

# Educational Alternatives Programs Report



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## Report Overview

1. HEARTS
2. STRIDES
3. RIT
4. The Delta Program
5. SCASD Virtual School

## 1. HEARTS (Helping Elementary At-Risk To Succeed)

**Description:** The HEARTS Program is considered a partial hospitalization program for students in grades K-5 to work on student behaviors that are impacting their learning and the learning of others at their home school. It is operated in collaboration with Home Nursing Agency (HNA). HNA provides the therapeutic portion of the program and SCASD provides the academic portion.

**Enrollment:** The maximum numbers of students that can be in HEARTS at any one time is 10. When we do have openings at HEARTS we will take students from surrounding school districts.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum we use at HEARTS is based upon the same curriculum we use at all of the other SCASD elementary schools. Individual instruction frequently takes place during the academic time due to the wide range of grade and ability levels amongst the students enrolled.

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## 2. STRIDES (Students Taking Responsibility In Developing Educational Strategies)

**Description:** The STRIDES Program is considered a partial hospitalization program for students in grades 6-8 to work on student behaviors that are impacting their learning and the learning of others at their home school. It is operated in collaboration with Home Nursing Agency (HNA). HNA provides the therapeutic portion of the program and SCASD provides the academic portion.

**Enrollment:** The maximum numbers of students that can be in STRIDES at any one time is 10. When we do have openings at STRIDES we will take students from surrounding school districts.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum we use at STRIDES is based upon the same curriculum we use at the other SCASD middle schools. Individual instruction frequently takes place during the academic time due to the wide range of grade and ability levels amongst the students enrolled.

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## 3. RIT (Reclaiming Individual Talent)

**Description:** The RIT Program is considered by PDE as Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY). Currently the RIT program contains students in grades 9-12. All AEDY programs must meet certain criteria to exist outside the regular high school placement. AEDY programs must provide 20 hours of instruction per week and 2 ½ hours of counseling per week for each student. Excluding violations of weapons or drug policies,

State High must demonstrate they have attempted interventions to assist each student in finding success within State High.

**Enrollment:** Our current enrollment capacity of the RIT program is 22 students. Due to the transient nature of the program it serves approximately 40-50 students over a school year.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum delivery tool we use within the RIT program is Education 2020 (E2020). The program includes the use of 100% online courses in which the students move through asynchronously. The courses are designed to mirror the course content of the respective courses at State High.

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#### 4. The Delta Program

**Description:** The Delta Program is a democratic school of choice available to students in grades 7-12 who enrolled in State College Area School District. The Delta Program is in easy walking distance of the High School, Penn State University and downtown shops and government buildings. A shuttle to and from the High School is offered at the beginning and end of the school day.

The Delta Program is founded upon building strong relationships between the faculty, student body, and families. Our primary goal is to be a strong community that provides a safe nurturing environment for all stakeholders. Delta focuses on a shared leadership model between parents, students, and faculty. Our program offers an educational environment for students which features personal attention through regular weekly advising with faculty, small class size, and flexible scheduling to include classes at the High School and/or Penn State, and experiential classrooms in the community. It is worth noting that we do not have any high school aged students attending a brick and mortar charter schools.

**Enrollment:** There are currently 136 students enrolled at Delta.

**Curriculum:** The courses at Delta are content specific. Most of the courses offered at Delta are semester based. Students select courses based upon interest in the topic and the potential to find success in the course. A sample of course offerings include: The Elections, Heat & Temperature, Meteorology, Shakespeare I, Mythology, Public Speaking, and East Asian Studies. The math curriculum at Delta is standard.

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#### 5. SCASD Virtual School

The Virtual School contains two different offerings: Virtual Academy & Virtual Flex Courses.

## **Virtual Academy**

**About:** The Virtual Academy is for SCASD high school students who want to proceed through their educational experience in an 100% online format. We started this initiative in the Fall of 2011. A local virtual school allows us to keep lines of communication open and makes ourselves available to meet with students and parents at any time as if they were in a brick and mortar building. Our current practice is for the administrator and guidance counselor to meet with the student and his/her parents at least once a marking period.

**Enrollment:** There are currently 14 students enrolled in the SCASD Virtual Academy. At this point last year we had 13 high school aged students enrolled in cyber charter schools, this year we currently have 11.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum delivery tool we use is Education 2020 (E2020). These are all online courses in which the students move through asynchronously. The courses are designed to mirror the course content of the respective course at State High.

