

Delaware Pathways Grants to support high school career programs

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Gov. John Carney announced on Nov. 14 more than \$438,000 in federal grants to expand high school career pathway programs.

The statewide Delaware Pathways initiative aims to prepare students to excel in key that offer good job opportunities in today's economy.

Carney joined Sussex Technical High School students and administrators in the school's automotive technology shop to announce the 42 awards, which will benefit 20 districts or charter schools across the state. Sussex Tech is using its grant to support its new automotive technology career pathway, which provides youth with the opportunity to earn a pre-apprenticeship certificate from the Delaware Department of Labor, the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence entry-level certification, the ASE G1 certification and college credits through Delaware Technical and Community College. This type of pre-apprenticeship program is the first such offering in Delaware.

"Expanding our Pathways programs will help more Delaware students prepare for successful careers, and help Delaware compete in an economy that is changing every day," said Carney. "We remain focused on making sure that all Delaware students have an opportunity to succeed, and to contribute to our state's success. Skills training programs like those offered at Sussex Tech and at districts and charters statewide will help us achieve those goals, and I am excited to announce this new step forward today."

"I.G. Burton is excited to partner with the state and our school districts to expand relationships with employers and ensure youth have the opportunity to apply their skills in the workplace. These partnerships help students graduate with the skills Delaware's employers need in the workplace," said Lester Guyer, assistant service director at I.G. Burton. "Congratulations to Sussex Tech for helping to grow our auto industry — and for helping youth build the automotive technology skills needed to be employed through classroom instruction and work-based learning experiences."

Grant funds are used by school districts and charter schools to implement career and technical education programs as part of a larger state effort to connect the public education system, post-secondary institutions and employers. Students take hours of specialized instruction and hands-on training in their pathways, giving them the opportunity to graduate with work experience, college credit and industry credentials that are relevant to those industries. As a result, students receive a head start on getting a job and earning a degree.

The program currently serves more than 12,000 students enrolled in 20 career pathways programs across 16 comprehensive school districts, three technical school districts and 10 charter districts, in addition to serving youth at Cleveland White and the Ferris School.

By 2020 Delaware aims to enroll more than 20,000 students — half of the state's public grade ninth- through 12th-grade population — in career pathways that lead to in-demand jobs — and will work across secondary and postsecondary education systems so that more than 7,500 students are actively engaged in work-based learning placements in partnership with Delaware employers.

Pathways are developed in partnership with Delaware employers and institutions of higher education. The Department of Education provides curriculum support for each pathway as well as training for teachers to implement the coursework. In addition, the department is working with Delaware colleges and universities so students who complete the new programs will be eligible for college credit at one or more institutions of higher education in the state.

School districts use funding in various ways to support students and staff and to provide the services and materials required to offer advanced coursework and hands-on training opportunities with Delaware employers.

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