# Curriculum

Upon enrollment, VCA staff assesses the student's functioning in academic, personal and interpersonal skills and provides programming that is developmentally appropriate through flexible groupings and departmentalization to meet different academic performance levels of the students (see attached curriculum grid for the range of curriculum available for teachers to differentiate and use to meet a range of student ability levels). VCA staff then continues to assess progress on each student's goals on their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) through a variety of methods including progress monitoring through our goal tracking system, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments, curriculum based measurements, student point sheet, behavioral data (referrals to the behavioral office, classroom assignments and homework, and teacher and therapist observations. Progress reports are sent to parents on a quarterly basis or upon request.

**Elementary/Middle School:** All students in grades 1 thru 8 receive daily instruction in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The Elementary ELA textbooks used are Pearson Reading Street and novels based on students' interests to accomplish the New Illinois Learning Standards. All grades use Pearson EnVision Math 2.0 to provide rigorous math curriculum by incorporating project based learning and visual learning strategies to empower students. Pearson Interactive Science incorporates hands-on and virtual science experiments to provide an enriched curriculum. In Social Studies, Pearson My World combines storytelling, literacy instruction and a variety of resources to engage students. Lessons include practice in reading and writing, collaboration and communication skills and applying inquiry. All Pearson curriculum incorporates a blended model of print and digital courseware and can be used on all devices. All instruction is tailored to the needs of each student. The curriculum content can be modified to meet instructional levels determined by progress monitoring data.

**High School:** High school students take classes based on graduation requirements and classes assigned after a complete evaluation of their transcript. Some of the standard classes offered at NCA are English Language Arts (9 thru 12), Math (Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2, Consumer Math, etc.), History, (World Geography, World History, U.S. History, Government, etc. ) and Science (Earth Science, Biology, Science & Technology, etc. ). During English Language Arts students are reading novels based on grade level and incorporate differentiated instruction, higher order thinking skills and incorporate writing through real-world connections. Math, History and Science curriculum is based on various levels of Pearson texts (see attached curriculum grid for more details), that empowers students to be successful both inside and outside the classroom. The curriculum engages the students with multiple practice opportunities, exploration, and visualization of concepts providing a deeper understanding with the ability to make a connection to their everyday world. Electives are offered based on evaluation of student transcript. Some example elective courses offered include Personal Public Safety (to

meet driver's education requirements), art survey, health, technology survey, and so forth.

VCA is a 1:1 device school where students are provided with a Chromebook and GAFE accounts upon entrance to access the technology that is used throughout each classroom. In conjunction with the curriculum, teachers also use a variety of technology to further enhance the current curriculum used along with game-based platforms to make learning fun. Some of the technology utilized in the classroom are Google Apps for Education, Read & Write extension, Kahoot, iXL Math, Khan Academy, etc.)

**Guided Reading:** Guided Reading is the cornerstone of our balanced literacy program. The teachers provide small-group or one-on-one instruction at the Tier I level to our students in ways that allow them to observe their individual strengths while working toward further learning goals. Books are selected at a student's instructional level so that with strong teaching, readers can meet the demands of more challenging texts over time.

**Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System:** This assessment elicits individual reading behaviors through identifying relative strengths and weaknesses in the areas of comprehension and word processing to better target our instruction. A *comprehension conversation* is embedded in this assessment, allowing our teachers to hear how the student is thinking *within the text, about the text, and beyond the text*. An accuracy score reveals how well the student is processing the text. Teachers analyze types of miscues made by the student: meaning, visual, syntactic. This information helps the teacher form targeted lessons to increase word knowledge. This assessment also serves to place our students along a Text Level Gradient to help match students to *just fit books,* and to plan for guided reading instruction.

**LLI:** The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention is a powerful, Tier II short-term intervention curriculum, that provides daily, intensive, small-group reading instruction. LLI turns struggling readers into successful readers with engaging leveled books and fast-paced, systematically designed lessons. LLI advances the literacy learning of students not meeting grade-level expectations in accordance with the Fountas and Pinnell assessment, and other formative and summative assessments. LLI is used to monitor student progress using the built-in running records to gauge growth.

**Lexia:** Lexia provides differentiated, supplemental literacy instruction for students in grades pre-K–12. Lexia Core5 (Elementary) and Lexia Powerup (High School) are quality, digital programs to assist teachers in helping students master five critical skills in order to become proficient readers: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Lexia provides explicit, systematic, personalized learning, targeting skill gaps as they emerge, and provide teachers

with the data and student-specific resources they need for individual or small-group instruction.   Additionally, older students build higher-order skills they need to comprehend, analyze, evaluate, and compare increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

**Credit Recovery:**  High school students who find themselves behind in credit due to failure of a class have the opportunity to take various courses online through Edmentum and Edgenuity Courseware.  All the courses offered on Edmentum and Edgenuity are aligned to the New Illinois Learning Standards and engage learners at all levels.  The content can be customized by the teacher to include additional resources and provides the teacher the opportunity to make the content flexible. The content also integrates assessments which allows the learner to move past the content that they have already mastered.  By including highly interactive and video-enriched academics learners are provided an opportunity to make real-world connections.  The student's eligibility for credit recovery is based on an IEP team decision in accordance with district credit policies.