

RENEWAL NARRATIVE: NEIGHBORS' NEW VISTAS HIGH SCHOOL

I. Enrollment Diagnostic

Provide the enrollment and demographic information for the current school year.

2021-22 ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
	#	%
Total Enrollment		
# of Students on Waiting List	0	
Gender		
Male	110	55%
Female	89	45%
Ethnicity/Race		
White	116	58.3%
Black	34	17.1%
Hispanic	39	19.6%
Asian	0	0%
Native American	1	.5%
Other (multi-race)	9	4.5
Special Populations		
Students with IEPs	38	19%
English Language Learners	8	4%
Homeless Students	0	0)
Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	121	60.8%

Provide enrollment information for length of current charter contract (ADM count).

Total Student Enrollment	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
September ADM	195	230	214	179	199*
February ADM	196	218	221	190	

**NOTE: This unofficial count as of September 17, 2021 and includes all enrolled students as of that date, including 30 students who are over the age of 22. These students are included in this application as a point of comparison since they have been counted for membership in the past nine years, although they will not count this year due to new legislation excluding students who are over the age of 22 from membership.*

Provide student attendance information for the length of the charter contract (last five years)

	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	5 Year Avg. % of Total Enrollment
Grade	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
9	7	14	7	9	14	5%
10	16	20	25	15	19	9%
11	45	42	42	41	21	19%
12	112	71	50	44	53	33%
13	9	83	90	70	92	34%
	195	230	214	179	199	

Provide number and percentage of students eligible for special education by eligibility category for length of current charter contract based on each school year's December 1 count.

Eligible Category	Year 6		Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10	
	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	2	4.5	2	3.6	2	3.9	3	9.4	3	7.9
Blind or Low Vision										
Cognitive Disability (mild & mod.)	9	20.5	10	18.2	7	13.7	4	12.5	3	7.9
Deaf or Hard of Hearing										
Deaf-Blind										
Emotional Disability	9	20.5	12	21.8	10	19.6	5	15.6	11	28.9
Lang. or Speech Impairment	1	2.3								
Multiple Disabilities or Other Health Impairment	2	4.5	6	10.9	8	15.7	7	21.9	5	13.2
Orthopedic Impairment									1	2.6
Specific Learning Disability	21	47.7	25	45.5	24	47.1	13	40.6	15	39.5
Traumatic Brain Injury										
Total	44		55		51		32		38	
% of Fall ADM	22.6%		23.9%		23.8%		17.9%		19.1%	

Data taken from STN Primary Exceptionalities Report – Period 1

Provide number and percentage of ELL students for the length of current charter contract.

ELL STUDENT POPULATION CHART									
Year 6		Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10	
2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
10	5%	9	3.9%	10	4.6%	9	5%	8	4%

Source: STN LM/ELL/Immigrant Report

Provide number and percentage of homeless students for length of current charter contract.

HOMELESS STUDENT POPULATION									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
2	1%	1	0.4%	0	0%	1	0.6%	1	0.5%

Provide number/ percentage of High Ability students for length of current charter contract.

HIGH ABILITY STUDENTS									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Provide Enrollment Projections for the next 5 years

Academic Year	Planned Number of Students	Maximum Number of Students	Grade Levels Served
2022-23	220	230	9 -12
2023-24	235	245	9 -12
2024-25	250	260	9 -12
2025-26	260	270	9 -12
2026-27	275	285	9 -12
At Capacity (specify year)	2026		

II. Executive Summary

A. School and Community Overview

1. Briefly describe the community/communities the school serves and explain how the school's mission and model is meeting identified community needs. Describe the needs-based rationale for focusing on the targeted student population.

Neighbor's New Vistas High School (NNVHS) is located in Portage, Indiana but serves students living in over 25 communities throughout Northwest Indiana (NWI). Currently, 59% of students live in Porter County, 40% in Lake County, and 1% live in LaPorte or other neighboring communities. The school's mission and model are designed to provide greater options for students to earn their high school diploma. Neighbors' Educational Opportunities (NEO) is the organizer for New Vistas and continues to have a positive relationship with traditional regional schools. This is due, in part, to the 49-year relationship between these schools our predecessor, Portage Adult Education and Portage Adult High School. These schools are the primary referral source for New Vistas. Area school administrators, counselors, and registrars easily and readily acknowledge the need for and the value offered by New Vistas to many, including:

- traditional age students who need a different, smaller, more personal school setting
- students who are significantly behind in credits and at risk for not graduating
- recent high school non-completers who do not want or cannot return to their home school
- adults who never completed high school and have limited choices to do so.

2. Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced over the last charter term. Include demographic and socio-economic changes about the students, staff, and community at large.

New Vistas is located in Porter County, centrally located between Lake and LaPorte County and off of US Highway 6, making it very accessible. The school occupies approximately 41% of the NEO Center a 70,000 square foot (sq.f) remodeled bowling alley that also houses NEO Adult Education, the NEO Testing Center, a 10,000 sq.f Sportsplex, 6,000 sf of three rental suites, and a 10,000 sq.f unfinished space nicknamed "the Cavern."

Size: Prior to COVID, New Vistas was moving toward a consistent enrollment rate of between 200 and 230. While we would like to be closer to our target enrollment goal of 275, the 200-230 range allows for some degree of financial stability. The school's Fall 2021 enrollment of 199 marked a 14% increase from the Fall 2020 enrollment of 174.

Race/Ethnicity: Over the past five years, the school has seen an 8% decrease in enrollment of minority students. At present, we have not been able to specifically identity the reason for this other than the often-stated need for transportation. Even with this decline in enrollment of

minority students, the diversity of New Vistas' student population remains an asset of the school. It mirrors regional demographics and enriches our school community by providing all of us with opportunities to form relationships with those of different backgrounds. It is an attribute often noted by parents and students and provides a more diverse population compared to other regional school corporations, especially with regards to the disparity between African American and white populations. The average minority enrollment in Lake County schools is 82% while in Porter County Schools it is 21%.

Race/Ethnicity of NVHS Students	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Change
White	47.4%	54.4%	7.0%
Black	22.0%	17.2%	-4.8%
Hispanic	23.8%	21.2%	-2.6%
Asian	0.4%	0.1%	-0.3%
Native American	0.6%	0.3%	-0.3%
Multi/Other	5.8%	6.8%	1.0%

Change in special populations: There was a 46% increase in the percentage of students with *Individualized Education Plans* (IEPs) in the past five years (21.5%) compared to the first-five year average of 14.7% . The average percentage of *English Language Learners* dropped from 7.9% in the school's first five years to 4.7% in the last four years. New Vistas average rate of *free and reduced lunch* as reported on the Annual Performance Report is 60.9%. While not official, according to monthly real-time reports the rate is projected to increase since the rate in 2020-2021 was 66%. Typically, the school's rate is 12% higher than the state average.

Grade Levels: There has been little change in the percentage of students enrolled by grade level. Note: The change in enrollment between grades 12 and 13 is due to the change in how the school reports these students over the past five years- those out of their cohort are reported as grade 13.

Grade	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Change
9 th	4.22%	5.00%	0.78%
10 th	8.73%	9.30%	0.57%
11 th	19.57%	18.89%	-0.68%
12 th	62.38%	33.19%	-29.19%
13 th	5.10%	33.62%	28.52%

Age: New Vistas was founded to provide a true alternative pathway to a high school diploma for traditional age students who desired an alternative school setting as well as for the students who were outside of their graduation cohort and wanted an personalized school setting. The following chart shows the enrollment breakdown by age over the past five years. The most significant change in the past two years is the increase in the percentage of students over the age of 18. This is still far short of the 60% over 18 that defines adult charter high schools but significant enough to warrant the need for New Vistas as an option for them.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	5 Yr. Avg.
14 – 18 years	77.5%	85.4%	81.7%	61.5%	64.1%	74%
19-22 years	14.2%	10.4%	14.1%	25.2%	20.3%	17%
23 – 30+ years	8.4%	4.2%	4.3%	13.2%	15.6%	9%

Communities Served: In the school's first five years, student residency was equally divided between Lake County (50%) and Porter County (49%). In the school's last five years, there has been an increase in Porter County students- the division is now 59% Porter County and 39% Lake County. The six primary sending schools/cities continue to be Portage (38.9%), Gary (13.4%), Hobart (12.8%) Valpo (9.2%), and Chesterton (9.1%).

