



North Carolina Virtual Public School



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Executive Summary of 2007-2008 Results
Prepared for the North Carolina State Board of Education

By Dr. Bryan Setser
Executive Director
North Carolina Virtual Public School
Learn and Earn Online

I. Enrollment Highlights

A. NCVPS Enrollment

Summer 2007 - 6,468
Fall 2007 - 5,835
Spring 2008 - 6,930
Summer 2008 – 3,100 minus credit recovery
Fall 2008 – 3,232
Total Enrollment: 25,565

B. LEO Enrollment

Fall 2007 - 3,471
Spring 2008 - 5,917
Total 2007-2008 - 9,388

II. Academic Highlights

- A. Spring 2008: 45 of the 52 courses or 86.5% had students score above 70% on course grades
- B. Alg I: 71% passed the course; EOC scores rose 11 points from Summer 2007 to Spring 2008. EOC scores approaching Manning/Easley Standard
English I: 78% passed the course; EOC scores rose over 14 points from Summer of 2007 to Spring 2008. EOC scores approaching Manning/Easley Standard

AP Earth / Environmental Science: (91%) passed the course
AP Human Geography: (89%) passed the course
Civics and Economics Honors: (98%) passed the course

Latin 1: (84%) passed the course
Latin 2: (93%) passed the course
Mandarin Chinese: (71%) passed the course
Pre-Calculus Honors: (77%) passed the course
Psychology Honors: (87%) passed the course
Spanish 3 Honors: (94%) passed the course

LEO: 2.7 GPA in all classes – Spring 2008
Latin: 10 cum laude students at or above the national merit level

Onslow County Morehead scholar: completed five courses online during the interview phase and received the award at the completion of the process
Catawba Student: 32 credits online and will pay for and complete his first college year while in high school
Pender Student: Will complete high school at age 15.

Access, Use and Capacity of North Carolina Technology: Rank of 10th nationally on education Week study and report – February 2008.

C. Credit Recovery Update

E-learning proposals have been heard per the North Carolina State Board Policy on e-learning. The following providers have been grandfathered to work with school districts this Fall of 2008. Although not a single provider has data regarding EOC results in credit recovery classes, they did provide data as to how many districts were currently being served.

Apex: 11
Odyssey Ware: 2
EPIC: 1
Virtual High School: 21
PLATO: 26
Pearson/NovaNet: 57
Robeson County Virtual: 12

NCVPS has 150 students enrolled in Algebra I and English I credit recovery this summer of 2008. At present, 5 of 7 students have tested out of mastery models and passed the EOC. The other students are on pace to test out of all mastery modules in the coming weeks.

After a year in beta development, NCVPS will offer state wide credit recovery in Algebra I and English I this fall on a mastery pace schedule. This Spring, NCVPS will offer credit recovery in the following courses:

Algebra II
Geometry
Civics
US History
Physical Science
English IV

Our recommendation after a year of study is that we need to develop our own content and ensure that districts choose our services first as the free provider. We are working on procedures in the coming months that will establish tiers of providers and how schools and/or LEAs will be processed if they do not utilize the free resources of North Carolina Virtual Public School and/or Learn and Earn Online as the primary option for e-learning in North Carolina. More details will be shared and taken through the leadership for innovation committee in the coming months.

III. Friday Institute for Innovation – NC State Evaluation Report Highlights

A. Overview of Procedures

1. Survey questions written with NCVPS staff input to inform strategic goals and objectives
2. Online surveys distributed spring 2008 to multiple stakeholder audiences
3. Questions were matched allowing for an analysis of any differences in group perception

B. Participation

1. 1648 students
2. 97 teachers
3. 150 school based distance learning advisors
4. 54 district level DLA
5. 19 Counselors
6. 12 Principals
7. 16 Tech Directors
8. 4 Superintendents

C. Summative Recommendations from the Evaluation Report

Recommendation 1

Standardize student preparation activities prior to course start-up's (e.g., orientations). Ensure DLAs are aware of role responsibilities.

Evidence from findings

On several pre-course preparation measures, the percentage of students who agreed they received a service or support hovered between 50-60%, suggesting room for improvement.

NCVPS Strategic Response

Second life, virtual worlds, video capture, and wimba live classroom all help to address orientation for students using 21st Century tools in 21st Century environments.

Recommendation 2

Teacher professional development should emphasize how to teach in an online environment. Summer sessions in subject-specific cohorts requested.

Evidence from findings

While student ratings of teacher quality bested 70% on most variables, students provided numerous suggestions for how teachers could improve their online teaching by actually teaching/explaining through podcasts or live conferences, supporting peer-peer collaboration, etc.

NCVPS Strategic Response

The April 2008 high five process development, online professional development, pre-learning modules in e-learning communities, and face to face sessions in Chapel Hill this summer all help to address teaching in an online environment.

Recommendation 3

Allocate additional time and resources to the technical preparation of students taking NCVPS courses.

Evidence from findings

Fewer than 40% of surveyed teachers felt students were technically prepared to take NCVPS courses compared to 75.9% of surveyed students who generally agreed they were technically prepared.

NCVPS Strategic Response

Student open houses, community virtual open houses, parent accounts, and flash video capture help students with technical training. Moreover, increased distance learning advisor white papers and procedures also addresses this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

Continue to improve course designs, assignments, and teaching methods to improve the perception of NCVPS courses compared to face-to-face.

Evidence from findings

Numerous students provided suggestions to improve course content, assignment structures, and teaching methods.

NCVPS Strategic Response

Gaming partnerships, training for graphic user interface design, and tighter revision cycles with high five teams helps ensure this recommendation's success.

Recommendation 5

Investigate procedures and tools that will make communication between and across stakeholder groups more standardized and efficient.

Evidence from findings

Students desired quicker feedback and more one-on-one contact with instructors, as well as opportunities to collaborate with peers. Teachers and DLAs desired procedures that would make it easier and more efficient to contact and work with students, parents, and each other.

NCVPS Strategic Response

Blogs, wikis, voice over IP, Skype, and other tools have increased two way interactions and communication. Moreover, the Blackboard e-PLC community and teacher boat dock have helped to establish more consistent practices and methods for communication across stakeholder groups.

Recommendation 6

Train teachers and DLAs to set expectations for their roles and standardize the level of communication expected of them with repercussions if high quality expectations are not met.

Evidence from findings

Student data indicated the quality of communication varied considerably by teacher and DLA.

NCVPS Strategic Response

A reorganization of leadership within NCVPS and two way communication methods for teachers and distance learning advisors has vastly improved over the Spring 2008 semester. Next steps will include dashboard data systems and iGoogle as a tracking mechanism.

Recommendation 7

Explore the potential benefits of public-private partnerships with NCVPS.

Evidence from findings

Students generally agreed that NCVPS collaboration with a business or organization would be appealing, and provided numerous suggestions for partnerships. Teachers and DLAs were unaware of any external partnerships, thus little progress has been made on this objective.

NCVPS Strategic Response

The Lockheed Martin public private partnership we are proposing would be the first of its kind in the country where gaming modules and full courses are developed and beta tested for student use on personal computers, multiple computers, and/or mobile computing. More details to come on this project this Fall of 2008.