

Green Mountain High School Academy Program

Green Mountain High School

Lakewood, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

The Academy Program is a four-year advanced learning series that is available to all students at Green Mountain High School (GMHS). Built upon Advanced Placement (AP) standards of excellence, the Academy Program incorporates AP coursework into its curriculum allowing students to accrue AP college credits and earn endorsements in particular disciplines along with their high school diploma.

The Academy Program at GMHS consists of four Academies, including (1) Arts, Humanities, & Performing Arts; (2) Business & Global Studies; (3) Health & Human Services; and (4) Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math. Within these Academies, students can select from 14 different Pathways that delve deeper into specific yet complementary disciplines.

Key stakeholders have been involved in vetting our Academy Pathways and co-curricular opportunities. These stakeholders include the GMHS Advisory Board made up of approx. 200 business partners (many of them parents of students at GM), college and university partners, school district and community partners. Students are a key stakeholder on our Advisory Board. The school has the Academy Student Leadership Team of approximately 60 students who serve as “Rambassadors” and have helped to vet other Academy Program components.

GMHS is continually improving and growing the program to meet the needs of industry and students. For example, last year they started an Agriculture Pathway that currently has a wait list of students. They have a chicken coop, raised growing beds, a hoop house (donated by CSU Global), an outdoor education lab, and aquaponics systems. Much of the Ag items have been donated through a partnership with the Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado and in partnership with local landscape companies. GMHS offers Senior Capstone projects, mock interviews, internships, career shadows, and a new apprenticeship program through CareerWise Colorado.

The data show significant student growth since the start of the Academy Program. Approximately 80% of the Class of 2017 completed one or more pathways. Together they completed over 400 pathways. This was also the first year GMHS could collect data on the first graduates in the Academy Program who graduated from college in 4 years. Many of them completed college degrees in fields related to the Pathways they completed in high school.

GMHS’ parting advice for those wanting to implement an Academy Program is: “Go slow to go fast. Take one thing at a time and do it well before broadening opportunities.”