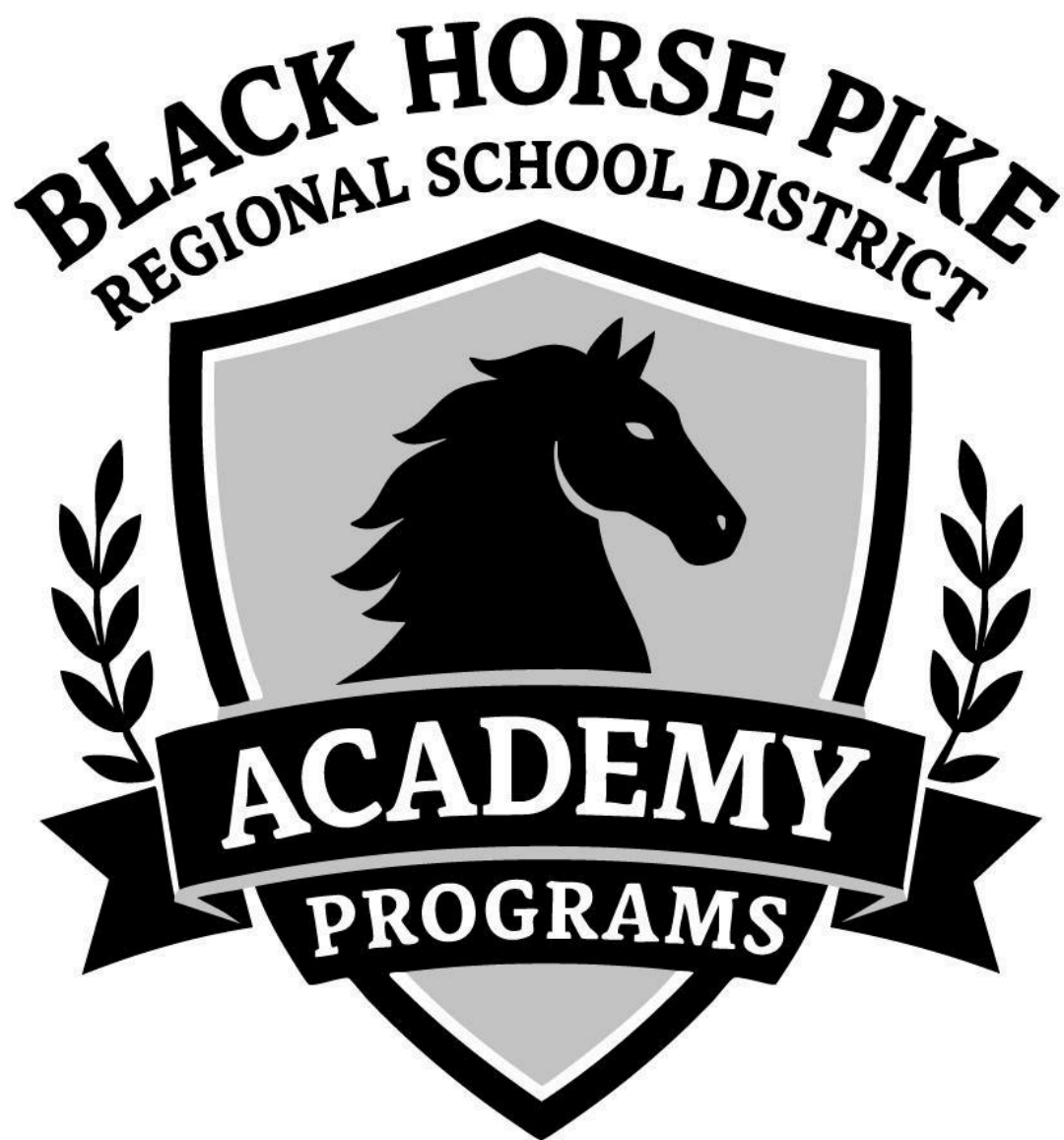




Academy Program Guide



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Table of Contents

<u>Introduction to Academies</u>	3
<u>Admissions Process</u>	3
<u>Commitment to Excellence</u>	4
<u>Academy Goals & Experiences</u>	4
<u>Business Leadership Academy</u>	5
Student Responsibilities	5
Coursework	5
Co-Curricular Participation	5
Professional Attire	5
<u>STEAM Academy</u>	6
Student Responsibilities	6
Coursework	6
Co-Curricular Participation	6
Professional Attire	6
College Partnerships and Dual Credit	7
<u>Academy FAQs</u>	7
<u>Contact Information</u>	9

