

ACCEL

Accelerated Coursework & Curriculum to Enhance Learning



Purpose:

A recent systematic review of seventeen studies examining factors associated with dropping out of high school prior to graduation suggests that grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of school dropout. Research indicates students that are a grade level or more behind are between two and eleven times more likely to drop out during high school than students on grade level. Targeting the approximately 30% of students who are a grade level behind by 7th grade, the ACCEL program provides participating students with the Carnegie units, study skills, character strengths, and career-related direction necessary for successfully rejoining their peers in the 10th grade.

Key Components:

- ✓ The ACCEL program is a two year program designed for 7th graders who are at least one grade level behind. As a separate middle school center housed on the campus of Richland Northeast High School, this program offers an intense course of study to provide students the opportunity to enter high school as sophomores on schedule for graduation.
- ✓ During the intensive two year program of study, students will complete 7th and 8th grade requirements while earning enough high school credits to enter high school as sophomores.
- ✓ The ACCEL program offers curriculum that has relevance not only to students' futures, but also to their current needs and interests.
- ✓ Instructional strategies rely on experiential learning selected to meet individual student needs and learning styles while capitalizing on student strengths.
- ✓ An emphasis on building student competencies through the application of knowledge and skills for real-world challenges and currently relevant topics is characteristic of content courses.
- ✓ The school schedule is designed to allow time for regular and frequent meetings for students and their teacher-mentors to plan and evaluate learning activities.
- ✓ The curriculum and the learning activities will address the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor needs of each learner
- ✓ Technology will be used in learning and assessment activities.
- ✓ A goal of the ACCEL program is to foster positive home-school relationships that engage parents/guardians in the learning process.

Number of students served:

For the 2008-2009 school year a maximum of 40 students will be accepted – an additional 40 students will be accepted the next year for a total two year program serving a maximum of 80 students.

Eligibility:

Any rising 7th grade student who has been retained at least once may apply to the ACCEL Program. Test scores and discipline history will be considered as part of the acceptance criteria.

Proposed Partnerships:

The South Carolina State Museum
Fort Jackson
South Carolina Army National Guard

Outcomes:

Students participating in the ACCEL program will enter high school as 10th graders with the courses and skills necessary to graduate in three years.