



Unconventional Paths Lead to High School Diploma - SBCUSD News Release No. 150

UNCONVENTIONAL PATHS LEAD TO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

June is the traditional time for commencement ceremonies honoring students who have completed high school or college and are ready to move on to the next stage of their life. But, increasingly, traditional life paths and stages are giving way to less traditional, but no less valid measures of a person's knowledge and experience.

Trevor Monroe, an 18-year-old former dropout, will soon graduate from **AdvancePath**, one of the San Bernardino City Unified School District's specialized high school programs.

Monroe began his high school career in a very conventional way at Cajon High School. By his junior year, he was behind in credits and, by his own admission, not motivated to do the work necessary to graduate.

"I was more into having fun than class work," he said. "I ended up behind in credits and wasn't going to graduate on time."

Monroe decided to drop out of school. It didn't last long.

About six months after he stopped attending class, a District employee visited Monroe's home to encourage him to return to school and provide his family with information on alternative paths to graduation. After he and his mother researched the available options, Monroe decided to enroll in AdvancePath.

The District offers AdvancePath in conjunction with AdvancePath Academics, Inc. The public/private partnership provides students with access to an online curriculum and a computer lab on the **San Andreas High School** campus. Students learn and earn credits toward a high school diploma at their own pace. On-site staff, including credentialed teachers, provide small group and one-on-one instruction for students during either the morning or afternoon sessions. Although a full-service computer lab is provided for AdvancePath students, the online curriculum makes it possible for students to also earn credits at any time of day from home, public libraries, or anywhere with free internet access.

Monroe said the ability to learn at your own pace is a real advantage. If you are ready to move on, you just start the next lesson. If you are having trouble understanding something, you can ask for extra help and go over the lesson as many times as it takes.

AdvancePath targets students who have stopped attending school or are at risk of not graduating from a traditional high school program.

Monroe said that aside from everything else, what really makes AdvancePath different from traditional school is all of the AdvancePath students are there because they want to be. Maybe at one time, AdvancePath students didn't want or think they could earn a diploma, but now every one of them are ready and willing to do what it takes to graduate.

"No more distractions," Monroe said. "The people who are here want to be here."

Monroe has proven that he wants to learn. In nine months, he has earned 155 credits and is on target to graduate this year.

Trevor Monroe is just one of several students to earn a diploma through a non-traditional District program. This year, more than 400 students will receive their high school diploma or equivalent from the **San Bernardino Adult School's** high school diploma and G.E.D. programs. Through the District's **Middle College High School** program, 39 students earned a diploma and 27 of those also earned an associate's degree in May.

For more information about AdvancePath Academics, Inc., visit www.advancepath.com.

For more information about the San Bernardino Adult School and its programs, visit www.sbcusd.com/adultschool. The Middle College website is www.sbcusd.com/middlecollege.