

Project PACE (Partnerships for Accessing College Education), represents a three-way partnership between local high schools, Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) and local businesses. The project focuses on increasing the college participation rates and graduation rates of underrepresented, first generation college-bound, and socio-economically disadvantage students.

A School-to-College-to-Business Proposal

Education is the key that unlocks multiple pathways which lead to life-long employment and financial stability. Entering the workforce with industry certifications or a college degree will significantly increase a student's earning potential.

SLCC, in collaboration with local school districts and businesses, proposes a collaborative three-way educational partnership:

Local school districts will select the students and monitor their progress throughout the qualification period. PACE will encourage students to be academically responsible during their formative high school years by requiring them to take courses that provide a strong academic foundation, maintain a satisfactory grade point average, and maintain a consistent pattern of attendance and punctuality.

SLCC will provide educational pathways that prepare students to be career and college ready for the workplace of tomorrow with additional transfer opportunities to baccalaureate-granting institutions.

Local businesses can participate in several ways:

- provide a one-time or annual donation to be used for funding the scholarships
- provide internships for summer employment opportunities
- mentor participating students as they progress throughout the program

This collaborative partnership will inspire and instill in students the necessary attitudes, commitment and academic foundation needed to successfully complete high school. Additionally students will be prepared to participate in a college experience that focuses on a major workforce opportunity as well as an opportunity to continue their education at a university.

Career Focuses

Research by Wayne State University lists that the following top ten careers for the decade and beyond:

Computer Programmers, Day Care Providers, Elder Care Specialists, Employment Specialists, Environmental Engineers, Home Health Aides, Management Consultants, Networking Specialists, Physician's Assistants, and Social Services Coordinators.

SLCC, an open access, comprehensive community college, provides educational opportunities for these programs, and the College has addressed the educational needs of business and industry at multiple levels. SLCC has an excellent transfer record with other Utah colleges and universities.

Partnership with High Schools

SLCC is partnering with area high schools to develop eligibility criteria for participating high school students. Students will participate in PACE as freshmen and will continue in the program each year as long as they meet the eligibility criteria.

PACE students will maintain set academic standards, have the opportunity for internships and summer employment, complete their high school diplomas in eight consecutive semesters, participate in a college experience with a goal to complete a minimum of two years of college, and have a unique access to the workforce (via business partnerships) when they complete their higher education goals.

Eligibility criteria for students participating in PACE:

- (1) Students must have an average attendance of 90% for each regular term of attendance. Students can be dropped from the program if the school tardy standards are exceeded.
- (2) Students will maintain an average grade point average of 2.50 (out of 4.00) each year. Students will maintain letter grades of C or higher.
- (3) Students are expected to take:
 - (a) four years of mathematics (including one concurrent course in mathematics)
 - (b) three courses in the social sciences (including one concurrent course)
- (4) Students are expected to complete their high school education in eight (8) consecutive semesters.

A review process will be in place to encourage and monitor academic behavior and to resolve any issues that may arise along the way.

Partnership with Local Businesses

Businesses enter the partnership by providing any or all of the following opportunities: internships (when the students reach the age to enter the workforce), summer employment, mentoring opportunities, and scholarships.

Businesses that chose to provide scholarships may do so with one-time payments or through a long term commitment. This money would be deposited in a special account that would be **used exclusively to pay the tuition and fees, or other necessary educational expenses, of participating students** for two years at SLCC once the students graduate from high school.

Action Plan for Implementation a PACE Pilot Program

- (1) West High School will be the pilot program for PACE.
- (2) West High School will identify students who will participate in the PACE pilot program.
- (3) SLCC will identify businesses which will mentor the PACE students, provide internships and summer job opportunities and future scholarships for participating students to attend SLCC when they graduate from high school.

- (4) High school instructors and counselors will counsel with students, monitor students' progress to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria for receiving two-year scholarships to attend SLCC.
- (5) Evaluation of the effectiveness of the project will be assessed from the students' perspective, the participating business's perspective and the College's perspective.
- (6) Develop a shared website between SLCC, West High School and participating businesses.
- (7) Establish a review process for resolving issues as they arise in the program. Academic remediation may be warranted in certain situations.
- (8) On-site visits to the SLCC and appropriate higher education activities will be arranged.