

2012

NCVPS Annual Report



North Carolina Virtual Public School
October 2012



North Carolina Virtual Public School

- Provides high school courses to over 50,000 students per year
- Serves all 115 school districts, plus over 20 charter schools
- Offers over 100 courses that include core studies, Advanced Placement, Career Technical Education and World Languages
- Provides mastery-based credit recovery courses with a NC-certified teacher
- Provides a nationally recognized Occupational Course of Study program
- Provides peer tutoring services that are nationally recognized by the US Department of Education

"eLearning opens up a whole new world of educational opportunities for North Carolinians. No matter where you call home, with the click of a mouse you can have the power to manage your education, further your career, and increase your job choices. So check out your elearning options and decide: Where will you learn today?"

- Governor Beverly Perdue



- NCVPS Advisory Board**
- Jamie Barnett
 - Myra Best
 - Dr. Randy Bledsoe
 - Richard Boyd
 - Dr. Amy Cheney
 - Melanie Chernoff
 - Dr. Ed Dunlap
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 - Lucas Gillispie
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 - Jane Smith Patterson
 - Dr. Susan Purser
 - Kimberly Reynolds
 - Dr. Elaine Rideout
 - David Scholl
 - Dawn Shepard Pope
 - Melissa Thibault
 - Rep. Joe Tolson

NCVPS Mission

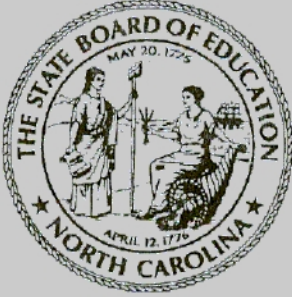
NCVPS provides blended learning and leadership opportunities to empower globally competitive students.

Vision

To be a world-class model of blended learning for a new generation of global learners.

Values

- Student learning focus
- Relationship building through clear and timely communication
- Family matters--our people are our most valuable resource
- Stakeholder involvement and teamwork
- Collaborative systems before silos
- Continuous improvement for high performing results
- Data-driven innovation
- Accountability for all stakeholders



LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Education Leader,

The 2011-12 academic year saw NCVPS achieve milestones that continue to establish North Carolina as a leader in virtual learning. Nearly 50,000 students across the state enrolled in courses from over 115 AP, Honors, Traditional, Credit Recovery, and OCS Blended course offerings. These students came from all 115 LEAs in North Carolina as well as over thirty Charter Schools. This state has truly achieved the goal of providing quality learning opportunities to every North Carolina student regardless of zip code. Additionally, NCVPS opened enrollment to non-public students for the first time. This is an area we believe will see much growth in the coming years.

This was a fantastic year for the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Blended Program. In March, NCVPS Teacher of the Year, Leslie Fetzer, was named the 2012 National Online Teacher of the Year by SREB and iNACOL. Ms. Fetzer is an OCS Biology teacher for NCVPS as well as Course Development Lead for the OCS Blended Program. In July, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills recognized the unique work of the NCVPS OCS Blended Program in working with Exceptional Children with the *Achievement in 21st Century Education John Wilson Award*.

NCVPS seeks to continue to expand the blended learning model with the Race to the Top Blended STEM courses. The first three courses: Integrated Math I, Earth/Environmental Science, and Forensics, completed development and will be implemented in pilot LEAs this year. The focus of this project is to bring high quality online courses in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics to students who are considered at risk in those content areas.

NCVPS continues to seek ways to increase access to high quality online content and instruction. This past year saw the first round of extensive revisions to all NCVPS courses in order to align them to the newly adopted Common Core and Essential Standards as well as to a unified instructional model that embraces Universal Design for Learning and accessibility standards. The goal is to complete the revisions over the next couple of years and then to share the courses and resources with the public schools and teachers of North Carolina.

North Carolina has much to be proud of in the area of Virtual Learning!

Sincerely,



Dr. Tracy Weeks
Interim Executive Director

OVERVIEW OF NCVPS

Thanks to the leadership of Governor Beverly Perdue, the NC General Assembly, and the E-Learning Commission, students benefit from online learning opportunities supported by highly qualified teachers regardless of their geographic location or economic circumstances. As a supplemental service, NCVPS continues to provide students with expanded academic options by offering online courses (AP, Honors, World Languages, etc.), online services such as test preparation, career planning services, credit recovery, and Occupational Course of Study (OCS) courses to North Carolina students. The courses use cutting-edge learning management and collaborative software to maximize student interaction in each class. Highly qualified teachers use the latest online and mobile technologies to engage students as well as prepare them to be career and college ready.

The North Carolina Virtual Public School has served over 175,000 middle and high school students since its initial launch in the summer of 2007. Here is a list of the accomplishments, facts, and recognition received by NCVPS during 2011-2012:

- 80.77% passing rate
- Leslie Fetzer recognized as the North Carolina Online Teacher of the Year and as the National Online Teacher of the Year
- Teacher-led credit recovery program is nationally recognized model that in the summer of 2012 saw students achieve 71% mastery
- National *Recognition of Achievement in 21st Century Education John Wilson Award* for the blended learning Occupational Course of Study model created in partnership with NCDPI
- 2nd largest state virtual school in the nation
- Largest course is Success 101 with 2,152 enrollments
- Largest use of NCVPS courses - Charlotte/Mecklenburg Schools with 6,311 enrollments
- Smallest use of NCVPS courses - Lenior County Public Schools with 12 enrollments
- NCVPS provides many services that assist districts in partnering with NCVPS to provide online learning for their students.
- School Support: regional consultants work with school-based liaisons to assist in registration, progress reporting, accountability & leadership development.
- Curriculum Support: services include peer tutoring, world language coaches, teacher-student support (asynchronous and synchronous)
- Technical Support: online helpdesk for students, teachers, parents, and school administrators.
- Leadership Support: modules and training to assist teachers, principals, technology facilitators, central office personnel and superintendents in integrating online learning.

