

Career & Technical Education Expert Review Team

Post-Visit Report
CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Governor's Workforce Development Board Career and Technical Education Committee

December 2025



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The Governor's Workforce Development Board is grateful to the CTE Expert Review Team members that participated in the exploration of this District's CTE programs, as well as central office and school leadership, staff, and students that contributed valuable insights regarding CTE programs in their Local Education Agency (LEA).

Table of Contents

04

Executive

Summary

10

Internal Strengths

and Challenges

07

Purpose of

CTE ERT

16

External Factors

08

About Charles

County Public

School System

19

Potential Next

Steps

09

Summary of Visit Appendix Guide

22



Executive Summary

The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* ("the *Blueprint*") established the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee within the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) to develop an integrated, globally competitive framework for providing CTE to Maryland students in public schools, postsecondary institutions, and the workforce. As part of this effort, the *Blueprint* mandates that the CTE Committee establish, administer, and supervise Expert Review Teams (ERTs) to visit schools offering CTE pathways. These visits observe and track the progress of local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing CTE programs that align with the *Blueprint*'s vision and the CTE Committee's framework and policies. In addition to reviewing progress, the visits are intended to provide support and identify technical assistance needs as LEAs build their CTE systems.

This CTE ERT visited Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), located in Southern Maryland, on March 6, 2025. This was the eighth CTE ERT visit conducted by the CTE Committee during the 2024-2025 School Year (SY). CCPS offers CTE programs at all seven comprehensive high schools, as well as CCPS's sole CTE Center, Robert D. Stethem Education Center. The CTE ERT visited Henry E. Lackey High School (HLHS) in Indian Head, Maryland and North Point High School (NPHS) in Waldorf, Maryland.

One CTE Committee member, one CTE Committee member designee, two employers/apprenticeship sponsors, one community college representative, two CTE Committee staff members/contractual support, two GWDB staff members, one neighboring LEA teacher, one neighboring CTE Director, one neighboring LEA administrator, and one Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) staff member participated in the CTE ERT visit for Charles County. Using the LEA's self-reported data, interviews, focus groups, school tours, and classroom visits, the CTE ERT organized their observations and preliminary analysis in this report.

CCPS's progress toward the *Blueprint's* goal that by the 2030-2031 SY, 45% of high school graduates shall complete the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship or another industry-recognized credential ("45% goal") is at 15% for 2024 graduates, according to the IRC guidelines determined by the CTE Committee.¹ This is notable as the updated list of approved-IRCs does not go into effect until the 2025-2026 SY. All of CCPS's progress toward the *Blueprint's* 45% goal is attributed to IRC attainment.

Below is a summary of the observations and findings from this visit:

CCPS Internal Strengths

- Passion and Commitment from Teachers, Career Advisors and Coaches, CCPS Staff, and Administrators to Students and CTE Offerings
- Career Coaches' and Advisors' Collaborations Have Led to Strong Middle School Engagement

¹ Career and Technical Education. (December 2024). "GWDB CTE Committee Industry Recognized Credentials". *Governor's Workforce Development Board*. https://tinyurl.com/3hxuw2ub



- CTE System Design Creates Options for Students
- Xello is a Useful Tool for Career Advising and Enrolling Students into CTE Programs

CCPS Internal Challenges

- Career Advisors and Coaches Have High Workloads
- Academic Testing Coordinators Do Not Assist with IRC Assessments
- Difficulty Changing Pathway and Competition with AP, Dual Enrollment, and Extracurriculars Lead to Lower Retention of Students in 11th and 12th Grades
- CTE Students Struggle with Practical Math Skills
- Transportation Hurdles
- Students with Disabilities Felt Like They Had to "Figure it Out"
- Opportunity for School Administrator Professional Development on CTE's Value

CCPS External Factors

- <u>Strength</u>: Connection with Local Experts Like the College of Southern Maryland and the Indian Head Naval Surface Warfare Center
- Challenge: Available Work-Based Learning Opportunities
- Challenge: Communication and Collaboration with External Stakeholders
- Challenge: Lack of Available Space or Qualified Teachers

CCPS Potential Next Steps

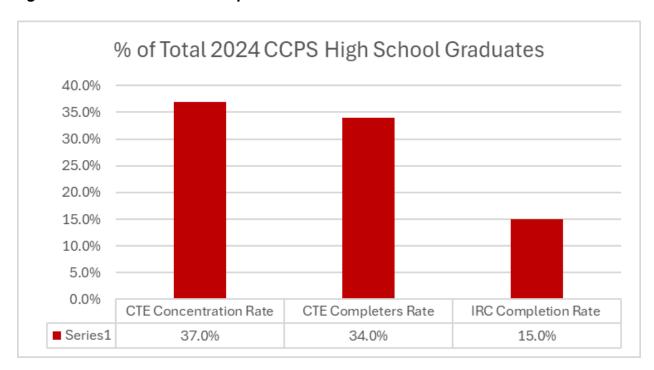
- Explore Opportunities to Highlight Students' Work and Accomplishments in CTSOs, Clubs, and Apprenticeships in a Career Fair
- Consider Consistent Collaborations with Neighboring LEAs
- Develop Strategies to Improve Communication with CCPS Stakeholders
- Professional Development for School Administrators to Understand Value of CTE
- Explore Technical Assistance with MSDE, the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor), and the CTE Committee in meeting the Blueprint's 45% Goal

The CTE Committee staff, along with the CTE ERT, have collaborated on this report to provide observations and preliminary points of analysis to readers. In this document, readers will find the purpose of the CTE ERT, a brief explanation of CCPS, a summary of the CTE ERT visit, Strengths, Challenges, and External (SCE) analysis, and Potential Next Steps for the LEA to consider.

Please feel free to reach out to the CTE Committee or CTE Committee staff to answer any questions, comments, or concerns at GWDB.CTE@maryland.gov.



Figure 1: CCPS CTE and IRC completion rates.





Purpose of the CTE ERT

The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* ("the *Blueprint"*), Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §21-209, established the Career and Technical (CTE) Committee as a unit within the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB).² The GWDB serves as the Governor's chief strategic and policy-making body for workforce development in the State of Maryland.³ The purpose of the CTE Committee is to build an integrated, globally competitive framework for providing CTE to Maryland students in public schools, institutions of postsecondary education, and the workforce. The CTE Committee aims to fundamentally reimagine and redesign career-connected learning and career pathways to ensure all of Maryland's students have real access to fulfilling and family-sustaining careers.

The *Blueprint* requires the CTE Committee to establish, administer, and supervise CTE ERTs to visit schools with CTE pathways.⁴ The goals of these visits are to: 1) review alignment of district programs and practices with *Blueprint* vision and policies, 2) assure an LEA's CTE programs and practices are consistent with the Maryland CTE Framework and policies on the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) and industry-recognized credentials (IRCs), and 3) support technical assistance needs for LEAs as they create new systems, programs and practices in order to support *Blueprint* goals and expand career-connected learning, especially Registered Apprenticeship and other IRC attainment, for their students. Ultimately, the CTE ERTs report back to the CTE Committee on district progress toward *Blueprint* goals, common challenges, and opportunities for policy change, technical assistance, or other support to meet those goals. The CTE Committee staff will publish a summary of findings from CTE ERT visits within the CTE Committee's annual report.⁵

The CTE ERT program has three phases that transition from Phase 1: Discovery, to Phase 2: Analyze and Assist, and Phase 3: Evaluate. The primary goal in Phase 1 is to visit all 24 LEAs and build a baseline set of observations to understand the state of CTE in Maryland, along with common challenges LEAs face in creating a robust CTE system. The common challenges will inform what technical assistance sessions will be provided in Phase 2, which will focus on alignment, systemic data collection, and support. Phase 2 is set to begin in the 2026-2027 SY, so the specifics for Phase 2 will be planned in Spring 2026. Phase 3 will begin in the 2028-2029 SY and will focus on evaluating progress toward *Blueprint* goals, but will be more specifically planned during Phase 2.

The CTE Expert Review Team visit to CCPS consisted of members from various backgrounds and brought expertise in areas such as student learning, workforce development, and CTE, ensuring a comprehensive review of the LEA's CTE programs (see Appendix A).

² Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §21-209, https://bit.lv/3W0JoeU

³ Executive Order No. 01.01.2023.22. (2023). https://tinyurl.com/execorder01012023

⁴ Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §5-412 https://tinyurl.com/5cb36cvv

⁵ Md. Ann. Code, Ed. Art. §21-209, https://bit.ly/3W0JoeU



About Charles County Public School System

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), located in Southern Maryland, enrolls 9,353 high school students, and has made 15% progress toward the *Blueprint*'s 45% goal among graduating students. The LEA offers 33 CTE programs covering a wide range of areas of specialization, from Construction Design and Management to Child Development Professions. CCPS is in alignment with the Southern Maryland Workforce Development Board and the State's focus on building key sectors in healthcare, construction, and professional services, which includes Information Technology and accounting. CTE programs in Biomedical Sciences, Academy of Health Professions, Engineering, Construction Design and Management, Business Management, IT Networking, and Cybersecurity are all at or near maximum enrollment. The three highest enrolled programs are Business Management, Engineering, and Computer and Information Sciences. This demonstrates CCPS's focus on developing a robust workforce targeting key sectors identified by the Southern Maryland Workforce Development Board. One unique aspect about CTE in CCPS's is marketing strategies, where each CTE program has an available video that gets sent to all 8th and 10th graders.

