

NORTH EAST SCHOOL DISTRICT

North East Cyber Academy

(Information adapted from BSSD/COALA)

A  **CAOLA**
Stay the Course Partnership



DRAFT VERSION

7/31/20

NORTH EAST CYBER ACADEMY



Dear NESD Students, Parents, Guardians, and Families,

The North East School District has coordinated an opportunity for our students to have an option to participate in a cyber program while maintaining eligibility as a North East School District student. The following information included in this handbook will outline expectations and guidelines for students enrolled in the North East Cyber Academy as they complete their learning pathway. This handbook will be reviewed as a component of the enrollment process and a copy will be provided prior to the initiation of the first cyber course.

Your child will continue forward as a North East School District student enrolled in the North East Cyber Academy (NECA) self-paced online learning platform. A mentor will be assigned through CAOLA; however, our school district will assign each student and advisor to act as a liaison between the online instructors and your child. Your child's advisor will be available to provide assistance to help monitor progress to ensure a successful journey of learning through the NE Cyber Academy. Your child's advisor will be identified during the enrollment process.

We encourage all students and parents to reach out for assistance or with questions at any time. Your child's CAOLA mentor will be your first point of contact. The district will assist to maintain an open line of communication moving forward, if needed.

We want this learning opportunity to be beneficial and impactful for your child. The best way to accomplish this is through commitment, dedication, and communication. Again, cyber programs are self-paced with academic expectations to be met daily and are the responsibility of the student.

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook. We look forward to a successful school year for your child in the NE Cyber Academy.

Yours in Education,

North East School District Administration

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NESD MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the North East School District is to challenge, empower, and engage all students to develop and achieve personal and career aspirations, to pursue lifelong learning, and to be responsible and accountable citizens in a dynamic world.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The North East School District Cyber Academy is offered in coordination with the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit and is an alternative, rigorous pathway towards graduation for a district student in grades K-12. Courses are taken in an online format. There is no fee for a student or parent. Students may use technology equipment that is provided by the district and/or Intermediate Unit. Students are assigned courses in alignment with each school building's respective curriculum. School counseling staff along with instructional staff, support staff, and administration will be available to work closely with each student to establish appropriate course enrollments and to monitor student progress. Online courses are not exact replicas of courses offered in the North East School District; however, all online courses are matched to the extent possible with curriculum and content provided here on the North East campus. All courses are aligned with the PA Core learning standards. All courses are rigorous and will certainly challenge the participating student. Students working online must be strong, independent workers with excellent attendance records. The North East School District expects all students in the NE Cyber Academy to be working online for a period of no less than four [4] hours per school day. Each student must also meet the completion deadlines as established by the School District. Students may work additional hours on weekends and during holiday breaks. Parents are also held accountable to closely monitor their child's online work progression and attendance. Students enrolled in this program are considered North East School District students. As such, students are eligible to participate in athletics, extracurricular activities, and school-sponsored events. Students are also eligible to receive a North East High School diploma with online courses being added to an individual student's transcript. All students participating in the NESD Cyber Academy will still remain accountable in the areas of academics, attendance, and behavioral expectations while online and/or involved in extracurricular activities.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students must have independent work habits, personal commitment, and parental support in order to be successful in the NESD Cyber Academy. Therefore, the North East School District will utilize the following guidelines to determine appropriate enrollment eligibility:

1. The student must be a North East School District resident.
2. Parent/Guardian must follow all district enrollment procedures.
3. Students must currently be maintaining satisfactory attendance in the previous/current school year or be recommended by a school administrator.
4. Students must demonstrate a record of adequate academic progress and independent work completion or be recommended by a school administrator.

5. Students must participate in the Pennsylvania System Of School Assessment [PSSA] and/or Keystone Exams during designated testing windows determined by the PA Department Of Education.
6. Students must complete the NESD Portfolio program in grades 9-12.
7. The student and parent/guardian must agree to sign the program agreement.
8. The student must be approved by the Principal for the NE Cyber Academy.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Students interested in participating in the NESD Cyber Academy must complete the following registration process:

1. The parent/guardian and student will meet with the cyber liaison and building administrator to review prior/current attendance and academic progress in order to initiate the registration process.
2. Special education students must participate in an IEP team meeting and have an IEP team recommendation in order to initiate the registration process.
3. The NE Cyber Academy Program Application must be completed by the parent/guardian.
4. The parent/guardian must meet with the cyber liaison and/or building administrator to review the application.
5. The parent/guardian and student must sign an agreement, which describes the student's program of study and responsibilities of both the student and parent/guardian.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

State Law provides that parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child[ren] attends school. Full-time, virtual academy students are expected to complete at least one lesson per day for each course in which they are enrolled, five days per week. Assignments need to be completed prior to 11:30PM in order for the assignment to count for the day's attendance. Full-time, virtual academy students will arrange an appropriate schedule with their assigned mentor. Students not attending school as mandated by the law will be considered truant. Students and their parent/guardian will be subject to local truancy laws and regulations.