Residency/ Sending Schools of NNVHS Enrolled Students

County	School Corporation/City	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Last 5- year Average	Change between Years 1-5 & 6-10	
Lake County	River Forest Community Sch Corp (Hobart)	1.0%	1.4%	39.8%	3.0%	-12.1%
	School City of Hobart	8.8%	11.4%		-1.0%	
	Merrillville Community School	3.3%	2.3%		0.0%	
	Lake Central School Corporation (Dyer)	0.4%	0.4%		0.1%	
	Tri-Creek School Corporation (Lowell)	0.2%	0.3%		0.3%	
	Crown Point Community School Corp	0.2%	0.5%		-0.5%	
	School City of East Chicago	0.5%	0.0%		-10.7%	
	Lake Station Community Schools	19.0%	8.3%		-3.1%	
	Gary Community School Corp	16.5%	13.4%		0.1%	
	Griffith Public Schools	0.1%	0.2%		-0.2%	
	School City of Hammond	1.6%	1.4%		0.0%	
	School Town of Highland	0.2%	0.2%		-0.1%	
	School City of Whiting	0.1%	0.0%			
Porter County	M S D Boone Township	0.2%	1.0%	59.1%	0.8%	12.1%
	Duneland School Corporation	3.7%	9.1%		5.4%	
	East Porter County School Corp	0.4%	0.4%		0.1%	
	Porter Township School Corp	1.0%	0.4%		-0.6%	
	Union Township School Corp	0.4%	0.1%		-0.3%	
	Portage Township Schools	34.6%	38.9%		4.4%	
	Valparaiso Community Schools	6.9%	9.2%		2.3%	
Other Counties	Michigan City Area Schools	0.6%	0.5%	1.1%	-0.1%	0.2%
	LaPorte Community School Corp	0.0%	0.3%		0.3%	
	Other	0.3%	0.3%		0.0%	

Increase

Decrease

Employee Profile

NEO has 43 employees and 3 onsite contracted professionals. Of these, 21 employees are dedicated solely to NVHS (i.e. principal, high school teachers, paras, school counselor, dean, para professionals, nurse, social worker, food service, and special education director.) 11 employees have assignments that include both high school and adult education programs (custodian, receptionist, Enrollment/Career Coach, Business Manager, Director of Safety and

Facilities, and Executive Director. Twelve employees are specific to the adult education program. The diversity of New Vistas' administration, teachers and staff continue to reflect that of our student population and provides a positive role model for students.

	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	Multi/Other
All NEO Employees	49.0%	38.0%	11.0%	2.0%
Full-Time Employees	54.2%	37.5%	8.3%	
Part-Time Employees	47.4%	31.6%	15.8%	5.3%
NVHS Administration/Leadership	62.5%	37.5%		
NVHS Teachers	50%	40%	10%	
NVHS Support Staff	33.3%	58.3%	8.4%	
NVHS Contracted Professional	33%	64%		

Change in Leadership and Staffing: NEO's Executive Director, Rebecca Reiner, has served in this capacity since the school was first chartered. New Vistas principal for the previous six years, Anna Swope, left at the end of the 20-21 and was replaced by Dante Pryor who has been with the school in the role of English teacher, Instructional Coach, and Title Coordinator over the past six years. Another major change in the past five years was the loss of our Director of Operations who was at the helm of all HR, payroll, and all other financial and operational functions. When she left, we hired Jennifer Jennings as Business Manager and employed the professional service of PayChex for payroll, HR, and management of benefits and the services of a Certified Public Accounting firm, Gabrielle Group, to oversee our Form-9, audit, and financial statements. The chart here summarizes New Vistas current positions and changes to the school's staffing.

#	Position	Change from 1 st Five Years
1	Executive Director	No Change
1	Principal	No Change
1	Dean	Replaced Assistant Principal
1	School Counselor	No Change
1	Enrollment and Career Coach	New Position
1	Director of Safety & Facilities	No Change
1	Business Manager	Replaced Director of Operations
1	Information and Technology Coordinator	New Position
3	Teacher Leaders/Mentors	Replaced Instructional Coach
1	Special Education Director	No Change
1	Registrar	
1	Compliance Officer	
9	Classroom Teachers	Added business teacher
1.25	Online Learning Lab teacher	Added part-time additional PM
3	Para-professionals	Fluctuates according to need
2	Contracted Student Support Staff	Added social worker & Communities in School onsite coordinator
4	Part-time support (custodians, receptionists, food services)	No change

Employee Retention:

NEO's overall employee retention rate has averaged 90% in the school's ten-year history. This fall, 2021, 94% of employees who were employed at the end of the 2020-2021 school year returned for this school year. The average years with New Vistas for employees by category is:

Leadership: 7 years Teachers: 6 years Support Staff: 5 years

Board: New Vistas is governed by a Board of Directors who serve as connection between the community and the administration. Board recruitment is deliberate and staggered to allow for an effective and strong process of orientation and onboarding, to address desired skills, knowledge, connections, and experience; and to ensure board diversity and representation of our student population. Over the past five years, we have increased by Board membership by five members, and increased minority representation. We still need to increase membership from those under 30 and to include strong members who have strong connections with the business and philanthropic giving sectors in our communities.

Board Profile

Years on Board	6+ years	4	3-5 years	3	1-2 years	2
Race/Ethnicity	Caucasian	5	African- American	2	Hispanic	2
Age	Under 30	1	30-50	5	51 +	3
Residency	Porter County	5	Lake County	4		
Gender	Female	6	Male	3		

3. Provide an overview of the key design elements and how the school implements these elements, including; primary instruction methods, assessment practices, and essential features of the model.

There have been few changes to the school's essential educational programming since the last renewal. The school year is divided into trimesters and begins one to two weeks after regional schools' start dates. Teacher /student ratio remains 15:1 and classes are 70 minutes long on Monday through Thursday. All students are assigned to a daily 30- minute advisory period. Fridays have always been a short day with 40-minute classes and an early dismissal at 12:45 for students. This year, as one of our responses to learning-loss from the pandemic, we have structured Fridays as e-learning days for most students. Students who need extra support or who are falling behind as assigned to come to school to meet with teachers. They or their parents can also choose to make appointments with teachers on Fridays until 12:45. Friday afternoons are dedicated to weekly team and school wide meetings and professional learning community time, and staff professional development. Most of our classes are taught by licensed teachers: 2 math, 2 English, 1 Science, 1 Social Studies, 1 Business, 1 Art, and 1 Spanish, Preparing for College and Careers and Service Learning and 1 online learning monitor.

There have been, however, some changes to our course offerings over the past five years. The school has an agreement with Ivy Tech Community College for the offering of dual credit classes in English, Spanish, Social Studies and Advanced Manufacturing. In response to the State's new graduation requirement options, we have four career pathways/ CTE concentrators as an option for graduation: Health Sciences, Interactive Media, Advanced Manufacturing, and Business and in the past three years, began to offer certifications in Serve Safe Manager, Certified Nurse Assistant, Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe Creative Cloud, MSSC Certified Production Technician, (Advanced Manufacturing), and the NCCER Core Curriculum (general construction).

Since the last renewal, all teachers have now been fully trained in the Instructional Priorities Model, Restorative Practices, and have developed updated curriculum maps and formative assessments aligned with priority standards. In 2020, we added a Service-Learning class as an option for meeting the Employability Competencies requirement. And in this year, we are piloting a 3008 Science Research class that is discussed in greater detail in the Goals and Plans section that follows. This class is being co-taught by our science and service-learning teachers and will provide students with unique opportunities for independent, in-depth study of one or more specific scientific problems.

4. Describe any anticipated changes to the essential terms of the school's educational program, program as described in the current charter.

As a result of legislation that was enacted in July 2021, once significant change to New Vistas current charter may be the implementation of steps to address the exclusion of our students who are over the age of 22 for membership and funding. This is work that is underway. A preliminary plan is summarized in the Goals and Plans Section of this application but will be addressed in greater detail in a supplemental response to this question sometime in the next three to six months.

B. Goals and Plans

1. State and provide an overview of the charter school's future goals. Summarize the plans for accomplishing these goals.

Over the school's first ten years, we have built a strong foundation, one that will readily support our goals and plans for the next five years and our core pillars: ***Equity and Justice, Environmental Stewardship, Empowered Agents of Change and Innovation, and Workplace Readiness.*** This foundation was built on:

- Strong partnerships and relationships with regional schools, organizations, businesses, and municipalities
- Established curriculum, assessment, and instructional proficiencies
- Deliberate practices that enhance school and workplace culture
- Effective operational and governance systems
- Acquisition of facility and property
- Articulation of vision and mission

Our future goals and plans listed in the sections below reflect the school's commitment to becoming a respected model of student empowerment and success, teacher innovation, and community engagement in the educational landscape of NWI and beyond.

B.1. Goals and Plans for Academic Benchmark

Goals: The following are the ***Academic Benchmark goals*** for New Vistas High School.