The continued growth of NCVPS depends on building collaborative partnerships with school districts and other educational institutions across the State. NCVPS actively pursues the role of resource provider by working with school systems to create and share course content and learning objects.

Collaborative learning is core to the NCVPS model, so courses will utilize real-time and asynchronous collaborative tools, audio & video, blogs, and cutting-edge assessment tools. Most importantly, courses pair students with highly qualified faculty members from around the world – faculty who, even though they may not live in students' zip codes, become a part of the life of their schools. NCVPS offers young people the opportunity to become globally aware (and globally competitive) while remaining firmly connected to their communities.

HIGHLIGHTS OF NCVPS LEGISLATION AND BUDGET

Funding Formula 2011/2012

Funding for NCVPS is generated by the legislatively mandated funding formula (Session Law 2011-145, Section 7.22). The formula provides funding for instructional costs (teacher pay, instructional leaders pay, and world language coaches pay) and operational/administrative costs. The total budget for NCVPS for 2011/2012 was \$18,616,464. Of that budget, instructional costs were \$15,750,042. Based on enrollment projections, the 2011-12 funding formula generated more funds than were needed to cover instructional fees resulting in \$1,599,003 refunded to school districts. The NCVPS administrative and operational budget for FY 2011-12 was \$2,866,923. The budget included a \$57,339 mandated reduction reserve. The operations budget was \$934,197 and the administrative budget was \$1,932,726 for 21 full-time staff.

Enrollment Reserve Funds

The General Assembly included an enrollment reserve fund in the funding formula legislation of 2011. The \$2,000,000 fund was an ADM reduction based on the number of students in grades 6 through 12 in each LEA. In 2011/2012, the reduction for the enrollment reserve was \$2.57 per student. LEAs and charter schools used \$981,536 from the enrollment reserve in 2011/2012 leaving a balance of \$1,018,464. Legislation directs that each year the reserve be replenished to \$2,000,000 with any balance carrying forward into the new fiscal year. Based on the amount needed to replenish the enrollment reserve, the 2012/2013 per ADM reduction was \$1.29 - a reduction of \$1.28 per ADM.

Funding Formula Changes for 2012/2013 - Session Law 2012-142

Changes to the funding formula made in the 2011 session of the General Assembly were retained, for the most part, in the 2012 short session. New legislation shown below permits more flexibility in funding enrollments when LEAs and charter schools exceed the enrollment projection from the Department of Public Instruction.

NORTH CAROLINA VIRTUAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SECTION 7.12. Section 7.22(k) of S.L. 2011-145 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 7.22.(k) The State Board shall use only funds provided through the North Carolina Virtual Public Schools Allotment Formula and the NCVPS enrollment reserve as set forth in this section to fund instructional costs of NCVPS. The only funds that may be used for the instructional costs of NCVPS are the following:

- (1) Funds provided through the North Carolina Virtual Public Schools Allotment Formula.
- (2) Funds provided through the NCVPS enrollment reserve as set forth in this section.
- (3) Local funds.
- (4) Federal funds.
- (5) Special State Reserve Funds for Children and Youth with Disabilities.
- (6) ADM Contingency Reserve.


Virtual Teacher Salaries

Per Student Teacher Pay	Summer	Block	Year-Long
2009-10	\$225	\$450	\$450
2010-11	\$200 (-11.1%)	\$350 (-22.2%)	\$400 (-11.1%)
2011-12	\$200 (-11.1%)	\$306 (-32%)	\$390 (-13.3%)

In 2011/2012, NCVPS contracted with approximately 700 highly-qualified, North Carolina-certified teachers.

New Registration System Tools

To help LEAs and charter schools manage enrollments in NCVPS courses more effectively, the registration system was modified to provide up-to-date financial data to schools and LEAs. In the past, LEAs and charter schools registered students three separate times each year: Summer semester, Fall/year-long, and Spring semester. NCVPS opened enrollment in the Spring of 2012 and allowed LEAs to register students for all three semesters and year-long courses. A statement of remaining funds report enables LEA staff to get up-to-the-minute balances as they register students. In the example below, the remaining balance information is located in the upper right corner of the screen displayed in orange text showing the LEA has \$11,609 remaining for enrollments.



Hello Test-School! | [Log out](#)

School Year 2012-13: \$1745 of \$13354 (\$11609 remaining)

School Year 2011-12: \$4423 of \$4820 (\$397 remaining)

My Info

Students

Enrollments

Reports

Schools

export registrations to excel for Fall 2012 Spring 2013 export

Enrollments List

1
2
3
4
5
NextSearch

	Course ▲	Semester	Department	Teachers	Section	Open	Enrolled	Max
enroll view	Accounting 1	Fall 2012	CTEC	[]	1	0	20	20
enroll view	Accounting 1	Fall 2012	CTEC	[]	2	0	20	20
enroll view	Accounting 1	Spring 2013	CTEC	[]	1	8	12	20
enroll view	Accounting 1	Summer 2012	CTEC	[]	1	10	10	20
enroll view	Advanced Functions and Modeling	Fall 2012	Math B	[]	1	0	20	20
enroll view	Advanced Functions and Modeling	Fall 2012	Math B	[]	2	0	20	20
enroll view	Advanced Functions and Modeling	Fall 2012	Math B	[]	3	0	20	20
enroll view	Advanced Functions and Modeling	Fall 2012	Math B	[]	4	7	13	20
enroll view	Advanced Functions and Modeling	Spring 2013	Math B	[]	1	2	18	20

REVENUE PLAN

Legislation

SECTION 7.22.(e) In establishing the fee structure and payment structure for NCVPS, the State Board shall consider recommendations from the eLearning Commission and the NCVPS Advisory Board

SECTION 7.22.(f) The State Board shall establish a separate per student tuition for out-of-state students, home-schooled students, and private school students, which shall be adjusted upward from the in-State student fee structure by an amount determined appropriate by the State Board.

