

# VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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## Rockville High School Kicks off Career Pathways Program for Class of 2026

VERNON, Connecticut – Freshmen at Rockville High School are the first class to experience a new program designed to help them identify a possible career and set them on a course of study that prepares them for that career or to continue their education.

The Career Pathways program requires every member of the Class of 2026 to join one of three academies. Students will then have the opportunity to select an area of focus, called a pathway.

The goal is to get students more engaged in their own learning, to better prepare them for a career or post-secondary education, and to help them be successful when they leave Rockville High School, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph P. Macary said.

“Preparing students for meaningful post-secondary experiences, be they at college, in the military or the workforce, is the mission of the Vernon Public Schools,” Dr. Macary said. “Providing these career pathways will enable students to determine where they want to become successful in life.”

It's important to provide students with options that meet their needs, Rockville High School Principal Jason Magao said.

“We’re trying to positively impact every student,” Magao said. “Typical high schools are designed for students who plan to go to college. We need to make sure we are doing our best for students who have college aspirations as well as those who do not. There are many successful people who took different paths in life but it all begins with the drive and opportunity to succeed.”

The Career Pathways program helps students discover the next chapter in their lives.

*The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.*

“We want to empower everyone to be successful when they leave here, whether they want to be a welder or a doctor,” said Bryan Wright, a technology education teacher at Rockville High School. The three academy options are:

- Academy for Advanced Technology and Science.
- Academy for Arts, Business and Communications.
- Academy for Health, Human and Public Services.

Within each Academy students will find a variety of pathways that can be adjusted to match their particular interest. In addition to coursework, students will have opportunities to participate in internships with local businesses and an opportunity to enroll in courses at local colleges and universities. These courses will provide students with college credits that will follow them upon graduation.

“All students will choose an academy,” Wright said. “Those hyper-focused will enroll in a pathway and have more specific areas of study for their interest.”

Students who have not yet figured out what they want to do need not worry. School officials know that many students won’t be ready to choose an academy or pathway immediately. That’s why all incoming freshman will first take exploratory classes that allow them to experience the opportunities each academy presents.

“We’re going to broaden their horizons and give them a sampling of everything we have to offer,” said Jennifer Kasek, a business teacher and the career services coordinator.

Even after that sampling, students may discover the pathway they choose is not right for them.

“Students aren’t locked in,” said Charles Martucci, a business and computer education teacher. “If they decide it isn’t what they want, they can change.”

The Academy for Advanced Technology and Science is grounded in the traditional STEM areas: science, technology, engineering and math. It also includes Rockville High School’s Agricultural Science and Technology Education (ASTE) program. The Academy is for students considering careers in science, manufacturing, agribusiness, construction management, engineering and design, information technology and natural sciences.

The Academy for Arts, Business and Communications blends STEM and the humanities. It is for students interested in areas such as business and finance, hospitality and food service, digital media and design, performance arts, journalism and new media.

The Academy for Health, Human and Public Services also blends STEM and the humanities to help students interested in careers that could include biomedical science, healthcare, human and family services, education and teaching, government service, law enforcement, the fire service and the military.

All students will continue to have traditional core requirements, including algebra 1, geometry, U.S. history, English, biology, world language, American civics, personal finance and health and physical education.

There is enough flexibility built into the program and Connecticut graduation requirements to allow students to pursue a curriculum that is personalized to their career goal.

Martucci said the program follows on Dr. Macary’s goal of having all students identify an area of interest earlier.

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