

Vilonia Pathways Academy K-12

Conversion Charter
Vilonia School District

Vilonia School District

- Located 15 Miles East of Conway Arkansas, Approx. 40 miles North of Little Rock, and 16 Miles From the Back Gate of the Little Rock Air Force Base
- Rural Bedroom Community Serving 2,665 Students Across 109 Square Miles
- District Operates as a Professional Learning Community
- District Core Beliefs Align With the Proposed Conversion Charter
- Experience with Successful Implementation of Conversion Charters: VPS and VMS
 - Both schools performed at high academic levels, with the conversion charter at the middle school receiving several top awards for academic performance on the Arkansas Standardized Test

Why A Conversion Charter

- Parent Request for Flexible Learning Options: Military, Work Split Shift, or Professional Positions That Require Travel
- As of July 2020 – Approx. 200 Students With Home School Status
- Presently 292 Students With Home School Status (34 Students Since August 24th)

A High Percentage of Students Are Not Engaged

Data indicates that a high number of K-12 students who chose the virtual learning option for the 2020-2021 school year are not participating or have very little engagement. In just 6 weeks of school many students are dropping out of the system and choosing the home school option.

The Current Reality of Virtual/Blended Learning

Why are our students not engaged?

In Addition We Must Consider:

- Research Concerning Screen Time
- Commitment Curriculum Embedded With Science of Reading
- Impact Isolation Has on Physical and Emotional Well Being
- Learned Helplessness Among Students

The Charter is Focused on the Needs of the Current and Future Workforce.

- In 2018, Gewerts reports, in Education Week, that “employers say their young hires haven’t learned the **reading, writing, and verbal communication skills that are most important to a working life**” (p.1).
- The National Education Association (2018) indicated that in order to prepare students for the workforce, **the skills of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity are essential to developing soft skills for the workplace.**
- Pew Research Center (2016) indicated that more adults ranging from 18-34 are still living at home. CBS News indicated the causes were: **high student loan debt, low wages, and poor job prospects.**
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2018) concerning employment outlook indicated that employment in associates, postsecondary, **non-degree level occupations are expected to grow at a higher rate than degree occupations through 2026.** The number of **commercial construction industry occupations** is expected **increase the highest** of any industry.

So What Does the Data Indicate About Commercial Construction?

Go Build Campaign Data (Parsons, 2017)

- The long term **shortage of skilled trade labor continues to plague contractors** of all sizes.
- For **every 4 workers retiring** from the commercial construction industry, **only 1 worker is entering the industry.**
- High schools need to introduce **males and females** to the opportunities that exists in the commercial construction industry.

Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board and UALR Commercial Construction Survey (Early 1990's)

- Results indicated that **unless a systematic educational plan was put into place to attract students to the commercial construction industry,** there would be a severe shortage of workers available in 25 years.

Vilonia Has the Perfect Location and Demographics for a Commercial Construction Program

- Do our students still have the mindset that everyone must go to college to be successful ?
 - 75% of Vilonia Students Indicate That Their Plans Include College
 - 55% Actually Enter
 - 37% Actually Remain After the First Year
 - *63% of Vilonia Students Need A Non-College Degree Workforce Training Option*

Mission

- To provide high levels of learning through differentiated pathways that promote academic success while
 - (1) providing a rigorous, standards based, core curriculum embedded with crucial workplace soft skills
 - (2) preparing all students to live as responsible, productive community members through service learning
 - (3) expanding opportunities through a commercial construction pathway.

Partnerships

- City of Vilonia
- Faulkner County 4-H Extension Office
- Community Members- Master Gardeners
- Community Members- Tell Your Story
- Nabholz Construction
- Kinco Construction
- Weaver and Bailey Contractors
- Nabco Construction
- UA Little Rock Construction Management Department
- Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board

David Nabholz

Executive Vice President, Nabholz Construction



Seeking Additional Partnerships and Support for Implementation

- ADE Division of Career and Technical Education Division
- Arkansas Association of General Contractors (AGC)
- University of Arkansas Community College of Morrilton
- National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)
- Construction Education Foundation (CETF)
- Arkansas Construction Education Foundation (ACEF)

Service-Learning

Service-Learning is not Volunteerism

- Investigate and Identify Needs
 - Plan and Collaborate With Others to Identify Genuine Community Needs
 - Take Action and Serve
 - Reflect Upon Service Experience and Learning
 - Celebrate Success
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- Some **projects** will engage students for the **entire year** while others will involve a **small group** for a **short period of time**.

