



# 2023-2024

# STUDENT – PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## **Littleton Campus**

260 Cottage Street Suite A (Mt. Eustis Commons)  
Littleton, New Hampshire  
(603) 444-1535 (Administrative Office)  
(603) 444-1671 (Classroom)

## **Lancaster Campus**

4 Mayberry Lane  
Lancaster, New Hampshire  
(603) 444-1535 (Administrative Office)  
(603) 788-2805 (Classroom)

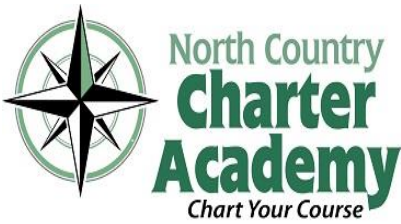


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*\*This handbook can be made available in another language or read to you upon request.*

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Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

It is a great honor and privilege for us to have your son/daughter enrolled at North Country Charter Academy (NCCA). Both the staff and myself want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to educate your child. It's never been more important as it is today that school choice is available. We take great pride in every aspect of what we do, and we live by our mission, which is stated on the following page.

This year NCCA will be reaching a significant milestone in that it will be our 20th year of operation and I am certainly proud to let you know that I have served as the Principal and Superintendent for two decades. The success of the students, support from the parents and communities and the design of our school model are all critically important factors that continue to keep me here.

Every day we live our mission, we are accountable for every action, we meet or exceed our high expectations and standards, and every decision we make is with the students and parents in mind. NCCA strives every day to provide an environment where students feel safe, secure and have a sense of belonging. We value relationships and find that this important component helps to foster academic growth and personal fulfillment, which gives our children an opportunity to realize their dreams. We comply with all federal and state civil rights laws regarding Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity for all students and staff.

I hope you will find this handbook a useful tool for understanding the rules and regulations that govern our school. NCCA is not a school for everyone; it is a school for those who believe they can meet the standards as listed in this handbook. Please review this book carefully, and do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or assistance that you may need. Communication is core to our success and it is important for you to know that my door is always open for students and parents. Have a great year!

I personally appreciate your support, and it is an honor to work with you and your family.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lavoie

## **NORTH COUNTRY CHARTER ACADEMY**

### **MISSION**

NCCA provides a rigorous, relevant and engaging education with high standards, which prepares students for life through a personalized, competency-based program that creates confident, career-ready individuals.

### **VISION**

North Country Charter Academy will provide educational excellence in a safe, supportive, and nurturing learning environment.

### **GOALS**

#### **Organizational:**

- Encourage parents and the communities to increase interest and involvement in our charter school
- The Board of Trustees will assume a leadership role in advocating for adequate funding to support North Country Charter Academy
- Develop an effective Board of Trustees and policies that focus on community stewardship and collaborative and democratic decision-making that advance the schools vision
- To support and retain highly committed and devoted teachers and SAU staff.

#### **Academic:**

- Provide educational excellence through instruction that establishes high expectations for all students yet recognizes their unique individual learning needs
- Integrate technology and added-value programs into the curriculum
- All students will participate in extended learning activities outside of scheduled classroom time to support career readiness
- Sustain high performance in attendance rate, at 90% or above
- Provide a curriculum platform that establishes a blended approach, offering rigorous and relevant educational opportunities at each site and within our communities

#### **Program:**

- Provide facilities that promote student learning and community support
- Provide a choice-open enrollment charter options
- Provide educational opportunities in collaboration with school districts

## **SITE AND STAFFING INFORMATION**

### **Administrative Office:**

North Country Charter Academy  
260 Cottage Street, Suite A  
Littleton, NH 03561  
(603) 444-1535  
Fax: (603) 444-9843

Lisa Lavoie, Principal/Superintendent  
Kimberlee Spaulding, Administrative Assistant  
Jean Adie, Data Clerk  
Marcella Shamberger, Business Administrator

### **Littleton Campus:**

TBA, Center Director  
Richard Larcom, NCCA Teacher  
**Classroom number: (603) 444-1671**

260 Cottage Street, Suite A  
Littleton, NH 03561  
Fax: (603) 444-9843

### **Lancaster Campus:**

Kathryn Locke, Center Director  
Susan Becker, NCCA Teacher  
**Classroom number: (603) 788-2805**