- Increase Credit Completion Rate for all students by 3% to 5% annually
- Maintain or exceed 90% attendance rate annually and reduce the percentage of chronically absent students to be within 10% of like schools
- Increase 4-year State graduation rate by 3% to 5% annually
- Increase graduation rate for internal "Senior Cohort" by 10% annually for the next three years, achieving a 90% graduation rate for this cohort by 2024
- Increase percentage of Core 40 graduates to 90% by 2023
- Increase College and Career Readiness rate by 3% to 5% annually
- Achieve an 80% or higher annual student retention rate

- Increase the percentage of students who demonstrate levels proficiency or approaching proficiency on formative assessments in English Language Arts and Math

Plans: The plans detailed below also serve as the response to question 2 of this section:

“Summarize plans for addressing any past academic deficits.”

Over the past five years, New Vistas administrators and teachers have aligned professional development work with our continuous school improvement work. The focus has been on gaining a solid foundation of data-driven priority areas that were identified in the 2017 AdvacedED-Assist assessment that was part of our 2016 Charter Renewal process, Five-Star and Future Ready Schools, and Shipley Assessments, and our 2018 2Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) conducted by Equitable Education Solutions (EES) as part of our School Improvement Grant and work. Our focus has been on increasing graduation, credit completion, and attendance rates. Over the past five years we have created the following responses to academic deficiencies that are included in our plan:

- Developed teacher competencies with Instructional Priorities Model
- Created Curriculum Maps and standards-based assessments aligned with priority standards Established clear performance evaluation tools and expectations for teachers
- Formed a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and a Student Support Services Team
- Instituted Grade-Level and Graduation Cohorts
- Created and implemented an In-School Suspension program
- Revamped our daily advisory program
- Implemented monthly student recognition ceremonies (Pheonix Awards) and incentives
- Established protocol for a Senior Cohort
- Established graduation pathways, opportunities for certifications, and dual credits

These foundational strategies are in place but due to the interruption to their full implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and by new school leadership and new teachers, our goal for the current school-year is to solidify and strengthen these to ensure all teachers, school leaders, and systems are functioning effectively. Therefore, our plans for 2021-2022 will be to:

- Create and implement a system of collecting, monitoring, analyzing, and responding to student academic performance data
- Fully implement Instructional Strategies Model
- Strengthen familiarity with newly created curriculum maps and assessments
- Enforce system and process of monitoring student grades and attendance by advisory teachers, content teachers, and Student Support team and grade-level cohort leads
- Strength teacher use of student data through training in Professional Learning Communities
- Fully implement MTSS tiered interventions and supports

B.1. Goals and Plans for Organizational Changes

Goals: The following are our future *organizational goals*:

- Create and implement plan to serve high school students over 22 years of age
- Develop NEO's Energy Academy
- Expand training and certification options
- Move towards Project-Based learning models of learning
- Expand of extracurricular offers

- Launch Parent Advisory Group
- Advance our Equity and Justice Platform
- Secure transportation plans

Plans: The following summarizes some of our plans for achieving organizational goals:

Ensure and possible expand access to and enrollment in a secondary credit program: In response to the cessation of ADM funding for New Vistas students who are over the age of 22, NEO is evaluating options to ensure that regional adults who are 23 years of age or older will still be able to earn a high school diploma in addition to a high school equivalency diploma (HSE – formerly GED). Simultaneously, we will assess how to leverage our expanded presence in Northwest Indiana (NWI) through NEO’s new Adult Learning Centers in Valparaiso, Lake Station, Gary, and East Chicago, and our partnerships with area school corporations to increase access for individuals seeking an alternative option for earning a secondary diploma.

Over the next year, NEO will form an advisory committee to examine these and other challenges. The committee will be charged with developing an assessment and delivery plan along with projected enrollment, outcomes, and budget and will include representation from the NEO Board of Directors, NEO Administration and leadership team (both NVHS and AE), regional high schools and colleges and universities and other community stakeholders. Any change to the nature of NEO’s charter with Ball State University’s Office of Charter School for Neighbors’ New Vistas High School will have to be presented to both the NEO Board of OCS for review and approval. The following are four options the committee will explore:

- **Adult Secondary Credit Program:** NEO’s Executive Director, Director of Adult Education, and New Vistas’ Principal are designing an Adult Secondary Credit Program as an immediate and internal response to the change of funding for our students over 22 years of age. We are crafting a credit transfer and acceptance agreement with assistance from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to ensure that we are in compliance with both entities. This is work that is just getting underway.

- **New Vistas Credit Recovery Program:** The advisory committee will also be charged with assessing the feasibility of adding a New Vistas High School Credit-Recovery Program at any of NEO’s new Adult Education Satellite sites using a standards-based secondary courseware such as Edmentum’s Plato Courseware. In addition to the sites listed above, NEO’s Adult Education program partners with the Porter County Juvenile Service Center and with Valparaiso’s Alternative High School to offer high school equivalency programs. NEO also has an agreements in place with the Porter County Jail and one developing with the Westville Correctional Facility. Each of these sites are possible locations for a NVHS Credit Recovery Program, the design of which is yet to be determined.

- **Diploma+ NWI:** In 2018, NEO and Ivy Tech-Valparaiso developed an innovative initiative called Diploma+ NWI aimed at reaching some of the thousands of NWI adults over the age of 22 whose lack of a high school diploma was preventing them from higher education, training, and better jobs but were reluctant to “go back to high school.” The model was a flipped version of the dual enrolled, dual credit program in many high schools. Under Diploma+NWI, the student would attend classes at Ivy Tech and New Vistas would cross-walk and issue credits as appropriate. The committee will be charged with working with Ivy Tech counterparts to assess why this program has not taken off as expected.

- **A second charter for an Adult High School:** A fourth task of this advisory committee

will be to research and assess the need for and process of applying for a second charter for NEO to run an adult high school. The expected timeline for this would be research commencing during the summer of 2022. The NEO Center certainly has the space for this. The committee will need to determine the feasibility and implications of doing this. The goal would be to be able to open this school by Fall of 2023 if this is an agreed upon and feasible option.

Develop NEO's Energy Academy: In November 2020, NEO held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the "opening" of our one-acre solar field, a springboard that launched a new focus for the direction of offerings at New Vistas. NEO's "Energy Academy" is a budding initiative that has engaged students, teachers, and administrators in exploring topics, resources, and careers connected to environmental issues. 2020-2021 was a foundational year of this initiative, one that involved stakeholder input sessions (students, parents, employees, and community), one-on-ones, small group presentations, site visits to regional schools that had strong environmental programs, , hikes through our property, and many meetings. During this initial phase of the initiative we:

- Secured a strong advisory committee, experts in fields related to this initiative including conservation, energy efficiencies, recycling, property development, environmental planning, green economy and jobs, etc.
- Launched a student school garden project
- Initiated a "Lunch and Learn" series
- Created access to NEO's "back 20" with the help of 20 community volunteers, organizational partners, and business sponsors

These foundational accomplishments have prepared us to advance our goal of creating and implementing a multi-tiered plan of course offerings, school-wide and community events, trainings, and organizational practices and use of NEO's facility and property that will enhance student learning experiences and outcomes, focused on environmental stewardship and interest and awareness and a legs-up into green jobs and the green economy. These plans will also contribute to the rebranding of New Vistas High School. Closely tied with these plans are our desire to advance the school as a STEM certified or Tech High School. See Attachment

Expand career pathways and training and certification offerings. NEO is committed to increasing educational and training offerings to our students in order to increase their capacity to get a good-paying jobs, and to be self-sufficient, empowered, confident, and engaged global citizens. We believe that providing students with exposure to in-demand career pathways and industry-recognized certifications will give them a leg-up in the competitive global economy. Our plans are to align these offerings with regional in-demand jobs and state funding programs such as Next Level Jobs and Indiana's State Earn and Learn (SEAL) program. In addition to New Vistas' current offerings, we plan to leverage our capacity to expand certification options by coordinating efforts with NEO's Adult Education Program, keeping funding and enrollment separated accordingly. We are currently working with Indiana's Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to advance a home energy audit certification called "Air Leakage Control Installer" to DWD's approved list of Industry certifications. This training is currently provided here at the NEO Center by our tenant and approved training provider Urban Efficiencies. We are working with Ivy Tech Community College, Hobart Schools, the electrician's union and the Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation to deliver the NCCER Electrical- Level 1 as part of a renewable energy program. Finally, we hope that if our plans to add an onsite childcare center here at the NEO Center come to fruition in the next year, we will be able to add a Child Development Associate (CDA) program here.

Key to the success of the school's certification offerings is the need to increase students' completion and pass rates. The low rate is tied to the newness of the curriculum and our workplace specialist teachers have less than five-years of teaching experience, especially with a new curriculum. One way we are addressing this is by contracting with outside trainers such as the Computer Education Institute in Porter for MOS training due to their 95% success rate. We will pair our Business teacher with them to enhance his familiarity with the curriculum.

