



# NEW SKILLS

READY NETWORK

Nashville, Tennessee



# 2023

# POLICY SCAN

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the many cross-sector stakeholders who contributed their time and expertise to this project. This scan would not have been possible without their courage and candor. To protect all contributors, the identity of the individuals interviewed and their organizations will remain unidentified.

We are also grateful to JPMorgan Chase's New Skills Ready Network for creating the opportunity for us to continue to study and highlight the policies and programs that create direct and indirect barriers for our students. It is our hope this document will be used to advocate for the removal of these barriers and create a more equitable Nashville.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) is a nationally recognized, statewide nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance efforts to improve college success for Tennessee students through research, facilitation, best practices, and expertise. TCASN's team has decades of collective expertise that span state government, federal college access programs, urban and rural initiatives, curriculum design, and the nonprofit sector. Learn more at [www.tncollegeaccess.org](http://www.tncollegeaccess.org)

FEDERAL POLICY/PROGRAM	INEQUITY CREATED	POSSIBLE SOLUTION	NOTABLE QUOTE FROM STAKEHOLDER	POLICY/PROGRAMMATIC UPDATE WITHIN 2023
<p><b>Access to Federal and State Financial Aid is Limited to U.S. Citizens</b></p>	<p>Undocumented students are unable to receive federal aid to help offset the cost of higher education.</p>	<p>Advocate for Pell Grant and other federal aid eligibility to be extended to undocumented students who graduate from a U.S. high school.</p>	<p>“The inability to access federal and state aid for undocumented students is a huge issue. We have been able to coalesce grant dollars, but that is not sustainable.”</p>	
<p><b>Expiration of the Public Health Emergency</b></p>	<p>The lifting of the PHE ends flexibilities related to student eligibility for federal benefit programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid.</p> <p>Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund dollars allowed campuses to free up funds to provide supports such as laptops and hot spots to students. Without these resources, many students are unable to access internet at home.</p>	<p>Pursue partnerships between the TN Department of Human Services and state higher education institutions to increase student SNAP enrollment, both through outreach and by streamlining the SNAP application process for students.</p> <p>Advocate for a broadening of SNAP eligibility to include students who are enrolled more than “half-time.”</p> <p>Increase awareness of <a href="#">Lifeline</a>, which provides a discount on broadband services for low-income consumers, on college campuses.</p> <p>Pursue grant opportunities that allow campuses and foundations to continue offering technology supports to students.</p>	<p>“Our campus food pantry needs to prepare for the influx of students who will be coming back to take advantage of it.”</p>	

<p><b>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Language Can Be Challenging</b></p>	<p>Terminology and language used on the FAFSA can be challenging for students and families, resulting in incorrect and/or incomplete responses.</p>	<p>While the FAFSA Simplification Act will result in a streamlined FAFSA form, terminology and language may remain an issue for which to advocate.</p>	<p>“The difference between custody and legal guardianship is not easily understood. If a student answers incorrectly, it delays their award.”</p>	<p>The <a href="#">FAFSA Simplification Act</a>, which will significantly reduce the number of questions on the FAFSA form, improve early awareness, and expand Pell eligibility, will go into effect with the 2024-2025 award year.</p>
<p><b>Stagnant Purchasing Power of the Pell Grant</b></p>	<p>“At its peak in 1975-76, the maximum Pell award was worth more than three-fourths of the average cost of attendance – tuition, fees, and living expenses – for a four-year public university. Today, it's worth roughly one-third.” - National College Attainment Network</p> <p>The rising cost of college coupled with the stagnant purchasing power of the Pell prevents low-income students from participating in higher education.</p>	<p>Advocate for Congress to “Double the Pell” amount.</p> <p>Advocate for the lifetime limit on the Pell Grant to return to 18 semesters, allowing low-income students who attend higher education part-time more semesters to complete their degree/certification.</p>		<p>The Biden/Harris administration <a href="#">has called for doubling the Pell Grant</a> by 2029. In 2023, Congress voted to increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$500.</p>
<p><b>Difficult to Decipher Financial Aid Award Letters</b></p>	<p>Colleges use different terms to categorize aid offers and provide limited details in award letters. For example, a loan may be categorized as an “award” and the requirements of a work study program may be absent.</p>	<p>Advocate for a universal, easy-to-read award letter format with standardized terms and definitions.</p> <p>Within TN, advocate for the establishment of a universal, easy-to-read award letter</p>		

