

North Fork Vision Home and Community Program

*Meaningful choice and diverse opportunity within
public education*



Educator Handbook 2011-2012

North Fork Vision Home and Community Program

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Dear Community Educators,

Welcome! We recognize and thank you for the very important role you are embarking on- facilitating the growth of a learner. At Vision we believe that learning is something that is modeled and nurtured, and every learner has the potential to thrive in their unique way. We celebrate diversity in learning styles and strategies, value both individual choice and common ground, embrace quality and growth for each learner, and support relationships. Whether you are working with a class or group of learners, one-on-one as a tutor, or a mentor or coach for an independent study, or whether your plans are still being formed, our goal as North Fork Vision staff is to support you in becoming a valuable part of the learners' experience.



At the August 22 Orientation educators learned how to: 1. Make quality agreements with learners; 2. Define your course goals and assessment plans so they can be used for the Individual Learning Plans; and 3. Document what has been learned quarterly. If you missed the orientation, please read the information in this handbook carefully and contact one of our Educator Consultants with any questions.

Each educator working with Vision students has a point-person assigned on the Vision staff (a Point of Contact or POC). The POC is a Educator Consultant, either Jane Viguiera (math), Melinda Merriam (language arts) or Cassandra Shenk (science, other areas). If you are not aware of your POC, please contact the North Fork Vision office. Please note that there will be two training sessions (fall and spring) offered this year for Educators to support you in developing peer relations and professional development.

Anyone at the Vision office can answer questions for you, but if you would like to talk in depth about educator issues, you are welcome to talk to your Point of Contact on the Vision staff or me at any time.

Best wishes for a fantastic year!

Terri Kinkade, Director
North Fork Vision Home & Community Program

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1.0 About the Vision Home and Community Program

The Vision Home and Community Program began in the year 2000 as an accredited K-12 public program. At Vision we believe that learning is something that is modeled and nurtured, and every learner has the potential to thrive in his or her unique way. We celebrate diversity in learning styles and strategies, value both individual choice and common ground, embrace quality and growth for each learner, and support relationships. As a public school, Vision HCP is funded through the state and school district. Each learner has access to approximately \$2,150 per year for support of a learning program (part-time learners have access to \$1,000). Community educators are hired by families- not by North Fork Vision- to serve their learners.

Learners have a variety of options for creating learning opportunities. These include classes with community educators, work with mentors, independent learning, learning at home with parents, classes at the traditional schools, travel, and jobs. Parents are usually actively involved. Throughout the year the learner, RC, and parents meet to check-in, reflect, explore possibilities, develop new learning strategies, initiate or deepen relationships with educators, revise plans, and make funding decisions. The use of a single computer database program-wide enables communication and accountability. The computer system we use is called Paragon (launched in the fall of 2010).



We believe that we are well-served by taking to heart the following principles:

- We provide a safe and healthy learning environment for everyone who participates in NF Vision classes and activities.
- Support and trust each young person.
- Support and trust each parent.
- Approach and honor all others with love and respect.
- Never sacrifice the well being of a child for the future of the program.
- Program accountability is built on the integrity of individuals and relationships.
- Support leadership that facilitates and membership that participates.
- Promote open and inclusive conversation. Strive for consensus.
- Do not hurry; the quality of the process is the goal.
- Maintain humor, humility and flexibility.
- Never give up on anybody; keep the door open.
- Do not do for others what they can do for themselves.
- The deepest learning often comes within the context of relationship.
- Facilitate informed, careful and unpressured choice. True commitment and a sense of responsibility usually follow.
- Examine carefully what we model, for that is what we teach.
- When mistakes are realized, be open, and accept responsibility immediately.
- Worthwhile policies permeate every level of an organization.
- Meaningful future lives flow from meaningful present lives.
- Inspired teachers are learning; inspired learners are teaching.
- Listen well and do not respond until you find compassion and respect.
- Question everything, especially when the children's eyes cease to shine.



2.0 Steps to Becoming a Community Educator

Step 1. Become familiar with the Vision program. The website: www.nfvision.com and this handbook provide a starting point, but it is also important to talk with people in the program, and familiarize yourself with the wide diversity of learning styles and approaches within the program.

Step 2. Complete a background check. New community educators who want to advertise classes through Vision must complete a background check by filling out a Delta County District *Volunteer Application* (attached) and/or providing your name and date of birth to Melinda Merriam, Academic Coordinator.

This background check will be repeated each year.

