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Hundreds of struggling Boston students spend February break in the classroom

Posted by Matt Rocheleau February 21, 2013 03:08 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Hundreds of Boston public school students are spending their February vacation in the classroom.

The youths are enrolled in the district's federally-funded Acceleration Academies program, which offers academically-struggling students an additional 30 hours of learning time, school officials said.

In past years, students who participated in the program saw their state standardized test scores rise by as many as 20 points.

"This is a program that works and it's easy to see why," Superintendent Carol R. Johnson said in a statement. "Giving students more time with great teachers, and using that time strategically, is a proven model of success."

More than 1,750 students are enrolled in the academies this week, up from

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about 1,200 who enrolled three years ago, officials said.

There is no charge for students who participate in the program. Its \$650,000 cost is funded by federal grant money, according to the school district.

In addition to academics, students also partake in enrichment activities, including African drumming, dance and tennis.

The program is being run out of 20 school buildings citywide, the district said. Seven more school buildings are hosting their own vacation week academic programs.

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