



Saint Paul
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Career 
Pathways

IMPACT REPORT

2025-2026

Program Overview

Career Pathways in Saint Paul Public Schools gives students the opportunity to explore high-wage and in-demand careers through college and career curriculum, personal learning plans, stackable credentials, certifications, and work experiences.

Students can explore pathways through districtwide programs and in each of the four SPPS Career Fields: Science & Medical, Human Services, Innovative & Emerging Technologies, and Business & Communications at Central, Como Park, Harding, Highland Park, Humboldt, Johnson and Washington High Schools with specific offerings at Open World Learning, Creative Arts, AGAPE, Gateway to College, LEAP, Online SPPS, and Gordon Parks.

Our work is driven by the mission to close the employment and wealth gaps in our community.

Inspiring students to think critically, pursue their dreams and change the world.



Thank you CTE teachers! The work highlighted in this report is a direct result of your dedication to our students. By providing hands-on career opportunities, you positively impact their trajectories, setting them up for successful futures.



Student Spotlight

AVIANNA



School: Humboldt High School



Status: Class of 2027



Program: FFA, 3M STEP



Student Voice: My experience in Career and Technical classes has helped me explore what I want to do in the future for a job. I've done welding, education, business, the National FFA Organization, Earn as You Learn, 3M STEP, and more. These are all very different paths; some I've considered doing for life until I kept searching and found something that I liked better. But because there was so much that I like, I found it difficult to choose what I wanted to do. So I kept searching until luckily, the STEP program helped me make a clear decision.



Shout Out: Avianna is a strong role model. She inspires those around her through her strong drive and natural ability to make the most of every opportunity. Avianna is Humboldt's FFA Club's Co-Treasurer and part of AJROTC. She completed her Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, and Office Specialist Associate, and IT Specialist Cybersecurity certifications through the Earn as You Learn program.



- FFA Officer
- Microsoft Office Specialist
- 3M STEP Intern



BUSINESS & COMMUNICATIONS

Students Enrolled: 2,088

Sample Courses: Introduction to Business, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Graphic Design, Broadcasting

Career Pathways: Marketing, Finance, Entrepreneurship, Media, Graphic Design

Partnership: Saint Paul College



7,101

Unique students participated in Career Pathways courses

INNOVATIVE & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Students Enrolled: 3,168

Sample Courses: Aerospace Engineering, Agriculture, Auto, Computer Science, Operating Engineers. PLTW Engineering Essentials, Robotics

Career Pathways: Aviation, Engineering, Information Technology, Trades, Robotics

Partnerships: IUOE Local 49, Project Lead the Way, University of Minnesota





HUMAN SERVICES

Students Enrolled: 1,566

Sample Courses: Exploring Teaching Profession 1 & 2, Introduction to Urban Education & Multicultural Approaches, Careers in Criminal Justice

Career Pathways: Counseling, Education, Law, Public Safety, Social Work

Partnerships: Century College, Minneapolis College, and University of Minnesota



SCIENCE & MEDICAL

Students Enrolled: 1,598

Sample Courses: Introduction to Medical Careers, Certified Nursing Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician

Career Pathways: Nursing, Physical Therapy, Emergency Services, Lab Tech

Partnerships: St. Catherine University, Century College, Saint Paul College, Saint Paul Fire Department





Student Spotlight

JOHN



School: Johnson High School



Status: Class of 2027



Program: Education Pathway



- Education intern at Farnsworth Elementary



Student Voice: I took the University of Minnesota's Exploring the Teaching Profession CIS class where I learned about how students learn, the classroom environment, curriculum writing, and much more. I wanted to learn more so I signed up for an Education Internship. I really enjoy working with kids because they showed me things that I didn't know. Working with kids makes me want to help the younger generation in every way possible. Being able to take the class made me feel like I was a teacher in training. Prior to education classes, I explored career pathways with business, flight, and engineering classes.



Shout Out: John made a real impact at Farnsworth. He enjoyed reading with students and helped students select books to inspire a love of reading. John excelled at asking students to do academic work while making it fun. He made a lasting impression on every student he worked with. John plans to study education in college and will be an asset to any school community.



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STUDENT VOICE

Based on focus group and survey feedback, the Career Pathways team and CTE teachers developed foundational and exploratory courses that are offered at Central, Como Park, Harding, Highland Park, Humboldt, Johnson, and Washington High Schools. These courses give students a chance to explore their interests and decide what to pursue further.