4 Mayberry Lane  
Lancaster, NH 03584  
Fax: (603) 788-2729

**\*Parents & Students:** Please call the **classroom number** when in need of speaking to Center Director/Teacher.

**NORTH COUNTRY CHARTER ACADEMY IS A PUBLIC SCHOOL, WHICH MEANS THAT ALL STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS, REQUIREMENTS, AND RESTRICTIONS APPLY. BEING A "CHARTER SCHOOL" DOES NOT EXEMPT US FROM THESE.**

**ALL RULES AND POLICIES THAT APPLY TO STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY ALSO APPLY TO ANY VEHICLE USED FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION BY NORTH COUNTRY CHARTER ACADEMY WHETHER THESE VEHICLES ARE A VAN, BUS, OR TAXI. TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ARE AN EXTENSION OF OUR SCHOOL.**

**NO SMOKING OR VAPING IS ALLOWED ANYWHERE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR IN SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES - ANY TIME FROM PICK UP TO DROP OFF.**

## **ACADEMICS**

Academic study is conducted in the classroom on scheduled school days. All academics must take place in the classroom and not at home.

**ACADEMIC PROGRESS** is defined as continuous progress toward the student's individual learning goals and consistent work toward earning credits. Progress is specifically measured by the following:

- Students remain engaged for the entire three hours a day while in school.
- Students set daily goals and attend meetings as needed to review with the Teacher or Center Director.
- **Satisfactory academic progress is earning a minimum of 1.25 credits per quarter or 2.5 credits per semester. These credits **MUST** be credits received from completion of the EDMENTUM curriculum platform and does not include outside credit, such as work study, WMSI or Title I.**

In the case that academic progress does not meet the above criteria, the following steps will be taken and documented:

**1<sup>st</sup>-Teacher/Student Meeting:** The Center Director and/or Teacher will review the lack of progress with the student and set a goal for improvement. The Center Director and/or Teacher will call the parent and inform them.

**2<sup>nd</sup>-Parent/Administration Notification:** If progress does not improve within a specified amount of time (usually within a week), the Center Director will update NCCA administration, call home, and, if applicable, notify the sending district principal and guidance counselor regarding concerns. The student and Center Director will set another timeline within which the goals should be attained by the student.

**3<sup>rd</sup>-Parent Meeting and Contract:** If progress does not improve within the specified amount of time that was set during the second progress review, the Center Director will schedule a face-to-face meeting with student and parent(s) to discuss possible solutions. The student is placed on contract.

**4<sup>th</sup>-Dismissal:** If progress does not improve, and the contract is broken, the student will be placed on administrative leave pending dismissal and has 24 hours to appeal (*see Due Process, p. 17*).

## **CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

**Cheating** is any form of copying written work without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, another student's work, reference materials, information on the Internet, or any other source. Additionally, cheating refers to a student's unauthorized access of Internet sources and sites and skipping tutorials and applications before taking the Mastery test in Edmentum. Any student suspected of cheating will be disciplined by the Center Director.

**Plagiarism** is defined in *A Guide to MLA Documentation* by Joseph Trimmer as, "*Using someone else's words or ideas without giving proper credit or without giving any credit at all to the writer of the original.*"



Plagiarism can be any or all of the following:

1. Incomplete paraphrasing. If you use substantive words or phrases from your source without documentation, you are plagiarizing.
2. Missing citation: If you use any ideas that are clearly not common knowledge without citing your source, or a whole page, you are plagiarizing.
3. Copying: If you simply copy from any source without quotation marks or attribution, you are plagiarizing.
4. Internet If you access Internet sources or sites without providing quotation marks or attribution, you are plagiarizing.

Students should always cite their sources and, if ever in doubt, consult their teacher. Students who plagiarize will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL PROGRAM PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT**

This requirement is also referred to as participation in an Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO). All students seeking enrollment at North Country Charter Academy (NCCA) will be required to participate in an administratively approved outside program upon acceptance and throughout the duration of enrollment at NCCA. There are several opportunities that students can engage in to fulfill this requirement.

It is the responsibility of the student and parent to enroll in an approved program and all expenses incurred are the responsibility of the student and parents. Potential examples include employment, volunteer work mentor program, community service, paid/unpaid internship, and independent learning project. Other examples include options needing enrollment and acceptance such as career & technical education programs, community college or college/university classes, returning to the resident district to take a class, extracurricular activity or sports. Students choosing this option must maintain a passing grade.

