



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

R. Scott Ralls, Ph.D.

President

May 2, 2008

IMPORTANT!

MEMORANDUM

TO: Presidents
Business Officers
Chief Academic Officers

FROM: Kennon D. Briggs
Vice President for Business & Finance

SUBJECT: Learn & Earn On-Line Summer

At the request of several community college presidents and chief financial officers, the NCACCP Finance Committee has investigated the funding opportunities for community colleges who seek to offer Learn & Earn On-Line (LEO) courses during the summer 2008 semester. The investigation included extensive conversations with the Education Appropriations Sub-Committee Chairs and Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly, the Deputy State Superintendent and staff of the Department of Public Instruction, the Office of the Governor, and the Office of State Budget & Management. The purpose of the conversations was to clarify the permissiveness of programmatic offerings and the extent of reimbursement to community colleges of LEO offerings to high school students in the summer.

After a full investigation and in-depth conversations, the NCACCP Finance Committee presented its report to the full Presidents' Association on April 25, 2008. The Presidents' Association gave complete approval to the dissemination of information clarifying the offering of LEO classes for the summer 2008 semester. It is the purpose of this MEMO to provide a summary of the report, and clarifying information about LEO summer offerings.

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The question of the permissiveness of programmatic offerings was clouded by the question of whether a classroom facilitator was required in the summer. This question has been resolved, clearing the way for summer offerings. Consistent with a March 27, 2008 MEMO from the Deputy State Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction and conversations with the Governor's Office, the facilitator requirement is waived for summer 2008. (The clarifying MEMO is attached.) It should be noted, however, that **the students who seek to enroll in LEO summer classes offered by a community college are still required to register through their local high school.** There were some concerns expressed by community college presidents about "calendar", but they appear to be non-issues.

The second question, the extent of reimbursement to community colleges of LEO offerings to high school students in the summer has also been resolved. While the Appropriations Act of 2007 is silent on the question of reimbursement, conclusive conversations with the Education Appropriations Sub-Committee Chairs and Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly have determined that reimbursement in the same format and manner as fall 2007 and spring 2008 semesters is permissive. That is to say, census date FTE will be captured, details of course code, location, high school code, etc., will be provided and technology fee information will be captured, and the college will be reimbursed in fiscal year 2008-09.

Given the resolution of these two major areas of discussion, colleges may, working through their LEAs and high schools, register high school students for LEO classes for the summer 2008. This is not a requirement, rather an attempt to respond to those community colleges seeking authority to offer summer-term LEO classes.

It is freely acknowledged that this has not been attempted before, and as such, there may be "bumps in the road." Perhaps that is to be expected. Nevertheless, it is also a collaborative attempt to deliver instruction.

/kdb

Attachment

pc: Dr. Scott Ralls
Mr. Fred Williams
Dr. Delores Parker
Mr. J. B. Buxton
Mrs. Elizabeth Grovenstein
Mr. Van Wilson
Mr. Antonio Jordan

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E-Mail

ATTACHMENT

To: 21st Century Leaders and Learners

From: J.B. Buxton, Deputy State Superintendent

Bryan Setser, Director NCVPS

Subject: LEO, NCVPS and Student Participation

Please see the Learn and Earn Online (LEO)/NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS) Executive Summary below. It is time sensitive to LEO and NCVPS enrollment this summer and in the fall. We know that you are in the window of student enrollments in these courses, so please pass this information on to the following groups: Staff, Principal, Counselor, and/or Distance Learning Advisor (DLA).

A major issue we face is whether or not you must have a facilitator in place for Learn and Earn Online (LEO). While providing a facilitator is certainly a best practice and should be strongly considered for college level work, we are going to provide some flexibility and allow this to be an option. But, first, we strongly encourage you to follow and implement the student support suggestions found below for 21st Century student success online.

March 27, 2008

I. LEA/NCVPS Executive Summary on 21st Century Options for Online Students

This executive summary is designed to provide information on 21st Century options for NC students. The first part of this summary is a table of four primary online options for K-12 students in North Carolina. Next, an update on registration is provided regarding best practices and processes for local education agency (LEA) leadership to increase enrollment and student success. Finally, scripts are provided to share with teachers, DLAs, and counselors when talking with students and parents. These scripts provide information regarding the opportunities being provided by the NC General Assembly and Gov. Mike Easley for online learning.