Students enrolled in CTE programs have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, and 15% of graduating students earned an IRC, based on the CTE Committee's-approved list.⁷

CCPS has CTE offerings at all seven high schools and at the CTE Center, Robert D. Stethem Educational Center.

At CCPS, the 33 CTE programs are either regionalized and offered to all students in the county, or CTE programs are open enrollment and offered at a high school through course selection. 19 CTE programs are offered at North Point High School and Maurice McDonough High School, but students are required to apply in 8th grade. 7 CTE programs are offered at Robert Stethem Educational Center, which is CCPS's sole CTE Center, and Southern Maryland Regional Training Center, but students are required to apply in 10th grade. Applications are evaluated for minimum requirements based on merit and interests: 60% Interest Survey Responses, 25% grades in core subject areas, 10% Xello core lesson completion, and 5% alignment with Xello scores, which is software meant to engage and support students with college and career readiness. If a program is oversubscribed, then there is a lottery among qualified applicants to earn enrollment. Transportation is provided for all regional, application-based programs. The remaining 7 CTE programs do not require an application, but the process for admission may vary depending on the school.

⁶ Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, Southern Maryland Workforce Development Board. (2024). 2024-2028 Southern Maryland Local Workforce Development Area.

⁷ GWDB CTE Committee. (December 2024). *Career and Technical Education: Industry-Recognized Credentials*. https://www.gwdb.maryland.gov/policy/gwdbcte2024commindustrycredentialpolicy.pdf



Summary of Visit

Prior to the visit, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Expert Review Team (ERT) members attended a virtual orientation to review the visit agenda, materials, and tools. During this session, Charles County Public Schools' (CCPS's) CTE Lead Staff provided an overview of the Local Education Agency's (LEA's) CTE system, highlighting key strengths and challenges. The Lead CTE administrator presented data on CCPS's progress toward the 45% goal, CTE Concentration rates, IRC Completion Rate, CCPS's CTE program data, and CCPS's student demographics. This pre-visit preparation helped the team understand the specific context and priorities of Charles County's CTE programs, setting the stage for focused observations and discussions during the visit.

During the visit, the CTE ERT visited two Charles County comprehensive high schools with CTE offerings: Henry E. Lackey High School (HLHS) in Indian Head, Maryland and North Point High School (NPHS) in Waldorf, Maryland. The CTE ERT visited HLHS and NPHS because more CTE programs were offered at these schools than at the CTE Center, Robert Sethem Educational Center. The CTE ERT separated into two teams and observed classrooms, completed student-guided tours, conducted focus groups and interviews, and learned about the state of CTE in CCPS. The team conducted focus groups with CTE administrators, teachers, students, school counselors, and career counselors.

At each site, the team engaged in discussions with stakeholders to gain insights into the strengths and challenges of the CTE programs. These conversations revealed valuable information about how CTE supports students' postsecondary pathways and career goals, as well as areas where the LEA could enhance program access and resources.

The CTE Expert Review Team visit to CCPS consisted of members from various backgrounds, and brought expertise in areas such as student learning, workforce development, and CTE, ensuring a comprehensive review of the LEA's CTE programs (see Appendix A). Throughout the day, the team engaged in observations, interviews, and focus groups with stakeholders to gain insights into the strengths and challenges of the CTE programs. The CTE Committee staff created a set of questions for each focus group: leadership, teachers, students, career counselors/coaches, and school counselors (See Appendix D). These questions aimed to uncover the experience these parties have in CTE by asking questions about opportunities, their opinions on their experience in CTE classes, their perspective on hurdles, etc.

After the visit, the CTE ERT compiled their individual notes and shared it with CTE Committee staff. A week after the visit, the CTE ERT gathered together for a debrief, where the team members collaborated, reviewed, and discussed their compiled observations. These conversations revealed valuable information about how CTE in CCPS supports students' postsecondary pathways and career goals, as well as areas where the LEA could enhance program access and resources. Together, these data, observations, focus groups, interviews, and debrief help inform the following SCE analysis, which is a slight deviation from the more conventional SWOT analysis.



OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EXPERT REVIEW TEAM VISIT

ABOUT THE SCE ANALYSIS

A SCE Analysis is meant to organize the CTE ERT's observations and notes into internal factors - Strengths and Challenges - and External factors. This method of analysis is based on the SWOT analysis method, which also differentiates between internal and external factors. This SCE analysis will help readers differentiate among internal Strengths, internal Challenges, and External factors, which are conventionally Opportunities and Threats. The CTE ERT did not have the opportunity to observe and coordinate with external stakeholders, but external factors came up in interviews, focus groups, debrief, and orientation that must be communicated. With a SCE Analysis, readers may use this section to target changes and best practices internally.

INDICATORS OF STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Strength: Passion and Commitment from Teachers, Career Advisors and Coaches, CCPS Staff, and Administrators to Students and CTE Offerings

All the stakeholders the CTE ERT spoke to, CCPS staff, instructional staff, career advisors and coaches, administrators, and students, all saw the value of CTE offerings and talked about how much more engaged students are with the hands-on learning in CTE classes. Career advisors, who serve in the high schools, and career coaches, who serve in the middle schools, were deeply committed to supporting students in CTE, which was apparent in both student and career counselor focus groups. All the career advisors and coaches the CTE ERT spoke to were engaged with students' progress toward their unique professional goals. During the school tours, the CTE ERT observed how front office staff added to a concerted effort at both NPHS and HLHS to create a warm and welcoming environment for students. CCPS's CTE Lead Staff were also deeply engaged with both students and the community at large, evidenced by the alignment across the district on what challenges CCPS faces in expanding CTE offerings.

Meanwhile, CCPS teachers, especially at NPHS, talked about the ways they went above and beyond for their students, like finding WBL opportunities with alumni. One teacher at NPHS said, "we're not just CTE teachers. It's much more than that for our programs and classes." A teacher at HLHS corroborated this passion by explaining that even if students do not finish a program, CTE teachers help make students employable and make real-world connections

"We're not just CTE teachers. It's much more than that for our programs and classes."

with students, which "aligns back to my why." Students spoke highly of their CTE teachers, especially their ability to connect their core academic courses with their CTE interests. This concerted effort among CCPS's CTE teachers has led to focused and driven students, evidenced by a student appreciating their CTE teachers: "the teachers treat me like a young adult." Regardless of their role, the CTE ERT observed the passion and commitment from all CCPS stakeholders to students and CTE offerings.



Strength: Career Coaches' and Advisors' Collaborations Have Led to Strong Middle School Engagement

During the visit, the CTE ERT learned about the concerted efforts the CTE Lead Staff have put toward recruiting middle school students in particular. There is a central hub for career coaches, who work in the middle schools, and advisors, who work in the high schools, to connect, which has added alignment due to the opportunities for collaboration this central hub has created. One unique project career coaches and advisors have collaborated on is the "News Stories" initiative where coaches and advisors create short video clips highlighting the work CTE students complete to draw interest from middle school students. These "News Stories" inform prospective CTE students of the kind of work and projects they can expect to complete should they choose to enroll in that pathway. In addition to the "News Stories", career coaches, career advisors, and school counselors have collaborated to update CCPS's website to include detailed program Descriptions for each CTE pathway, a video showcasing the kind of work and projects students can expect to complete, the course sequence, a sample schedule, available certifications, and available college credits. These updated websites help inform potential CTE students about the benefits and trajectory of each CTE pathway for students to make the best decisions for their futures. While the "News Stories" and website updates are relatively new undertakings, the CTE ERT observed strong middle school engagement at CCPS.

Strength: CTE System Design Creates Options for Students

CCPS's CTE system is organized with 33 different CTE program students can choose from, organized into 10 different career clusters.8 CCPS's CTE program design uniquely enrolls the majority of CTE students at North Point High School (NPHS), despite having the Robert Stethem Education Center (RSED), CCPS's sole CTE Center. 19 CTE programs are offered at North Point High School and Maurice McDonough High School, but students are required to apply in 8th grade. 7 CTE programs are offered at Robert Stethem Educational Center and Southern Maryland Regional Training Center, but students are required to apply in 10th grade. Applications are evaluated based on merit: 60% Interest Survey Responses, 25% grades in core subject areas, 10% Xello core lesson completion, and 5% alignment with scores on Xello, which is software meant to support college and career readiness through guided lessons, self-assessments, career pathway profiles, and other similar activities. If a CTE program is oversubscribed, then there is a lottery among qualified applicants to earn enrollment. The remaining 7 CTE programs do not require an application, but it may vary depending on the school. CTE programs are also organized by location, with 17 CTE programs offered at NPHS and 7 CTE programs, including all Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Pathways, offered at all high schools.