**Students who fail to maintain successful participation in an ELO , will have ten (10) days from the date of termination to begin another approved program, failure to do so will result in immediate dismissal.**

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports indicate a student's performance by providing the **percentage of completed course(s)** at the end of each quarter. Academic year 2023-2024 progress reports are mailed to the student's home one week after the end of the each quarter:

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| First Quarter:  | November 9, 2023 |
| Second Quarter: | January 26, 2024 |
| Third Quarter:  | April 5, 2024    |
| Fourth Quarter: | June 19, 2024    |

## **ACADEMIC TESTING**

Academic testing has two main goals: 1) to help students know where they are at academically and where they need to go to reach their goals, and 2) to help teachers/educators to understand and better meet the needs of students. NCCA administers the following academic tests each school year:

**Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB):** The ASVAB is an incredible career and skills assessment administered to all students in the fall. **STUDENTS TAKING THE ASSESSMENT CAN CHOOSE NOT TO BE CONTACTED BY THE MILITARY.** The New Hampshire Department of Education has identified this assessment as one of the indicators of students being “College and Career Ready.” We at NCCA are very impressed with the ASVAB assessment and use the results to identify possible college and/or career paths. This assessment helps students to identify their skills, abilities, aptitudes, values, and interests while helping them to tie those characteristics into future occupations.

**Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA):** This test measures academic growth and proficiency. In the fall of each year or upon entry into NCCA, all students are tested in areas where academic credit is needed in Math, Language and Reading. At the end of the year, or when students complete their programming at NCCA, a post-test is given in the same areas in order to measure progress.

**NH Statewide Assessment System (SAS):** Each year, New Hampshire students participate in the New Hampshire Statewide Assessment System (SAS), a general statewide assessment for English language arts (ELA), mathematics and science. The Department of Education tests all juniors in the spring, and is administered at NCCA.

**Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT):** The Department of Education mandates that all juniors take the SAT in the spring. This test is given at their NCCA classroom site. Information is sent to the student’s family during the second semester.

## **FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)**

According to NH State Law, all families are now required to submit a FAFSA each school year. More information and access to the FAFSA form is available online at <https://studentaid.gov/>

## **ATTENDANCE / TRUANCY**

NH Law (RSA 193:1) states that parents of children ages 6-18 must send their children to school or a district-approved home school, full time. In accordance with this law, North Country Charter Academy expects 100% attendance from all students and seeks to support parents by addressing attendance issues as they happen. However, once all procedures and supports are exhausted, it may be necessary to report the case to the district Truancy Officer. Because the law holds the parent responsible, the parent may face criminal charges. The following policy lays out the procedure for addressing attendance issues at NCCA and everything parents need to know to avoid truancy.

## **ATTENDANCE TRACKING: SIGN-IN/OUT**

Classrooms will provide a sign in/out sheet to document attendance. All students must sign in and sign out by using the classroom clock. A student whose time does not accurately reflect the actual time in or time out will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal.

## TRUANCY

Per RSA 189:35-a (2017), any time a student has an unexcused absence, they are truant. **"Habitual Truancy" is defined as 10 half days (5 Charter school days) of unexcused absences.**

Each time a student is absent, a teacher is required to call a parent/guardian to discuss the absence. This call, along with who was spoken to and the reason for the absence, is documented.

**NOTE: When there is a need to have a meeting with the parent(s) and the parent(s) cannot be contacted after three documented attempts to set up a meeting, the student will be placed on administrative leave until the meeting takes place. The Center Director will send a certified letter home informing the parent of the administrative leave, and if the meeting is not set up immediately upon receipt of the letter, the student will be dismissed without opportunity to appeal. The decision to dismiss will be final.**

### Unexcused Absences (AU)/Truancy Procedure:

Following is the school procedure used for unexcused absences (AU):

- AU 1:** Phone call home by Teacher/Center Director.
- AU 2:** Warning letter sent to parent along with a phone call.
- AU 3:** Phone call to set up a face-to-face meeting with a parent and a completed face to face meeting with parent.
- AU 4:** Phone call home to warn of contract possibility and the final opportunity to avoid an attendance contract.
- AU 5:** The student is "habitually truant". The parent will be contacted and a face-to-face meeting will be set up in order to place a student on an attendance contract. **Once on contract, the student *CANNOT* miss a day of school for any reason.**
- AU 6:** Student dismissed and has 24 hours to appeal (*see Due Process, p. 17*).

If a student is enrolled full-time, the student's second semester will begin with a clean slate. Absences, tardies, and early departures from the first semester will not carry over into the next semester.