		format for all TN public colleges.		
<b>Inequitable Distribution of Federal Work Study Funds</b>	Distribution of federal work study funds is determined in part by the length of time an institution has participated in the Federal Work-Study program. This leads to several older institutions, including some elite ones enrolling fewer low-income students, receiving more money than newer colleges serving large numbers of low-income students. "According to the Congressional Budget Office, 35 percent of work-study dollars were awarded to students in the top two income quartiles in 2016." - National College Attainment Network	Advocate for Congress to better target aid to low-income students by adjusting the Federal Work-Study program funding formula to allocate dollars to institutions based on the percentage of Pell Grant recipients at the school.		
<b>Teacher Vacancies and Turnover</b>	States across the nation are reporting <a href="#">teacher storages</a> ; Tennessee and Nashville are not exempt. Some MNPS schools struggle to hire and retain teachers, leading to vacancies in core academic classes such as English Language Arts and math. Teacher vacancies are often filled by a substitute teacher or a school staff member who has another full-time	Partner with higher education institutions to increase enrollment in teacher preparation programs.  Advocate for scholarships for students who enroll in teacher preparation programs.  Nashville's cost of living causes many teachers to be		For the 2022-2023 academic year, all Metro Nashville Public Schools employees received at least a <a href="#">4% cost-of-living adjustment</a> . MNPS's <a href="#">proposed 2023-2024 budget</a> proposes competitive pay for administrators and rewarding long-term, successful teachers.  <a href="#">HB0432/SB1220</a> As introduced, requires the

	<p>job, such as academy coach. These professionals, while well intentioned, are not trained in teaching the specified subject; therefore, students' academic growth in the subject is limited.</p> <p>For MNPS, CTE teacher turnover and vacancies create disruptions with academy partners, leading to a more fragmented approach for students within those academies.</p>	<p>unable to afford living within the city. Nashville leadership should continue prioritizing MNPS teacher pay and making Nashville teachers the <u>'best paid in the state.'</u></p> <p>Pursue <a href="#">opportunities</a> to increase MNPS <a href="#">teacher and employee affordable housing</a> options within the city.</p>	<p>"We have a lack of teachers. We are down 2-3 English teachers this year."</p> <p>"We have some schools that equip students better than others. It is based on a lack of programming or lack of staffing. Those students miss out on the opportunities."</p> <p>"Teacher vacancies create problems. I feel like we have to restart every time. Many [CTE teachers] are going back in the industry."</p>	<p>Tennessee student assistance corporation to administer a five-year pilot program to award Tennessee Future Teacher scholarships to students pursuing a teaching degree at an eligible postsecondary institution who meet certain requirements and who agree to teach in a targeted setting for at least four years after the student completes an approved educator preparation program. The pilot program is to begin with the 2023-2024 academic year and terminate on July 1, 2028. "Targeted settings," an area for which there is a critical shortage of teachers, will be determined by the Tennessee Department of Education.</p>
<p><b>Inability to Register for College Classes with a Past Due Balance/Transcript Withholding</b></p>	<p>Students with past due balances at an institution are unable to register for classes at that institution. They are also unable to access their transcript to transfer to a different institution.</p> <p>Students often drop out of classes due to challenges and barriers unrelated to their coursework and are left with</p>	<p>Allow students to register for classes with a past due balance so long as they sign an agreement saying they will pay the balance off by the time they graduate. By doing so, students will be able to access federal aid to cover college costs.</p> <p>Work with state policy partners to conduct a study</p>		<p>The Nashville Chamber Public Benefit Foundation, in partnership with Nashville State Community College, completed two years of the Clean Slate pilot project. Clean Slate aimed to positively impact re-enrollment, persistence, and completion by paying off students' past-due balances, many of which were below</p>