CTE Lead staff have created a system that helps them overcome CCPS's largest hurdles in expanding CTE programs: transportation and scheduling conflicts. By offering CTE programs at all of the high schools, CCPS can expand CTE offerings without the scheduling and transportation issues associated with CTE centers. This CTE system design has helped students have more options when pursuing CTE offerings related to the career pathway they are seeking. This CTE system design has created an opportunity for students who are

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⁸ See Appendix E



interested in CTE programs that are overenrolled to pursue a related CTE program in the same career cluster. For instance, students interested in the Certified Nursing Assistant Pathway at NPHS who did not make it past the lottery may pursue PLTW: Biological Sciences, which is offered at all high schools in CCPS. Students who cannot enroll in a particular CTE program for whatever reason may be able to find an alternative Pathway that still speaks to their interests at their home school. The CTE ERT observed CCPS's CTE system design as a strength because it allows students more options for CTE enrollment, especially if a desired CTE program is already at maximum capacity.

Strength: Xello is a Useful Tool for Career Advising and Enrolling Students into CTE

During the career and school counselor focus group, the CTE ERT learned about how CCPS has incorporated Xello, a digital program that helps students become college and career ready through activities like self-assessments, career pathway portfolios, and guided lessons. Xello leverages self-assessments to build personalized student portfolios that showcases their interests, skills, and abilities. It also matches these portfolios with career and college profiles that overlap with students' interests and skills. Finally, Xello helps students create a plan with embedded lessons so students can target specific skills to develop on their career path. At CCPS, Xello acts as the first tier in career advising and is an integral part of their career coaching system. Career advisors told the CTE ERT about how valuable of a tool Xello has been giving students advice on how to plan their career path. Career advisors mentioned how some students do not take it seriously, which can make the career advisors' work more challenging. Career advisors are working together with CCPS teachers to see if they can require it as part of their curriculum. The CTE ERT observed CCPS's use of Xello as a strength because of how it serves as a starting point for developing career advising.

Challenge: Career Advisors and Coaches Have High Workloads

At CCPS, career advisors work in the high schools and career coaches work in the middle schools. Every career advisor and coach reports to the Career Specialist and this team has received praise from the Director of CTE at CCPS and from students and teachers during focus groups. The CTE ERT observed that the career coaching team has a high workload. In the 2024-2025 SY, CCPS had 9,275 high school students and 6,252 middle school students, with 16 career coaches hired through *Blueprint* funding, which would average 970 students per career coach. The career coaching team has relied on tools like Xello to keep up with the challenging workload. The Career Specialist supports career coaches and career advisors, coordinates the Career Exploration program, and collaborates with the CTE Specialist, who oversees work-based learning and the Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP). It could be challenging for CCPS's long-term plans with these high workloads, especially if the Career Specialist continues to be responsible for making industry connections to establish apprenticeship programs and other work-based learning opportunities.

Career advisors and coaches talked about how they get pulled into doing work beyond their designated roles and responsibilities. At CCPS, career advisors and coaches are hired as "Instructional Support", which means they can be assigned to other duties as needed, but that authority is not the Career Specialist's; it is the principal's authority to assign career advisors and coaches to different roles. It is common among small-to-medium-sized LEAs for



staff to adapt to various roles and for principals to assign duties when there are staff shortages, but the additional tasks given to career advisors and coaches has created a challenge for the career coaching team to focus on their primary duties. During focus groups, career advisors revealed that when some principals go into "triage-mode", career advisors are the first people they look to for assistance (specific examples of the type of tasks were not provided). Career advisors and coaches said there has been some difficulty finding time to access students because of these high workloads. While structures vary by school, the CTE ERT observed the career coaching team, which includes the Career Specialist, career advisors at the high school level, and career coaches at the middle school level, is facing a challenging workload.

Challenge: Difficulty Changing Pathway and Competition with AP, Dual Enrollment, and Extracurriculars Lead to Lower Retention of Students in 11th and 12th Grades

During the pre-visit orientation and during focus groups, the CTE ERT learned CCPS Lead staff have developed a system to respond to students' interests and needs. CCPS's CTE Lead staff told the CTE ERT about how CTE Pathways in CCPS have a lot of interest for students to enroll, but retention, especially of 11th and 12th graders, was a challenge. The CTE Lead staff pointed to two important factors for retention hurdles: difficulty changing CTE programs and competition with other school offerings like Advanced Placement (AP), Dual Enrollment (DE), and extracurriculars like sports, theater, music, etc. School counselors and teachers told the CTE ERT that many students start and complete the first year of a CTE program, then choose other priorities, like AP, Dual Enrollment, extracurriculars, or even to stay closer to friends who were not interested in CTE offerings. CTE programs that start in 11th grade, which include all of the CTE programs available at Robert Stethem Educational Center, CCPS's sole CTE Center, face the steepest decline in retaining students. One teacher specifically noted that their CTE program only had five 12th graders left in it.

Meanwhile, teachers agreed it is hard to retain CTE students in certain CTE programs like Information Technology: when the profession requires a postsecondary degree, students prefer to earn college credits over an IRC. Other teachers agreed, noting how difficult it is to compete with AP and DE courses, or with students who enroll in extracurriculars where their friends are involved. For instance, a 12th grader at Westlake High School may choose to forego their final two courses in the Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning program at Robert Stethem Educational Center to enroll in AP classes at their home school or to stay connected with friends who are not interested in CTE offerings.

One teacher offered insight into the impact of this challenge, noting that this competition with AP and DE means CTE programs lose their strongest students to early college pathways. Teachers told the CTE ERT that high-performing students want to get both an IRC and college credits, but when they must choose between the two, they choose college credits, especially in CTE programs that require a postsecondary degree for employment. At CCPS, it is a challenge retaining students through 11th and 12th grades, but losing high-performing students means teachers also lose the peer mentorship and tutoring high-performing students bring to the classroom dynamic. The CTE ERT observed that retention of CTE students to complete a CTE program is not unique to CCPS.



Challenge: CTE Students Struggle with Practical Math Skills

CTE courses draw on academic subjects and student knowledge, including Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. Several CTE teachers mentioned that students face challenges in CTE programs due to low math abilities, particularly in courses that require "practical" math skills. CTE teachers described "practical" math skills as reading a ruler, converting measurements, reducing fractions, arithmetic, order of operations, etc. Without these crucial, foundational math skills, CTE students face challenges completing assignments and work-based learning experiences. Teachers talked about how students have skills in geometry and algebra because that is what the State assesses, but these skills are not as important in CTE courses. When students do not have the "practical" math skills necessary for success in CTE courses, it presents a challenge for CTE teachers because they have to spend valuable teaching time covering skills students should already have. Moreover, when a potential apprenticeship sponsor sees a student does not have the necessary math skills to do required work, they will be deterred from sponsoring apprentices at the high school level. CTE students struggling with "practical" math skills is not unique to CCPS, but teachers spent a considerable amount of focus group time on this challenge.

Challenge: Transportation Hurdles

The CTE ERT observed transportation as a significant hurdle for CCPS's CTE students. Charles County has historically been a rural county, but due to its proximity to Washington D.C., it is becoming increasingly suburban with many commuters relying on private transportation options for their commute. Charles County has VanGo bus routes for public transportation, which is made up of 17 routes serving Charles County, including connections to Calvert, St. Mary's, and Prince George's Counties. Due to its size and how it is becoming increasingly suburban, increasingly relying on private transportation, Charles County faces a transportation challenge for students interested in work-based learning opportunities.

In addition to public transportation limitations, school buses also have a challenge transporting students. CCPS does not have the resources to expand their transportation options for such a large, historically rural county. If rural students use a school bus as their primary method of transportation, then it is likely they are facing long bus rides. One student said they had to be on the bus for at least an hour each way commuting to school and home. Transportation issues are not unique to Charles County, but it should be noted that CCPS is doing the best with what they have - the VanGo bus routes continue to expand, adding new routes and the Maryland Transit Administration has also added a commuter bus to Washington D.C. from Waldorf, La Plata, Accokeek, and Charlotte Hall. The CTE ERT observed transportation both to school and WBL opportunities as a challenge for CCPS.

Challenge: Students with Disabilities Felt Like They Had to "Figure it Out"

The CTE ERT observed the additional challenges students with disabilities, especially those who are wheelchair-bound, face with transportation. Of course, barriers vary widely depending on disability type and program setting, but supports for students with disabilities require different layers of instructional, environmental, and social-emotional support. CCPS is not unique in facing these structural barriers, including limited paraprofessional support in CTE labs, inconsistent implementation of accommodations, CTE teachers who have not been



trained in disability-specific strategies, and the complexity of aligning IEP (individuals education plan) accommodations with IRC or licensure requirements.

Students reported that when there is transportation available for students with disabilities, it can take an extraordinary amount of time and can be inconsistent. The CTE ERT specifically observed the challenges wheelchair-bound students at Henry Lackey High School faced getting to their CTE classes. On the other hand, CCPS teachers told the CTE ERT about the lack of available classroom help to support students with disabilities compared to general education classes. Teachers told the CTE ERT they felt underprepared and understaffed to effectively handle the accommodation needs for some students with IEPs. Students with disabilities did not have up-to-date information on the resources available at CCPS to help them succeed in their courses and felt like it was up to the students to "figure it out." In other words, there are resources available for students with disabilities, but students told the CTE ERT they did not know about these resources or they were not informed about what resources were available to help them succeed in CTE courses. Whether it was with transportation, accessible classrooms, classroom support, or informing students of available resources, the CTE ERT observed that supporting students with disabilities was a challenge for CCPS.

