

BEARDEN HIGH SCHOOL

2026 - 2027 SCHOOL PROFILE



ADMINISTRATION

Principal	Debbie Sayers
Curriculum Principal	David Rynkiewicz
H2S2 Academy Principal	Stephen Harris
STEMA Academy Principal	Rebecca Bitner
BLC Academy Principal	Donald Balcom
Freshman Academy Principal	Chris Caruthers

| NASSP | TN ASSP | College Board | SACAC | NACAC |

8352 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919 | (865) 539-7800 | Fax: (865) 539-7805 | CEEB Code: 431-090

beardenhs.knoxschools.org

THE SCHOOL & THE COMMUNITY

Bearden High School is a comprehensive 4-year high school with a current enrollment of around 1,900 students in grades nine through twelve. Designated a 1:1 Technology school in 2013 and a Pre-AP school in 2018, Bearden has also earned a U.S. News Silver Award and Niche’s list of 2026 best high schools. Our high school has gained accreditation from the Tennessee State Board of Education. In the 2024-25 school year, BHS fully transitioned to an Academy-based program.

BHS Foundation and PTSO are active parent & alumni-based organizations that provide support through voluntary efforts and fiscal contributions which enhance instruction and student support.

Bearden High School exists to help all students become responsible, self-directed, lifelong learners capable of functioning effectively in a global society.

Bearden High School is in a middle/upper income community in the fastest growing sector of Knoxville. The City of Knoxville is home to 202,500 people with a county population of 511,500. The area has seen a population growth of over 15.5% in the last fifteen years. Knoxville serves a business and industrial community as well as being home to The University of Tennessee and neighbors Oak Ridge National Lab. Our parental community is largely professional in nature, drawing from our proximity to science, engineering, medical, legal, and university arenas. Students at Bearden speak 39 different languages and come from a variety of backgrounds. Bearden has three CDC classrooms and boasted a 97% graduation rate in 2026.

STUDENT BODY DEMOGRAPHICS & ENROLLMENT STATISTICS*

* Enrollment based upon Fall 2026 statistics

Asian	5%	12th	470 students
Black/African American	12%	11th	450 students
Hispanic.....	15%	10th	454 students
White	67%	9th	502 students
American Indian/P. Islander..	1%		
Econ Disadvantaged	31.3%		

ACT & AP STATISTICS*

Bearden High School	21.5 ACT	Total AP Exam Takers ..	747
Knox County	20.5 ACT	Total AP Exams	1,355
Tennessee	19.3 ACT	Students Scoring 3+	590
		Percentage of	
		Students Scoring 3+	79%

* Reported ACT scores are averages and AP Exam data is based upon 2026 statistics.

BEARDEN ACADEMICS

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The academic program is organized on a block schedule. The annual load is 9 credits, and the district requires a minimum of 28 credits for graduation. Mathematics requirements include Algebra I & II, Geometry, & Advanced Mathematics. Science requirements include Biology, Chemistry, & 1 Lab Science. Social Studies requirements include World History, US History, Government and Economics.

English	4 Credits	Wellness/PE	1.5 Credits
Mathematics.....	4 Credits	Fine Art	1 Credit
Science	3 Credits	Personal Finance	0.5 Credits
Social Studies.....	3 Credits	*Computer Science.....	1 Credit
		(*Beginning Class of 2028)	

*Additional Points: Honors courses: 0.5 quality point;
NIC/SDC/AP and DE courses: 1.0 quality point.

GRADING POLICY & RANK

Knox County Schools reports class rank in deciles. Class rank is determined following mid-term senior year grades. Mid-term grades may not have additional points added. Transcripts include both a weighted and unweighted GPA based on a 4.0 scale. Additional percentage points are added to students’ final weighted averages in honors courses (3 pts.), Statewide & Local Dual Credit courses, National Industry Certifications (4 pts.), and Dual Enrollment (DE) & AP (5 pts.). Bearden is also approved by the College Board to offer the Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma Program.

