FORD NGL *Phase 1: Explore* Visit

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

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Hopkins Public Schools, MN



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FORD NEXT GENERATION LEARNING

Community Connected Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Hopkins Public Schools (HPS) requested the support of Ford Next Generation Learning (Ford NGL) to explore the district's current capacity to potentially implement a community-connected, career-academy model in its comprehensive high school. Doing so requires consideration of the current (and future) systems, structures, processes, and community partnerships that would support the expansion of career and technical education (CTE) programming and real-world learning opportunities for all students.

The Ford NGL coaching team of Marc Hill and Terri Jackley conducted a Phase 1: *Explore* visit from April 28 to April 30, 2025 to determine the capacity and readiness of HPS to undertake the subsequent phases of the Ford NGL Roadmap Process. (Please see the appendix to view a full illustration of the Ford NGL Roadmap.) This report provides a synopsis of Ford NGL's findings and recommendations.

Ford NGL's Phase 1: *Explore* engagement with HPS focused on the following objectives:

1. Ascertain the current delivery and student outcomes associated with HPS's high school CTE programs.
2. Understand HPS district and high school structures, leadership, resources, and instructional programming.
3. Explore community stakeholders' capacity and willingness to be a partner in a transformation of the district's high school programs.
4. Assess the current strengths and challenges associated with a potential implementation of the Ford NGL Community-connected Learning Model and Roadmap Process.

Within these broad objectives, Ford NGL considered the following driving questions:

- What is the current post-secondary and career readiness of HPS students?
- If a high school transformation is taken to scale, what do HPS and the community need in order to promote equity and increase college access and career preparation?
- Does HPS currently have the right resources and organizational structures to support the transformation of their secondary schools?
- Are HPS's current CTE programs aligned with workforce needs identified by regional workforce data?
- Are HPS's college and career pathways organized, clearly communicated, and part of a district plan for all students?
- Are HPS's partnerships with the business community organized to scale real-world learning opportunities for all students?

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONTEXT

Hopkins Public Schools (also known as Hopkins School District 270) in Minnesota serves students in early childhood programs through twelfth grade in multiple municipalities in the Twin Cities West Metro. Located approximately nine miles west of downtown Minneapolis, HPS encompasses the city of Hopkins, most of Minnetonka, half of Golden Valley, and portions of Eden Prairie, Edina, Plymouth and St. Louis Park.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DATA

Hopkins Public Schools is located in western Hennepin County, Minnesota. Hennepin County is part of the 16-county Minneapolis-Saint Paul-Bloomington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the 16th most populous MSA in the country, with 3.7 million residents. The region is experiencing minimal population growth of .3 percent against annual job growth of .8 percent.

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL-BLOOMINGTON MSA DEMOGRAPHICS

Column	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI			
White	71%	±0%	2,635,130	±4,812
Black	9.4%	±0%	349,249	±7,218
Native	0.3%	±0%	11,720	±1,344
Asian	7%	±0%	259,164	±4,617
Islander	0%	±0%	1,103	±686
Other	0.5%	±0%	19,070	±3,715
Two+	4.9%	±0%	180,198	±9,887
Hispanic	6.9%	±0%	256,386	±0

Source: *ACS 2023, US Census Bureau, Censusreporter.org*

The region produced $350 billion in gross domestic product in 2023.[1] In 2021, the median household income was $83,698 and 53.5 percent of the population over the age of 25 had an associate's degree or higher. The median home purchase price was $315,200.[2]

[1] Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, 2023
[2] MSP Regional Indicators Dashboard 2021, Greater MSP

WORKFORCE AND LABOR DATA

Under the federal Perkins V law, a school district's CTE programs must be informed by local-workforce needs. This information is provided to HPS as part of their membership in the Hennepin West Consortium which administers Minnesota's federal Perkins funds. These funds support CTE programs in 12 West Metro school districts and Hennepin Technical College. RealTime Talent (RTT) (a nonprofit organization that provides workforce research, analysis, and consulting services) supplies economic data to the consortium which covers a seven-county region including Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington. These are the same counties that make up the Metropolitan Council — a council of county and municipal governments serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Twin Cities region.

The seven-county MSP Metro has a workforce of 1.7m, with a labor participation rate of 71 percent. The regional unemployment rate in June 2024 was 3.7 percent, lower than the state (3.8 percent) and national rates (4.3 percent). In its 2024 workforce report to the Hennepin West Consortium, RealTime Talent provided regional wage and employment data on the 16 career clusters outlined in the federal Perkins legislation, as well as the location quotients of each cluster. The location quotient for a career field indicates the degree of concentration of that career cluster in the MSP Metro compared to the national average. Four career clusters are about 20 percent more concentrated in the MSP region than nationally: Human Services, Finance, Information Technology, and STEM.

In an effort to present this information in a format that helps guide decisions about education-program offerings, the same report also organizes occupational employment and wage data by Minnesota's six CTE career fields. This information includes specific occupations that form a career progression in each career field with the goal of earning at or above the region's median annual wage of $58,000. These career progressions are expressed in three categories of occupations: "origin occupations" which pay less than $45,000 a year and typically do not require a post-secondary credential; "gateway occupations" that are promising jobs paying between $45,000 and $58,000 with the prospect of advancement; and "target occupations" which offer at least $58,000 annually and are generally high-skill and high-demand jobs.

As HPS considers expanding its future CTE offerings, there is ample opportunity to implement high-demand, high-wage pathways in the first five of the six Minnesota CTE career fields. The Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources career field represents only 4 percent of the MSP region's jobs and has projected job growth in only a couple occupations.

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MSP SEVEN-COUNTY METRO (2024)

Career Cluster	Employment	Avg Ann Wages	Job Ads	Ann Empl Change	Ann Total Demand
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	32,518	$116,300	5,286	88	2,068
Information Technology	68,563	$111,200	6,949	448	4,500
Finance	87,494	$105,200	6,739	-246	6,246
Health Science	171,525	$94,600	18,456	578	14,362
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	47,627	$90,300	2,972	-245	4,060
Business, Management & Administration	357,648	$84,000	18,145	-2,583	33,217
Government & Public Administration	16,567	$82,000	1,091	-28	1,398
Architecture & Construction	107,726	$77,000	3,688	-237	9,083
Marketing, Sales & Service	189,840	$71,100	15,834	-1,097	20,998
Education & Training	109,214	$69,500	6,680	-366	9,385
Arts, A/V Technology & Communications	32,578	$69,500	1,251	-205	2,869
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources*	69.416	$68,300	4,931	-1,249	7,568
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	139,399	$60,500	5,612	-70	15,570
Manufacturing	149,470	$60,000	7,708	-935	13,915
Human Services	128,994	$49,200	7,865	922	17,107
Hospitality & Tourism	198,759	$38,500	12,873	-749	34,014
Total - All Occupations	**1,855,958**	**$73,700**	**122,524**	**-4,532**	**191,251**

Source: 2024 Regional Career Trends for Career and Technical Education: MSP Metro, Real Time Talent (December 2024)

MSP REGION KEY TAKEAWAYS BY MINNESOTA CAREER FIELD

Health Science Technology	Human Services	Arts, Communications, and Information Technology
• Largest volumes of occupations forecasting shortages • Award gaps for Therapeutic Services talent at all education levels • Registered Nurse occupation remains in high demand and moderate shortage • Opportunities for expanded career laddering, stackable credentials, or microcredentials	• Educational institutions dominate overall demand • Education and Training pathway in significant talent shortage • 46.1% of positions do not require postsecondary credentials yet 67.6% of workforce holds one • Mental health, behavioral health, and counseling have an undersupply of talent and low volumes of postsecondary awards	• Highest average entry-level and median wages • Systematic undersupply of Information Technology cluster talent and postsecondary awards • Highly educated workforce aligned with high level education and training requirements (70% require bachelor's or higher, almost 80% hold a bachelor's degree or higher)
Business, Management, and Administration	**Engineering, Manufacturing, and Technology**	**Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources**
• Largest share of employment by career field • Forecasting moderate decline in overall employment but high replacement demand • General and Operations roles in high local concentration experiencing shortages unlikely to be met by existing local talent providers	• Comparatively high unemployment (3.2%) • Industrial Engineering and Transportation industries in need of career pathway expansion • Aging talent signaling exacerbation of talent shortage due to upcoming retirements with 23.7% being 55 or older	• Veterinarian Technologists and Technicians and Aircraft Mechanics are uniquely concentrated in the region and have significantly low unemployment • Animal related occupations are in high need for career pathway expansion • The workforce in this career field is predominately male (71.5%) and white (80.1%)

Source: 2024 Regional Career Trends for Career and Technical Education: MSP Metro, Real Time Talent (December 2024)

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS OVERVIEW

HPS is governed by a seven-member board of education elected at-large to staggered, four-year terms. The district serves approximately 7,000 students in 17 school programs (seven preschool locations, six elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school and an online/blended school). In 2024-2025, HPS had a general fund operating budget of $128 million, employing a combined total of 1,331 educators and staff. HPS students are increasingly diverse, representing 72 countries of origin and 69 home languages. While HPS has made recent progress in increasing staff of color hires to meet its strategic plan goal of faculty reflecting the demographics of the student body, (385 percent increase between 2017 and 2023), this continues to be an area for future growth.