Challenge: Opportunity for School Administrator Professional Development on CTE's Value

The CTE ERT observed how school administrators, especially principals, have faced a great deal of turnover, which has led to some inconsistencies on the level of understanding for CTE offerings in CCPS. The CTE ERT learned that there were some principals in CCPS who did not see the value or understand the value of CTE offerings during focus groups. In addition to this misunderstanding, CCPS is dealing with high administrator turnover, which is a nationwide problem. When one principal knows everything about CTE leaves, especially the unique CTE program model in CCPS, it can be difficult to replace them. In addition, a few CCPS school administrators who were highly informed and supportive of expanding CTE offerings took on different positions, leaving a gap in the localized knowledge. Considering the unique CTE program model at CCPS, it is a challenge to find school administrators who can pick up where their predecessor left without facing hurdles. For this reason, the CTE ERT observed that there is an opportunity for additional professional development for administrators. The CTE ERT observed administrator turnover and the need for more administrative professional development as a challenge for CCPS to grow their CTE enrollment.



INDICATORS OF EXTERNAL FACTORS AND INFLUENCES

A SCE Analysis is meant to organize the CTE ERT's observations and notes into internal factors - Strengths and Challenges - and External factors. This method of analysis is based on the SWOT analysis method, which also differentiates between internal and external factors. With a SCE Analysis, readers may use this section to advocate for change externally.

External Strength: Connection with Local Experts Like the College of Southern Maryland and the Indian Head Naval Surface Warfare Center

The CTE ERT observed how CCPS has a deep connection with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) and with the Charles County community. CCPS has developed a strong connection with the Charles County Community through Program Advisory Councils (PACs) and partnerships with local industry experts like CSM and the Indian Head Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC Indian Head). During the pre-visit orientation, the CTE Lead staff told the CTE ERT about how the CSM, the NSWC Indian Head, and PACs helped them make decisions on what CTE programs to expand and which to replace. For instance, the NSWC Indian Head's collaboration with CCPS led to the CTE Lead staff replacing the Manufacturing Pathway because both the skills and equipment were antiquated.

Meanwhile, a representative from the CSM was a part of the CTE ERT and they offered useful insights on the ways CCPS and the CSM collaborate to overcome their shared challenges. For instance, CCPS is facing the challenge of CTE's competition with AP and Dual Enrollment offerings, which the CSM is collaborating with CCPS Lead Staff on how to overcome or mitigate this challenge. CCPS, in collaboration with CSM, the Maryland Airport, and the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD), which is located in neighboring St. Mary's County, is developing a strong pipeline in the Aviation and Engineering pathways. CCPS plans to begin their Aviation and Engineering programs in the 2026-2027 SY. The Engineering program will directly lead to employment at NAWCAD.

Throughout the visit, the CSM was mentioned by teachers, school counselors, career counselors, and administrators as a good partner with strong facilities, but that the process of collaborating with them can be laborious. One of the challenges CCPS is facing in expanding their CTE offerings is having the available space and teachers, but the CSM has been a useful partner in overcoming these challenges. During the pre-visit orientation, the CTE Lead staff told the CTE ERT about how impactful the CSM's partnership and collaboration has been in determining what CTE programs to expand. CCPS has developed a strong connection with local partners in PACs, the CSM, and the NSWC Indian Head to help CTE Lead staff make the best decisions for their students.

External Challenge: Available Work-Based Learning Opportunities

During the pre-visit orientation, the CTE Lead Staff explained their biggest challenge toward accomplishing the *Blueprint's* 45% goal is the set of hurdles associated with finding available work-based learning opportunities for students. This challenge came up several times during focus groups with CCPS stakeholders, each having their own perspective on the nature of the challenge. During the pre-visit orientation, the CTE Lead staff told the CTE ERT that more than 75% of businesses in Charles County have 3 or fewer employees, so the opportunities for



WBL, especially for a high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship (RA), is limited. CCPS teachers added that there are siloed infrastructures across agencies and partners, making collaboration with external parties challenging. Career counselors pointed to a difficult start to the relationship between CCPS and the Southern Maryland Local Workforce Development Board as the root cause for challenges associated with expanding RAs. While CCPS has a strong connection with industry leaders in the area like CSM and NSWC Indian Head, finding and obtaining high school level Registered Apprenticeships (RA) have been a challenge. Career counselors also pointed to confusion about how employers were incentivized to begin a RA program. In addition to these hurdles, CCPS has one Apprenticeship Coordinator for the entire LEA and no WBL Coordinators, which is a challenging workload for one person who has a plethora of other responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, CCPS is doing exemplary work in reaching toward the *Blueprint's* goals. CCPS is making progress as they take on collaborations with new organizations: Charles County Chamber of Commerce and the Patuxent Partnership. CCPS's CTE Lead staff predicts 31 students will finish their YA by the end of the 2024-2025 SY, which is more than 5-times their previous number of 6 YA completers. In addition to the Apprenticeship Coordinator at the Central Office, CCPS is working to obtain WBL Coordinators at each high school. CCPS will continue to face challenges as they establish and expand WBL opportunities, especially RAs, but CCPS is making positive strides by setting themselves up for reaching the 45% goal.

External Challenge: Communication and Collaboration with External Stakeholders

In the pre-visit orientation and during stakeholder focus groups, the CTE ERT learned about difficulties CCPS is facing collaborating with external stakeholders. Overall, there seemed to be misalignment or a lack of understanding for what services and resources are available and how to prioritize those resources. The career counselors and school counselors talked at length about how external partners and state agencies are siloed with each stakeholder having different interpretations or understanding. For example, there were misunderstandings around what incentives are available to businesses that sponsor a RA. There are incentives available to RA sponsors that could benefit employers, but these incentives were not communicated to potential RA sponsors.

In addition to a lack of clarity surrounding available services and resources, teachers expressed a great deal of frustration with the Maryland Board of Nursing and the Maryland Board of Cosmetologists. According to the teacher focus group, both of these Boards made sweeping, highly impactful changes without communicating or consulting with teachers. Teachers explained that these Boards made these changes in May 2024 and that they learned about them during a Town Hall meeting, but Nursing teachers did not get a meeting with the Board of Nursing to discuss these changes until February 2025. The Board of Nursing changes resulted in sweeping changes to CCPS's Certified Nursing Assistant Pathway, as many students had to convert to Geriatric Nursing Assistants in order to complete their Pathway on time. The CTE ERT observed that CCPS faces the challenge of communicating with external stakeholders beyond industry experts like CSM and NSWC Indian Head.



External Challenge: Lack of Available Space or Qualified Teachers

During the pre-visit orientation, the CTE Lead staff told the CTE ERT about the biggest challenges they believe CCPS is facing: lack of available space and lack of qualified teachers. CCPS's CTE program design uniquely enrolls the majority of CTE students at North Point High School (NPHS), despite having the Robert Stethem Education Center (RSED), CCPS's sole CTE Center. This is because RSED does not have the available space or capacity to enroll that many students. In order to alleviate this challenge of available space, CTE Lead Staff continue to look for innovative ways to expand CTE programs without available space. For instance, PLTW Biomedical Sciences and PLTW Engineering are becoming regionalized at two specific sites in the county and will require an application now in response to changing student interest. CTE Lead Staff are also collaborating with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) to strategize how they can work together to expand CTE offerings using the CSM's facilities.

In addition to lack of available space, the CTE Lead staff also pointed to the lack of qualified and certified teachers as an important hurdle to expanding their CTE offerings. The teacher shortage is certainly not unique to Charles County, but the CTE Lead staff pointed to difficult certification processes as an important hurdle. CTE teachers talked about their difficulties obtaining teacher certifications, despite having a plethora of industry and management experience. In focus groups, CTE teachers talked about how difficult it was to receive state certification, but they also informed the CTE ERT about how they are incentivized to earn National Board Certification, but that those incentives do not account for the costs, time commitment, and resources associated with earning that certification. Whether it is finding qualified and certified teachers or finding available space, CCPS is facing challenges in strengthening and expanding their current CTE Pathways.



POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

Although the CTE ERT has presented its observations in this report, these observations and potential next steps are preliminary. The purposes of Phase 1 of the CTE ERT are to establish a baseline for progress toward *Blueprint* goals across Maryland and identify key challenges. While the following Potential Next Steps are preliminary, they are areas CCPS may look for improvement in and something the CTE ERT will look at more closely as the CTE Committee transitions into Phase 2 in the 2026-2027 SY. In other words, these potential next steps are not a directive, but opportunities of improvement to explore. These Potential Next Steps are meant to be the beginning of a conversation with CCPS that will continue into Phase 2, and for this reason, these Potential Next Steps do not comprehensively address the challenges the CTE ERT notes in this report. In Phase 2, the CTE ERT will target specific areas to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the state of CTE.⁹ While Phase 2 is focused on analysis and assistance, it should be noted that is also when the CTE ERT can make recommendations to the AIB to withhold funding if there is resistance complying with the *Blueprint*.¹⁰

Explore Opportunities to Highlight Students' Work and Accomplishments in CTSOs, Clubs, and Apprenticeships in a Career Fair

The CTE ERT observed how CCPS has barriers associated with availability of WBL opportunities, misalignment on the value of CTE, and communicating with external stakeholders. These barriers may be alleviated with more engagement with CCPS's Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs), student clubs, and career fairs. The CTE ERT did not observe CCPS's engagement with CTSOs like SkillsUSA or FBLA; however, the CCPS website has a post about students who earned a medal in SkillsUSA. CCPS also tried a new strategy for their career fair this year where employers help students plan and be ready to apply for a job upon graduation.

