

# Technical Preparation Opportunities in West Virginia Public Schools

In Partnership with the  
Community and Technical College System  
of West Virginia

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Early College Academies  
Accelerated Pathway  
Credentialed Pathway



# Technical Preparation Pathways

**Learn More. Earn More.**

## FOREWORD

The reality that students today must be prepared to continue their education beyond high school places a higher education standard on today's student. Viewing the high school diploma as a terminal degree is no longer an option for students seeking meaningful employment as the workforce of today requires a higher level of skill and knowledge and the demand for unskilled labor is declining.

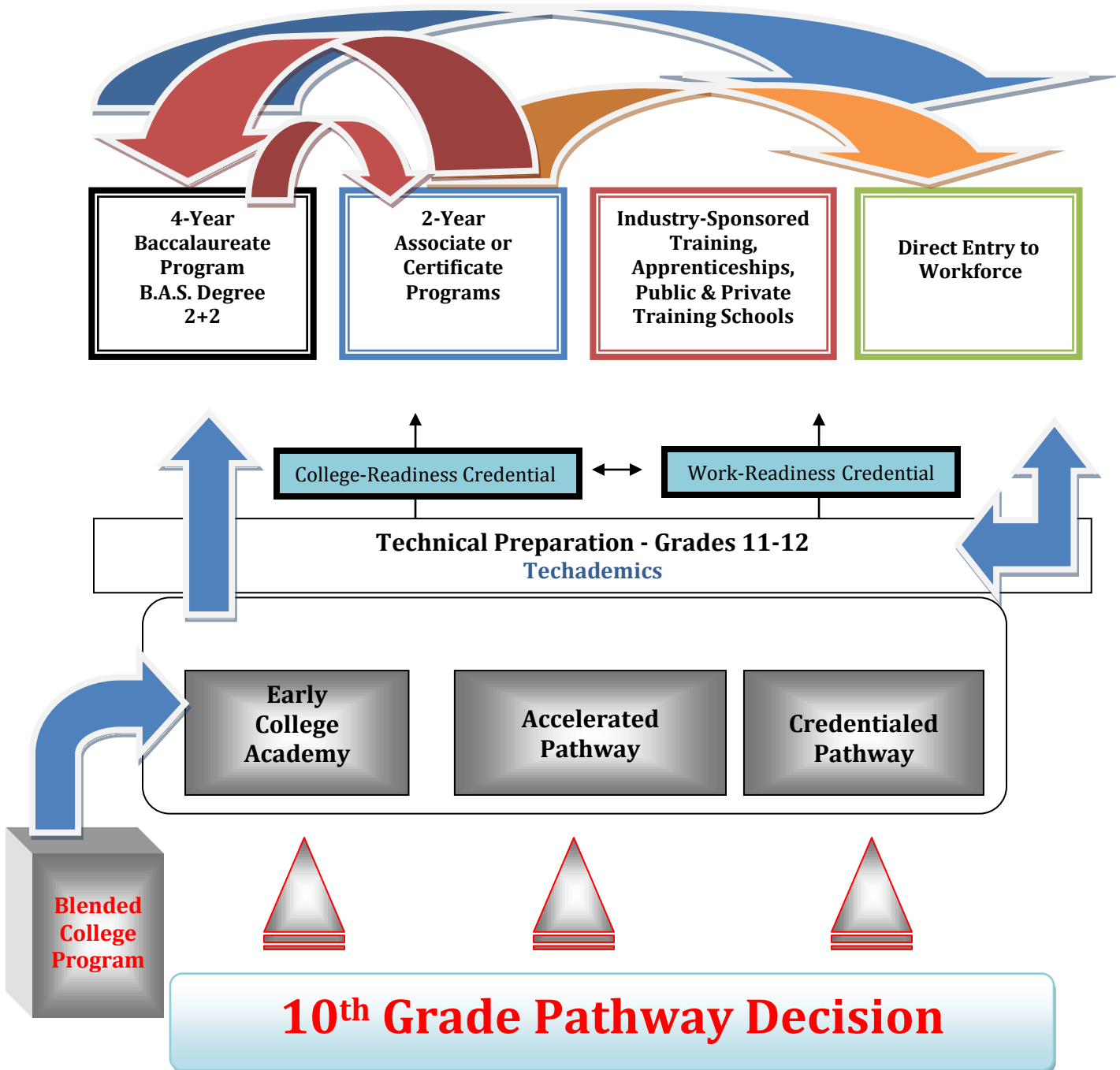
New workplace requirements should raise a concern for West Virginia leaders. Even though West Virginia's college-going rate is at or slightly above the national average, over sixty percent of West Virginia students going on to college are dropping out during the first two years. Out of every 100 West Virginia ninth graders, only 15-18 are successfully finishing a postsecondary degree program or credential. Additionally, the high school drop-out rate in West Virginia continues to increase. These statistics are alarming and do not reflect a healthy climate for our state's future economy and workforce. Reversing the reported college and high school dropout rates in West Virginia requires a change in how education is delivered.