Project-Based Learning model of learning and teaching. We hope to use our pilot 3008 Science Research class (mentioned earlier) as a model for future classes leading to a school-wide model of project-based learning and community engagement. Students in this class are working with an extensive list of expert advisors from Valparaiso University, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Isack Walton League, the City of Portage, Wildlife Habitat Council and other entities to fully utilize NEO's "back 20" of land as a learning lab for students in this class. They will identify and monitor plant and wildlife (such as bats, native and invasive species, etc.), test water, and create a conservation plan that will be based not only on their research but on the feedback they get from stakeholders (neighbors, City officials, etc.) See Attachment

Expand of extracurricular offerings: The school currently has one active club- our student council and over the past five years we have had an art club, a communications club, a debate team, and a science club. Our plan is to work with the Portage YMCA to offer after school sports options and to fully develop a greater variety of extracurricular offerings. After-school transportation has always been the biggest barrier to this.

Launch Parent Advisory Group: New Vistas is launching its first Parent Advisory Group this school year. The plans are yet to be developed.

Advance Equity and Justice Platform: In 2020, NEO launched its school-wide response to the growing disparities and injustices based on race. We formed an Equity and Justice Committee that was charged with implementing school-wide commitments and initiatives. See Attachment

B.1. Goals and Plans for Facility and Property Improvement

NEO's 70,000 square foot facility and 29 acres of property are valuable assets that support many of our future goals and plans. In 2020-2021, these advanced to a priority status as the result of three events – the launch of the Energy Academy Initiative (described in previous section), the impact of and allocation of funds associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the strategic planning process that began for NEO's and New Vista's next five years. These plans include:

Development of our outdoor areas: As a result of the year of exploring ideas for our energy academy and with the research on the social and emotional benefits of outdoor learning, we stated the planning and development of our outdoor learning areas in 2020-2021.

- New Vistas Service- Learning class began a gardening project that began with windowsill gardens that students grew and donated to senior citizens through the Portage Food Panty. With the support of Purdue Extension, the project grew to container gardening in Term 2 and 3 using kiddie swimming pools, horse troughs, and plastic buckets. Students researched and designed a more elaborate fenced-in garden area that, with the efforts of 20 community volunteers, a Purdue Extension grant, and a business sponsorship was built in August 2021. The goal is to further develop the school garden as an integral part of this class, student learning, and connection to the community and careers and life skills

- Over the next five years, NEO hopes to work with the City of Portage, Northwest Indiana Planning Commission, Boy and Girl Scout troops, and other groups to develop the footpaths that currently exist for multiple uses by students. Current suggestions include nature trails, fairy gardens, cross-country and walking trails, and bird-watching areas. This plan will involve community and city input and support.
- A part of New Vistas plans for some of the school's ESSER III funds is the construction of an outdoor pavilion on the west side of the building as an outdoor classroom and event space. The goal is to have this completed before the 2022-2023 school year.

Renovate “Cavern” for expanded classroom and training space: Nestled between the renovated space at the NEO center that houses New Vistas High School and the 10,000 square foot Sportsplex on the north end of the building is a 10,000 square foot area of empty space nicknamed “the Cavern”. We have secured schematic drawings and construction estimates to develop this space into expanded training space and classrooms. *The goal is to commence phase one of this project in 2022 and use this as a catalyst for a capital campaign to raise additional funds from grants, donations, and business sponsorships to complete this in 2023.*

Establish an onsite childcare program: A top priority of NEO's is to have a childcare center here at the NEO Center. NEO's executive director is working closely with a partner to have this in place by the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

Further development of NEO's Sportsplex: There is significant interest in the development of NEO's Sportsplex by numerous entities. This is a long-term initiative, but one that has significant potential for New Vistas programs and students.

B.1. Goals and Plans for Financial Stability

NEO has been operating from a Financial Stability Plan for the past four years and has made significant progress to achieving most of the goals for 2017- 2021. The plan is detailed in Section V – Financial Diagnostic section of this application. This section describes our goals and plans for financial stability.

Goals:

- Continue to meet Ball State's- Office of Charter School's (BSU-OCS) Financial Framework indicators
- Continue to have clean annual financial audits
- Increase internal capacity for managing finances and resources
- Secure financial sustainability to secure valuable personnel to meet our needs and goals

Plans: Most of the plans to achieve these goals are included in Section V B.2 ***Addressing Financial Deficits*** and reflect of initiatives already taken, many which will continue. In addition to those, the following are new, future plans:

Development Director: Key to our capacity to achieve the overarching goals of financial stability is NEO's need for a Development Director. While this may not be possible this year, NEO will seek grant funds to pay for a short- term contracted position until we have the capacity to hire a full-time person to oversee development priorities such as student recruitment, grant research and writing, donor and sponsor development, and fundraising. Embedded in this is the goal of launching a capital campaign in the next five years to pay down our mortgage. Our plans are to have someone in place by 2023.

Strategic Financial Planning: NEO is extremely mindful of the need to be strategic and deliberate in our use of funds related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The two Paycheck Protection Program loans and the funding the school received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) all provide a unique opportunity for us to be strategic in how to use these funds to address not only student learning, employee retention, and other designated uses, but to do so strategically with financial stability in mind. New Vistas was awarded a Strategic Planning Grant to do just this and we will be working with Mass Insights through this grant. NEO has also engaged the professional services of a financial firm that will work with NEO's Board of Directors and Executive Director, Business Manager, and our financial consultants to identify and apply for other potential funds.

Project and Capital Campaign: Two years ago, NEO began the process of building organizational infrastructure to embark on a capital campaign aimed at the development of the Cavern and debt (mortgage) reduction. We have made strides in our efforts including increasing our donor base, establishing engagement tactics such as our Mission Tours and online newsletter, and adopting Salesforce as our customer relationship management (CRM) platform. Our future plans include launching a project campaign in June 2022 linked with our celebration of the school's 10-Year Anniversary. We have a small group of volunteers who are working to plan that event, but we will need to hire a Development Director or a consultant to oversee this.

III. Student Performance Diagnostic

A. Academic Performance Framework

1. Describe indicators that show a positive and negative trend in performance.

2. If academic performance has resulted in a rating of "Falls Far Below" on any Quality indicator in the Ball State Academic Framework during the charter term, please provide the school's assessment of those results and describe changes being made to address any deficiencies. The following information is in response to both questions 1 and 2 of this section.

Attendance: Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, New Vistas as on a positive trend with regards to improving student attendance. Chronic absenteeism remains a serious concern, however, and is being addressed in a systematic and deliberate way. Strategies include weekly monitoring of student attendance by classroom teachers, advisors, and the assigned lead from the Student Support Services team for students' grade level cohort. The school has adopted protocol for addressing meeting with students and their parents after their parents after their 5th absence to discuss and identify barriers and solutions to attending and setting goals and in some cases contracts. We have also implemented monthly recognition awards for attendance, behavior, and academic progress called the Pheonix Awards and a system of incentives.

Attendance	Average Years 1-5	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20 <i>1 Term Full-Remote</i>	Year 9 2020-21 <i>Full Year Hybrid</i>	Average Years 6-9
Attendance Annual Rate	82.8%	89.7%	90.5	91.1		89.7%
% Students >10+ Unexcused Absences	78.13	65.1%	42%	40.7%		49.23
% Students Absent >10% of SY	65%	54.3%	33.8%	33.25		33.2%

Annual Performance Report

Credit Completion: One of the key goals for our school improvement work was to increase our students credit completion rate. We were making significant gains in years 6,7, and the first period in year 8 until the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing this rate by 6% from the average rate

for our first five years. The strategies that we employed included the weekly monitoring of student grades mentioned above, improving attendance, as well as the implementation of the Instructional Priorities model which focused on student engagement and outcomes through setting clear and high expectations, encouraging student voice and choice, literacy.

Credit Completion	Years 1-5 Average	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20 <i>1 Term Full Remote</i>	Year 9 2020-21 <i>Full Year Hybrid</i>	Years 6-9 Average
Annual Percentage Rate <i>(avg. periods 1 & 2 – STN CC Report)</i>	69.2%	75.8%	75%	67.2%	66.7%	71.1%

Student Retention: Student retention is a key concern of the school, not only as it impacts student performance and success, but also because of the revenue associated with student enrollment. Although current retention rates fall short of our goal of 80% , we have increased our student retention rate by 23.2% over the past five years.