Introduction to Academies

Black Horse Pike Regional School District's Academy Programs prepare students for advanced college study in a particular subject. These programs are offered to a qualifying group of students who have demonstrated interests and abilities in particular fields of study. Academies include in-depth study of targeted courses on an advanced level, with many courses meeting the requirements of Advanced Placement (AP) or college-level work. Courses fall within traditional academic disciplines such as science, math, social studies, English/language arts, business, and technology.



The suggested course sequence creates an integrated and interdisciplinary academic experience for students. The Academies address the core skills, knowledge, and values that are essential to success in high school and in preparation for acceptance to a competitive four-year college or university. Students enrolled in the Business Leadership Academy (BLA) or S.T.E.A.M. Academy should be prepared for challenging coursework, service learning, and participation in a variety of opportunities beyond the classroom.

Admissions Process

Students who express an interest in college majors in one of the various areas of business or STEAM-related fields and are looking to take academically rigorous courses are excellent candidates for an Academy program.

Each Academy program is divided into two phases: two years of interdisciplinary education requirements (grades 9 & 10) and two years of advanced preparation aligned with collegiate programming (grades 11 & 12).

Option 1: *Students may apply for acceptance to the program in their 8th-grade year.* Admission into an academy considers multiple measures to ensure that each accepted student has potential to succeed in the program. Considerations include academic grades, attendance records, test scores, and the disciplinary records. Students must complete an application and obtain one teacher recommendation:

- [Academy Application](#)
- [Teacher Recommendation Form](#)

Option 2: *Students who are not a member of one of the Academy Programs during their 9th-grade year,* but wish to apply for Phase II (applications are due by February 27th) must complete the following:

- Meet all course requirements for admission to the Academy Program of choice.
- Contact their school counselor to express an interest in applying.
- Complete an [application](#) (online form).
- Obtain two recommendations from teachers. Students asking their teachers for a recommendation should use this [Recommendation Form](#) along with their application.

The admissions formula for Phase II applicants considers multiple measures to ensure that each accepted student has potential to succeed in the program. Considerations include academic grades, attendance records, test scores, and the disciplinary records.

Academy Acceptance is contingent upon an end-of-year record review of both academic and disciplinary records.

- Students must be in good academic standing in order to be accepted into an academy.
- In order to preserve their membership in an academy, students must meet all prerequisite requirements (as noted in the Program of Studies) to continue on academy paths.
- In alignment with the Academy agreement, Academy acceptance is also contingent upon disciplinary record review.

Additionally, **administrative discretion** may be applied in cases involving **incidents that** cause significant disruption to the school environment and/or the community and/or require a heightened response due to their nature or severity.

Commitment to Excellence

Students enrolled in the Academy Programs represent Black Horse Pike Regional School District and are expected to be role models as well-rounded, young scholastic professionals. Exemplary performance, leadership, kindness to others, behavior, and a strong work ethic are **expected** of all Academy students, which makes it possible to serve as role models. Students are required to sign an Academy Agreement as a member of the Academy Program.



If, at any point, a student fails to meet the expectations outlined in the [Academy Agreement](#), a meeting with the counselor and supervisor will be held to determine the next steps. These may include probation and/or dismissal from the Academy Program.