	balances that prevent them from continuing their education at any college.	on transcript withholding practices to see their influence on student success and evaluate if there is a return on investment when students with outstanding debt are allowed to continue their education.  Research <a href="#">Wayne State University's Warrior Way Back</a> program to learn more about the pros and cons of implementing a debt forgiveness program.		\$500. Since the pilot began in Spring 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 students have signed up to participate.</li> <li>• 20 students had a portion of their balances paid.</li> <li>• 8 will move into the Fall 2023 semester.</li> <li>• 4 students have graduated.</li> <li>• 8 of the 20 students who had a portion of their balance paid are no longer in the pipeline.</li> <li>• 2 additional students will graduate in the 2023-2024 academic year.</li> </ul>
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TENNESSEE POLICY/PROGRAM	INEQUITY CREATED	POSSIBLE SOLUTION	NOTABLE QUOTE FROM STAKEHOLDER	POLICY/PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES WITHIN 2023
<b>TN Promise Application Requirements</b>	For various reasons, some students may not complete the TN Promise application by the required deadline, resulting in them being ineligible to receive the scholarship.	Streamline TN Promise enrollment by removing the TN Promise application and deadline. Use the community college application as automatic enrollment in Promise.	"There are too many barriers to entry because students who need supports the most are not going to seek these things out."	New Skills Ready partners advocated for refinements to TN Promise among members of the education committees during the 2023 legislative season. For example, the Tennessee College Access and Success Network shared a <a href="#">document</a> outlining potential refinements that would better serve students. Partners are working to identify champions to lead these efforts during the 2024 session.
<b>TN Promise Full-time Requirement</b>	Many students, especially low-income students, are unable to meet TN Promise's requirement to attend college full-time (12 hours). Rather, these students must	Expand TN Promise to part-time students by removing the full-time enrollment requirement allowing students to receive a pro-rated scholarship when attending college part-time.	"With college enrollment being down and students asking if college is worth it, why are we making students choose between work and school? Why can't they do both?"	

	<p>work to support their families and their education.</p> <p>For TN Promise funds to cover tuition for summer classes, students must take 12 hours during the 10-week summer term.</p>	<p>Consider advising students to complete 24 credit hours over the course of an academic year to maintain progress toward a degree.</p>	<p>“Many students need to take classes during the summer term to keep the 2.0 GPA requirement, but taking 12 hours over 10 weeks is really difficult for any student.”</p>	
<p><b>TN Promise Community Service Requirement</b></p>	<p>The 2020 State Comptroller's Office of Research and Education Accountability's Tennessee Promise Evaluation found that attending the mandatory meeting and completing eight hours of community service were the two most common reasons why Promise applicants did not become eligible for the program. Students often lack: 1.) the time to complete the hours, as they have jobs and families they must support, 2.) transportation to community service/job shadowing opportunities, and 3.) at-home internet access to complete virtual hours.</p>	<p>Remove the community service requirement from TN Promise.</p> <p>For current college students, consider replacing the community service requirement with the requirement to participate in a <a href="#">high-impact practice</a> such as student employment and first-year seminars.</p>	<p>“People do not understand the full scope of what students have to do. The people making the decisions approach it from ‘Oh, they are right out of high school, they don’t have responsibilities.’ But they do! They have financial responsibilities, and they contribute to their families. There is a big disconnect.”</p>	
<p><b>TN Promise Immediate Enrollment Requirement</b></p>	<p>Requiring students to enroll the first available semester after high school graduation removes the opportunity for</p>	<p>Remove the requirement to enroll the first available semester after high school graduation or lengthen the</p>	<p>“Many students are disenchanted by their high school experience, and going on to college seems</p>	<p><a href="#">HB0348/SB0364</a> (changes the date within which a student must be enrolled in a full-time eligible postsecondary</p>