Excused Absences

The NE Cyber Academy recognizes that circumstances can occur that will keep a student from completing daily lessons and signing into the system. These types of absences are considered excused and should fall under one of the categories listed below. Virtual students are expected to collaborate with their mentor and online instructors to make up any missed work. **ALL EXCUSES ARE DUE WITHIN 3 SCHOOL DAYS OF ABSENCE, AS REQUIRED BY SCHOOL LAW.** Excuses provided outside of the 3-day window will not be accepted.

- ***Absence due to illness, health condition, and/or family emergency.*** The parent/guardian is expected to notify the assigned mentor via email prior to the absence unless the situation does not provide for such opportunity. A doctor's note must be provided if the student misses three [3] consecutive days due to illness. This note should be forwarded to the assigned mentor.
- ***Participation in school approved activity.*** In order to be granted an excused absence, the activity must be authorized by the advisor and parent/guardian. The affected online instructors must be notified prior to the event.
- ***Parental request for temporary absence.*** Upon parental request, the assigned mentor and appropriate school district personnel may temporarily excuse a student for agreed-upon reasons. The request should be submitted in writing in advance and should state the reason along with the duration of the absence. An absence may not be approved if it is deemed to be detrimental to the student's academic progress.
- ***Disciplinary actions.*** Absences due to temporary suspensions are deemed excused for purposes of accurate attendance record keeping.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence that does not fall into an excused absence category as identified above or is not adequately documented will be considered an unexcused absence. The parent/guardian will be notified of any unexcused absence. If two [2] unexcused absences occur in a month, a conference between the parent, assigned mentor, and student will occur. Three [3] or more unexcused absences in one month will require a conference with the parent/guardian, student, assigned mentor, and building administrator. At that time, an action plan will be determined to ensure student success moving forward. If a student has ten [10] or more consecutive absences, he/she may be considered withdrawn from the NE Cyber Academy.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

NESD students involved in the NE Cyber Academy must adhere to the following guidelines and expectations outlined below:

- Students must meet with appropriate school personnel and sign the provided student contract.
- Students are required to abide by all NESD policies as it relates to academics, attendance, and behavior.
- Students will follow the NESD calendar.
- Students are required to work a minimum of four [4] hours per school day in the course[s] in which he/she is enrolled. Students may work additional hours during weekends and holidays.
- Students will complete all provided lessons in order.

- Students will contact the assigned mentor and virtual instructor with any questions or concerns while completing a course.
- Students agree to inform the assigned mentor and virtual instructor of any planned absences.
- Students are required to participate in the PSSA and/or Keystone Exams on the NESD campus. Locations will be determined prior to all testing.
- Students are responsible for maintaining all district-provided technology equipment. Payment will be expected if any piece of equipment is not returned or if there is any damage upon completion of the program.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

All parents/guardians of NE Cyber Academy students have a unique opportunity and responsibility to participate in the education of their child[ren]. Parents are expected to follow all guidelines and expectations as outlined below:

- Directly supervise and support their child's educational journey at home.
- Provide a physical environment conducive to your child[ren]'s educational needs.
- Talk with your child about taking online courses.
- Accompany your child to meet with the building administrator to sign the contract.
- Maintain account information necessary to log in and monitor your child's progress.
- Attend any informational sessions as offered by the district.
- Log in weekly to monitor your child's progress.
- Assist and support your child in complying with all Virtual Academy rules and regulations.
- Assist your child in the submission of all forms, applications, and other documentation.
- Assist your child with logging in as needed.
- Maintain regular contact with the school by telephone and email.
- Monitor your child's device usage to ensure that district equipment is being used for educational purposes and in accordance with school policy.
- Collaborate with your child and assigned mentor to ensure successful completion of the curricular course offerings within the allotted time frame.
- Ensure that all school work submitted is completed solely by your child.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes in household contact information and/or academic status of your child.
- Provide your child with transportation as needed in order to participate in standardized testing and/or other school activities.
- Return all instructional materials, resources, and equipment to the school at the appropriate time.

