

Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle Level Program - STEPS

(Students Transition to an Educational Program for Success)

Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School

Contact Person: Nancy Frischmann

Program Length: September - June

Number of Learners Served:

20 mid-level students (8th grade only)

Mission Statement:

The purpose of STEPS is to provide each student with an opportunity to succeed. The program provides small group instruction and individualization of the main stream curriculum along with study skills which will be of assistance at this and subsequent levels. The program encourages the acquisition of skills and the return to regular classes.



Belief Statements:

1. We believe that most students' needs can be met in the mainstream classroom.
2. We believe that some students require special support to be successful in the mainstream.
3. The school-within-a-school concept provides a viable option for success.
4. The goal of STEPS is the return to the mainstream with academic and study skills necessary for success.
5. Students benefit from small groups led by positive motivated adults.
6. We believe pro-social behaviors can be taught.
7. The parent involvement in STEPS is crucial to the student's success.

Entrance Criteria:

The target population will be "at risk" middle school students (grade 8) who exhibit 2 or more of the following behaviors:

1. At least two prior intervention strategies have been unsuccessful
2. Students exhibit anti-social behavior
3. Students have a history of school academic failure
4. Students are unengaged in the mainstream classes
5. Students are chronically absent and/or truant
6. Students need support in transitioning back to school after temporary placement (i.e. chemical dependency, behavior disorders depression)

Referral/Enrollment Process:

(i.e. parent, classroom teachers, self, social services, court system, building committee etc.)

Referral is generally by the student's team of teachers with some referrals coming through parents. There is an SAT process in effect, during which teachers, counselors, administration and parents are brought together to consider concerns and educational options for students.

Description of Academic Program:

This program has been created to help students, who are having difficulties achieving success in regular classes, achieve success in a different learning environment. The academics are regular grade eight curriculums, which have been modified in some instances. With STEPS students it is not so much the curriculum that troubles them. Many times, the major factors contributing to success are friendly classroom sizes and one on one attention. Another important aspect of the academics of this program is to help these "at risk students" see the importance of school. STEPS teachers maintain contact with other teachers to monitor progress throughout the school day.

Exploration Activities:

Project based learning has been implemented in each area of academics. Hopefully by exploring many hands-on, real life situations students will experience the relevance of school to the "Real World". The student's experience: resume writing, job interviewing, balancing credits/debits, job hunting, map reading, trip planning and much more. These are a sample of the individual things the STEPS program explores.

Social and Personal Development Skills Curriculum:

Personal skills are usually the skills STEPS students' lack. These skills are: setting goals, self esteem, organization, anger control, complacency and respect to name a few. These are addressed within each academic class. Each student is responsible for keeping journals and an updated agenda in hopes of expressing personal feelings and a hands-on approach to organization.

Parent Involvement:

Parents are an integral part of making STEPS work. They are involved from the first meeting. Parents are contacted every two weeks by the STEPS teacher. This is usually done by phone, Email or letter.

Exit Criteria:

In order for a student to exit the STEPS program; they need to demonstrate an improvement in the class or classes, personal skills, and social skills, which they were lacking. Each student has a goal sheet on record. When they have made improvements and have achieved success in regards to these goals, they can return to the regular classroom. The STEPS teacher remains in contact with each student. All students who exit STEPS must be brought to SAT (Student Assistance Team).