High-quality college and career advisement throughout K-12

Rigorous early postsecondary and work-based learning opportunities in high school

Seamless vertical alignment between K-12, postsecondary programs, and career opportunities as a result of effective partnerships among school districts, higher education institutions, employers and community organizations

District-Postsecondary Partnerships: Across the state, most high schools send the majority of their college-bound students to a single local college. At the same time, every year there are many college-ready students who do not enroll in postsecondary education. Throughout spring 2021, regional coordinators are supporting local community and technical colleges and their high school partners to help students complete as much of the college enrollment process as possible prior to high school graduation. Working together, college partners and high school staff will identify ways to reduce administrative barriers in the enrollment process and provide robust supports to students and families. This program will support 18 partnerships representing every economic region of the state and serve approximately 1,000 high school seniors.

Student Placement Solutions Program for Work-Based Learning: Work-based learning (WBL) is an evidence-based practice that increases a student's likelihood of gaining high-quality employment after graduation. Still, because of liability concerns, some employers are hesitant to place students under the age of 18, thus limiting the number of WBL opportunities. Lori Burdine, Southwest regional coordinator, coordinated with local partners Personnel Placements, LLC (PPL), theCO, and the Southwest Tennessee Workforce Development Board to propose a novel approach to this challenge. The Student Placement Solutions Program (SP2) allows districts to place 16-17-year-olds in a variety of WBL placements with local employers, and PPL acts as the single employer of record. SP2 will serve students involved in CTE and academic programs of study tied to these industry sectors: Transportation and Warehousing, Healthcare and Social Assistance, Advanced Manufacturing, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services.

Tennessee School for the Deaf: In the spring of 2019, the Tennessee School for the Deaf (TSD) in Knoxville was seeking postsecondary partners for three of their programs of study. The TSD presented a unique opportunity for postsecondary partnerships and early college experiences because they serve students on three campuses across the state. Danny Satterfield, East regional coordinator, and the East CTE CORE consultant collaborated to leverage their statewide networks to connect TSD with TBR institutions across five Tennessee regions. The first partnership, established with Pellissippi State Community College, helped pave the way for TSD to provide local dual credit agreements for pathways in structural systems, STEM, and culinary arts. Through this collaboration, TSD students can access multiple early postsecondary opportunities that prepare them for successful careers in or near their hometowns.

Tennessee Pathways is made possible through an interagency agreement between the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) and the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). Launched in 2018, Tennessee Pathways represents our state's commitment to ensuring that every student can graduate high school with opportunities for postsecondary education and high-quality employment in their local community.
**Starting Line Partnership**

Shelby County Schools is partnering with Nike to develop Starting Line, a training program for students in the logistics sector, a high-demand field in the Greater Memphis region. The Starting Line partnership will design industry-informed logistics training while promoting career opportunities in the logistics field. Kenderek Harris, Greater Memphis regional coordinator, is facilitating coordination between Shelby County Schools, Nike, and Southwest Tennessee Community College (STCC) to create a postsecondary certificate for the program. As a result of Starting Line, STCC has started the process of co-designing a logistics/distribution technical certificate with Nike. The end goal is for students to obtain this certificate from Southwest concurrent with a high school diploma, placing them at the front of the line for employment with Nike.

**Pre-Practical Nursing Pathway**

In fall 2020, TCAT Shelbyville established a pilot dual enrollment program in pre-Practical Nursing (pre-PRN) with Moore County Schools to fill a growing labor market need. As the program began, two immediate challenges surfaced: limited dual enrollment funding and time for students to complete all graduation requirements. Tracy Whitehead, the Southern Middle regional coordinator, supported the partnership by facilitating communication with the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation and TDOE. Tracy helped the partners advocate for GIVE dual enrollment grant eligibility for pre-PRN courses and confirm that the program’s math course could satisfy students' required fourth level math course. Finally, Tracy collaborated with district leadership to minimize out-of-pocket costs to students to promote access to this high-quality, in-demand pathway.

**Tennessee Pathways Regional Coordinators** serve all nine economic regions in the state by facilitating cross-sector coordination and partnerships to serve students. For example, regional coordinators help local districts and schools initiate or expand partnerships to offer career exploration, early postsecondary coursework, work-based learning, mentorship, and more. Regional coordinators are housed at local TBR campuses and are the glue that connects educators, employers, and community partners throughout each region.

Launched in 2019, the **Tennessee Pathways Certification** sets clear expectations for alignment, advisement, and partnerships that define strong education-to-career pathways. Beyond establishing standards for program quality and design, the Certification elevates and celebrates innovative and exemplary pathways across the state.

**DENSO/Blount County Partnership**

DENSO, a Fortune 500 automotive manufacturing company focused on automotive electrical products, currently maintains partnerships with six school districts in the East and Southeast regions. Recently, DENSO deepened its relationship with three Blount County school districts through the Blount County Partnership 2020 Perkins Reserve Grant award. The Blount County Partnership was one of only twelve proposals granted a portion of TDOE’s $1.4 million allocation for expanding Regional Career Pathways. Through the grant award, DENSO will continue to expand its capacity to offer students on-the-job training through work-based learning, increase Mechatronics dual enrollment opportunities with TCAT Knoxville, and strengthen the Tennessee Valley Youth Apprenticeship program.