SECTION 7.22.(g) NCVPS shall develop a revenue-generating plan for the sale of courses to out-of-state educational entities. NCVPS shall submit its plan to the State Board by September 1, 2011.

Session Law 2011-145 directs NCVPS to:

- develop a plan to sell online courses to out-of-state non-public educational entities and enroll non-public students in-state and out-of-state.
- establish tuition and fees for out-of-state students, home-schooled students, and private school students.
- base tuition for out-of-state students, home-schooled students, and private school students on instructional costs, administrative costs, and a \$100 non-refundable, per-course registration fee.
- implement a pilot program for generating revenue by offering three courses to non-public school students in- and out-of-state during spring semester 2012.

NCVPS Revenue Plan 2011-2013

Phase 1 – School Year 2011-2012 Implementation Pilot

- Pilot was limited to 90 students but only 3 students enrolled
- Offer three courses: SAT Prep, Success 101, Anatomy & Physiology
- Direct outreach to home school and private school students
- Limiting factors were lack of course options and course cost (as cited by parents and private schools)

Phase 2 – School Year 2012-2013 Expansion

- Expand the sale of online courses based on experience gained during the implementation and planning phase.
- Establish a pricing structure for the sale of NCVPS developed online courses.
- Implement a system of payment and accounting processes to:
 - Receive fees for the sale or lease of NCVPS courses
 - Provide timely accounting information to NCVPS
 - Transfer funds to appropriate NCVPS Type 2 account budget lines
- Determine which NCVPS courses have all rights needed for commercial re-sale.
- Determine which NCVPS courses will require minor and major modification for re-sale.
- Develop a catalog of courses that can be sold to other educational entities.
- Publish a catalog of courses that are available for sale.

- Develop a communications/marketing plan
- Develop and implement a marketing/sales communications plan to inform other virtual schools of the courses available for sale through NCVPS.
- Create and publish a course catalog for non-public students.

Non-Public Enrollment

Since December of 2011 the Non-Public School Student Pilot has moved forward in policy, procedure, and enrollment. The pilot initially was planned to begin by Spring 2012. However, the task became much more complex as payment processes and procedures were established. The Non-Public School Student Pilot launched successfully for the Summer semester 2012. NCVPS enrolled and collected payment for four students. Support procedures for those students were in place and each of the four initial students succeeded. One of the enrolled students was a home-school student in North Carolina but is living in Taiwan and taking NCVPS courses. Following the summer session, NCVPS enrolled three more students in the Fall 2012 semester. One of the families and one of the private schools were repeat enrollments adding support that the program can work and be beneficial to both the Non-Public Community and NCVPS.

Student and Parent Testimony

"As a student at a private school, I really hadn't used any type of virtual learning. My virtual SAT Prep class taught me not only what I need to know for the test, but it also introduced me to all sorts of new technological tips and tricks I will use during my face-to-face school year. Though it was a lot of work for the summer class (they aren't lying, it does really take 3-5 hours a day!), I look back and see how much we covered and how much I learned. I am looking forward to next summer so I can take another virtual class!"

Chloe P., Student

"I can't tell you how pleased I was as a parent to see my daughter, currently in private school, experiencing a well developed & worthwhile virtual course this summer. The material & teachers were exceptional and always in close contact with her. And this was no canned computer program. I really feel she got the attention and information she needed and I got my money's worth (and then some)! Thank you NCVPS! We will be back for more..."

Parent of Chloe

Current Non-Public Enrollment

- Nineteen students enrolled for 2012-2013. Twelve private school students and seven home school students are enrolled.
- Course enrollments:
 - SAT Prep/3
 - Psychology/3
 - Success 101/2
 - African American History/3
 - English I/1
 - Latin II/2

- Latin I/2
- Accounting I/1
- Personal Finance/1
- Medieval Studies/1
- Music Theory/1
- Spanish I/1
- Spanish IV Honors/1

Vendor Course Approval Process

The goal of the vendor course approval process is not to limit choices, but to consolidate as many high-quality courses as possible into a menu of options for schools and LEAs.

Scope: The Scope of the process includes the following:

- The approval process covers only courses that are teacher led and taken for initial credit or repeating a course for credit. Repeating a complete course for credit refers to “a high school course repeated via any delivery method when the entire Standard Course of Study for that course is being taught to the student for a second time.”
- NCVPS ensures that courses taken through a variety of vendors meet high quality standards. Quality standards are customized for North Carolina and are based on quality standards for online courses and online instruction developed by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).

2011-2012

- Ten vendors have requested to submit course and teacher quality documents and artifacts: Apex, Aventa, Brigham Young University, Connections Academy, Edison Learning, Education2020, Florida Virtual School, Odyssey Ware, Oklahoma State University, and PLATO.
- Learning/Ed Options.
- Edison Learning submitted six courses for evaluation: Algebra 1, Geometry, Calculus, English 1,
- French 3 and French 4.

Evaluators reviewed Algebra 1 and Geometry and neither course met approval standards primarily due to non-alignment to Common Core and NC Essential Standards.

Edison Learning has chosen to resubmit Algebra 1 and Geometry for re-review and have asked that we hold Calculus and English 1 until they make the necessary revisions align to State standards.