HPS DEMOGRAPHICS (2023)

Race/Ethnicity	HPSD Students	HPSD Licensed Staff
American Indian	0.3%	0.3%
Asian	4.5%	5.2%
Black or African American	24.7%	3.4%
Hispanic or Latino	11.0%	3.2%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%
White	50.2%	82.0%
Two or more races	9.3%	1.0%

Source: *Minnesota Report Card,* Minnesota Department of Education

In the year following Dr. Rhoda Mhiripiri-Reed's appointment as Superintendent of HPS, the school board adopted Vision 2031 — a vision and strategic plan for the district developed through an extensive stakeholder engagement process. Vision 2031 defines the district's core values as: authentic inclusivity; intentionally adventurous; optimistic innovation; humility of heart; vigilant equity; and love. HPS also has eight success indicators. Among those indicators are: being the first choice for students; being the first choice for teachers; and, when it comes to hiring HPS graduates, being the first choice for employers. The strategic plan is organized into three areas: learning and teaching; school and district culture; and operations. As HPS considers transforming the high school

experience for students, the table below outlines multiple, strategic-plan objectives and deliverables that would be advanced through the academy model:

HPS VISION 2031 AND ACADEMY MODEL ALIGNMENT

Strategic Plan Goals	Objective (1)	Objective (2)	Deliverable
Goal 1: Learning & Teaching	Student-Centered Learning for All	Tier-One Instruction Is Student-Centered; Personalized Learning	Inquiry-based pedagogy integrated into every classroom
			Creating pathways, pedagogies, and tools for implementing personalized learning in E-12+ mathematics classrooms
		Anytime, Anywhere Learning	Experiential learning built into all schools' conceptual units
			Community and business partnerships formed based on students' passions
		Multi-Tiered System of Supports	Purposeful use of professional learning communities
		Redefined Student Success Metrics	E-12+ competency system centered on graduate traits
	Schools & Programs Reimagined	Redesigned Grades 6-12+ Programming	Career and college readiness framework that ensures equity and access
			Multiple career pathways for students to match their interests and ambitions
			Transitioning 6th and 9th Graders to the middle schools and high school
		High Quality, Specialized Programs and Services	Specialized certifications that allow ABE students to improve their job opportunities
Goal 2: School and District Culture	Living Into Core Values	Optimistically Cultivate Innovation	Student-led innovation and voice systematized
		Pursue Vigilant Equity	Equity at center of all district policy

Traits of a Hopkins Scholar

The Traits of a Hopkins Scholar excerpted below were developed as part of the Vision 2031 strategic planning process and outline the competencies students are expected to demonstrate during their time at HPS and upon graduation. (Please see the appendix for the full trait definitions.)

- **Critical Thinking** - means analyzing and evaluating an issue in order to form a judgment.
- **Global and Well-Traveled** - means appreciating the complexity of the world and our interconnectedness within it.
- **Confidence** - means willingness to approach uncertainty by activating strengths and drawing on collective resources.
- **Voice** - means learners can express themselves in their most authentic way and make choices in how they express themselves.
- **Holistic** - means learning through the whole self: mind, body, spirit, emotions, identities, and community memberships.
- **Empathetic** - means responding to others from a position of understanding their feelings, needs, and points of view.

Stakeholders from multiple focus groups were familiar with the Traits of a Hopkins Scholar, but acknowledged there were opportunities to embed the traits into instruction across grade levels and subjects.

HPS High School Programs

While the first school in Hopkins was built in 1862 and the original Hopkins High School opened in 1908, the background of the school district's current high school facility began with the more recent construction of a new Hopkins High School building in 1956 (currently operating as Eisenhower Elementary, Eisenhower Community Center and the district's administrative offices). In 1970, Lindbergh High School opened as HPS's second high school, while the original Hopkins High school was renamed Eisenhower High School. Despite the expansion of the district's boundaries in 1980 when the Golden Valley School District merged into HPS, the district decided in 1982 to consolidate its two-campus high school program into a single facility. The newer Lindbergh High School was renamed Hopkins High School, while the older Eisenhower facility was repurposed for other district uses.

Hopkins High School (HHS) currently operates on a four-block schedule in which students earn one credit for each course, with each course being completed within one of four, nine-week terms during the school year. This schedule allows a student to earn 16 credits per year, with the potential to earn a total of 64 credits over the course of four years. HPS requires students to earn 54 credits to graduate, so students have the potential flexibility of

ten open blocks in their class schedule by the end of their senior year. On a traditional schedule in which a one-credit course spans the entire school year, these credits would equate to .5 credits, with students being able to earn a total of 32 potential credits.

HPS graduation requirements (54 total):

- Language Arts: 8 credits
- Social Studies: 8 credits
- Mathematics: 6 credits
- Science: 6 credits
- Physical Education/Health: 2 credits
- Fine Arts: 2 credits
- Health Science: 1 credit
- Personal Finance: 1 credit
- Electives: 20 credits

Students at HHS have a wide range of choices, with approximately 250 different courses of varying lengths offered each year. In 2024-2025, 24 Advanced Placement (AP) courses were offered, along with five Honors courses. There are currently 35 CTE courses offered within four broad industry areas (with highest-enrolled courses): Business Education (personal finance, criminal law, keyboarding 1, finance & investment); Family & Consumer Sciences (culinary 101 and 102, child psychology 1, housing & interior design); Health Care, and Technology Education (woodworking 1, computer programming 1, construction). The full list of CTE courses offered at HHS with enrollments can be found in the appendix.

While HHS students have the opportunity to sample a wide variety of courses, there does not appear to be a focus beyond the accumulation of individual elective credit required for graduation. This is evident in the dramatic enrollment decline across what might be viewed as a building-block sequence of courses in a specific CTE pathway, as seen in the table below.

ENROLLMENTS IN SELECT PATHWAY COURSE SEQUENCES (24-25)

Industry Area	Course	Enrollment
Family & Consumer Science	Culinary 101	384
	Culinary 102	105
	Culinary 103	17
Technology Education	Computer Programming 1	67

	Computer Programming 2	10
	Woodworking 1	122
	Woodworking 2	32

Source: *Hopkins Public School District*

Hopkins students do have opportunities to pursue additional CTE courses off campus. HSD is one of 12 West Metro school districts that are members of Intermediate District 287, which provides special-education services, Alternative Learning Academies (ALCs), transition services, and CTE programs. Intermediate school districts were created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1969 to provide services that are sometimes beyond the means of small, individual school districts. Intermediate District 287 also serves as the fiscal agent for the Hennepin West Consortium, which applies for and receives federal funding for CTE programming through the Perkins V Act on behalf of HPS and the other 11 member school districts (just under $1.6m in 2023-2024). There are 23 Perkins/CTE consortia across the state of Minnesota, comprising at least one college and one or more school districts. The Hennepin West Consortium also provides Perkins-required advisory boards for its CTE pathways by contracting with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber, which recruits business leaders from a variety of industries to participate and also organizes the meetings.

