



New Branches Charter Academy Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan

Address of School District: 3662 Poinsettia Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508

District Code Number: 41901

Building Code Number(s): 08019

District Contact Person: Teresa Larkin

District Contact Person Email Address: teresalarkin@choiceschools.com

Local Public Health Department: Kent County Health Department

Local Public Health Department Contact Person Email Address:

Joann Hoganson MSN, RN
Division Director of Community Wellness &
Liaison to Schools
(616)-632-7067, cell (616)690-0735
covid@kentcountymi.gov

Name of Intermediate School District: Kent Intermediate School District

Name of Authorizing Body: Central Michigan University

Date of Adoption by Board of Directors: 09/14/2020



October 01, 2020 [via email]

Ms. Teresa Larkin
New Branches Charter Academy

Re: Approval of Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan (“Extended Learning Plan”)

Dear Ms. Larkin:

I am pleased to inform you that the Extended Learning Plan for New Branches Charter Academy (“Academy”) has been approved by The Governor John Engler Center for Charter Schools at Central Michigan University. The Center will transmit the Extended Learning Plan to the State as soon as an appropriate mechanism to do so is made available. The Extended Learning Plan is effective as of the date indicated in the document.

To fulfill one of the required assurances, immediately add a copy of the approved Extended Learning Plan to the Academy’s Transparency Page of its website. An approved copy of the Extended Learning Plan is attached and can be found in Epicenter. The approved Extended Learning Plan constitutes a Charter Contract amendment and remains in effect as long as the Extended Learning Plan remains in effect.

Thank you for all your efforts to keep student learning moving forward in these trying times. If you have any further questions or need additional support, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corey Northrop". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corey Northrop
Executive Director

cc: Kina King, Board President
Stan Rathbun, Board Corresponding Agent

Attachment:
Approved Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXTENDED COVID-19 LEARNING PLANS
("ECLP") AND APPROVAL OF CHARTER CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

New Branches Charter Academy (the "Academy")

A regular meeting of the Academy Board of Directors was held on the 14th day of September, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Board President Kina King: *Revised Minutes*
Present: Kina King, Steven Jull, Scott Embree, Eric Thomas-Fell
Absent: none

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Board Member Steven Jull and supported by Board Member Kina King:

BACKGROUND

On August 20, 2020, in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affecting our state, Governor Whitmer signed into law certain amendments to the State School Aid Act of 1979, as amended, MCL 388.1601 et seq. ("Back to School Laws"). The Back to School Laws include additional requirements for all Michigan schools as they plan for a return of preK-12 education for the 2020-2021 school year. Under the Back to School Laws, a public school academy must provide for instruction under an extended COVID-19 learning plan ("ECLP") that is approved by its authorizing body ("Authorizer"). ECLPs includes many of the same subject matters addressed in a public school academy's charter contract, including measurable educational goals to be achieved by all subgroups in the school, measurement of those educational goals by one or more benchmark assessments, a description of how the educational program, including instruction, will be delivered, a description of the school's curricula and specific reporting requirements for the 2020-2021 school year. Under the Back to School Laws, schools retain the flexibility to tailor and adjust their ECLPs to meet the needs of their students and the community they serve.

The Back to School Laws require, among other things, that each public school academy do the following:

- (1) Establish educational goals required to be included in the ECLP no later than September 15, 2020.
- (2) Approve an ECLP and submit it to their respective authorizing body ("Authorizer") for approval by October 1, 2020. If approved by the Authorizer, the ECLP is transmitted by the Authorizer to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Treasurer.
- (3) Make an ECLP accessible through the transparency reporting link on the school's website by October 1, 2020.
- (4) Within the first nine weeks of the 2020-2021 school year, administer 1 or more benchmark assessments from the list approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE)¹, a benchmark assessment provided by MDE, or local benchmark assessments, or a combination of the above, to pupils in grades K-8 to measure math and reading proficiency. In addition, by the last day of the 2020-2021 school year, administer another benchmark assessment to pupils in K-8 to measure proficiency in the same subject matter. The Back to School Laws require schools to use the same benchmark assessment(s) used in the 2019-2020 school year, if applicable.
- (5) Provide each pupil's data from the benchmark assessment or benchmark assessments, as available, to the pupil's parent or legal guardian within 30 days of administering the benchmark assessment(s).

¹ MDE has approved four providers of benchmark assessments and continues to assess additional providers. See [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Benchmark assessments 700077 7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Benchmark%20assessments%207000777.pdf)

(6) Not later than February 1, 2021, create a report that addresses the progress made in meeting the educational goals in the ECLP that the academy expected would be achieved by the middle of the school year and make the report available on the transparency reporting link on a public school academy's website.