ACADEMIC RESULTS

NCVPS End of Course Test Results 2011/2012

General/Honors/AP Courses											Prior Scores
	Scores					Calculations					
	Non-Reported	1	2	3	4	Total NCVPS Enrollment	Total Scores Reported	Percent Reported	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	2010-11 Percent Proficient
ALG1	109	61	55	156	179	560	451	80.5%	335	74.3%	71.04
BIOL	119	13	19	83	48	282	163	57.8%	131	80.4%	64.12
ENGL	58	26	52	84	52	272	214	78.7%	136	63.6%	63.7

OCS Courses											Prior Scores
	Scores					Calculations					
	Non-Reported	1	2	3	4	Total NCVPS Enrollment	Total Scores Reported	Percent Reported	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	2010-11 Percent Proficient
ALG1	174	952	99	17	1	1243	1069	86.0%	18	1.7%	0.85
BIOL	104	605	230	50	1	990	886	89.5%	51	5.8%	6.22
ENGL	113	599	195	27	0	934	821	87.9%	27	3.3%	3.76

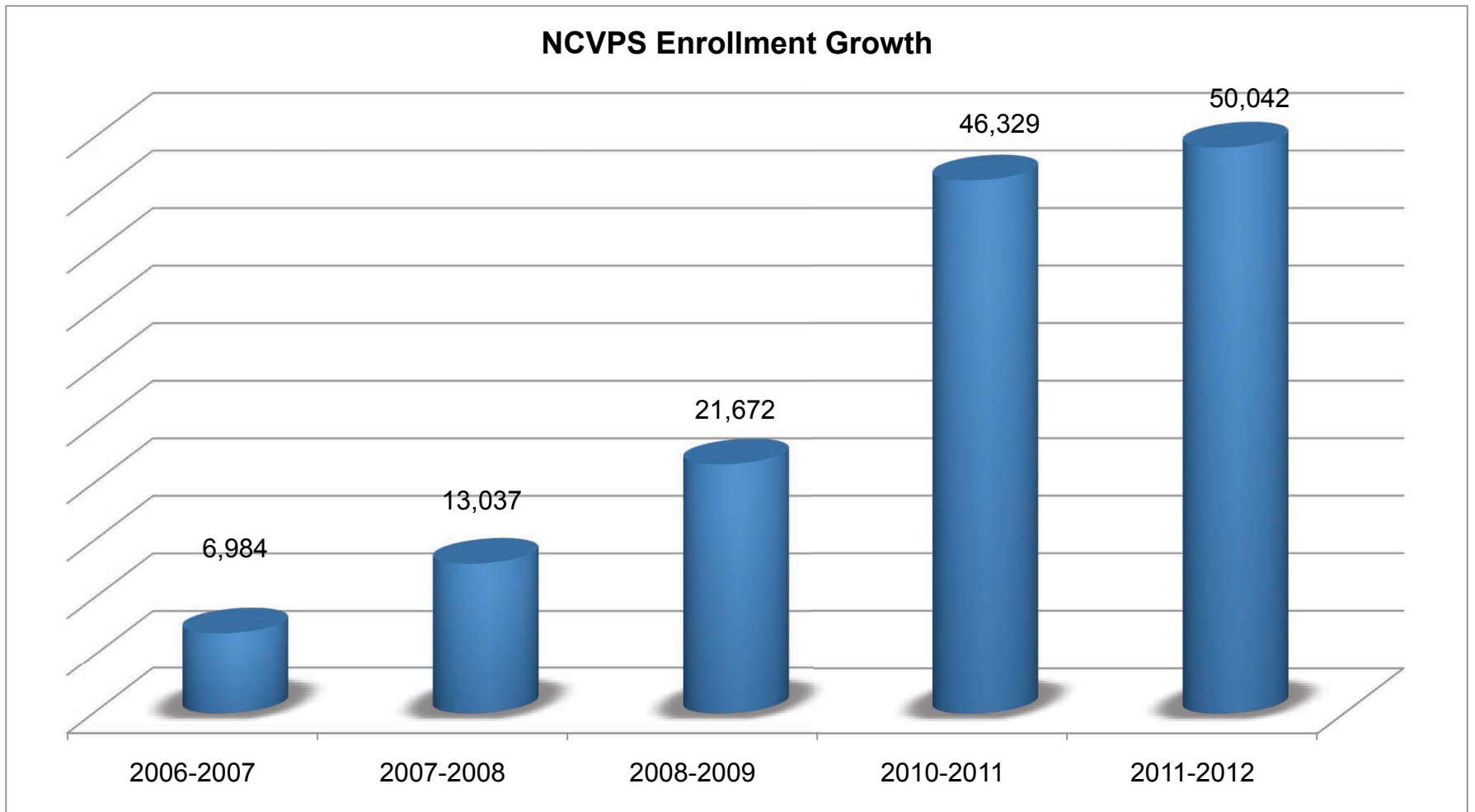
Credit Recovery Courses											Prior Scores
	Scores					Calculations					
	Non-Reported	1	2	3	4	Total NCVPS Enrollment	Total Scores Reported	Percent Reported	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	2010-11 Percent Proficient
ALG1	185	74	105	88	2	454	269	59.3%	90	33.5%	28.4
BIOL	109	34	69	54	1	267	158	59.2%	55	34.8%	26.17
ENGL	193	26	56	62	4	341	148	43.4%	66	44.6%	39.32

