

Project BEST

A Collaborative Tutorial Program

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

THOMPSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

In the beginning... 1989

Purposes of the program were:

- To increase retention of minority students at VCU
- To enhance retention of at-risk middle school students
- To enhance academic preparation of at risk middle school students for success in a college preparatory track for college admission

Overall Goals: 1989

Academic success in mathematics and science in middle school

- Passing scores on SOL Tests in Math and Science
 - Good grades
 - Fewer discipline referrals
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- College admission

Four Basic Components: 1989

- Three-tiered mentorship program
- Mentor/tutorial program
- Saturday seminars in mathematics and science
- Cultural activities for mentors and mentees



Three-tiered Mentorship Program

Thompson Faculty/VCU Faculty

VCU Students

Thompson Students



Mentor/Tutorial Program



Saturday Seminars in Mathematics and Science



Workshops for College Students





Workshops for Middle School Students



Field Trips Relevant to Learning



Criteria for Selection



- Recommended by teachers
- Academically at-risk
- Demonstrated potential based on grade point averages or test scores

Results of Study in *Middle Level Research Journal*



- Higher grades
- Greater self-esteem and more likely to accept responsibility
- Fewer absences and discipline referrals

Two National Awards

- American Association for Higher Education
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities

State Award



Virginia Math and Science Coalition

“Programs that Work”

New and Continuing Goals: 2007 and Beyond

- Enhance academic performance in math and science
- Expose students to college faculty and careers in math, science, and engineering
- Provide on-going support for middle school students through high school to facilitate college admission
- College enrollment in undergraduate mathematics or science majors and related career goals including teaching

Three Basic Components: 2007



Mentor/Tutorial Program

Saturday Math and Science Seminars

Summer Camp in Math and Science

Experimental and control groups: 2007



- Scores on algebra readiness diagnostic test
- Demonstrated potential through grade point averages and/or test scores
- Similar GPAs
- Number of discipline referrals
- Number of absences from school

How will we measure success?

Academic performance in math and science

- SOL test scores
- Grades in math and science
- Interest in a career in math or science
- Discipline referrals
- Absenteeism rates

Why Project BEST is Important

- It enhances the mathematics and science skills of middle school students.
- It helps middle school students gain a vision of who they can become
- It may increase the number of students interested in careers in math or science or entering teacher preparation programs in math or science.

Collaboration + Dedication =

SUCCESS!