Step 3. Connect with us. Ask the Vision office for your assigned Point of Contact on staff (POC) and get in contact with that person by phone or e-mail. You may explain your qualifications as an educator, provide letters of recommendation, a resume, certificates, portfolios and more. Vision will not deny anyone the right to be an educator unless there are legal reasons to do so.

You may be wondering if you are a good match for the Vision program's network of community educators. Here's some considerations: The typical profile of a community educator is someone passionate and interested in helping young people learn, who is self-directed and enjoys choice and autonomy in teaching style and methods, and who is flexible in work schedule and pay. Most educator work is very part-time. Formal educational training is not necessary; educators can be certified and trained, or skilled and experienced in other areas relevant to their teaching situation.

Step 4. Connect with families. Develop ways to let families know about you, your skills, and your classes. If you would like your class information to be included in our Catalog which is published at the end of May ("Sneak Peek" Edition) and again in early August, e-mail a description of the class(es) and/or tutorial(s) offered to the Academic Coordinator (melindamerriam@nfvision.com) by approximately May 5 for the upcoming school year, and confirmed again by approximately July 15. Entries and classes can be received through approximately August 15. Your entry will be listed in a course catalog, which is posted on the internet and available at the Vision office. Because the families/learners hire the educators, it's important to get to know the families and to network within the community. Participate in the educator fair, typically held the week before most classes begin (August 22, 2011).

Step 5. Understand your role and responsibilities, and follow through. A timeline of important dates for the current year is on the next page!

**Note: Community educators are hired by families, not by the program. Community educators should complete the above steps if they would like to network through Vision.*

3.0 Role and Expectations for Community Educators

Just as each learner develops an individualized learning plan in Vision, each educator has the liberty to pursue teaching in the ways that he or she finds most productive and rewarding. Our expectations for you as a community educator include:

- Submit **Course Information** to nfvision@nfvision.com or to all RC's within the first 2 weeks of class. The course information should follow this format: Course Description, Course Goals, Course Materials, Learner Actions, and Course Assessment. See Section 4.0 of this handbook for guidelines, and/or ask your POC for help. In creating your course goals, you may find and make use of diagnostic information to advance your learner, such as standard test data available to you with the family's permission.
- Create a written **Learning Agreement** with the learner that includes course information (as described above), but also addresses:
 - When and where the class meets
 - Cost of the class and materials
 - Length of commitment (semester or year), and defined last free drop date (usually within 1 or 2 weeks of starting the class)
 - Total hours and/or credits (High School only)
 - Homework expectations, (can be part of "Learner Actions")
 - Attendance expectations, (can be part of "Learner Actions")
 - Safety considerations and/or any special expectations of families such as pick-up and drop-off times, communication and discipline plan
 - Your access to student records such as standard test data as needed
 - Due process if this agreement is not kept

This agreement becomes a contract between you and the learner/family. The Resource Consultant can support you in making sure this agreement is well-done and kept. See attached Learning Agreement form; you are welcome to use this form or create your own.

- **Assess and Document** learner progress quarterly (refer to Timetable, and to Section 5.0) by giving information on paper or via e-mail to the RC for each of your learners. Documentation can be in any form that works for you, but should include both progress information (eg., completed 5 chapters out of 20 planned for the year) and performance information (averaged 80% on weekly quizzes; completed a high-quality music performance or artwork). Documentation is the chance for you, the RC and the learner to identify whether the learning environment is working well, or whether a change or intervention is needed to accomplish your goals. Refer to Section 5.0, Response to Intervention or to the Educator Consultant team at Vision for support.
- Be proactive in getting paid. Know and follow invoice/receipt procedures with RC's and families. See "Money Matters", p. 10.

2011-2012 Educator Timetable

*Note: Dates are subject to change! Refer to the calendar at www.nfvision.com for updated information.

August 22: Educator Orientation and Educator Fairs, (5:00 till 6:45 pm) Contact Vision office or your POC for more information and to prepare.
August 29: Coordinated class schedule begins (Elementary, Junior High, and High School)
September 7: Educators, please submit electronic course information (course description, goals, and means of assessment, and learner actions); due to each RC or learner for learning plan development. See Section 4.0 of this handbook more information
September 27: 6:00 till 8:00 pm 1 st EDUCATOR support and training evening.
October 14- #1 Community Educator Documentation Due Date (Submit to RC)
December 16- #2 Community Educator Documentation Due Date (End of Semester)
January 9, 2011: Educators, please submit electronic Course Information (course description, goals, and means of assessment, and learner actions); due to each RC or learner for learning plan development. See Section 4.0 of this handbook more information
February 28: 6:00 till 8:00 pm 2 nd EDUCATOR support and training evening.
March 9- #3: Community Educator Documentation Due Date (Submit to RC)
March 12-30: Tentative CSAP test dates; your learners should have a free schedule during this time. Formal classes will be cancelled for 3 rd through 10 th grade.
May 24- #4 Community Educator Documentation Due Date (Final, End of Year)