	students to earn money to support their pursuit of a degree/certification.	amount of time a student has enroll.	miserable. But, if they got out and worked for a year, they would understand they could do more with a degree. The year could give them a long-term grasp of real-world financial sustainability.	program to be eligible for TN Promise from the fall term after the student's graduation of high school to no later than 16 months after the students graduation of high school) passed through the education committees but was taken off notice for calendar in s/c Finance, Ways, and Means Subcommittee of Finance, Ways, and Means Committee. Promise administration groups (including NSR partners TN Higher Education Commission and TN Board of Regents) have adjusted requirements so that students may now take a year off if they submit the proper documentation to prove they are working full-time during the "gap year."
<b>Gap between TN Promise and TN Reconnect</b>	If students do not enter college in the first available semester after their high school graduation, they are no longer eligible for TN Promise. To qualify for TN Reconnect, students must be 23 years of age. The five-year gap between these programs results in many students leaving postsecondary and	Remove the Promise requirement to enroll the first available semester after high school graduation or lengthen the amount of time a student has enroll to coordinate with the TN Reconnect age requirement.	"If students wait until they are 23 to get Reconnect, many of them have their own families and that is a barrier to college in itself."	<a href="#">HB1114/SB0968</a> (expands eligibility for the Tennessee Reconnect grant to include students who completed high school or obtained a GED® or HiSET® diploma during the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year, and who are at least 21 years of age by January 1 of the academic year in which they enroll in

	<p>joining the workforce due to being unable to afford college costs on their own.</p>	<p>Remove or lower the age requirement for TN Reconnect.</p>		<p>an eligible program of study) was taken off notice for calendar in s/c Higher Education Subcommittee of Education Administration. Costs to administer the expansion prohibited movement forward.</p>
<p><b>COMPLETE Grants Application and Requirements</b></p>	<p>Students are not always aware COMPLETE Grants are available to them.</p> <p>Requirements include full-time enrollment, completing a COMPLETE grant form in its entirety, including necessary documentation, and connecting with your COMPLETE coach. These additional steps often result in a delay in getting the needed aid assistance to the student.</p> <p>COMPLETE Coaches are not required to have an education or counseling background, degree or credential. They are not always physically present on community college campuses which can prevent students from building a trusted relationship with their coach.</p>	<p>Automatically enroll Pell-eligible Promise students in COMPLETE.</p> <p>Move administration of the COMPLETE Grants to community colleges. Community College administration and staff know their students and their struggles and can provide support in a timelier fashion. This may also allow more money to go directly to the students.</p> <p>Advocate for the funding of Completion Coach positions on each community college campus that require relevant degrees/credentials to advise and counsel students and require on-campus offices/services.</p>	<p>“Students need funds to help them cover up-front costs like books and transportation. The COMPLETE Grants require additional layers of unnecessary bureaucracy, which are stumbling blocks for students. We need to cut out that additional application and make it easier for students to access.”</p> <p>“We need to provide the support to the campuses and let them support the students.”</p> <p>“What works for one student will not work for every student. Community colleges understand that when it comes to funding like the COMPLETE Grants, there needs to be local control and</p>	

			flexibility to meet the students where they are.”	
<b>Lack of Accessible Childcare</b>	Students with dependents are limited in time and resources. Childcare is expensive and even for students who have financial resources, many Nashville area childcare facilities are full and have waitlists.	<p>Pursue opportunities to provide childcare on college campuses.</p> <p>Pursue opportunities to partner with existing childcare facilities to increase the number of available spots and/or to open additional satellite locations or <a href="#">microcenters</a>.</p>	“There are a lot of standards around childcare. Even those who have space and interest in providing it don’t want to take it on. It is going to take a government solution.”	<p><a href="#">Raising Readers</a> is developing a Process Guide that will detail the necessary steps to open a childcare center within Davidson County. This guide will serve as a resource and will inform state and local advocacy efforts to address existing barriers. United Way and Raising Readers is also partnering with Vanderbilt University’s PN3 Policy Impact Center (Pre-natal to 3) to research childcare deserts within Nashville.</p> <p>Action on <a href="#">HB0785/SB0750</a> (requires the department to create and implement a promising futures program to provide scholarships to children who are not school age to assist them in developing early language and literacy skills in a high-quality early care and learning program; redirects, from the lottery for education account to an account administered by the department to provide funding for the promising futures scholarship program,</p>