### Excused Absence Requirement and Procedure

**Excused absenteeism must be documented and submitted to the Center Director within two(2) days or the absence will be unexcused with no exceptions.**

#### Excused Absence (AE):

1. Illness
2. Court Appearance
3. Bereavement
4. College Visit
5. ROTC
6. Field Trip
7. Military
8. Special Circumstances

#### Required Documentation

- Doctor's note \*
- Note from the court system
- Copy of obituary
- Documentation of Event
- Documentation of Event
- Documentation of Event
- Documentation of Event
- NCCA Principal/Superintendent Approval

**\*EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM, EVEN IF EXCUSED, MAY RESULT IN AN EVALUATION OF APPROPRIATE ENROLLMENT/PLACEMENT AT NCCA**

**TARDINESS / LEAVING EARLY POLICY**

**Tardiness** is defined as not being present for the start of the session, and **leaving early** is defined as leaving before the end of the session. Students are expected to arrive on time at the start of their session and to stay for the full three hours of their session. The following steps will be taken to address tardiness/leaving early:

- 1st Offense:** Verbal warning to the student, call to parent, and documentation.
- 2nd Offense:** Written warning to student with a copy of warning sent to the parents.
- 3rd Offense:** Call to parent and meeting with parent and student and contract set up.
- 4th Offense:** Dismissal. The student has 24 hours to contact the NCCA Principal/Superintendent to appeal (*see Due Process, p. 17*).

All warnings and calls to the parents, along with who was spoken to/the contents of the discussion, meetings and meeting notes will be documented.

**FAMILY VACATIONS (or other voluntary extended periods away from NCCA)**

Should a family decide to plan a vacation outside of the scheduled school vacation periods, families must inform the school with as much advance notice as possible. Upon notification, NCCA and the family will work out a "make-ahead" plan to counter the impacts of future missed academic days during the family vacations. Students are required to make up time prior to leaving for vacation. This proactive approach promotes academic progress and avoids an attendance contract.

**MAKE UP DAYS**

Students who are not on an attendance contract have the option to make up days, if there is room in the classroom, and with the prior approval of the Center Director.

**ATTENDANCE RECOGNITION AT GRADUATION**

Students participating in the graduation ceremony and who have the following attendance percentage rate during their year of graduation will be given a cord to be worn for recognition. Students interested in increasing their attendance percentage can make up days. However, if a student is under a contract, days cannot be made up.

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 100%     | Green Cord  |
| 95 – 99% | Red Cord    |
| 90 – 94% | Yellow Cord |

**BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS/CODE OF CONDUCT**

Our expectation of all students who attend NCCA is that they are here to learn. Any behavior that disrupts the classroom and interferes with another student's ability to attend to their work is considered unacceptable. All students will treat each other and staff with respect. Minor and Major

behavioral violations at NCCA, during transportation, in the classroom, or on the surrounding grounds will not be tolerated. Students who violate NCCA code of conduct will be disciplined by the Center Director.

NCCA Principal/Superintendent, sending district principals and counselors will be notified, if appropriate, prior to placing a student on contract, administrative leave, or dismissal.

The following is the code of conduct that all students at NCCA are expected to follow.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Cell Phones**

**Cell phone use is prohibited during instructional time at the North Country Charter Academy.** Parents, if you must call students for an emergency, please call them on the classroom phone. Thank you. Cell phone policy violations will be addressed in the following way:

- **First Offense:** A warning will be given to the student with a phone call to the parents. The incident will be documented.
- **Second Offense:** Center Director will have a face-to-face meeting with the parent.
- **Third Offense:** Center Director will set up a face-to-face meeting with the student and parent. A student contract will be established by the Center Director.
- **Fourth Offense:** The contract has been violated and the student is dismissed. The student has 24 hours to contact the NCCA Principal/Superintendent to appeal (*see Due Process, p. 17*).

### **Computer And Internet Access: Acceptable Use, Code Of Conduct, And Procedures For Policy Violations**

Use of NCCA computers and networks by students of NCCA shall be in support of education and research that is consistent with the mission of NCCA. Network access is limited to those students who have been issued NCCA-approved accounts. Use will be in accordance with the NCCA's Acceptable Use and expectations set in the Code of Conduct.

The use of the NCCA network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of those privileges. The system administrators will determine what is appropriate use based upon the guidelines established in this document, any subsequent modification thereto, and the NCCA policies and procedures. NCCA reserves the right to terminate, suspend, or otherwise limit network access at any time and to inspect or review accounts and files for security purposes.

