

Report Card Narratives

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Sussex County CS for Technology (80-7850-960)

The Sussex County Charter School for Technology, in operation since 1997, is an innovative public school of choice, aligned with the Common Core Standards, servicing 225 6th, 7th & 8th grade students in Sussex County and surrounding areas. A distinctive and dynamic technology-based program promotes active learning and embraces multiple learning needs and styles in a challenging environment. The interactive learning community encourages every student to grow academically, socially, and emotionally into responsible individuals who are ready to make a successful transition into high school.

The Sussex County Charter School for Technology features a community-based atmosphere, emphasis on student responsibility, differentiated and individualized instruction and block scheduling. Since January, 2011 the school now has its own new facility – a stylish and newly constructed campus consisting of a Humanities Building, Math and Science Building, which are modular constructions, and a free-standing, full size gymnasium.

Based on the Common Core Standards, the Sussex County Charter School program offers courses in Pre-Algebra and Algebra, an integrated Humanities course (Language Arts Literacy, Social Studies, Philosophy, and the Arts), Integrated Science (Earth Science, Biology, Physics and Chemistry), Spanish, Communications, Music and Physical Education and Health. The technology component of the program involves Computer Literacy, Laboratory Science Technology, Commercial Art, Engineering, Computer Aided Drafting and Design, Film Production and Electronics. Students also take seminar rotations in Holocaust Studies/Character Education, Visual Arts, Creative Writing, Journalism, Performing Arts, Strategic Thinking and Study Skills.

Differentiation of instruction is a major priority at the Sussex County Charter School. Changing the pace, level, or kind of instruction provided to students in response to individual learners' needs, styles, or interests is a major avenue of educational change today. This instruction is both rigorous and challenging to motivate students to push themselves forward academically. Learning at the school is relevant, in that it focuses on essential learning. Instruction is both flexible and varied, allowing students, where appropriate, to make choices about how they will learn, and how they will demonstrate learning. Finally, differentiated instruction at the school focuses on depth rather than breadth of knowledge, thus providing a higher quality of learning to the students.

Our educational program operates on a reflective, school-wide portfolio culture, based on eight key learning objectives essential academic growth. This school-wide reflective portfolio system allows us to more fully integrate academic subjects, as well as more fully link these academic subjects with the technology emphasis of the Charter School. Not only does this portfolio culture help more fully integrate curricula, it facilitates ensuring curricula addresses the life skills students need. Through the portfolio process, students come to understand that learning does not take

place in isolated “academic segments,” but rather, true learning is integrated across all disciplines and throughout a lifetime.

Caring Community, an integrated character education initiative of the Sussex County Charter School, supports both the emotional development of young adolescents as well as the development of leadership abilities. As a result, student commitment to being kind, helpful, responsible and respectful of others deepens. Students learn to accept both the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society, and develop the skills necessary to live safe, humane, and productive lives.

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