Perhaps CCPS could consider combining the two, where the CCPS Career Fair would highlight the projects and work students complete in CTE courses, CTSOs, and school clubs, then invite local businesses and members of PACs to both see students' skills and help them plan and be ready to apply for a job. CCPS could also invite students' families as part of this career fair so they can see the value and understand the outcomes of CTE offerings. A career fair that celebrates students' skills and accomplishments while simultaneously connecting them with potential employers would help bolster the number of available apprenticeship opportunities in Charles County. When family units, PACs, and local employers see CTE students' skills, then it is more likely that local employers will decide to engage in work-based learning opportunities, like Registered Apprenticeships.

Consider Consistent Collaborations with Neighboring LEAs

The CTE ERT observed how the barriers CCPS faces toward growing CTE programs or establishing new CTE programs may be alleviated by identifying opportunities to collaborate with neighboring LEAs. CCPS has a strong connection with the community and a strong

⁹ GWDB CTE Committee. (July 1, 2024). CTE Committee Expert Review Team Deployment Plan School Year 2024-2025. https://gwdb.maryland.gov/ctecomm/ctecomm-ctedeploymentplan_draftsy24-25_62624.pdf

¹⁰ AIB's Updated Comprehensive Implementation Plan, August 2023, https://drive.google.com/file/d/IPsYOGhld5Owk7PgK2cEubr68SSKrG5dH/view?usp=sharing.



sense of what students' needs are, but lacks the budget, space, resources, and qualified experts to expand or establish CTE programs. Perhaps CCPS can explore CTE programs at neighboring LEAs to see what unique factors for success are available at Prince George's, Calvert, Anne Arundel, or St. Mary's Counties to be potentially adopted at CCPS. For instance, St. Mary's County Public Schools has a Collision Repair program as well, and it may be worth exploring what strategies they use to get students to complete the CTE program and earn IRCs.

CTE Lead Staff may also consider collaborating with neighboring LEAs to send students to join one of their CTE programs that is not offered at CCPS. For instance, on the Eastern Shore, neighboring LEAs send their NJROTC students to Talbot and send their Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute students to Queen Anne's CTE program. In this way, CCPS may consider neighboring LEAs as an option when thinking about what CTE programs to expand, establish, or remove. Moreover, CCPS may be able to expand their community connections by connecting with the Northeastern Virginia, Southern Maryland, and Central Maryland regions, potentially creating pathways to apprenticeships.

Develop Strategies to Improve Communication with CCPS Stakeholders

One of the challenges the CTE ERT observed centered around communicating with external stakeholders like the Southern Maryland Workforce Development Board, Maryland State Agencies and Boards, local employers, and the community at large. CCPS should consider creating communication pathways to help both internal and external stakeholders stay aligned on what information, resources, and assistance is available to CCPS to accomplish the 45% goal. The CTE ERT observed how the network of CCPS stakeholders needed more effective communication pathways to stay up to date with any changes or updates. Improving communication with internal and external stakeholders may alleviate many of the challenges the CTE ERT observed, like retention rates for 11th and 12th grade CTE students, barriers for students with disabilities, and even the availability of work-based learning opportunities.

Another useful strategy to consider would be to provide an annual questionnaire to students to identify what their interests and priorities are to alleviate the challenges associated with CCPS's low retention rates for 11th and 12th grade CTE students. CCPS may also want to consider revamping their social media strategy as the CCPS social media profiles have high engagement, but the CCPS CTE social media profiles do not. More effective social media campaigns, like at Dorchester and Washington County Public Schools, may help communications with CTE students' families.

Professional Development for School Administrators to Align on the Value of CTE

During the visit, the CTE ERT observed how there was misalignment among school administrators about the value of CTE. In order to remedy this, the CTE ERT suggests CCPS school administrators proceed with professional development that provides depth on the value of CTE. Historically, many school administrators were trained to prioritize placing graduating students into a postsecondary institution; however, the *Blueprint* has set the goal that 45% of graduating high school students will have earned an industry-recognized credential or completed a high school level Registered Apprenticeship by the 2030-2031 SY.



Getting CCPS school administrators in alignment about the 45% goal is crucial for CCPS to accomplish this long-term goal. Professional development for school administrators has the potential to alleviate some of the other challenges CCPS is facing, like communication with external stakeholders, low retention rates for 11th and 12th grade students, and even students' lack of "practical" math skills. CCPS has buy-in from career advisors and coaches, from CTE teachers, CTE administrators, and CTE students, but getting buy-in from CCPS school administrators would be of great benefit to all stakeholders.

Explore Technical Assistance with MSDE, the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor), and the CTE Committee in Meeting the *Blueprint*'s 45% Goal

In order to achieve the *Blueprint*'s 45% goal, establishing and expanding RAs should be one of CCPS' priorities. CCPS should explore closer collaboration with MD Labor's Apprenticeship Navigators on what opportunities are available for high school students in the region. CCPS should work with MD Labor's Apprenticeship Navigators to ensure employers understand scheduling options for students, as well as accessing available incentives such as grants and tax credits. CCPS may also seek technical assistance from MSDE and similar LEAs in strategies to increase IRC attainment. One of CCPS's greatest strengths is being able to adapt to evolving industry needs, so CCPS should continue their analysis of industry needs and target skills to support IRC attainment. The CTE Committee will also be developing more targeted technical assistance around this topic in Phase 2, and facilitating a community of practice utilizing findings from CTE ERT visits. The CTE Committee recognizes that policies defining the 45% goal were not issued until December 2024, and this CTE ERT visit took place in March 2025, so all of those implementing this work and the partnerships required are still in the early stages of development. Exploring technical assistance with MSDE, MD Labor, and the CTE Committee will prove to be a useful addition to meeting the 45% goal.



APPENDIX GUIDE

- A. Visit Participants
- B. LEA Brief
- C. Visit Agenda
- D. Interview & Focus Group Questions
- E. CCPS CTE Pathways



Appendix A | Visit Participants

Name	Role
Brian Cavey	International Vice President, International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers (CTE Committee member)
Dawud Abdur-Rahman	Principal, DAR Project Management Consulting
Erika Bailey	Associate Manager, Workforce Initiatives, CVS Health (CTE Committee member staff designee on behalf of Charnetia Young-Callahan)
Stacey Butler	CVS Health (CTE Committee member staff designee on behalf of Charnetia Young-Callahan)
John Strickland	Expert Review Team Manager, CTE Committee
Mike Boyle	CTE Director, St. Mary's County Public Schools
Bonnie Skinner	CTE Teacher, St. Mary's County Public Schools
Ashley Baldwin	Manager, Policy and Strategic Initiatives, GWDB
Shuana Davis	Deputy Director, GWDB
Sylvia Royster	Director of Educational Partnerships, College of Southern Maryland
Helga Einhorn	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Talbot County Public Schools
Gretchen Cheney	Policy Analyst, AIB
Lateefah Durant	VP of Innovation, City Works DC (CTE Committee Strategic Facilitator)



Appendix B | LEA Brief

CTE LEA LEAD STAFF		
Name	Role(s)	
Rebecca Brandt	Director of CTE	
Kevin Reisinger	CTE Instructional Specialist	
Sandy Rooney	CTE Content Specialist, AMP Coordinator	
Simone Young	STEM Coordinator	
Christina Jones	Career Specialist	

COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOLS WITH CTE			
Henry E. Lackey High School	La Plata High School		
McDonough High School	North Point High School		
St. Charles High School	Thomas Stone High School		
Westlake High School			

LEA CTE CENTER(S)

Robert D. Stethem Educational Center

CTE ERT VISIT			
Date School(s)			
February 12, 2025 rescheduled due to inclement weather to March 6, 2025	Henry E. Lackey High School North Point High School		



LEA CTE ENROLLMENT, PARTICIPATION and COMPLETION RATES

KAILS			
	Charles County	Henry E. Lackey	North Point
E	nrollment		
Total Enrollment (# of all HS students)	9353	1046	1922
Total Enrollment (# of all graduating students)	2181	265	431
	СТЕ	•	
CTE Participation Rate ¹¹ (% of all graduating students)	n/a	n/a	n/a
CTE Concentration Rate (% of all graduating students)	37 %	36%	56%
CTE Completers Rate (% of all graduating students)	34%	33%	52%
IRC Completion Rate (% of all graduating students)12	15%	6%	41%
Apprenticeship and C	Other Work-Base	ed Learning	
Work-Based Learning Participants ¹⁴ (# of all graduating students)	243	31	72
Dual Enrollment Participants ¹⁵ (# of all	1446	189	297

¹¹ CTE Participants are students completing not less than one credit in a MSDE-approved CTE program of study. CTE Concentrators are students who have completed at least two courses and are enrolled in a third course in a single MSDE-approved CTE program of study. CTE Completers are students who meet all requirements in a state-approved CTE program of study, typically three or four courses.

Defined as the percentage of all graduating students who have earned an IRC (as defined by the CTE Committee)

Participation is defined as the number of all high school students or all graduating students who have participated in the high school portion of a registered apprenticeship (RA) or an AMP youth apprenticeship (YA). Completion is defined as the number of all graduating students who have completed the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) or have completed both an AMP youth apprenticeship (YA) and an IRC (YA completers who don't earn an IRC will not count towards 45% goal).