NCVPS Advanced Placement Test Results

Course	Year	Tests Taken	NCVPS Pass Rate	National Pass Rate
AP Art History	2012	100	40.0%	60.0%
	2011	61	50.8%	58.0%
AP Biology	2012	52	19.2%	51.0%
	2011	34	32.4%	50.6%
AP Calculus AB	2012	36	22.2%	59.7%
	2011	39	20.5%	56.2%
AP Calculus BC	2012	45	66.7%	85.8%
	2011	38	60.5%	80.2%
AP Computer Science A	2012	74	63.5%	63.6%
	2011	74	67.6%	63.9%
AP English Language & Composition	2012	43	58.1%	60.2%
	2011	46	78.3%	61.2%
AP English Literature & Composition	2012	88	58.0%	56.6%
	2011	65	53.8%	57.2%
AP Environmental Science	2012	103	38.8%	50.4%
	2011	91	49.5%	49.4%
AP Government & Politics: US	2012	185	52.4%	52.2%
	2011	168	40.5%	51.6%
AP Human Geography	2012	198	58.1%	52.4%
	2011	117	53.0%	51.0%
AP Latin : Vergil	2012	11	36.4%	62.9%
	2011	17	11.8%	63.9%
AP Mandarin V	2012	25	100.0%	95.2%
	2011	14	100.0%	95.4%
AP Music Theory	2012	62	64.5%	61.6%
	2011	51	25.5%	59.2%
AP Physics B	2012	30	63.3%	62.0%
(Physics not offered in 2011)	2011			
AP Psychology	2012	668	58.5%	77.4%
	2011	474	56.5%	66.2%
AP Statistics	2012	91	28.6%	59.2%
	2011	121	30.6%	58.8%
AP United States History	2012	77	35.1%	54.6%
	2011	72	26.4%	52.8%
AP World History	2012	107	57.9%	53.1%
	2011	102	42.2%	48.4%

ENROLLMENT AND COURSE DISTRIBUTION

NCVPS Enrollment Growth

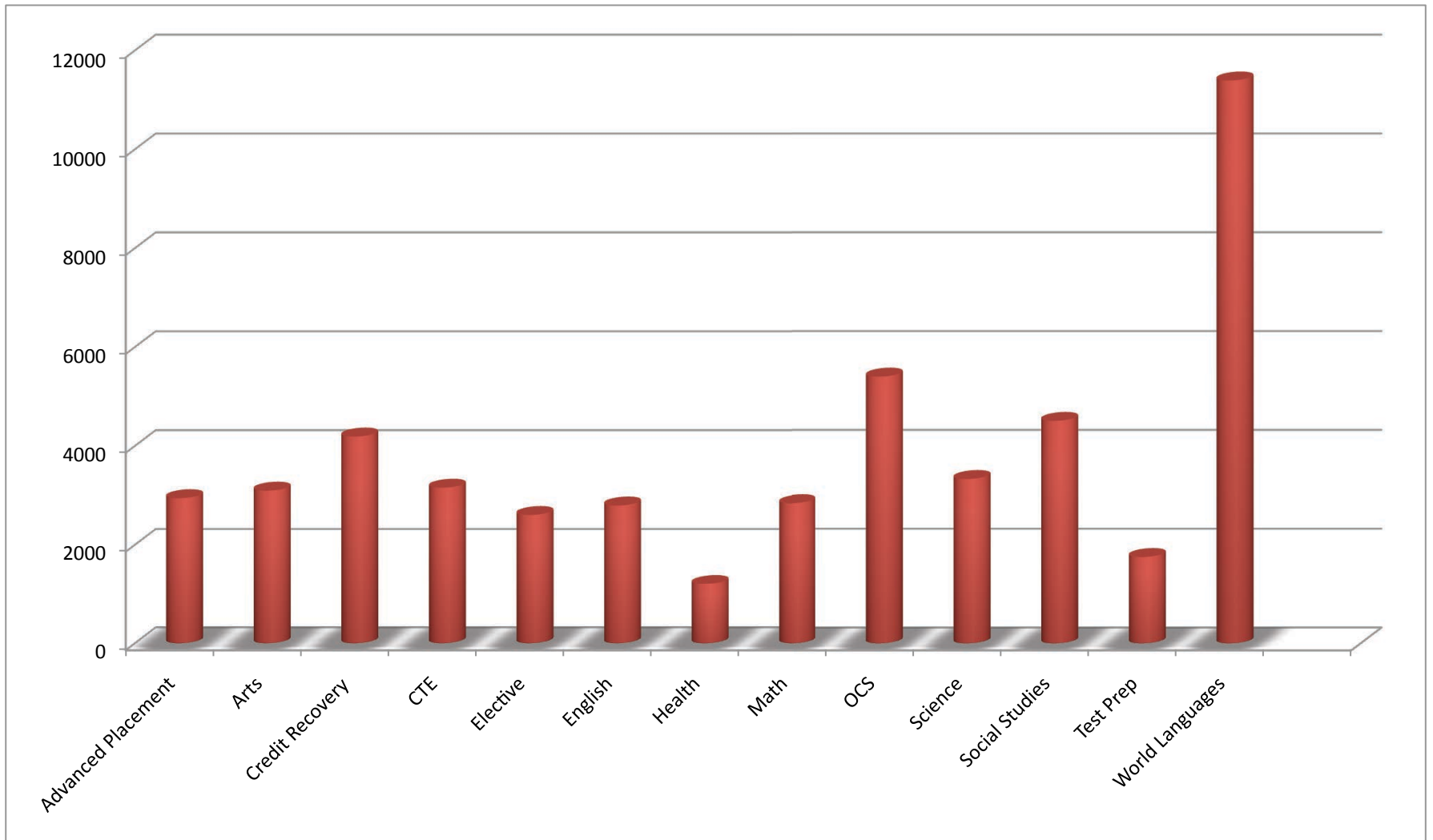


NCVPS Enrollment by LEA



NCVPS Enrollment by LEA and Course is located in Appendix A

Course Distribution



ACHIEVEMENTS 2011-2012

2012 SREB/iNACOL National Online Teacher



2012 SREB/iNACOL National Online Teacher of the Year Leslie Fetzer continues to have many speaking engagements across the country, visiting California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Washington DC, and Louisiana. Leslie is making great connections at these venues with leaders of other state schools, including Hawaii's State School. She shares that she is exceptionally proud to represent what North Carolina is doing for online learning and with Secretary of Education Arne Duncan who stated that North Carolina is a leader in education. Leslie will be presenting to an

audience of parents of students with disabilities at the ARC of NC Annual Conference and will be the keynote speaker at the Annual North Carolina Exceptional Children's Conference. In addition to these appearances, Leslie has contributed articles and blog posts to multiple publications, and has been interviewed on UNC TV's North Carolina Now program and appeared in West Virginia's Governor Bob Wise's Alliance for Education series, and also iNACOL's series that will be released in October on Quality Online Teaching Standards. Leslie is also serving on an advisory committee for the US Department of Education's League of Innovative Teachers and is participating in the Education Policy Fellowship Program.