Letter Grade*	Numerical	Decile	GPA Range
A	90+	I	4.61-4.34
B	80-89	II	4.33-4.15
C	70-79	III	4.14-3.94
D	60-69	IV	3.93-3.78
F	0-59	V	3.77-3.60
		VI	3.59-3.34
		VII	3.33-3.08
		VII	3.07-2.75
		IX	2.74-2.42
		X	2.41-below

COURSE OFFERINGS

Honors (24)	AP (30)	
Algebra I, II	Art-Studio 2D & 3D	Statistics
Anatomy & Physiology	Art Studio Drawing	U.S. Gov & Politics
Band	Biology	U.S. History
Biology I, II	Calculus AB/BC	World History
Calculus	Chemistry	Music Theory.
Chemistry I, II	Computer Sci Princ	*Computer Sci A
English I, II	Economics-Macro	*Physics I
French III, IV	Economics-Micro	*Pre-Calculus
Geometry	English Lit & Lang	
German III, IV	Environmental Sci	World Language
Latin III, IV	European History	German
Orchestra	Human Geography	Spanish
Physical World Concepts	Physics C Mechanics	French
Physics	Psychology	
Pre-Calculus	Research	*Available through
Spanish III, IV	Seminar	Niswonger
		Foundation

COUNSELING & ACADEMY ROLES*

Director of College Counseling	Susan Bolinger
	<i>susan.bolinger@knoxschools.org</i>
Freshman Academy (Last Name A-K)*.....	Leslie Wiles
	<i>leslie.wiles@knoxschools.org</i>
Freshman Academy (Last Name L-Z)*.....	Jessica Floyd
	<i>jessica.floyd@knoxschools.org</i>
STEMA Academy*.....	Kathryn Parrott
	<i>kathryn.parrott@knoxschools.org</i>
Dept. Chair & H2S2 Academy*	Nicole Mullinax
	<i>nicole.mullinax@knoxschools.org</i>
BLC Academy*.....	Brian Tanner
	<i>brian.tanner@knoxschools.org</i>
865 Academies Coach	Kelley Darnell
	<i>kelley.darnell@knoxschools.org</i>
College & Career Asst	Pam Canon
	<i>pamela.canon@knoxschools.org</i>
Registrar.....	Joanne Rubash
	<i>joanne.rubash@knoxschools.org</i>
Counseling Secretary	Becky Dickerson
	<i>rebecca.dickerson@knoxschools.org</i>

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS

2026 TAA Arts Rich High School of the Year
Tennessee Arts Academy

CLASS OF 2026	OTHER AWARDS
2 US Presidential Scholar Nominees	Key Club Largest Donation & Service to Ronald McDonald House, Plat. Div.
3 National Merit Finalists	JROTC Most Outstanding Unit Top 23
3 National Merit Semi-Finalists	Nationally 3 rd Consecutive Year
9 National Merit Commended	10 Times Grand Champion Band
Morehead Cain Finalist	7 TN All State Band
Jefferson Scholar	4 TN All State Concert & Jazz Bands
Park Scholar	1 TN All State Theatre Honors
Robertson Scholar	5 TN All State Honors Orchestra
2 Hagan Foundation Scholars	1 TN All State Acting Honors
Ned McWherter Scholars	4 TN All State Honors Theatre
Questbridge Finalist	International Championship for HS
Gates Scholar	ACappella 3 rd Place Choir
Golden Eagle Scholarship	22 Student Athletes Letters of Intent
3 Seniors with perfect ACT scores	Knoxville Museum of Art Annual East Tennessee Regional Student Art Comp.
2 World Language Honors Seals	Americas Most Artistic Kid Nom.
8 College Board First	Dogwood Arts Epiphone Comp.
Generation Recognition Scholars	Cattywampus Puppet Council
52 Capstone Diplomas	Earned Superior Ratings in all Categories for 8 th Consecutive Year Band
15 Seal of Biliiteracy Awards	12 Top Three Caption Placements in Marching Band
104 AP Scholars w/Distinction	East TN Performing Arts Association
36 AP Scholars with Honors	Top Five Placements at Championships for Ensembles Band
85 AP Scholars	Bob Ross America’s Most Artistic Kid
28,819 community service hours	2 nd Place Quarterfinalist
\$37,241,971 in scholarships	2026 Scholastic Arts Gold Key Award
200 National Industry Certifications	Dogwood Arts Festival Chalk Walk
	2026 Best in Show
	TN Theatre Association 2025 All-Star Cast & Best Student Director
	23 HOSA Leadership Conference

THE BHS ACADEMIES



AN OVERVIEW

New to Bearden, career-themed academies at select district high schools are known as “The 865 Academies.” This approach helps students create stronger connections between classroom knowledge and workplace success. Beginning with the class of 2026, Bearden High School now offers 15 academy pathways within four specialized academies: the Freshman Academy, the STEM & the Arts Academy (STEMA), the Health, Human Science, & Services Academy (H2S2), and the Business, Leadership, & Communications Academy (BLC).