1. **Acceptable Use:** The use of your NCCA account must be consistent with the educational and operational policies and procedures of NCCA. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or any NH state statute or regulation is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted or trade secret material, threatening or obscene material, or any criminal activity. The use of the network for commercial activities, product solicitations, or political lobbying is also prohibited. Inappropriate use will be reported to either local or state police.
2. **Code of Conduct:**  
**Etiquette:** You are expected to comply with the generally accepted rules of network

etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Comply with all school rules regarding behavior and personal conduct.
  - Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or other inappropriate language. Be polite.
  - Do not use the system for frivolous, harassing, or inconsiderate purposes, or to disrupt another person's use of the system.
  - Do not reveal personal addresses or phone numbers.
  - Electronic mail (email) is not guaranteed to be private. System administrators have access to all accounts and reserve the right to monitor the use of NCCA's network, including email.
3. **Liability:** NCCA cannot be held responsible for any lost resources or damages incurred through the use of this account.
  4. **Security:** Users of the system agree not to violate or attempt to violate the system security or intentionally interfere with the system performance, or access to another person's account, files, or password. Individuals may be denied access to the system (based upon security violations of other computer systems) and/or immediately be dismissed.
  5. **Fee for Service:** Without the express permission of a sponsoring teacher, you may not use the network to access any database, service, or download data or software which charges a fee for such services of access. If you do any of the foregoing, you are liable for any and all charges.
  6. **Terms and Conditions:** NCCA reserves the right to modify these terms and conditions at any time. These terms and conditions shall be governed by the laws of the State of New Hampshire and the applicable policies of NCCA.
  7. **Computer and Internet Policy Violations:**
    - **First Offense\***: A warning will be given to the student with a phone call to the parents. The incident will be documented.
    - **Second Offense\***: Center Director will have a face-to-face meeting with parent and student to discuss behavior and set goals for change.
    - **Third Offense:** Center Director will set up a face-to-face meeting with the student and parent and a student contract will be established by the Center Director.
    - **Fourth Offense:** The student is dismissed. The student has 24 hours to contact the NCCA Principal/Superintendent to appeal (*see Due Process, p. 17*).

*(\*Note: These offenses are based on severity of misuse.)*

### **Dangerous Weapons On School Property**

Dangerous weapons, such as but not limited to, firearms, explosives, incendiaries, martial arts weapons (as defined in RSA 159:24), electronic defense weapons (as defined in RSA 159:20), clubs, billies, any form of knife, metallic knuckles or any container containing chemicals such as pepper

spray or mace, or the use of any object as a weapon are not permitted on school property, in school vehicles or at school-sponsored activities. Student violation of this policy will result in both school disciplinary action and notification of the police. Dismissal or expulsion from school could result. In addition, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm (as defined by 18 US 921) to school will be expelled for not less than one year (365 days). This expulsion may be modified by the Principal/Superintendent upon review of the specific case in accordance with other applicable laws.

### **Dress Code**

Apparel disruptive to the classroom **may not be worn**; prohibited apparel includes revealing clothing, midriffs, **hoodies, hats, pajamas**, sunglasses, as well as any apparel displaying or referencing alcohol, tobacco, drugs or inappropriate language/symbols. **Students should dress for success!**

### **Leaving School Grounds**

North Country Charter Academy is considered a "closed" campus. Therefore, any student leaving school grounds for any purpose during that student's session time must be first excused by the Center Director. Parents and the police department will be notified when a student leaves school without permission. Students who need to be released during their session time must have a note signed by a parent or legal guardian. In an emergency, a parent or guardian may call the school to request that a student be released. **It is highly recommended that all appointments or other personal business be scheduled before or after the student's session.**

### **Property Damage/Vandalism**

Parents will be billed for any costs for repair or for the replacement of any school property that is damaged by the student. Any student suspected of this violation will be referred to the Principal/Superintendent for disciplinary action including possible dismissal.

### **Tobacco, Drugs, E-Cigarettes/Vaping, Alcohol, and Drug Paraphernalia**

It is illegal for a student attending NCCA or while using NCCA transportation to possess or use tobacco, e-cigarettes, drugs, vaping paraphernalia, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol. Any student SUSPECTED of being in possession of any of these OR under the influence will be removed immediately from the classroom and **will be searched by NCCA staff**. Local police authorities will be called to take over. Once police authority is notified, the Center Director will call the parents. **NCCA IS A SAFE SCHOOL DRUG-FREE ZONE**. Any student found to be in possession of drugs will be dismissed.