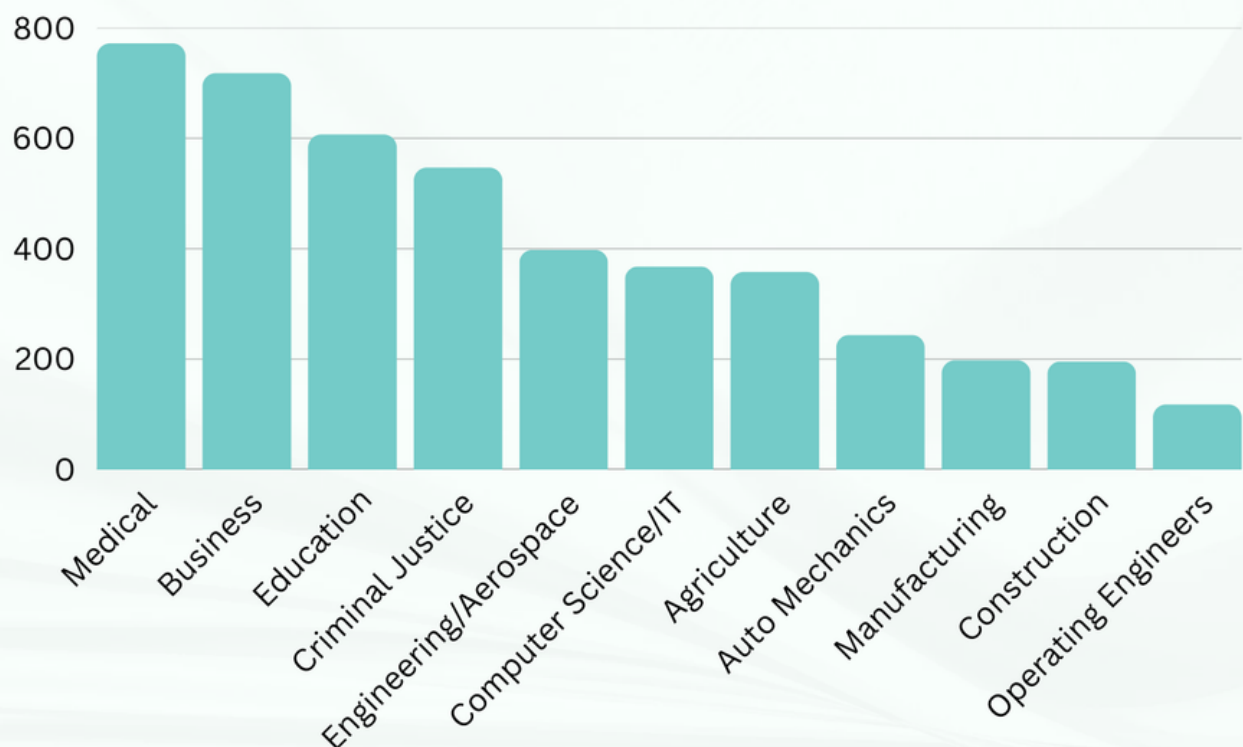
Exploratory Courses:

- Introduction to Medical Careers
- Introduction to Business
- Exploring Education & Social Justice
- PLTW Engineering Essentials or PLTW Computer Essentials



CAREER PATHWAYS STUDENT INTEREST

● Student Responses Grades 9-12



"My internship experience taught me a lot about different careers. I enjoyed being able to work with a professional in STEM and to experience what their daily job life was like."

Central High School Student



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WORK-BASED LEARNING

140

students participated in
PAID Spring Internships

Youth Jobs 1 (YJ1) focus on developing foundational employment readiness skills for students often engaging in their first jobs.

Youth Jobs 2 (YJ2) focus on career pathway experiences, centered on independent and project-based work. Interns have previous work experience or have taken Career Pathway courses.

In partnership with the City of Saint Paul's Right program, SPPS spring internships are paid work experiences for 9-12th graders who have prepared by taking the Career Seminar course. Since the program began in 2021, **800+** students have explored career pathways and gained work readiness skills in spring internships.

