

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 4 • SEPTEMBER 2026

ACELLUS[®] JOURNAL

INFORM • INSPIRE • UNITE

THIS ISSUE

CLOSING THE GAP, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

How COIL Charter School in
Fremont, California uses Acellus
to lift its most at-risk learners.



■ SCHOLARSHIP UPDATES
From Dr. Roger Billings

■ ACELLUS NOW
Build a Graduation Plan

■ THE FEATURE
Finding the Hole and Filling It

International Academy of Science

Welcome to the fourth issue of the Acellus Journal, the flagship monthly publication of the Acellus Learning System and the International Academy of Science. Every issue is built for you: the teachers, parents, students, administrators, and staff who make this community extraordinary. Here is what awaits you inside.

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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

INSIGHTS AND PERSPECTIVES

DR. ROGER BILLINGS SCHOLARSHIP

Welcome to Our Scholarship Families

By **Dr. Roger Billings**



I want to personally welcome all of the new students joining Acellus Academy on my scholarship program. You now have a wonderful opportunity to obtain a truly excellent education, and I am delighted to have you with us.

"Study hard, and your diploma will open doors of opportunity as you graduate and begin your own career."

Acellus is considered by many to be the finest learning system in existence, and this coming school year we have some HUGE improvements on the way that will elevate it even further. My thanks to the wonderful students and parents whose ideas and suggestions have helped make Acellus what it is today.

Now, a few things I'd like you to know about the scholarship itself.

My purpose in funding these scholarships is simple: I want to help students who are serious about getting a good education. What I ask in return is a diligent, steady effort. Set up a learning plan for what you want to accomplish this year. The system will track your goals and help you stay on course to finish your studies on time. If your student is signing in regularly and making good progress, then my objectives are being fully achieved.

Let me put one common worry to rest. Many families have asked whether a vacation, an illness, or a busy stretch of life could cost them their scholarship.

"The answer is no. Life happens, and I want to give families as much flexibility as possible in their schedules."

If study is interrupted for a while, you may receive an automated message asking about your progress.

Please don't be alarmed by it. Just send us a quick note or contact support to let us know what's going on, and we'll work with you. I only withdraw a scholarship in extreme cases, and a family vacation is certainly not one of them.

What those extreme cases look like, I'll mention plainly so there is no confusion. Last year a small number of families hired outside people to do the coursework while pretending to be the student. I have no patience for that. It doesn't just misuse the scholarship — it robs the student of the education itself, and there is no substitute in life for a solid education. A small number of others simply never studied — a few hours a month, month after month, with no communication. Those situations are rare, and if your student is making an honest effort, they will never apply to you.

So here is the heart of it:

"I want to see your student succeed. Make a plan, study regularly, and stay in touch with us when life gets in the way."

Do that, and the scholarship is yours for the whole journey.

Let's make this the best school year ever.

Dr. Roger Billings
Acellus Chairman

ANNOUNCING THE ACELLUS PARENT PORTAL

By **Dr. Joshua Billings** · Executive Director, Acellus Academy



I am excited to announce a new resource for parents this school year that has been a long time coming — the Acellus Parent Portal.

First, the portal is a resource for keeping you informed. You will find news from across the Acellus community, including announcements and updates. It is also where you can ask questions and receive official answers from our support team. One of our goals is to organize answers to common questions so that you have a resource for quickly finding information.

Second, the portal allows you keep us informed. It provides a direct avenue to share suggestions, ideas, and recommendations on how we can better meet the needs of your children. Taking the time to listen to parents and implement their suggestions has long been one of our "secrets" to improving Acellus.

"So many of our best features started out as a simple suggestion from a parent."

If you have ideas on how we can make Acellus better, we want to hear from you!



Third, the portal provides a way for you to connect with other Acellus families.

"Schooling a child from home is a journey, and hearing from another parent who is on the same journey can be invaluable."

The portal includes a parent community where you can discuss topics, trade insights, and support one another.

You will also see a formal complaint channel in the portal. I hope most families never need it, but if an issue arises that our support team has not been able to resolve to your satisfaction, the portal provides a procedure for having your situation reviewed by my office. This is not a replacement for working with support, quite the opposite. But if you have made the effort to resolve your concerns with our support team and cannot reach resolution, this process is available to you.

Our hope is that the launch of this portal will make a real difference in helping you provide the best learning experience for your student. If you haven't yet, check it out at <https://parents.acellus.com> and let us know what you think. We look forward to having you join the discussion.

Dr. Joshua Billings

Executive Director, Acellus Academy

SHOWING YOUR WORK

By **Jackson Hunt** · Editor, *Acellus Journal*

Every issue teaches me something I wasn't expecting to learn. It usually shows up late, after I've read each piece enough times that the pattern underneath them finally surfaces on its own. This time, the pattern was proof.

Not proof in the courtroom sense. Proof as in: don't just tell me it worked, show me how you know.