### **Prohibition Of Bullying/Cyberbullying, Harassment, Hazing, And Intimidation**

North Country Charter Academy is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and patrons; free from harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying/cyberbullying. Bullying/cyberbullying means a single significant incident or a pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another pupil which:

- Physically harms a pupil or damages the pupil's property;
- Causes emotional distress to a pupil;
- Interferes with a pupil's educational opportunities;
- Creates a hostile educational environment; or

- Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying shall include actions motivated by an imbalance of power based on a pupil's actual or perceived personal characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs or motivated by the pupil's association with another person and based on the other person's characteristics, behaviors, and beliefs.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral, or physical actions. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the education environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, hazing, intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom, or program rules.

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation.

Disciplinary consequences or interventions, or both will be taken for a pupil who commits an act of bullying or cyberbullying or **falsely accuses** another of the same as a means of retaliation or reprisal.

Students must report suspected incident(s) to the Center Director. The Center Director will immediately conduct an investigation which may include a formal police report.

### **MINOR/MAJOR BEHAVIORS DEFINED AND PROTOCOLS FOR DISCIPLINE**

**MINOR:** *Lingering, inappropriate or foul language, disrespectful behavior or language, sleeping in class, aggressive acts that may not directly hurt people or property but are inappropriate and/or raise safety concerns, and other minor disruptive behaviors as identified by the Center Director. Disciplinary actions taken for each cumulative incident committed by a student are as follows with documentation of all activities and outcomes:*

**First Offense:** A warning will be given to the student with a phone call to the parents.

**Second Offense:** Center Director will set up a face-to-face meeting with the parent and the student. Behavioral goals will be discussed.

**Third Offense:** Center Director will set up a face-to-face meeting with the parent and the student. Behavioral goals will be discussed and a behavior contract will be set up.

**Fourth Offense:** Student has violated the contract and will be dismissed. Student has 24 hours to request an appeal (*see Due Process, p. 17*).

**NOTE: If a parent cannot be contacted to set up a meeting, the student will be placed on administrative leave until the meeting takes place.**



**MAJOR:** Bullying, *blatant disrespect, violent behavior including assault/bodily harm to another student or staff and/or threatening violence/bodily harm, property damage, possession of any type of a knife or weapon on school grounds, theft, any actions that violate New Hampshire criminal laws (i.e. possession of illegal drugs, underage smoking/vaping, alcohol use, etc), and other major disruptive behaviors as identified by the Center Director. Disciplinary **steps to be taken each time** a student commits a major behavior violation are as follows:*

### **Step One: Managing the Incident and Ensuring Safety**

- Center Director/Teacher will manage the incident and ensure the safety of all students and staff, including calling law enforcement, if needed.
- The Center Director/Teacher will place the student on immediate administrative leave, send them home, and notify the parent.
- The Center Director will document the incident and submit a written incident report to the NCCA Principal/Superintendent and complete a police report if applicable.

### **Step Two: Disciplinary Process**

- NCCA Principal/Superintendent has five days to review the incident report, and if needed, conduct an investigation including meeting with the student and parent(s).
- A decision to dismiss or put the student on a contract will be issued by the NCCA Principal/Superintendent within two days of the investigation and communicated to the student/parent.
- The student/parent can appeal the decision within 24 hours (*see Due Process, p. 17*) and, if an appeal is requested, the NCCA Principal/Superintendent will schedule a meeting with the student, parent, and the Center Director.
- The decision of the NCCA Principal/Superintendent following due process is final.

### **DUE PROCESS**

Due Process means that students will be treated fairly, according to the rules and regulations of the state and school, given the right to appeal and to receive a fair and impartial hearing. All students will be provided with due process when facing disciplinary actions unless otherwise stated in policy. Steps to follow in order to appeal a disciplinary action:

1. The student must contact the NCCA Principal/Superintendent **within 24 hours** stating intent and reason for wanting to appeal.
2. The NCCA Principal/Superintendent will review the request, research student history, and circumstances, and set up a meeting with the student and parent(s) within five (5) days.
3. The NCCA Principal/Superintendent will make a decision within two (2) days following the meeting.
4. The decision of the NCCA Principal/Superintendent is **final**.
5. If a student has one more violation after a decision to reverse a dismissal is made, the student will be dismissed without the right to appeal.

## **FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PROTECTION ACT (FERPA)**

Under FERPA, families have certain rights under state and federal laws. Parents may inspect and review their child's education records and may seek to correct parts of the record if believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of student rights. This includes a hearing to present evidence that the records should be changed if the District decides not to alter them according to the request.