Networking

There are various ways to promote your classes and tutoring throughout the program. Word of mouth is one of the most tried and true methods, and it cannot be overrated. Getting to know the resource consultants can go a long way toward connecting with learners and becoming part of their learning plan, or getting out information about a course. Following is a list of other networking opportunities the program provides for you:

- Fliers about you and your class can be posted on bulletin boards at the Vision office once your application is complete, and you have passed the background check. Fliers should include the date they are submitted and the date until which they are valid. The bulletin boards will be “started afresh” each semester. (Get permission to post a flier from Vision staff.)
- The Course Catalog published in May and August will include descriptions of the classes and/or tutorials offered by educators. Class descriptions should be emailed to melindamerriam@nfvision.com by early May and again by mid-July. The Catalog will be available on line and at the Vision office about mid-August.
- Other ideas? Use your imagination...put an ad in the Shopper, put up fliers around town...

Educators are not required to do any of the above networking. These are simply services that the program provides to help learners find educators in their areas of study.

Classroom Space and Coordinated Educators Schedule

The North Fork Vision Home and Community Program may offer educators places to hold classes. This year, coordinated classes have been organized for these spaces; this allows students to take a variety of classes back-to-back (see the Course Catalog for examples). Elementary-level classes will be held at the Old Paonia Middle School; Junior High and High School level classes will be held at the Vision office on Main Street, Paonia.

Space that is not already allocated to coordinated educators, is allocated to educators based on type/size of space needed, and on a first-come, first served basis. Seek other areas for your classes, as well. Vision’s office assistant will create a schedule for these spaces at the beginning of each semester. Note: If you are not on the coordinated schedule this year, and would like to be on the coordinated educator schedule next year, please talk to your POC or to Melinda Merriam, Academic Coordinator.

Educators should apply for classroom space in writing. Please include the following information:

- What kind of space do you need? (approximate number of learners, subject(s) being taught, special equipment needs (i.e., sink, video player, large room, computer(s) etc.)
- What time periods you would like to schedule? It is helpful if you can give a few possibilities.
- Do you plan to teach the classes all semester?

Once a space is available, brief yourself and your students with the building safety procedures and regulations.

Building SAFETY is important for any learning space. Educators and learners must know and follow all regulations for the building or space they use.

Money Matters

Educators will be employed as independent contractors by parent/guardian and should make sure their learning agreement addresses finances. Note that parents/guardians have two options for paying educators:

1. The family may pay the educator and then be reimbursed by the program. In this case the family needs to submit a RECEIPT describing what the services or materials were that they paid for in order for the family to be reimbursed.
2. The educator can INVOICE the family for the services or materials, which the learner can in turn hand in to their resource consultant during the funding period with a Purchase Order for that amount. When the family receives the funds from the program near the end of the month, they will pay the educator. When the EDUCATOR is paid, they then need to provide a RECEIPT stating that they have received the funds. The family must, in turn, give the receipt to their R.C.

Blank INVOICE and RECEIPT forms are available in the Vision Office or you may create your own. Completed forms are due near the beginning of the month. Check with relevant RC's for exact dates.

Payment can be made by the semester, monthly, or as the class is given, whatever is agreed upon with the family and designated by contract agreement. Educators can invoice 100% of the semester at any time after Oct 1 (first semester), or after Feb 1 (second semester). Educators have an option of defining a "last drop date" and requiring funds to be paid in full if learners drop the class. Please make sure you add this to your learner agreement!

Know the names and phone numbers of the RC's of the learners with whom you work so that you can contact them if you want to verify that your payment request was submitted.

4.0 Learner Agreement and Course Information Guidelines

Course Information can be created jointly with your learners, or you can create it independently. Either way, it's important that each section: (Course Description, Content Standards, Course Goals, etc.) is included. If a section does not seem to apply to you, make a note of that for the RC.

Course Information is an important part of the Learner Agreement. A Learner Agreement form is attached and available in electronic form from the North Fork Vision Office. Plan to create this Course Information, as part of a written, signed agreement by September 7. If you need more time, contact the RC for permission. Once this Course Information is created, e-mail it directly to the RC for each learner, or to nfvision@nfvision.com before September 7, 2011 (fall semester) or January 9 (spring semester) (see 2011-2012 Educator Timetable).