47

employer worksites



20

students participated in
3M STEP Internships

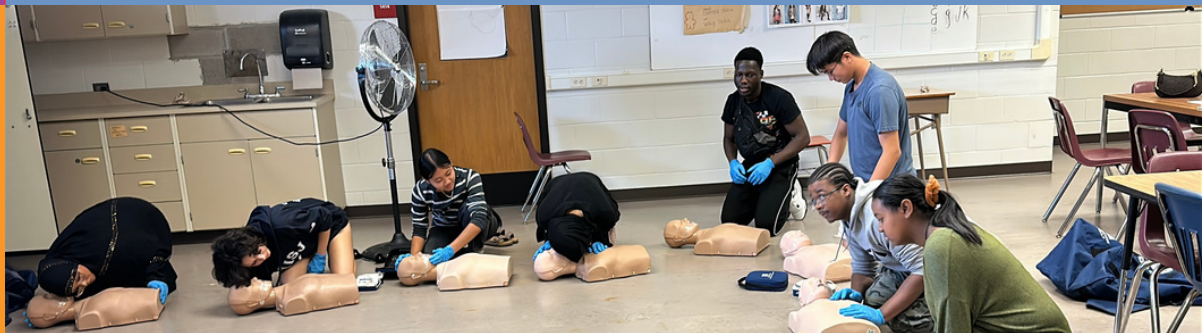
3M STEP (Science Training Encouragement Program) provides an immersive experience in STEM careers for high school juniors who attend SPPS. In this program, students explore STEM careers at 3M and conduct research alongside a 3M scientist.

The program has two phases:

- Phase 1 includes paid trainings with Right Track & 3M Site visits (spring)
- Phase 2 includes paid STEM internship experiences with 3M Hosts (summer)