(7) Not later than the last day of the 2020-2021 school year, create a report concerning progress made in meeting the educational goals in the ECLP and make the report available on the transparency reporting link on a public school academy's website.

(8) No later than June 30, 2021, send the aggregate academy-level data from a benchmark assessment(s), excluding data from a local benchmark assessment or local benchmark assessments, to a regional data hub that is part of the Michigan data hub network that shall compile the data and send it to the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI).

(9) Thirty days after approval of the ECLP, the Board shall meet monthly to re-confirm how pupil instruction is being delivered at the school and whether it is consistent with the ECLP and to ensure that 2 2-way interaction, as defined in the Act, is occurring between students and teachers each week of the school year for at least 75% of students enrolled in the school. At each meeting, the Board shall: (a) publicly announce its weekly interaction rates of 2 2-way interaction since its last meeting; (b) allow for public comment on the ECLP; and (c) discuss whether changes to the method of delivery for pupil instruction under the ECLP are necessary.

THE ACADEMY BOARD THEREFORE RESOLVES THAT:

1. The actions taken by Academy representatives to prepare and submit the Academy's ECLP to Authorizer are ratified.
2. The ECLP, as approved by the Authorizer, is approved by the Academy Board as the ECLP and as the ECLP Amendment to the Contract.
3. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same hereby are rescinded.
4. The Academy will deliver from time to time such information regarding the implementation of the Academy's ECLP as the Authorizer or Michigan Department of Education may reasonably request.
5. Any Board policies or provision of Board policies that prohibit or impede the Academy's compliance with ECLP are temporarily waived, suspended or altered.
6. This Resolution shall take immediate effect and continue through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. If the Back to School Laws are amended, and such amendments requires additional Board action relative to the ECLP, the Board may take such action to comply with existing law.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Resolution declared adopted.



Print Name: Steven Null

Secretary, Academy Board



Assurances

- The Academy will administer an approved benchmark assessment, or local benchmark assessment, or any combination thereof, to all pupils in grades K through 8 to measure proficiency in reading and mathematics within the first nine weeks of the 2020-2021 school year.
- Within thirty days after the approval of its Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan, and every 30 days thereafter, the Academy, at a meeting of its board of directors, will re-confirm how instruction is delivered during the 2020-2021 school year and will solicit public comment, at a public meeting, from the parents or legal guardians enrolled in the Academy.
- If delivering pupil instruction virtually, the Academy will expose each pupil to the academic standards that apply for each pupil's grade level or courses in the same scope and sequence as the Academy had planned for that exposure to occur for in-person instruction.
- If delivering pupil instruction virtually, the Academy will provide pupils with equitable access to technology and the internet necessary to participate in instruction.
- The Academy will ensure that students with disabilities will be provided with equitable access to instruction and accommodation in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.
- The Academy, in consultation with a local health department, and district employees, will develop guidelines concerning appropriate methods for delivering pupil instruction for the 2020-2021 school year that are based on local data that are based on key metrics. A determination concerning the method for delivering pupil instruction shall remain at the Academy Board's discretion. Key metrics that the Academy will consider shall include at least all of the following:
 - COVID-19 Cases or Positive COVID-19 tests
 - Hospitalizations due to COVID-19
 - Number of deaths resulting from COVID-19 over a 14-day period
 - COVID-19 cases for each day for each 1 million individuals
 - The percentage of positive COVID-19 tests over a 4-week period
 - Health capacity strength
 - Testing, tracing, and containment infrastructure with regard to COVID-19
- If the Academy determines that it is safe to provide in-person pupil instruction to pupils, the Academy will prioritize providing in-person pupil instruction to pupils in grades K to 5 who are enrolled in the Academy.
- The Academy will ensure that two (2), 2-way interactions occur between a pupil enrolled in the Academy and the pupil's teacher or at least one (1) of the pupil's teachers during each week of the school year for at least 75% of the pupils enrolled in the Academy. The Academy will publicly announce its weekly interaction rates at each Academy Board meeting where it re-confirm how instruction is being delivered, beginning 30 days after approval of its Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan, and every 30 days thereafter. The Academy will make those rates



available through the transparency reporting link located on the Academy website each month for the 2020-2021 school year.

- The Academy will create and make available on its transparency reporting link located on the Academy's website, a report concerning the progress made in meeting the educational goals contained in its Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan not later than February 1, 2021, for goals its expected would be achieved by the middle of the school year and not later than the last day of school of the 2020-2021 school year for goals the Academy expected would be achieved by the end of the school year.

Kina King

Board President

Board approved: 09/14/2020



Introduction and Overview

New Branches Charter Academy prioritizes high quality instruction and high engagement in learning. To ensure that all students and staff are supported in this vision, NBCA has created an Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan. Whether students are learning in-person or virtually, students will be exposed to and engaged in essential academic standards that align with grade level sequence and curriculum. This plan will outline measureable goals to ensure academic growth for all students.