The Intermediate 287 Career & Tech Center is located within the Eden Prairie Campus of Hennepin Technical College about 10 miles north of Hopkins High School. The Career & Tech Center offers courses throughout the school day in three, 100-minute class periods. Students are transported by the sending district (or transport themselves) and attend a course for two consecutive, HHS class blocks over a nine-week term to earn three credits. In the 2024-2025 school year there were 19 HPS students enrolled in CTE courses at the Career & Tech Center. These students were enrolling in culinary, automotive, and communication technology courses as part of HPS's TPlus program, which helps students ages 18-21 who are receiving special-education services transition to work. The most recent year in which general education HHS students enrolled in Career & Tech Center courses was in 2023-2024 (8 students). Current Career & Tech Center course offerings include:

<u>Construction Careers</u>
- Practicum for Independent Living

<u>Culinary & Hospitality Careers</u>
- Cooking for Independent Living
- Culinary Arts

Health Careers
- Nursing Assistant
- Exploring Health & Wellness
- First Aid, CPR and Emergency Medical Response

Computer Science & Information Technology Careers
- Computer Repair
- Networking Systems
- Cybersecurity

Media & Visual Communications
- Graphic Design
- Video Production

Transportation Careers
- Auto Body Repair
- Automotive Technology
- Outdoor Power Sports

The Intermediate District 287's Career & Tech Center programs offer several advantages. The location on the campus of Hennepin Technical College provides easy access to post-secondary faculty on an as needed basis. This convenience, as well as the pooling of students from multiple school districts, can be particularly helpful in offering more advanced pathway courses. For the student, enrollment includes all costs for consumables and materials, as well as the exam fee for industry certifications. The main disadvantage for member school districts is the perception that student enrollment at the Career & Tech Center is costly, since the programs are funded by tuition paid by the sending school districts. Lack of program capacity (another potential disadvantage) does not currently appear to be a barrier, as approximately 650 students are enrolled in a facility that can accommodate 1,200 students. The Career & Tech Center is also exploring offering course blocks outside of the regular school day or online to provide greater flexibility for students.

Post-Secondary Partnerships

The seven-county MSP Metro region has 44 post-secondary institutions that collectively conferred 70,120 awards (certificates and degrees) in 2022-2023[3]. While most Hopkins students are seeking to earn early-college credits through Advanced Placement courses, nearly 200 students are also enrolled in French, Spanish, or XingXing (Chinese) courses through the University of Minnesota's College in the Schools program. Offered through the Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) Post-secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program, these courses allow students to earn both high school and post-secondary credit without tuition or textbook costs. The way in which PSEOs are funded at the state level,

[3] *2024 Regional Career Trends for Career and Technical Education: MSP Metro,* Real Time Talent (December 2024)

however, has tended to limit the number of courses offered, as the funding model does not cover the full costs to the participating school district or the post-secondary institution.

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) is partnering with HSD on the first Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course in the district, in which HHS students will have the opportunity to earn a CNA certification in addition to post-secondary credit. While the main focus of HTC is to prepare students for immediate employment (with some opportunities to transfer credit toward a four-year degree), North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) has strong transfer partnerships with Minnesota's four-year universities, in addition to programs that lead to employment after attainment of an Associate's Degree. Starting in 2025-2026, NHCC and HSD will be partnering for the first time in offering a Medical Terminology concurrent-enrollment course in which HHS students will be able to earn both high school and post-secondary credit.

CTE Programs of Study and Industry-Recognized Credentials

A CTE program of study is a sequence of courses aligned to industry standards that prepares a high school student for a specific career or post-secondary program. Contrary to many states in which Ford NGL works, Minnesota has taken a bottom-up approach to its approval of CTE programs of study. Each CTE/Perkins consortium is required to have at least six, state-recognized programs of study, which are submitted every two years as part of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) process. To seek approval of a new program of study, a consortium would apply for approval as part of the biennial CLNA process, beginning with the identification of a MDE-approved CTE program and courses, as well as a Minnesota State post-secondary program.

Minnesota has made recent progress in recognizing the value of students attaining industry-recognized credentials (IRCs). Effective August 1, 2023, state law was amended to include IRCs in Minnesota's education attainment goal of 70 percent of Minnesota adults (ages 25-44) attaining a post-secondary certificate or degree. There are three types of IRCs recognized as contributing to the state's education attainment goal: certificates (awarded by an educational institution or training provider), certification (an award that demonstrates proficiency and knowledge through an examination, but is not tied to a specific education or training program), and licenses (a credential granted by a governmental agency that is required to be employed in a specific profession). As a first step in valuing IRCs in state policy, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education has begun compiling a list of IRCs, although the state currently lacks the means to track and report IRC attainment.

There are currently very few opportunities for HPS students to earn IRCs. In its inaugural school year, 26 out of 32 students earned a CNA certification in 2023-2024, with even more students poised to take the CNA exam in 2025. The CompTIA A+ certification in

information technology is offered by HHS, but no students are currently enrolled. The 19 TPlus students enrolled in CTE courses at Intermediate District 287's Career & Tech Center in 2024-2025 do not appear to have earned any IRCs.

Real-World Learning Opportunities for Students and Employer Partnerships

Students at HHS have an opportunity to interact with professionals from area employers in two primary ways. One way to experience real-world learning, such as visiting a jobsite or interacting with a professional who is a guest speaker, is by choosing to enroll in CTE courses. Teachers in many CTE courses, such as culinary or business, either recruit businesses to support their program or do so with the assistance of the CTE coordinator. Students in the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course in health care get first-hand, clinical experience at one of three long-term care facilities in the area as preparation for passing the CNA exam. Although the CNA course is rigorous, less than half of the students requesting the course in 2025-2026 will get into one of the two available sections that are capped at 20 students each.

The second primary way HHS students can access real-world learning opportunities is through the ProPEL program (internship or mentorship) or through the longstanding Community Involvement program (community volunteering). Juniors or seniors enrolled in the year-long ProPEL (Professionals Providing Experience for Life) course spend the first semester researching their professional interest and securing their internship or mentorship placement, and then spend the 4th class period of their second semester with a professional mentor in the workplace, earning a total of four credits. The selective program is in its 17th year and is limited to two sections totalling 40 students. The Community Involvement program has been in place for decades and allows seniors to earn two social studies credits by finding their own volunteer placement in the community. In addition to these legacy programs, two newer, paid-internship programs for students are offered. Students participating in the Genesys Works program commit to an eight-week training program during the summer before spending the second half of their school day during their senior year in a paid internship. Access Point is an IT apprenticeship program allowing students to work while completing high school and throughout their subsequent enrollment in college. While valuable, these programs benefit a handful of students. In 2024-2025 only one HPS student participated in Genesys Works while just three students took part in Access Point.

Like real-world learning opportunities for HHS students, school partnerships with area employers exist in pockets. Employer partnership activities are taking place largely at the initiative of individual teachers or because the design of a specific program requires it. Consequently, there is not a systemwide or schoolwide expectation for partnership activities or a systemic approach to supporting school-employer partnerships. Participants

in both our business and nonprofit focus groups reported it can be challenging to partner with the district or high school because of the absence of a systemic approach.

Through years of experience in dozens of communities, Ford NGL has identified seven steps essential to a comprehensive, high-capacity partnership process. Communities implementing school transformation as part of the five-phase, FNGL Roadmap Process examine each of these seven steps as they enhance or create their partnership system as part of the Ford NGL Roadmap Phase 3*: Plan*. Should HPS proceed through the Roadmap process, there will be opportunities in Phase 3 to formalize actions and roles, develop needed tools and resources, and create supporting structures to monitor the overall process and ensure results. Below are definitions for the seven-essential steps to creating powerful partnerships and observations about current HPS practices.

1. Recruit: Execute a strategy to recruit diverse community/business partners, meet with company decision-makers, and deliver a compelling case for initiating partnerships.

HPS current practice: *Employers are recruited by individual teachers or the CTE coordinator to assist with a particular course or program, but there is not a systemwide expectation for these practices.*

2. Intake & Match: Organize partnership information to understand the external partners' and schools' intent, capacity, and needs. Ensure equitable access to business partnerships across the district.

HPS current practice: *Employer partnerships are formed at the initiative of individual teachers and staff, so there is no system wide approach to collecting partner information.*

3. Onboard: Provide partner organizations and district/school staff with training and tools to foster productive partnerships between students, teachers, and community/business partners.

HPS current practice: *Onboarding efforts may occur through the initiative of individual teachers or staff, but we did not find evidence of a districtwide approach.*

4. Action Plan: Establish district and community expectations for annual partnership plans, outlining the engagement activities for the school year. Ensure all parties are accountable for implementing the plan by determining how to communicate, collaborate, and coordinate. (3Cs).

