



A note from the Superintendent

by Matthew Moore

Pathways to Success

What was the one question you were asked the most as a kid? (Other than, "Did you clean your room?" or "Have you brushed your teeth?") Chances are, from the time that that you were in elementary school, well-meaning adults asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" And, you likely had a ready answer, maybe you dreamed of becoming a fireman, a nurse, a professional ball player, or an astronaut.

Jobs in the digital age, and the skills and capabilities required to do them, are transforming at an unprecedented rate. How will this impact your child's future? Sixty-five percent of today's students will eventually be employed in jobs that don't even exist today. Think about that. We are preparing students for jobs that have yet to be created. JCS is rising to that challenge by developing programs in high-demand career fields and focusing on helping students to find their passion and purpose. By utilizing their interests, skills, and strengths to explore and choose a path, students will be better able to adapt to the ever-changing career landscape and find meaningful and fulfilling work, even if the profession they will work in does not yet exist.

So, what exactly is "Career and Technical Education," or CTE? In a nutshell, CTE describes classes that are designed to prepare students for the world of work. You may think that your child is too young for CTE, but, remember that often-asked question about what you wanted to be? Elementary school is a crucial time for developing career awareness. With support and guidance, students can begin profiling their strengths, interests, and values from an early age, building their confidence to pursue their interests and achieve their future goals, even if those goals change many times. The intent of early exposure to a variety of careers isn't to lock students into a choice, but to deepen their awareness and help them to stay focused and engaged in school.

Our aim is for all of our families to become familiar with JCS CTE programs and the career pathways offered in our district. We're making an intentional effort to bring career exploration down to the lower grade levels, where we know that this early exposure

has numerous benefits for younger students. Our students are connected with multiple career pathways starting at 4th grade. We've partnered with our high school student ambassadors to visit our elementary students to talk about the various pathways and related careers. We're eager for our families with younger children to preview the path that lies ahead, and all of the wonderful experiences to come, including work-based learning, internships, and dual credit opportunities, saving both time and money after your student graduates from high school. I'm very proud to share that the JCS graduating class of 2020 will see a number of our students actually graduating with both a high school diploma and an Associates Degree.

We are incredibly excited about a planned expansion of our CTE programs and related renovations at EJHS, WJHS, and the Jessamine Career and Technology Center. This two-year phased project will enable us to offer additional opportunities to our students, including carpentry and, with the assistance of a \$750,000 grant, advanced manufacturing, both of which have been designated by the state as high-demand industry sectors in need of trained professionals. Through this expansion, our students will also benefit from additional opportunities for industry certifications in other high-demand professions.

Career and Technical Education programs aren't just for high school students. Middle school and the elementary years are key times for self-exploration, discovery and career awareness. Whether the path after high school includes a professional certification or license, a two or four-year university program, or military service, we are committed to helping all JCS students find their passion and purpose in life. Thank you for being our partner in this very important work.



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