintendent, and/ or Board of Directors and may be excused. Please contact your Academy Director if you have a concern about an absence.

Absences must be documented to be considered excused. Please do your best to inform NCS of your child's absence by completing the [Absence Questionnaire](#) for EACH day your child is absent by 9:00 am that day. At any point in the year that a student's excused absences are for an illness or injury, the Academy Director may require a statement from the student's physician to excuse future absences. Absences will be considered unexcused if a student misses school for any other reason or if the proper documentation is not provided within 5 business days of the absence. Absences will automatically be recorded in the School Information System (Infinite Campus).

NCS requires appropriate *official* documentation after the first five days of unexcused absences, tardies, or early dismissals (whether those five occurrences are separate days or continuous days). If that is not received, the absence, late arrival, early dismissal will remain as unexcused. All parent notes are subject to review and may result in a required parent-administration meeting to be considered. All appropriate official documentation is subject to verification with the doctor/ medical office, court, etc. Students returning to school after an absence and who fail to provide documentation for that absence may be subject to other disciplinary actions.

Total (unexcused and excused) absences will be handled in the following manner:

Number of Daily Absences	Follow-Up
Six (6)	Communication from Attendance Office via the School Information System
Ten (10)	Communication from Academy Director via the School Information System
Fifteen (15)	Meeting with Academy Director
Twenty (20)	Meeting with Academy Director, School Counselor, and Superintendent

### *Unexcused Absences/ Truancy*

An unexcused absence is a part of a student's school record. Students will be marked for an unexcused absence for failure to attend school. Failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent/ legal guardian, for reasons other than those specifically outlined as excused absences will be considered unexcused absences. Per [G.S. 115C-378](#), any child between the ages of seven and 16 years is subject to the Compulsory Attendance Law.

Unexcused absences will be handled in the following manner:

Number of Daily Absences	Follow-Up
Three (3)	NCS will send an email notification to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) sent via the School Information System of the unexcused absences. NCS will also notify the parent(s)/ guardian(s) by mail prior to the sixth absence.
Six (6)	NCS will send an email notification to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) sent via the School Information System notifying the parent(s)/ guardian(s) that he/she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted.
Ten (10)	NCS will send an email notification to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) sent via the School Information System to notify the parent(s)/ guardian(s) that he/she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted and will make a referral to the District Attorney and the Department of Social Services, per G.S. 115C-378.

Any parent or guardian must ensure the student attends school continuously for a period equal to the time in which the public school is in session. Truancy shows a deliberate disregard for the educational program and is considered a serious matter that will have immediate consequences. If a student is truant, no credit will be recorded for work missed as a result of truancy.

### *Consequences of Truancy*

Any parent, guardian, or other person violating the provisions of the Compulsory Attendance Law is guilty of a Class 1 Misdemeanor ([G.S. 115C-380](#)).

Please note that high school students are held to the truancy law for the duration of a school year. This is separate from attendance that occurs each class period. A student who misses 10% or more (16 classes) for a class may fail the class or be retained.

## *Tardy/Early Dismissal Procedures*

### Late Arrival to School

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classroom by 7:45 am, which means entering the carpool line before 7:43 am. Tardiness is only excused for medical and dental appointments, to comply with court-ordered attendance at a legal proceeding, or other areas deemed excusable by the administration, such as traffic accidents. In all such instances, for the tardy to be excused, proper documentation is required within 3 business days via the [Absence Questionnaire](#) or an email to [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org).

All tardy students must report to the Main Office to receive a Tardy Pass. K-5 students must have an adult come to the office with them. Additionally, students in K-5 must be escorted by an adult or a student in 6-12 to the classroom upon arrival. NCS will attempt to have an upper academy student or other adult available to walk the child to class; however, if no one is available, a parent will be required to escort them to the classroom after receiving the pass. Not following this process may result in an absence for the day.

### Early Dismissal from School

Please remember that teachers actively deliver instruction until the end of the school day, and early dismissals interrupt instruction. Early dismissals are only excused for medical and dental appointments, to comply with court-ordered attendance at a legal proceeding, or for NCS-sponsored athletics. In all such instances, for the tardy to be excused, proper documentation is required within 3 business days. Students tardy due to illness will only be excused with parent communication in writing via the [Absence Questionnaire](#) or an email to [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org). Unexcused early dismissals are classified in the School Information System as unexcused tardies.

NCS encourages parents to make appointments for their child outside of school hours; however, if you must pick your child up from school early, please notify the teacher in advance. Parents must sign students out in the main office. Students will only be released from school to authorized drivers for the student. Those NOT listed as authorized adults can only pick up a student if NCS has received permission via an email to [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org) from the parent/guardian giving permission for that person to pick up the student. Proof of identity is required in order to pick up a student.

Parents/guardians of Upper Academy students who drive themselves to school must email the [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org) to allow the student to leave early for an appointment. The student will still need to come to the office to officially sign out for the day.

In grades 9-12, attendance is taken each class period to meet seat time requirements. Students are considered “in attendance” for a class period when they are present for at least half of the

class period. An absence (whether all-day or period absence) will be marked as unexcused until an absence note is presented to the front office staff via the [Absence Questionnaire](#). Additionally, students in grades 9-12 are bound by the [NC Truancy laws](#).

Excessive unexcused early checkouts from school may result in disciplinary action under the [Code of Conduct](#) and/or referral to Child Protective Services.

NCS also reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary consequences for excessive early checkouts, such as after-school detention, loss of privileges, silent lunch, or any other appropriate consequences determined by the Academy Director.

The latest time a child may be picked up for early dismissal is 2:30 pm excluding any extraordinary circumstances. Please schedule appointments accordingly and remember that students will not be dismissed after this time.

### *Daily Tardy/ Early Dismissal Policy*

Tardies and early dismissals have a direct impact on the learning environment and are a disruption to the classroom. Both the state and NCS recognize that when students are not present in the classroom, they miss valuable instructional time. When a student has excessive tardies and/ or early dismissals, NCS may take disciplinary action consistent with the law.

- At three unexcused tardies/ early dismissals, the parent/ guardian will be notified.
- At six unexcused tardies/ early dismissals, the parent/ guardian will be invited to conference with the Academy Director.
- From nine to 15 unexcused tardies/ early dismissals, the student will receive a one-day suspension for every three unexcused tardies/ early dismissals.
- At eighteen unexcused tardies/ early dismissals, NCS will recommend exclusion and notify the Department of Social Services, District Attorney, and Juvenile Court.
- NCS also reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary consequences for excessive tardies, such as after-school detention, loss of privileges, silent lunch, or any other appropriate consequences determined by the Academy Director.

### *Upper Academy Class Period Tardy Policy*

Being on time for each class is an expectation for all Upper Academy students. Students will have approximately 5 minutes of transition time between each class, allowing them ample time to arrive at each class on time.

Teachers will track per-period tardies and make contact with the Academy Director once the student reaches 3 unexcused tardies. The following actions will likely be taken for recurring tardies:

- 3: Parent Contact
- 5: Silent Lunch
- 6: Silent Lunch

7: 2 days of Silent Lunch  
8: 2 days of Silent Lunch  
9+: 1 Day OSS

### *Chronic Absenteeism*

The State of NC recognizes the importance of student attendance and its direct relationship to student success. As such, students with excused AND unexcused absences that total greater than 10% (16 school days) of their current attendance are designated as Chronic Absenteeism and are identified as at greater risk for unsatisfactory student outcomes. NCS wants to partner with parents and physicians to develop a plan to address attendance and advocate for the student's academic and social/emotional success. The goal of this plan is to open communication between parents, physicians, and NCS to identify students who are struggling with attendance and address potential academic, social, and/or developmental deficits. School-appropriate strategies for success identified by a student's provider can be implemented at school to help students reach their goals for academics, social development, and emotional development.

As such, the NCS Student Services Team will review attendance no less than monthly. Once a student has missed more than 10% (16 school days) of the school days in any academic year, parents will receive communication from NCS. Students missing this level of days will be considered for grade-level retention.

If your student falls into this category and has a medical condition or has a family extenuating circumstance that NCS should be aware of, please email the business office at [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org).

NCS also reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary consequences for chronic absenteeism as set forth above, including, but not limited to, suspension, exclusion, lunch/after-school detention, loss of privileges, silent lunch, or any other appropriate consequences determined by the Academy Director.

Any student with 20 or more absences in any class in a school year will fail that course or grade level, unless the Academy Director or designee determines otherwise. If the Academy Director determines that retention or failure of a course is necessary based on attendance, the parent/guardian and student will be notified in writing.

For the purpose of state reporting, students will be considered present for the day if they have been present for at least half of the instruction time for the day, excluding the lunch period.

### *10-Day Rule*

The State Board of Education Ten Day Rule states that when a student accumulates ten consecutive days of unlawful absences, he/she is to be withdrawn from funded membership as of the first day following his/her last day in attendance.

1. On the day following the 10th consecutive unlawful absence, the student in violation of the 10 Day Rule will no longer be counted in the calculation of ADM as of the first day of the consecutive absences. However, he/she will continue to be enrolled in NCS, and attendance is to be taken with the appropriate reason code. If the student has 10 consecutive unexcused absences, causing violation days and returns on the 11th day or after, and this occurs in one school month, the 10 days will stay as violation days, but the student will not show as a violation. If the student has 10 or more consecutive violation days occurring over a span of multiple months, the days will be reflected as violations depending on when the PMR data is processed, as well as the student's violation status.
2. If and when the student returns to school, he/she is simply to be counted present for the days in attendance. Beginning on the first day, the student returns and is counted as present. The student will once again be included in the calculation of NCS's ADM. However, the consecutive violation days will continue to be excluded from ADM.
3. If and when it is determined that a student with consecutive violation days is not returning to NCS and is to be withdrawn, the withdrawal will be posted on the first day after the student's last day in attendance.
4. Students under age 16 who are unlawfully absent for more than 10 consecutive absences are not to be withdrawn until their whereabouts are known, or it is determined they have left the attendance.

When administrative actions taken to correct truancy have proven ineffective, NCS will report to the District Attorney, who may file proceedings in court and furnish evidence for the conviction of parents/legal guardians and/or the child for non-compliance with state attendance laws.

### *Partial Attendance for Extracurricular, Athletic and Special Event Participation*

Students must be counted as present for the day to participate in any NCS-sponsored activity/event, including extracurricular, music performance, athletic, or special event activities.

### *Make-Up Work for Absences*

Absence from school, even for several days, does not remove any student from their academic responsibilities. Missed work should be made up immediately. Students who have excused absences will be given 2 school days for each day that they were absent to make up missed work, up to 10 days to complete missed work, unless the administration approves additional days. If assignments were assigned prior to the absence, those assignments are due upon return unless prior written approval is received. For students absent due to suspensions, all missed work will be due the day they return. Students and parents are responsible for emailing teachers to find out what work needs to be completed. For an absence to be considered excused, a note should be submitted to the main office via the [Absence Questionnaire](#) no later than five days after returning to school.

For students who have been absent, make-up tests will be scheduled at a time designated by the teacher, which shall be reasonable, and the teacher shall make efforts to work with the

student's/family's schedule. It is the student's responsibility to take the test at the scheduled make-up time. Generally, if the student fails to do this, the teacher is not obligated to set another time for the test.

It is understood that Kindergarten through 3rd-grade students will need additional guidance and assistance in these processes from their teachers.

Students who have unexcused absences will not be allowed to make up missing work.

Students who have absences due to a suspension will be expected to turn in any pre-assigned work on the day of return and all other make up at the discretion of the teacher.

## **Tuition and Fees**

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute [§ 115C-218.50](#), NCS shall not charge tuition or fees except as follows:

1. Any fees that are charged by the local school administrative unit in which NCS is located.
2. NCS, upon approval by the Board of Directors, may establish fees for extracurricular activities, except that such fees shall not exceed the fees for the same extracurricular activities charged by a local school administrative unit in which forty percent (40%) or more of the students enrolled in the charter school reside.