THE FRESHMAN ACADEMY

Freshman Academy is designed to prepare 9th-graders for selecting their Academy Pathway, including a Freshman Seminar to identify interests, aptitudes and skills; Career exploration activities and guest speakers from various industries; exposure to Advanced Academics; and Industry Experience to gain broad understanding of various careers.

THE STEM & THE ARTS ACADEMY

STEMA is designed for students interested in the high-demand fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, automotive/aviation repair, and visual/performing arts. Students may leave this pathway with industry certifications that qualify them for immediate employment or further study. Students cultivate creativity, innovation, effective communication, team-work, and entrepreneurial mind-set.

THE H2S2 ACADEMY

H2S2 focuses on those pathways and careers that provide healthcare, nutrition, social work and counseling. Additionally, we include “Teaching as a Profession” in this academy, which allows students to explore the foundations of teaching and learning, preparing them for employment in childcare or postsecondary work toward teacher licensure.

THE BLC ACADEMY

BLC offers students the opportunity to explore and pursue pathways that focus primarily on business and prepares students for careers in planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating functions essential to business operations. In addition, students may pursue coursework and experiences that direct them toward careers in government service, public policy, journalism, and law.

CLUBS & ATHLETICS

ATHLETICS OFFERED

Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
Cheerleading	Basketball: Boys	Baseball
Cross-Country	Basketball: Girls	Flag Football
Football	Bowling	Lacrosse: Boys
Golf	Dance	Lacrosse: Girls
Soccer: Girls	Wrestling	Soccer: Boys
Volleyball		Softball
		Tennis
		Track & Field

ATHLETIC AWARDS

There are 19 athletic teams in which students may participate. Recent awards included the United Soccer Coaches National Female Player of the year, Gatorade Female Player of the year for TN, and TN HS Female Heisman All American; Gatorade Male Player of the Year for TN; TSSAA Miss Basketball, and multiple players recognized by the Greater Knoxville Sports Hall of Fame. Girls & Boys Soccer and Dance have won multiple state and national championships. BHS Athletic Department has earned 12 State Championships in the last 6 years and 11 National Championships in the last 5 years. In the 2025-26 school year, The BHS earned State Championships in Girls Soccer and Dance as well as State runner-up in Girls Lacrosse and Boys Soccer. Plus, BHS also claimed #7 position as most successful public school athletics in the state for the year.

CLUBS OFFERED

American Sign Lang	Key Club
Archery	Kindness
Art Guild	Latin
Bearden Design	Marching Band
Bearden High Chess	Mentoring
Black Student Union (BSU)	Mock Trial
Climbing Team	Model UN
Coding	Music Production
Craft	Muslim Student Association
Creative Writing	National Art Honor Society
Cyber	NHS
Dawgathon	NJHS
Debate Team	Navy Jr ROTC
DECA	Penpals
Educator Aid	Pickleball
Environmental	Project Lit
Ethics Team	Project U
FCA	Prom Committee
FCCLA	Red Cross
French	Reptile & Aquarium
Gaming/e-Sports	Robotics
Gay/Straight Alliance	Rock Climbing
German	Rotary Interact
Golf	Scholars Bowl
Hiking	Science Olympiad
Hockey Dawgs	Senior Committee
Hope Squad	SGA
HOSA	Swimming & Diving Team
Improv Team	Teens for Christ
Interclub Council	Ultimate Frisbee
Japanese	Water Polo
Jewish Student Union	