¹⁴ Work-based learning includes internships, job shadowing, and other job-based experiences.

¹⁵ Participation is defined as the number of all graduating students participating in dual enrollment (does not count towards the 45% goal unless they earn an IRC).



graduating students)			
Dual Enrollment Completers ¹⁶ (# of all graduating students)	1347	177	288
Apprenticeship Participants (# of all HS students)	RA: 0 YA: 11	RA: 0 YA: 1	RA: 0 YA: 2
Apprenticeship Participants (# of all graduating students)	RA: 0 YA: 11	RA: 0 YA: 1	RA: 0 YA: 2
Apprenticeship Completers (# of graduating students)	RA: 0 YA: 6	RA: 0 YA: 1	RA: 0 YA: 1
Progress Towards 45% Goal ¹⁷	15%	6%	41%

CTE Program Enrollment - SY24-25 Data

Program Name	Total Enrollment	Overenrolled or Under Enrolled?	Number of Students on Waitlist
Graphic Communications	132	Overenrolled	4
Interactive Media	32	Underenrolled	0
Theatre	18	Underenrolled	0
Barbering	33	Underenrolled	0
Culinary Arts (ACF)	55	Overenrolled	89

 $^{^{16}}$ Dual enrollment completers is defined as the number of all graduating students who earned college credit through dual enrollment.

 $^{^{17}}$ This metric is calculated by adding together the Apprenticeship Completion Rate (RA completers plus YA completers who also earn an IRC) and the IRC Completion Rate (based on draft guidance from the CTE Committee), divided by the total number of graduating students.



Food and Beverage Management: ProStart	205	No application	N/A
Cosmetology	50	Overenrolled	55
Construction Design and Management	53	Overenrolled	16

HVAC	27	Overenrolled	1
Electrical Construction	37	Overenrolled	4
Welding	38	Overenrolled	14
Business Management	1125/1036	No application	N/A
Academy of Health Professions: Certified Nursing Assistant	47	Overenrolled	88
Academy of Health Professions: Pharmacy Technician	37	Overenrolled	3
Academy of Health Professions: Physical Rehabilitation	34	Underenrolled	0
PLTW: Biomedical Science	416	No application	NA



Biotechnology	57	Overenrolled	15
Drafting and Design	88	Overenrolled	19
PLTW: Engineering	1217	No application	N/A
CASE: Natural Resources	42	Underenrolled	0
Cisco: IT Networking	74	At capacity	0
Cyber Security	77	Overenrolled	72
Computer and Information Sciences	522	No application	N/A
Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute	33	No limit	N/A
Criminal Justice	46	Overenrolled	40
Child Development Professions	37	Overenrolled	25
Teacher Academy of Maryland	144	No application	N/A
Army JROTC	201	No application	N/A
Air Force JROTC	280	No application	N/A
Marine Corp JROTC	138	No application	N/A
Navy JROTC	208	No application	N/A



Automotive Technician (NATEF)	65	Underenrolled	0
Collision Repair	25	Underenrolled	0
Career Research and Development	162	No application	N/A
Apprenticeship Maryland Program	34	Overenrolled	N/A

Progress Towards the 45% Goal:

• What are you projecting, for next school year, in growth towards the 45% goal for your district?

The district is currently at 15%. It is expected the pass rate on Industry Recognized Credentials will continue to grow as all student exams are now paid for, which leads to all students attempting the exams. Prior to 2023, students paid for exams and were reimbursed when they received a passing score. Now that all exams are being paid for, we are seeing two things happening: instructors are adhering to the curriculum pacing and exam criteria more rigorously because exam scores are available as a benchmark for the program as a whole, and students are aware taking the exam is a requirement of the program which leads to more accountability. The rate of growth needs to be assessed after SY 2024-2025 to affectively predict pass rates for the next several years. CCPS continues to grow exponentially in youth apprenticeships, which require the passing of an IRC as well. Charles County is beginning to transition to registered apprenticeships. As in the past, apprenticeships are difficult in Charles County because more than 75% of our businesses have 3 or fewer employees. Small businesses find the financial burden of an apprentice due to budgetary restraints. CCPS is working with two different organizations to attain grant funding to support apprenticeship placements: Charles County Chamber of Commerce and The Patuxent Partnership. Additional resources are being developed to support apprenticeships as well. In addition to an Apprenticeship Coordinator at Central Office, we are working to attain Work-Based Learning Coordinators at each high school to support apprenticeship and work-based learning placements, and to attain additional sites for our students.



Program Plans for Future

- Are there any new programs you plan on adding to your current programming within the next 2 school years?
- 1- CCPS plans to add an Aviation (manned and unmanned) pathway in SY 2026- 2027. Additionally, College of Southern Maryland is adding an Aviation Mechanics program. CCPS is researching the opportunity to offer the first course in the pathway within the high school setting.
- 2- CCPS is developing an enriched Engineering program aligned with the College of Southern Maryland and University of Maryland Southern Maryland pipeline. This pathway is attempting to develop a 2 x 2 that directly leads to employment at NAWCAD.
 - Why are you adding/not adding the program(s)?
- 1- The Aviation pathway is being added due to a high demand in the local workforce that is exemplified by the number of individuals retiring in the next several years. Additionally, community resources to include the Maryland Airport and NAWCAD provide ample pipeline opportunities for our students.
- 2- The local workforce needs local talent to stay in Southern Maryland to support the base. The community is looking for economical pipelines for STEM fields, with enriched educational outcomes.
- Are there any current programs you plan on expanding upon within the next 2 school years?

No programs are expanding within the next two years.

Are there any programs you are taking away within the next 2 school years?

No programs are being taken away. Two programs are transitioning from non application programs that were offered at all comprehensive high schools to becoming regional programs offered at two high schools in the county. PLTW: Biomedical Science and PLTW: Engineering will transition to regionalized programs in SY 2026-2027.

• Why are you taking away the program(s)?

The programs are being regionalized because of limited resources and limited value added for students. The number of specialized teachers needed to run the program at 6 high schools is unable to be attained. The limited teacher resources lead to varying student outcomes in the program. Both programs need enhanced teacher resources, and building resources, to increase the number of students attaining an Industry Recognized Credential or Apprenticeship opportunity.



Enrollment Practices

• How do students enroll in programs?

Please see the attached one-pager to see how students enroll in different pathways. • Are all CTE programs offered to all students?

All CTE programs are offered to all students.

• Can a student participate in a CTE program at another school? Programs are either regionalized, and offered to all students in the county, or programs are open enrollment, and offered at each high school through course selection.

Program Design

 What are some best practices from CTE in your LEA that you think are worth sharing with other CTE programs across the state?

Application programs are held a a comprehensive high school that the students apply to in 8th grade. This allows for a full program of study to be implemented throughout the high school career to include aligned core content courses and additional elective courses. This alignment enhances the level of knowledge and experience of students. Here are links to specific course sequences as examples.

AHP - Certified Nursing Assistant - Charles County Public Schools CISCO Networking Academy - Charles County Public Schools

As seen in the links, we have developed a comprehensive website to include videos for each program. This supports our in-depth marketing campaign pushed out to all middle school students, and again to 10th graders prior to Early College/ Dual Enrollment, and CTE applications at the technology center. The Career Coaches and Career Advisors work hard to support students as they complete self-exploration activities and complete career plans to identify their areas of strength and interest prior to enrolling in programs.

LEA Support for Schools

How is CTE financial support structured within the LEA?

Reoccurring curriculum needs are approved yearly in the local budget. Replacement technology is scheduled on a 5-year rotation and approved through the local budget. Additionally, all certification exams are paid for locally. Transportation for work-based learning, apprenticeships, and field trips are supported through the local budget as well.



8

Innovations, enhancements, and new programs are proposed in grant funding to include Perkins V, Reserve Fund, and previously the Innovation Grant. Once the grant period is concluded, the reoccurring costs are budgeted for in local funds.

• How is CTE staffing structured within the LEA?

The CTE Department Central Office staff includes Director of CTE, CTE Content Specialist/AMP Coordinator, CTE Instructional Specialist, Career Specialist, and STEM Coordinator. Please find the slide attached with the breakdown of responsibilities. CTE teachers are staffed based on enrollment numbers. Application based programs have a set number of seats and staffing is assigned accordingly.

All middle schools have a Career Coach. All high schools have a Career Advisor.

Career Exploration

- What career exploration is available to students in your LEA? CCPS provides a full spectrum of career exploration activities in middle and high schools including:
 - Self-reflection / Assessments RIASEC
 - o Xello
 - Guest Speakers from Industry, College, & Military
 - Career Fairs
 - College Fairs
 - o CTE Pathways available in CCPS
 - CTE Career Exploration Camps
 - Soft Skills
 - Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Testing & Career Interpretation
 - Youth Apprenticeship Summits
 - o Senior Career Portfolio Interviews
 - Financial Aid Fairs & Workshops
 - o Field Trips to Industry and College facilities
 - Senior Signing Day
 - How do the students access their career coach(es)?
 - Each school has a career center where students can meet with students.
 - o Students have outlined lessons that are taught by



the career exploration staff yearly, starting in 7th grade. These are completed in the push-in model.