Please see the attached list of [Student Fees](#). Student records will not be released to other schools and students will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities, including but not limited to field trips, athletics, graduation activities, and other optional school activities, regardless of the price, until all accrued fees are paid in full.

## **Portrait of a Cougar**

The Lower Academy counseling department recognizes students monthly for their representation of the Portrait of a Cougar, and the Upper Academy recognizes students quarterly. Teachers are asked to nominate students who have been role models in displaying the characteristics of the portrait (see next page). The counseling team presents students with a certificate and a reward coupon in the presence of their peers and teachers.

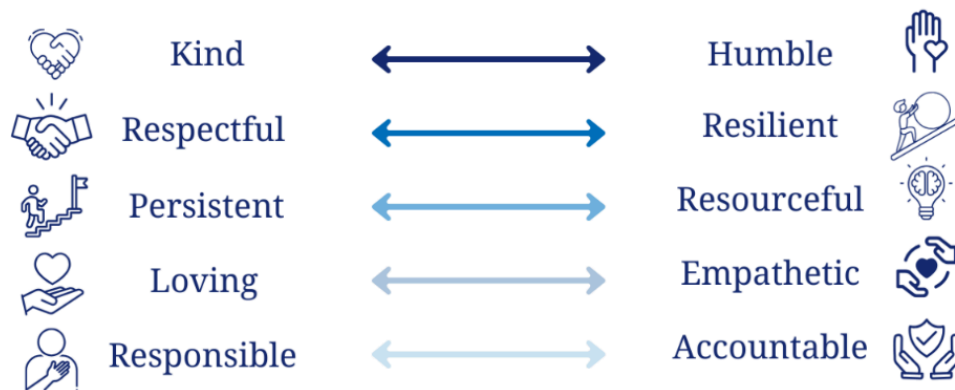
# Neuse Charter School

*Excellence | Growth | Engagement*

**NCS Cougars**



## An Honorable Leader



**Neuse Charter School staff and students will embody the values of the NCS organization.**

## Parent/ Community Relationships

### Volunteers

The staff at NCS welcomes volunteers! Parent volunteers are important to ensuring the success of our school. A volunteer is anyone who provides services, without compensation or benefits of any kind, on an occasional or regular basis at NCS or NCS activities. The following policy assists our volunteers in being effective, satisfied, and successful School volunteers while maintaining the integrity of NCS and the health and safety of our students and teachers. Volunteers in large group functions may not be subject to all the same service requirements.

All volunteers at NCS are required to:

1. Have a background check, including a Sex Offender Registry Check, performed through NCS's third-party vendor on file dated within the last two calendar years.
2. Complete, sign, and date the [Volunteer Policy and Confidentiality Agreement Acknowledgement](#), which confirms they have been provided with a copy of, read, understand, and agree to comply with this policy.

The Superintendent or designee will formally approve every volunteer application, and volunteers must be placed on the Authorized Volunteer list before volunteering their services at NCS. All administrative staff will have a copy of the Authorized Volunteer list and will prohibit any person not on this list from volunteering at NCS.

Information collected during the screening process for volunteers will be treated as confidential to the extent allowed by the law.

The Superintendent or designee will review all criminal background checks. No person who has been convicted of crimes against children, sex crimes, or serious crimes of violence will be allowed to volunteer at NCS. The Superintendent will evaluate other criminal records on an individual basis. If a criminal history presents itself in a review, the Superintendent shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the volunteer (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as a volunteer. The Superintendent shall document the decision.

All volunteers must report directly to the main office when they arrive and should sign in as visitors. The main office and/or the background check company will provide an official badge identifying the volunteer, which must be worn at all times.

All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age unless they are supervised by another responsible adult as approved by the Academy Director or designee. Volunteers work in partnership with, under the supervision of, and at the request of NCS administration and staff. Volunteers are

expected to abide by all Board policies, procedures, and School rules when performing their assigned responsibilities.

Volunteers will not have access to confidential information in student records except as allowed by federal and state laws and regulations. Volunteers will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen and heard while working as a volunteer. If there is a safety concern or an emergency, it must immediately be communicated to someone in authority at NCS.

Volunteers shall not use information learned or acquired during volunteering for any reason other than in furtherance of their volunteer efforts at NCS. For example, if a volunteer is a class parent and receives parent email information to communicate with parents, the volunteer shall not share parent email addresses with others and shall not use such email addresses to communicate with parents about anything other than serving as a class parent.

Volunteers are to serve as positive role models. School volunteers must always:

- Use appropriate language
- Dress appropriately
- Discuss age-appropriate topics
- Refrain from inappropriately touching students
- Adhere to the [School Campus Expectation Policy for Adults](#)

Volunteers are prohibited from disciplining students. Behaviors requiring discipline should be reported immediately to the appropriate teacher or staff member.

Volunteers are prohibited from administering medications of any kind to students.

Volunteers should refrain from giving students gifts, rewards, or food items of any kind without the permission of NCS Administration.

Volunteers are expected to be prompt and dependable. Volunteers should notify the main office if an illness or emergency prohibits them from attending a volunteer assignment.

Volunteers may not take students off school property without the written permission of parents and NCS Administration.

Volunteers must leave children who are not enrolled in NCS at home when volunteering.

NCS does not tolerate any kind of racial, ethnic, disability, gender discrimination, or sexual harassment by volunteers of NCS, and it is expected that all volunteers will comply with NCS's policies related to such matters. If the volunteer has been an educator, NCS will ensure that they are not on the State Board of Education Revoked License list. Any individual on the State Board of Education Revoked License list shall be barred from serving as a volunteer at NCS.

## Campus Visitors

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, shall post instructions to parents and visitors, directing them to the main office to sign-in upon their arrival on campus. All parents and visitors shall report to the School office upon arrival and are required to sign a visitation form, including the time of their arrival and their destination. Visitors, including parents, are required to wear a nametag identifying themselves at all times while on campus.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee is authorized to:

- Limit campus access to persons, including students and parents, who threaten the safety or well-being of the NCS community, or whose presence disrupts or is likely to disrupt the School environment;
- Determine if sales personnel may make sales visits to NCS administrators; and
- Call law enforcement personnel to protect against any threat posed by any person or to remove from the NCS property any person who refuses to leave after being directed to do so by authorized personnel.

## School Campus Expectation Policy for Adults

At NCS, we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent and guardian body. Our parents and guardians recognize that educating children is a process that involves partnership between them and the NCS community. We understand and value the importance of sustaining a good working relationship between our families and educators to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. We greatly appreciate our parents' commitment to entrusting their children's education to us and thank them for supporting our unique school programming through which we engage our students daily. We welcome and encourage parents/guardians to participate fully in the life of NCS. So we can continue to flourish, progress, and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, the purpose of this policy is to remind all parents, guardians, and visitors to NCS about their expected conduct. Parents, guardians, and visitors are expected to:

- Respect the caring spirit of NCS.
- Understand that both teachers and parents/guardians need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all NCS community members should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and actions.
- Use effective communication with NCS staff, administration, and Board Members to cultivate open dialogue while seeking peaceful solutions.
- Engage NCS with an open mind to help resolve any issues of concern.

To support a peaceful and safe school environment, NCS will not tolerate parents, guardians, and visitors who exhibit the following:

- Disruptive actions that interfere or threaten to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, a board meeting, NCS event, field trip, car line or parking lot, office area, or any other area of the campus.
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language, or displaying temper on or in the sight of the NCS campus.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to NCS staff, Board Members, visitors, fellow parents/guardians, or students, regardless of whether or not the action constitutes a criminal offense.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Abusive or threatening e-mails, texts, voicemails, phone messages, or other written communication, including social media postings or discussions with community members regarding NCS or a staff member.
- Defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments regarding NCS or any of the pupils, parents, staff, or Board members on Facebook and other social media sites. Any concerns about NCS must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher or the Leadership Team, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all concerned.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences.
- Carrying weapons, smoking, vaping, and/or consuming alcohol or other drugs while on NCS property, unless permitted for a specific event approved by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
- Animals/pets brought onto NCS premises without permission. Please note: Service animals are permitted. For more information, please see the [Service Animal policy](#).

To the extent that an adult's actions/behavior fall below the code of conduct, the adult can be subjected to disciplinary action by the administration.

- Upon the first occurrence, the Academy Director will send a follow-up email to the individual.
- Upon a second occurrence, individuals can be:
  - removed from the premises;
  - restricted from re-entry for a period of 30 calendar days; and
  - limited to pick-up and drop-off of students outside the building.
- Upon a third occurrence, individuals can be:
  - Removed from the premises; and
  - Permanently banned from re-entry by the Superintendent or Board of Directors.

NCS reserves the right to restrict any adult, including parents, from coming onto campus for any reason, including drop-off or pick-up, if the adult has engaged in violence, threats, harassment, or disruption as set forth above or if NCS determines that the adult's behavior has created an unsafe or hostile environment. Additionally, NCS also reserves the right to impose additional

disciplinary consequences on students for repeated violations by their parents/guardians of this policy.

### **Classroom Interruptions**

Every minute of instructional time is valuable, and NCS strives to avoid needless interruptions. If you need to speak to your child's teacher, please make an appointment beforehand. No visitors will be given access to any classroom unless the visitor has made prior arrangements for their visit and said visit has been confirmed and approved by the teacher.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parents and teachers should maintain open communication to help students receive the best possible education. Our most important form of communication is the parent-teacher conference. School-wide parent-teacher conferences are scheduled to be held on October 9, 2025, and March 5, 2026, as noted on the academic calendar found on the [school's website](#). Conferences may be requested at any time during the school year. If you would like to schedule a parent-teacher conference with any staff member, please email that staff member to make arrangements.

### **Registered Sex Offenders**

Pursuant to [Session Law 2008-117](#), The Jessica Lunsford Act for North Carolina (the "Act"), the General Assembly of North Carolina has recognized that sex offenders often pose a high risk of engaging in sex offenses after being released from incarceration or commitment and that the protection of students from sex offenders while on school property and at school-sponsored activities serves an important governmental interest.

NCS is committed to the following: Sex offenders are banned from all School property and School events. In accordance with [G.S. 14-208.18](#), all persons who (1) are required to register under the Sex Offender and Public Protection Program AND (2) have been convicted of certain sexually violent offenses or any offense where the victim was under the age of 16 years at the time of the offense ("Prohibited Persons") are expressly forbidden to be present on any property owned or operated by NCS, including School buildings, athletic fields, playgrounds, parking lots, School buses, activity buses or other property of any kind for any reason, including attendance at sporting events or other School-related functions, whether before, during or after School hours.

In addition, Prohibited Persons may not attend or be present at any student function or field trip on or off of school property, which is 1) school-sponsored or 2) otherwise under the official supervision or control of school personnel. This policy applies to all Prohibited Persons regardless of their relationship to, or affiliation with, a student enrolled at NCS (i.e., stepparents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc).

1. Prohibited persons: The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the administration is familiar with the criminal offenses that qualify an individual as a Prohibited Person

under this policy. The Superintendent will also subscribe to electronic notification of Registered Sex Offenders and access the state database as needed.