HPS current practice: *We did not find evidence of districtwide expectations for action planning between employer partners and HHS.*

5. Implement & Manage: Execute system monitoring and support to ensure effective implementation of partnerships.

HPS current practice: *We did not find evidence of districtwide*

monitoring and support for employer-school partnerships.

6. Evaluate: Measure the overall success of school and business partnerships to continuously improve student impact and community/business partner return on investment.

HPS current practice: *We did not find evidence of a districtwide approach to evaluating employer-school partnerships.*

7. Celebrate/Recommit: Implement an intentional communication strategy highlighting partnership successes and a process for annual partner recommitment.

HPS current practice: *We did not find evidence of consistent district recognition of employer-school partnerships and their impact on students.*

HPS STUDENT DATA

Hopkins High School has a long tradition of academic excellence, evidenced by the wide range of Advanced Placement courses offered and by the fact that 76 percent of the graduating class of 2022 enrolled in some type of post-secondary institution within 16 months of graduation. HPS students taking the ACT college readiness assessment earned an average, comprehensive score of at least 21 over the past three years, beating the Minnesota state and national average.

Under Minnesota's North Star accountability system for K-12 public education, most Hopkins High School students take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). Less than 2 percent of HHS students take the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) — an alternative assessment for students requiring accommodations. In 10th grade, students take a reading assessment, followed by a mathematics assessment in 11th grade. In addition, high school students complete a science assessment in the year a student completes a life sciences course. It is important to note that the results of these assessments, which are published online as part of the Minnesota Report Card, offer a very incomplete view of student academic performance due to the high percentage of students choosing to opt out of the state testing program. The proficiency rates below, drawn from the Minnesota Report Card, reflect the number of students meeting or exceeding state standards as a percentage of all students, so students opting out of testing are counted as "not meeting standards."

HHS STUDENTS MEETING STATE STANDARDS (2023-2024)

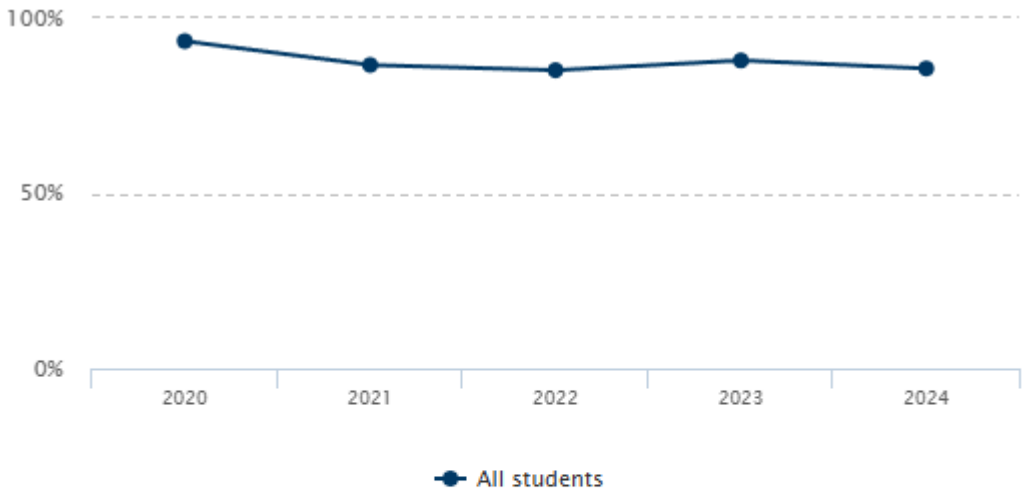
Tested Subject	Percent Proficient	Percent of students tested
Reading (10th grade)	49.4%	69.9%
Math (11th grade)	31.7%	52.5%
Science	37.7%	64.5%

Source: *Minnesota Report Card,* Minnesota Department of Education

On measures related to student engagement, student-faculty relationships are a strength. In 2022, according to the Minnesota Report Card, 83 percent of students felt HHS "teachers care about students." A similar number of students, 84.5 percent, reported caring about doing well in school most or all of the time. Perhaps unsurprisingly, 96.5 percent of HHS students try to learn more about something if it interests them. And yet, only 61.2 percent of students thought what they were learning in school was useful.

Like many school districts around the country, after the closing of schools following the COVID-19 pandemic, HPS has experienced challenges around attendance and graduation rate. Only 56.4 percent of HHS students attended school more than 90 percent of the time over the course of the school year. That is nearly 20 percentage points below the state average. Over the past five years, HPS has seen a decline in the four-year graduation rate from 93.4 percent in 2020 to 85.6 percent in 2024.

HHS FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2020-2024)



Demographic	Year	Graduated count	Graduated %
All students	**2020**	425	93.4%
All students	**2021**	439	86.6%
All students	**2022**	440	85.1%
All students	**2023**	416	87.9%
All students	**2024**	364	85.6%

Source: *Minnesota Report Card,* Minnesota Department of Education

Discipline incidences reveal significant disparities among students of different races/ethnicities. Of the 89 out-of-school suspensions of HHS students for two or more days in 2023-2024, Black or African American students were suspended at more than twice the rate of their representation in the student body.

HHS OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS FOR 2+ DAYS (2023-2024)

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Suspensions	Percentage of all Suspensions	Percentage of Student Body
American Indian	1	1.1%	1.9%
Black or African American	58	65.2%	26.5%
Hispanic or Latino	14	15.7%	12.1%
White	12	13.5%	47.9%

Two Or More Races	4	4.5%	7.1%

Source: *Minnesota Report Card,* Minnesota Department of Education

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

SOURCES

Our observations and conclusions are based on the following reports, data, and focus group conversations gathered in preparation for and during Phase 1: *Explore* visits.

Community / Environment Reports

- *2024 Regional Career Trends for Career and Technical Education: MSP Metro,* Real Time Talent (December 2024)
- *Concurrent Enrollment Grant Program Report,* Lain DeSalvo, Minnesota Office of Higher Education (December 2021)
- CTE Programs and Courses (Table C), Minnesota Department of Education (May 2025)
- *Educating for the Future Report*, Dr. Lesley Sisaket, Minnesota Office of Higher Education (October 2024)
- *"Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways,"* Minnesota State and Minnesota Department of Education (2019)
- "MSP Regional Indicators Dashboard 2021" (Volume 7), Greater MSP
- *State-Recognized Programs of Study User Guide,* Minnesota State and Minnesota Department of Education (2019)

District and School Data

- Application for Minnesota State FY23-24 Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), Hennepin West Consortium, (July 2022)
- "CFAC Annual Comprehensive Board Report - for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026", Citizens Financial Advisory Committee (February 2025)
- "Exploring Pathways into a Successful Career," *Update: The Community's Guide to the District* (Winter 2025), Hopkins Public Schools
- "Hopkins Creates," Hopkins Public Schools (March 2025)
- "Hopkins E-12 Learning Framework," Hopkins Public Schools
- "Hopkins High School 2024-2025 School Profile," Hopkins Public Schools

- “Hopkins Report to the Community: Our 5-Year Progress on Vision 2031,” Hopkins Public School District
- “Redefining Student Success Metrics at Hopkins Public Schools” (Executive Summary and Full Report) Hopkins Public Schools (Fall 2023)
- *Minnesota Report Card*, Minnesota Department of Education (2024)
- “Traits of a Hopkins Scholar” Hopkins Public Schools

School Visits

- Hopkins High School

Focus Group Conversations

- District Leadership Team (5)
- Board of Education Members (5 of 7)
- School Administrators (6)
- Counselors (8)
- Teachers (20)
- Students (15)
- Business Partners (9)
- Municipal Government & Elected Officials (10)
- Nonprofit Organizations (7)
- Post-secondary Partners (5)
- Parents (8)
- Intermediate District 287 (2)

Not Observed

- Early Childhood Centers, Elementary, and Middle Schools
- Hopkins Creates program

KEY FINDINGS

As Hopkins Public Schools explores the possibility of transforming the high school experience for its students through the Ford NGL Community-Connected, Career Academy Model, it is useful to reflect upon the district's current strengths and challenges across the three strands of the Ford NGL Framework: 1) transforming teaching and learning; 2) transforming the culture, systems, and structures of schools; and 3) transforming partnerships between the schools and the community. The assets and opportunities for growth are summarized under each of the three strands and will be

described in more detail in the “strengths” and “challenges” section which follows. (Please see the appendix for a full illustration of the Ford NGL Framework.)

