



April- May 2020 Directors Report

NEO Adult Education

Student Enrollment and Performance

- NEO has 53 students engaged in remote learning since the building closed for COVID-19.
- NEO AE has held 3 different remote intake sessions, and a total of 5 new students attended remote intake. These experiences were helpful as first steps to learn best practices for remote registration.
- These numbers are, of course, lower than the number of students we see engaging in classes at NEO during April and May of previous years; however, 48 students stuck with their studies as classes were abruptly shifted to an online only format and 5 students were brave enough to start their studies in the midst of a global pandemic. While the numbers may be lower than our “normal” numbers, I believe that these numbers show the courage and resilience of our students and their willingness to adapt to dramatic change very quickly.

Program Updates

- NEO staff is already working together to plan for hybrid instruction next year so that students don't lose momentum in the event COVID-19 continues to impact the ability to engage in face-to-face instruction.
- The NEO staff has risen to the challenges of shifting classes to an online only format beautifully. They are engaging with students and providing quality content. They are helping their students build digital literacy skills while also improving their own. I was blown away to watch one of my teachers easily navigate in Zoom and switch between the white board function and the online curriculum platform with ease. She was able to bring her traditional classroom style into the virtual space.
- One of my teachers brought me the staff handbook at the beginning of the year and asked me if AE was really required to have e-learning days on snow days. This teacher was very resistant to the idea of remote instruction. Now, this same teacher is excited about the possibilities that remote instruction can bring and believes that this could be a way for NEO to engage a new demographic of students moving forward.

New Vistas High School

Student Enrollment and Performance

- The attendance rate for April was 93.9%. Although attendance looks good, we are trying to qualify what this means for remote learning and engagement, rather than just checking in with an email.
- Credit Completion remains a focus for Term 3. Many New Vistas students continue to struggle academically. Some homes no longer respond/answer phone calls. 87 students are failing one or more classes. Of these, 60 are minors and 27 are 18 years or older. Teachers and paraprofessionals continue to work with these students; the Term 3 end-date has been extended for them through June 11.
- Graduate list: There are 55 students on the graduate list; 45 of them are on track. The NVHS team continues to reach out to the 10 students to get them back on track.

High School Equivalency Testing

- There were no testers for the HSE or Para-Pro in April or May. We are planning limited HSE and Para-Pro testing in mid to late June.

Financial Updates

- NEO was awarded a \$8,000 grant from Dollar General to support the technology update (phase 1) we began this school year that included upgrading to Windows 10, retiring 65 OLD laptops and desktops, and purchasing 108 Chrome Books.
- New Vistas High School will receive \$31,000 in Title CARES funds to offset costs directly associated with COVID.

Facility Update

- NEO's tenants, Corral Martial Arts and the Medical Career Academy requested and were granted rent deferments for the months of April and May. The Medical Career Academy moved out in May. All rink rentals have been cancelled through the end of June.
- The party interested in renting Suite 5 for a childcare business has put plans on hold until summer.
- SunFunded, after a temporary hiatus, will be presenting their zoning application to Portage's Board of Zoning Appeals on Tuesday, May 26, 2020. They expressed some issues with their negotiations with NIPSCO regarding a favorable connectivity agreement.
- Relator Belinda Schuster reported that she has a client interested in the lot for sale. Very preliminary. We do need to legally split the lot into two – ½ for sale and the other ½ for the solar panels.

Personnel and Professional Development

- Administrators, teachers, and staff continue to participate in various online trainings on such topics as: engaging students remotely, distance learning/instruction best practices, and technology skills.
- AE Director Adrienne Carrol reports that one teacher is striving to be comfortable using online tools such as Zoom and Google Classroom to their fullest, and has spent hours (and hours) of time on Zoom conferences with her building his skills so that he is better able to bring his quality teaching skills into the virtual space. She is thrilled to watch the NEO staff challenge themselves to develop new skills and grow as teachers.
- The New Vistas team continues to work on targeted school improvement trainings including "High Priorities in the Digital Classroom."
- Teacher observations and evaluations are occurring remotely.
- Intent to Return forms were emailed to all staff and 2020-2021 calendars, schedules, and assignment are being finalized.
- NEO is posting for the position of Enrollment and Career Coach for 2020-2021.

Community Connections

- Rebecca is working with Project Neighbors, Center Township Trustee, Porter County Career and Technical Center, the Construction Roundtable Foundation, WorkOne, and other partners to launch a pilot Construction Training Program for July or August.
- Rotary and Kiwanis are meeting weekly via Zoom.

REMINDER

Next Board Meeting Via Zoom on Thursday May 28, 2020