Student Retention	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20 <i>1 Term Full Remote</i>	Year 9 2020-21 <i>Full Year Hybrid</i>
% of students still enrolled/total enrolled for year on STN Real Time reports	41.4%	51.9%	52.4%	64.6%

Discipline: One goal of New Vistas has been to ensure a safe and respectful learning environment for all and to empower students with the skills to self-regulate, and to manage their behavior and emotions in a way that is not counterproductive, unsafe, threatening or disruptive. The fact that between 71- 82% of all offences in the past five years are categorized as either Verbal Aggression or Profanity or Defiance supports the need for targeted interventions to address the skills gap needed to reduce these issues. We have addressed this through an in-school suspension program, the hiring of a Social Worker, and equipping all teachers with training in Restorative Practices. New Vistas also contracts with Communities in Schools to assist with connecting students and families with outside resources including additional counseling.

Discipline	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20 <i>1 Term Full Remote</i>	Year 9 2020-21 <i>Full Year Hybrid</i>	Average Years 6-9
# In-School Suspensions	7	58	12	0	19
# Out-of-School	90	60	14	16	45
Number of Students Expelled	4	5	2	0	3

Graduation: Although the graduation rate for 2020-2021 is not final, according to our internal calculations it will be close to 38.8%. This is an increase of 14.5% from the five year average of the school's first five years. Data that we still need to gather and track is the school's five-year graduation rate. This will be submitted in a supplemental attachment.

Graduation	Average Years 1-5	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20 <i>1 Term Full Remote</i>	Year 9 2020-21 <i>Full Year Hybrid</i>	Average Years 6-9
State 4 Year Graduation Rate	24.3%	31.2%	26.4%	33.78%	38.8%	32.5
State 5 Year Graduation Rate		40.98%	41.76%			
Total # of Graduates per year	38	35	55	54	59	51

Strength of Diploma: A focus of our school improvement plan was to increase the percentage of students graduating with a Core 40 diploma. The school has made continuous improvement in this, with the exception of 2018-2019, raising the four-year rate for all Core 40 to 79.8% compared to 66.9% in years 1-5.

Strength of Diploma	Average Years 1-5	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20 <i>1 Term Full Remote</i>	Year 9 2020-21 <i>Full Year Hybrid</i>	Average Years 6-9
% General Diploma	32.6%	11.4%	29.1%	14.8%	13.6%	17.2%
% Core 40	66.9%	85.7%	61.8%	85.2%	85.7%	79.4%
% Core 40 w/ Academic Honors	0%			1.7%		.4%
% Waivers	.5%	2.9%	9%	0%	0%	3%

Senior Cohort Graduates: New Vistas' population is unique in many ways, including their age and their past success and experiences in the traditional school setting. Typically, 60% of students enroll at New Vistas significantly behind in credits for their designated cohort. In an attempt to better gauge our "true" graduation rate, and in accordance with BSU-OFS's Conditions to Subsequent Renewal for New Vistas, the school established protocol to identify students as eligible for membership in the school's internal senior cohort. This protocol stipulated they:

- Needed no more than 18 credits to graduate at the beginning of the school year (on average 6 per trimester)
- Were able to adhere to a full time schedule, managing any previous barriers to attendance
- Had proven success with online based the number of credits they needed to graduate

The full implementation of this process did not take place until 2019, however. Our goal is to reach a 90% graduation rate for this cohort. Although we made gains over the past few years, we have fallen short of meeting our contractual goal of 90% of these students graduating. Our plans are to address this deficiency and achieve this goal within the next three years.

New Vistas' Senior Graduation Rate	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20	Year 9 2020-21
Number in Internal Senior Cohort	97	81	89	94
Graduates	35	55	54	58
Graduation Rate for Cohort	36%	67.90%	60.70%	62.80%
Grade attached with BSU-OCS Rubric	F	F	NA	NA

State Accountability: Indiana's State Board of Education's A-F State Accountability Component utilizes a formula to assess student performance, growth and college/career readiness during the academic school year, a formula that has been a challenge for the school due to a number of factors including the number of students who are not with us for 162 days, those that enroll who may only need a few credits and not need or meet any of the College and Career items that lend to points, and due to the high mobility of our students and the low percentage who are with the school for more than two years. We have taken critical steps to address areas that are within our scope of capacity to demonstrate growth in these areas including those mentioned previously to address graduation rates as well as the inclusion of dual credits into our course options in 2017 and the addition of certification options in 2020.

College and Career Readiness	Year 1-5 Total	Year 6 2017-18	Year 7 2018-19	Year 8 2019-20	Year 9 2020-21
Demonstrated Employability Skills	NA	NA	36.4%	72.2%	NA
Demonstrated Post-Secondary Readiness	NA	NA	36.4%	72.2%	
Dual Credits	8	16	29	65	NA
Grade attached with BSU-OCS Rubric		F	F	NA	NA

3. Provide any academic performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information that may not be captured in academic framework.

New Vistas' Graduation Rate only captures those students in the 4 or 5-year cohort, who, on average represent about half of our graduates. The rate does not reflect the accomplishments of the other half of our graduates who are outside of these cohorts. Additional data will be included in supplemental attachments in the next month along with a closer analysis of the percentage of students who do not count for our performance indicators based on number of days enrolled.

B. Continuous Improvement Practices

1. Does the school engage in a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive process to review, revise and communicate the school's mission and design? Please describe this process, and when it last occurred, or is planned. Over the past ten years, the NEO has engaged stakeholders in a systematic, including, and comprehensive process to share information and gather input with regards to vision, mission, goals, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. These have included three organizational wide strategic planning processes that were supported by hired consultants and involved the Board, staff, and community members. In addition to these strategic planning initiatives, the school has undergone three recent assessments that have included teacher, student, parent, and community input of aspects of the school, a technology audit conducted by Five Star and through the Future Ready Schools initiative in 2018, an analysis of our systems through Shipley in 2019, and a Comprehensive Needs Assessment conducted by Educational Equity Solutions in 2020 and more recently by Communities in Schools in 2021. The School will begin its three year strategic plan work in January 2022.

2. Describe the school's assessment system and how it is used to improve instructional decision-making, support student learning and implement professional development. New Vistas High School has several ways that it assesses student data to improve instructional decision-making, support student learning, and implement professional development. Initially, the high school used Edmentum to assess students and track growth. This school year, however, the high school is switching to the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). The benchmark assessments used by the school assess both reading and math. The data in congruence with classroom formative and summative assessments drive decisions made by classroom teachers. In addition to academic data, New Vistas uses daily attendance, credit completion percentage by term, 4-year cohort and our internal cohort numbers. Attendance shows motivation to succeed, credit completion shows student who are and are not on track to graduate.

3. Describe how the school uses other data (qualitative and quantitative) to evaluate the effectiveness of the academic program. The administrative team uses the RISE rubric to evaluate teachers twice annually and four walkthroughs. Those minimum requirements are conducted by the building principal. The principal and instructional coach do non-evaluative walkthroughs based on a specific teaching competency. The competencies used are from the Instructional Competencies Model. There are four domains with four indicators for each domain. The evaluations led to the professional development over the Instruction Competencies. The evaluation of specific programs is often done qualitatively through student and teacher feedback. We are collecting and monitoring student performance data to evaluate the effectiveness of our Communities in Schools partnership and the impact of the Student Support Services Team. Two programs, our school's In-School-Suspension program and the school-wide use of Restorative

Practices are still fairly new and will require the school to set defining goals and criteria for measuring success.

4. Describe how the school leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving student learning. The results of teacher evaluations lead to our targeted professional development and individual professional learning goals. Supported by the trainings offered by Equitable Educational Solutions, teachers have improved their practices through the four domains of the Instructional Priorities Model. Teachers have demonstrated proficiency in differentiated instruction, communicating high expectations, and reliable assessments. The impact of these will be measured with student performance data gathered this year as a baseline.

5. Describe how leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes have resulted in improved professional practice and student success. One of the ways leadership and staff supervision and evaluation have improved professional practice and student success is allowing teachers to have autonomy about how they deliver instruction. Though teachers have curriculum maps to guide them through a course for the school year, teachers are not told “explicitly” how to deliver instruction. All professional developments are to “add” to a teacher’s skill set. When the school hired an instructional coach, the coach’s job was to improve in-class instruction, specifically in the area of instructional rigor. Professional development under the instructional coach included but not limited to scaffolding questions and various ways to elicit questions. As a result, teachers have improved with asking upper- level questions, varying the way questions are asked, and varying the way responses are elicited.

C. Needs of Learners

1. Describe the systems in place to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists, classroom teachers and parents regarding the needs of individual students. The systems New Vistas has in place to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists, classroom teachers and parents regarding the needs of individual students include, but are not limited to, students’ Individual Service Plan, a requirement of alternative schools, that students fill out and during their advisory period. These are monitored by the student’s advisory teacher are the basis for academic, behavioral and social/emotional goals.

