

# FUTURE READY

MARCH 2023

A newsletter for supporters of Wichita Public Schools College and Career Ready programs



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WPS Office of College and Career Readiness.

Executive Director: Kelly Bielefeld

Editor/Writer: Anne Schneider

## From the Executive Director

As we round out the third quarter and head to the homestretch of our school year, we have several updates for all of our partners:

- The Senior Career Fair is coming up on **April 18**. Last year we had great feedback from students and employers. Over 86% of the 83 companies who attended indicated they were "somewhat" or "very" satisfied with the fair. 75% of them made job offers to students during or after the event. See the flyer on page 8 of the newsletter to sign up your business.
- Our All-District Advisory Board meeting will be on **May 3 at 4:00** at the AMAC Administrative Center, 903 S. Edgemoor. All of our partners are invited to hear updates about the year and plan for ideas for the future.
- Enrollment is underway for all of our CTE and college classes for next year. The Future Ready Center opportunity will be available to more students next year. If you have an interest in touring the Future Ready Center for Advanced Manufacturing, reach out to Christy in our office at **316-973-4511**. The Future Ready Center for Health Science will have a full-scale opening in August upon the completion of construction.



**Kelly Bielefeld**

Executive Director, College and Career Readiness Office

# Construction Students Build Wichita's Future



These construction students from East High are building an 8' x 8' storage shed as part of the annual statewide SkillsUSA competition in 2022. They apply framing, plumbing, electrical, and masonry skills to complete the project. In addition, they learn the importance of teamwork and earn valuable industry credentials, such as OSHA and NCCER certification. This team placed second in the state.

Now in his fourth year as a construction teacher at East High, Aaron Haselwood has seen firsthand the value of having connections with industry partners. "It's one thing for me to tell students they can have a good job after graduation but when someone from an area construction company comes in and tells them what the starting pay is and that they'll help pay for schooling, ears perk up," he said. Local firms such as McCown Gordon, Conco, Crossland, and Higgins Group have made presentations to Haselwood's students. Another important partner is the AGC, Association of General Contractors.

Haselwood's goal is to get his students in front of as many industry professionals as possible while they're still in high school. They learn what employers are looking for, what jobs are available, and what income they can expect to earn in a career that is financially, as well as personally, rewarding.

Students who choose the construction pathway take Introduction to Industrial Technology during their freshman year. The course covers safety, use of hand and power tools, and key core construction basics. In their sophomore year students go on to take Residential Carpentry 1. By the end of the second semester they will have earned two essential certifications described below.

During their sophomore year students begin earning college credit at WSU Tech as they continue to add construction courses. "Many firms want to train workers in their own methods. What's most important is being able to read a tape measure and have a basic understanding of framing," Haselwood explained. Juniors and seniors complete pathway courses with Remodeling and Building Maintenance and Construction.

Construction pathways will be available at two additional WPS high schools next fall: North and Northwest. Students who complete the coursework can have a good-paying job waiting for them immediately upon graduation. Haselwood said, "Education as a whole has pushed students toward attending four-year college. But many of my students who struggle in other classes show real promise when they work with their hands. They can go to work for a local construction company that will help pay for their education after high school, getting the best of both worlds—a career, and additional training paid for by their employer."

## CREDENTIALS STUDENTS CAN EARN IN CONSTRUCTION PATHWAYS:

OSHA 10— Provides workers with basic training about common safety and health hazards on the job.

NCCER— National Center for Construction Education and Research. Offers an introduction to construction drawings, construction math, hand tools, and power tools.



# Early Childhood Classes Get Infants and Young Children Off to a Great Start

The littlest among us are the biggest reasons to provide a solid foundation for early childhood education. This pathway prepares high school students for careers as early childhood educators. Students take classes at seven WPS high schools while also obtaining work experience at the Greater Wichita YMCA's Child Development Centers.

Dani McEwen is in her second year of teaching at West High. Being a role model and helping students succeed is what motivates her every day. Her students begin their pathway work by taking Parenting and the World of Children during the first year. In their senior year, students take Foundations of Early Childhood Education, earning workplace credentials from KCCTO (Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities). This 18-hour training covers safety procedures, bloodborne pathogens, basics of child development, identifying child abuse/neglect, and safe transportation of children.

Earning the KCCTO certification qualifies students to work at a licensed child care facility. It also prepares them for coursework at Cowley College, where they can obtain an Associate's Degree in Child Care and



Above: Toddlers gather for story time at the Greater Wichita YMCA's Child Development Center located at West High. Students assist in the classroom as part of their laboratory time.