2. **No special permission:** There shall be no "special permission" given for Prohibited Persons to be on school grounds or attend events or activities in violation of this policy.
3. **Possible exceptions for students:** Students who meet the definition of a Prohibited Person may be on School property only in accordance with state law.
4. **Limited exception for prohibited persons who are parents / legal guardians of a student:**
  - a. A Prohibited Person who is the Parent/Legal Guardian of a student may be on school property for the following reasons only:
    - i. To attend a previously scheduled School conference with School personnel to discuss their child's academic or social progress; or
    - ii. At the request of the Superintendent or designee, for any other reason relating to the welfare or transportation of their child.
  - b. The procedure for making a request is as follows:
    - i. For each visit authorized by subsection(a)(i) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian must provide the Superintendent with prior written notice of their registration on the Sex Offender Registry.
    - ii. A request for presence at NCS must be submitted to the Superintendent in writing, at least 72 hours in advance.
    - iii. The Superintendent or designee will respond within 48 hours, either authorizing or denying the request.
    - iv. The decision of the Superintendent or designee is final.
    - v. The Director will notify the Board of any such requests and the decision.
  - c. For each visit authorized by subsection (a) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian must check in at the front office upon arrival and departure. In addition, during each and every visit, the Parent/Legal Guardian must be under the direct supervision of school personnel at all times. If personnel are unavailable to supervise the Parent/Legal Guardian during any visit, they shall not be permitted on NCS property.
  - d. For each visit authorized by subsection (a) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian shall comply with all reasonable rules and restrictions placed upon them by the Superintendent or designee, including any restrictions on the date, time, location, and length of meetings.
5. **Enforcement:** Any suspected violation of this policy shall be reported by a school administrator to both the Superintendent and law enforcement for immediate investigation. All school personnel should report the presence or suspected presence of a Prohibited Person to a school administrator and take appropriate action. The Superintendent shall immediately notify the President of the Board of any known or suspected Prohibited Person who is a student, or a parent or legal guardian of a student, at NCS.
6. **Applicability:** This policy shall supersede any conflicting provisions in all other Board policies regarding school safety, parental involvement, school field trips, school visitors, school volunteers, and student transportation.

## Prohibition of Drugs and Alcohol

NCS is dedicated to maintaining a safe educational environment. Thus, we have implemented a drug and alcohol-free school policy, which prohibits anyone from being under the influence of alcohol or illegal/misused drugs on school grounds or attending a school-related event.

Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed on school grounds or during field trips. Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed in vehicles of transportation owned or operated on behalf of NCS, or by their drivers, while they are responsible for the operation of such vehicles. The use, sale, transfer, or possession of alcohol, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, illegal drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia on School property, at school events, or on field trips is prohibited. This includes the misuse of prescription drugs, including medical marijuana, or any mood-altering substances while on school property, at a school event, on field trips, or in circumstances NCS believes will adversely affect the school's operation or safety. More specific drug policies may be found in the [Alcohol & Drug Policy](#).

## Smoking and Tobacco Products

NCS is a smoke-free campus. In keeping with the school's intent to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking and/or vaping are prohibited on School property at all times. This policy applies equally to all employees, parents, students, volunteers, and visitors. This policy also includes the use of e-cigarettes.

## Weapons or Dangerous Items Prohibited

Weapons of any kind are expressly prohibited on school grounds or during school events. Weapons are defined to include firearms, knives, destructive devices, and/or any item (regardless of its nature) used to threaten or cause actual harm.

## School Communication

Every effort will be made to ensure good communication between the home and NCS. Parents may communicate directly with NCS's staff members via e-mail, voicemail, written request, or by accessing the school's webpage. NCS also uses its School Information System as an automated phone, SMS, and email system to notify parents of events or weather closures.

Parents can expect the following communication plan to be followed throughout the school year.

- All parent communication will come through email, the School Information System, Talking Points, and Academy Blogs.
- All emails sent to staff that require a response will be returned within 2 business days. If a parent has an urgent or time-sensitive matter to discuss with a teacher or administrator, it is recommended that they call the front office and leave a message. Our teachers and administrators do not consistently check their email during the instructional day, as they are expected to be teaching and engaging with students during instructional time.

- NCS does not communicate through Facebook or any other social media sites regarding personal matters, questions, or concerns. All school-related questions must be asked in person, over the phone, or via email.
- The NCS website is the school's main source of information. Please refer to the website first with any questions regarding policies, procedures, or dates of school functions.
- Student communication will come through their email or the School Information System portal. NCS encourages students to handle any questions or issues directly with their teacher, either in person or via email. Once in the Upper Academy, parents are expected to encourage their student to take personal responsibility for their learning.
- Parents should ONLY communicate with members of the NCS staff through the staff member's school email address, via the Talking Points, over the phone, or in person. School staff members are not permitted to communicate directly with parents through direct text messaging.
- Parents should respect all staff by not expecting responses to communications late in the evenings or on the weekends. A healthy work/life balance is as important for the NCS staff as it is for our NCS families.

### **Emergency/ Inclement Weather Closings**

The Superintendent will make all decisions regarding school delays or closures due to inclement weather and will not necessarily follow the local school district. School cancellation or a delayed opening will be communicated to all parents and staff via email, text, social media, and local news stations (WRAL and WTVD). The information will also be posted on our website at [www.neusecharterschool.org](http://www.neusecharterschool.org).

Additionally, the Superintendent has the ability to call for an early dismissal if there are concerns about the road conditions or the safety of the children. Parents should ensure that their emergency contact information is updated for communication regarding inclement weather delays.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

Every family must provide Emergency Contact Information to NCS. Please communicate any changes to the information throughout the year by emailing [frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:frontdesk@neusecharterschool.org).

### **NCS Fundraising**

It is the policy of the Neuse Charter School Board that the NCS Superintendent has authority over all fundraising activities, including all plans, decisions, communications, and implementation, and that all groups, organizations, and individuals who fundraise on behalf of NCS, its students, faculty, staff, administration, teams, clubs, or any other NCS stakeholders shall not plan, implement, or communicate any fundraising activity, including the solicitation of gifts, without prior approval from the Superintendent. All funds raised by any and all fundraising activities on behalf of NCS shall be under the purview of the Superintendent. The

Superintendent shall create and maintain appropriate procedures to implement this policy and exercise authority over all NCS fundraising activities.

### *Fundraising Group Certification Policy*

It is the policy of the Neuse Charter School Board that all groups, organizations, and individuals who fundraise on behalf of Neuse Charter School, its students, faculty, staff, administration, teams, clubs, or any other NCS stakeholders shall be approved annually by the Development Manager. In order to be considered for approval, all such groups, organizations, and individuals must email the Development Manager at [officemanager@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:officemanager@neusecharterschool.org). The email should include a fundraising proposal as well as an agreement to follow the NCS BOD fundraising policy and to allow NCS to annually, or as often as necessary, review its financial books and IRS Form 990, if applicable. Only approved groups will be allowed to participate in fundraising activities on behalf of NCS. Any person or group that violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action by NCS. Once approved, groups must follow the [Fundraising Guidelines](#) as established by NCS.

### *Donations*

Neuse Charter School is a 501(c)3 organization that accepts monetary donations to help cover the cost of facility needs, teacher bonuses, athletics, and more. To make a donation, please visit the [NCS Giving Page](#) or contact Emily Harris, Development Manager, at [eharris@neusecharterschool.org](mailto:eharris@neusecharterschool.org).

### *Silent Partner Program*

This program seeks to involve members of the community in reaching out to help children in our schools. Anyone can become a Silent Partner and help students with such needs as money for field trips, snacks, clothing, etc. The program is anonymous for the Silent Partner and the student. When a need is identified, Silent Partners are contacted to ask if they can make a partial or complete contribution toward the need. If the silent partner cannot fulfill the request, the coordinator will reach out to another partner. Silent partners may be contacted once or twice in the school year. Please contact a school counselor to learn more about this program or how to become a partner.

## **Support Services**

### **Health and Wellness**

#### *Student Health Guidelines*

Parents/guardians shall not send their child to school if he/she has:

- A fever of 100.4 or higher (the student must be fever-free, without the use of fever-reducing medicine, for at least 24 hours before returning to school);
- Vomiting in the past 24 hours;

- Diarrhea in the past 24 hours;
- Chills;
- Sore throat;
- Strep Throat (the student must have been taking an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to school);
- Bad cold, with a very runny nose or a bad cough, especially if it has kept the child awake at night; and/or
- Any red, itchy, watery eye conditions with drainage.

If your child becomes ill at school and school staff feel the child is too sick to benefit from school or is contagious to other children, you will receive notification to pick him/her up from school. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to update the family's emergency contact numbers. If the student is not picked up within an hour of the notification process, the emergency contact(s) will be contacted. If neither the parent/guardian nor the emergency contact(s) can be reached and it is deemed that the student needs immediate medical attention, NCS will call 911.

### *Prevention and Control of State Reportable Communicable Diseases*

Students are excluded from school in cases of certain reportable communicable diseases. While the list of diseases reportable to the state Division of Public Health is lengthy, the number of such diseases common to the school-age child is not. This list is available upon request from the Health Department.

When a student is suspected of having one of those reportable communicable diseases, it is the responsibility of the parent to take the child to the local health department or primary health care provider for verification and treatment before that student can return to school. Students should be temporarily excluded from school if they present symptoms of a reportable disease. In each case, readmission to school should also take into account whether the student is able to participate in school. In some cases, a student with a disabling disease, who is no longer contagious but may require ongoing care, may be eligible for additional services under [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act](#).

A list of students who have not been vaccinated for bona fide religious or medical reasons or who have illnesses that cause immunosuppression will be maintained in the school nurse's office so that appropriate action can be taken to protect these individuals when serious communicable disease outbreaks do occur.

School staff make every effort to reduce the prevalence of disease-causing organisms by ensuring the environment's cleanliness, emphasizing frequent handwashing of students and staff, and following proper decontamination procedures of items used in mealtime and other activities. Despite those actions, the child is often the source and conduit for communicable diseases ranging from the "common cold" to ringworm, among many. Most such illnesses are

not among the diseases for which the state Division of Public Health, following guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has issued mandatory isolation rules.

- Chickenpox (Varicella): Student is excluded until all blisters have formed scabs.
- Fever: The parent/guardian of any student with an oral temperature higher than 100.4 degrees will be notified and asked to pick up their child. The student should remain at home until fever-free for 36 hours without medication.
- Head Lice (Pediculosis): The parents/guardians of any student found with lice will be notified and asked to pick up their student. If the student cannot be picked up and must remain at school, they will remain in the school nurse's office until a parent can pick them up. The parent/guardian may consult their medical provider or treat with an over-the-counter product. The student may return to school after receiving treatment for lice and removing nits. Head lice cases that have not been resolved within three (3) days per occurrence will be counted as unexcused absences after the three-day period.
- Impetigo: Students are excluded from school if they have more than three to four sores until they are seen by a medical provider and treated with a prescription antibiotic for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Measles (Rubeola/Rubella): Student is excluded until the physician's approval is given and the student is no longer contagious.
- MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus): All suspected cases should be referred to their healthcare provider, and if possible, lesions should be kept covered while at school. Exclusion from school and sports activities should be reserved for those with wound drainage that cannot be covered and contained with a clean, dry bandage and those who cannot maintain good personal hygiene.
- Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea: The parent/guardian of any student experiencing nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea will be notified and asked to pick up their child. The student may return to school 36 hours after the symptoms have abated.
- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): A student exhibiting symptoms of pink eye should be evaluated by their medical provider. The student may return when treatment has begun, the eye has minimal drainage & the student is able to keep their hands away from their eyes. The student is allowed to return to school with a physician's approval.
- Scabies: Student is excluded until one (1) treatment with prescription medication has been completed for at least 24 hours.
- Strep Throat (Streptococcal and Staphylococcal Infections): Student is excluded from school until treated with a prescription antibiotic for 24 hours and has been fever-free for 36 hours.

If a student has a communicable disease, including but not limited to HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, and Tuberculosis, the parents are encouraged to notify the school nurse. This information will be kept confidential in accordance with the law.