If a student is deemed truant or failing two or more classes, teachers and advisors utilize the referral process that is in place, informing either the Community in Schools’ resource coordinator or the school’s social worker of the need for a conference. Grades are also monitored by the Student Support team and classroom teachers. Grades are communicated online via PowerSchool and progress reports are sent home every six weeks of a term.

2. Explain how the school supports diverse learners. New Vistas supports diverse learners in several ways. Students who are non-native speakers take the WIDA screener test to identify the students’ language level. Special Education students have access to a paraprofessional and the special education resource room. The Special Education teacher ensures that the accommodations/modifications in the students’ IEP is met daily in class. Classroom teachers were trained in differentiated instruction through Equitable Educational Solutions using the Instructional Priorities Model.

3. Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward increasing performance, and which toward decreasing performance? Please support with data. One subgroup that has shown a trend toward increasing performance are the school's African American (AA) students. Over the past five years, graduation rates have increased amongst that specific student population, from 33% in 2016 to 46.15% in 2020. Female students, on the other hand, showed a decline in graduation rate from 42.6% to 34.15%. There has also been a decline in the number of female students eligible for graduation over the same five years..

4. Describe persistent or closing achievement gaps between demographic groups, and strategies being used to address those needs. Please support with data. As it concerns the school's three primary criteria, credit completion, graduation rate and attendance, there was little variance in the data by race and ethnicity. There were years where numbers were lower than others but it was consistent across the board. The only variance was in gender.

IV. Stakeholder Diagnostic

New Vistas utilized the following surveys to complete this diagnostic and are used as a basis for the responses to these questions:

- Communities in Schools Needs Assessment – School Improvement Plan Summary
- Equitable Education Solutions Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Collaborative Connections Stakeholder Survey

The items listed below are referenced by which stakeholder group(s) identified these items.

1. Which area(s) indicate the overall highest and lowest levels of satisfaction?

The highest levels of satisfaction included:

C	P	S	T/S	
	✓	✓	✓	Level of care and personalize attention to students
	✓	✓	✓	Relationships between students and teachers
✓	✓		✓	Real and meaningful options for high school completion
✓	✓	✓	✓	School culture of inclusion and diversity
	✓	✓	✓	Access to remediation and support
	✓	✓		School to home/student communication

The lowest levels of satisfaction included:

C	P	S	T/S	
✓	✓	✓	✓	Lack of transportation
✓			✓	School to community communication and engagement
		✓	✓	Extra-Curricular activities
✓			✓	Childcare
✓	✓	✓	✓	Poor sense of community and school identity
			✓	Dealing with chronic absenteeism
✓	✓	✓	✓	Confusion and misunderstanding about charter and alternative schools
✓	✓			Marketing
			✓	Student enrollment

2. Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other sources (e.g. surveys, observations, anecdotal, third party reviews), please explain. All of the above are consistent with these findings.

3. What are the implications and/or challenges related to any negative stakeholder perceptions? There are significant implications related to any negative or misunderstood perception of the school including parents' or students' reluctance to enroll, schools and other referring entities not referring students, lack of donor and business support, difficulty recruiting and retaining highly qualified professionals and lack of overall respect in the community.

4. How will survey findings inform school improvement plans? What actionable steps will be taken based on survey results? The survey findings support many of the actionable steps already identified in our school improvement plan and NEO's strategic plan and already identified in the Section II.B- Goals and Plans in this document.

V. Organizational and Financial Diagnostic

A. Organizational

1. Provide a reflection of the school's governance and organizational performance over the past charter term. Describe any anticipated changes to the governance and management of the school, including but not limited to:

Board composition: NEO plans to continue to be deliberate in the makeup of the Board of Directors to ensure that it is comprised of individuals who

- reflects the students and communities we serve
- are committed and well-informed advocates for the school and NEO
- offer specific skills, knowledge, resources and/or connections that will advance the mission and sustainability of the school

Board member roles: With the recent addition of three new board members it is imperative that the NEO Board of Directors pause and review roles and responsibilities and reflect on their answers to the recent Board Survey distributed by BSU-OCS. This ten-year mark is also a time for the board to revisit the schedule of reports, documents and policies that are responsible for reviewing on an annual basis.

Member recruitment: NEO has developed protocol and process for the recruitment and orientation and mentoring of new board members. The process has fallen more on the executive director, however, and the goal is to turn more of it over to the board.

Committee structure: Currently the NEO Board has the following committees: Governance, Community Relations, Facility, and Development. Over the next year, these will be evaluated against organizational priorities, and board skills and capacity.

Amendments to by-laws: There are no anticipated changes to the by-laws. However, as part of the board's scheduled cycle of reviewing policies, this will include reviewing policies to deal with board conflicts of interest and grievances by stakeholders.

2. Please specify whether the board intends to contract or terminate a contract with an education service provider (ESP). ☐ YES ☒ NO Not Applicable

3. Describe the current condition of the school's facility, and its capacity to serve students. Discuss any anticipated changes in facilities needs and/or location, which includes any changes to lease terms and/or building plan. If the facility is leased, how

does the board oversee the terms of the lease agreement? The current capacity of the NEO Center is more than adequate to meet the needs of New Vistas current students and faculty. The overall condition of the facility is decent. The roof, HVAC units, and other core elements of the building are in good shape. The parking lot needs crack-filling and sealing. The changes and future plans are described in Section II.B.1 – Goals and Plans for Facility and Property. There are no changes anticipated for the terms of the mortgage on the property or a change in location.

4. If any organizational deficiencies or findings were noted in any of the annual independent audits, prior notices of deficiencies, onsite reviews, or prior renewal letter, please note such deficiencies and how they were remedied. NEO has corrected the following organizational and governance deficiencies.

The following finding, identified by Dr. Brian Carpenter in his 2017 Governance and Operations Audit, were corrected and evidence of corrections submitted to BSU-OCS on June 10, 2017:

- Finding 1: NEO's Bylaws missing 5 of the 14 required elements
- Finding 2: Board not compliant with various portions of Indiana's Open Door Law (executive session)
- Finding 3: Expanded Criminal History Check
- Finding 4: Not compliant with State Board of Accounts Part 8 -Internal Control

The following organizational deficiencies were noted as needing improvement as a result of the AdvancedEd Assist Self-Assessment and are aligned with AdvancedED's Standards for Schools.

Continuous Improvement Process (1.3): New Vistas has been deliberate about seeking and using stakeholder input in our review of mission including the School Improvement work that we have been engaged in over the past two years. New Vistas has received and will use the Strategic Planning Consortium Grant it received in 2021 to take this to the next level and articulate this and our plans for the next five years. This was also identified as a Goal 2 and Goal 4 written as part of the self-assessment process with Assist – Advanced ED.

Goal 2: *The school will create a system to ensure that staff and stakeholders review its purpose statement at the end of every term.*

Goal 4: *Completion of school's continuous improvement plan.*

Policies (2.1): The Board of Directors implemented a schedule of reviewing the Board Policies and designated reports.

Evaluation Process (2.6): The Board established a schedule of evaluating NEO's Executive Director on an annual basis in accordance with Board policies and contractual requirements

Services to provide safe and healthy environment (4.3): New Vistas implemented school wide training in Restorative Practices and established an In-School Suspension program and Student Support Services plan to address disciplinary and social and emotional issues facing students.

Technology Infrastructure (4.5): NEO hired a full-time Information and Technology Coordinator to provide timely and organizational-specific onsite services. These include, but are not limited to: onsite trouble-shooting of minor technology issues, researches and offers teachers and administration resources and options for operational and instructional functions, keeps accurate and detailed inventory of devices, and monitors and advises on adherence to technology policies and procedures.

Support Services to meet social and emotional needs of students (4.6): In the past five years, New Vistas has developed and implemented a Multi-Tiered Support System

(MTSS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum. The school contracts social work services with Living N' Harmony to offer onsite social work services to students who either have these services listed in their IEPs or who are referred to the school's Student Support Services Team for services. New Vistas also contracted with Communities in Schools in 2019 to assist with address chronic absenteeism, poor grades, course pass rate, and graduation rates.

Counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning for students (4.7):

In 2020, the school hired a career counselor to work along with the school counselor and advisory teachers to provide enhanced college and career counseling services and activities including college fairs, speakers, and field trips, College-Go week, the use of Indiana Career Explorer.

Standards 4.6 and 4.7 were the basis for the school's Goal 1 written as part of the self-assessment process with Assist – Advanced ED: ***Goal 1: New Vistas High School will increase the number of support services provided by this school to students.***

5. If applicable: If the school will provide transportation, describe the transportation arrangements for prospective students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events.