				a certain percentage of the privilege tax collected from sports wagering licensees for certain fiscal years) was deferred in Education Administration to first calendar in 2024.
<b>Tennessee Legislation Requirement that Community Colleges Charge Two Rates of Tuition (In-State and Out-of-State)</b>	Students who do not qualify for in-state tuition (new residents, undocumented students) must pay out-of-state tuition rates, often making a college education unaffordable.	Advocate for the removal of different tuition rates at Tennessee community colleges. Allow community colleges to charge one tuition rate to all students. Or, advocate for one tuition rate for Tennessee residents, allowing community colleges to continue to charge out-of-state tuition to residents of other states.	“It is more affordable for [students who do not qualify for in-state tuition] to go to the University of Missouri than it is for them to go to a TN community college. We would get a ROI on those students if we kept them here. The economics of not providing [affordable postsecondary] education to people who want to live here and contribute to the workforce here does not make sense.”	Some New Skills Ready partners have aligned to pursue one tuition rate at Tennessee community colleges through policy change.
<b>Lack of Postsecondary Planning Accountability at High Schools</b>	While the state emphasizes ACT scores and FAFSA completion, focus on submitting postsecondary plans and applications is limited. Students without networks of support end up submitting their FAFSA and taking the ACT without a clear understanding of why they are doing so.	Broaden participation in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s College Application Week. Encourage participation among high school administrators.  Consider adding the following criteria to TN Ready Graduate requirements: 1.) participation in college and career advising, 2.) completion of a	“There is so much pressure to ensure our students have completed the FAFSA and taken the ACT, but then we apply no pressure for them to actually know what they are doing after high school.”	New Skills Ready partners launched the “Increasing College Applications” and “YouScience” pilot projects in the 2022-2023 academic year. “Increasing College Applications” aims to increase college enrollment rates at partner postsecondary institutions and has included events such as TCAT Senior Nights where students and families tour

		postsecondary plan, and 3.) completion of a postsecondary application.		campus, learn more in-depth information about programs and have opportunities to meet with admissions and financial aid departments. "YouScience" targets increased career exploration by equipping adults to empower students to use their YouScience results to make data-informed decisions about education and career pathways.
<b>State Policy Limits Classroom Instruction to the English Language</b>	English Language Learners are increasing in Tennessee. MNPS provides extensive interpretation and translation services from which many families benefit; however, classroom instruction is still limited to English, due to state law. Tennessee designated <a href="#">English as the official state language</a> in 1984. The law states, "All communications and publications, including ballots, produced by governmental entities in Tennessee shall be in English, and instruction in the public schools and colleges of Tennessee shall be conducted in English unless the nature of the course would require otherwise."	Advocate for state law to allow for classroom instruction to be taught in other languages.	"There are some schools across the country providing English 101 and Math 101 in other languages. Maybe we could do something like that?"	New Skills partners piloted the You Choose / Tú Escoges workshop series in the 2022-2023 academic year to offer culturally competent information on postsecondary options and provide individualized follow-up. The project aims to increase postsecondary knowledge and self-efficacy.