The delivery of a 21<sup>st</sup> century education requires a different approach than is provided in the traditional model. Whereas, the traditional model is more a generalist approach to learning, the new approach creates goal-oriented pathways that lead students to employment opportunities and successful lives. Succinctly, it is education with a purpose, LEARN MORE. EARN MORE.

Education with a purpose, (LEARN MORE. EARN MORE.) , encompasses a redesign of Technical Preparation Pathway. Under the redesign model, three pathways are available: Early College Academy Pathway; Accelerated Career Pathway, and Credentialed Career Pathway. Each of the three pathways' programs of study includes secondary and postsecondary connections that are deeper, more systemic, and focus on the needs of the student. Students enrolled in the Technical Preparation program will choose their appropriate pathway at the end of the tenth grade.

The redesigned pathways are being developed in concert with the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia to insure a seamless, effective and efficient transition. Technical Preparation through the new design will create goal-oriented pathways that lead West Virginia students to gainful employment and successful lives.

# Technical Preparation Pathways



# **EARLY COLLEGE Academies**

## **PURPOSE**

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The Early College Academies accelerate the education opportunities for West Virginia career technical students by providing blended high school/college programs of study in the junior and senior years. Students electing to attend an Academy may possibly obtain an associate degree along with their high school diploma.

All academies are collaborations between specific community and technical colleges and a career-technical center, a comprehensive high school, or a county school system. The physical location of the Academy may be a career-technical center, a comprehensive high school, or the community and technical college. The focus of the Academy is to provide an opportunity for high school students to enroll in college-level technical programs that lead to high-demand, high-wage employment opportunities. Programs of study will be determined by documented regional employer demand and the alignment with current community and technical college programs such as Mechatronics, Electrical Distribution Engineering Technology, Power Plant Technology, Applied Process Technician, etc.

## **PROCESS**

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### **9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Students who are likely prospects for a specific Academy will be identified. The ACT Explore information will be utilized to develop an individualized education plan for the student.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Potential Academy students are enrolled in a College Transition 101 course. During the course, students will explore the various career opportunities that exist and identify a career interest by the end of the course.

Within the College Transition 101 course, developmental math and English are delivered to address academic deficiencies pre-determined by a college placement exam.

At the end of tenth grade, students and parents identify the student's career focus and will make a decision to enter or not enter The Early College Academy for the next two years.

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## **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Students enter an Academy at the beginning of the eleventh grade. The program of study reflects an agreed upon sequence of courses, that may include EDGE, Dual Credit and/or early entrance college courses. Courses may be delivered in person, virtually or blended.

In close collaboration, the two education levels share in the administration, teaching loads, class schedules and other responsibilities set forth for the Academy. Both levels, secondary and postsecondary, reflect the academy students in their FTE's.

The curricula may consist of both secondary and postsecondary courses that meet graduation requirements for both high school and postsecondary program completion. Faculty from secondary and postsecondary levels will work in conjunction with employers to identify the body of knowledge necessary to satisfy the requirements for each education level.

### **Implementation:**

1. Identification of targeted programs and Academy sites, secondary career technical center and community and technical college partners.
2. Administrators from both levels, postsecondary and secondary, meet to determine class schedules, operating hours, faculty loads, finances, areas of responsibilities, i.e., counseling, testing, and reporting.
3. Faculty from both levels, postsecondary and secondary, meet to determine courses, course content, course sequencing, and faculty credentials.
4. Potential Academy students are identified by the end of ninth grade.
5. Potential Academy students are enrolled in a College Transition 101 course during the tenth grade.
6. At the end of the tenth grade, an Academy workshop is held for all potential students and parents and the decision to attend or not attend an Academy is made.