A school in Fremont tracked exactly which students it reached and which ones it hasn't yet, because the harder number was more useful than the flattering one.

A scholarship changed its own requirements this year, and rather than bury the update in a policy page, its founder sat down and wrote to you directly about why.

A student in Cape Town graduated eighteen months ahead of his peers. His mother's explanation was simple: South African schools run four holiday terms a year, and while everyone else was on break, he kept working, some years putting in extra hours over December just to stay ahead.

None of these stories are dramatic on their own. A course requirement. A technology that quietly reteaches a missing fraction from three grades back. A transcript that adds up to eighteen months ahead.

But put them next to each other, and something becomes obvious that isn't obvious from any single piece: every good outcome in this issue came from someone being willing to show their work, a student, a parent, a superintendent, or Acellus itself.

That is not a small thing to ask of anyone. It is much easier to just claim a result than to open up how you got there. It is easier to give a student the answer than to make them earn it. It is easier to say "trust us" than to publish the numbers, the requirements, and the letter explaining exactly what changed and why.

I think about this every time I sit down with a piece that's ready to run. The parents who end up in these pages are rarely the ones who were sold on a promise. They went looking for the receipts first, the data, the requirements, the fine print, and only trusted the promise once the receipts held up.



That instinct is not cynicism. That is exactly the right way to choose something as important as your child's education. And honestly, it is the same instinct we try to hold ourselves to before anything goes to print.

We tried, this issue, to hold ourselves to that same standard. Every stat in these pages traces back to someone willing to be named for it. Every claim about how something works came with an explanation of the mechanism, not just the result.

That takes longer to build than a magazine that just tells you things are good. I think it's worth the extra time. I think you'll feel the difference as you read.

So as you go through these pages, look for that thread. It shows up in a struggling math student, a scholarship policy, and a transcript that adds up to eighteen months ahead, different stories, same idea:

"The work is the point, and showing it is how you earn the result."

Jackson Hunt

Editor, Acellus Journal

BUILD A GRADUATION PLAN: ACELLUS GIVES YOUR STUDENT A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

High school isn't just about earning credits — it's about building a bridge to whatever comes next. Because Acellus self-paced learning offers so much independence, having a clear anchor point is what turns that freedom into genuine momentum.

The Graduation Plan provides exactly that: a tool built into the Acellus App. You tell it where your student wants to end up after high school, and it helps you select every course they'll need to get there. The result is a personalized roadmap that converts big career ambitions and personal passions into a confident, step-by-step path to graduation day.

WHY EARLY PLANNING TRANSFORMS THE ACELLUS EXPERIENCE

Translates curiosity into purpose: A Graduation Plan connects your student's daily coursework directly to their personal goals. When students see why a course matters to their future, study time within Acellus becomes far more engaging.

Eliminates the credit guesswork: Diploma requirements, subject tracks, and state expectations can feel overwhelming to navigate alone. Because the plan maps every course and credit for you, you get complete confidence that every single term counts — no spreadsheets, no second-guessing.

Unlocks future opportunities: Identifying course sequences early ensures your student meets the prerequisite courses, GPA targets, and skill milestones required for targeted college majors or scholarship opportunities, long before senior year arrives.

Flexibility that grows with your child: A 13-year-old's dream career often looks very different from their goals at 16, and that is entirely normal. The Graduation Plan isn't a rigid contract; it's a flexible blueprint you can edit inside your



parent account at any time as their passions evolve and new opportunities arise.

Honors past successes: If your student is transferring from another school, Acellus makes it easy to request a credit transfer right in the Parent Portal, blending prior accomplishments into their active Acellus timeline so no hard work goes to waste.

WHAT BUILDING A PLAN MEANS FOR YOUR FAMILY

When you sit down in the Acellus App to establish a plan, you create an active, collaborative support system for your student. You are doing far more than checking off administrative boxes — you are opening a meaningful line of communication about their interests, setting clear expectations, and removing the stress of last-minute senior-year scrambles.

By laying out this vision in Acellus today, you give your student a strong sense of ownership over their education and a clear, motivating picture of where their hard work will take them tomorrow.

**OPEN THE ACELLUS APP
AND START YOUR STUDENT'S
GRADUATION PLAN TODAY.**

BEYOND ACELLUS

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

FROM CAPE TOWN TO THE NEXT CHAPTER

THE BEGINNING

Welton Botha liked school. Then his neighborhood in Cape Town, South Africa, became unsafe to get to.

Protests and unrest spread throughout the area. Roads to his school were blocked. Sometimes the schools themselves became targets. His family never knew, day to day, whether it would be safe for him to go in.

"It got to a point where we just didn't feel comfortable sending Welton to a traditional school anymore," his mother says. "Not knowing from one day to the next if it would be safe for him to go."