23

students participated in
Genesys Works
internships



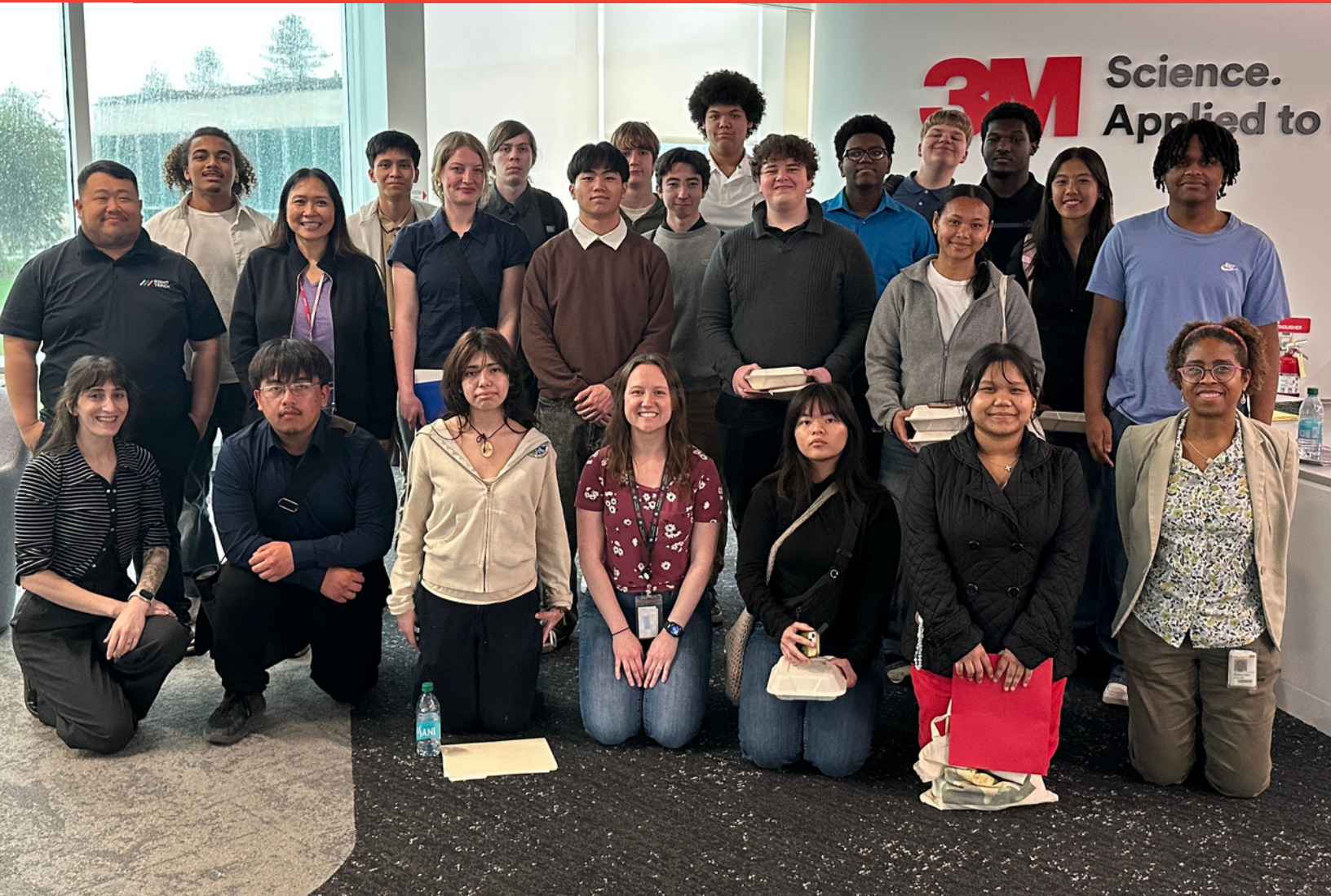
370

industry certifications
earned by students

Students explore career pathways through earning industry-recognized certifications in their courses or through the Earn As You Learn (EAYL) program. In EAYL, students complete any two industry recognized certifications and other program requirements. Any SPPS high school student can complete Earn as You Learn (EAYL) asynchronously. To date, students have earned 2400+ industry-recognized certifications.

“Saint Paul Public Schools has been an invaluable partner in our shared commitment to preparing Saint Paul’s young people for success. Together, the City of Saint Paul’s youth employment & training program and SPPS create opportunities for students to gain meaningful work experience, build career-ready skills, and develop connections with supportive adults. This long-standing partnership reflects what is possible when our institutions come together with a shared belief in the potential of every young person.”

Nardos Tesfalidet, Right Track Program Supervisor



Our partnership between the St. Paul Area Chamber and St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS) is a critical investment in the future of our students, our workforce, and our local economy. By collaborating, we bridge the gap between education and industry, equipping students with the skills and experiences needed to excel in high-demand careers.”



B Kyle, President and CEO, St. Paul Area Chamber

2025-26 PARTNERSHIPS

With the invaluable support of our partners, we've helped students forge strong, successful career pathways, empowering them to thrive both professionally and personally.

TOP STRATEGIC PARTNERS

- 3M
- Best Prep
- Black Men Teach
- Blaze Credit Union
- Century College
- City of Saint Paul Right Track
- Construction Careers Foundation
- Finishing Trades Institute of Upper Midwest
- Greater Twin Cities United Way
- IUOE Local 49
- Junior Achievement North
- Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
- Saint Paul College
- St. Catherine University
- St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
- St. Paul Fire Department
- University of Minnesota

TOP FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

- 3Mgives
- Blaze Credit Union
- Greater Twin Cities United Way
- Minnesota Department of Education
- Operating Engineers Pathway Partners
- Project Lead the Way
- Travelers

CTE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

- DECA (marketing, finance, and management)
- FFA (agriculture, food, natural resources)
- HOSA (healthcare and medical)



JENNY WINKELAAR & IUOE Local 49

2025-26 Partner of the Year



On behalf of the Saint Paul Public Schools community, we are overjoyed to honor Jenny Winkelaar from the Operating Engineers Local 49 as our Partner of the Year!

Jenny has spent her life connected to the construction industry and the people who make it work. Throughout her career, she has worked in both the public and private sectors, with a passion for creating opportunities for people who have struggled to find their place in the workforce. Her work has always been rooted in a simple belief: everyone deserves the opportunity to find dignity, purpose, and a path to a better future through meaningful work.

Her passionate leadership and unwavering persistence were integral in bringing the Operating Engineers Pathway and hands-on sandbox to Saint Paul Public Schools. Jenny's tenacity and collaborative approach brought over a dozen partners together to build the sandbox and pathway in our district through numerous hours of donated time and project management, as well as significant financial donations in materials and supplies.

Though the pathway is only in its second year and still growing in Saint Paul Public Schools, it's about more than just a sandbox. Students in the pathway have expressed gratitude for finding "their people" and experiencing a strong sense of belonging during their senior year. The pathway has provided a supportive community where students feel connected, valued, and understood. Students have had meaningful opportunities to explore their interests, identify their strengths, and help guide their plans for life after graduation.

Under Jenny's leadership, the pathway has grown into a nationally recognized model for connecting young people with careers in the skilled trades. The program not only helps unions develop the next generation of highly qualified workers, but more importantly, it has changed lives by showing students that a career in the field of heavy equipment operations can provide opportunity, stability, pride, and a future.

Jenny - thank you for your dedication and vision in creating meaningful opportunities for dignity, belonging, and possibility for SPPS students. We are honored to be your partner and grateful for the opportunity to be part of this work. We can't wait to continue growing this program with you and the many incredible partners who support and strengthen this pathway!

THANK YOU!

We thank our students, teachers, partners, families, and staff for their continued support and work for our programs.

We invite organizations to join us in this impactful work by exploring partnership opportunities with us. Together, we can create even more pathways to success and open doors to lasting career achievements for students and our community.

Visit us at www.SPPS.org/CareerPathways

