

SUPA 50th Anniversary!

This year we celebrate 50 years of Project Advance!

[Click here to download this as a PDF](#)

PIONEERING PARTNERSHIPS

School partnerships have been at the heart of Syracuse University's concurrent enrollment program since its beginning in 1972 when educational leaders from 6 local school districts convened with members of the university to collaborate on an innovative educational model called concurrent enrollment. These early visionaries of concurrent enrollment sought to foster students' college readiness and address the need for more challenging and advanced coursework for students who had already met most of their high school graduation requirements. Together, they helped conceptualize and pilot "Project Advance."

The hallmarks of Project Advance involved high school students enrolling in college courses during their regular school day, taught by a high school instructor, with SU faculty providing ongoing academic oversight and professional development. SUPA's concurrent enrollment model was seen as providing students with the skills and confidence to be successful in college and easing an otherwise oftentimes difficult transition between secondary and postsecondary education.

From those first founding partners, SUPA quickly grew the next year (1974-1975) to encompass over 40 school partners across New York State and extended into neighboring New Jersey soon thereafter. Today, SUPA annually enrolls over 12,000 students at over 250 partner schools in 9 different states and 6 other countries. And SUPA continues to serve as a model for many other concurrent enrollment programs across the country, as well as being a founding member of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

A half century later, Project Advance's mission of providing high school students with the opportunity to challenge themselves by engaging in authentic college courses (not a high-stakes testing program) and cultivate their college readiness before they formally matriculate at a postsecondary institution has only increased in significance as the benefits of concurrent enrollment have become more widely understood and valued, not just locally or domestically but internationally.

THE SUPA DIFFERENCE

These days, nearly every college or university in the U.S. now offers some form of concurrent enrollment or dual enrollment programming to high school students. NCES estimates that one-third of all high school students across the country enroll in concurrent or dual enrollment courses, and the vast majority take those college courses at their high school campus.

However, as a New York Times article from 1981 titled "Experiment to Join High School and College Is Lonely Effort" observed at the time, Project Advance was part of a novel educational "experiment" in the country that came with many challenges.

And so student access to these types of "college in the high school" cooperative programs would not have been possible without all of you – the teachers, counselors, principals, superintendents, district staff, parents, and wider school communities – who helped pioneer, expand, and enrich this educational model throughout the years in partnership with Syracuse University Project Advance. Throughout economic downturns, superstorms, technological revolutions, and pandemics, SUPA's school partnerships have remained strong in support of educational excellence and innovation. It is our shared commitment to high quality professional development and

student achievement, ongoing dialogue, and reciprocal engagement that make SUPA partnerships stand out from the multitude of other programs.

Too many individuals have been instrumental to the success of SUPA over the years to name them all here. We are grateful to each of you who daily devote your time and energy to creating an environment in which students are excited to learn, receive encouragement to reach their academic potential, and gain the confidence to be successful in their college and career endeavors.