### **Potential Early College Academy Sites:**

1. Blue Ridge Community and Technical College and James Rumsey Technical Institute
2. New River Community and Technical College and Mercer County Career Center
3. Pierpont Community and Technical College and United Career Center
4. Southern WV Community and Technical College and Lincoln County High School
5. Southern WV Community and Technical College and Boone County Career Center
6. WVU at Parkersburg and Wood County Schools
7. WV Northern Community College and Wetzel County Schools

## **ACCELERATED Career Pathway**

### **PURPOSE**

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The Accelerated Career Pathway provides career technical students in West Virginia the opportunity during their junior and senior year to prepare for the workplace and begin accumulating credits toward an associate's degree or a postsecondary certificate in their field of study. Students electing this pathway may graduate from high school with the first year of an associate degree completed.

### **PROCESS**

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#### **9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Students who are likely prospects for the Accelerated Career Pathway are identified. The ACT Explore information is utilized to develop an individualized education plan for the student.

#### **10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Potential Accelerated Career Pathway students should enroll in a College Transition 101 course. During the course, students explore career opportunities available to them and they choose a career area of interest by the end of the course.

Within the College Transition 101 course, developmental math and English are delivered to address academic deficiencies pre-determined by a college placement exam.

At the end of tenth grade, students and parents identify the student's career focus and make a decision to enter or not enter the Accelerated Career Pathway for the next two years.

#### **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Students enter the Accelerated Career Pathway at the beginning of the eleventh grade. The accelerated career pathways program of study leads to employment in targeted industries identified by West Virginia's Economic Development Office and provides students the opportunity to begin advanced studies programs.

Partnering with community and technical colleges, the two education levels share in the administration, teaching loads, class schedules and other responsibilities set forth for the career pathway .

The curriculum consists of blended courses (secondary and postsecondary) that count towards the graduation requirements for both high school graduation and postsecondary program completion.

Faculties from secondary and postsecondary levels meet to determine the curriculum that identifies the body of knowledge necessary to satisfy the requirements for each education level.

**Implementation:**

1. Identification of Accelerated Career Pathway, secondary career technical center and community and technical college partner.
2. Administrators from both levels, postsecondary and secondary, meet to determine delivery and areas of responsibilities, i.e., counseling, testing, and reporting.
3. Faculty from both levels, postsecondary and secondary, meet to determine courses, course content, course sequencing, and faculty credentials.
4. Potential Accelerated Career Pathway students are identified by the end of ninth grade.
5. Potential Accelerated students are encouraged to enroll in a College Transition 101 course during the tenth grade,
6. At the end of the tenth grade, an Accelerated Career Pathway workshop is held for all potential students and parents and the decision to enroll or not enroll in the Accelerated Career Pathway is made.

# CREDENTIALLED Career Pathway

## PURPOSE

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The Credentialed Career Pathway provides West Virginia career technical students the opportunity during their junior and senior year to enroll in career technical courses leading to an industry certification in their field of study.

## PROCESS

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### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

Students who are likely prospects for the Credentialed Career Pathway are identified. The ACT Explore information is utilized to develop an individualized education plan for the student.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

Potential Credentialed Career Pathway students may enroll in a College Transition 101 course. During the course, students explore career opportunities available to them and they select a career area of interest.

In addition to the college curriculum taught through the College Transition 101 course, developmental math and English is delivered to address any academic deficiencies pre-determined by a college placement exam.

At the end of tenth grade, students and parents identify the student's career focus and make a decision to enter or not enter the Credentialed Career Pathway for the next two years.

### 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Students will enter the Credentialed Career Pathway at the beginning of the eleventh grade. The career pathways programs of study will lead to employment in career technical industries.

Partnering with a community and technical college, the Credentialed Career Pathway will offer EDGE courses that provide college credit toward an associate degree in the student's career field of choice, should they elect to continue their studies at the postsecondary level.

### Implementation:

1. Potential Credentialed Career Pathway students will be identified by the end of ninth grade.
2. Potential Credentialed Career Pathway students may enroll in a College Transition 101 course during the tenth grade.
3. At the end of the tenth grade, potential students and parents will make the decision to enroll in the Credentialed Career Pathway.