 How does/do the career coach(es) serve students in your LEA?

 The overall goal is to ensure every student is aware of the endless career possibilities and assist students in creating a plan so they can be successful in that career.

The goal is for each student to have an individualized career plan starting in 6th grade that is updated yearly with the support of the career exploration staff and school counselors.

INFORMATION FOR VISITING SCHOOLS

School #1 Lackey High School

School Leadership: Ms. Cheryl Davis, Principal; Ms. Ivy Hodges, Assistant Principal School Contact: Cheryl Davis
School Website HOME - Henry E. Lackey High School

School #2 North Point High School

School Leadership: Mr. Daniel Kaple, Principal; Mr. Carl Pascarella, Assistant Principal School Contact: Daniel Kaple School Website HOME - North Point High School

CTE PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENT AT VISITING SCHOOLS

Schools with CTE Programs	CLUSTER	CTE PROGRAM	ENROL LMENT NUMBE R	COMPL ETION RATE	IRC ATTAIN MENT RATE
Henry E. Lackey High School	Apprentice shi p Maryland Program	Apprentice shi p Maryland Program	5	N/A	N/A
Total Enrollment:	Career Research and Developme	Career Research and Developme	35	19	



	nt	nt			
	Business Manageme nt and Finance	Business Management	145	11	9%
	Ī				
	Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	ProStart: Food and Beverage Manageme nt	55	13	0%
	Health and Biosciences	PLTW: Biomedical Science	34	14	57%
	Human Resource Services	JROTC: Air Force	127	17	
	Information Technology	Computing and Information Sciences	42	0	
	Manufactu rin g, Engineerin g, and Technology	PLTW: Engineering	100	11	82%
	*Number of students completed in SY 23-24 provided; completion rate not available as there is no set number of seats at Henry E. Lackey HS.				
North Point High School Total Enrollment:	Apprenticesh ip Maryland Program	Apprentice shi p Maryland Program	6	N/A	N/A
	Arts, Media, and Communica tio ns	Graphic Communic ati ons	132	95%	100%



	Business Manageme nt and Finance	Business Management	198	9 complete rs	67%
	Information Technology	Cisco IT Networking Academy	74	78%	0%
	Information Technology	Cyber Security	77	90%	89%
	Information Technology	Computing and Information Sciences	212	11 complete rs	
	Consumer Services, Hospitality and Tourism	Culinary Arts (ACF)	55	100%	100%
			_	_	_
	Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	ProStart: Food and Beverage Manageme nt	7	3 complete rs	0
	Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	Cosmetology	50	75%	27%
	Health and Biosciences	Academy of Health Professions: Certified Nursing Assistant	47	88%	100%
	Health and Biosciences	Biotechnol og y	57		0%



	Human Resources Services	Criminal Justice	46	76%	0% (no IRC offered)
	Human Resources Services	Child Developme nt Professions	37	N/A *1st class of completer s in SY25- 26	N/A
	Human Resources Services	Teacher Academy of Maryland	24	17 complete rs	100%
	Human Resources Services	JROTC: Air Force	153	36 complete rs	
	Constructi on and Developmen t	Constructio n, Design, and Management	53	43%	86%
	Constructi on and Developmen t	Electrical Construction	37	56%	22%
	Constructi on and Development	Welding Technology	38	93%	93%
	Manufacturi ng, Engineering, and Technology	Drafting and Design	88	67%	100%
	Transportati on Technologies	Automoti ve Technicia n (NATEF)	34	75%	75%



Transportati	Collision	25	44%	0%
on Technologies	Repair			
l				

Overview of CTE Programs

LEA STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

	Maryland	Charles Co
District Student Demographics (2023)	276495	28212
% Asian	7%	2.95%
% American Indian / Alaska Native	<1%	0.28%
% African American	33%	57.5%
% Hispanic	21%	15.1%
% Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	<1%	0.18%
% Two or More Races	4%	8%
% White	34%	16%
% Students with Disabilities	11%	11.84%
# of Multi-Lingual Learners	9%	4.78%
% Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS)	47%	47.77%
Child Poverty Rate % (2022)	12%	9.2% (2023 from Data USA website)
Unemployment Rate % (2024)	3%	2.2% (2023 from MD State Archives website)

COMMUNITY CONTEXT



Nearby Universities & Community Colleges

University/College Name

College of Southern Maryland (CSM)

Economic Profile

Major Industries in Maryland | Why Charles County | Charles County Economic Development

Educational Attainment¹⁸

Community Profile | Charles County Economic Development

Leading Business Groups¹⁹

Major Companies in Charles County, Maryland | Charles County Economic Development

https://data.census.gov/profile/Worcester_County_Maryland?g=050XX00US24047#education

¹⁹ Maryland Department of Labor, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning https://www.labor.maryland.gov/lmi/emplists/worcester.shtml



Appendix C | Visit Agenda

Location AM: Arrival Time: Visit Date: March 6, 2025 Location PM: Henry E. Lackey High North Point High 7:45am-8:00am Time: 7:45am School School Morning Meeting*: *Morning meeting will 3000 Chicamuxen Rd. <u>2500 Davis Rd.</u> be for the visiting team Indian Head, MD Waldorf, MD 20603 and participants to 20640 review agenda and logistics

AM Session: Henry E. Lackey High School

Team 1: John Strickland, Helga Einhorn, Ashley Baldwin, Dawud Abdur-Rahmen, Stacey Butler, Sylvia Royster		Team 2: Mike Boyle, Lateefah Durant, Erika Bailey, Bonnie Skinner, Gretchen Cheney, Brian Cavey	
Time	Activity	Time	Activity
7:45am-8:15am	Meet and Greet	7:45am-8:15am	Meet and Greet
8:15am-9:05am	Career Coach Focus Group Location: Library	8:15am-9:05am	Teacher Focus Group Location: Telepresence Room
9:05am-9:55am	Student Focus Group Location: Telepresence Room	9:05am-9:55am	Career Coach Focus Group Location: Library
9:55am-10:00am	Break	9:55am-10:00am	Break
10:00am-10:45am	School Tour	10:00am-10:45am	School Tour
10:45am-11:30am	CTE Staff/School Admin Mtg Location: Library	10:45am-11:30am	CTE Staff/School Admin Mtg Location: Library
11:30am-12:30pm	Food Bus Lunch and Travel	11:30am-12:30pm	Food Bus Lunch and Travel



PM Session: North Point High School

Team 1: John Strickland, Helga Einhorn, Ashley Baldwin, Dawud Abdur-Rahmen, Stacey Butler, Sylvia Royster Team 2: Mike Boyle, Lateefah Durant, Erika Bailey, Bonnie Skinner, Gretchen Cheney, Brian Cavey		
Time	Activity	
12:30pm-12:45pm	Arrival and Check In Location: Career Counseling Suite	
12:45pm – 1:30pm	CTE Teacher Focus Group Location: Library	
1:30pm – 2:15pm	CTE Student Focus Group Location: Career Counseling Suite	
2:15pm – 3:00pm	School Tour	
3:00pm-3:30pm	End of Day Debrief & Gathering Location: Career Counseling Suite	

Team Member Roles			
Team 1		Team 2	
Facilitator/Recorder	John Strickland	Facilitator/Recorder	Mike Boyle
Notes/Time	Ashley Baldwin	Notes/Time	Lateefah Durant

Team Member Roles		
CTE Staff/Admin		
Facilitator/Recorder John Strickland		
Notes/Time	Ashley Baldwin	



Appendix D | Interview & Focus Group Questions

Focus Group Reminders

To be used by team facilitator for focus group participants before starting

- We're here on behalf of the CTE Committee, committed to improving CTE programs in line with Maryland's goals outlined in the *Blueprint*.
- Our team represents a variety of different perspectives. Our members here today are teachers, administrators, school leaders, researchers, employers, local workforce board members, and CTE Committee staff and board members.
- Our purpose in this visit is to try to understand what is in place now in your LEA, including plans for expanding or strengthening existing programs and current challenges. We also want to identify any strong practices in place that we might be able to highlight statewide. These visits will also inform the CTE Committee's development of the statewide CTE framework.
- We are not here to "assess" or grade CTE programming or CTE teachers in schools or LEAs.
- After the visit, CTE Committee staff will draft a LEA report summarizing what we saw and heard, including our understanding of the LEA's CTE strategy, current strengths and challenges, and suggestions to help the LEA reach its goals.
- We look forward to hearing about your experiences and your thoughts on what's working and where we can support CTE here in your LEA.
- We would like to record this session (except student groups) to capture your thoughts accurately—does that work for you all? To be clear, this recording is only for note-taking purposes; we ensure confidentiality meaning no names will be cited in our reports.
- Your contributions today will help us improve CTE programs both here and statewide. Any questions before we start?



