

John Marshall Metropolitan High School

Chicago, Illinois

Pathway to Accelerated Student Success (PASS): Three different credit recovery programs help high school students develop the academic and personal skills necessary to become productive members of their communities

In 2009, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) put Marshall Metropolitan High School on academic probation. In 2011, the Marshall staff designed and implemented Pathway to Accelerated Student Success (PASS), which consists of three credit recovery programs: Daytime, Extended Day, and the PASS Institute. In the three PASS programs, Fuel Education (FuelEd) instructors, certified in the state of Illinois, teach all of the FuelEd courses. PASS students take online courses in one of the Marshall High School computer labs every weekday.

Depending on the specific program, PASS students take their online courses at different times: PASS Daytime students take their online instruction during their normal school day. PASS Extended Day students take their online instruction between 2:45 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. every weekday and PASS Institute students take their online instruction for about seven hours every weekday.

In all three programs, on-campus Marshall PASS program teachers support, mentor, and tutor the students. Generally, the PASS teachers work with students one-to-one or in small groups. One PASS teacher commented, "We get to know each student individually and understand his or her needs. Students look forward to coming in because they know we will understand them."

Over
600

PASS
program
students
earned their
high school
diploma
in the past
4 years



SCHOOL

Type of school:
Public school

Grades:
9 through 12

Program Initiated:
February, 2011

School enrollment:
445 whole school
160 PASS Daytime program
30 students on a rotating basis:
PASS Extended Day program
60 students (3 cohorts) on a rotating
basis: PASS Institute program

Ethnicity:
98.1% Black
1.6% Hispanic
.3% other

Low income:
91.3%

Program Staff:
4 Teachers
1 Social worker
1 Student advocate
1 Security guard
1 Intern
1 Counselor
1 Dean

PROGRAM

Students served:
**3 programs within the school
for selected students**

Instructional models / programs:
**Online learning labs within a
traditional public high school**

Primary course type:
Credit recovery

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Pathway to Accelerated Student Success (PASS): Three programs in which students take Fuel Education (FuelEd) online courses in one of several Marshall High School computer labs

PASS Daytime Credit Recovery

- Current Marshall students, needing to recover credits, take online instruction for one or two class periods each day

PASS Extended Day Credit Recovery

- Students needing to recover credits take online courses from 2:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily
- Participants include students from Marshall and other Chicago Public High Schools (CPHS) as well as dropouts who work during the day and must attend the evening program, rather than the Institute Drop-out Re-engagement program

PASS Institute Drop-out Re-engagement

- Students come from all over the city
- Three seven-hour sessions per day; students attend only one session
- Strong emphasis on helping students be successful in all aspects of their lives, including on-the-job training, social and emotional counseling, parental training, resume writing and postsecondary preparation

At least one Marshall High School teacher, who provides individual tutoring and support for each PASS student, staffs each lab.

FuelEd provides the online courses and online teachers for all three PASS programs.

PASS Programs Improve the Graduation Rate, Reduce the Dropout Rate, and Improve Student Motivation

CPS is the third largest public school district in the country, with 664 schools and about 397,000 students. Marshall High School has approximately 445 students, in grades 9 through 12. More than 91% of Marshall High School students come from low-income families and, as Table 1 indicates, nearly 96% of PASS students suffer from some type of bereavement stress. Overall, the data in Table 1 indicates most PASS students face numerous social and personal challenges that could easily interfere with their education. Accordingly, the PASS program offers a multitude of services to these students, such as parental training, grief groups, and personal counseling. A PASS student said, “One of the main reasons I stopped coming to school was because I was pregnant. I lost all my ambition; I gave up. Now I actually love school. I want to further my education, even after high school. PASS helped me a lot.”

Table 1: PASS Student Demographics on Stressors

Demographic	Percent of PASS program students
Have children	40.8%
Employed	28.6%
Gang affiliations	42.9%
IEP	34.7%
Formerly incarcerated or on parole	53.1%
Chronically truant	57.1%
Struggling reader	32.7%
Anger issues	71.4%
Incarcerated	4.1%
Pregnant or recently had a baby	32.7%
Hospitalized or institutionalized	24.5%
Bereavement	95.9%

When the Marshall staff designed and implemented the three PASS programs, in February 2011, their goal was to address not only their academic probation status with CPS but also the common challenges experienced by many of their students. Thus, two of the three PASS programs are open to struggling high school students across the entire CPS district.

The PASS instructional model consists of three major components: FuelEd online courses, FuelEd online teachers, and four Marshall teachers who tutor, mentor, and support PASS students. A critical element of PASS, especially the Extended Day and the Institute programs, is the relationship Marshall teachers and staff develop with their students. They hold students accountable for their actions and behaviors and help them take responsibility for their future. “A core value for us is building positive relationships with our assigned students,” notes a PASS teacher.

Table 2: PASS Credit Recovery Programs

	Daytime	Extended Day	PASS Institute
Restricted access to the computer lab	No. Open access for all students	Yes. PASS students only	Yes. PASS students only
When students take FuelEd courses	Up to three class periods per day	2:45–7:00 p.m., weekdays	7 hours every weekday
Types of students needing to recover credits	Marshall students	Marshall and other CPS high school students, as well as dropouts for whom this time works better than the Institute times	CPS students who are significantly behind in credits or have dropped out of school and are less than 21 years old
Criteria for exiting the program	End of the semester	When student recovers all necessary credits	When student recovers all necessary credits
Student / teacher ratio	25:1	30:1	15:1
Course completion	It is CPS policy that high school students who fail a class must complete the entire class again to recover credit.		