That's when the family started looking for something different. They also wanted Welton's faith to be part of his everyday learning, something harder to build into a regular school day. Then COVID hit and schools closed everywhere. For Welton's family, it didn't feel like a setback. It felt like confirmation they'd made the right call. Welton kept working. He even got ahead.

There was one more reason behind the decision. Welton had always dreamed of studying in the United States. Starting him on an American curriculum early just made sense.

WHY ACELLUS

What drew the family to Acellus was its accreditation. It's recognized internationally, which meant Welton's education would hold up when it came time to apply to American universities.

Every lesson is also recorded. If something didn't click the first time, Welton could watch it again. He never fell behind



Welton Botha marks his Acellus Academy graduation by revisiting where it all started, cap and gown included, the first time around.

QUICK FACTS

NAME

Welton Botha

AGE AT GRADUATION

16

FROM

Cape Town,
South Africa

CURRENTLY

Moved to the United
States for university,
August 2026

GRADUATED FROM

Acellus Academy,
Summa Cum Laude

because he missed a day, and he never had to keep pace with a class moving faster than him. He just worked until he understood it.

Afrikaans is his first language. By graduation, he was more comfortable speaking English.

THE EXPERIENCE

Finishing 18 months early wasn't luck. It came from one family rule: trips and important events were time off. Everything else was school time.

"Schools in South Africa have four holiday terms a year," his mother explains, "and while everyone else was on break, Welton would often keep working, even putting in extra hours over December."

That discipline added up over time. He completed 32 credits, including Honors British and World Literature, Honors Geometry, and three AP courses: AP Computer Science A, AP Environmental Science, and AP Statistics. He graduated at 16 with Summa Cum Laude honors.

But finishing early was never really the goal. What he did with the extra time was.

"It wasn't only about finishing faster," Welton says. "It gave me room to keep doing things I love, like playing piano and violin, alongside school."

Music stayed part of his life the whole way through. So did his church's youth discipleship program, which took him to leadership camps and outreach events across South Africa.

In 2024, he traveled to Wyoming for the Pathfinder Camporee, a gathering of more than 60,000 young people from over 100 countries. The next year, he went back to the U.S. for the 2025 General Conference Session of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in St. Louis. Both trips were possible because his schoolwork traveled with him.

"I could travel, go to camps in America, and still keep up with

my schoolwork," he says. "If I knew something big was coming up, I could just plan ahead and get extra work done beforehand."

WHERE HE IS NOW

This August, Welton moves to the United States to start university. A dream he's carried since childhood now has a departure date.

Asked about his proudest moment, not the diploma itself, but the moment that meant the most, his answer was simple.

"Probably realizing I'd finished 18 months ahead of everyone else," he says, "and that meant I could start chasing my college dreams and my dream of studying in America way sooner than I expected."

HIS ADVICE

"For me it was the freedom to build a life outside of textbooks, not just in them. Because I could manage my own schedule, I could travel and keep up with my schoolwork. It taught me real time management, too."



Welton Botha closes out his Acellus Academy journey as a Class of 2026 Honors graduate.

FROM HIS MOM

"We always wanted Welton on an American homeschool curriculum because we knew it would open up more opportunities for him than what we had access to locally. Acellus made that happen. That gave Welton an academic foundation that actually holds up internationally."

— Proud Mother of Welton Botha

SCHOOLS THAT SHINE

ACELLUS® IN ACTION

TURNING INTERVENTION INTO OUTCOMES

HOW CIRCLE OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING USED ACELLUS TO ACCELERATE STUDENT SUCCESS

Reading proficiency among English Learners rose 19.7 points in a single year at Circle of Independent Learning (COIL) Charter School, the largest gain of any group, in a year when no student in the school's most at-risk tier lost ground.

QUICK FACTS

SCHOOL

Circle of Independent Learning (COIL) Charter School

LOCATION

Fremont, CA

POWERED BY:

Acellus®

STUDENT BODY:

~400 students, 12+ native languages

YEARS WITH ACELLUS:

1

KEY CONTACTS:

Teresa Copenhaver

Executive Director of Circle of Independent Learning Charter School

COIL has been a charter school in Fremont for nearly 30 years. It was one of California's first conversion charters, meaning it started as a regular public school and became a charter later. Its motto hasn't changed since: reach the unique bent of genius in every student through personalized learning.

"We recognize that personalization is recognizing that our students learn differently. They progress at different rates, and they all have different, unique interests and circumstances that bring them to our school," says Teresa Copenhaver.



Teresa Copenhaver
Executive Director

THE CHALLENGE

Every student at COIL learns independently, at their own pace. That's great for personalization, but it makes traditional intervention hard. You can't put a group of students in one room with an intervention teacher when every student is working on something different.

The pandemic made this harder. "After COVID, they're coming in three and four years below grade level," Teresa says. "We found a huge impact since COVID with our students."