ACADEMIC PLACEMENT & SUPPORT

- Each online course content and included assignments are aligned with the PA Core Standards or national Common Core Standards. These courses have all been written by highly qualified instructors and have undergone a rigorous, multi-step review process.
- Each lesson of each online course contains multiple methods for students to learn the material that accommodates different learning styles. Additionally, each online course has an online textbook that was written specifically to accomplish the lesson objectives. Furthermore, each lesson has an assessment in order to gauge student understanding of the lesson objectives. NOTE: Advanced Placement courses may not have all of these features as these courses are being acquired from a third-party vendor.
- Students enrolling in the NE Cyber Academy will collaborate with their School Counselor, Building Administrator, and parent/guardian to determine proper placement in courses. The school will place the student at an appropriate level taking into consideration previous grades, completed courses, earned credit, academic performance, assessment results, and graduation requirements.
- Each student will have an online instructor that will monitor the student's progress. If necessary, interventions will be utilized to help the student master the lesson objectives.
- Each student will be able to seek assistance from an online, on-demand tutor. This tutor will be available multiple times from 8AM to 5PM on weekdays and is a highly qualified instructor who can provide additional assistance to aid the student's learning.
- Each student will have an Assigned Mentor appointed by the school district to help monitor the student's progress and help coordinate assistance as needed.
- Students are required to attend all state and school mandated assessments. Students should contact the North East School District for dates and times of required assessments.
- Students and parents have continual access to student grades online. The North East School District will continue to issue report cards and diplomas.

WITHDRAWAL, TRANSFER, & DROPPED COURSES

Withdrawal

Students participating in the full-time online learning model may withdraw from the program provided the parent/guardian indicates in writing the reason for withdrawal, the name and location of the public/private school that the student will attend and expected date of withdrawal from the program. Parents may initiate withdrawal from the program by contacting their child's Building Administrator. The North East School District will contact the parents to ensure all applicable paperwork is completed and equipment is returned to school.

Transfer

Students enrolled in the full-time online learning model that expect to be away from the home of residence for three [3] or more weeks must fill out an Educational Request Form. This form must be submitted to the student's Assigned Mentor no less than a week before the expected event is to occur. The North East School District has the authority to accept and/or deny any requests for location transfers. Students are expected to continue with their school work regardless of their temporary location. Students with location transfers are still required to participate in state assessments.

Dropped Courses

Students have a two-week [2] window to drop an online course without incurring a penalty. The two-week [2] starts from the day the student first logs into the system and does include weekends. If a full-time NE Cyber Academy student drops a course, they then have three [3] days to enroll in another course to maintain their full-time status. If the student does not enroll in another course in order to maintain full-time status, they will be dropped from the NE Cyber Academy and enrolled back into the applicable North East School District building.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA] is a Federal Law that protects the privacy of student educational 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 child's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he/she reaches the age of eighteen [18] or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students."

The NE Cyber Academy follows the FERPA Act and requires that any request for academic records be made to the school of residence where all academic records will be maintained. The local school of residence can assist with questions pertaining to FERPA and currently enrolled students.

STUDENT RECORDS

A cumulative file will be maintained for the student while enrolled in the NE Cyber Academy. This record shall contain only verified information of educational importance and may be used only for the benefit, promotion, and/or welfare of the student. All material in each student's file shall be confidential and access thereto strictly limited to personnel of the school, NE Cyber Academy, and parent/guardian.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The NE Cyber Academy is required under the Individuals with Disabilities Act [IDEA] to ensure educational services to students with disabilities. Students with an Individualized Education Plan [IEP] or 504 Plan will be accommodated within the NE Cyber Academy courseware. The NE Cyber Academy does not conduct evaluations in determining eligibility for special education placement. Parents who believe their child is eligible for special education should contact the NESD Supervisor of Special Education for further assistance. The North East School District will work with the parent and student to ensure proper procedures are followed with appropriate results. Communication between the student's Assigned Mentor and online instructors will ensure the student receives the proper adaptations and/or modifications as outlined in the IEP or 504 Plan.

ACADEMIC GRADING

Students are assessed on a multitude of criteria such as quizzes, tests, essays, and forum discussions. Students and parents have immediate and continuous access to grades by logging into the system. Grades will be posted within two [2] to three [3] days from the date an assignment is submitted.

Students are permitted to make up missed assignments without grade penalty due to excused absences. Mentors will closely monitor student make-up days and communicate with online instructors. Students will be given at least two [2] school days for every day missed to complete assignments after an absence. An incomplete grade may be given on the quarterly report card if the student's make-up days overlap with a quarter end date. The student will have ten [10] days after the conclusion of the marking period to complete any remaining assignments or the incomplete may change to a 0%. Building administrators will be notified of incomplete marks and may request a conference with the student and parent.