Educational Goals

New Branches Charter Academy will continue to meet the goals of our charter contract. To continue to monitor and evaluate the performance of our students through approved assessments, NBCA will use the NWEA MAP Assessment and Acadience Reading Assessment (grades K-1).

NBCA is entering our 7th school year utilizing NWEA MAP as an assessment tool. This assessment is approved by the MDE, delivered online, and aligned with content standards. NWEA MAP provides immediate feedback for students and teachers. The assessment provides a nationally normed mean achievement and growth percentile which were recently updated in the summer of 2020. Our instructional team can utilize the data to impact instruction immediately after finishing the assessment and use the data to drive their instruction to meet achievement and growth goals. Students in grades K-8 will participate in the math assessment and students in grades 2-8 will complete the Reading assessment. Students in grades K-1 will be assessed utilizing the Acadience Reading Assessment as the initial assessment within the first 30 days of school, in the winter, and at the end of the year.

Academic Goals for K-8

Goal	Assessment Used	Timeline
The median growth percentiles (MGP) reflecting fall-to-winter and fall-to-spring scaled score growth in grades 2-8 on reading NWEA MAP Growth will be at or above 50%.	NWEA MAP Reading Assessment	Mid-year End of year
The median growth percentiles reflecting fall-to-winter and fall-to-spring scaled score growth in grades K-8 on the math NWEA MAP Growth tests will be at or above 50%	NWEA MAP Math Assessment	Mid-year End of year
Students in grades K-1 will score at or above the Acadience Benchmark Goal by the end of the year. Student will make progress toward the benchmark goal at mid-year.	Acadience Reading Assessment	Mid-year End of year



Instructional Delivery & Exposure to Core Content

The parents at NBCA were given the choice of two different learning environments for the first trimester.

Instruction will be delivered through two options:

1. In-person instruction
2. Virtual/remote instruction

Students participating in the in-person and virtual learning environments will be presented with the curriculum that is stated in our charter contract. Virtual/remote instruction is synchronous with the pacing guide of an in-person student. The highly qualified teacher will utilize Zoom and Big Blue Button through Canvas as platforms for live instruction.

All students will receive live instruction for ELA and Math 5 days a week. Eco-Art, STEAM, Physical Education, Environmental Science, Social Studies, and Science will be delivered asynchronously.

If there is a closure or a student must be quarantined because of illness, any students who are receiving in-person instruction will transition to virtual/remote instruction, and will return to in-person instruction once re-opened or returning to school. Parents may make the decision between in-person and virtual instruction each trimester based on the best interest of the student.

All students will be provided a Chromebook or iPad for learning. NBCA will utilize the Canvas Learning Management System for instructional delivery and communication between school and home for PK-8th grade. Canvas will serve as the hub for student's classwork for all students whether they are in the building for in-person instruction or learning remotely. Various methods of instruction will be utilized including synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Teachers will instruct students how to utilize Canvas.

All teachers will focus on essential standards in each subject area that are aligned with Common Core State Standards and communicated through Canvas with clear learning targets, pre-assessments, post-assessments, assignments and resources. The same summative assessment will be given to online and in-person students. The grade level teams will collaborate in Professional Learning Communities after an assessment is given to answer four key questions:

1. What did we want all students to know?
2. How will we know if they learn it?
3. How will we respond when some students do not learn?
4. How will we extend the learning for students who already know it?

Parents will be notified of a student's progress toward mastery by utilizing our student information system – PowerSchool. All parents will have a login for this system. All parents, in-person and virtual, will also have a parent access code for Canvas to monitor work completion and progress toward mastery.



Equitable Access

New Branches Charter Academy has ensured that all students that have chosen the virtual option have equitable access. NBCA has provided each student with an electronic device and headphones to utilize for virtual learning. Each family was surveyed to determine if the internet was available in their residence. If it was not, administration would support them in making that available through community resources. If community resources are not an option, a hotspot or wifi extender would be made available.

NBCA will provide special education programs and services according to the student's IEP or Section 504 plan. If the offer of free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in an IEP or Section 504 Plan cannot be fully implemented, a Contingency Learning Plan (CLP) will be developed with parent input. Students that require specialized instruction and accommodations will have their needs met according to their IEP. Programs and services will be offered virtually if a student has chosen the virtual learning environment. Our instructional team is aware of accommodations that are needed for students and will be compliant in providing those. The special education team will be monitoring students' abilities to determine if recovery services are needed.

Interventionists and special education teachers will participate in –person or through Zoom calls to support them on a one-on-one or small group basis. Special education services will include academic support, social-emotional check-ins, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy as indicated by the students IEP.