Academy Goals & Experiences

Black Horse Pike Regional School District's Academy programs aim to effectively equip their students with 21st Century Skills that prepare future leaders to tackle the complex problems and projects they will encounter in college and as professionals in the workforce. These skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, collaboration, etc., are not only critical to a student's success in high school, but also to college, career, and life. A student's success centers on his or her ability to not only gain advanced knowledge but also understand how to further obtain and use that knowledge to capably and confidently solve problems in the global marketplace. Successful completion of either Academy is a major academic achievement for which students, families, and faculty should be proud. In addition to challenging academic coursework, Academy students will also engage in the following experiences:

21st Century Learning

Understanding and learning within the Academy programs will center on the reinforcement of concepts found within the Framework for 21st Century Learning, which highlights "...the skills and knowledge students need to succeed in work, life, and citizenship, as well as the support systems necessary for 21st-century learning outcomes." Through their active participation in this program, students will be effectively prepared for college success. Collaboration, critical thinking, project-based learning, and an emphasis on 21st Century Learning are central to the Academy experience.

Extra-Curricular Learning Experiences

Capstone experiences are essential for high school students in the STEAM or Business Academies because they provide a hands-on opportunity to apply what they've learned in real-world settings. By participating in a STEAM Capstone or joining DECA, students develop professional skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, and problem-solving, while working on long-term projects that simulate college or workplace expectations. These experiences allow students to create tangible outcomes, like prototypes, business plans, or presentations, that enhance their portfolios and resumes, connect them with mentors and community partners, and help them reflect on their personal and academic growth. Capstones also strengthen the identity of the academy, giving students a chance to showcase their work and demonstrate how their education prepares them for college and future careers.

Academy Requirements

- Business Academy students create and present projects aligned to course requirements and DECA competitions.
- STEAM Academy students create and present a Capstone project that aligns with pathway coursework.
- Environmental Sustainability Academy students must serve as a member of the school's Green Team.

Business Leadership Academy

The Business Leadership Academy (BLA) is designed to expose students to various facets of the business world. The overarching goal of the Academy is to provide students with curricular experiences relevant to the underpinnings of the business world using a collaborative student-centered approach. Through their active participation in this program, students will be effectively prepared for college business programs through exposure to foundations critical to the business world.



To achieve its goals, Black Horse Pike Regional School District's Business Leadership Academy includes the following:

- A course sequence based on research of collegiate business administration programs.
- An Academy cohort model to support collaboration and interpersonal relationships among and between students and faculty. Two Business-related pathways will be offered: [Finance](#) and [Marketing](#).
- Instruction that is student-centered and focused on real-world connections that require critical and creative thinking as well as collaborative problem solving; an emphasis is placed on the integration of DECA components within business courses.

Student Responsibilities

Coursework

All business courses within Black Horse Pike Regional School District's Business Academy aim to:

- Provide a strong knowledge related to business principles, economic understandings, and theoretical underpinnings.
- Develop an understanding of business law and ethics and their application to real-world scenarios.
- Cultivate leadership skills and interdependence between and among classmates.
- Advance 21st-century skills that support innovative and entrepreneurial thinking.
- Provide a broadly based business curriculum that supports transferable skills and understanding between and among industries.
- Foster a realistic understanding of professional business environments and employer expectations; and,
- Build school and community partnerships.

Co-Curricular Participation

DECA is an extra-curricular, non-profit, local, district, state, and nationally affiliated organization for secondary students. The purpose of DECA is to provide opportunities to develop career-supportive competencies and to promote civic and personal responsibility. **All students enrolled in Black Horse Pike Regional School District's Business Leadership Academy must be members of DECA.**

In addition to an official membership card and pin, DECA members have exclusive access to all the college and career preparation opportunities DECA provides. These include access to [DECA Direct](#), participation in DECA's Competitive Events Program to demonstrate their knowledge and earn recognition, opportunities to attend conferences designed to prepare them for college and careers, access to \$300,000 in scholarships, and more. Additionally, each grade level participates in business-related field trips throughout the year, typically twice a year. Students in good standing (i.e. behavior, attendance, academics) are required to attend these scheduled trips.

Professional Attire

All BLA students will be expected to dress in professional business attire using DECA guidelines and/or BLA polo shirts when required by their business teachers and on occasions when representing the BLA.

