STAR ACADEMY

Summary
There are presently 22 Star Academies in South Carolina, 18 of which are located along the I-95 corridor. Star Academy programs - schools within schools that are rapidly being implemented in South Carolina - serve as a transition point to ensure that overage eighth graders continue to high school. The program exists to achieve dropout prevention and acceleration for overage failing eighth- or ninth-grade students with little or no high school credit. The primary goal is to accelerate the learning of overage eighth- and ninth-grade students who have previously failed so that they complete both the eighth and ninth grades in one school year, which serves to lower dropout rates. Learning is based in relevant, career-focused curriculum. The program was first implemented by the PITSCO Corporation of Pittsburg, Kansas for the 2005-2006 school year and has served 1,222 students in its first five years. Of the 1,222 students, 867 (nearly three quarters) have accelerated to 10th grade by the end of the year. Programs generally serve approximately 40 or 80 students per year per location based on the Star Academy model implemented.

Demographics
- *Target Settings*: Rural, urban, suburban, inner city
- *Target Groups Served*: Overage eighth- and ninth-graders who are failing and/or have no high school credit.
- *Districts Served*: Allendale, Anderson 5, Barnwell 19, Berkeley, Charleston, Clarendon 1, Fairfield, Greenville, Hampton 1, Lee, Pickens, Richland 1

Research and Evaluation
What national or other research was considered during the development of this program/initiative?
Describe the evidence that shows the program/initiative works.

Locations that began the program at the start of the school year experienced high rates of program success with 83% of students ending the year as 10th grade students. Only five percent of students failed to complete the course of study. Locations that began the program after the beginning of the school year were considerably less successful, with only 49% of the students ending the year as 10th grade students. Furthermore, 64% percent of Academy students improved their school attendance. Finally, in the Pickens and Anderson 5 Star Academies, there were 72% fewer behavioral instances amongst Academy students than the previous non-Star Academy school year.

Disaggregate data collection forms are distributed to every Star Academy program. Providing data is voluntary. Some locations complete the disaggregate forms; other provide only aggregate data; others provide no data at all. Upon receipt, data is entered into a central repository. Basic calculations are computed to indicate the aggregate data for acceleration, promotion, retention, and program completion.

The data below was provided by individual locations in aggregate or disaggregate form. Only locations that provided data are included in these calculations.

50 Reporting Cohorts (with stabilized enrollment assumptions for 12 cohorts)	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	Comprehensive program totals
Enrollment - # of students							
Stabilized enrollment after probationary period	80	117	282	632	743	152	2006
Ending enrollment	71	104	232	587	671	139	1804
Promotion/Retention (from ending enrollment)							
Percent Accelerated two 2 grades	82%	93%	73%	71%	61%	88%	71%
Percent promoted 1 grade	18%	7%	26%	26%	34%	9%	26%
Percent retained in original grade	0%	0%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Overall program completion							
Percent of stabilized enrollment who completed the SA program	89%	89%	82%	93%	90%	91%	90%

Resources
- *Annual Cost*: Initial cost: $700,000 for an 80-student model. The annual cost is dependent on the location and includes nominal consumable and perishable items as well as teacher salaries.
- *Funding Sources*: Funding sources vary. SC EEDA grants, ARC grants, district funds, and state funds have been used to purchase the program.
- *Staffing Needs*: Each Star Academy is staffed by one program administrator, one guidance counselor, and four facilitators, each certified in the subject they teach.
- *Infrastructure/Equipment Needs*: classroom space, computers, basic lab equipment, extra server space/ equipment
- *Partner Organizations:* PITSCO Education, ResCom Education, SC Department of Education, SC Education and Economic Development Act Regional Services.

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