<p><b>Lack of Student/Adviser Clarity of Co-Requisite Learning Support Course Requirements</b></p>	<p>Students who do not meet the initial course placement requirements at community colleges are required to enroll in co-requisite learning support classes that are non-credit-bearing and do not count toward graduation. Students enrolled in these courses are at a higher risk of being off-track for graduation.</p>	<p>Provide more information to students about co-requisite learning support classes.</p> <p>Consider offering ACCUPLACER and co-requisite learning support courses to students while they are still enrolled in high school.</p>	<p>“Students are told they need to take 12 hours, but then 9 hours are learning supports and the other is a first-year freshman course. They leave their first semester almost two semesters behind.”</p>	
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<p><b>NASHVILLE POLICY/PROGRAM</b></p>	<p><b>INEQUITY CREATED</b></p>	<p><b>POSSIBLE SOLUTION</b></p>	<p><b>NOTABLE QUOTE FROM STAKEHOLDER</b></p>	<p><b>POLICY/PROGRAMMATIC CHANGE WITHIN 2023</b></p>
<p><b>Lack of Reliable Transportation</b></p>	<p>In theory, students can select, enroll, and attend any MNPS academy based on their interest. If their zoned high school does not have the academy that reflects their interests, students can simply choose to attend a high school in a different zone that does. In practice, very few students have the resources, like reliable transportation, to take advantage of academies offered outside of their zoned school.</p> <p>Students who lack access to reliable transportation are</p>	<p>Pursue better public transit for Nashville secondary and postsecondary students.</p> <p>Pursue mitigating transit barriers to create opportunities for students to attend their choice high schools and academies through alternate transportation options.</p> <p>Pursue mitigating transit barriers to create</p>	<p>“If you are at [a school located on the East side of Nashville] and want to learn more about [a pathway that is only available at one school located in another portion of the city], the option to attend another school offering that academy is extremely limited.”</p> <p>“If all our students had access to reliable</p>	<p>New Skills Ready funded <a href="#">Point of Departure: Navigating Nashville as a College Commuter</a>. Point of Departure focuses on college accessibility as it relates to Nashville’s public transit system, with a specific focus on college students who commute. The Tennessee College Access and Success Network, authors of the report, and partners will share it broadly, especially among Nashville policymakers.</p>

	<p>unable to participate in after-school enrichment activities and career-based/work-based learning opportunities.</p>	<p>opportunities for students to attend after-school enrichment activities.</p> <p>Pursue bringing employment opportunities to students either at the high school or at an Innovation Center similar to <a href="#">Greenville County Schools CTE Innovation Center</a>.</p>	<p>transportation, we could serve more students.”</p> <p>“We put students in [employer storefronts] all over town, but they have to get there. Even in planning field trips, it’s about the buses. We could provide full day trips, but the buses are needed. You see the equity issues show up at schools that have vans or where the students can drive cars.”</p>	
<p><b>Inequitable Distribution of Community Resources</b></p>	<p>More affluent families within MNPS are able to provide more resources and opportunities to their students while less affluent families are often limited.</p> <p>Some PTAs/PTOs are better funded and are able to provide more resources than others.</p>	<p>MNPS works diligently to create equity across its high schools. MNPS and community partners should continue to pursue grant opportunities to help offset these resource discrepancies.</p> <p>PTAs/PTOs that are well resourced should consider investing in schools that are under-resourced. <a href="#">Evanston school district in Illinois</a> is currently piloting a “one fund” PTA for the whole district.</p> <p>Schools should continue to augment their capacity by expanding partnerships with community-based</p>	<p>“The city is segregated, and the resources are too.”</p> <p>“There are literacy coaches at [MNPS elementary school in a middle/high income area] that are completely funded out of the PTA.”</p>	

		organizations to increase the services provided to underserved students.		
<b>Lack of Public Sharing of Postsecondary-Going Data</b>	<p>Unlike graduation rates and attendance, postsecondary going is not a metric on which MNPS principals are evaluated. As a result, limited resources are dedicated to more in-depth college-going activities such as application and transition support. More affluent families find ways to supplement these supports through opportunities outside the district.</p> <p>Some communities and families attending MNPS high schools are uninformed about their zoned high school's postsecondary-going rate.</p>	<p>Pursue an opportunity to either create accountability around postsecondary-going rates or pursue an opportunity to incentivize principals to prioritize this data.</p> <p>Postsecondary-going and success rates of high schools should become metrics that are publicly reported annually so families can make informed decisions about the high schools in which they enroll their students.</p>	<p>"If we aren't addressing that we have a postsecondary issue, we aren't getting in front of the students what they need to change the course of their lives to make a decent living."</p> <p>"All the time is it said, 'We've got to get our kids graduated.' But [postsecondary] is part of that conversation. If they can't see what's next, why would they even finish high school?"</p>	<p>In Spring 2023, the Tennessee Board of Regents launched <a href="#">The High School to College Pathway</a>, a data dashboard that tracks enrollment and success for recent high school graduates at Tennessee community colleges. Users can disaggregate the data by district, high school, race and ethnicity and other factors.</p>
<b>Lack of Preparation for Postsecondary Academics and Culture</b>	<p>Some MNPS graduates score low on tests (ACCUPLACER) that measure college readiness, indicating the students are not ready to enroll in credit-bearing courses. These students are then placed in developmental/remedial classes which do not earn</p>	<p>Academic awareness and advising must begin in early grades and continue through high school. Because school counselors are overworked and handle large caseloads, MNPS could broaden partnerships with community non-profit programs who provide college readiness and</p>	<p>"Students lack the awareness that in order to succeed in challenging STEAM courses in high school, they should take high school credit bearing courses in middle school."</p> <p>"I have a great fear for even top junior and senior students who see themselves</p>	<p>New Skills Ready partners launched the "Healthcare Futures" pilot project in the 2022-2023 academic year. The project, aimed at career readiness, doubles at equipping students for postsecondary as it increases professionalism by developing durable skills that</p>