STEAM Academy

Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics

The STEAM Academy offers a four-year program of interdisciplinary studies for academically motivated students interested in pursuing careers in mathematics, engineering, or the sciences. The program includes courses that have a challenging, collaborative, and inquiry approach to learning that cultivates critical thinking skills and 21st-century skills that will ensure success in post-secondary education as well as STEAM career paths.



To achieve its goals, Black Horse Pike Regional School District's STEAM Academy includes the following:

- A course sequence that emphasizes STEAM.
- Academy pathways that use a cohort model to support collaboration and interpersonal relationships among and between students and faculty. Three STEAM-related pathways will be offered: [Architectural Design](#), [Engineering Design](#), and [Environmental Sustainability Design](#).
- Instruction that requires critical and creative thinking as well as collaborative problem solving.

Student Responsibilities

Coursework

All courses within Black Horse Pike Regional School District's STEAM Academy aim to

- Provide a strong knowledge related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- Develop an understanding of STEAM principles and their application to real-world scenarios.
- Cultivate leadership skills and interdependence between and among classmates.
- Advance 21st-century skills that support problem-solving and critical thinking; and,
- Build school and community partnerships.

Co-Curricular Participation

All students enrolled in the District's STEAM Academy must participate in STEAM Capstone.

STEAM Capstone is an interdisciplinary, enrichment-based program within the Black Horse Pike Regional School District for secondary students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. The purpose of the STEAM Capstone is to provide opportunities for students to develop advanced, career-aligned competencies through research, innovation, and cross-disciplinary problem-solving. Students accepted into the program are required to design, complete, and present a capstone project each Spring at Camden County College and earn 2.5 credits upon successful completion of all program requirements.

All students enrolled in the Environmental Sustainability pathway are also required to serve as a member of the school's Green Team.

The Green Team is dedicated to promoting environmental awareness and sustainability within the school community. Members work together on projects such as recycling programs, energy conservation, and school cleanups to reduce the school's ecological footprint. The team also encourages peers and staff to adopt eco-friendly habits through education and example. Going to see if I come from

Additionally, each grade level participates in STEAM-related field trips throughout the year, typically twice a year. Students in good standing (i.e. behavior, attendance, academics) are required to attend these scheduled trips.

Professional Attire

All STEAM Academy students will be expected to dress in professional attire and/or STEAM Academy polo shirts when required by their teachers and on occasions when representing the STEAM Academy.

College Partnerships and Dual Credit

Black Horse Pike Regional School District Regional School District has partnered with Camden County College to offer Dual Credit enrollment for many of our Academy courses. This partnership has the potential to provide Academy students with opportunities to earn college credits. Students may also work with their counselors to plan for taking courses on the college campus during the student's senior year.



If Academy students take advantage of these opportunities, they will engage in learning that is not only vital to post-secondary academic standards, but also experience college expectations and environments. These create a comprehensive high school experience that prepares students for the transition into higher education and nurtures confidence needed for success in college. For more information on these, please contact the Academy Supervisor or the student's School Counselor.

Academy FAQs

1. How do I know an Academy is right for me?

Your responses to the following questions will help you to decide whether you are a good fit for one of the Academies.

- *Do my interests match the focus of the Academy?*
- *Do my grades in the subjects that are the academic focus of the Academy demonstrate that I am ready to accept the challenge of the program?*
- *Have I demonstrated that I could balance the demands of accelerated classes while still participating in sports, clubs, hobbies, and other extracurricular activities?*
- *Am I taking Algebra I or higher in 8th grade?*
- *Can I identify two faculty members in my school who are willing to provide me with excellent recommendations for these programs?*
- *Does my discipline record reflect an ability to know right from wrong in situations with my peers, my teachers, my use of social media, etc.?*
- *Have my scores on standardized/local assessments (i.e. NJSLA, Course benchmarks) been strong?*

2. What is included in the application and selection process? (See online [application](#) form)

The selection process considers many different criteria. As such, the selection process is a lengthy one. The following are part of the application process.

- *Basic student information (demographic information, name, address, academy interest, etc.)*
- *Academic records including 7th and 8th grade ELA and math*
- *State and/or local assessment scores*
- *Recommendations from teachers*
- *Disciplinary Record*

3. If I am accepted into one of the Academies, do I have a better chance of getting into competitive colleges?

The Academies are an excellent place to start, but it is just the beginning. You will have to work hard and make a serious commitment to your learning throughout high school.

