

TRANSFORMING LIVES

After retiring as a school administrator, Pattie Campbell continues to impact lives teaching English as a second language

By Nicole Carr

When Pattie Campbell saw the final days of her tenure as the principal of Lincoln Middle School drawing to a close, she somehow knew her journey was incomplete.

“A year into retirement, I answered the call of a fellow school administrator, and I agreed to return to education serving as an ESL (English as a second language) teacher at Vista Adult School,” Campbell reflects. “Teaching is my passion, so I had to return to it.”

It was the continuation of a long career—now totaling more than 50 years—at Vista Unified School District. She served in administrative roles for most of that time, developing qualified faculty pools and curricula and overseeing her school’s daily activities, which she says was challenging yet rewarding.

As a principal, Campbell had witnessed a surge of immigrant students, which resulted in higher teacher-student ratios. Having seen the demand for qualified ESL instructors firsthand, Campbell decided to make a direct difference in the lives of these students and meet an unmet need in the Vista School District. In 2006, she joined the faculty at Vista Adult School as an ESL instructor.

“Vista [Adult School] was my chance to inspire students to achieve fluency in English and to provide my pupils with the training needed to enhance their lives,” Campbell explains.

A unique aspect of Vista Adult School is its flexible approach to education. Once enrolled at Vista, students are not confined to a single learning path. They are encouraged to explore multiple avenues to find the path that suits them best. This unique approach has proven a highly effective way



Pattie Campbell has taught English as a second language at Vista Adult School since 2006. Before that, she was an administrator in the same district for more than 30 years. Photo by Charlie Neuman

of offering students basic and secondary education and English as a second language curricula.

In addition to the varied courses of study, Vista uses a holistic approach to education, ensuring its students’ success. Students are not only afforded the benefit of educational services, but they are also provided with wraparound services and customized plans that offer financial aid, wellness, and academic and career counseling.

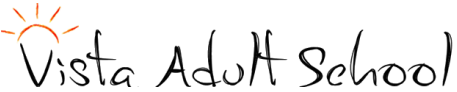
“The curriculum at Vista Adult School is a scaffolding program where students start with the ESL program, then transition to vocational programs based on their interests,” Campbell notes.

At Vista, ESL instructors like Campbell have inspired students to join the workforce and make invaluable contributions to their communities. During Campbell’s 18 years as a Vista ESL instructor, she has enjoyed teaching a diverse population of students from Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Campbell says that the ESL program helps international students overcome language barriers and improve their ability to secure employment.

“Vista Adult School helps students reach their job search goals by acquiring English fluency and developing viable career paths,” Campbell states.

Effective, passionate teachers like Campbell form authentic relationships with their students to positively impact their lives. As a result, Campbell indicated that most of her students not only complete her advanced ESL class but also pursue and complete high school equivalency exams and enjoy technical or vocational careers, many as medical assistants.

“My students are contributing members of a global society, and I help them find the skills needed to make positive, economic impacts on society and their communities,” Campbell concludes.


Vista Adult School

To learn more about Vista Adult School, visit www.vistaadultschool.org