Service-Learning K-12 Will

Be Foundational to Building a Quality Blended Learning Experience

Build A Bridge to Increase Student/Family/Community Engagement While Preparing Students for the Workforce

- Service-learning puts **students at the center of their learning**. All students will learn to address the **genuine needs of their community** while **developing workforce ready skills**.
- All projects will be **tied to specific learning objectives** and ensure a **guaranteed viable curriculum** is delivered through an **applicable multidisciplinary approach**.
- Service-learning will **educate the whole child**, **build stronger school/community relationships**, **develop work ethic**, **civic responsibility**, and **advance soft skills** students need to become **leaders** that **build a stronger workforce**.
- AmeriCorps*VISTA indicates “**integrating academics and community service** delivers **greater student leadership** development”(2018).

Preparing Students With Skills Needed for the Workforce Takes a Systematic Approach

- K-6 – Teaching Soft Skills Through the Community Garden (Other Short Term Projects will be Student Driven)
 - Provides Student Engagement, Social and Emotional Skill Development, Development of Soft Skills
 - Support the Development of Reading Skills Foundational to Strong Communication Skills- Will Ensure the Curriculum is Embedded With the Science of Reading
 - Core Curriculum – Online Curriculum Will Include Science of Reading and Math QuEST Initiatives

7-8 Middle School

- Focus on the Unique Needs of the Middle School Child
- Making Middle Grades Work
- Following Arkansas Diamond School to Watch Domains:
 - ***Academic Excellence*** Ensuring that Core Standards are Fully Embedded with Career Explorations (**4 Units of Career Explorations- 1 Per 9 Week**)
 - ***Developmental Responsiveness*** Allow Personalized Pathways for Application of Knowledge
 - ***Social Equity*** Ensure development of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Skills
 - ***Organizational Structures and Process***- Focused on Student Centered Learning

9-12 Commercial Construction Pathway

Workforce Education		College Prep
	COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION	

Commercial Construction Curriculum Initiatives

- All **core standards** will be taught through a **commercial construction content**.
- Students will be provided opportunities to learn more about the industry through for **field experiences, mini labs, internships, and capstone projects**.
- Graduate With a Portfolio **Prepared for Entry Level Jobs**
- **Industry Certifications** through online programs such as NCCER.
- **Elective Courses** that Focus on **Specific Areas** of the **Construction Industry**
- **Opportunities** to **present** at state and national **industry meetings**.
- **Earn Concurrent Credit** through UA Little Rock



Dr. Hank Bray

DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AND CIVIL AND
CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING



To Achieve the Goals of the Charter, Students Will Meet the Following Requirements

- All students will participate in at least **1 ongoing service-learning project** and **4-8 short term projects**.
- Upon graduation, all seniors will earn a **service-learning elective credit** as measured by the ESSA SQSS Score.
- Upon graduation, students will earn a **minimum of 2 commercial construction certifications**. OSHA 10 will be a requirement.
- All students will maintain **grade appropriate personalized portfolios to demonstrate their learning**.

Long Term Expected Outcomes to Come From the Vilonia Pathways Academy

LOCAL

- Academic Excellence
- Student/Family/Community Engagement
- Students will master core standards while developing civic responsibility and becoming productive members of the community.
- All students will develop the skills needed to gain entry level jobs in the workforce.
- Vilonia students will secure jobs, in the commercial construction industry, that provide a livable wage with the potential for advancement of education and earnings.

STATE

- Will serve as a model for other districts to improve blended learning while developing workforce readiness skills in their students.
- The Vilonia Pathways Academy will be an innovative contributor to improving blended learning opportunities for students and supporting the state goal of making Arkansas a model throughout the nation.
- Will improve economic development by contributing to the commercial construction industry in Arkansas and preparing students for high paying jobs that will enhance their quality of life.