Transportation remains a priority for the school and one that will be addressed in 2021-2022. We anticipate that this will have a significant impact on increasing student enrollment and attendance as well as facilitating transportation for fieldtrips, college visits, and workplace experiences, internships, and practicums. Once established, we will also be able to provide in-house transportation services for students who are homeless or in foster care.

6. Required: How will the school comply with the McKinney-Vento Act, which requires all public schools to transport homeless students, even if general transportation is not provided?

New Vistas has entered into contractual agreements with two different transportation companies when we have a homeless student(s) in need of transportation.

B. Financial

1. In what ways does the board assure that financial resources provide adequate support for the school's overall program and to improve student achievement? Please reflect on the allocation, challenges, trends and any shifts in resources directed toward Student Academic Achievement, Student Instructional Support, Overhead and Operational, and Nonoperational (See Form 9).

One of the primary duties of the NEO Board of Directors is to resources (funds) and to ensure they are being managed properly and in accordance with their intended use and in compliance with applicable rules and regulations. The board works closely with NEO's executive director to review and approve and monitor annual budgets to ensure that they provide support for programs, personnel, and resources needed to improve student achievement. The process includes a comparison of previous year's budget with per pupil allocations and an examination of the financial indicators on the Annual Performance Report. The board also is involved in researching and comparing compensation packages of other schools to ensure that the school's ability to recruit and retain high quality professionals. The board also assists with refinancing the mortgage note and researching health insurance options. The board provides crucial oversight of the Executive Director.

2. If any financial deficiencies or findings were noted in any of the annual independent audits, prior notices of deficiencies, onsite reviews, or prior renewal letter, please note such deficiencies and how they were remedied. For ten years, NEO has had clean annual financial audits and not defaulted on any financial obligations. We have made significant improvements to our financial standing as evidenced by BSU's Financial Framework Dashboard implementing a deliberate plan for financial stability that included these (and other) remedies to previous financial deficits.

Implemented cost-savings measures:

- In 2020, NEO refinanced our mortgage with 1st Source Bank at a lower interest rate for a 15- year note, reducing our annual premium and interest payments by \$78,700.
- In 2020, NEO flipped the switch on our newly installed 1-acre solar field (no cost to NEO for this). As evidenced by the first quarter of electrical bills and supported by projections calculated on five-years of usage and sun data, NEO will save 25-30% on our electrical bills, an anticipated annual savings of between \$13,000 and \$17,000.

Implemented revenue-raising measures:

- In 2018, NEO hired a Communications and Development Coordinator who was instrumental in establishing a cohesive marketing and communications plan to assist with student recruitment.
- Over the past five years NEO has slowly and progressively developed over 6,000 square feet of designated space at the NEO Center for tenant rentals culminating in 2021 with 75% of available space rented, adding \$66,000 in revenue each year. In addition to renting out this space, NEO rents out our 10,000 square foot Sportsplex to community groups which is included in the total annual rental income.
- In 2016, NEO initiated a multi-tiered ***fundraising plan*** to increase local support and revenue that resulted in a 65% increase in the number of donors from 17 in 2018 to 28 in 2020 and increasing annual donations to NEO from \$17,974 in 2019 to \$78,081 in 2020.

In our ten years of clean financial audits, we had minimal findings that were shared with BSU-OCS and corrected. These included:

- A finding for credit card usage and late payments and accrued interest on credit card bills. This occurred when NEO hired the wrong person to serve as business manager. It was corrected immediately with the hiring of our current business manager and with Board oversight on the monthly docket and review of financial statements.
- A one-time issue on our Form 9. This occurred when we hired the services of a firm to assist with our Form 9 when our Director of Operations left. They made many errors and were not rehired. Since then, Form 9s have been correct and on time.
- Two findings related to Internal Controls related to training of designated staff. This has been assigned to the annual duties of NEO's business manager to ensure compliance.

In the past five years, we have met significant challenges that have impacted our finances and financial practices: the procurement of the NEO Center in 2016, a significant drop in student enrollment in 2017, the departure of NEO's Director of Operations in 2018, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on enrollment in 2020, and the exclusion of 9% of our students from funding in 2021. We feel confident that we will continue to meet the financial framework standards and those associated with financial practice in the year to come.

VI. FINANCIAL DASHBOARD

Ball State University Financial Performance Framework Dashboard for 2021

Meets
Does Not Meet
Falls Far Below

1. NEAR TERM INDICATORS			
1.a.	Current Ratio (Working Capital Ratio)	Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities	1.5
1.b.	Cash to Current Liabilities	Cash divided by Current Liabilities	1.0
1.c.	Unrestricted Days Cash	Unrestricted Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	59 (60 is meets)
1.d.	Enrollment Variance	Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget <i>Met projection but new legislation removed 30 from membership</i>	
1.e.	Default		NO
2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS			
2.a.	Total Margin	Net Income divided by Total Revenue	12.9%
		Aggr-*9/egated Total Margin: Total 3 Year Net Income divided by Total 3 Year Revenues	7.6%
2.b.	Debt to Asset Ratio	Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets	0.83
2.c.	Cash Flow	Multi-Year Cash Flow=(Year 3 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash); One-Year Cash Flow = (Year 2 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash)	\$336,190
2.d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)	2.36

Financial Performance Framework – Data Points	
Current Assets	\$635,803
Current Liabilities	\$419,386
Cash	\$399,891
Unrestricted Cash	\$399,891
Total Expenses	\$2,656,233
Depreciation	\$176,846
Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	190
Actual Enrollment	192 (minus 30 over 22 yrs. of age = 162)
Default	No
Net Income	\$395,045
Total Revenue	\$3051,277
Total 3 Year Net Income	\$642,163
Total 3 Year Revenues	\$8,411,259
Total Liabilities	\$4,172,959
Total Assets	\$5,044,902
Year 1 Total Cash	\$63,701
Year 2 Total Cash	\$257,924
Year 3 Total Cash	\$399,891
Interest	\$175,406
Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments	\$316,511



NEO ENERGY ACADEMY

Education & workforce development **re-imagined**

NEO has begun development of an exciting new initiative - the **NEO Energy Academy**. Aligned with our mission, resources, and plan for growth and sustainability, this initiative is deeply rooted in our commitment to building equity through education and addressing issues head-on.

CORE COMPONENTS

Establish NEO as a regional training center for industry supported/ in-demand certifications

Develop graduation pathways aligned with building trades, agriculture, renewable energy and systems of sustainability

Create viable adult education Integrated Education Training (IET) and certification options tied to in-demand jobs





Support student-led initiatives including service and project-based learning opportunities related to energy, sustainability, green economy, etc.

Secure work-based experiences, internships and pathways to employment with regional energy companies, employers, apprenticeship programs, builders, unions, etc.

The Neo Energy Academy will be well positioned to provide new opportunities for training and jobs in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and a green economy.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

NEO, with the support of regional partners, is committed to designing initiatives that will have a direct impact on our students and the sustainability of our organization, as well as regional and global outcomes.

-  Increase student motivation, engagement, and educational outcomes
-  Model meaningful solutions and responses to current climate issues
-  Prepare workers for green jobs by offering training for in-demand careers
-  Advance regional initiatives, conversations, and opportunities focused on equitable access to the green economy and systems of sustainability

GET INVOLVED

The NEO Energy Academy will serve as a catalyst towards expanding educational and career opportunities throughout our community. This game-changing program will help drive job creation, economic development, and environmental equity across Northwest Indiana. **Here is how you can help.**

PARTNER - Industry, business, civic and labor leaders are welcome to lend their expertise by joining our Energy Academy Advisory Committee.

PROMOTE - Institutions, individuals, and influencers from across the region are encouraged to learn more about the academy and to advocate on its behalf.

CONTRIBUTE - Help advance this exciting initiative and add to our \$50,000 start up investment through a generous tax-deductible contribution today!



NEO  NEIGHBORS' EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

NEO's New Vistas High School and Adult Education

5201 US Hwy. 6 | Portage, IN 46368

219-850-4448 www.neoadulted.org info@neoadulted.org



Dear NEO families, friends, and supporters:

We know that many schools and organizations have already issued statements in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. However, NEO was unprepared to do so until we identified concrete steps that we will take to change the course of systemic racial discrimination and inequality.

Black lives matter, and our organization is publicly committing to begin work on the following outcomes in the 2020-2021 school year:

- Increase the diversity of our board members.
- Identify, plan, and deliver ongoing, required professional development for all staff that addresses inherent biases, discrimination, and the correction of practices that negatively affect marginalized groups. For the first time this year, our team of volunteers will also be required to participate in this training.
- Perform a professional audit to examine organization-level practices, policies, and procedures that interfere with a truly fair and just school/workplace for all. Outline and undertake steps for change based on the feedback of this audit.
- Perform a professional audit of NEO's curriculum and instructional materials to ensure that they are wholly diverse and teach our students to recognize the realities of injustice while also empowering them to become agents of positive, permanent change.
- Provide optional opportunities for engagement that build a school culture of reflection, growth, and change through book studies, cultural events, forums, and more.