THE DECISION

Circle of Independent Learning (COIL) Charter School turned to Acellus, which has a built-in proprietary system called Vectored Instruction®. It identifies exactly where a student's understanding broke down, then delivers the precise instruction needed to close that gap before returning them to the point where they got stuck.

"We wanted our students to receive instruction precisely at the point where they fell or missed whatever concept they needed to learn," Teresa says. "If a student fails frac-

tions, they still pass to the next grade. But now you're six years down the road trying to learn algebra, and if you don't understand fractions, you're not going to be able to do algebra. It's all about the fractions."

The same idea applies to access, not just academics. Many COIL families live far from support services and can't easily get their kids there.

"Families that are economically disadvantaged, and the parents are busy trying to work and put food on the table, are not going to be able to drive their student two hours to an independent study school," Teresa says. "And so, with the online format, that's how it's leveled the playing field."



ENGLISH LEARNERS: THE BIGGEST GAIN OF THE YEAR

COIL serves roughly 400 students across more than a dozen native languages, including Arabic, Mandarin, Persian, Pashto, Spanish, Telugu, and Urdu. This year, its English Learner subgroup posted reading proficiency gains from 49% to 69% Met/Exceeded, a 19.7 percentage point jump, the single largest one-year gain anywhere in COIL's data.

Teresa says bringing in Acellus let other, non-specialized teachers step in too: "By bringing in a tool, other teachers who aren't specialized in how to work with English language learners use that tool. Assigning a curriculum like Discover English just opens up the availability and the opportunities for more students to see success."

Students with disabilities and students from lower-income families also kept improving this year, in both reading and math. The growth isn't limited to one group.



A QUIETER GAIN: WRITING

Math and English Learner support tend to draw the most attention in COIL's data, but Teresa points to a subtler shift happening in writing.

"The writing tool meets the student where they're at, and then tries to incorporate additional resources and support, and helps show the student how to advance their writing," she says.

Instead of forcing every student into one writing structure, the tool adjusts to how each student writes and builds from there. Teresa says that matters most for students

BY THE NUMBERS

Reading Rescue Rate:
38% OF STUDENTS

English Learner Reading Gain:
+19.7 POINTS

Level 1 Decline Rate:
0% OF STUDENTS

Exited Intervention:
79 STUDENTS



one around them, outperforming 92 to 94 percent of peers statewide who began at a similar level in both reading and math.

COIL connected Grade 11's performance directly to the Acellus implementation and, specifically, to teacher-level program fidelity. Where teachers fully adopted the platform's mastery-based, self-paced structure, growth wasn't just good. It was top-decile.

The strongest evidence that Acellus is driving results is the dose-response pattern inside COIL's own data: outcomes rose and fell with how fully the program was

implemented. Where Acellus was implemented with fidelity, growth was exceptional.

THE RESULTS

School-wide, reading proficiency rose from 71% to 78% over four years, including a 6.8-point jump this year alone, the year Acellus was adopted. Math climbed from 44% to 57% over the past four years; this year alone, the school's top "Standard Exceeded" math band jumped 10 points.

One story sticks with COIL's staff. A high schooler, kept anonymous to protect his privacy, arrived so convinced he couldn't pass algebra that he'd given up on graduating.

"The best thing, and the only thing that has kept me in education for the 20 years I've been in education, is that moment," Teresa says. "You see that aha moment, that light bulb moment goes off, their eyes open, and they're like, 'I got it.'"

"We couldn't hear enough from the mom about how amazed she was that now her son enjoys working and doing math," Teresa says. His words, once he got there: "I'm not stupid in math."

A LEAP IN JUST ONE YEAR

In one year, students in Grade 11 outpaced nearly every-

WHAT THIS YEAR PROVED

The data made one pattern hard to miss: where teachers used Acellus with fidelity, students moved. Where they did not, growth was ordinary. That is why Teresa does not talk about the platform as a replacement for teaching.





"Technology alone does not eliminate achievement gaps," she says. "It's just a tool that's been added to the teacher's tool belt. If the teacher doesn't know how to use it properly, it won't be effective, like using a screwdriver to pound a nail."

Vectored Instruction® works because a student stays on a concept until it is actually mastered. That asks something of

teachers and families in an independent-study model: patience with productive struggle, and trust that holding a student at the right step is not holding them back. Skip the repair, and the next lesson is built on a gap that only gets more expensive to fix.

"Instead of being lawnmower parents who clear every obstacle, we need to be the trapeze safety net that lets them fail safely and learn how to get back up," Teresa says.

"Our success came from combining high-quality instruction tools with dedicated teachers, with families and parents being engaged and wanting to support it, and consistent progress monitoring, and a culture that believes every student can grow, regardless of their background."

"When all of that is combined and working together, that's when remarkable changes can happen."