Course Description:

Describe the content of the course. What specific topics will be addressed, and what skills will the learner be expected to acquire

Content Standards:

Which content standards will you use to measure the learner's progress and skill against? Please refer to

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/Standards_Reference_System.html. Links for math and reading/writing are available at [CCSS and CAS reference codes in Mathematics](#) or [CCSS and CAS reference codes in Reading, Writing and Communicating](#). More content area standards are available as well.

Course Goals:

- What is the one main goal for taking the course?
- What are the distinct goals that would help a learner to achieve the main goal?
- What weekly or monthly progress goals (small steps toward the larger goal) will be measured?
- What is the frequency for the progress goals—weekly or monthly?
- How will the learner and the educator know that the main class goal was met?

For those teaching one of the content areas such as reading, writing, math or science, or even music, drama or art, it is worth reading through the Colorado Model Content Standards and the Assessment Frameworks in order to be aware of what the state standards are for knowledge and skills in these areas. Ideas about goal writing may be found on-line at the Colorado Department of Education, http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/k12_standards.html

NOTES:

- In addition to documenting the learning that has occurred in the subject area you are teaching, you can set goals and assess other factors such participation, attitude, motivation, behavior, etc. These learning skills are important for all learners.
- These documents become part of a learner’s transcript and portfolio. This can be done in many ways and might be completed in cooperation with the learners.

Learning Relationship:

Describe the learning relationship; will it be one-on-one, small group, or other?

Learning Setting:

Where will the course take place?

Learning Resources:

- Is there a textbook or other materials the learner is expected to have, use, or bring to class?
- List the specific materials to be used in the course.
- If there is a textbook, how many chapters or pages will be completed?
- Is there a timeline which must be adhered to?

Learner Actions:

- What activities will the learner do to reach the course goal(s)?
- What type of instruction will the learner receive?
- How frequently and for what duration will the learner be expected to work on course activities?
- What are the performance expectations for the learner (i.e. work independently, complete a certain amount of material, complete projects at a certain level)?

Course Assessments:

- How will growth and progress be measured (chapter tests, quizzes, educator evaluations, standards checklist, qualitative assessment)?
- How many and how frequently are the quizzes, tests, completed projects, or other scored assessments?
- What grade will be on the transcript—letter grade A-F, pass/fail, narrative, letter grade with percentage)?
- What things are included within the grade determination (tests, homework, final exams, class participation, preparation, effort)?
- How will grades be weighted (i.e. do tests count for a specific percentage of the final grade)?
- How will credit be determined for high school courses (completion of materials, time, skill mastery, other)?

IMPORTANT NOTE: A credit form must be completed and submitted to the RC for each learner awarded High School credit at the end of the semester. A credit form is attached.

5.0 Learner Assessment and Documentation

Educators are expected to assess and document learner progress, which should be given in summary form to learners' RC's (in person or via e-mail) four times this year:

- October 14- #1 Community Educator Documentation Due Date- 1st Quarter (Submit to RC)
- December 16- #2 Community Educator Documentation Due Date - End of Semester
- March 9- #3 Community Educator Documentation Due Date - 3rd Quarter
- May 24- #4 Community Educator Documentation Due Date - Final, End of Year

Guiding learners in a process of evaluating what they have learned can be a rich learning experience in and of itself. Educators are encouraged to work with families and parents to present documentation in meaningful ways. Classes and other learning opportunities must be documented in a manner that communicates clearly what was learned, and how we can know that it was learned. Planning in advance for your assessment of learning is key.

If a learner is taking a class or tutorial with you as an educator, it is important to distinguish what you have taught, from what the learner has learned. There are many possibilities for assessing and documenting learning; ideally, follow your own course information/learner agreement.

Ideas/examples of documentation:

- Daily work sheets
- Chapter or other quizzes
- Essays, research papers, or other writing
- Homework assignments
- Scantron tests
- Projects
- Presentations
- Performances
- Portfolios
- Class discussions
- Learner Reflections (Some educators have successfully used the last few minutes of class, sometimes at the end of each class, sometimes weekly, to review what has been learned. This reinforces learning, gives an on-going sense of accomplishment, and is great feedback for the educator to see if more reinforcement is needed or perhaps if different teaching approaches are needed.)
- Other
- High School Credit form must be completed along with documentation at the end of the semester or year. Each RC will provide you with a form.