II. Quick Reference of 21st Century Online Opportunities for LEA Students Learn and Earn Online (LEO) - <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/learnandearnonline/>

LEO is a dual credit program that awards high school and college credit to students attending public schools in North Carolina. Students may take courses from any of the 45 participating NC Community Colleges or UNC Greensboro's iSchool Program.

UNCG iSchool - <http://ischool.uncg.edu/dcl/web/ischool/>

For high school students starting to think about getting ahead of the game by taking college classes while still in high school, the iSchool is an option. There is no cost to students for courses or textbooks. The state funds the enrollments through DPI and the LEO Program, which at the K-12 level is managed under NCVPS.

North Carolina Community College System Online *(NCCCS) - <http://vlc.nccommunitycolleges.edu/LaE/>

To enroll in NCCCS Learn and Earn Online courses, students will need to complete a few simple steps. Once the steps are completed, students will have a better understanding of online learning environments, how to select courses, how to enroll in courses provided by NCCCS institutions, and how to register for courses. It is important that students talk with their school counselors during this process.

North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) - www.ncvps.org

NCVPS offers high school course credit to middle and high school students who want to complete core courses, Advanced Placement courses, Honors courses, and/or credit recovery courses to complete the requirements of a high school diploma and to enhance their transcripts for college applications.

III. Registration, Best Practices, and Processes for LEA Leadership

Superintendents can help increase enrollment and student success through the following approaches:

1. Awareness of the new flexibility in LEO support. An onsite facilitator is the recommended best practice for these courses due to the nature of the college level of instruction. Gov. Easley, DPI, the University System, the Community College System, and NCVPS have all agreed to allow these courses to be supported in the same manner as NCPVS courses without having to provide an onsite facilitator. This should be an option only if the school provides students with support as detailed in this executive summary.

2. Communicate to principals these new options.
3. Support and encourage enrollment in the different course options provided, knowing these courses can prepare students for future ready goals, provide options for acceleration, credit recovery, and free college tuition. Set goals for increases in student enrollment.
4. Audit processes for student support. For example, Superintendents should work with NCVPS to implement best practices for how to support students in an online environment. Currently, Web sites, Wikis, emails, and other Web 2.0 tools are being provided to the LEA. However, evidence is low that principals and counselors are using these resources to support online learning at their schools.
5. Ensure that the distance learning advisors (DLA) who may be teacher assistants, full time employees, and/or combination positions (counselor, assistant principal), etc., report to the principal and support students who are taking online courses.
6. Read the NCVPS Director's Chair letter and blog as it provides additional information regarding K-12 online learning in North Carolina. To access the eletter and blog go to: <http://apps.ncpublicschools.org/ncvps/blog/>

Principals can help increase enrollment and student success through the following approaches:

1. Have awareness of the state's new direction toward not requiring an onsite facilitator in order to participate in LEO when it meets a student's needs.
2. Audit current registration numbers and promote enrollment in LEO and NCVPS for summer courses. Avoid dropping classes until these options have been evaluated.
3. Send out communication and information to students and parents on summer and fall 2008 options.
4. Work with school counselors on process improvements to LEO and NCVPS enrollment.
5. Provide support to online students in the absence of an onsite facilitator whether or not the courses are offered through LEO (UNCG iSchool and/or NCCCS) or NCVPS.
6. Ensure that the distance learning advisors (DLA) at the school meet and/or report regularly to the principal on the status of online students.

7. Ensure that students enrolling in these courses have appropriate counseling on the online environment and that these students have demonstrated consistent proficiency in face-to-face courses. It is important to note that these courses are not an option for students who have repeatedly failed in the face-to-face environment; particularly in the absence of a facilitator model.
8. Provide leadership and planning for summer support. It is important to consider the following questions:
 - a. How will online students be supported?
 - b. Who will support them?
 - c. How will summer staff keep track of these students and work with the various organizations (NCVPS, LEO, iSchool, and NCCCS) to ensure seamlessness in the educational environment over the summer?
9. Read the NCVPS Director's Chair eletter and blog as it provides additional information regarding K-12 online learning in North Carolina. To access the eletter and blog go to: <http://apps.ncpublicschools.org/ncvps/blog/>
10. Ensure that school level DLAs are reading and responding to the weekly DLA e-lert and DLA Wiki which are collaborative Web tool being provided by NCVPS and can be found at: www.ncvpsdevelopment.wetpaint.com