COURSE CATALOG

NEW & UPDATED

PRESCHOOL SIGNING

**NOW AVAILABLE ON THE
ACELLUS LEARNING SYSTEM**

A joyful first language experience
for the youngest Acellus learners



ABOUT THE COURSE

Long before children can read or write, their hands are ready to talk. Research has long shown that young children can communicate with signs before spoken vocabulary fully develops — and that early signing builds language, confidence, and connection. The newest early-learning course from Acellus, Preschool Signing, puts that power into little hands, introducing American Sign Language through the everyday world children already love to explore.

Across eighteen playful, themed units, children learn to recognize and match the ASL signs for a wide vocabulary — colors, shapes, family, feelings, foods, weather, transportation, body parts, and the animals of the farm, jungle, woodland, sea, and garden. Every unit is built around a warm, concrete theme — a barnyard, a jungle, a starry night in space — so new signs arrive inside a story a child can picture and remember. Short lessons, bright visuals, and steady repetition keep young learners engaged while they master one clear skill at a time.



COURSE DETAILS

COURSE TITLE

Preschool Signing

SUBJECT AREA

American Sign Language /
Early Learning

GRADE LEVEL

Preschool / Early Elementary

LENGTH

Full Year · 177 Lessons

UNITS

18

ASSESSMENT

Lesson Practice, Unit Exams, Mid-Term
Exam, Final Exam

SKILLS DEVELOPED

Recognizing and matching ASL signs,
matching letters to ASL handshapes,
counting and sequencing numbers 1–
10, sorting and classifying by attribute,
extending patterns, identifying
feelings and facial expressions,
following one-step directions

WHAT THE COURSE COVERS

The 177-lesson course does far more than build a signing vocabulary. Woven through every unit are the early skills that ready young children for school. Children meet the letters of the alphabet and match each to its ASL handshape, building from their first letters in Unit 1 to sequencing the full alphabet by the course's end. They learn to sign and count the numbers one through ten, matching numbers to sets and counting down from ten on a rocket ride through space. And they practice the sorting, patterning, and same-versus-different thinking that forms the foundation of early math.

The course nurtures the heart alongside the mind. Children learn to match the signs for happy, sad, mad, and scared to the faces that show them, practice the good-manners signs please, thank you, and share, and build healthy habits — from brushing teeth and washing hands to naming the five senses and helping out at home. By the final unit, children bring it all together: signing about their favorite things,

sequencing the alphabet, pairing opposites, and communicating a rich set of everyday ideas in ASL.



WHY IT MATTERS

For young children, signing is more than a new skill — it is a voice. Preschool Signing gives Acellus students a way to express what they see, feel, and want before written words are within reach, while quietly building the letter, number, and thinking skills that early learning depends on. Because every lesson pairs a sign with something concrete a child knows and loves, learning feels like play — and the vocabulary sticks. Children finish the course able to communicate in ASL and ready for the school years ahead, with a first language experience they will carry with them.



INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT

American Sign Language

Ms. Donnie brings deep experience in American Sign Language instruction to Preschool Signing. She studied at the Institute of Science and Technology and at Gallaudet University — the world's premier institution of higher learning serving deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Her teaching spans the full range of ASL learners, from high school ASL I and ASL II to Elementary Signing. With Preschool Signing, she brings that expertise to the youngest Acellus students — introducing a first language with the warmth and patience early learners need.



OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED INITIATIVES OF ACELLUS

ACELLUS ACADEMY

Acellus Academy is a fully accredited online school serving K–12 students who need a flexible, personalized alternative to traditional education. Using the full Acellus curriculum, students learn at their own pace through engaging video-based lessons taught by qualified instructors.

With features like Vectored Instruction®, Acellus identifies learning gaps and provides targeted support to help students achieve mastery before moving forward. Parents can easily monitor progress, while students have the freedom to learn from anywhere — whether at home, traveling, or balancing unique schedules and opportunities.

Acellus is ideal for families seeking a rigorous home-based education option, including students with medical needs, performance athletes, and those in rural areas with limited course access. Acellus students have gone on to earn college scholarships, complete dual enrollment programs, and graduate early.

Enrollment is open year-round. To learn more, visit [AcellusAcademy.com](https://www.AcellusAcademy.com) or [Acellus.com](https://www.Acellus.com), or call (866) 684-6127 to speak with an enrollment advisor.

ACELLUS FOR SCHOOLS

CLASSROOM-READY IMPLEMENTATION

Acellus equips public and private schools with a flexible, standards-aligned platform designed for in-classroom and blended learning. Schools use it for core instruction, intervention, credit recovery, special education, gifted programs, or STEM — integrating seamlessly without disrupting schedules.

When your school signs up, you can expect:

- Fast Onboarding — Quick setup, staff training, and dedicated support.
- Flexible Classroom Models — Including Gold Spark, the popular 40/20 blended model (40 minutes adaptive digital instruction + 20 minutes teacher-led collaboration and higher-order activities).
- Teacher Empowerment — Real-time dashboards and automated tools that free educators to focus on mentoring and instruction.
- Proven Outcomes — Strong gains in engagement, mastery, and test scores across diverse populations. Acellus complements strong teaching, helping schools differentiate instruction and keep every student on track for graduation.