Don't hesitate to ask for support and guidance so you can do a quality job documenting the growth of each individual learner. If you are concerned that the learner is not growing, please ask for a meeting with the learner and the RC (and read more about Response to Intervention;

Tier II). Your relationship with each learner gives you insight that can be valuable to others working with the learner.

Note: In addition to what content has been learned, all educators should consider including in their semester evaluation of the learner for other very important areas such as:

- how a learner has interacted with you and with other learners (polite, respectful, appropriate, etc.
- his/her level of motivation,
- quality of work
- effort
- follow through with assignments
- other

This need not be lengthy, but it does need to be an accurate reflection. This can be educator generated or learner generated with the educator signing off on it, or a combination of the two can be done. Again, please look for the learning in this experience. What value is there in evaluating oneself, in seeing how one is evaluated by others? What conversations might be generated by such evaluations? What goals might come out of such an evaluation?

5.1 Is More Support Needed? Response to Intervention; Tier I, II and III

Your role is to ensure that each learner is responding to your methods, style and content. Learners in grades 3 through 10 who do not demonstrate proficiency in math, reading, writing or science are given extra support through the Vision program, and you may be part of this support. These learners are in general considered Tier II (Tier I being proficient or advanced according to standard tests).

Test information is protected by privacy rules. However, if you feel it would benefit the learner, as an educator, you can access the previous year's test information from the Learner Coordinator (Hattie Taylor) or the Academic Coordinator (Melinda Merriam) for your students. If you are educating a Tier II learner it is the RC's responsibility to coordinate with you as needed to ensure the learner is well supported. The EC (Educator Consultant) for your content area may also coordinate with you. Setting goals for Tier II learners and more frequent assessment may be necessary. A learner is considered Tier III if there is a special learning need and the student is receiving special services from Delta County School District through administration of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The RC for the learner will communicate with you if you are working with a Tier III learner. Documentation may be required more frequently for Tier III learners as well, and you should be aware of the contents of the IEP. You may be asked to participate in an IEP meeting.

Attachment- Learner Agreement Form

Together the learner and educator should use this form or create their own form, covering the necessary areas as stated in Sections 4.0 and 5.0 of the Educator Handbook.

1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Learner's Name _____

Parents/Guardians Names _____

Phone Number _____ Emergency Phone Number _____

Email _____

Educator's Name _____ Phone _____ email _____

Resource Consultant's Name _____

Resource Consultant's Phone Number _____ E-mail address _____

Subject: _____

Educator Qualifications: _____

We understand that _____ will be the educator for this subject for _____ in-class hours per (semester, year) _____. Together with at least _____ homework hours or other agreed upon measures of proficiency, this class will constitute at least _____ learning hours or _____ credit per (semester/year) _____, when completed with satisfactory skill level, attendance, and personal qualities.

2. COURSE INFORMATION (Refer to Section 4.0 of the Educator Handbook)

Course Description: _____

Course Goals: _____

Learning Relationship: _____

Location of Class: _____

Learning Resources Required: _____

Learner Actions: _____

Dates class begins & ends: _____

Day(s) and Time of Class: _____

Financial Arrangement _____

Attendance: (Vision Policy- If 2 classes are missed or if there is consistent lateness without communication from a parent or guardian, the educator will contact the RC, who will follow up and get back to the educator as soon as possible. If the RC feels it is necessary, she/he will ask for a meeting of all concerned.)

Homework: (Since learners must meet Vision hour requirements, we agree that homework must be completed. Homework can be made up or other options considered with an additional agreement of the learner, the educator, and possibly the RC.)

Course Information will be e-mailed to the: _____ learner and _____ RC by _____ (date)_____

3. ASSESSMENT AND DOCUMENTATION, OTHER (Refer to Section 5.0 of the Educator Handbook)

Assessment and Documentation: Vision HCP requires documentation of what has been learned every quarter and semester. This requirement will be met by:

- Standards checklist with back-up work for support
- Daily work sheets
- Chapter or other quizzes
- Essays, research papers, or other written material
- Homework assignments
- Scantron tests
- Projects
- Presentations
- Performances
- Portfolios
- Class discussions
- Discussion of what has been learned (see Documentation of Learning p. 14)
- Other Assessment Plans (describe)

Other Areas of Agreement, Safety Considerations and Communication Plan:

4. SIGNATURE

Access to Information as Needed: By signing this agreement, the Learner/Family Agree to allow the Educator to access relevant student records from the North Fork Vision office

Signature of Learner _____ Date _____

Signature of Educator _____ Date _____

Educator will keep a copy of this agreement and give one to the learner and one to her/his RC