NCVPS Occupational Course of Study Blended Learning Program Wins National Award

The Recognition of Achievement in 21st Century Education John Wilson Award was presented to NCDPI for the North Carolina Virtual Public School Occupational Course of Study Blended Learning program. This highly successful initiative pairs an NCVPS content teacher with a face-to face OCS classroom teacher to provide blended instruction to OCS students across the state. The NCVPS OCS Blended Learning program now offers six courses and will develop additional courses so that the OCS course catalog will be available to North Carolina schools in the blended learning format. For the Fall 2012 semester, NCVPS has over 3,500 students enrolled in the OCS Blended Learning courses; these students are from over 200 high schools and represent over 500 partnerships between the OCS classroom teacher and the NCVPS content teacher. NCVPS also presented the unique OCS Blended Learning program at conferences throughout the state and nation.

Aligning NCVPS Courses to the Common Core and North Carolina Essential Standards

In the 2011-12 school year, NCVPS began revising numerous courses to align with new Common Core and/or Essential Skills Standards. Since NCVPS offers over 100 online courses, a revision cycle was created to update all courses over the next three years. The courses that could not be offered until they were revised to new standards were revised first. In the 2011-12 fiscal year, 49 courses were revised ranging from Advanced Placement, Honors, Credit Recovery, and Occupational Course of Study. Another 24 courses will be revised and 2 new courses developed in the 2012-13 fiscal year. All courses are revised or developed using a team approach. A team consists of several developers that are North Carolina certified teachers with content expertise in the course being developed, a learning management system expert, and a content reviewer/team leader. The team begins the revision or development process by completing a professional development course that contains detailed

information about the revision or development process, the instructional design standards (that are comparable to national research based standards), and tutorials on working in the learning management system. The revision and development teams are supported throughout the revision or development process by the curriculum staff of NCVPS through webinars, tutorials, and just-in-time professional development. The strength of the process is the cycle of development, review, and revision. The content reviewer and learning management system expert review all content for standards and instructional design alignment. Revisions are made based on their feedback. This process has proven successful since NCVPS began developing courses in 2008. Once all courses have been revised to new standards (content and instructional design), the course will enter a periodic revision cycle in order to stay updated and relevant.

Learning Management System Conversion - Moodle Transition

At the beginning of fiscal year 2010-11, NCVPS was faced with rapidly increasing costs for renewing the Blackboard Learning Management System contract. The cost of scaling the system to support continued enrollment growth would, in several years, grow to a point that funding would no longer be sufficient for renewal. Different learning management systems were researched and NCVPS determined it would convert courses to the open-source Moodle system and pilot it in the summer of 2012. The advantages are lower cost due to the non-licensed, open source system. Initial results from the pilot were good, although some instructional tasks had to be achieved using different tools due to the different system. The second advantage of moving courses into Moodle is that course content is easily shared. More and more educational entities in North Carolina and across the country are transitioning to Moodle, therefore by moving content into Moodle sharing on like systems is achieved without concerns of conversion. NCVPS plans to continue a larger scale pilot in 2012-13 to determine the feasibility and schedule for proceeding with a full Moodle deployment.

NCVPS Help Desk

NCVPS provides a help desk for student, teachers, and parents who need assistance with problems accessing online courses. Help desk requests range from simple password problems to complex issues of managing course content in the learning management system that delivers courses to students. In fiscal year 2011-12, the vendor providing the help desk service proposed a renewal cost of \$150,000. This renewal cost came at a time when user complaints citing lack of timely, useful support from the vendor were increasing. NCVPS terminated the vendor contract for help desk support and replaced it with an in-house system. NCVPS set up a web-based ticketing system using open source software and existing hardware. A contractor was hired to resolve basic technology issues and escalate issues to NCVPS staff when more support was required. The financial impact was a savings of \$120,000 over the proposed vendor renewal. Customer satisfaction increased dramatically as user complaints decreased. The new help desk approach allows NCVPS staff to better understand and respond to customer needs.

NCVPS Science-Technology-Engineering-Math (STEM) Virtual & Blended Courses

Race to the Top funds enable the NC Virtual Public Schools to expand its offering of virtual and blended courses to ensure that students at risk of low performance in core science and math courses have access to effective teachers, quality course content, innovative instructional practices designed to meet their needs, and additional supports needed to be successful. Blended courses involve a partnership between online teachers (traditional distance learning model) and on-site teachers specially trained to support students in accessing the virtual courses. NCVPS is developing eight new STEM-focused

virtual courses and will pilot six of those courses over the next two years in three partner school districts: Greene County, Person County, and New Hanover County. Three STEM courses are being offered during the 2012-13 school year (Integrated Math I, Earth and Environmental Science, and Forensic Science) in the pilot districts. Three additional courses (Integrated Math II, Biotechnology and Agriscience I, and Discrete Math) will be offered during the 2013-14 school year in the pilot districts. Two new courses will also be developed during the final year of the grant (Integrated Math III and Biotechnology and Agriscience II).