To learn more, contact partnerships@Acellus.com or visit <https://www.Acellus.com/schools/>.



JOIN OUR TEAM

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

WORK AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION INNOVATION

The International Academy of Science is a mission-driven organization that believes every student deserves access to an excellent education. Our team is made up of educators, engineers, designers, and support professionals who share that belief and work every day to make it real. Working at IAS means working somewhere where the mission is the reason — not a paragraph in an employee handbook.

View a full list of open positions and apply at: kccareermakers.com/jobs/.

CURRENT OPEN POSITIONS

*We offer
competitive
compensation,
meaningful work,
and the
satisfaction of
contributing to
something that
genuinely changes
lives. We look
forward to hearing
from you.*

ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURING APPRENTICE APPRENTICE, ENTRY-LEVEL, MANUAL LABOR, ON-SITE

As an Electronics Manufacturing Apprentice, you will receive structured on-the-job training, mentorship, and valuable real-world experience while building high-reliability electronic assemblies for cutting-edge applications.

FRONT END DEVELOPER ON-SITE

Build beautiful, easy-to-use applications and interfaces. Use HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and tools like React to create user-focused, high-performance web applications and work with a creative team on exciting projects.

CALL CENTER APPRENTICE SERVICE, ENTRY-LEVEL, ON-SITE

In this role, you'll receive hands on training in a customer service apprenticeship. You will provide encouragement, and resources to parents homeschooling their children.

GO DEVELOPER ON-SITE

Write fast, reliable backend code using Go. Build strong systems, handle big data smoothly, and help create powerful online tools with a talented team.

CALL CENTER REPRESENTATIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE, ON-SITE

In this role, you'll provide personalized guidance, encouragement, and resources to parents homeschooling their children through an innovative online learning program.

HALF THE BATTLE: WHAT THREE FAMILIES LEARNED AFTER THEY SWITCHED

Three families left traditional classrooms for very different reasons — neurodivergent burnout, foundational math gaps, and a move into a full-time RV. All three arrived at the same conclusion about the first year: choosing the program was the easy part.

The decision to step away from traditional K–12 education rarely happens overnight. For most families, it begins at a breaking point where the classroom environment has begun to cost the child more than it gives back.

CHELSEA SHEEDY: OVERCOMING NEURODIVERGENT BURNOUT

Chelsea Sheedy came to Acellus after concluding that her eldest son was not thriving in a standard public school setting. Raising four neurodivergent children, Sheedy watched him move into severe burnout under expectations she describes as rigid and unbending. By the time he was 11, she says, the family had stopped weighing homeschooling as an option and started treating it as urgent.

“He really needed a year to just not have rigid expectations and to learn at his pace.”

—Chelsea Sheedy

JOCELYN PEASE: RESTORING ACADEMIC TRUST AND FIXING GAPS

For Jocelyn Pease, the turning point came when, she says the strategies her daughter had developed to manage complex visual-spatial and auditory processing needs ran up against classroom expectations that had not been adjusted to fit her — among them, sustained eye contact. Pease says the resulting anxiety contributed to learning gaps that traced back to early elementary math.



“Turning to homeschool, it was ‘How am I going to do this? I’m not a trained teacher.’ One of the concerns was, ‘Are they going to present the information in a way that she can learn?’ And that’s one of the biggest challenges; how do you accommodate all these different kinds of learners?”

— Jocelyn Pease



Jocelyn Pease and her daughter.

MELISSA DELACEY: EMBRACING MOBILE FREEDOM AND FAMILY TIME

For Melissa DeLacey, the move stemmed from a major life shift: her husband’s retirement from the Air Force after 20 years, four deployments, and a year away in Korea. Wanting to make up for lost time, the DeLaceys moved into

an RV full-time to travel the country — though stepping into the educator role felt daunting at first.

“COVID taught me as much as I love my kids, I am just not the teacher type. Acellus being completely online and having no books was something that really sparked my interest in it, because when you live in an RV, weight matters. It’s been a really great program for us and we can do it anywhere and at any time.”

— Melissa DeLacey

THE TRANSFORMATION

Before turning to their advice, it is worth looking closely at what actually changed for these students.

What these three parents describe is less an indictment of any one school than a set of close-range observations about learner variability — the kind of observations that apply wherever a student is sitting.

When Pacing Becomes the Accommodation



Jocelyn Pease

For students with processing hurdles or sensory sensitivities, the demands of a live classroom can cause quick overload. Asynchronous video lessons remove the requirement to process at the room’s speed, allowing students to pause, rewind, or take a physical break whenever their bodies need to reset.