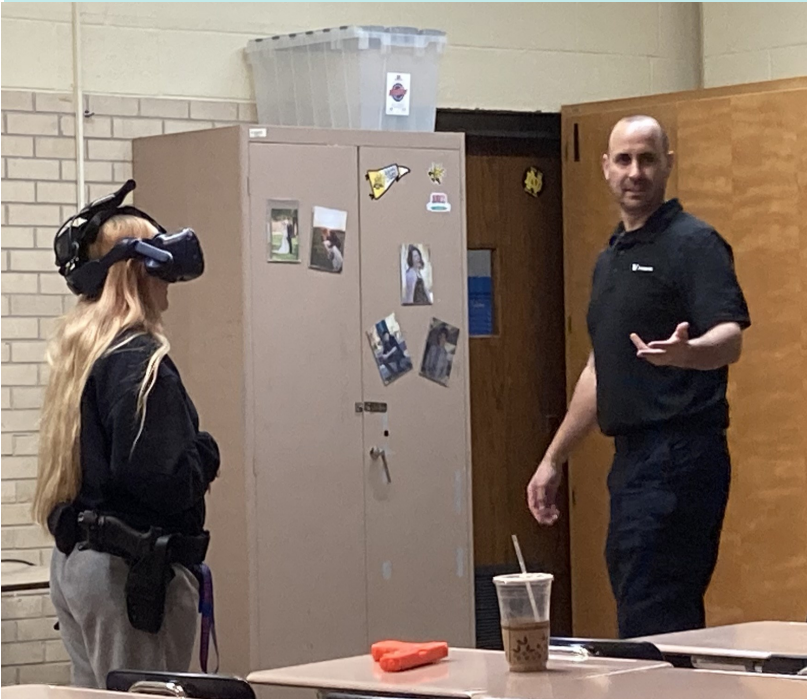
Left: A West High student carries a "RealCare" infant simulator that helps students learn parenting skills, infant health lessons, and early childhood.



Development, qualifying them for a license to teach at an early childhood center.

McEwen is grateful for the opportunity to teach the essentials of parenting and child development. "One of my most rewarding moments was building relationships with seniors last year and watching them grow from the beginning of the school year to graduation." Even if students don't end up employed at a child development center they benefit from what they've learned, using their skills to be good parents. As a community, we all benefit from having educated, prepared moms and dads.

# Careers in Law Enforcement: Creating Create Safe Communities for All



This student is testing a special virtual reality headset used in law enforcement training. Much like a video game, the headset allows the student to experience and respond to different scenarios similar to those encountered by law enforcement officers every day.

Having trained and responsive law enforcement is an essential part of living in a safe society. But many communities, including Wichita, are struggling to fill vacant law enforcement positions. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of law enforcement workers in the U.S. decreased by 4% from March 2020 to August 2022.

There are many reasons why communities are experiencing shortages of qualified workers — increased resignation and retirement rates, changes in public perception, and increases in violent crime are at the top of the list.

The WPS law enforcement pathway seeks to address area employment needs by introducing students to the many career opportunities in law enforcement, not only as police and sheriff officers, but in support positions.

Students who are 18 years of age can begin their careers immediately after graduation as corrections officers, dispatch workers, or

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“One of the most rewarding moments I’ve experienced was attending the police academy graduation of a student and pinning her badge. It’s an honor to help these students who take an oath to uphold the laws of this state and the constitution.”

—Melissa Seiwert, Law Enforcement Pathway Instructor, South High

records clerks. As an example of local need, the Sedgwick County Jail recently graduated 20 corrections officers. Openings for 80 additional positions remain.

To Melissa Seiwert, who teaches Introduction to Law, Public Safety, and Law Enforcement 1 and 2, public service and first responder jobs are a good fit for students interested in helping people. Classes take field trips to the Sedgwick County Courthouse where they get to meet a judge and observe a trial. Other field trips include a visit to the Hutchinson Correctional Facility and Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center.

In Seiwert’s Law Enforcement 1 and 2 classes students learn about the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and how to apply it in real life. This amendment protects people from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government. Applying true-to-life simulations, as well as learning about procedures in the field—handcuffing, traffic stops, communication, and pat down rights—are all part of the classwork that prepares students for rewarding careers that help maintain protection and safety in a community.



# Fashion and Interior Design Students Bring Beauty to our World

“Design is right up my alley,” says Shiloh Tyler. A former elementary school teacher who is in her first year at Northwest High, Tyler teaches freshmen through seniors the basics of interiors and textiles as well as more advanced application classes in apparel and interior design.

In Essentials of Fashion, Apparel and Interior Design, students research careers in this field. They go through the elements and principles of design, learning about architectural styles, house plans, and career readiness. They also begin creating a portfolio of their work.

After completing Essentials, students go on to take Apparel 1 and 2 where they focus on the construction of clothing.



Above: Northwest High students were given an assignment to use items found in nature to design an outfit.

Below left: A student's completed design.



Coursework includes learning how to operate a sewing machine, sewing by hand, and attaching closures. “It’s really fun to see a project come to life, learn with students, and watch them problem solve,” Tyler enthused. “During Apparel 2 they learn to read a pattern and start their first clothing piece for themselves.”

