

Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan Template (2020–21)

The instructions for completing the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan is available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lc/documents/lrngcntntyatndncpln-instructions.docx>.

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone
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General Information

[A description of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the LEA and its community.]

As a network of online public charter schools, California Connections Academy (CalCA) provides a high quality fully online educational program per the terms of the charter. With the changes across the world due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the core educational program for CalCA has not changed. While there have been changes to in person activities (such as field trips, school gatherings, student social events and graduation) the day to day educational program for students has continued without interruption. All curriculum, instruction, instructional support etc. that is normally provided in our program has continued. The only exception is that students with IEPs who have face to face support services in their IEP had those services temporarily changed so that they are provided remotely, such as through video or phone calls, while public health orders are still in place.

Stakeholder Engagement

[A description of the efforts made to solicit stakeholder feedback.]

On May 28, 2020, we held our spring School Advisory Committee meeting. The meeting was attended by nearly 175 stakeholders. This meeting was done in a virtual webinar meeting room. Parents were able to provide feedback both in the chat pod and through a Google Form distributed at the conclusion of the meeting. Also, on August 25, 2020, we had our Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan public hearing in our regularly scheduled board meeting. In addition, we held our fall School Advisory Committee on September 10, 2020. This meeting also had nearly 170 attendees. This meeting was held in the virtual webinar room, and a poll pod was made available to provide direct feedback on the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan.

[A description of the options provided for remote participation in public meetings and public hearings.]

The School Advisory Committee meetings were only available through an internet connected device. Phone participation was unavailable, however, families must have a computer and the internet to attend our school. We also hold monthly public meetings of the Board of Directors for the organization. The meetings are publicized in accordance with the Brown Act and are held via teleconference in accordance with board policy. During the pandemic when the school offices were closed, members of the public still had the opportunity to call in to the meeting to listen and/or provide input to the Board. The board agenda always provides open input to the public on both agenda items and non-agenda items, including public hearings.

[A summary of the feedback provided by specific stakeholder groups.]

There were two main areas of feedback provided through the School Advisory Committee and these themes echoed in both meetings. The first focused on the area of providing socialization activities. The second focused on providing school based social and emotional well-being supports.

[A description of the aspects of the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan that were influenced by specific stakeholder input.]

The main aspect of the plan influenced by the stakeholder input was the section on mental health and social and emotional well-being, a component of which will be virtual socialization opportunities.

Continuity of Learning

In-Person Instructional Offerings

[A description of the actions the LEA will take to offer classroom-based instruction whenever possible, particularly for students who have experienced significant learning loss due to school closures in the 2019–2020 school year or are at a greater risk of experiencing learning loss due to future school closures.]

California Connections Academy is a fully online virtual school. As part of our regular program when we are not restricted by public health orders, we offer a variety of in person educational and socialization events, such as field trips and festivals, however none of these are required for the academic aspect of our school. We do offer all mandated standardized testing face to face, in non-pandemic times, and students in the grade levels being tested must attend, unless a waiver is provided. Once the shelter in place order was issued on March 19, 2020, California Connections Academy did not host any in person events. We will continue to closely monitor all shelter in place orders issued by the state and will resume face to face activities once deemed safe to do so.

Actions Related to In-Person Instructional Offerings [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Description	Total Funds	Contributing
[A description of what the action is; may include a description of how the action contributes to increasing or improving services]		

Distance Learning Program

Continuity of Instruction

[A description of how the LEA will provide continuity of instruction during the school year to ensure pupils have access to a full curriculum of substantially similar quality regardless of the method of delivery, including the LEA's plan for curriculum and instructional resources that will ensure instructional continuity for pupils if a transition between in-person instruction and distance learning is necessary.]

CalCA strives to set a new standard for virtual education excellence in California. Students have benefitted from a top-quality curriculum that meets all California Common Core State Standards for many years. Each student has one or more fully qualified California-certified teacher working with expert curriculum specialists to tailor the curriculum to meet that student's individual learning needs. More than an online school, CalCA is a virtual K-12 learning community that connects students, teachers, and families through unique technology tools as well as synchronous and one-on-one interaction. Students and their families can count on sophisticated support for their curriculum, technology, special education, and digital learning platform needs, so that they can focus on academic progress and achievement. Consistent with applicable law, as a virtual school, CalCA serves students in grades TK-12. CalCA represents an outstanding educational choice which provides high quality distance learning for enrolled families.

Access to Devices and Connectivity

[A description of how the LEA will ensure access to devices and connectivity for all pupils to support distance learning.]

During the enrollment and registration process, caretakers are asked if they have a device or need one. If they indicate that they need a device, a Windows based laptop will be provided on loan. Families may also apply for an internet subsidy which is provided on a reimbursement basis. Our foster and homeless students are eligible to receive both a laptop and a WiFi hotspot on loan.