“The videos being separate and not being like a live classroom was really what attracted us to it. She could pause it when she needed to. She could rewind it. She could not have eye contact with the screen, and no one would care.”

— Jocelyn Pease

Overcoming Executive Function Hurdles

From the outside, a processing delay can look like work refusal — and a student who is treated as refusing often

spirals into analysis paralysis. Breaking instruction into manageable modules, supported by built-in tools like digital dictionaries and writing prompts, gives students a way back to independence.

“I was so surprised in such a good way that he was excited to get up for school. It’s really helped him figure out: How do I learn best? What does my body need so I can learn best? And I can meet these needs myself.”

— Chelsea Sheedy

Academic Recovery and Real-World Integration

Pacing freedom allows students to remediate foundational skill gaps without shame, or to accelerate. Pease’s daughter returned to 4th-grade math foundations while in 6th grade, eventually turning math into her strongest subject and choosing to take on Algebra 2. Sheedy’s son completed 6th grade and most of 7th in a single year. Both cases turn on the same mechanic: the student’s working level was invisible to peers, so filling a gap carried no social cost — the outcome credit-recovery and intervention programs are generally built to reach.

For the DeLacey family, learning extended well beyond a desk.

“We were backpacking a month in Europe, had a picnic by the Eiffel Tower, and the kids were doing their schoolwork right there. They’re learning online, but then experiencing it in real life.”

— Melissa DeLacey



The DeLacey family at Glacier National Park.



The kids of the DeLacey family.

THREE RULES FOR THE FIRST YEAR

Their reasons for leaving were very different. Their conclusion was the same: switching to online learning is only half the battle, and how a family handles the transition at home makes the difference.

1. Stay Involved: Don’t Throw Them Into It

One of the most common early mistakes is assuming a digital curriculum means hands-off learning from day one.

“Sit down as a family and see exactly what it is. Don’t just throw your kids into it and think it’s gonna go. Sit with them and really do it. Have patience with each other. If things get stressful, just take a break for a little while, watch a YouTube video together, and revisit it.”

— Melissa DeLacey

2. Grant Student Autonomy and Embrace Patience

Transitioning out of a traditional classroom requires an adjustment period.

“Have patience, it takes a little bit of time to get into the swing of things. Allowing them to figure out what their best way of learning is not only taking the stress off of parents, but also giving them the power and the confidence that they’re allowed to be independent.”

— Jocelyn Pease

3. Build Community Around the Core Program

An accredited, all-in-one curriculum does not have to account for a child’s entire week. Acellus Academy is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC); families who want more can layer local activity on top of it.

“Give your kiddo autonomy to figure out their routine. Acellus doesn’t have to stand alone, it’s accredited, it’s everything in a box, but you can also join a homeschool co-op for sports, theater, or speech and debate.”

— Chelsea Sheedy

QUICK-REFERENCE ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY AREA	ACTIONABLE ADVICE
STUDENT AUTONOMY	Grant students ownership over their daily routine and environment to build self-reliance and reduce parental stress.
PATIENCE & TRANSITION	Allow a grace period for trial and error while adjusting to online learning; take physical breaks when frustration arises.
ACTIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT	Sit with students during the initial weeks to learn the platform together rather than expecting immediate solo navigation.
SOCIALIZATION & COMMUNITY	Supplement core learning with local homeschool co-ops, sports teams, theater groups, or travel communities.

FINDING THE HOLE AND FILLING IT

The Technology Behind How Acellus Catches Students Up, Without Holding Them Back

Only 39 percent of fourth graders and about 28 percent of eighth graders are performing at or above proficient in math nationally. Only 22 percent of twelfth graders are proficient in math, with a record 45 percent scoring below basic. Behind those numbers is a structural problem every superintendent recognizes.

A sixth-grade teacher is required to teach sixth-grade material. But if a third of the class never fully mastered fourth-grade fractions, that teacher faces two bad options: push forward and lose the students who can't follow, or fall back to reteach earlier grades and never catch up to where the class is supposed to be.

Superintendent Scott Borba of Le Grand Union Elementary School District in Merced County, California, described it plainly:

"My sixth-grade teachers were trying to teach sixth-grade curriculum, but they couldn't. They were too busy going back and filling in holes in third, fourth, and fifth grade."

The result, he said, was "a domino effect of academic regression cascading through every grade level."

Holding a student back a grade doesn't fix this, and the research bears that out consistently: repeating a grade shows no real academic or emotional benefit over simply moving forward. Generic remediation, pulling a student into below-grade-level worksheets, doesn't work well either.

So the real dilemma is this: a student has to stay on grade level, but can't learn grade-level material without a foundation that's missing from an earlier grade. Vectored Instruction® was built to solve exactly that problem, not by managing it, but by dissolving it.



WHAT VECTORED INSTRUCTION® IS AND HOW IT WORKS

Vectored Instruction® is built into every Acellus course automatically, in every deployment, for every student. It isn't a separate program or an add-on that has to be turned on.

When a student can't get past an assessment, a technology called Deficiency Diagnostics steps in first to figure out why, not just that the answer was wrong. Acellus has found, across millions of student responses, that students rarely miss questions randomly. Large groups of students tend to make the exact same specific mistake, and that pattern reveals exactly which earlier concept is missing.

Once the gap is identified, a second piece, Customized Personal Instruction, reaches back as far as necessary, sometimes one lesson, sometimes several grade levels, and delivers exactly the instruction needed to rebuild that missing piece before returning the student to the original lesson to try again. A tenth grader stuck on an algebra problem because of a fifth-grade fraction concept gets that concept rebuilt, then returns to algebra and passes with a perfect score.



Throughout the whole process, the student never leaves the grade-level course, never loses credit, and stays on track for graduation. Often, the student doesn't even realize anything out of the ordinary happened, they just got stuck, got help, and kept moving. As Dr. Billings puts it, the message a student gets is simple:

"We know exactly what you're missing, we're going to fix it right now, and you're going to keep moving forward."

Teachers aren't shut out of any of this. From the Acellus teacher dashboard, a teacher can see exactly when a student got stuck, what concept was diagnosed, which lesson bridged the gap, and the student's score before and after. That visibility is what lets a teacher spend their time on the humans in the room instead of hunting for a lost concept buried three grades back.

OUTCOMES REPORTED BY DISTRICTS

At Le Grand Union, a K-8 district that is 96% Hispanic/Latino, 80% high-poverty, and 40% English language learners, teachers coming out of the pandemic were reteaching content from two and three grades earlier in nearly every classroom. After a year of school-wide use, Le Grand Union became one of only two schools in all of Merced County to post positive academic growth in both English language arts and math compared to pre-pandemic levels, closing three-year learning gaps for individual students and reducing special education referrals.

"If you teach fifth grade, you're teaching fifth grade," Borba says. "You're not going back and filling in holes. We have something doing that for us."

At Kansas Heartland Virtual Academy, built by Lansing USD 469 on the Acellus National Cyberschool model, Superintendent Marty Kobza calls Vectored Instruction® "the engine that drives recovery" for students who fall behind, reporting an 18% average increase in lesson scores among students being vectored on retakes, retention near 100%, and a graduation rate that climbed from about 87% to about 96%.

"It assesses where a student is on the fly, then goes back to reteach and fill the gaps, all while the student keeps moving forward with grade-level content," Kobza says.

At Community School of Holy Angels, a school serving students with significant learning challenges, math scores rose by up to 40% and English scores improved by 24% in a single year.

Across every one of these reports, the same pattern shows up. The biggest gains land with the students who were furthest behind, the ones carrying the oldest, deepest gaps. Teachers report spending more time on grade-level material, not less. And the results tend to show up in weeks, not semesters, which fits with what's actually happening: a specific missing piece gets found and fixed, rather than a whole year getting reviewed just in case.





WHY THIS MATTERS MOST FOR STUDENTS LEARNING AT HOME

In a traditional classroom, when a student gets stuck, a teacher is physically present, even if that teacher can't always pinpoint the exact missing concept, they can notice the struggle and try something. At home, that safety net usually isn't there. A parent may be deeply invested in their child's education without being trained to recognize that a tenth grader struggling with algebra is really still missing a fifth-grade fraction concept, let alone equipped to teach it.

That's exactly the gap Vectored Instruction® is built to fill. It supplies, automatically, the same function an attentive teacher would provide: noticing the student is stuck, figuring out why, teaching the missing piece, and sending the student back to the lesson.

"It works at the kitchen table at nine at night the same way it works in a classroom at nine in the morning."

For any family weighing a home-study or virtual option, that's the real question worth asking: when a student gets stuck, what actually happens next? If the answer is "the parent tries to help" or "an email goes out and the student waits," that's the model that's historically given virtual learning its reputation for kids falling further behind. If the answer is "the system finds the gap and fixes it immediately, and a teacher can see it happen," that's a program built to

keep a student on grade level even while learning away from a classroom.

THE BOTTOM LINE

None of this replaces a good teacher, and it was never meant to. What it replaces is the impossible math of one teacher trying to individually diagnose thirty different missing pieces while still covering a full year of new material. Vectored Instruction® handles the part that doesn't scale, finding exactly what's missing for exactly one student, so that teachers are free to do what only a person can do: encourage, explain, and connect.

Every day a child remains stuck on a missing foundation, the gap grows. The tools to find the hole and fill it exist, and they are already working in schools across the country.

This piece is adapted from Dr. Roger Billings's full paper, "*Vectored Instruction®: A Breakthrough Technology in Modern Education*," published in the *Journal of Science* (August 2026). Read the complete paper, including its full research citations, at sis.science.edu/journal/publications/SIS00022.

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