Strand 1: Transforming Teaching and Learning

The first strand, “Transforming Teaching & Learning,” is in many ways, the most difficult to implement, as it depends on elements of the other two strands and requires educators to collaborate with other faculty and business partners in a manner different from traditional, professional training. Tactics in this strand include: teaching subjects through the lens of a career or theme; ensuring access to post-secondary credit opportunities; and encouraging student voice throughout the school experience.

Related to this strand, HHS has a veteran faculty who have built strong, supportive relationships with students. As the district has become increasingly diverse, the school community has made a clear commitment to equity and antiracism. There are a wide range of course offerings at HHS allowing students to sample courses, and post-secondary-bound students have ample opportunity to accumulate potential college credit, primarily through a wide range of Advanced Placement courses. This approach to course offerings and selection, however, makes it difficult for students to pursue areas of passion and potential career interest. With the notable exception of the arts, foreign languages, and several CTE offerings (such as the recently-created healthcare courses) there are few opportunities for students to gain expertise or credentials that will give them a competitive advantage in a future career pathway. Finally, while there are pockets of instruction that provide relevant, project-based, or interdisciplinary learning, much of the instructional program at HHS looks traditional.

Strand 2: Transforming the Culture, Systems, and Structures of Schools

To truly transform the high school experience for students, it will be necessary to reimagine the culture, systems, and structures within HPS. Strand 2 tactics include: building a school master schedule that allows teachers to collaborate in teams across academic disciplines; providing a continuum of ongoing professional development to faculty; updating district policies where necessary; and developing a strategy to collect, share, and monitor desired outcomes.

A key strength for HHS, as the district considers the career academy model, is its block schedule. Students are able to earn 16 credits each school year, allowing them to take the courses required for graduation and college enrollment, as well as a future sequence of CTE courses and additional electives to pursue the arts, foreign language, or explore other interests. Student scheduling will, however, need to reflect a new expectation that students complete a sequence of courses, rather than treating nearly every course as a one-off elective. Due to flat enrollment and rising costs, resources are increasingly at a premium as the district anticipates future reductions in its operating budget. That said, an

anticipated public referendum in the Fall of 2025 could provide capital funding to renovate and expand the high school, including the addition of equipment for enhanced CTE offerings.

While change can be difficult, HHS faculty and administration largely recognize that for a growing number of students, the traditional approach to high school isn't working. While traditional methods have value, in today's world they also keep the district from achieving its commitment to ensuring all students have equitable access to post-graduation success. To overcome these challenges (as well as the natural complacency that can accompany long-practiced habits and mindsets) the HHS school administration team must provide focused and steadfast leadership throughout, what will be, a transformation process for all stakeholders.

Strand 3: Transforming Partnerships Between the Schools and Community

Strand 3 is where the implementation of career academies moves beyond being a school program or district initiative to systemic change — change sustained through shared ownership with community partners. Tactics in this strand include: designing oversight committees that include both district and community leaders; developing a multi-step partnership process to scale real-world learning opportunities for students; and resourcing an ongoing communications and marketing strategy to inform and engage key constituencies at each phase of the transformation.

As a suburban, one-high school district in a major metropolitan area, HPS has both significant advantages and limitations in partnering with community organizations. Situated in the West Metro of the Twin Cities, HPS is in close proximity to some of Minnesota's largest employers, as well as small and medium businesses. This is a distinct advantage should the district wish to scale real-world learning opportunities for all high school students.

Finding a convening organization, a key partner in the community that plays a leadership role alongside the district, can be a challenge for a smaller school district whose nonprofit partners have limited staff capacity. Fortunately, HPS has a number of nonprofit, business, municipal, and post-secondary partners who would be eager to expand their current relationship with HHS in support of the career academy model. The district may also be able to build upon strategic relationships with key community partners who have a service area beyond HPS district boundaries. Some students have the opportunity to interact with business and community partners as part of their CTE course or as part of the limited enrollment in the ProPEL internship program, and these interactions have typically been initiated and sustained by individual teachers. As they currently exist, these limited relationships are not sufficient to support a systemic approach to school partnerships.

Strengths and Challenges

During the course of Phase 1: *Explore*, the Ford NGL coaching team has identified the following strengths and challenges HPS is likely to encounter during subsequent phases of the Ford NGL Roadmap Process:

Strand 1: Transforming Teaching and Learning

1. Current Course Offerings

    Strengths: HHS offers approximately 250 courses, which allows students to sample a wide range of subjects. Most courses that are not required for graduation function as one-off electives. Students have the potential for earning post-secondary credit in 24 AP courses (depending on the admitting college's requirements). For some students, courses in the arts, foreign language (College in the Schools program) and several CTE offerings allow for deepening expertise and skills in a particular area of interest.

    Challenges: The approach of elective exploration (in addition to courses required for graduation) provides little opportunity for students to pursue an area of potential career interest through a sequence of courses. University-bound students may miss opportunities to discover, explore, or rule out a future college major or career field. The missed opportunity may even be more consequential for students who must seek employment right after high school graduation. They have to decide on a technical or two-year program or must work to support themselves while enrolled in a university. While students enjoy the wide range of course offerings at HHS, we also heard from students who felt their high school experience could be more purposeful and organized.

2. Instruction

    Strengths: HPS has a longstanding reputation for innovation and academic excellence. Students were able cite examples of HHS teachers who clearly enjoyed teaching and made learning enjoyable. Some students shared examples of project or inquiry-based learning in certain classes, including from their memories of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in HPS middle schools. Hopkins Creates is an unaccredited, alternative program that emphasizes project-based learning, but we were not able to observe the program during our visit.

    Challenges: Students reported most of their classroom instructional time consisted of lecturing/explanation from the teacher and completing classwork

or practice problems. Students, who had positive memories of the IB Middle Years program in 8th grade, reported a jarring experience as freshman when they found the program did not continue into high school, and they encountered traditional instruction.

Moving to the academy model entails a much greater emphasis on teachers serving as the facilitators of project and inquiry based learning, collaborating across disciplines, and, when possible and appropriate, looking for opportunities to teach general education content through the lens of a career theme. Doing so would represent a significant shift in practice for HHS and would require intentional, ongoing education, training, and support.

3. Focus on Student Voice and Equity

Strengths: HPS has a long tradition of valuing student voice. This strength dates back to the beginning of the student school board representative program in 1991. (There are currently five, nonvoting, student board members.) Students in our focus group reported feeling valued and believe that they have a say in their education. Students are included on hiring panels for HHS staff, and there are a wide range of student clubs (including career and technical student organizations such as HOSA and DECA).

As diversity of its student body has increased, HPS has served as a leader in prioritizing student equity, inclusion, and antiracism. In 2021, the district commissioned an equity audit performed by Symmetry Systems Unlimited, which outlined detailed findings in the areas of teachers/staff, programs, achievement, and resources. In the current school year, HHS faculty and staff have invested in antiracism professional development.

Challenges: There are a number of important dimensions to ensuring all students, especially those furthest from economic opportunity, have equitable access to a quality education. This report focuses on the need for all HPS graduates to be prepared for post-graduation success.That means empowering each student to choose the right, next step after high school, whether that is employment, entrepreneurship, enlistment, or enrollment in a post-secondary program. In 2022, 76 percent of HHS graduates enrolled in a post-secondary program. (We were not able to find post-secondary completion data.)

For students wishing to pursue a specific-career interest, opportunities are limited. Although there were 32 CTE courses offered in 2024-2025, there is not an expectation that students will complete a sequence of courses in a specific pathway. Moreover, the only course in which students were able to

earn an industry-recognized credential was the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA course). With over 70 applicants for only 40 slots in two sections of the CNA course, there is a clear demand for more advanced CTE offerings.