Pupil Participation and Progress

[A description of how the LEA will assess pupil progress through live contacts and synchronous instructional minutes, and a description of how the LEA will measure participation and time value of pupil work.]

Each student in every grade must communicate with a teacher at least once every two (2) weeks. In addition, parents/legal guardians (or their qualified designee) must communicate with their student's teacher(s) on a regular basis, with the frequency to be determined by the teacher based on the student's grade level and progress in the program. These required reports (also known as contacts) occur in person,

by phone, or via LiveLesson® real-time instructional sessions, at a mutually agreed upon time and date. Meetings and contacts are documented in log entries. The student and Learning Coach agree to report the student's attendance and lesson completion on a daily basis. The student and Learning Coach agree to submit student original work samples to the school by the stated school deadlines, typically once per month at a minimum. Work should be submitted, via an online "drop box" or via email submission. On occasion, and with approval of the course teacher, work may be submitted via U.S. Mail, in person or via fax. Parents/guardians/caretakers will ensure their student participates in all assessments as required by the school program.

Student evaluation will incorporate a variety of methods that may include, but are not limited to: portfolio items, review of assignments by teachers and the Learning Coach, observation, teacher-made evaluations, online assessments, proctored exams, any other mailed or electronic work to be graded, and written and oral tests and quizzes. Submission of original portfolio and original student work samples by the stated school deadlines is required to participate in the program.

Activities selected as a means to reach the objectives may include, but are not limited to: core curriculum materials, reading, independent research, essays, term papers, flash cards, illustrations, oral and written reports, demonstrations, participation, lesson exercises, games, comprehension questions, computer programs, field trips, simulations, discussions, note-taking, videos, and other educational activities.

Teachers evaluate the time value of pupil work on a monthly basis and award attendance credit based on this evaluation, in accordance with all regulations applicable to independent study programs and non-classroom based charter schools. Teachers can monitor student participation in lessons and assessments in real time using the tools provided in the Learning Management System, Connexus.

Distance Learning Professional Development

[A description of the professional development and resources that will be provided to staff to support the distance learning program, including technological support.]

When newly hired, CalCA teachers participate in rigorous asynchronous professional development prior to teaching their classes. Professional development topics include: an overview of the learning management system (LMS), the communications tool in the LMS, LMS tools for families, the curriculum, student enrichment and support offerings, enrollment, placement, withdrawal, delivering instruction through a webinar platform, internet safety, modifying and accommodating students with IEPs and English learners, identifying and supporting students in distress in a virtual school. These listed topics are reinforced during the school year through follow up, primarily through synchronous, professional development sessions and professional learning communities tailored to the grade level and subject area(s) taught. CalCA provides a 800 phone number to staff, families, and students to access technical support during school hours.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

[A description of the new roles and responsibilities of affected staff as a result of COVID-19.]

As an existing online school, there are very few new roles and responsibilities of affected staff as a result of COVID-19. Some office based staff had to relocate from the business office to their homes. The essential staff that do need to report to the office have been trained on and implement the California Department of Public Health and the CDC safety guidelines, such as wearing masks and disinfecting surfaces. Staff go to the office for essential tasks only, such as receiving mail and working with student records. The largest impact for CalCA staff

was not a result of their employment with our school, but the impact of the return of school aged children and significant others who could no longer go to their educational organization or their place of business as a result of the statewide shelter in place order. Some additional staff duties were added to address such things as the office schedule, purchasing of PPE and disinfection supplies, and sharing best practices for online learning with other organizations.

Supports for Pupils with Unique Needs

[A description of the additional supports the LEA will provide during distance learning to assist pupils with unique needs, including English learners, pupils with exceptional needs served across the full continuum of placements, pupils in foster care, and pupils who are experiencing homelessness.]

Some of the supports provided for students with special needs in our virtual school program include: built in assistive technology such as Dragon Naturally Speaking Software, additional support for parents and caretakers newly navigating distance learning, increased 1:1 support from teaching staff, and additional 1:1 devices offered for students with exceptional needs, (as well as for foster and homeless students), as well as ongoing collaboration with related service providers to determine the effectiveness of virtual services. Homeless and foster students are placed into a special support 'section' with a Homeless/Foster Liaison who will then reach out to the family to check to see what types of supports they need and provide information regarding resources available in their specific city/county.

Actions related to the Distance Learning Program [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Description	Total Funds	Contributing
[A description of what the action is; may include a description of how the action contributes to increasing or improving services]		

Pupil Learning Loss

[A description of how the LEA will address pupil learning loss that results from COVID-19 during the 2019–2020 and 2020–21 school years, including how the LEA will assess pupils to measure learning status, particularly in the areas of English language arts, English language development, and mathematics.]