Additionally, it is the intent of the District to limit the disclosure of information in a student's record *except* by prior written consent of the parent; as directory information; or under certain, limited circumstances, as permitted by law. On the "Release Forms", parents and students may choose to authorize or deny the school any permission to use student names and photos on the school website, in news releases, social media, educational and financial reports, public relations or for local public television stations. Also, parents are asked for permission to videotape their children while involved in classroom activities and school projects. This information will be used for school purposes only.

## **STUDENT MEDICATION**

Staff at NCCA are not responsible for administering any medication to students. This includes over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc. Students are asked to take prescribed medication before or after attending their school session. If a prescription requires that a student take medication during school hours, the medication must be kept in a locked cabinet at school in a marked container and accompanied by a dated doctor's note specifying the time of administration. The student is required to administer their medication. NCCA employees can not administer medications to students.

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

North Country Charter Academy Board of Trustees and staff are committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of all students and the school community. We support federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt; and promote access to community resources. If a staff member becomes informed of a student's intention regarding suicide, the staff member will inform the Center Director who will take the appropriate action required by the district's policy, including, but not limited to, parent contact, referral to the District Student Assistance representative; and provision of additional resources.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE: 1-800-273-8255 or dial 811 for counseling.**

## **TRANSPORTATION**

North Country Charter Academy is not obligated to provide transportation. However, we want all of you to succeed and we recognize that transportation is a challenge in the North Country due to rural communities and the scope of our geographical area. Using North Country Charter Academy transportation to and from school is a privilege.

**Student Automobile Use:** Both North Country Charter Academy sites have public parking lots that are shared by other businesses. We expect that all students will behave responsibly when driving themselves. Any student caught driving in a reckless manner will be referred to the Center Director or Principal/Superintendent to determine whether or not the student will be allowed to self-transport or be subject to dismissal. All vehicles must be registered with the North Country Charter Academy main office. Students with vehicles must sign a "Student Vehicle Registration and Release of Liability" on the "Release Forms".

**North Country Charter Academy Bus Transportation Routes:** North Country Charter Academy contracts its transportation services. Transportation is as follows:

Lancaster Site:

AM Routes – Colebrook and Groveton

PM Routes – Groveton, Milan, Berlin and Gorham

Littleton Site:

AM Routes – Woodsville, Lisbon and Bath

No PM Routes

\*NCCA is able to provide transportation on these predesignated routes only. Pick-ups and drop-offs must be scheduled with the Center Director.

Contact the Center Director with any questions or concerns regarding transportation.

**Student Transportation Code of Conduct:** The transportation contractors and drivers have the responsibility to maintain the orderly behavior of students in the transportation vehicle. The drivers will notify the Principal/Superintendent of any misconduct and submit a written report of the incident. The Principal/Superintendent will contact the parent when an incident is reported. The student may be placed on administrative leave for up to five days so an investigation can be completed. Parents will be notified in writing the findings of the investigation and of the disciplinary actions, if any, will be taken.

All students will be expected to be on time and waiting at the designated areas for their bus. Any absence due to a student missing the bus pick-up will be counted as an unexcused absence. All students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the transportation contractor. The Principal/Superintendent will have the authority to suspend the riding privileges of students who are having disciplinary problems and who fail to conform to the rules. Parents of students whose pattern of behavior and conduct in the transportation vehicle endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their child will lose school transportation privileges in accordance with the student discipline codes.

All students who use school transportation are expected to abide by the rules set by the transportation company:

- Eating and drinking in the vehicle will be at the discretion of the driver
- No smoking or vaping is allowed on the bus
- Students must remain seated until the vehicle reaches either the school or the student's stop
- Students are not allowed to have their hands or heads out of the vehicle at any time
- Students must cooperate and not distract the driver either while the vehicle is in motion or standing still

- Swearing, abusive language, loud shouting, whistling, or any major disturbances will not be tolerated
- Students must be **ready to board the bus 10-15 minutes before the bus arrives**. As a result of tight schedules, drivers have been instructed not to wait for students who are not ready.
- The driver is in complete charge of all students while he/she is taking them to and from the school
- Strict attention must be paid to the driver's instructions at all times so as to ensure the safety and welfare of our students
- Students must keep the vehicle as clean as possible
- Students will be held responsible for any damages to the vehicle which is caused by them
- When the vehicle stops at a railroad crossing, all students should stop talking and remain quiet while the driver checks the crossing
- Students will be picked up and dropped off at designated locations only
- Any behavior considered disruptive or that could interfere with the safe transportation of students could result in the loss of transportation privileges

**Offenses: (based on the severity of the offense)**

- **First Offense**: Written Warning by driver and phone call to parent by Center Director.
- **Second Offense**: Suspension of transportation privileges up to five days.
- **Third Offense**: Loss of transportation privileges.