Strand 2: Transforming the Culture, Systems, and Structures of Schools

4. District and School Leadership

Strengths: HPS has enjoyed leadership stability at the top of the organization since 2017 when Dr. Rhoda Mhiripiri-Reed became the district's first female and person of color to serve as superintendent. A visionary leader, Dr. Mhiripiri-Reed initiated the strategic planning process that resulted in the district's Vision 2031 plan and the Traits of a Hopkins Scholar. At Hopkins High School, the leadership team has helped the school community navigate incredibly difficult tensions among a diverse student body in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd in neighboring Minneapolis and the ongoing war in Gaza in the Middle East. Both the district and high school leadership recognize the current high school program does not adequately serve all students. These leaders want students to graduate with a plan for their future, a greater understanding of themselves and their interests, and with something of value beyond just a high school diploma.

Challenges: At the district level, the superintendent and leadership team clearly recognize the potential of the community-connected, career academy model to engage and support all students. However, if HPS decides to proceed through the Ford NGL Roadmap Process, there needs to be a district champion for an academy transformation who has the necessary decision making authority and access to the superintendent.

At the high school level, while the school leadership team has been adept at managing the impact of local and global events on the school community, multiple-stakeholder groups referenced a disconnect between many of the school faculty and the administration team around issues such as student expectations and support for colleagues. If HHS decides to implement a redesign around community-connected, career academies, it will be crucial for the school administration team to truly lead the transformation at the school level. Doing so involves providing professional supports, as well as developing and sustaining faculty buy-in and trust.

5. Staffing and Master Schedule

Strengths: Not every community in the Ford NGL Network operates on a block schedule with longer class periods and an expanded number of credit

opportunities, but many do. They choose to, because it enables students to take more electives and allows more class time for hands-on projects and applied learning. Because HHS currently operates on a block schedule where students have the opportunity to earn 16 credits over the course of four, nine-week periods each school year (the equivalent of 8 credits a year on a traditional, semester-based calendar), Hopkins should already have the number of teaching positions that would be necessary to implement academies for every high school student. In addition, HPS would not necessarily incur professional development costs associated with helping teachers move to a longer, block schedule, since teachers are already accustomed to operating in that structure.

Challenges: While HHS's block schedule is clearly a strength in terms of staffing resources and instructional time, we did hear concerns from several stakeholders about whether the current type of block schedule works well for all student populations. The main alternative to a four-block schedule based on quarters or semesters, would be an "A/B" block schedule where courses alternate days and most courses run throughout the entire school year. While the number of teaching FTE positions would not necessarily need to change in the academy model, there would be a clear need to create true CTE pathways (sequences of two or three courses in a specific program of study). In a block schedule, students can complete a CTE pathway and still have ample opportunity to enroll in the arts, foreign language and AP courses, but there may need to be a reduction in under-enrolled, single electives or the use of study hall periods.

HHS has a traditional approach to administration and counseling staff roles that would change during a transformation to the academy model. Instead of the current practice of three assistant principals being in charge of a myriad of school-wide duties and handling student discipline for a specific grade, each assistant principal would function as the principal of a specific academy within the larger high school. Based on the current enrollment of HHS and the fact that academies are typically composed of 350 - 450 students, this would likely require the addition of at least one additional assistant-principal position.

Intentional master scheduling is critical to the success of the academy model. Multiple stakeholder groups mentioned challenges around the current approach to master scheduling, such as a significant number of students receiving class schedules late or students being enrolled in courses they did not choose. Scheduling in the academy model comes with clear priorities. These often include: student being cohorted in core, general-education

courses by academy; common planning time for each academy's team of teachers; student completion of their sequence of CTE pathway courses; and schoolwide access to popular global courses such as band, the arts, foreign languages, and early-college credit. Should HHS move forward in implementing the Ford NGL Community-Connected, Career-Academy Model, it will be important for the school leadership team (and anyone else involved in scheduling) to receive training and support related to master scheduling in an academy model.

6. Financial Resources

Strengths: In addition to the aforementioned financial advantages of HHS already being staffed for a block schedule, the high school also has the potential of receiving significant capital resources for renovation and expansion. Through its partnership with architecture and design firms SitelogIQ and Fielding International, HPS hosted a series of "Facilities for the Future" focus groups. Based on these conversations, the district may pursue a capital bond measure for voter approval as early as November 2025, just as the district considers implementing the academy model. In addition to renovating the existing high school facility and constructing a new wing, the bond measure has the potential to fund equipment and laboratory space for additional CTE programming.

Challenges: Due to flat student enrollment, the rising costs of salaries and benefits, and minimal increases in state funding, HPS anticipates making reductions of approximately $7m in their future operating budget. Because the move to an academy model is a systemic transformation and not a new program, school districts in the Ford NGL Network often begin by realigning existing positions to staff the academy structure including: district transformation lead; assistant principals and counselors assigned by academy; academy team leads (existing teaching positions that often receive a stipend for their additional leadership responsibilities); and academy coach (serves as the liaison between the faculty/students and all the school's business/community partners). Aside from staffing considerations, there will also be a need for significant professional development (PD) for school faculty and staff. These trainings, which should include ongoing support, may include: distributed leadership, effective teaming, and project-based learning. The initial cost of training an entire school faculty can be significant, but these trainings can often be staged across multiple years based on a school's implementation schedule. It will be important to allocate smaller PD outlays in the years beyond full implementation to onboard and support new hires.

7. Communication and Data

Strengths: As a large organization with many internal and external stakeholders, school districts almost always want to improve their communication practices. Even so, across all of our focus groups at this early stage of the process, we encountered interest and excitement (along with a few, typical questions and concerns) about exploring the academy model. In addition to the interest expressed by internal stakeholders, HPS's nonprofit, business, municipal, and post-secondary stakeholders were particularly excited by the possibilities to expand their current relationships with the district. The most recent HPS *Update* newsletter posted on the district's website features a lead article on the district's CTE programs, communicating the student impact of these offerings.

Challenges: While the HPS *Update* newsletter was a recent highlight, the district's informative, four-page "Hopkins High School 2024-2025 School Profile" found on the HPS website does not contain any information about the school's CTE offerings. Every community that goes through the Ford NGL Roadmap Process has the challenge of communicating consistently and effectively to all internal and external stakeholders about what the transformation might entail, when design decisions will be made, and how people can be involved. If leaders at different levels of the organization provide conflicting or incorrect information, the result is often confusion or misinformation. The absence of regular, coordinated communication can lead to the circulation of false rumors or myths.

In its simplest form, HPS is in Phase 1 and is exploring the possibility of high school transformation to the academy model. Phase 2 would involve envisioning what the school transformation would look like and why change is needed. Phase 3 is the development of a multi-year plan for implementation and is where many of the design decisions will need to be made. Phase 4 is a multi-year process of implementing the academy model in which minor modifications and refinements are often made. Should HPS move forward, the district and its community partners should be prepared to develop communication resources, such as a web page, email updates, and FAQs that inform all stakeholders where the district is in the process and how interested persons can stay informed or get involved.

Easy access to reliable student performance data will be a challenge for most Minnesota schools given the high rates that students and families opt out of the state's standardized testing program. At the district level, despite the efforts of HPS staff, we also found it difficult to access data that illustrate

the college and career readiness of students, the post-secondary completion rate of HPS graduates, or the number and types of real-world learning experiences for students. A transformation to the academy model will require new processes to collect and share data to ensure all students have equitable access to real-world learning experiences.

Strand 3: Transforming Partnerships Between the Schools and Community

8. Employer-Education Partnerships

Strengths: The stakeholders we talked to in our business, nonprofit, and municipal focus groups were very interested that HPS was exploring the Ford NGL Community-Connected, Career Academy Model and were excited about the possibility of partnering to provide real-world learning opportunities for students. Several teachers, particularly CTE educators, are actively engaging with a number of businesses. The culinary program, for example, works with a number of leaders in the local restaurant and hospitality industry. Students in the CNA health-care course experience field work at three different long-term-care facilities. Social studies teachers report maintaining a list of professionals who have previously hosted student interns through the ProPEL course.

Challenges: The efforts of several HHS teachers to engage employers in the community is truly admirable and, potentially, life-changing for their students. One teacher reported “cold-calling” area businesses hoping they would get involved in supporting her program and students. Given the demands on teachers, however, that approach is not sustainable or scalable. In order to support the academy model in what might become dozens of partnerships between HHS and area employers, HPS will need to partner with key community organizations to develop a comprehensive system. This partnership system, which is typically designed with Ford NGL coaching and support during Phase 3: *Plan*, will provide clarity around roles and responsibilities; structures of support; needed tools and resources; and a seven-step process that includes partner recruitment, onboarding, evaluation, and celebration.