Questions for School Leadership

Priority Questions:

- 1. How long have you been in your role? What is your background in CTE?
- 2. Can you give us an overview of the structure of CTE programs in your school / LEA? If not addressed, ask about: Dual enrollment, WBL, Range of programs, Application process, Transportation
- 3. What are the school's current priorities for CTE in your school/LEA? If not addressed, ask about: Eliminate/add programs, Apprenticeship, Increasing enrollment, Working with industry
- 4. In your opinion, how well does the programming at your school align with key (high-growth, high-wage) industries in your community and statewide?
- 5. Is there capacity for all interested students to participate in CTE programs? Are there any barriers to enrollment?
- 6. For those students who are not able to enroll and stay on a waitlist, what's the process for those students? What happens if they don't get off the waitlist?
- 7. How does the LEA/district update CTE programs? What are some current plans you have for adding new programs, expanding existing programs or eliminate current programs?
- 8. From your perspective, what are the strengths of your LEA/school's CTE program, and what have you made the most progress on recently?
- 9. What do you see as the key challenges facing your LEA/school now?
- 10. Where would you like the LEA to be in five years in regards to CTE?

Additional Questions:

- Are any CTE teachers earning National Board Certification? If so, have they been able to move into differentiated roles?
- How do you collaborate with local business and industry and community colleges?
- Do you have sufficient teachers for current programs? If not, what are the issues in recruiting them?



- What's your process for reviewing the IRCs currently offered to students as part of their CTE program?
- What measures are in place to assess the long-term impact of CTE programs on students' career trajectories and contributions to the local economy?
- Do certain programs have higher completion rates than others?
- Are there clear pathways from current CTE programs to community college certificate and degree programs?
- What strategies are employed to raise awareness and improve perceptions of CTE programs among students, parents, and the broader community?

Questions for CTE Teachers

Instructions for focus group lead: Please start by asking everyone to introduce themselves with the first question. Since there are a lot of questions to get through, ask for a few people, not everyone, to answer each of the following questions, asking for different perspectives as needed.

Priority Questions:

- 1. What program do you teach in? How long have you been in your role? What is your background in this area?
- 2. Can you give us an overview of your CTE program? If not addressed, ask about: Dual enrollment, WBL, IRCs, completion rates, post-grad options
- 3. Do you have contact with employers in your industry? If so, what partnerships have been most beneficial for students?
- 4. Where do students from your program go after graduating (i.e., further training, work, college, etc.)?
- 5. What support do you and/or the school provide to help CTE students develop post-graduation plans? Are your students getting time with a Career Coach as part of that support?
- 6. If you could redesign your subject's program of study, what would you change?
- 7. What professional learning opportunities are available for you?
- 8. From your perspective, what are the strengths of your school's CTE programs?
- 9. What do you need as a CTE teacher that you feel you may not be getting?
- 10. What do you see as the key CTE challenges facing your school now?



Additional Questions:

- How do you collaborate with your colleagues (CTE and academic teachers)?
- Do any of your programs have school-based businesses that serve the school community and/or local clients?
- Do you think the certification requirements for CTE teachers are well-aligned to what was needed to teach in the area you teach in?
- Do most students who enroll in your program intend on completing the program?
- Can you share a success story of a former student who has benefited from your program?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of your CTE program, and what data or feedback informs changes or improvements?

Questions for CTE Students

Priority Questions:

- 1. What year are you, what program are you enrolled in, and why did you choose the program you're in?
- 2. How did you learn about the program you are enrolled in now? What was the process of getting in to the program?
- 3. How has your experience in the classroom been for your CTE classes? Is it different from your other classes?
- 4. Have you had any work experience as part of your program?
- 5. If you have a different home school, how do you get to your CTE program and / or to your job (if applicable)?
- 6. Will you graduate with any certifications/credentials or college credits?
- 7. What is your plan post-graduation, and how did you develop it?
- 8. How much do you know about careers in your industry (salary, training paths)?
- 9. What would you say is the best thing about your program?
- 10. If you could change anything in your program, what would it be?



Additional Questions:

- Are there any CTE programs you think the school/LEA should offer that it does not now?
- Have you participated in any competitions or extracurricular activities related to your CTE program? If so, what was your experience like?
- How well do you feel your CTE program is preparing you for the workforce or further education in your chosen field?
- How do your family and friends perceive your enrollment in a CTE program, and has their perception changed since you started?
- How does your school promote CTE programs to students, and what improvements would you suggest to increase awareness and interest?
- Looking back on when you first enrolled in your CTE program, what advice would you give to students who are currently considering CTE as an option?

Questions for School Counselors/Career Coaches & Staff

Instructions for focus group lead: Please start by asking everyone to introduce themselves with the first question. Since there are a lot of questions to get through, ask for a few people, not everyone, to answer each of the following questions, asking for different perspectives as needed.

Priority Questions:

- 1. How long have you been in your role? What is your background in this role?
- 2. How is school counseling and career counseling organized at your school? Do the counselors work together?
- 3. Is there a work-based learning coordinator and if so what is their scope of work and how do they interact with counselors?
- 4. How does the school counseling staff and career counseling staff stay up-to-date with CTE programming and workforce trends in the LEA and the state?
- 5. How are students introduced to CTE programs? Do students have opportunities for career exploration/education?
- 6. How are CTE students supported in making post-graduation plans?



- 7. How are parents and families introduced to programs? Are there other efforts to publicize CTE in the community?
- 8. What do you see as the strengths of CTE in this school?
- 9. What do you see as the key challenges facing your LEA/school's CTE programs?

Additional Questions:

- Do you track post-graduation outcomes, such as enrolling in further education / training or entering the workforce?
- In what ways does the school involve parents and the community in the CTE program?
- How are students who change their mind about a career path supported?
- How do you think the CTE guidance could be improved? Is feedback on guidance and support collected from students?
- Are there issues with students being able to access CTE programs? If so, what are the reasons and what are current strategies to address access issues from a counseling perspective?



Appendix E | CCPS CTE Pathways



CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PATHWAYS

Have an 8th or 10th grade student? Now is the time to review the career pathways available in Charles County Public Schools. To explore each program, visit www.ccboe.com/cte today!

CTE PATHWAYS Organized by Career Cluster

Arts, Media, and Communication	Business Management and Finance	Information Technology
Dance Graphic Communications Interactive Media Theatre	Business Management	IT Networking Academy Cyber Security Computer Science
Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	Health and Biosciences	Human Resources Services
BarberingCulinary Arts (ACF)Food and Beverage Management (ProStart)Cosmetology	 Academy of Health Professions Certified Nursing Assistant Pharmacy Technician Physical Rehabilitation PLTW Biomedical Sciences Biotechnology 	Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI) Criminal Justice Child Development Professions Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) JROTC
Construction and Development	Manufacturing, Engineering, and Technology	Transportation Technologies
 Construction Design and Management Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Electrical Construction Welding Technology 	Drafting and Design PLTW Pathway to Engineering Engineering	Automotive Technician (NATEF) Collision Repair
Career Research and Development	Environmental, Agricultural, and Natural Resources	Apprenticeship Maryland
Career Research and Development (CRD)	CASE: Natural Resources	Apprenticeship Maryland (AMP)



Next Steps Timeline

8 th Grade Fall/Winter Online Application Required	8 th Grade Course Selection with Counselor	10 th Grade Fall/Winter Online Application Required	10 th Grade Course Selection with Counselor
Academy of Health Professions Certified Nursing Assistant Automotive Technician Biotechnology Cisco: IT Networking Child Development Professions Collision Repair Construction Design and Management Cosmetology Criminal Justice Culinary Arts (ACF) Cyber Security Dance Drafting and Design Electrical Construction Engineering Graphic Communications Interactive Media Productions Theatre Welding Technology	Business Management Computer Science Food and Beverage Management (ProStart) PLTW: Biomedical Science: PLTW: Pathway to Engineering Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) JROTC (branch varies based on school)	Academy of Health Professions Pharmacy Technician Physical Rehabilitation Automotive Technician Barbering CASE: Natural Resources Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI)	Business Management Career Research and Development (CRD) Computer Science Food and Beverage Management (ProStart) Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM)





CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PATHWAYS

Have an 8th or 10th grade student? Now is the time to review the career pathways available in Charles County Public Schools. To explore each program, visit www.ccboe.com/cte today!

CTE PATHWAYS Organized by Location

North Point High School – Application Required in 8 th grade		
 Academy of Health Professions (AHP): Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Automotive Technician Biotechnology Child Development Professions Cisco: IT Networking Culinary Arts (ACF) Collision Repair Construction Design & Management (CDM) 	 Cosmetology Criminal Justice Cyber Security Drafting and Design Electrical Construction Engineering Graphic Communications Welding Technology 	
Maurice J. McDonough High School – Application Required in 8 th grade • Dance • Interactive Media Productions • Theatre Robert D. Stethem Educational Center – Application Required in 10 th grade		
 Academy of Health Professions: Pharmacy Technician Academy of Health Professions: Physical Rehabilitation CASE: Natural Resources Automotive Technician Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning 		
Southern Maryland Regional Training Center – Application Required in 10 th grade		
Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI)		
All High Schools - Application Required		



Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP)		
All High Schools – NO Application Required		
• JROTC (branch varies based on school)	• PLTW: Biomedical Science (regionalizes in 11 th and 12 th grades) *	
Business Management	• PLTW: Engineering (regionalizes in 11 th and 12 th grades) *	
Career Research and Development	ProStart: Food and Beverage Management	
Computer Science	• Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM)	

THERE ARE MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS THAT VARY FOR EACH PATHWAY, INCLUDING AN EMPHASIS ON PERSONAL INTEREST. ALL STUDENTS SHOULD APPLY.

Updated: 11/1/2024