Peer Tutoring

The NCVPS Peer Tutoring Center (PTC) began in 2009 with 12 tutors. To date there are 60 tutors who support students taking NCVPS courses. There are 6 different services provided by the PTC to include:

- **Virtual Buddy:** At the request of a teacher or eLA, a tutor volunteer from the PTC will initiate contact with the student to offer guidance, support and encouragement. Virtual Buddies are asked to contact students at least twice a week and complete Virtual Buddy Contact Log
- **Quick Question:** Peer tutors are available via Bb IM throughout the day during their scheduled office hours. Usually coverage is from 9 AM to 11 PM.
- **Peer Tutors:** A tutor from the PTC will assist students with understanding the content or assignments of a course (short or long term.) Tutors are available during a variety of times and make concerted efforts to accommodate any schedule.
- **Live Wimba Sessions:** At the request of an instructor, tutors hold review sessions, assignment specific help sessions or test preparation sessions.
- **Bb IM Help Desk:** The tutors man a "Help Desk" in Blackboard through the "school" tab that serves ALL NCVPS students.
- **Peer Tutor Blog:** Tutors post biweekly articles that offer tips and suggestions to achieve success in the online classroom and the face-to-face classrooms.

For 2011-12 peer tutors logged 4000+ hours. Students serve on volunteer basis and the incentives a tutor may receive include:

- Earning community service hours
- Participating as part of their Senior Project
- Receiving Presidential Volunteer Service Award
- Receiving recognition of Service certificate from Dr. June Atkinson
- Being recognized monthly for outstanding work – Peer Tutor of the Month Award

In 2012 NCVPS began looking at a different way to get students involved beyond taking courses. In the summer students were surveyed to determine interest in participating in a Literary Magazine Club. Students were given the opportunity to submit poetry to be shared in the first publication of the Literary Magazine. Input was taken from the teacher who sponsored the club and will be used to make improvements to the club. Both teachers and students will be surveyed to determine the clubs students are most interested in participating as NCVPS looks at adding new clubs.

Teacher Induction System

North Carolina Virtual Public School recognizes the value of producing quality, virtual-school teachers who can develop student-teacher relationships. This is why NCVPS established the Teacher Assistant program that provides mentors to potential teachers and teaches them how to instruct online and make connections with the digital natives that they are preparing to be global competitors. NCVPS provides Teacher Assistants with a powerful mentoring experience and promotes lifelong learning throughout their career in education.

World Language Expanding Teachers and Coaches

NCVPS Japanese, Arabic, Russian and Chinese courses have a unique concept of assigning conversation coaches to each student. Not only does this concept help students learn the languages, it also allows development of new online teachers. Coaches, who have a college degree and pass the OPI language test, can work with NCVPS to obtain a North Carolina teaching license. This allowed NCVPS to expand our teacher pool in critical languages. This will allow NCVPS to continue to expand and develop coaches and instructors to support the expanding Critical Language needs.

Course Sharing

Chinese, Arabic and Japanese courses have been shared with several state virtual school systems over the past several years. Our most recent partnership with Kentucky opened doors to receiving German courses developed by their teachers. Currently NCVPS is offering German courses through an outside vendor, Oklahoma State University. The Kentucky courses are currently being converted to Moodle so we should receive access within the next year. Currently NCVPS and the Department of Public Instruction are working together to create a German advisory board that will include NC teachers to review the content for alignment with State standards.

Sharing courses offers cost savings to NCVPS. Currently, developing a course costs \$22,500. This cost includes course developers, content reviewers, and technology support staff. Sharing courses, such as German, from other states allows NCVPS to reduce the cost of developing courses.

Appendix A: NCVPS Enrollment by LEA and Course

NCVPS Enrollment by LEA

Alamance Burlington	1169
Alexander	187
Alleghany	13
Anson	485
Ashe	69
Asheboro City	182
Asheville City	24
Avery County Schools	87
Beaufort County Schools	360
Bertie County Schools	126
Bladen	125
Brunswick	69
Buncombe	120
Burke	486
Cabarrus	1235
Caldwell County Schools	304
Camden	75
Carteret	363
Caswell	32
Catawba	867
Chapel Hill-Carrboro	1579
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	6311
Chatham	123
Cherokee	87

Cherokee Central	15
Chowan	181
Clay	84
Cleveland	421
Clinton City	87
Columbus	507
Craven	982
Cumberland County	1225
Currituck County	944
Dare County Schools	236
Davidson	547
Davie	289
Duplin	329
Durham Public	674
Edgecombe County Schools	342
Elkin City	74
Forsyth	180
Franklin	413
Gaston County Schools	622
Gates	70
Graham	58
Granville	471
Greene	88
Guilford	1573

Halifax	146
Harnett	351
Haywood	175
Henderson	273
Hertford	53
Hickory City	89
Hoke	109
Hyde	35
Iredell	1125
Jackson	112
Johnston County Schools	217
Jones	25
Kannapolis City	117
Lee	371
Lenoir	12
Lexington City	16
Lincoln	199
Macon	43
Madison	195
Martin	105
McDowell	176
Mitchell	59
Montgomery	120
Moore	1050
Mooresville City	165
Mt. Airy City	109
Nash-Rocky Mount	629
New Hanover	1302

Newton City	206
Northampton County Schools	69
Onslow	783
Orange	301
Pamlico	57
Pasquotank	115
Pender	857
Perquimans	170
Person	459
Pitt County Schools	374
Polk	120
Randolph	464
Richmond	210
Roanoke Rapids City	86
Robeson	81
Rockingham	42
Rowan	236
Rutherford	110
Sampson	370
Scotland	111
Stanly County Schools	353
Stokes	262
Surry	153
Swain County Schools	47
Thomasville City	200
Transylvania	151
Tyrrell	64

Union County Schools	2066
Vance	230
Wake County Schools	3793
Warren	297
Washington	57
Watauga County Schools	310
Wayne	1164
Weldon City	36
Whiteville City	66
Wilkes County Schools	316
Wilson	119
Yadkin	248
Yancey	41
Federal Schools - Camp Lejeune	1
Special Schools	48
LEA Total	49,189

Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy	4
Triad Math and Science	6
Union Academy	187
Voyager Academy	33
Washington Montessori	15
Woods Charter	4
Bowling Green School	4
C.A. Dillon Youth Development Center	1
Chatham Youth	2
Dobbs Youth Development Center	5
Enola School	7
Lenior Youth Development Center	2
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	1
NC School of the Arts	19
NC School Science & Math	3
Stonewall Jackson Youth Development Center	4
Charter School Total	853
LEA and Charter Enrollment	50,042

NCVPS Enrollment by Charter School

Pine Lake Prep	75
Quality Educ Academy	5
Queens Grant Cmty	144
Raleigh Charter High	7
River Mill Academy	37
Rocky Mount Prep	167
Roxboro Community Middle School	69
Southern Wake Academy	52

NCVPS Enrollment by Course

Success 101	2152
Spanish II	1605
Spanish I	1593
SAT Prep	1528
Psychology Honors	1460
OCS Blended Algebra 1	1256
OCS Blended Applied Science	1133
Latin I	1001
OCS Blended Biology	999
OCS Blended English 1	937
AP Psychology	929
Leadership Development	911
OCS Blended English 2	870
French I	784
Earth/Environmental Science	767
Anatomy Honors	751
Music Appreciation	749
Latin II	726
French II	722
Digital Photography	720
Psychology	622
Spanish III Honors	607

Health Education - First 9 Weeks	602
Art I: Drawing & Design	598
German I	575
Geometry	568
Earth/Environmental Science Honors	528
CR English 2	527
CR English 3	518
Algebra I	511
Early Calendar: Spanish 2	500
CR Geometry	498
Health Education - Second 9 weeks	486
CR Algebra 1	455
Personal Finance	443
Early Calendar: Spanish 1	439
Advanced Functions and Modeling	422
English III	410
Small Business Entrepreneurship	407
African-American Studies	406
CR World History	397
English IV	382
Medieval Studies	375
World History	374
German II	370

CR Algebra 2	365
Principles of Business and Finance	346
CR English 1	341
Spanish IV Honors	312
Pre-Calculus Honors	311
AP Human Geography	311
English II	309
Digital Communications	302
CR Civics and Economics	299
Journalism	297
Geometry Honors	281
English IV Honors	281
United States History	277
CR US History	276
Computer Programming 1	270
CR Biology	268
Chemistry Honors	263
AP Government & Politics: US	261
English III Honors	255
Computer Applications 1	253
Early Calendar: Success 101	252

Algebra II	235
Mandarin Chinese 1	228
Civics & Economics	222
Early Calendar: SAT Prep	218
Physical Science	217
Civics & Economics Honors	217
Russian 1	212
OCS Blended Intro to Math	203
United States History Honors	201
English I	201
Early Calendar: Leadership Development	199
Japanese 1	183
Algebra II Honors	180
World History Honors	176
Accounting 1	172
AP Statistics	164
Music Business and Recording	161
French III Honors	160
AP Environmental Science	157
AP World History	156
Latin III Honors	155
Mandarin Chinese 2	146

Early Calendar: English III	141
AP Computer Science A	135
Art of Game Design	133
Early Calendar: English IV Honors	132
AP Art History	128
English II Honors	127
CR Physical Science	126
Arabic 1	124
CR English 4	120
Calculus Honors	116
AP Music Theory	116
eCommerce I Honors	113
Digital Photography II	113
Integrated Math I	103
AP English Literature & Composition	102
Early Calendar: Psychology Honors	101
Russian 2	100
Early Calendar: French 1	100
Early Calendar: Earth/Environmental Science Honors	99
Biology	95

AP United States History	94
Early Calendar: German 1	85
Early Calendar: Latin 1	82
Early Calendar: Latin 2	80
AP Biology	79
Early Calendar: Health Education – Second 9 weeks of semester	76
Early Calendar: French 2	74
German III	73
Early Calendar: Music Appreciation	73
Mandarin Chinese 3	72
Early Calendar: Art I Drawing and Design	72
Videography	70
Early Calendar: Personal Finance	70
AP Calculus AB	70
French IV Honors	68
Early Calendar: English III Honors	66
Non Western Art	65
AP Physics B	65
Early Calendar: German 2	64
Biology Honors	62

Early Calendar: Advanced Functions and Modeling	58
Early Calendar: Physical Science	56
English I Honors	54
AP English Language & Composition	54
AP Calculus BC	53
Japanese 2	52
Early Calendar: Digital Communications	52
Integrated Math II	51
Early Calendar: Psychology	50
Early Calendar: Medieval Studies	50
Arabic 2	49
Early Calendar: English IV	48
Early Calendar: Journalism	47
Early Calendar: Digital Photography	46
Early Calendar: Biology Honors	46
Early Calendar: Computer Applications I	44
Mandarin Chinese 4	42
Early Calendar: Health Education – First 9 weeks of semester	42

Visual Journaling	41
Early Calendar: United States History Honors	41
Early Calendar: Principles of Business and Finance	41
Early Calendar: Geometry	41
Early Calendar: World History Honors	36
AP Latin : Vergil	34
Early Calendar: World History	30
German IV	29
Early Calendar: Anatomy Honors	29
AP Mandarin V	29
Early Calendar: English II Honors	28
Early Calendar: Chemistry Honors	28
Early Calendar: Geometry Honors	27
Art 2	25
Early Calendar: Pre- Calculus Honors	23
Early Calendar: Earth/Environmental Science	23
Early Calendar: Computer Programming I	16

Early Calendar: African-American Studies	15
Early Calendar: Spanish 3 Honors	13
Early Calendar: English I	12
SAS Computer Programming	9
eCommerce II Honors	8
AP German V	6

Early Calendar: English I Honors	5
Early Calendar: Algebra 2	5
Early Calendar: Latin 3 Honors	3
Early Calendar: German 3 Honors	3
Early Calendar: French 3 Honors	3
Early Calendar: German 4 Honors	2