Tyler noted that it sometimes surprises students that good design includes a lot more math than they were expecting. As a teacher she finds it satisfying to watch students follow their instincts and trust the process, leading to a sense of pride when they’ve completed a project.

Currently Fashion and Interior Design students can earn concurrent credit through WSU Tech beginning in their sophomore year. Tyler is eager to explore what industry-related credentials students can obtain.

At the beginning of the semester in one of her classes, Tyler asked students to create a fashion collage of who they are and what they’re drawn to. “I was so proud, this was the first work I’d gotten from this group. They have a great eye for design and the project helped them realize their potential. I can’t wait to see them achieve great things in their lives.”

# Scholastic Press Association Activities Promote Careers in Journalism and Civic Leadership



Left: A student works on an assignment that is part of the annual Scholastic Press Corps program. Students have one nine-hour day to create a four-page newspaper or a four-minute video.

Below: a video team from Southeast High works on the news story they will submit to the Kansas State Fair.

Just a few weeks after school begins in the fall, teams of WPS high school journalism students chosen by their teachers spend a day at the Kansas State Fair. But the day isn't about cotton candy and Ferris wheels; it's part of the annual Scholastic Press Corps program, designed to give high school students the opportunity to put their video production and journalism skills to the test.

"The State Fair provides a real-world atmosphere that's hard to replicate in the classroom," said Jeff Welch, who heads up the WPS journalism programs. "And it's a lot of fun to watch students divide up the work and make it come together."

Throughout the school year WPS journalism students have opportunities to learn, compete, and advance their skills. The National Scholastic Press Association hosts an annual convention every fall that includes workshops and big-name keynote speakers. Students can enter their yearbooks and newspapers in a nationwide competition while also receiving valuable feedback from judges.

Sharon Martin, East High journalism teacher, enjoys watching students mature. They may not end up having careers as journalists but by pursuing this pathway in high school they are preserving moments in their history. "Working on a yearbook or newspaper is something tangible; it's a way to leave a permanent mark on your school and community," she said.





# College and Career Bootcamp

## Prepares High School Juniors for Life

Cammie Kennedy recalls a previous job as a college admissions director. “The high school students I spoke with had no clue about applying for college, obtaining financial aid, discovering what majors they might be interested in...just life in general.”

She is passionate about changing that perspective by helping plan and organize the second annual College and Career Bootcamp. As a College and Career Counselor (CCC) at East High, Kennedy is part of a team that helps students learn what resources exist to help them attend college, apply for a first-time job, polish interview skills, understand business etiquette, and discover careers in the military.

### COLLEGE AND CAREER BOOT CAMP

**WHERE:** Southeast High School, 2641 S. 127th East (Days 1–4) and WSU (Day 5).

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 30 through Saturday, June 3

**WHO:** Bootcamp is open to all WPS students who are currently high school juniors.

**HOW:** To enroll, students should contact the CCC (College and Career Counselor) at their high school.

**HOW MUCH:** Thanks to sponsor support, there is no cost to participants. Travel from the students’ base high school to Southeast and back will be provided, along with lunch and snacks.



This student is visiting with an admissions counselor from Newman University. On the final day of Bootcamp students in eighth grade and higher, along with their parents, can meet with prospective employers, college representatives at a College and Career Fair.

WPS hosted Bootcamp for the first time in 2022. Business sponsors made presentations and met with students one-on-one to discuss what qualities they look for in employees. Some offered jobs with scholarships. College reps explained the differences and advantages of community college, technical college, and four-year universities. The final day of bootcamp was a college and career fair open to students in eighth grade and above. Parents were welcome to attend and explore job openings. This year’s Bootcamp will follow the same schedule. Parents and students can register to participate by using StriveScan. Check it out at: [www.strivescan.com](http://www.strivescan.com).

To Rachel Schmeidler, a CCC at North High, Bootcamp is a great confidence-builder for students who fear their grades will limit any hope of obtaining a post-secondary education. “I’ve talked with students who have a below-average GPA and I tell them, ‘Your grades don’t define who you are.’ That’s something they need to hear.”

Planners hope to attract 600–650 juniors for this year’s Bootcamp. Meagan Wofford, an instructor at Northwest High, emphasized how important participation is, especially for students who will be the first in their families to attend college or technical college after graduation. “My parents didn’t know anything about financial aid,” she recalled. “I had to learn it on my own. At Bootcamp, students will come away knowing how to complete the forms and so much more.”

# USD 259 Seniors JOB FAIR!



**WICHITA**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS®



WPS CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

## THE FUTURE WORKFORCE IS WAITING!

Many Wichita Public Schools students are looking to start their careers immediately after graduation.

Join us for a Job Fair for  
our graduating seniors  
looking for full-time  
employment!

Contact Laura Barker:  
[lbarker1@usd259.net](mailto:lbarker1@usd259.net)  
316-973-4764  
[Register here!](#)

Tuesday  
**18th**  
April 2023

9am -3pm  
AMAC - 903 S. Edgemoor