Counselors and Distance Learning Advisors (DLAs) can help increase enrollment and student success in these options through the following approaches:

1. **Awareness of the new state direction that LEO does not require an onsite facilitator.**
2. Audit current registration numbers and promote enrollment in LEO and NCVPS for summer courses. Work with principals on cutting classes until these options have been evaluated.
3. Send out communication and information to students and parents on summer and fall 2008 options.
4. Realize that registration is not over. Moreover, the team needs to develop a plan at the school on process improvements to LEO and NCVPS summer and fall enrollment.
5. Provide support to online students in the absence of an onsite facilitator whether or not courses are offered through LEO, UNCG iSchool, NCCCS, and/or NCVPS.
6. Meet and/or report regularly to principals the status of online students.

7. Ensure that students enrolling in these courses have appropriate counseling on the online environment and that these students have demonstrated consistent proficiency in face-to-face courses. It is important to note that these courses are not an option for students who have repeatedly failed in the face-to-face environment; particularly in the absence of a facilitator model.

8. Provide leadership and planning for summer support. It is important to consider the following questions:

a. How will online students be supported?

b. Who will support them?

c. How will summer staff keep track of these students and work with the various organizations (NCVPS, LEO, iSchool, and NCCCS) to ensure seamlessness in the educational environment over the summer?

9. Read the NCVPS Director's Chair eletter and blog as it provides additional information regarding K-12 online learning in North Carolina. To access the eletter and blog go to: <http://apps.ncpublicschools.org/ncvps/blog/>

10. Ensure that school level DLAs are reading and responding to the weekly DLA e-lert and DLA Wiki which are collaborative Web tool being provided by NCVPS and can be found at: www.ncvpsdevelopment.wetpaint.com

IV. Scripts for Teachers, DLAs, and Counselors Regarding LEO and NCVPS

Teacher script for answering the following question, "What do I say to students who want to take courses online?"

* This is a great way for you to prepare yourself for the 21st Century. If you enroll in NCVPS, I would like to encourage you to take these courses, but speak with your guidance counselor who can provide you with a few suggestions for your success.

* First, make sure you find out what it takes to be an online student from the NCPVS Web site at <http://www.ncvps.org/parentstudent/>. This information will help ensure that you are familiar with the requirements. If you find that online learning is a good fit for the way you learn, the Web site also provides information on how you can register for courses. Your counselor and/or the school Distance Learning Advisor (DLA) can help you with any additional questions you may have.

* Second, if you are considering enrolling in Learn and Earn Online (LEO), you'll need to understand that these are college level courses and you'll want to work very closely with your Distance Learning Advisor and/or school designee who will provide you with the necessary support. If our school has an onsite facilitator this person will be helpful to you as well.

* Let's see if we can make an appointment with the guidance counselor to talk with you about how we can support you.

Counselor, and/or school designee script for answering questions from parents such as,

* How can I get my child enrolled in NCVPS or Learn and Earn Online?

* Why should I enroll my child in NCVPS or Learn and Earn Online (LEO)?

* I heard I can get free tuition online, how does that work?

We can provide support and counseling for your child from our Distance Learning Advisor (DLA), guidance counselor's office, and/or the principal. The NCVPS Web site is a great resource and it is located at: www.ncvps.org. You can sit down with your child in the convenience of your own home and go through the NCVPS Web site where you can find information on what it takes for your child to be successful online at <http://www.ncvps.org/parentstudent/>. Once you make the decision to enroll your child, we will provide you with a table of online NC options. Our staff can assist you through the enrollment process for each program.

In reference to your question regarding free tuition, I would encourage you to review your child's academic record, time schedule, and commitments. Next, you need to map out a summer schedule and a schedule for the upcoming year so you can see how your child can earn dual college credit online for free while in high school. Once you've mapped out a plan, I will direct you to the guidance counselor's office for college and career mapping so you can enroll your child in an online course that will prepare them for the future, and help you save some money.