**THINGS TO NOTE**

**CLASSROOM GUEST SPEAKERS/FIELD TRIPS**

Throughout the school year classroom speakers, field trips, Student Assistant Program (SAP) activities and other special events will take place within the three (3) hour scheduled classroom time. All students enrolled will be **REQUIRED** to actively participate in these activities. These scheduled events are intended to educate and provide students with valuable experiences.

Students are **EXPECTED** to participate in all those activities listed above should the event exceed the normal three hour scheduled classroom time. Students will be given ample notice to make transportation arrangements.

**FUNDRAISING**

A variety of fundraising events will be planned throughout the year. All proceeds raised will go directly toward the graduation ceremony. This will help us to provide our graduating students with the best graduation ceremony possible. Proceeds left over after graduation expenses are covered will be carried over to the following year. Each year, both the students and parents have worked hard to raise money. We encourage everyone to participate! The students need all the help they can get, so parents, please **GET INVOLVED!**

**GRADUATION**

Participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, and all students wanting to participate are **REQUIRED** to fulfill two requirements:

1. Attend one of the March Graduation Informational Meetings listed:
  - Littleton Site: March 12, 2024 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM (subject to change)
  - Lancaster Site: March 14, 2024 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM (subject to change)
2. Attend Graduation Rehearsal - To Be Announced at the March Meetings

\*\*\*If a student enrolls in NCCA after the March Meetings, that student is responsible for contacting the main office to schedule an appointment to receive the information. Should the student not comply with the graduation ceremony participation requirements as outlined above, the student will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony. The decision of the Principal/Superintendent is final.

### **MILITARY RELEASE**

As part of the **No Child Left Behind Act of 2002**, North Country Charter Academy, as a public secondary school, is required by a provision of this act to release student directory information to military recruiters. Parents wishing to keep their son's/daughter's personal information private must actively opt out of providing this information. If you choose **not** to give permission for NCCA to release information to the military recruiters, please fill out the section on the "Release Forms" stating this. Otherwise, you are giving us permission to release the information.

### **ONECALL SYSTEM**

NCCA uses the OneCall system to send phone messages and texts to communicate school closings and other important announcements. It is very important for you to be aware of this as it is a communication system we use. **Please notify the Main Office of any changes in your phone number and/or contact information by calling 603-444-1535.**

### **PUBLICITY RELEASE**

Student names and/or photos for public relations purposes are used with the permission of students and parents/guardians. Throughout the year, NCCA prepares news releases, educational and financial reports to meet state reporting requirements and for public relations. Students are asked to fill out a release on the "Release Forms".

### **SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY**

North Country Charter Academy is an independent public school. All decisions related to DELAYS, EARLY DISMISSALS, and CANCELLATIONS will be made at the discretion of the NCCA Principal/Superintendent. **\*NCCA is its own school district. All NCCA students will follow the NCCA school calendar and school closings, not those of the sending/"home" school districts.**

**Weather-Related:** If NCCA is canceled due to the weather, the school building will be closed and students will not attend school that day. Students will receive notification of the cancellation via the OneCall system and notification will be posted on WMUR–Channel 9 and WCAX–Channel 3. If NCCA is open, it is expected that all students from all districts will attend school, even if the district where they live has closed school. Students attending NCCA must abide by NCCA policies.

**School Delays:** North Country Charter Academy does not have delayed openings. It will cancel its morning session and leave the afternoon session open.

### **Early Dismissals or Afternoon Session Cancellations**

- Early dismissals or afternoon session cancellations due to inclement weather will be made solely at the discretion of the Principal/Superintendent.
- NCCA staff will call students who are in the afternoon session to inform them of the cancellation.

### **Cancellation Announcements:**

- Students and Parents/Guardians will be notified through NCCA's **OneCall system**.
- Cancellations and delays also will be placed on the following television stations and online:
  - **Television Stations:** WMUR TV-Channel 9, WCAX-Channel 3
  - **Online:** WMUR – [www.wmur.com](http://www.wmur.com)
- **Note: Last day of school may change on the school calendar due to school cancellations.**



# **WELCOME!**

## **North Country Charter Academy**

### **Student-Parent Handbook Signature Page**

#### **2023-2024 School Year**

The information provided in this handbook is intended to notify the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of specific rules and regulations that must be abided by for the continued success of our school and students.

We (the names signed below) have read, acknowledged and understand the information provided in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date