## **Flex Courses**

**About:** The Virtual Flex Courses are for SCASD high school students. There are a variety of reasons students take these courses, but most of the reasons are due to student's wanting to "flex" their schedules. We have been piloting this initiative for two years and went to full implementation in the Summer of 2011. For many years students have been taking these as correspondence courses through other organizations and we thought it was time to create an internal option. The courses available are Drivers Education, Health 1, Health 2, and every grade level of Physical Education. Students must pay to take these courses; the cost of the course is dependent on the credit value of the course. There is no additional cost to the district for these courses to operate.

### **Enrollment:**

Summer 2011: 249

Fall 2011: 45

Spring 2012: 73

Summer 2012: 319

**Curriculum:** The curriculum we use for this program is through Education 2020 (E2020) and SCoodle. These are all online courses in which the students move through asynchronously. The courses are designed to mirror the course content of the respective course at State High. Students enrolling in Physical Education flex courses must also log their physical activity during the semester of their enrollment.

**Staffing:** SCASD certified teachers supervise these students. This is a voluntary assignment outside of their contract and they are paid per student.

## Budget Information

### HEARTS (2010-11):

Operational Budget: \$9,303

Staffing Budget:

<u>Description</u>	<u>FTE's</u>
Classroom Teachers	1.0
Paraprofessionals	1.5
**Budget Secretary	.2
**Administrator	.2

Salaries & Benefits: \$134,623

### HEARTS Total: \$143,926

\*In 2010-11 we billed for 257 days of out of district enrollments for approximately \$17,990. Up to this point in the 2011-12 school year we have billed for 287 days of out of district enrollments or \$20,090.

\*\*These positions accounted for in Delta/RIT/Virtual budget information.

### STRIDES (2010-11):

Operational Budget: \$10,072

Staffing Budget:

<u>Description</u>	<u>FTE's</u>
Classroom Teachers	1.0
Paraprofessionals	1.5
**Budget Secretary	.2
**Administrator	.2

Salaries & Benefits: \$90,129

### STRIDES Total: \$100,201

\* In 2010-11 we billed for 368 days of out of district enrollments for approximately \$25,760. Up to this point in the 2011-12 school year we have billed for 158 days of out of district enrollments or \$11,060.

\*\*These positions are accounted for in Delta/RIT/Virtual budget information.

### **Delta/R.I.T./Virtual School**

These three programs are being combined because there is a lot of overlap in services that are received from the professional staff. Five of the teachers at Delta also serve as highly qualified teachers for students at RIT and the Virtual Academy. The guidance counselor for Delta also serves these programs as well as STRIDES students in a variety of ways.

Operational Budget: \$131,738

Staffing Budget:

<u>Description</u>	<u>FTE's</u>
Classroom Teachers	13.34
Counselor	1.0
Paraprofessionals	3.0
Secretary	1.2
Administrator	.6

Salaries & Benefits: \$1,812,559

**Delta/R.I.T./Virtual School Total: \$1,944,297**

**Educational Alternatives Total: \$2,188,425**

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**Summary Observations:** It is beneficial to have internal alternatives available for our students for many reasons. Primarily, it is valuable to keep a district student and their family connected with the district in which they reside as well as their home school. When a student is placed in one of our Educational Alternative programs there is a line of communication and monitoring that remains with the student's home school including administrators, teachers, and counselors. Having internal options also allows us to ensure that these students have access to the same high quality curriculum as other SCASD students, making the transition back to their home school more seamless.

Facilitating internal district options is more cost effective for the district than having to contract or reimburse a charter school, neighboring school district, or private entity whom would otherwise be providing services to these students. Below are sample costs of external programs students would attend:

HEARTS/STRIDES: \$60 - \$265 per student/per day (excludes transportation)

RIT: \$70 - \$88 per student/per day (excludes transportation)

Delta & Virtual Academy students: \$10,972 (non special ed.) and \$22,419 (special ed.)/year for charter school reimbursement

The current estimated cost to operate our Educational Alternative program is approximately \$2.2 million per year. The estimated cost to the district if we did not have these programs would be between \$2.5 and \$3.3 million per year.