Many factors exist as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic which contribute to pupil learning loss. Being that the specific cause of the learning loss is difficult to ascertain, and in addition, that mitigating the cause may be nearly impossible while the conditions of the pandemic exist, CalCA will focus on identifying the amount of loss and will conduct strategies to accelerate learning where needed. CalCA will utilize formative diagnostic assessments to determine the current baseline of students achievement levels in English language arts, math, and English language development. In grades TK-8, the diagnostic system provided by i-Ready will be utilized. In the high school, NWEA MAP will be utilized. We are still in the planning stages for ELD specific diagnostic, however, progress is being made in this area. At this time, the plan is for ELD teachers to analyze i-Ready and MAP data that overlaps with the ELD domains.

Pupil Learning Loss Strategies

[A description of the actions and strategies the LEA will use to address learning loss and accelerate learning progress for pupils, as needed, including how these strategies differ for pupils who are English learners; low-income; foster youth; pupils with exceptional needs; and pupils experiencing homelessness.]

The actions and strategies to be used to address learning loss will be delivered through instructional delivery and curriculum. Students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 services will be taught in small groups of 5 - 10. In addition, students will be guided through the i-Ready intervention curriculum individualized to their needs. At the high school level credit deficient students will be placed in a program called Project Success. Within this program, credit deficient students are clustered within a specific homeroom. Homeroom teachers are strategically selected from the four core subject areas and electives in order to accelerate the credit recovery for those students most at risk of not graduating on time. Our ELD students are either placed in a homeroom with their ELD teacher or closely monitored by an ELD teacher. Students with exceptional needs will have their services minutes tracked in order to ensure all elements of the IEP are implemented. Homeless and foster students will be placed into a special 'section' with the Homeless/Foster Liaison who will then reach out to the family to check to see what types of supports they need and provide information regarding resources available in their specific city/county.

Effectiveness of Implemented Pupil Learning Loss Strategies

[A description of how the effectiveness of the services or supports provided to address learning loss will be measured.]

All diagnostic assessments will be administered three times. This will provide a data source for both the amount of learning loss and the level of mitigated learning loss during the 20-21 school year. Student progress after each diagnostic round will be closely analyzed and services and strategies will be modified based on the results. In addition, data triangulation amongst all pertinent data sources will be analyzed, both during the 20-21 school year results and historical results as available. Sources of this data include but are not limited to: diagnostic assessment results, pass rates, graduation rate, letter grade analysis, and summative assessment results. This historical analysis will provide a measure of the mitigated learning loss year over year.

Actions to Address Pupil Learning Loss [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Description	Total Funds	Contributing
[A description of what the action is; may include a description of how the action contributes to increasing or improving services]		

Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being

[A description of how the LEA will monitor and support mental health and social and emotional well-being of pupils and staff during the school year, including the professional development and resources that will be provided to pupils and staff to address trauma and other impacts of COVID-19 on the school community.]

To begin, CalCA has a credentialed counselor to student ratio of 200 to 1, which is below the American School Counselors Association's recommended 250 to 1. This lower ratio allows for a more personalized support of our students. The counseling department has a well defined and communicated method for identifying, monitoring, and supporting students in distress. In addition, twice per year, all school staff are trained in how to identify students in distress and how to communicate this with the appropriate member of the counseling department. When needed, students are referred to virtual mental health services. The counseling department also hosts a virtual anxiety and depression group that meets on a regular basis. CalCA is also working on ways to increase the number of virtual socialization activities such as virtual social lounges and virtual interest based clubs. The CalCA staff have also convened a diversity and inclusion focus group.

Pupil and Family Engagement and Outreach

[A description of pupil engagement and outreach, including the procedures for tiered reengagement strategies for pupils who are absent from distance learning and how the LEA will provide outreach to pupils and their parents or guardians, including in languages other than English, when pupils are not meeting compulsory education requirements, or if the LEA determines the pupil is not engaging in instruction and is at risk of learning loss.]

As a non-classroom based charter school, CalCA is subject to all independent study education code and regulations. One key requirement is the board approved Independent Study Policy. To foster each student's success in Independent Study, the Board establishes the following maximum lengths of time which may elapse between the time an assignment is made and date by which the student must complete the assigned work shall be as follows:

For Grades K-12, no more than four (4) school weeks may elapse between when a teacher makes an assignment and the date by which a student must complete the assigned work ("Assignment Time"). Where special or extenuating circumstances exist, and this set time limit cannot be met, the grade level Administrator or designee may approve a period not to exceed an additional 4 (four) weeks. (Education Code 51747 (a))

Because the California Connections Academy Schools programs are virtual schools using the Independent Study model, it is crucial that teachers know that a student is completing adequate work under their Independent Study Agreement to make educational progress at a rate similar to a classroom based program. There are several methods by which teachers can evaluate if a student is benefitting from delivery of their education through the Independent Study model. In addition to completing assigned lessons and assessments, and submitting original student work to the teachers, direct contact between the teacher and the student, using the means set out in the Master Agreement, is essential in a virtual program.