9. Strategic Partners in the Community

Strengths: HPS has a number of highly-engaged nonprofit partners such as ICA, MoveFWD, MyHealth, Opportunity Partners, ResourceWest, and St. David’s Center. These partners provide an important range of services to district students and families. A number of these nonprofits come together quarterly as the Schools and Communities in Partnership (SCIP) Hopkins

Collaborative, which is staffed by HPS's Adult & Community Enrichment Coordinator. The Hopkins Education Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization that raises money from individuals and organizations to support HPS initiatives. In addition, HPS has a partnership with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber which merged with the Plymouth-based TwinWest Chamber of Commerce in 2020. As part of this partnership, the Minneapolis Chamber convenes CTE advisory councils for the Hennepin West Consortium. The workforce and economic data provided to the Consortium by Real Time Talent through this partnership is among the best we have encountered. Finally, Children First, a collective impact nonprofit that is part of the StriveTogether Cradle to Career National Network, has recently expanded its service area beyond St. Louis Park to include Hopkins and is actively exploring partnership opportunities with HPS.

Challenges: Community organizations can play a variety of important roles in supporting a school district's transformation to the Ford NGL Community-Connected, Career-Academy Model. Through decades of experience, Ford NGL has identified the importance of identifying a "convening organization" in the community that is willing to serve as a lead partner with the district throughout the transformation. The identification of a convening organization by the end of Phase 2: *Envision* can sometimes be a challenge for smaller school districts and communities, because the capacity of their partner community organizations can be extremely limited. Access to Ford NGL's experienced coaches and network of communities (both large and small) can be an invaluable resource in the identification of a suitable and aligned convening organization.

CONCLUSIONS

Hopkins Public Schools has several reasons to consider transforming the high school experience for students. While most HHS students enroll in some type of post-secondary education after graduation, there is a belief among some faculty and students that there is a disconnect between the academic program at HHS and the world outside of education. In addition, for the approximately 25 percent of students who do not enroll in post-secondary education, only two CTE programs currently offer the opportunity to earn a certification valued by a potential employer. Today's students at HHS have a lot of opportunities to sample a wide variety of elective courses. Setting a district expectation for students to complete a career or thematic pathway during their high school career, while still retaining room in their schedule for electives, can benefit all students.

Several internal and external stakeholders also noted that Hopkins Public Schools is in a very competitive environment, and, with the growing diversity of its student body, there is an opportunity for the high school to distinguish itself beyond athletics and its legacy academic programs. Several school board members mentioned growing enrollment as a goal. That can be a real challenge when students or families can choose a plethora of nearby private schools, charter schools, or affluent, neighboring school districts. A high school transformation that ensures all students complete a pathway of interest, develop professional skills, interact with dozens of employers in the community, and graduate with something more than a high-school diploma could be a differentiator that draws students and families across the West Metro.

HPS has numerous strengths that will be invaluable to the district should it proceed through the Ford NGL Roadmap Process, as documented above and included in the appendix. In our view, the question is not whether to transform the high school experience but more of an issue of determining the right timing. While HPS has many strengths, it can also expect to encounter significant challenges. Two issues should be prominent factors in the district's decision on when to move forward. The first challenge is district leadership's assessment of when the high school leadership team has the capacity to lead the school faculty successfully through the transformational process. The second challenge is ensuring there are budgetary resources for sustaining the transformation during what may become annual reductions to the general operating budget in a flat-enrollment environment. This challenge is complicated by the impending departure of the district's chief financial officer for another school district. HPS may determine that additional time is needed to adequately address both or either of these challenges before moving to Phase 2: *Envision*.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

We recommend HPS embark on the Ford NGL Roadmap Process by initiating Phase 2: *Envision*, but only after district leadership feels they have the primary challenges addressed that were identified in the preceding section. This may involve additional facilitation and support for the high school faculty and staff or additional time to hire and onboard a new, chief-financial officer. Other challenges identified in this report can be addressed during the course of the Ford NGL Roadmap Process, but addressing the two, primary challenges described in the conclusion before proceeding to Phase 2: *Envision* will be invaluable in setting the district up for success.

Once HPS is ready to proceed through the Ford NGL Roadmap Process, as part of a potential Phase 2: *Envision* engagement, Ford NGL can:

- Facilitate district and community partner conversations to develop a clear vision of how high school transformation can support all HPS graduates, as well as a shared understanding of the "why" behind the transformation. Phase 2: *Envision* would also include ensuring the high school transformation connects to and advances the Traits of a Hopkins Scholar.
- Assist HPS in identifying community partner organizations and their specific roles in transforming the secondary-school experience (i.e., business partner recruitment, interpreting regional workforce and economic data, annual review of CTE programs, identification of a convening organization, etc.).
- Assist HPS and its community partners in devising governance structures to implement the Ford NGL Community-Connected, Career-Academy Model (i.e., steering committee, operating committee, tactic teams, etc.).

We have found that successful school and district transformations utilize a design-thinking approach that embodies a number of key principles including:

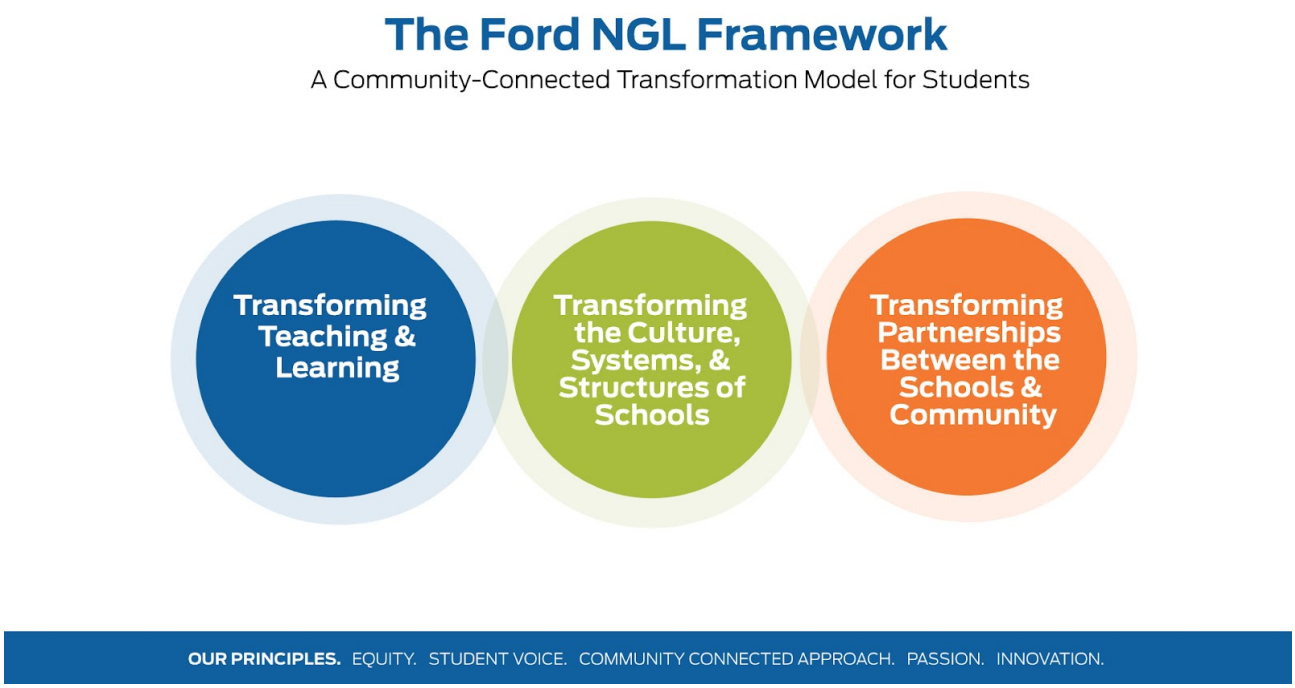
- **Strategic:** The design is framed in terms of exploring new possibilities instead of exploiting old ideas. It is focused on images of potentiality for preparing young people for their future.
- **Systemic:** The design addresses school, program, and curriculum components systemically, that is, understanding their interrelationships and interactions and proposing an interconnected set of initiatives. The design reflects an understanding of how the school can fit within the larger system of the community it serves.
- **Collaborative:** The design is a product of collaborative action among individuals, organizations, and agencies in the school and larger community. Students and families are involved in the design.