2021-2026 STUDENT CAMPUSES

Agnes Scott	Illinois Institute of Technology	Tusculum
Air Force Academy	Indian River State College	U of Akron
Alabama A&M U	Jacksonville U	U of AL - Birmingham
Appalachian State U	James Madison U	U of AL - Huntsville
Arizona State U	Johns Hopkins U	U of Alabama
Athens Technical College	Johnson C. Smith U	U of Alaska Anchorage
Auburn U	Johnson U	UCLA
Austin Peay U	Kansas City Art Institute	U of CA Berkley
Baylor U	Kansas State U	U of CA San Diego
Belmont U	Kennesaw State	U of Central Florida
Berea College	Lee U	U of Chicago
Berklee College of Music	Lenoir Rhymes U	U of Cincinnati
Berry College	Liberty U	U of Dayton
Bethel U	Lincoln Memorial U	U of Florida
Birmingham Southern	Lipscomb U	U of Georgia
Bluffton U	LSU	U of Idaho
Boston U	Maryville College	U of Kentucky
Brigham Young U	McKendree	U of Limerick- Ireland
Butler U	Michigan State U	U of Louisville
Carson-Newman U	MTSU	U of Maryland
Cedarville U	Milligan U	U of Memphis
Centre College	Mississippi State	U of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Chattanooga State CC	Mississippi Valley State U	U of Mississippi
Clemson U	Missouri State U	U of Missouri
Cleveland State CC	Morehead State U	U of Montevallo
Coastal Carolina	Motlow State CC	U of Nebraska
College of Charleston	Mount St Joseph	U of North Alabama
Colorado State U	Naval Academy	U of Northwestern Ohio
Columbia State CC	North Carolina State U	U of NC-Chapel Hill
Cumberland U	Northern Michigan	U of Notre Dame
CUNY	Oglethorpe U	U of Oklahoma
John Jay College of Criminal Justice	Ohio State U	U of South Carolina
Dartmouth	Pace U	U of Southern California
Davis & Elkins College	Pellissippi State	U of Southern Indiana
Defiance College	Penn State	U of Stockholm
DePaul U	Pensacola Christian	U of TN Chattanooga
Douglas J Aveda	Princeton	U of TN Knoxville
Duke	Purdue	U of TN Martin
Dyersburg State	Reichman U - Israel	U of the Cumberland
ETSU	Rhodes College	U of the South
East Mississippi CC	Rider U	U of Utah
Eckerd College	Ringling Coll. of Art/Design	U of Virginia
Eastern Kentucky U	Roane State CC	U of Virginia - Wise
Eastman School of Music	Sam Houston State U	U of West Georgia
Embry-Riddle U	Samford U	U of Wisconsin
Emory & Henry Coll	SCAD	Utah State U
Emory U	Singapore Mgt U	Utah Tech U
Erskine College	Smith College	US Air Force
Ferrum College	Sophia Univ - Japan	US Army
Fisk U	South College	US Marines
Flagler College	Southern Illinois U	US Navy
Florida Atlantic U	Southern Virginia Univ	Valdosta State U
Florida State U	Southwest TN CC	Vanderbilt U
Fordham U	Stockholm Univ Sweden	Vassar College
Full Sail	SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology	Virginia Tech
Furman	Sweet Briar College	Volunteer State CC
Gannon U	Taylor U	Wake Forest
Gardner-Webb U	Temple U - Japan	Walters State
George Mason U	TCAT - Harriman	Wash. U - St Louis
George Washington U	TCAT - Jacksboro	Watkins Coll of Art
Georgia Southern	TCAT - Knoxville	West Point
Georgia Tech	TN School of Beauty	West Virginia U
Grand Canyon U	TN State	Western Carolina U
Harding U	TN Tech U	Western Governors U
High Point U	TN Wesleyan College	Western Kentucky
Hillsborough CC	Trevecca Nazarene	Western Washington U
Hollins U	Trinity College - Ireland	Wheaton College
Howard U	Troy U	Wilbur Wright College
	Tulane	Williams College
		Wingate U
		Wittenberg U
		Worcester Polytech
		Xavier

Class of 2026 plans after graduation:

70% - 4-year college, 18.1% - 2-year college, 4.4%-technical/vocational college, 5.6%-work/other, 1.4%-military, 0.5%-Special programming (e.g., UT Futures)