4. How do Academy programs help my child earn college credit?

Many Academy courses align with our Dual Credit partnership with Camden County College, which means that students can apply for college credit for only \$150 per eligible high school course. The college credits are documented on the students' transcript from Camden County College, which can then be presented to other colleges and universities for evaluation of transferable credit. For the list of courses eligible for Dual Credit, see the [District Program of Studies](#).



5. What is the advantage of being a member of an Academy program vs. taking the courses as a non-Academy student?

Students enrolled in an Academy program will have opportunities for field experience and benefit from active membership in Academy clubs (DECA, STEAM Capstone, and/or Green Team). Completion of pathway coursework will be noted on students' transcripts. Academy students will receive customized attire to wear for special field experiences and presentations. They will be celebrated at Board of Education ceremonies and graduation programs.

6. What if my child needs accommodations or modifications to successfully learn?

Academy Program applications are available for all students. Teachers are legally bound to follow individualized plans that accommodate learning needs according to IEP or 504 plans, and to differentiate per status as an English Language Learner or as a Gifted & Talented student.

7. What if my child does not want to participate in some of the activities?

The Academies are competitive programs, and selected participants are expected to take part in the full complement of programming. Some of these programs may include professional speakers, career organizations, service learning, field experiences, summer workshops, research, and job shadowing.

8. What if my child wants to participate in other activities or sports beyond what's required for Academies?

The expectations for Academy students to participate in required clubs does not preclude students from also joining other clubs or sports teams. Each school hosts meetings for activities after school as well as during the Common Time lunch. Club meetings are scheduled monthly to avoid conflicts, and athletic coaches can accommodate athletes who have Academy commitments.

9. What are the requirements to remain enrolled in an Academy pathway?

All Academy students and parents will be asked to sign an [Academy Agreement](#) that holds them accountable for their conduct, academics, and attendance. Academically, students are expected to maintain a minimum of a C average in Academy courses.

10. What if my child wants to switch Academy pathways?

Changing enrollment to a new pathway is allowed. A switch is easier to make at the end of 9th grade, but, depending on what coursework the student has completed, a switch is still possible at the end of 10th grade. The student would need to work with his/her counselor to determine a plan for fulfilling the new pathway's requirements within the time remaining in their high school career.

11. Can my child withdraw from the Academy Program once started?

Students have an opportunity to leave the Academy at the end of each academic year. They are not penalized for withdrawing from Academy enrollment. It is important that students learn about the program requirements and consider their level of interest and commitment to the course of study before applying.

12. Where can I learn more about the specific Academies?

To learn more about the specific academies, please visit our website at <https://www.bhprsd.org/departments/curriculum-instruction/academies>, or visit the "Academics & Experiences" tab of any school's website to find the link entitled "New Academies." You may also check our course descriptions in our [2026-2027 Program of Studies](#).

13. Where can I access the application? When are applications due? When will students know of their acceptance into an Academy program?

The [application](#) is available on the "New Academies" webpage of each school's website (#12 above). Applications are due by February 27th; [Teacher Recommendation](#) form is due by March 1st. Students will be informed of acceptance by April 2, 2026.



Contact Information

If you have additional questions, please the student's counselor, the content-area supervisors, or the Director of Curriculum & Instruction.

Department/Academy	Contact
School Counseling Departments	Triton Counseling Department Highland Counseling Department Timber Creek Counseling Department
Business Leadership Academy - Finance - Marketing	Mr. Steve Arena, sarena@bhprsd.org
STEAM Academy - Architectural Design - Engineering	Mr. Steve Arena, sarena@bhprsd.org
STEAM Academy Environmental Sustainability	Ms. Jennifer Gramble, jgramble@bhprsd.org
STEAM Academy Capstone	Mrs. Lori Hunt, lhunt@bhprsd.org
Director of Curriculum & Instruction	Mrs. Marcie Geyer, mageyer@bhprsd.org