



Building Trades Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is the new Building Trades Program?

The Building Trades Program at St. Dominic, which will be open to juniors and seniors for the 2025-26 school year, will include hands-on construction trades coursework in four core areas: carpentry, electrical, plumbing/pipefitting and HVAC.

Why is St. Dominic investing in a building trades program?

We are continually evolving to meet the needs of our students and our community. According to recent school surveys conducted in the fall of 2023 and 2024, nearly one in five students said they would be interested in having the option to take trades program courses at St. Dominic. The initiative to implement industrial arts programming is a part of our current five-year strategic plan.

Does having a building trades program change St. Dominic's college preparatory status?

No, every student is still on an educational path to be able to attend a four-year university.

Does adding a building trades program impact the number of college credits being offered to students?

No, the building trades program does not offer college credits and does not take away from any college credits being offered through St. Dominic.

Will students who go through this program achieve some level of certification or apprenticeship status?

No, we've heard consistent feedback from both contractors associated with SDHS and unions that they are not concerned about students having specific certifications or credentials. The main goal is to get students early exposure to construction trades to see if they like to work with their hands in a particular field and to understand the work ethic that is demanded of individuals in this industry. Students who find they are passionate about the trades will have an advantage when applying for technical school or seeking employment in the non-union workforce.

Can students who are interested begin taking the building trades program curriculum their freshman year?

No, the program is currently restricted to juniors and seniors only.

Is there a limit to how many students can participate?

For safety and educational reasons, there will be a maximum of 15 students per class, but multiple sections will be offered in each of the four core building trades program.

Do students enrolled in the program pay the same tuition rate as other students?

Yes, the trades program curriculum is no different from other classes at St. Dominic that provide early exposure to specific career paths, such as business or engineering.

Who will be teaching these courses?

We will look to hire instructors with trades industry experience in the Spring of 2025. For the 2025-26 school year, we will focus on hiring two experts dedicated to teaching carpentry and electrical courses. In 2026, we will hire two more experts who specialize in plumbing/pipefitting and HVAC to prepare for the 2026-27 school year.

How was the new Trades Building acquired?

The property was purchased through the generosity of an anonymous benefactor, who donated \$2.4M –the single largest gift in the history of the school. St. Dominic did not take on any debt to purchase the property.

Is the Trades Building strictly for trades program classrooms?

No, in addition to housing two traditional classrooms and four separate laboratory workshops, the Trades Building will also include boys and girls changing rooms, an expanded fitness center and a new multi-purpose athletic court, which will primarily serve as a dedicated space for our cheer and dance teams. This will open up additional space in our main school building for an upgraded band and choral room with improved sound-quality, as well as four additional academic classrooms and a dedicated workroom for teachers who support curriculum writing, etc.