Students will be given at least one [1] opportunity to submit late work not related to an absence without penalty per quarter. Work will be penalized on the second offense with a 25% deduction on the graded assignment.

Students are permitted to retake any major test that he/she has failed. The student must request a retake from the online instructor and notify the Assigned Mentor of the request. The higher score will be recorded in the grade book with the lower score being removed.

TESTING POLICY

Mandated Testing

Students are required to participate in all school and state mandated assessments. Students will receive communication from their Assigned Mentor regarding the date and time that they are expected to arrive at the specified school to complete identified assessments.

Proctored Exams

Students enrolled in the full-time online learning program may be required to take Proctored Unit Exams each school year at the school district. The student will work the Assigned Mentor to arrange when and where these forms of assessment will take place.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students will collaborate with the High School Counselors to ensure proper placement and credit fulfillment in order to meet all graduation requirements. Students in grades nine [9] through twelve [12] will be classified by grade level based on the number of credits they have earned.

Students in Pennsylvania must also complete a graduation project in order to receive their High School diploma. The graduation project.....

FIELD TRIPS & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

NE Cyber Academy students are encouraged to participate in school-sponsored activities. Students must comply with all school district policies and not be under any current disciplinary action. Students wishing to attend a field trip or social activity must first notify their Assigned Mentor and make proper arrangements with the school district. Once arrangements have been made and permission has been granted, students will then notify their online instructors of their excused absence. Students are responsible for completing their missed assignments due to participation in a field trip or social activity.

Full-time online learning students should remember that they are still a member of the North East School District and therefore should dress appropriately. Dress code administrative procedures are identified in each school building's student handbook. Dress code guidelines will be enforced and any student found in violation of dress code expectations will not be permitted to participate in the field trip and/or social activity. Students should also be aware that when they attend a school related function, they are representing our school district and community. All students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times, consistent with behavioral expectations in place in our respective school buildings. Student conduct is a direct reflection on themselves, their families, and their school.

NOTE: Full-time NE Cyber Academy students are not permitted to drive to school-sponsored activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education requirements may be satisfied by participating in organized lessons, activities, and other various events. The North East Cyber Academy also offers an elective in Health & Fitness. Students that choose to participate in physical activities must work with their Assigned Mentor to develop a fitness plan and keep a log of their activities. Students must complete at least 2.5 hours per

week of physical activity and submit a log with parent/guardian signature to their Assigned Mentor on a monthly basis.

ATHLETICS & EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

Students wishing to participate in the North East School District's athletic program and/or extracurricular clubs/organizations will need to express that interest to their Assigned Mentor. The Assigned Mentor will in turn give the student the appropriate details regarding the team and/or program including any academic restrictions. The North East School District has the authority to enforce academic probation on any student that is participating on a team, club, or in an activity. Assigned Mentors will collaborate with students, parents, and coaches/advisors to assist students who are in danger of academic probation.

APPENDIX A - NESD CYBER ACADEMY STUDENT CONTRACT

The North East School District will provide distance education through a cyber platform for our students via online courses that are standards-based and in alignment with curriculum offerings provided in our schools. Students are expected to adhere to a high standard of performance and productivity while enrolled in our NE Cyber Academy. This Student Contract serves to inform all prospective students and their parents of program expectations. This Student Contract will also serve to hold all student participants and their parents accountable for student effort, behavior, and work completion while enrolled in each online course.

While participating in the North East Cyber Academy, I acknowledge the following:

1. High standards are expected of me while enrolled in this program. I understand that my interactions, behavior, and work efforts must be appropriate and respectful at all times.
2. I will not use inappropriate language in any form, including verbal or electronic. I understand the seriousness of the impact inappropriate language will have on my enrollment in this program.
3. Technology issues that may arise will not negatively impact my progress with course work. I will immediately report any matters regarding technology with which I am in need of assistance.
4. I will continue to participate in all state-mandated assessments as coordinated by the school district and my Assigned Mentor.
5. As a participating student in the North East School District Cyber Academy, I will:
 - a. Communication with my online instructors on a regular basis.
 - b. Complete my assigned lessons in proper order.
 - c. Refrain from any inappropriate usage of information within any of my courses.
 - d. Maintain the highest degree of academic honesty and integrity.
 - e. Follow all North East School District's policies and guidelines, including the attached Code Of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy.

In the event an enrolled student is unable to abide by the standards outlined in this Student Contract, the following procedures will be followed:

The North East School District will notify both student and parent/guardian of specified infractions. In the event of severe misconduct, the student will be removed from the program.

We have read and understand the STUDENT CONTRACT and agree to abide by the standards set forth.