- **Comprehensive:** The design framework addresses the needs of the whole child and every child. The design addresses all the teaching and learning environments in which students might develop their competencies, as well as the many external services available to support students' readiness to engage in deep and productive learning.
- **Intelligent:** The design is supported by comprehensive, high-quality information about all levels of school, program, and student performance. The design is guided by high-quality research and exemplary practice.
- **Deliberate:** The design includes a plan for staging and phasing implementation. Prototyping of key components and features is conducted.

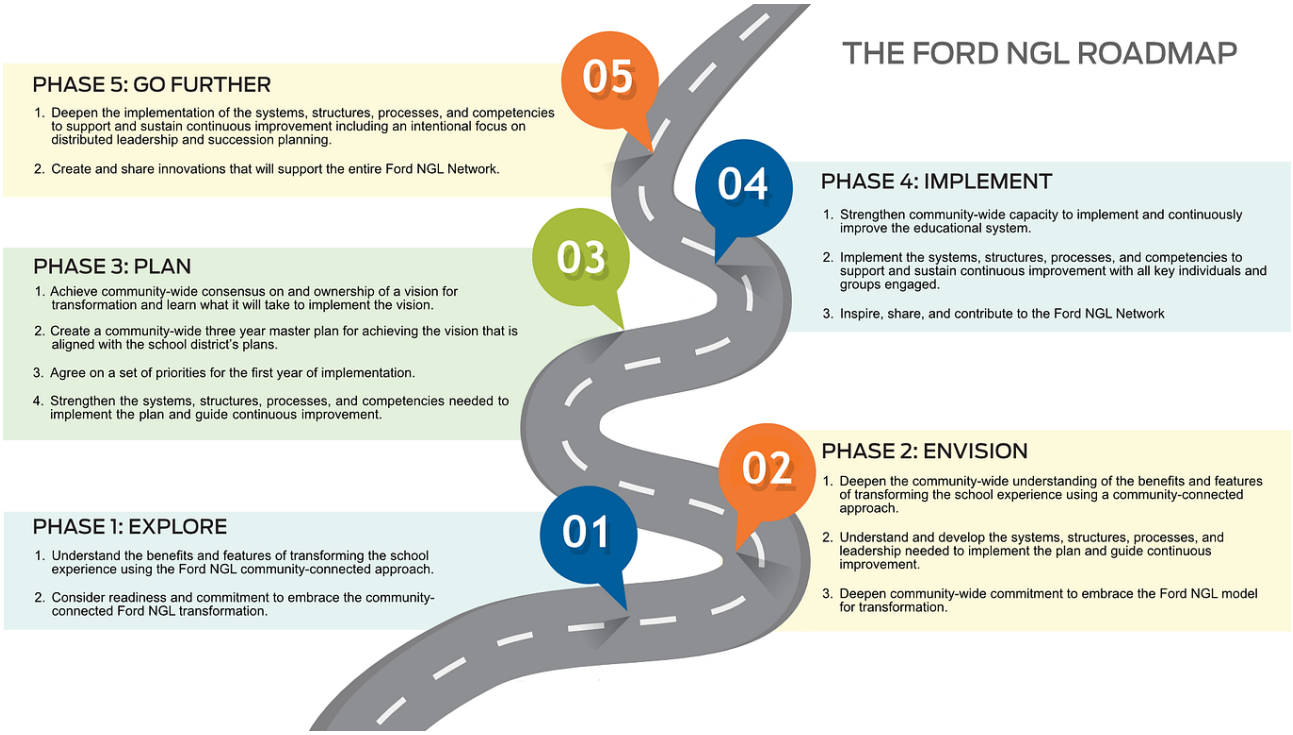
The Ford Next Generation Learning team looks forward to discussing the findings in this report and working alongside HPS and its community partners.

APPENDIX

FORD NGL FRAMEWORK



FORD NGL ROADMAP



HOPKINS HIGH SCHOOL CTE COURSE ENROLLMENTS (2024-2025)

Department	Course	Student Count
Academic Development	ProPEL	28
Art Education	Media Arts 1 - Photo & Web Des	131
Art Education	Media Arts 2 - Photography	15
Art Education	Media Arts 2 - Web Design	
Business / Marketing Education	Accounting 1	38
Business / Marketing Education	Advertising	30
Business / Marketing Education	Business Management / CLEP	35
Business / Marketing Education	Civil Law	64
Business / Marketing Education	Criminal Law	170
Business / Marketing Education	Finance and Investment	106
Business / Marketing Education	Keyboarding 1	125
Business / Marketing Education	Marketing / CLEP	37
Business / Marketing Education	Personal Finance	379
Business / Marketing Education	Personal Finance - ONLINE	15
Business / Marketing Education	Personal Finance (alt day)	67
Business / Marketing Education	Sports & Entertainment Mrktng	72
Family & Consumer Science	#SurvivalAfterHighSchool	49
Family & Consumer Science	Career Search	22
Family & Consumer Science	Child Psychology 1	103
Family & Consumer Science	Culinary 101	384

Family & Consumer Science	**Culinary 102**	**105**
Family & Consumer Science	**Culinary 103**	**17**
Family & Consumer Science	**Housing & Interior Design**	**74**
Health Care	**Exploration of Medical/Health Fields**	**30**
Health Care	**First Aid/CPR/AED (Advanced)**	**47**
Health Care	**Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)**	**38**
Technology Education	**AP Computer Science Principles**	**16**
Technology Education	**Civil Engineering & Arch 1**	**18**
Technology Education	**Computer Programming 1**	**67**
Technology Education	**Computer Programming 2**	**10**
Technology Education	**Construction**	**40**
Technology Education	**Information Technology 1**	**14**
Technology Education	**Information Technology 2**	**3**
Technology Education	**Woodworking 1**	**122**
Technology Education	**Woodworking 2**	**32**
Total Enrollments		**2,503**

TRAITS OF A HOPKINS SCHOLAR

HOPKINS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Traits of a Hopkins Scholar

Critical thinking means analyzing and evaluating an issue in order to form a judgment. Critical thinkers learn through interdisciplinary inquiry. Hopkins scholars who think critically are prepared to innovate to shape a better world.

Critical thinkers:
- Are reflective
- Are able to identify & challenge biases & assumptions
- Are innovators and problem solvers
- Are cognitively flexible

Global & well-traveled means appreciating the complexity of the world and our interconnectedness within it. Global learners travel outside their schools to learn. Hopkins scholars who are global believe in their capacity to influence change and advocate for the dignity and well-being of individuals, communities, and the Earth.

Global learners:
- Are multilingual
- Are culturally agile
- Are change-makers
- Are engaged with local & global communities

Confidence means willingness to approach uncertainty by activating strengths and drawing on collective resources. Confident learners are agents in designing their learning. Hopkins scholars who are confident learn from successes and failures, can take and give feedback, and question their internal and external critics.

Confident learners:
- Are able to generate & articulate ideas
- Are aware of strengths & areas of growth
- Are resilient
- Are honest

Voice means learners can express themselves in their most authentic way and make choices in how they express themselves. Having a voice empowers students to participate in creating their learning environment and the goals, policies, and procedures which inform it. Hopkins scholars contribute their voices to strengthen communities and create conditions for all voices to be heard.

Vocal learners:
- Are expressing their thoughts & ideas in various mediums
- Are listeners as well as contributors
- Are aware of how they can make a difference
- Are restorative community members

Holistic means learning through the whole self: mind, body, spirit, emotions, identities, and community memberships. Holistic learners develop emotional skills and intelligence integrated with academic skills and knowledge. Hopkins scholars who are holistic understand themselves in relation to others and have a bravely optimistic sense of self.

Holistic learners:
- Are emotionally intelligent
- Are balanced socially, academically, mentally & physically
- Are able to set healthy goals and limits
- Are mindful

Empathetic means responding to others from a position of understanding their feelings, needs, and points of view. Empathetic learners collaborate, growing through dialogue and interactions with others. Hopkins scholars who are empathetic have a sense of shared responsibility - building relationships, shifting perspectives, and valuing each person's contribution.

Empathetic learners:
- Are open-minded
- Are an active part of a collective
- Are inclusive
- Are kind