If notified that a student suffers from such immunodeficiency, the school nurse will request that the notifying party provide information about what types of exposures might put the student at

risk and what reasonable practices can be taken in the school setting to minimize the risk to the student. Whenever possible, the school nurse will notify the parents or guardians (or the student, where appropriate) of an infected or immunodeficient student of the existence of Chicken Pox, Influenza, Meningococcus, Measles, Tuberculosis, or other contagious diseases occurring in the school that may represent a serious threat to the student's health. Students who are removed from school as a result of such conditions will be provided instruction in an appropriate alternative educational setting.

### *Allergies and Asthma*

Parents/ guardians who have students with severe allergies should confer with the school nurse or designee so that a health care plan can be developed.

Students with severe asthma should get a physician's permission and the school nurse's permission to keep inhalers on their person.

### *Vision Screening*

#### [Vision Screening Protocols](#)

### *Garrett's Law*

North Carolina law mandates that at the beginning of every academic year, local Boards of Education shall provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis, influenza, Human Papillomavirus (HPV), and their vaccines.

The following information is taken from the NC Public Health website:

"Meningitis is a contagious respiratory disease caused by bacteria and is spread through air droplets and direct contact with infected persons. It can be spread through coughing, sneezing, kissing, or sharing items like drinking glasses, lip balm, eating utensils, or cigarettes. Adolescents and young adults are at increased risk of contracting this disease. Invasive meningococcal disease occurs in three common forms: meningitis, blood infection, and pneumonia; other forms account for a small percentage of cases.

Meningococcal vaccines protect against most types of meningococcal disease, although they do not prevent all cases. There are two kinds of vaccines that protect against meningitis available in the US: the meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine and the meningococcal conjugate vaccine.

Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and, at times, lead to death.

There are two types of vaccines:

1. The "flu shot" is an inactivated vaccine (containing the killed virus) given with a needle, usually in the arm. It is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

2. The nasal-spray flu vaccine is a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that do not cause the flu (sometimes called LAIV for “live attenuated influenza vaccine” or FluMist). LAIV (FluMist) is approved for use in healthy people 2 to 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

The viruses in the vaccine change each year based on international surveillance and scientists' estimations about which types and strains of viruses will circulate in a given year.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common virus that is usually spread through sexual contact. Most of the time, HPV has no symptoms, so people do not know they have it. There are more than 150 related viruses in the group HPV, and approximately 40 types of genital HPV. Some types can cause cervical cancer in women and can also cause other kinds of cancer in both men and women. Other types can cause genital warts in both males and females.

The HPV vaccine works by preventing the most common types of HPV that cause cervical cancer and genital warts. It is given on a two-dose or three-dose schedule, depending on age.”

For more information on these diseases, please visit the [NCDHHS Resources for Schools site](#).

## **First Aid and Emergency Care Procedures**

Trained NCS staff are on campus to provide first aid to students in the event of accident, injury, and illness, and will notify parents as soon as possible after treatment has occurred. According to the NC Emergency Guidelines for Schools, if you prefer that first responders wait and do not provide treatment until receiving consent from a parent or guardian to treat your child, please complete this form: [Opt-Out of General Consent for Medical Care](#).

In the event of a serious injury to a student, staff member, or visitor, school staff are responsible for instituting appropriate first aid procedures.

### *First Responders*

A first responder is defined as a staff member who:

- is currently certified in CPR/AED and First Aid by the American Red Cross (ARC) or the American Heart Association (AHA);
- is trained in OSHA procedures;
- is available to aid in school emergencies;
- has been offered the Hepatitis B vaccine; and
- agrees to follow the first aid procedures the ARC and AHA set forth.

### *First Aid Preparation and Training*

A brief overview of first aid procedures will be provided to all teachers' assistants at the beginning of each school year.

Names of first responders located in each school building will be posted in the school's main office.

All Athletic Directors and coaches shall maintain current CPR and first aid certification.

NCS shall maintain current information on students, including:

- parent/guardian's name
- where the parent/guardian can be located during the school day
- emergency contact(s) other than parent/guardian
- the name of a licensed health care provider.

NCS shall maintain the staff's current emergency contact information.

NCS will make AHA Heartsaver First Aid and/or ARC Standard First Aid and Safety classes available for designated school personnel.

#### *First Aid Response: General*

- School employees are expected to act in loco parentis. They are not expected to determine the cause or extent of injury.
- School-designated first responders will follow procedures in accordance with ARC or AHA certification.
- An [Incident Report Form](#) must be completed within 24 hours whenever school personnel provide first aid for an injury serious enough to warrant parental notification, and when the incident occurs during the school day, at school after events, on field trips, or during athletic events or practice. If blood or body fluid exposure occurs, the school nurse must be contacted within 2 hours, or as soon as possible. The school nurse reviews Incident/Injury Reports to ensure adherence to school first aid and OSHA regulations.
- A 911 call must be documented and submitted to the Superintendent and Director of Business by the supervising adult on the day of transport or by the morning of the next school day for athletic injuries.
- A trainer or coach trained in CPR/First Aid must attend every athletic event.
- Students with health problems requiring special care shall have an Individualized Health Plan on file, available in the school office and health room.
- A sick or injured student can be released only to parent/guardian(s), listed emergency contacts, or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel.

#### *First Aid Response: Emergencies*

- Staff members are responsible for calling EMS (911) when necessary in an emergency. Administrators and parents must be notified as soon as safely possible after EMS has been called.
- School staff or students are not to transport students in their own cars for emergency treatment.

- Under all circumstances, upon arrival at a school, EMS personnel will become the primary care providers of the injured party for whom they were called. School personnel will remove other students and staff from the scene to allow EMS personnel space and safety to deliver appropriate care.
- EMS personnel responding to a school or school-sanctioned event will attempt to contact the school nurse on site.
- In cases where a school nurse or administrator knows of an existing health condition, any Health Plans on file or other documents that contain pertinent medical history, medications, allergies, and special directions that may aid the school system and paramedics in assessing the correct disposition of the child will be provided to EMS staff.
- If transportation of the child is found to be necessary by the paramedic or desired by the person acting in loco parentis, then the destination shall be determined by which facility would be most appropriate for the specific condition of the child, as best determined by both parties. In some cases, this may involve bypassing the closest facility for a more distant, yet more appropriate, facility for the child.
- In cases where the parents or legal guardians are not present at NCS or event, EMS crews will respect the wishes of the person acting in loco parentis in decisions related to transporting the patient.
- If any student requires EMS transport, and a parent/guardian is not available to accompany the child, school personnel will accompany the student during transport. They will remain with the student until the parent/guardian assumes responsibility.

#### *First Aid Response: Injuries and Illness*

- Care for injuries and sudden serious illness in the school setting will be in accordance with the ARC or AHA guidelines.
- Parents/guardians will be called when a student's condition prevents participation in normal school activities.
- Students with an undiagnosed rash may be excluded from school. If excluded from school, readmission is contingent upon a note from a physician, being symptom-free, and receiving appropriate treatment.
- Students will not leave or be sent home from school if unattended when exhibiting symptoms of illness for diabetes, head, back, or abdominal trauma, severe stomachache, seizures, fainting/dizziness, fever higher than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (oral), vomiting, diarrhea, or active bleeding.

#### *First Aid: Loss of Change in Level of Consciousness or Concussion*

- A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in the loss of consciousness.
- Nurses, first responders, coaches, and assistant coaches will comply with concussion safety requirements set forth in the [Gfeller Waller Concussion Awareness Act of 2011](#).

- Parents/guardians of any student with an injury to the head that results in a change in the level of consciousness, even reported dizziness, will be notified.
- Students may not continue in physical education until a note of clearance is received from a licensed healthcare provider.
- Any middle or high school athlete with a suspected concussion will not be permitted to return to any participation in practice or event until a written release is provided to the school from a healthcare provider with expertise in the management of concussion.
- The Athletic Director will be in charge of guiding the return to play progression and has the authority to withhold play.
- Coaches, assistant coaches, and student athletes must adhere to guidelines set forth in the Athletics Emergency Action Plan.
- All coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, first responders, volunteers, student athletes, and parents of student-athletes must be provided annually with concussion and head injury information.
- NCS will retain records of training and concussion incidents.

### *Do Not Resuscitate Orders*

In accordance with First Aid and Emergency Care Procedures, it is within the scope of the duty of teachers and other employees to give emergency health care when delay would seriously worsen the physical condition or endanger the life of a student or other person.

Because of the complexity and severity of the medical conditions of medically fragile students, parents or guardians sometimes may request that school personnel not resuscitate a child in the event of cardiac or respiratory arrest. However, NCS believes that the implementation of Do Not Resuscitate (“DNR”) orders is not consistent with the duty to protect the health and safety of students. Therefore, it is the policy of NCS that school employees will neither accept nor honor DNR orders.

When a student with special health needs is enrolled, appropriate school personnel will determine whether an Individualized Health Plan needs to be prepared for the student. School personnel will consult with the student’s parents, school health officials, and the student’s physician, as appropriate, in making the determination. Individualized Health Plans should be reviewed annually to ensure the student’s health needs are met.

If a school administrator receives a written DNR request from any student’s parent/guardian and physician, appropriate school personnel will review the student’s current Individualized Health Plan to determine whether it is still sufficient and make necessary adjustments. In the rare event that parents and physicians can demonstrate that special circumstances justify alternate life-sustaining approaches, school personnel, in consultation with the parents and physician, may create an individually-designed medical resuscitation plan for the student. Such

a plan shall not prohibit life-sustaining activities, but may describe emergency procedures appropriate to the individual student.

In the event of cardiac or respiratory arrest of a student, the following procedures will apply:

- Emergency Care will be administered, including CPR.
- Emergency Medical Services (911) will be activated.
- EMTs will assume responsibility for the student when they arrive.
- The parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible.

It is the intent of NCS that the underlying principle of any response to a DNR request is that no student is to be denied the fullest, genuine, appropriate efforts to preserve life and health.

## **Medication Administration**

NCS recognizes that students may need to take medication during school hours. School personnel may administer medication prescribed by a health care practitioner upon the written request of a student's parent. In limited circumstances, a student may be authorized to self-administer medications. To minimize disruptions to the school day, students should take medications at home rather than at school whenever feasible. School administrators may deny a request to administer any medication that could be taken at home or when, in the opinion of the Superintendent or designee in consultation with the school nurse, the administration of the medication by school personnel would pose a substantial risk of harm to the student or others.

For purposes of this policy, all references to "parent" include parents, legal guardians, and legal custodians. In addition, for purposes of this policy, the term "health care practitioner" is limited to licensed medical professionals who are legally authorized to prescribe medications under North Carolina law, such as doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathic medicine, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners.

### *Medication Administration by School Employees*

1. Conditions for administering medication: Authorized school employees may administer medication to students when all of the following conditions are met. These conditions apply to all medications, including those available over the counter without a prescription.
  - a. Parental Consent: The student's parent must make a signed, written request that authorizes school personnel to administer the medication to the student.
  - b. Medication Authorization/Order: A health care practitioner must prescribe the medication for use by the student and provide explicit written instructions for administering the medication.
  - c. Certification of Necessity: The student's health care practitioner must certify that administration of the medication to the student during the school day is necessary to maintain and support the student's continued presence in school.

- d. Proper Container/Labeling: If the medication to be administered is available by prescription only, the parent must provide the medication in a pharmacy-labeled container with directions for how and when the medicine is to be given. If the medication is available over the counter, it must be provided in the original container or packaging, labeled with the student's name.
  - e. Proper Administration: The employee must administer the medication pursuant to the health care practitioner's written instructions provided to the school by the student's parent, and in accordance with professional standards.
2. NCS and its employees assume no liability for complications or side effects of medication when administered in accordance with the instructions provided by the parent and health care practitioner.

### *Procedures for Administering Medications*

The following procedures govern the administration of medications to students. These procedures and a copy of this policy must be made available to all students and parents each school year.