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT NAME

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX B - NESD CYBER ACADEMY CODE OF CONDUCT

The North East School District Cyber Academy exists to provide standards-based education to our students in an online, distance learning environment. All students are expected to adhere to and follow the policies and expectations of the North East School District. The NESD will not tolerate any actions on the part of students, parents, staff, or visitors that negatively affect this delivery of educational services. The NESD also does not tolerate or condone any actions that jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of any member of our school community.

School administration will utilize their professional judgment in determining potential disciplinary action regarding student misconduct. A student's age, maturity, previous record, and the nature of an infraction will all be considered in disciplinary decision making.

While enrolled in the NE Cyber Academy, the following infractions may result in disciplinary action:

- Academic Dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, copying, plagiarism, etc.
- Violation of the Academic Integrity/Plagiarism Policy
- Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy
- Insubordination
- Theft
- Fighting
- Vandalism
- Harassment, including both in-person and online forms.
- Inappropriate Behavior
- Possession of contraband including drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or illicit substances while on school property or at school-sponsored events
- Possession of weapons while on school property or at school-sponsored events
- Hazing
- Bullying

We have read, understand, and agree to the CODE OF CONDUCT as outlined above.

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT NAME

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX C - ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM POLICY

It is expected that all course work submitted for the purpose of meeting online course requirements represents the original efforts of the individual students. This includes, but is not limited to exams, homework, assignments, essays, research, and other forms of assessment. All work submitted by a student should be a true reflection of his/her own effort and ability. If this is not the case, then a student will be deemed to have exhibited unacceptable academic behavior and will be subject to disciplinary action. All stakeholders, including school administrators, faculty/staff, Assigned Mentors, students, and families are integral contributors to upholding the highest degree of academic integrity in our NE Cyber Academy.

Plagiarism is defined as copying/stealing and passing off as one's own, the ideas or words of another, using someone else's created product without crediting the source, or committing literary theft.

Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- Turning in a paper retrieved from an Internet source as one's own work
- Using another student's work in whole or part and handing it in as one's own work
- Using information from an encyclopedia, text, website, database, etc., without citing the source
- Using another person's idea, opinion, or theory without citing the source
- Using any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings, pictures, sounds, or other pieces of information which are found from any source that is not common knowledge, without citing the source
- Using quotations of another person's actual spoken or written word without citing the source
- Paraphrasing another person's unique ideas, spoken or written, without citing the source

Plagiarism has no place in the construct of our NE Cyber Academy programming and will not be tolerated. In accordance, the North East School District will detail the policy on plagiarism as:

- Plagiarism will result in an automatic "Zero" (grade) on identified assignment
- Instructor and/or Assigned Mentor will provide written documentation of specific infraction
- A conference will be held with the student and online instructor or Assigned Mentor
- Referral to the school building administrator will be made and documented
- Parental contact will be made by school building administrator and/or online instructor
- Where applicable, referral will be made to athletic coach and/or extracurricular advisor

If plagiarism is found to have taken place, the student will be expected to redo and resubmit the identified assignment based on instructor specifications. The resulting grade for the resubmitted assignment will be no higher than a "C." Failure to complete this action step will result in an automatic "F" for the particular assignment.

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT NAME

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX D - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY [815]

The North East School District's educational and informational technology resources, including email contact information, device hardware and software, and Internet access are provided to our students for educational purposes. The following policy is put in place to ensure all students are appropriately informed of such expectations which allow for continued success in the NE Cyber Academy.

- All students will respect and protect the privacy of others.
- All students will utilize only their designated account information.
- All students will refrain from viewing, using, or copying passwords, data, or other networks to which they are not authorized.
- All students will not distribute private information about themselves or others.
- All students will respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all technological resources.
- All students will observe and obey all network security practices.
- All students will report security risks and/or violations to their online instructor, Assigned Mentor, or network administrator.
- All students will not destroy or damage any data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission from the owner.
- All students will respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
- All students will not infringe on any copyrighted property.
- All students will not plagiarize.
- All students will respect the practice and principles of communication.
- All students will communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
- All students will report threatening or uncomfortable materials to their online instructor.
- All students will not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create any material that violates the North East School District Code Of Conduct Policy.
- All students will not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create any material that is illegal.
- All students will refrain from using resources that are criminal in nature.
- All students will refrain from sending spam, chain letters, or other unsolicited mass mailings.
- All students will refrain from buying, selling, advertising, or any business-related activity, unless as an approved component of a school project.

We have read and understand the ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY and agree to abide by the standards set forth.

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT NAME

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE