

ALGEBRA ACADEMY

At-risk South Carolina high school enjoys academic turnaround as 93 percent of Pitsco Education Algebra students pass state end-of-course exam in 2009-2010

About the School

- Carolina High School & Academy
- Greenville, South Carolina
- Grades: 9-12
- Enrollment: 731

About the Curriculum

Program overview: *Each course – Algebra Readiness and Algebra I – has been written and developed to meet state and national standards and provide students with rich, connected learning experiences. Both courses are delivered in three distinct phases of instruction that introduce core strands of highly integrated mathematical concepts and successfully guide students to increasing levels of sophistication and depth of knowledge.*

Program features:

- Build mathematical literacy across Grades 7-10
- Individualized and team-based curriculum
- Progressive three-phase delivery model
- Small-group activities
- Cooperative learning
- Project-based, hands-on curriculum
- Diagnostic assessments
- Homework reinforcement

Three methodologies employed:

- **Individualized Instruction** – diagnostic assessments; targeted remediation; individualized, scheduled lesson plans; one-to-one, computer-based instruction
- **Whole Class Curriculum** – whole class, small-group activities; written and aligned to core math concepts
- **Cooperative Learning** – builds communications skills; accommodates multiple learning styles; promotes teamwork; student-directed learning

‘Experiencing math . . . is the difference’

GREENVILLE, S.C. – Carolina High School & Academy (CHS&A) Principal Anthony Holland’s philosophy is that incremental change can bring about systemic improvements. His approach, in combination with new curricular solutions such as Pitsco Education Algebra, is paying dividends.

CHS&A in Greenville, South Carolina, deemed an at-risk school for five straight years (2005-2009), experienced a significant breakthrough in Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) exam scores in 2009-2010, the same year Pitsco’s program was fully implemented in several sections of Algebra I.

In 2008, only 58 percent of students passed the state EOC exam. In 2010, 93 percent of students who experienced the hands-on, cooperative learning of Pitsco Algebra passed the exam. Of the remaining CHS&A students who took the exam, 71 percent passed.

Assistant Principal Michael Delaney, a former math teacher, said the unique design of Pitsco Algebra empowers students to succeed through relevant, real-world content.

“It is the way the class is structured to promote teamwork and collaboration, yet with a specific individualized plan for success

for each student,” Delaney said. “The students not only become accountable for their own learning, but they also are able to track their learning throughout the semester. This in itself is a powerful tool.”

He added, “The students involved in this class did not just learn math. They had the opportunity to experience math, and that is the difference.”

Pitsco Education Algebra was implemented in 2008 as an attempt to reach struggling students and improve state end-of-course algebra exam results.

“We actually scored lower in math than we did in reading. We needed some help in that area,” Principal Anthony Holland said. “Our superintendent, Dr. Fisher, was a key player in getting this (Pitsco) program. She’s the first one to introduce me to this lab. She really believes in it and in what we want to do.”

Delaney said the results in the Pitsco lab and the school overall are unprecedented. “We have tried a number of things over the years to improve test scores, from math blitzes to double blocking to personnel changes, and none of them have resulted in jumps in scores like we have had this year.”



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Michael Delaney

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