- The health and welfare of the student must be of paramount concern in all decisions regarding the administration of medication.
- Procedures for medication administration must be consistent with recommendations of the School Health Unit of the Children & Youth Branch of the N.C. Division of Public Health, as described in the North Carolina School Health Program Manual.
- Students with special needs are to be afforded all rights provided by federal and state law as enumerated in the Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities.
- Students with disabilities are also to be afforded all rights provided by anti-discrimination laws, including [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- No student may possess, use, or transmit any drug or counterfeit drug prohibited by policy.
- Any medications kept at school for a student must be kept in a locked and secure place. An exception to the requirement for locked storage may be made for emergency medications that must be immediately accessible.
- Outside of emergency situations, students will be required to come to the office to receive their dose. Only FDA-approved medications will be administered on campus, and NCS can only accept a 30-day supply of daily medications. All unused, discontinued, or expired medication must be picked up in the front office. Any medications not collected by the established deadline will be properly disposed of.
- All school personnel who will be administering medications must receive appropriate training.
- Only medications clearly prescribed for the student may be administered by school personnel. At the time a parent brings a medication to school for administration, if school personnel have concerns regarding the appropriateness of the medication or dosage for a student, a confirmation should be obtained from the student's health care

practitioner or another health care practitioner prior to administering the medication or allowing a student to self-administer the medication. It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to complete both the [Physician's Order Form for Medication](#) and the [NCS Consent to Release Medical Information Form](#) and provide them to NCS with information regarding the student's medical needs. Additionally, parents or guardians are responsible for monitoring medication expiration dates and replacing medication when it expires.

- Although efforts should be made not to disrupt instructional time, a parent has the right to administer medication to their child at any time while the child is on school property.
- Written information maintained by school personnel regarding a student's medical and health needs is confidential. Parents and students must be accorded all rights provided by FERPA and state confidentiality laws. Any employee who violates the confidentiality of the records may be subject to disciplinary action.

### *Emergency Medication*

Students who are at risk for medical emergencies, including but not limited to diabetes, asthma, or severe allergies, must have an Individual Health Plan developed for them to address emergency administration of medication. Students must meet the requirements listed above, including providing authorization and instructions from the health care practitioner and written consent of the parent, in order for emergency medication to be administered by school personnel while the student is at school, at a school-sponsored activity, and/or while in transit to or from school or a school-sponsored event.

### *Student Self-Administering Medications Under a Medical Plan of Care*

NCS recognizes that students with certain health conditions, including but not limited to Diabetes, Asthma, or an allergy that could result in an anaphylactic reaction, may need to possess and self-administer medication on school property in accordance with their Individualized Health Plan or emergency health care plan. As used in this section of the policy, "medication" refers to a medicine prescribed for the treatment of medical conditions, including but not limited to Diabetes, Asthma, or anaphylactic reactions. Guidelines for procedures for the possession and self-administration of such medication by students on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, and/or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events are listed below.

1. Authorization to Self-Administer Medication: Before a student will be allowed to self-administer medication pursuant to this section, the student's parent must provide to the Academy Director or designee all of the documents listed below:
  - a. written authorization from the student's parent for the student to possess and self-administer the medication;
  - b. a written statement from the student's health care practitioner verifying that:
    - i. the student has a diagnosed health condition

- ii. the health care practitioner prescribed the medication for use on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events; and
- iii. the student understands, has been instructed in self-administration of the medication, and has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the medication and any accompanying device;
- c. a written treatment plan and written emergency protocol formulated by the prescribing health care practitioner for managing the student's health condition;
- d. a statement provided by the school system and signed by the student's parent acknowledging that NCS and its employees and agents are not liable for injury arising from the student's possession and self-administration of the medication; and
- e. any other documents or items necessary to comply with state and federal laws.

Prior to being permitted to self-administer medication at school, the student also must demonstrate to the school nurse, or the nurse's designee, the skill level necessary to use the medication and any accompanying device.

The student's parent is encouraged to provide the school with backup medication that school personnel are to keep in a location to which the student has immediate access in the event the student does not have the required medication.

All information provided to the school by the student's parent must be reviewed by the school nurse and kept on file at the school in an easily accessible location. Any permission granted by the Academy Director or designee for a student to possess and self-administer medication will be effective only for the current school year. Such permission must be renewed each school year.

2. **Responsibilities of the Student:** A student who is authorized in accordance with this policy to carry medication for self-administration must carry the medication in the original labeled container with the student's name on the label.
3. **Consequences for Improper Use:** A student who uses his or her medication in a manner other than as prescribed or who permits another person to use the medication may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct. However, school administrators shall not impose disciplinary action on the student that limits or restricts the student's immediate access to required medication for conditions, including but not limited to diabetes, asthma, or anaphylactic reactions.

NCS does not assume any responsibility for the administration of medication to a student by the student, the student's parent, or any other person who is not authorized by this policy to administer medications to students.

## Food Allergy Policies

Lunch may be eaten in the classroom or outside on campus. Teachers and staff should ensure that all students wash their hands before and after lunch. All trash from lunch must be disposed of in the designated classroom trash can.

## Medical Policies

Please review the full list of NCS's [Health/ Medical Policies](#).

## Mandatory Reporting Policy

Pursuant to [N.C.G.S. § 7B-301](#), all school personnel are required to report any suspected abuse of any child. These reports should be made directly to the Department of Social Services where the child resides. Reports can be made with help from a School Counselor or the Academy Director. If a report is made, it must be reported to the Superintendent immediately. All school personnel will receive training on how to report child abuse. If any staff member has a question or concern, they should contact the School Counselor and Superintendent.

In addition to cases of abuse, neglect, dependency, and maltreatment, under [N.C.G.S. §14-318.6](#), any person 18 years of age or older who knows or should have reasonably known that a juvenile has been or is the victim of a violent offense, sexual offense, or misdemeanor child abuse under [N.C.G.S. §14-318.2](#) shall immediately report the case of that juvenile to the appropriate local law enforcement agency in the county where the juvenile resides or is found. If a report is made, it must be reported to the Superintendent immediately. All school personnel will receive training on how to report child abuse. If any staff member has a question or concern, they should see the School Counselor and Superintendent.

## School Counselor Services

The mission of the Neuse Charter School Counseling Department is to nurture and empower each student to soar and reach new heights. We support each student through collaboration with school, home, and community. We counsel and advise in academics, careers, and personal/social development. We give space to allow students to discover their unique abilities to create a firm foundation to become lifelong learners.

Lower Academy School Counselor: Mrs. Donna Michael

Upper Academy School Counselor: Mrs. Amy McGinnis

Direct Services: Academic/Personal/Social/College and Career, Advisement, Individual Counseling, Small Groups, and Instruction

Indirect Services: Consultation, Collaboration, Referrals, and Testing

### *What happens in individual counseling?*

The main goal of short-term individual counseling is for students to learn the skills necessary to manage situations on their own. The number of sessions typically ranges to, at most, six or eight, so that we can serve as many students as possible. Confidentiality and its limitations in the context of school counseling are explained to students before counseling begins: What is shared with the counselor remains confidential and will not be disclosed without the student's consent unless there is reason to suspect that the student may be at risk for harming themselves or others.

### *What happens in a group?*

Research shows that groups are an efficient, effective, and positive way to support students with academic, career, and social/emotional developmental and situational concerns, enabling us to meet a greater number of student needs at once. Groups typically involve approximately six to eight students working towards addressing shared concerns and developing supportive relationships within the group setting. Groups typically meet weekly for about six to eight weeks, depending on the curriculum. The types of groups are based on the individual student, school, and community needs. Participants are selected for participation through a referral process or analysis of school data. The School Counselor will screen potential group members and address informed consent, the purpose of the group, goals, limits to confidentiality, and voluntary participation. As a best practice, parental consent and student agreement are required to participate.

### *What is classroom guidance?*

Classroom guidance is a whole-class approach in which the School Counselor meets with students to teach them things that will promote success in and out of school. Preventive in nature, lessons are designed to foster academic, personal, emotional, and social development.

### *Distance Counseling*

If school is canceled for a prolonged period of time, Distance Counseling via a FERPA-compliant video conferencing platform may be implemented for brief check-ins with students.

## **Governance, Compliance & General School Policies**

### **Board of Directors**

NCS is a non-profit organization. As a non-profit, NCS is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors consists of seven members. The primary responsibilities include ensuring that the school is achieving its mission, creating and following board policies, overseeing the strategic plan for the school, and approving the annual budget. The Board is also responsible for the hiring and termination of employees at the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The Board meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month, eight months out of the year, as scheduled at the beginning of each fiscal year. All board meetings are open to the public. Public comments

are allowed at board meetings. Anyone who wants to make a public comment must sign up before in-person meetings are started or follow the posted processes on the website for virtual meetings.

#### **Board Members and Positions**

Michelle Denning, President

Nichole Booker, Vice President

Jeremy Pearce, Treasurer

Lindsey Spain, Secretary

Chris Kiser, Board Member

Jason Gipe, Board Member

Benjy Woodard, Board Member

### **Corrections and/ or Modifications to this Handbook**

NCS reserves the right to make changes or modifications to this handbook as needed throughout the school year. Changes or modifications made during the school year may be announced on the Academy Director's blogs. The latest version will always be available on our website.

### **Compliance with Other Laws**

NCS shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to such laws and regulations governing employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. NCS shall comply with all applicable federal, state, or local health and safety laws and regulations. Neither the State Board of Education (SBE) nor the local board of education assumes the duty to oversee the operations of NCS except as may otherwise be required to monitor NCS for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

### **Religious Accommodations**

NCS respects the religious beliefs and practices of all staff and students, and will make, on request, an accommodation for such observances when a reasonable accommodation is available that does not create an undue hardship on NCS's operations.

### **USDA Statement**

NCS is an equal opportunity provider. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or

funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint-filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's Target Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact the USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found [online](#) and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866)632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to the USDA by:

1. Mail: US Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410; or
2. Fax: (202)690-7442; or
3. Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

### **Access to Education, Student Privacy, and Immigration Enforcement**

School personnel must not allow any third party access to a school site without permission from the site administrator. The site administrator shall not permit third-party access to the school site that would disrupt the learning environment.

NCS staff must contact the Superintendent immediately if approached by immigration law enforcement agents. NCS staff must also attempt to contact the parents or guardians of any students involved.

The Superintendent must process requests by immigration law enforcement agents to enter a school site or obtain student data as follows:

1. Request identification from the officers or agents and photocopy it.
2. Request a judicial warrant and photocopy it.
  - a. If no warrant is presented, request the grounds for access, make notes, and contact legal counsel for NCS.
3. Request and retain notes of the names of the students and the reasons for the request.
  - a. If school site personnel have not yet contacted the students' parents or guardians, do so.

- b. Do not attempt to provide your information or conjecture about the students, such as their schedule, for example, without legal counsel present.
4. Provide the agents with a copy of this Policy.
5. Contact legal counsel for NCS.
6. Request the agents' contact information.
7. Advise the agents that you are required to complete these steps before allowing them access to any school site or student data.

## **Title I Program/ Parent & Family Engagement**

The Title I program is a federally supported program that offers assistance to educationally and economically disadvantaged children to help ensure they receive an equitable, high-quality, well-rounded education and meet NCS's challenging academic standards. The Title I program provides instructional activities and supportive services to eligible students over and above those provided by the regular school program.

Qualified Title I schools will operate as school-wide programs or targeted assistance programs based on federal eligibility criteria. School-wide programs will provide comprehensive support to offer improved opportunities for all students to meet the NCS academic standards. Targeted assistance programs will provide services to eligible students most in need of assistance in the school, as determined by objective criteria established by the Superintendent or designee. Eligibility criteria may include, for example, standardized test scores, teacher judgment, and results of preschool screening and home-school surveys.

School-wide and targeted assistance programs shall be based on effective means of improving student achievement and include evidence-based strategies to support parent and family engagement.

