

Marion County's three high schools receive pathways certification from the Tennessee Department of Education.

***Marion County High School – Nursing Services
South Pittsburg High School – Nursing Services
Whitwell High School – Nursing Services***

***Tennessee High Schools Recognized for Creating College and Career Pathways
Seventy-four high schools to receive pathways certification from the Department of Education***

NASHVILLE—Education Commissioner Penny Schwinn today announced that 74 Tennessee high schools are leading the way in the state to become the first to receive a pathways certification from the Tennessee Department of Education. This certification recognizes strong alignment between high school programs of study offered, postsecondary partners, and high-quality employment opportunities in their region. The department launched the Tennessee Pathways Certification as the K-12 initiative under Tennessee's Drive to 55 to elevate and celebrate model college and career pathways throughout the state.

“These communities are working together to provide students with the skills they need to succeed beyond high school,” Schwinn said. “Earlier this week, we unveiled the department’s strategic plan, which emphasizes providing quality academic programs, serving the whole child, and developing and supporting our teachers and leaders to ensure that every student is on a path to success. Schools across the state are making this a reality through the Pathways program. I am excited that we are able to recognize their efforts and encourage others to follow their lead.”

Tennessee Pathways is structured around three key elements shown to increase seamless enrollment and success in postsecondary programs:

1. High-quality college and career advisement throughout K-12;
2. Rigorous early postsecondary and work-based learning opportunities in high school; and
3. Seamless vertical alignment between K-12, postsecondary programs, and career opportunities as a result of effective partnerships among school districts, higher education institutions, employers, and community organizations.

These Certified Tennessee Pathways are providing students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences that lead to in-demand careers. Each pathway was evaluated through a rigorous application process in which schools detailed their postsecondary and employer partnerships, early college and career experiences, and structures for providing students with high-quality career advisement.

All schools serving grades 9-12 in Tennessee were eligible to apply; however, it was encouraged that applicants bridge programming to elementary and middle schools within their school system. More than 400 applications were submitted from 81 school districts across the state. After a comprehensive review, a total of 122 pathways representing 74 high schools received the Tennessee Pathways Certification.

The recipients of the Tennessee Pathways Certification were recognized today by Commissioner Schwinn and Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents, Dr. Flora Tydings, at a formal recognition ceremony during the LEAD Conference.