Therefore, all of these criteria are considered to be the equivalent of “assignments” (as per Education Code § 51747 (b)) for the California Connections Academy Schools program:

- Substantial and substantive direct contact between the student and teacher (as defined in the Master Agreement), OR:
- Active Participation in the program as evidenced by satisfactory completion of assigned lessons and assessments; OR
- Submission of the required original student work samples (and/or “portfolio items”) to the certificated employee(s) assigned to the student for evaluation.

The following constitutes the definition of a “missed assignment” (as per Education Code 51747 (b)) for the California Connections Academy program:

- Failure to conduct a direct contact (as defined in the Master Agreement) between the student and teacher (the supervisory teacher and/or other assigned teachers)
- A “participation rate” of less than seventy percent (70%) in the school’s Learning Management System
- Failure to submit required and assigned work samples, assessments and/or portfolio items to the school

As per Education Code § 51747, the Board has determined that the following number of missed assignments, as defined above, will trigger an evaluation of whether it is in the best interests of the student to remain in Independent Study:

- Missing two (2) consecutive contact appointments between the student and teacher
- A “participation rate” of less than seventy percent (70%) in the school’s Learning Management System over a period of four (4) weeks
- Failure to submit the required and assigned work samples, assessments and/or portfolio items for one (1) school month

The evaluation triggered by the missed assignments will be delivered to the parents, and to the student if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age. Written evaluation findings shall also be kept in the student's school record. (Education Code § 51747 (b)). If the student fails to address the issues which led to the evaluation within one week of the delivery of the written evaluation, and with prior written notice to the student’s parent/guardian, the school may withdraw the student as a result of the student’s non-compliance with the Master Agreement.

Throughout all communications during this process, every attempt is made to do so in the home language of the caretaker.

School Nutrition

[A description of how the LEA will provide nutritionally adequate meals for all pupils, including those students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, when pupils are participating in both in-person instruction and distance learning, as applicable.]

CalCA is a virtual charter schools and instruction is delivered exclusively online. The school is defined under state law as non-classroom based using the independent study model. The school does offer certain face to face, in-person activities which normally include but are not limited to educational field trips, college tours, social activities such as dances, picnics and other gatherings, graduation and honors ceremonies, and mandated state testing. Of these, none are considered “classroom instruction” by school policy. While on occasion these in-person activities may exceed two hours in length, they are not held in facilities operated by the school, so meals are not required to be offered under state law (California Education Code 47613.5(b)). We do not have a cafeteria facility. The school does provide families with information about meal resources in their local communities.

Additional Actions to Implement the Learning Continuity Plan [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Section	Description	Total Funds	Contributing
	No additional actions are planned at this time.		

Increased or Improved Services for Foster Youth, English Learners, and Low-Income Students

Percentage to Increase or Improve Services	Increased Apportionment based on the Enrollment of Foster Youth, English Learners, and Low-Income students
0%	0

Required Descriptions

[For the actions being provided to an entire school, or across the entire school district or county office of education (COE), an explanation of (1) how the needs of foster youth, English learners, and low-income students were considered first, and (2) how these actions are effective in meeting the needs of these students.]

All pertinent data sources are disaggregated by student group including, foster youth, English learner, and low-income students. Data was analyzed first and services to assist these groups were given higher priority. Unfortunately, the reality is that for these groups there are achievement gaps with other student groups. As a result, summer school options and interventions were only made available to students that were struggling. We did not offer any summer enrichment programs. We have found success with our summer program. 77% of the courses taken received a passing grade and of the students in their last year of high school who participated, 85% graduated as a result of summer school.

[A description of how services for foster youth, English learners, and low-income students are being increased or improved by the percentage required.]

Based on the adopted state budget for 2020-21, the school will not receive any additional funding for unduplicated students, therefore the services provided do not need to be increased, however the school will CONTINUE to provide the following services as it has in previous years, and will attempt to provide these services to all unduplicated students enrolled during the 2020-21 school year, regardless of the fact that no additional funding will be received. Because it is anticipated that the number of unduplicated students enrolled will actually INCREASE during the 2020-21 school year, additional general purpose and federal funds will be needed to continue to provide services at the same level as in previous years.

1. Maintain the compensation packages of teachers in order to retain highly effective teachers trained in virtual school instruction
2. Maintain student technology assistance to provide additional technology and internet service
3. Continue services for English Language Learner students, in particular by adding further supporting the credit based courses for high school ELL students and developing procedures to address LTEL students
4. Continue the support provided in several areas, including math intervention, high school staffing, and liaisons dedicated to homeless and foster youth support
5. Continue credit recovery options for at risk students, including additional funds for the summer school program which will be used for students who are at the highest risk of not graduating on time