### *Benefits of the Title I Program*

Our Title I program will provide your child with educational support both in and beyond the regular classroom. Title I funds are used to increase student mastery in their learning and academic achievement. Some benefits may include:

- Title I Tutors/Interventionists
- Instructional Supplies
- Professional development for school staff
- Family engagement and education events
- Classroom supplies

### *Title I/ Parent and Family Engagement*

NCS recognizes the value of family engagement in a child's academic success and believes a child's education is an ongoing cooperative partnership between the home and NCS. Parents and other family members are their children's first teachers; therefore, the continued involvement of parents and family members in the educational process is most important in

fostering and improving academic achievement. School administrators shall strive to support parents and provide parents and family members with meaningful opportunities to become involved in the programs offered by the Title I schools.

### *Definition of Parent and Family Engagement*

For this policy, the term “parent and family engagement” means the participation of parents, guardians, and other family members in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student learning and other school activities, including ensuring the following:

1. Parents and family members play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning.
2. Parents and family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school.
3. Parents are full partners in their child’s education, and parents and family members are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
4. NCS utilizes activities to support parent and family engagement in the Title I programs.

### *Parent and Family Engagement Efforts*

The Board believes that the involvement of Title I parents and family members in the design and implementation of the Title I program will increase the program's effectiveness and contribute significantly to the children's success. The Title I staff and all School personnel shall strive to conduct outreach to parents and family members and involve them in activities throughout the school year.

The Superintendent shall ensure that this school-level parent and family engagement plan is developed, agreed upon, and annually distributed to parents and family members of participating students. In addition to the school-level parent and family engagement plan, NCS shall ensure the plan describes the means for carrying out school-level policy, sharing responsibility for student academic achievement, building the capacity of school staff and parents for involvement, and increasing accessibility for participation of all parents and family members of children participating in Title I programs, including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, who have disabilities, or who are migratory. Plans must involve parents in the planning and improvement of Title I activities. They must provide for the distribution to parents of information on expected student achievement levels and NCS’s academic performance.

School administrators shall invite appropriate school personnel from private schools to consult on the design and development of their programs to provide equitable services to students enrolled in private schools. The Superintendent or designee shall establish any additional procedures necessary to achieve timely and meaningful consultation with private school administrators in accordance with federal law.

In addition, NCS school leaders and Title I school personnel shall do the following:

1. Involve parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I program and school support and improvement plan, and the process of school review and improvement by including parents on the NCS advisory committee and any committees that review the Title I program;
2. Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support from various departments necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participants in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities that are designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance;
3. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in the Title I program to the extent feasible and appropriate with parental engagement strategies established in other federal, state, and local laws and programs;
4. With the meaningful involvement of parents, conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the NCS parent and family engagement policies and program in improving the academic quality of NCS and assisting students to meet the NCS academic standards;
5. Strive to eliminate barriers to parental participation by assisting parents who have disabilities and parents who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, are migratory, or have other backgrounds or characteristics that may affect participation;
6. Provide outreach and assistance to parents and family members of children who are participating in Title I programs in understanding the state's testing standards, the assessments used, Title I requirements, and all national, state, and local standards and expectations through such efforts as community-based meetings, posting information on school websites, sending information home, newsletters, workshops, and newspaper articles;
7. Design a School-Parent Compact that sets out respective responsibilities in striving to raise student achievement and explains how an effective home/school partnership will be developed and maintained;
8. With the assistance of parents, ensure that teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, Academy Directors, and other staff are educated in the value of parents as partners in the educational process and understand how to work with, communicate with, and reach out to parents as equal partners in education;
9. Distribute to parents information on expected student proficiency levels for their child and the school's academic performance, and provide materials and training to help parents monitor their child's progress and work with educators to improve achievement through such methods as literacy training or using technology, which may include education about the harms of copyright piracy;
10. Coordinate and integrate, to the extent feasible and appropriate, parental involvement programs and activities with federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities in the community that encourage and support parents to more fully participate in the education of their child;

11. Strengthen the partnership with agencies, businesses, and programs that operate in the community, especially those with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education;
12. Ensure that parents are involved in the NCS Title I activities; and
13. Provide such other reasonable support for Title I parental involvement activities as requested by parents.

The NCS Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed/ revised jointly with and agreed upon with parents, as evidenced by minutes from the annual meeting held on March 29, 2021, for the 2021-2024 school years.

Neuse Charter School will develop/revise the Parent and Family Engagement Policy in the first semester of the school year for the 2025-2028 school years. NCS will distribute this Policy to all parents and make it available to the community on or before the end of the first semester via the NCS website and hard copies located in the main office.

### *Annual Meeting and Program Evaluation*

Each year, school administrators must invite parents of students participating in Title I programs to a meeting to explain parental rights, discuss the programs and activities to be provided with Title I funds, and solicit input on the Title I program and this policy. In addition, school administrators must provide parents and family members a meaningful annual opportunity to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Title I programs and the parent and family engagement policies and plans. Information collected from these proceedings will be used to revise Title I programs and parent and family engagement plans.

### *Notice Requirements*

School administrators and Title I school personnel shall provide adequate notice of the following information as required by law. The notice must be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

### School-Parent Compact

A compact is another word for “contract” or “agreement.” Neuse Charter School School-Parent Compact is an agreement between NCS, students, and caregivers. It outlines how we work together to make sure our students are exposed to high-quality curriculum and instruction and receive the individual support they need to reach and exceed grade-level standards. The purpose of the School-Parent Compact is to foster student mastery in their learning and academic achievement. The School-Parent Compact can be found on the [NCS Title 1 webpage](#).

### Program for English Learners

Each year, the Academy Director or designee shall provide notice of the following to parents of English Learners identified for participation in a Title I, Part A or Title III funded language-instruction educational program:

1. The reasons for the child's identification;
2. The child's level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed;
3. Methods of instruction;
4. How the program will help the child;
5. The exit requirements for the program;
6. If the child has a disability, how does the language instruction educational program meet the objectives of the child's individualized educational program (IEP);
7. Any other information necessary to effectively inform the parent of the program and the parental rights regarding enrollment, removal, and selection of a program for English learners; and
8. Notice of regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents.

### School Report Card

Each year, school administrators shall disseminate to all parents, schools, and the general public a School Report Card containing information about NCS, including, but not limited to:

- Information, both in the aggregate and disaggregated by category, about:
  - Student achievement;
  - Graduation rates;
  - Performance on other school quality and/or student success indicators;
  - Progress of students toward meeting long-term goals established by the state;
  - Student performance on measures of school climate and safety; and, as available,
  - Rate of enrollment in post-secondary education
- Performance of NCS on academic assessments as compared to the state as a whole, and NCS's performance on academic assessments as compared to the state and local district as a whole;
- Percentage and number of students who are:
  - Assessed,
  - Assessed using alternate assessments,
  - Involved in preschool and accelerated coursework programs, and;
  - English learners achieving proficiency;
- Per-pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds; and
- Teacher qualifications.

### Teacher Qualifications

At the beginning of each year, NCS shall notify parents of students who are participating in Title I programs of (1) the right to request public information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child and (2) that such information will be provided in a timely manner.

The Academy Director or designee shall provide timely notice informing parents that their student has been assigned to or has been taught for at least four consecutive weeks by a teacher

who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level or subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

### Student's Academic Growth and Achievement

NCS shall provide information on the student's level of achievement and academic growth, if applicable and available, on each of the state's academic assessments to each parent of a student participating in the Title I program.

### Parental Rights and Opportunities for Involvement

Each year, the Academy Director or designee shall provide notice to parents of the school's written parent and family engagement policy, parents' right to be involved in their child's school, and opportunities for parents and family members to be involved in the school.

At the beginning of each school year, the Academy Director or designee of a Title I school shall provide notice to parents of (1) their right to request information regarding student participation in state-required assessments and (2) that such information will be provided in a timely manner.

### Website Distribution of Information

Each year, NCS officials shall publicize on the school's website:

1. The School Report Card, as described above; and
2. Information on each assessment required by the state and, where feasible, by NCS, organized by grade level. The information must include:
  - a. the subject matter assessed;
  - b. the purpose for which the assessment is designed and used;
  - c. the source of the requirement for the assessment;
  - d. if available, the amount of time students will spend taking the assessments and the schedule of the assessments; and
  - e. if available, the time and format for distributing results.

The Superintendent shall develop any administrative procedures necessary to implement the requirements of this policy.

### *Right to Know Under the Every Student Succeeds Act*

Title I schools must notify parents/guardians of their right to receive certain information. Parents may request and have the right to know information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher, including the following (from ESEA amended by [ESSA, Section 1112\(e\) \(A\) and \(B\)](#)):

Whether the student's teacher:

- has met NC qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- is teaching under emergency or another provisional status through which the NC qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and

- is teaching in the field of the certification of the teacher.

Parents may also ask if the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, the paraprofessional's qualifications.

Title I Schools must also notify parents in a timely manner that the student has been assigned or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable NC certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

In addition, parents have the right to the following information:

- The NCS Strategic Plan;
- Professional development opportunities for teachers and assistants to ensure highly qualified personnel;
- Opportunities for parent involvement and input;
- The Title I Parent Involvement Plan and School-Parent Compact; and
- School Report Card.

## School Safety

NCS has a Crisis Management Team that will create and manage the following procedures by outlining the actions and responsibilities of staff and administration in addressing the following issues:

- Evacuation Fire
- Evacuation Non-Fire
- Hazardous Materials
- Lockdown-Perimeter
- Lockdown-Full
- Serious Medical Emergency
- Severe Weather (tornado, hurricane, etc.)
- Public Health Emergency
- Student in Crisis

The Superintendent oversees the Crisis Management Team, and is responsible for ensuring that the procedures are current and applicable and that all relevant parties are aware of the procedures.

The Superintendent is also responsible for ensuring that drills occur on a regular basis. These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Crisis Management Team, and any changes or revisions will be made by the Superintendent. The Superintendent is responsible for communicating these procedures to the Board of Directors.

### *Emergency Drills*

Students must follow their teachers' instructions and go to designated areas as quickly as possible. Students must not talk, run, or push. A signal will be given to return to class. A student who does not follow the safety rules will receive an office referral, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

### *Fire and Safety Regulations*

NCS will submit to all fire and safety inspections by state, county, and municipal authorities as required by law. NCS will also obtain all necessary certificates and licenses prior to opening for each School year.

### *Unsafe School Choice Option*

Title IX, Section 9532 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 provides that a student attending a “persistently dangerous school” or a student who is a “victim of a violent criminal offense” on school property, as defined by law, has the right to transfer to another safe school in the district, if his/her parent requests a transfer. If there is no other safe school in the district providing instruction at the student’s grade level, NCS shall contact neighboring districts to request that the students be permitted to transfer to a school in one of those districts.

### *Asbestos Management Plan*

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires NCS to annually notify parents, students, staff members, and others who regularly occupy the school building of compliance with AHERA. An Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been developed for the NCS and is on file in the Facilities Office. Parents may schedule an appointment with the Facilities Manager to review the AMP.

### *Pesticide Notification*

NCS aims to control pest populations and reduce the use of active pesticides throughout the school by implementing an integrated pest management program. The health and safety of all persons within the NCS facilities are of primary concern. NCS will notify parents in advance of pesticide applications. Notice will be posted on the front door of NCS and on the school website. A parent can also request to be notified by letter 48 hours before the application is to take place. Please contact the main office if you wish to be notified by letter or wish to review the NCS integrated pest management program or records.

### *Hazardous Chemicals*

NCS will take all necessary steps to protect its students and staff from hazardous chemicals or other potentially dangerous materials, and it will comply fully with all required inspections, laws, ordinances, and regulations regarding hazardous chemicals.

### *Child Sexual Abuse and Sex Trafficking Training Policy*

It is the intent of this policy to comply with North Carolina law with respect to child abuse and sex trafficking, including [N.C.G.S. 115C-218.75\(g\)](#). Those laws require that NCS adopt and implement a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program in accordance with [N.C.G.S. 115C-375.20](#). Specifically, N.C.G.S. 115C-375.20, states as follows:

1. **School personnel:** Teachers, instructional support personnel, directors, and assistant directors. This term may also include, at the discretion of the employing entity, other school employees who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12.
2. Each employing entity shall adopt and implement a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program for school personnel who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12 that provides education and awareness training related to child sexual abuse and sex trafficking, including, but not limited to, best practices from the field of prevention, the grooming process of sexual predators, the warning signs of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, how to intervene when sexual abuse or sex trafficking is suspected or disclosed, legal responsibilities for reporting sexual abuse or sex trafficking, and available resources for assistance. This training may be provided by local nongovernmental organizations with expertise in these areas, local law enforcement officers, or other officers of the court. All school personnel who work with students in grades kindergarten through 12 shall receive two hours of training consistent with this section in even-numbered years beginning in 2020.
3. No entity required to adopt a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program by [N.C.G.S. 115C-47\(64\)](#), [115C-218.75\(g\)](#), [115C-238.66\(14\)](#), or [116-239.8\(b\)\(17\)](#), or its members, employees, designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission relating to the provision of, participation in, or implementation of any component of a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program required by this section unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any specific duty of care or standard of care on an entity required to adopt a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program by G.S. 115C-47(64), 115C-218.75(g), 115C-238.66(14), or 116-239.8(b)(17)."

Such a program shall be adopted and implemented by January 1, 2020, and training shall be required for school personnel beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. The NCS program under this policy shall be conducted in accordance with North Carolina law and supervised by the Director of Business.

### **Animals In School**

Please see the [Service Animal Policy](#) / [Service Animal Form](#).

## **Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying**

Please see the full [Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members](#) and [Non-Title IX: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying and Complaint Process](#) regarding Non-Discrimination for more information.

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process**

See the [Non-Title IX: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying and Complaint Process](#).

## **Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure**

See the [Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members](#).

## **Nondiscrimination (Title VI)**

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of NCS in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. This means that NCS does not advantage any one racial or ethnic group over another or use racial/ethnic stereotypes. Further, NCS recognizes that Title VI protection covers students who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or other groups that are or are perceived to: 1) share ancestry or ethnic characteristics; or 2) have citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin against students of any religion when the discrimination:

- involves racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes;
- is based on a student's skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions; or
- is based on the country or region where a student is from or is perceived to have come from, including, for example, discrimination based on a student's accent or name, a student's limited English proficiency, or a student speaking a language other than English.

Please see the [Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process](#) for information regarding complaints alleging Title VI violations. General inquiries regarding Title VI should be directed to the Academy Director or Assistant Academy Director.

Additional [Title VI](#) information.

## Student & Parent Grievance Procedure

### *Parent Concerns*

NCS encourages the involvement of parents in their child's education. If you have a concern regarding your child, please contact your child's teacher first. As a parent, you may request a conference with the teacher at any time. Please make these arrangements directly with your child's teacher. If you feel that your concern has not been handled by the appropriate teacher, then you can contact your child's Academy Director.

### *Resolution of Student Issues*

If a parent wishes to meet to resolve a classroom/student issue, we encourage them to contact the appropriate staff members in this order:

1. Student's Classroom Teacher
2. Grade Level Academy Director
3. Superintendent

### *Grievance Policy for Parents/Guardians/Students*

This policy is in place to respond to parent/guardian/student grievances. Grievances may only come from current students or parents/guardians of current students. It is expected that any guardian/parent/student with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if they disagree with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first level of grievance is their student's teacher. If they are not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then set a meeting with the Academy Director. At that meeting, the teacher, Academy Director, and parent/guardian must be present, and the issue at hand will be fully discussed.

If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Superintendent. Similarly, if a guardian/parent/student disagrees or has an issue with a policy or procedure at NCS, the guardian/parent/student should set a meeting with the Superintendent.

If the guardian/parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Superintendent and the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the guardian/parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many issues that a guardian/parent/student has with the classroom, teacher, or NCS will not rise to the level of a grievance, and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or Academy Director.

### *Definition of a Grievance*

A grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a current parent of a student stating that a specific action has violated a school policy, board policy, law, or regulation. Complaints that do

not raise an alleged violation of a School policy, board policy, law, or regulation do not raise a grievance issue and are not subject to these procedures. In addition, a grievance does not include disagreements on day-to-day operational issues, personnel matters, schedules, or student discipline unless they violate a specific policy, law, or regulation.

Additionally, a grievance does not include a complaint covered by certain other policies or procedures, including but not limited to complaints under Title VI, Title IX, the ADA/ADAA, the Parents' Bill of Rights, and NCS's non-Title IX harassment and bullying policy, which shall be handled in accordance with those policies. Any parent or student who has a complaint covered by those policies must follow the specific policy that addresses their complaints. Even if a complaint constitutes a grievance, a grievance will only be considered eligible for the grievance process if the employee demonstrates that they have attempted to have their concerns addressed by their supervisor.

### *Time Limits*

A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen calendar days of the meeting with the Superintendent. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Superintendent.

### *Grievance Process*

Step 1: If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent, and the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the guardian/parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the NCS policy, Board policy or law/regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The guardian/parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision-making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Superintendent and the President of the Board of Directors. If the Superintendent is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should only be submitted to the President of the Board of Directors.

Step 2: Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled board meeting provided such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the President of the Board of Directors may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with the NCS bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance in accordance with Open Meetings laws. At that meeting, the Board will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email is accepted) if further action is necessary. If the Board decides that it needs additional time to consider the grievance, gather information, and/or conduct an investigation, it may defer its decision until another regularly scheduled board meeting or schedule a special meeting. At the meeting where the Board makes a decision on the grievance, the Board will give the individual filing the grievance or appeal notice and the opportunity to attend the meeting. Once the Board reaches a decision on the grievance, the Board will communicate that decision to the individual who filed the grievance within five school days. The

Board's decision concerning the grievance is final. The Board reserves the right to appoint a Board Panel to address the grievance. In such cases, the Board Panel's decision is final, and there are no appeal rights to the Board. Notwithstanding any other provision, the Board may conduct an investigation and/or gather additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews or engagement of an investigator, at any time.

## **Directory and Photo/Video Permission Granted**

### *Photo/ Video*

Parents/guardians agree, without compensation, to permit NCS, its contractors, employees and students to use, reproduce, exhibit, display, broadcast, distribute and create derivative works using their child's photographic image or likeness and/or their child's work product in, including but not limited to, NCS's publications, promotional materials, website, alumni materials, and videos for the purposes of promoting, publicizing, illustrating or explaining NCS, its activities or programs and otherwise for the use and benefit of NCS for other purposes. In most instances, photographs of students are published without names or with first names only. This permission includes print, broadcast, photographs, videotape, video, DVD, CD-ROM, and all present and future forms of electronic, online, or cloud-based media. This release shall continue in force until revoked explicitly by the parents/guardians in writing by email, mail, or fax addressed to the Director of Business, except to the extent that NCS has already relied upon it. If parents/guardians revoke this release, NCS shall have a reasonable time to comply with that request.

NCS reserves the right to post pictures and images of current and former students on its website, official Facebook page, or for any other school purpose. Parents/guardians understand and agree that any images or videos posted by NCS can be viewed or used by the public, including AI or bots. They understand and agree that any published image or video also carries the risk of deep fakes being created and disseminated. Parents/guardians have the right to opt out or withdraw consent regarding the use of their child's photo or video. Parents/guardians understand and agree that if they do not opt out or withdraw consent, they waive their right to any claim or action against NCS arising from the use or misuse of their child's images/video posted by NCS.

### *School Portraits*

A contracted photographer will photograph NCS students during the fall and spring semesters. Parents may purchase the entire package of photos, a partial packet, or none at all.

## **Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act**

NCS does not discriminate against any group officially affiliated with either the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting within an open forum. NCS does not deny such access or opportunity or discriminate for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or the

oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or the youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).

### **Seclusion and Restraint (House Bill 1032) Policy**

NCS complies with all applicable laws governing seclusion and restraint. NCS has established guidelines for the use of restraint and provisions for training the staff in the management of student behavior in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 115C-391.1, also known as House Bill 1032 – Deborah Greenblatt Act. This law took effect July 1, 2006, and requires NCS to inform parents of the existence of the law, the definitions for the following terms, and how NCS will use these forms:

1. Physical Restraint is the use of physical force to restrict the freedom of movement of all or a portion of a student's body. NCS will use a trained crisis team to physically restrain a child only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the child and others in the area.
2. Mechanical Restraint is the use of any device or material attached or adjacent to a student's body that restricts the freedom of movement. NCS will use a trained crisis team to mechanically restrain a student only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the student and others in the area. NCS will also contact the proper authorities (law enforcement) to assist when needed.
3. Seclusion is the confinement of a student alone in an enclosed space from which the student is prevented from or not capable of leaving. NCS will use a trained crisis team to seclude a student only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the student and others in the area. NCS will also contact the proper authorities (law enforcement) to assist when needed.
4. Isolation is a behavior management technique in which a student is placed alone in an enclosed space from which the student is not prevented from leaving. NCS will use isolation to help children get their behavior back under control before allowing them to rejoin their classmates. This space will follow the guidelines set forth in the law.
5. Time-out is a behavior management technique in which a student is separated from others for a limited time in a monitored setting. NCS uses the time-out system to manage student behavior. The new law does not regulate the use of a time-out.

Aversive procedures are a systematic physical or sensory intervention program for modifying a student's behavior that causes physical harm and long-term psychological impairment. NCS will never use aversive procedures to modify a student's behavior.

### **The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights concerning student privacy, parental access to information, and administration of physical examinations to minors. These include the right to:

- Consent is required before students are required to submit to a survey, which is funded in part or in whole by a program of the U.S. Department of Education, that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”):
  - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent;
  - Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
  - Sexual behavior or attitudes;
  - Anti-social, demeaning, illegal, or self-incriminating behavior;
  - Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close familial relationships;
  - Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  - Religious affiliations, beliefs, or practices of the student or the student’s parent; or
  - Income, other than as required by law, to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
  - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding.
  - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by NCS or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the students (except for hearing, vision, scoliosis, or any other physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law).
  - Any activity involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information or the marketing, selling, or distributing of such information to others.
- Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:
  - Surveys created by a third party before their distribution by NCS to its students.
  - Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.
  - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

NCS has developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect students’ privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. NCS will directly notify parents of these policies at the beginning of each school year and after any substantive changes. NCS will also directly notify parents through U.S. Mail, e-mail, parent meetings, or the Student/Parent Handbook at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates (if such events are planned and/or scheduled) of the above activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in them. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
 U.S. Department of Education  
 400 Maryland Avenue SW  
 Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

## Parents' Bill of Rights

Parents have legal rights with regard to their child's education and in accordance with North Carolina State law, [S.L. 2023-106](#); Senate Bill 49. Please find the information pertaining to this law on our website at <https://www.neusecharterschool.org/parents-bill-of-rights.html>.

## Parents' Guide to Student Achievement

NCS welcomes and encourages the involvement of parents, guardians, and caregivers in their students' education. Information regarding student achievement is available through our Parents' Guide to Student Achievement, which is available at <https://www.neusecharterschool.org/parents-bill-of-rights.html>.

## Media/School Name or Brand

All media utilizing the NCS name or brand (e.g., logo, mascot, etc.) must have approval by the NCS Board of Directors and shall be linked to the official NCS websites.

### *Misuse of the Brand (Defined)*

The Board of Directors encourages parents and students to voice their concerns. Any concerns you may have must be addressed through appropriate channels as outlined in this handbook. This includes speaking to the class teacher, the Academy Director, or the Board of Directors, so your concerns can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all concerned. We consider using social media websites to fuel campaigns and complaints against NCS, board, staff, students, and, in some cases, other parents, not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

In the event that any staff member, pupil or parent/guardian of a child/ren being educated at NCS is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site and may be disinvited or otherwise prohibited from NCS's official social media pages, including Facebook.

All social network sites have clear rules about the content that can be posted on the site, and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity that breaches these rules. NCS will also expect any parent/guardian or pupil to immediately remove such comments. In serious cases, NCS will also consider all legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyberbullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. NCS will consider this a serious incident of school bullying in accordance with the [Code of Conduct](#) and any other school policies.

We may take any of the following steps if a parent/guardian or visitor does not follow the policy:

1. Request a parent meeting on campus.
2. Ban the parent from campus for a period of time.
3. Contact the appropriate authorities.

Parents or visitors who receive consequences based on their behavior shall follow the NCS grievance process as set out in this handbook or any other policy established by NCS. Students engaged in such activity will be addressed in accordance with this Handbook and any other applicable policies. We trust that parents/guardians and visitors will assist our school with implementing this policy, and we thank you for your continued support.

Nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to interfere with or infringe upon any rights, obligations, or responsibilities under state or federal law, including but not limited to free speech rights. Furthermore, nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to discourage or interfere with any individual's right or decision to participate in a proceeding with any appropriate federal, state, or local government agency, or to prohibit any individual from cooperating with any such agency in its investigation.

### **NCS Social Media Comments and Participation Policy**

Comments on NCS-sponsored sites, such as its website via blogs, online forms, etc., or social media sites, are welcome and encouraged. To promote respectful discussion within these forums, we request that you be courteous and productive and avoid comments that are profane, obscene, offensive, sexually explicit, inappropriate, inflammatory, libelous, defamatory, slanderous, in breach of confidentiality, or would adversely affect NCS's culture or be objectionable to staff, parents, or stakeholders.

For the privacy of users and their families, please assume that all postings to NCS-sponsored sites will be publicly available on the Internet and, therefore, publicly accessible without limitation or protection of any kind. Please consider how much personal information to share, with the understanding that this information may be linked to your name and published on the Internet. By posting a comment or other material to NCS-sponsored sites as outlined above, users give NCS the irrevocable right and license to exercise all copyright, publicity, and moral rights with respect to any content you provide, which includes using your submission for any purpose in any form and on any media, including but not limited to displaying, modifying, reproducing, distributing, creating other works from, and publishing your submission. NCS reserves the right to review all comments before they are posted.

NCS further reserves the right to reject or remove comments for any reason, including but not limited to our belief that the comments violate this Comment Policy, to determine in its sole discretion which submissions meet its qualifications for posting, and to remove comments for any reason, including but not limited to our belief that the comments violate this Policy. Any submissions that fail to follow this Policy in any way or are otherwise irrelevant will be removed. We also reserve the right to amend this Policy from time to time in our judgment to address issues that may arise and changes in our operations or the law. This policy should be construed to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and constitutions.

In posting material on NCS-sponsored sites, you agree not to:

- Post material that NCS determines is threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hostile towards any individual or entity.
- Post phone numbers, email addresses, or other confidential information of students, faculty, or any other person other than yourself. If you choose to post your contact information for any reason, please be aware that the information will be available to the public and is, therefore, subject to misuse.
- Post material that infringes on the rights of NCS or any individual or entity, including privacy, intellectual property, or publication rights.
- Post material that promotes or advertises a commercial product or solicits business, membership, or financial or other support in any business, group, or organization except those that are officially sponsored by NCS or granted permission by NCS, except in designated areas specifically marked for this purpose.
- Post chain letters, post the same comment multiple times, or otherwise distribute “spam” via the NCS-sponsored site.
- Allow any other individual or entity to use your identification for posting or viewing comments.
- Post comments under multiple names or using another person’s name.

NCS reserves the right to do any or all of the following:

- Ban future posts or membership of people who repeatedly violate this policy. We may affect such bans by refusing posts from specific email addresses or IP addresses or through other means as necessary.
- Remove comments at any time, whether or not they violate this policy.
- User agrees to indemnify and hold harmless NCS, its affiliates, directors, employees, successors, and assigns against any damages, losses, liabilities, judgments, causes of action, costs, or expenses (including reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs) arising out of any claim by a third party relating to any material user has posted on NCS-sponsored sites.

By posting a comment or material of any kind on an NCS-sponsored site, the user hereby agrees to the policy set forth above.

### *Creating and Maintaining Official NCS Social Networking Sites*

All official Neuse Charter social networking sites must be approved by NCS and should adhere to the following standards:

- Logos and graphics used on the site must be consistent with NCS's branding standards and usage guidelines.
- Sites that accept comments or postings by anyone other than the site administrator must be diligently monitored to ensure that the information displayed fits within NCS guidelines and is appropriate to the subject matter of the page.

Unauthorized pages that NCS officials have not approved will be treated as personal pages and are, therefore, limited to the standards provided above. Page owners who use NCS logos without permission will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or exclusion.

## *Student Use of Social Media*

First and foremost, students are encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media or online communications, both within the NCS community and beyond. Students who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts and media reflect on the entire Neuse Charter School community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the [Code of Conduct](#). In addition to the regulations found in the Student Handbook, students are expected to abide by the following:

- To protect the privacy of NCS students and faculty, students may not, under any circumstances, create digital video recordings of NCS community members either on campus or at off-campus NCS events for online publication or distribution without consent.
- Students may not use social media sites to publish disparaging or harassing remarks or media about NCS staff, community members, athletic or academic contest rivals, etc.
- Students who choose to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online media must ensure that their submission does not slander, libel, defame NCS, students, parents, or staff, or violate school policies.
- Students may be disciplined for out-of-school communication, including social media and electronic communication, that may cause a substantial disruption to NCS, consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

Failure to abide by this policy, as with other policies at NCS, may result in disciplinary action as described in the Student Handbook or as determined by the administration.

## **Video Monitoring**

School recognizes that the use of video monitoring/surveillance systems is warranted to maintain campus security, to increase student and employee safety, and to assist with the enforcement of the school's policies and rules concerning student and employee conduct, safety, and security.

School buildings and grounds may be equipped with video monitoring devices, but such devices shall not be placed where there are reasonable expectations of personal privacy, such as in locker rooms, changing rooms, nursing and health room areas, or bathrooms.

## *Use of Video Recordings*

Video recordings will only be utilized for official school business.

Administrators or the Board may use a video recording of actions by students as evidence in any disciplinary action brought against students arising out of the student's conduct on or about school property.

The video surveillance recordings may not be used in connection with instructional observations of professional staff. This policy does not prohibit the administration from establishing other methods of videotaping lessons for the purpose of instructional observation.

Video surveillance recordings of students, staff, and/or others may be reviewed for the purpose of determining adherence to school policy and rules. Such recordings may be used to detect or deter criminal offenses that occur in view of the camera(s) and may be shared with law enforcement officials.

Video surveillance recordings will be released to others only in accordance with applicable state and/or federal law or regulation.

## **Cellular Phones and other Wireless Communication Devices Policy (HB 959)**

### *Section 1. Overview*

North Carolina recently joined more than 20 other states and the District of Columbia by passing a law that restricts the use of cellular phones and other wireless communication devices during instructional time. The law and this policy recognize that such devices can disrupt the learning environment and should therefore only be permitted for students in limited and clearly defined circumstances.

A Wireless Communication Device is a wireless, portable device that can provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties. The following is a non-exhaustive list of wireless communication devices prohibited by this policy: cellular phones, laptops, gaming devices, smartwatches, and any other personal technology devices.

### *Section 2. Exceptions*

Wireless Communication Devices are not allowed during instructional time except for the following situations:

- 1) When expressly authorized by a teacher for educational purposes.
  - a. A teacher must clearly state the intended educational purpose to students and shall have documentation available to support the use (e.g., lesson plans detailing why devices would be needed).
  - b. The teacher shall only allow devices for the duration and purpose allowed.
- 2) When expressly authorized for a teacher for use in an emergency.
- 3) When required by the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan;
- 4) As required to manage a student's health care, in accordance with a documented medical condition.
  - a. Students who need a wireless communication device to manage health care must request access from the school and, as part of that request, must provide

- documentation from a licensed medical professional outlining the necessity of access to the device.
- b. If approved by the administration, students with documented medical conditions shall be granted permission to use the wireless communication device only as necessary for their condition.
  - c. The school shall make accommodations as needed to ensure the student has access to their device, while also maintaining a safe and educational environment.

### *Section 3. Procedures*

Lower Academy: Students are not permitted to bring their cell phones/smart watches to school.

Upper Academy: Students are required to turn off their cell phones/smart watches and store them in their backpacks or designated storage areas while on school grounds. Phones should not be carried in pockets, on desks, or in any other accessible location.

### *Section 4. Consequences*

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent Contact, silent lunch, cell phone is returned to the student at the end of the day.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parent Contact, 5 days of silent lunch, parent/guardian must pick up the cell phone and conference with the Academy Director.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parent Contact, suspension, parent guardian must pick up the cell phone and conference with the Academy Director.

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Parent Contact, additional disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Academy Director.

If any staff member requests a student to turn over their cell phone and the student refuses, automatic disciplinary action will be taken for insubordination. Cell phones are brought to school at the student's own risk, and NCS assumes no investigative or financial responsibility if the device is lost, damaged, traded, or stolen.

### *Section 5. Implementation and Training*

The Superintendent or their designee shall develop procedures to implement this policy, including how to confiscate wireless communication devices if necessary.

The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen devices.

All staff members shall receive training annually on this policy and its enforcement.

### *Section 6. Communication of this Policy*

This policy shall be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and staff members through appropriate channels, including but not limited to student handbooks, parent newsletters, and

staff meetings. The policy shall also be submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) as required by law; DPI shall receive the revised version of this policy whenever it is modified.

### *Section 7. Legal Authority*

This policy aligns with North Carolina General Statute [§ 115C-76.100](#).

### *Telephone Calls*

Students may not be called from class to talk on the telephone during school hours, nor are they allowed to make outgoing calls except in the most necessary circumstances. Students may not use any phone at school other than an office phone. Classroom phones are prohibited from being used by students at any time.

NCS does not have sufficient phone lines to accommodate student phone calls at the end of the school day. All arrangements regarding after-school activities must be made before the student leaves home in the morning. Families should notify the main office if a child is going home differently than the way they normally go home. The office will communicate this information to the student's teachers.

Calls of an emergency nature that may involve the interruption of a class to deliver a message to a child must be directed to an Academy Director for approval. Students must have written permission from a staff member stating a reason to use the office phones between 7:20 am and 3:15 pm. We ask that all students arrive at school every morning knowing whether their parents will be picking them up or be picked up by another family member or friend in the afternoon. We also ask that parents please know whether or not their children are planning to stay for an after-school activity.

### **Student Camera Phones/ Recording Devices**

Students are prohibited from audio or visual recording of teachers, classrooms, lessons, or students while on campus during school hours unless express permission is given by their teacher, Academy Director, or Superintendent.

### **Threats and Violence**

Our policy is to strive to maintain a school environment free from intimidation, threats, or violent acts. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, threatening, or hostile behaviors, physical abuse, vandalism, arson, sabotage, use of weapons, carrying weapons of any kind onto school property, or any other act which, in the school's opinion, is inappropriate to NCS. In addition, jokes or offensive comments regarding violent events will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary measures for students.

Additionally, if the act or action of an adult falls within the category of acts of violence on school premises, threats of violence on school premises, or bullying of teachers, students, or other

parents, the individual can be immediately removed from the premises and permanently restricted from re-entry. While a parent is restricted from re-entry to NCS, their access is restricted to external pick-up and drop-off of their student. Interactions with NCS teachers or staff must be done electronically.