To remain accountable to these goals, NEO will form an Equity and Justice Committee with members of our staff. The committee will advise on and address the administration's progress regarding the five outcomes above. Administration will NOT be part of this committee in order to remove hierarchical influence over decisions that may perpetuate systems of inequity.

NEO remains committed to our mission: creating educational access, equity, opportunity, and student success. To do this, we must examine our own shortcomings and correct them. We must also establish a process of continued reflection to evaluate the above outcomes. This is our pledge to do just that.

In solidarity,

The NEO Board of Directors and Administrative Team

OUR NEXT ACTION STEPS

Identify, plan, and deliver ongoing staff professional development and learning opportunities dedicated to examining and raising our capacity to address our personal and organizational obligation to meet our mission of creating educational access, equity, opportunity, and student success.

- Form ***justice and equity committee*** that includes members from all levels of NEO with the number one goal of acting as the voice of organizational change and identification of training needs. ***(June 2020)***
- Design, distribute and disseminate ***survey*** of first staff, and later students and other stakeholders, to assess and identify our cultural competencies, inherent racism and biases, and needs; interpret survey results; use information to set and prioritize actions. ***(July 2020)***
 - Look for existing ones
 - Send to Leona
 - Leona will compile draft for group input
- Use results from survey to form ***professional development and learning plan*** that will increase awareness of personal and organizational biases, practices, and beliefs and attitudes and define our collective actions to confronting discriminatory practices that adversely affect marginalized groups. ***(July-August 2020)***
 - Scheduled / required trainings
 - Staff-lead learning initiatives (i.e. book clubs, discussion forums, film viewings, etc.)
 - Bank of resource on shared drive and social justice library of books, videos, music, etc.
 - Identify budgetary needs for trainers (internal/outside), material and supplies.
 - Increased training for volunteers on organizational expectations in regard to serving and interacting with our diverse student population

Examine and correct organizational policies, practices, and programs for implicit biases and under-representation of the experiences, voice, and contributions of people of color and otherwise marginalized people, and the impact of systemic discrimination

- Collect, review, and share disaggregated student data on attendance, credit completion, GPA, graduation, discipline and withdrawal from schools to inform staffing and program needs ***(July- August 2020)***
- Increase diversity of board members ***(July – December 2020)***
- Identify increased opportunities for meaningful student, parent, and employee leadership and engagement options ***(August – September 2020)***
 - Student led initiatives and clubs
 - Monthly events (cultural celebrations, films, speakers potlucks, etc.)
 - Parent forums
- Contract with "expert" to conduct and involve staff in audit of NEO's curriculum and instructional material to ensure that they are wholly diverse and empower our students to recognize realities of injustice and become agents of positive change. Subsequent training on how to responsibly use inclusive materials. ***(November – March 2020)***
- Increase opportunities for meaningful student, parent, and employee leadership and engagement options
- Professional audit of organizational policies and procedures: HR, leadership, student discipline, outreach methods, and more. ***(February – April 2002)***

OUR COMMITMENTS

As a result of our shared All Staff Training on , NEO Employees collaborated on the development of our Shared Commitments that are summarized here.

In our collective efforts to create and sustain a safe, respectful, and representative learning and work culture and place where each individual is valued and empowered, we commit to **BE HONEST** with ourselves and others, **EDUCATE OURSELVES, CHECK IN WITH EACH OTHER**, and **BE ACTIVE ADVOCATES** of educational equity and social justice. Specifically, we will:

Set and adhere to high expectations for all members of our school community with regards to:

- Student learning and performance
- Instructional practices
- Compliance with rules and safety protocol
- Addressing harmful language, attitudes and behavior
- Encouragement of risk taking and divergent thinking ("thinking outside the box")

Develop learning opportunities that explore the impact of historical and systemic discrimination, social injustice, and poverty on student success, family engagement, and school/workplace culture:

- Culturally responsive teaching practices
- Implicit biases
- Inherent biases in language (ie LGBTQ)
- Curriculum materials and discussions

Create cultural events where we can share, promote, and learn about different cultures such as:

- Staff Culture Fest
- Hispanic Heritage Month
- Black History Month
- Women's History Month
- Monthly films and potlucks

Promote educational equity by addressing barriers to learning that students may face

- Access to support services
- Issues pertaining to attendance
- Academic struggles

Audit NEO's physical space and assets to ensure equitable accessibility promotion of our commitments to supporting and celebrating our diverse community of learners and employees

- ADA compliance
- Website and documents in Spanish
- Gender neutral bathrooms
- Safe spaces
- Multicultural artwork
- Positive messaging around building

In order to do this, we need to ensure that we have here at NEO:

- **a culture of trust**
- **individual and organizational commitment and participation**
- **a shared understanding and framework of knowledge**
- **adequate resources, and**
- **staff autonomy and empowerment to make decisions.**

Financial Performance Framework Dashboard for:

Neighbor's New Vistas High School

9730-6864

			Meets	Does Not Meet	Falls Far Below	
1. NEAR TERM INDICATORS			6/30/2017	6/30/2018	6/30/2019	6/30/2020
1.a.	Current Ratio (Working Capital Ratio)	Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.8
1.b.	Cash to Current Liabilities	Cash divided by Current Liabilities	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.5
1.c.	Unrestricted Days Cash	Unrestricted Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	6	1	10	38
1.d.	Enrollment Variance	Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	116%	75%	115%	94%
1.e.	Default		No	No	No	No

2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

2.a.	Total Margin	Net Income divided by Total Revenue	-7.4%	-11.8%	7.5%	1.8%
		Aggregated Total Margin: Total 3 Year Net Income divided by Total 3 Year Revenues	5.9%	-0.7%	-3.4%	-0.3%
2.b.	Debt to Asset Ratio	Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets	0.90	0.95	0.91	0.90
2.c.	Cash Flow	Multi-Year Cash Flow = (Year 3 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash); One-Year Cash Flow = (Year 2 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash)	-\$112,560	-\$67,256	\$24,726	\$250,525
2.d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)	0.39	0.28	1.65	1.10

Current Assets	\$223,831	\$68,821	\$175,800	\$379,901	\$635,803
Current Liabilities	\$479,104	\$493,124	\$478,265	\$504,072	\$419,386
Cash	\$38,975	\$7,399	\$63,701	\$257,924	\$399,891
Unrestricted Cash	\$38,975	\$7,399	\$63,701	\$257,924	\$399,891
Total Expenses	\$2,684,821	\$2,548,636	\$2,437,335	\$2,675,529	\$2,656,233
Depreciation	\$178,534	\$191,379	\$178,846	\$176,846	\$176,846
Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	225	260	200	215	190
Actual Enrollment	260	195	230	202	192
NOTE: for 2021-22 there are 2 enrollments listed & calculated - 192 is actual enrollment, 162 is allowed membership, excluding 30 students over age 22					
Default	No	No	No	No	No
Net Income	-\$184,942	-\$268,070	\$198,392	\$48,726	\$395,045
Total Revenue	\$2,499,879	\$2,280,566	\$2,635,727	\$2,724,255	\$3,051,277
Total 3 Year Net Income	\$405,626	-\$47,334	-\$254,620	-\$20,952	\$642,163
Total 3 Year Revenues	\$6,839,993	\$7,147,626	\$7,416,172	\$7,640,548	\$8,411,259
Total Liabilities	\$4,725,451	\$4,647,236	\$4,378,977	\$4,411,451	\$4,172,959
Total Assets	\$5,223,413	\$4,877,024	\$4,807,157	\$4,888,357	\$5,044,902
Year 1 Total Cash	\$151,535	\$74,655	\$38,975	\$7,399	\$63,701
Year 2 Total Cash	\$74,655	\$38,975	\$7,399	\$63,701	\$257,924
Year 3 Total Cash	\$38,975	\$7,399	\$63,701	\$257,924	\$399,891
Interest	\$141,537	\$147,852	\$146,813	\$172,307	\$175,406
Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments	\$342,550	\$251,694	\$317,737	\$360,980	\$316,511

Year	Net Income	Revenue	Margin
2021	\$395,045.00	\$3,051,277.00	12.9
2020	\$48,726	\$2,724,255	1.8
2019	\$198,392	\$2,635,727	7.5
2018	-\$268,070	\$2,280,566	-11.8
2017	-\$184,942	\$2,499,879	-7.4
2016	\$405,678	\$2,367,181	17.1
2015	\$184,890	\$1,972,933	9.4