Because Marshall High School students need 24 credits to graduate, the primary goal of each PASS program is to help students earn those credits and receive their diploma. One PASS student said, “This was good because it showed that the school cared if I graduated. I had a rough junior year and fell behind, and now I have caught up and will graduate on time.”

Another goal of the PASS programs is to provide a path for training or education after graduation. Thus, before students receive their diploma they must provide an acceptance letter from a trade school, community college, or other postsecondary institutions.

PASS Daytime Credit Recovery is a program for current Marshall students who take their FuelEd online courses for one or two class periods each day in one of the computer labs. Students who complete their assigned FuelEd instruction before the end of the semester continue in the computer lab and take an online elective during their assigned PASS class period. One PASS student noted, “Finishing the online classes in a reasonable time period allowed me to earn the credit I needed and then take the electives I wanted, like art.”

PASS Extended Day Credit Recovery is a program for both Marshall students and students from other CPS district high schools. Specifically, this program is for students not enrolled full-time in high school but want a high school diploma, or are enrolled full-time in a high school but cannot fit a credit recovery course into their schedule. This program also serves some students who have dropped out and would normally enroll in the PASS Institute but find that the Extended Day schedule better meets their needs.

Students in the Extended Day program work on their assigned online courses from 2:45–7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. They may complete a FuelEd course in a few weeks or they may need the entire semester. When students complete their online instruction, they exit the program.

Students in both the Extended Day and Institute programs follow a dress code and are required to contact their PASS instructor if they cannot attend school on any given day. One PASS staff member notes, “Each of the adults in the PASS program holds their assigned students accountable for attendance, coursework, and behavior. We require them to be responsible for all aspects of their own growth and development.”

PASS Institute is a program for students who have dropped out of school, are more than a year behind in course credits, and are less than 21 years old. Sometimes students fall well behind and enter the Institute before they drop out. If students are older than 21, they can enroll in a city college that has a diploma program for older students who have not graduated from high school.

To enroll in the PASS Institute, students must have at least 10 credits toward the 24 credits required for graduation. Counselors work with students to create a graduation plan and estimate how long it will take them to earn their diploma. Students usually start their online instruction with subjects they feel the most confident about and take one course at a time.

MARSHALL POINTS TO KEY PRACTICES THAT WORK

1. Relationship building:

PASS students develop strong relationships with PASS staff members, who hold students accountable and help them take responsibility for their own personal growth and development.

2. Peer-to-Peer mentoring:

PASS students develop a sense of community and self-worth when they mentor another PASS student. Sometimes students' peers can reach them more quickly and effectively than an adult.

3. FuelEd online

courses: Comprehensive and rigorous FuelEd courses enable students to work at their own pace and discover their own learning preferences, strengths, and weaknesses.

4. Wraparound services:

The variety of support, services, and individual attention that PASS students receive is critical for helping them mature and achieve academic success.

There are three PASS Institute cohorts and two daily sessions. Two cohorts arrive at 8 a.m. and leave at 3:12 p.m. One cohort arrives at 8:48 a.m. and stays until 4:06 p.m. Students receive a mid-day lunch and typically will interact with at least one PASS teacher, counselor, or other adult several times every day.

The Institute offers a variety of off-campus options to help the students succeed.

For example, students can go to:

- A local business to learn on-the-job skills
- Columbia College to learn how to make and record their own music
- Urban Threads to learn fashion design
- BLUE1647 to learn computer skills, e.g., how to make drones and assemble and disassemble computers

Services offered to PASS Institute students include a day care facility for teen parents, social and emotional counseling, peer-to-peer mentoring, grief groups, parental training, and workshops on resume writing and interview skills. PASS Institute students also earn stipends for active participation in life skills and workforce training.

The Institute helps students find places to live if they are homeless and collaborates with numerous city agencies to provide extensive services. One student raved about PASS saying, "PASS not only helped me with school, but they are my family. They helped me get through hard times and work hard to graduate. I am proud to say I am the first in my family (to graduate)!"

The PASS Institute is at capacity most of the year and retention is high. About 90% of PASS Institute students finish high school in a year or less. Two Institute students praised this program, saying essentially that PASS gave them a second chance to graduate. They are not only motivated to finish high school but also to set goals for furthering their education.





Four Years of PASS Programs Produce Impressive Results

From 2011 to 2015, PASS has provided thousands of Chicago Public High School students the opportunity to recover credits, meet graduation requirements, and move on to postsecondary education. The four key practices (described on the previous page) have evolved into a powerful, integrated system that gives students hope and opportunities they never thought they would have.

Successful High School Graduation and Beyond

CREDITS RECOVERED

PASS students recovered **more than 2,000 credits** over the past 4 years



DIPLOMAS EARNED

more than 600 PASS students earned their high school diploma (June 2011 through August 2015)



GRADUATION RATES

85% of PASS Extended Day students graduate



90% of PASS Institute students finish high school in a year or less

POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

83% of PASS Institute students attend a postsecondary institution



AWARDS / OUTCOMES

Chicago Public Schools cited Marshall Metropolitan High School as

“A turnaround school that has revitalized its curriculum, culture, and climate, and is showing clear gains as a result. Students receive the supports necessary to be academically successful.”

Marshall Metropolitan High School is off academic probation

BOTTOM LINE:

The PASS programs enable Chicago Public High School students to earn a diploma and acquire life skills that will help them become productive members of their communities.