	<p>credit or count toward earning a degree.</p> <p>The culture and expectations of high schools are different than those of higher education institutions. Students who lack awareness of these differences may struggle in the transition to higher education. Peers at more affluent high schools are often primed for these differences in advance, allowing them time to prepare and even experience the differences.</p>	<p>transition (awareness building, advising, academic supports, coaching, peer networks, etc.) services, allowing these groups access to students during the school day to avoid transportation barriers.</p> <p>Internal programs, such as GEAR UP Nashville and expanded dual enrollment opportunities, work to increase college readiness among MNPS students. MNPS should sustain the practices of these programs after grant funding has ended.</p> <p>Pursue opportunities for higher education institutions to engage middle and high school students during the school day, providing content on what campus culture entails.</p>	<p>going to four-year colleges. I worry they will fail out due to the academic portion.”</p> <p>“They are not being rigorously expected to do high-quality work in the high school setting, which means they are ill prepared to be successful in college.”</p> <p>“The high schools do not have enough support to help students as they transition to higher education.”</p>	<p>allow high school students to succeed in health care careers and/or postsecondary opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Limited Opportunities for In-Depth Career Exposure</b></p>	<p>In-depth career exposure for students is often limited to the fields of their school’s academy partners, which might prevent some students from finding their niche. For smaller high schools, the number of academies and pathways are limited. For</p>	<p>Expand opportunities to bring diverse hands-on career exposure to students via 2 and 4-year higher education partnerships and/or embedding miniature TN College of Applied Technology campuses at each high school.</p>	<p>“Students’ career knowledge is limited. They don’t know what all they could be, and they think they can become doctors by going to college for just four years.”</p>	

	<p>example, Whites Creek High School has one academy and three pathways: Alternative Energy &amp; Sustainability, Community Health, and Criminal Justice and Correction Services.</p>	<p>Pursue creating one or multiple Innovation Centers, similar to <a href="#">Greenville County Schools CTE Innovation Center</a>, with bus transportation provided.</p> <p>Explore a TCAT Middle College design that would allow students to attend high school virtually and spend the remainder of their day learning a trade at TCAT. Upon completion, these students graduate with a high school diploma and a TCAT certification.</p>	<p>“To strive for equity, we have to take it out of the school buildings and create a centralized hub. We need to be transformative.”</p> <p>“Students are having to choose between putting food on the table or continuing their education. [Students should be able to] go to school and work at the same time.”</p>	
<p><b>Ambiguous Career-based/Work-based Learning Policies and Procedures</b></p>	<p>Students interested in participating in career-based/work-based learning opportunities must meet the eligibility criteria established by the <a href="#">TN Department of Education</a> (pages 14-20) and those established by MNPS. Some <a href="#">MNPS WBL requirements</a> include that students must maintain a “C” grade point average and positive behavior. Students who fail to meet MNPS WBL requirements are no longer allowed to participate in WBL, regardless of their employers’ desire to retain</p>	<p>MNPS and business partners should work together to define what happens when a student fails to meet the expectations of either side. Students entering the program should be fully informed of the expectations and the resulting consequences of not meeting those expectations.</p>	<p>“Work-based learning operates in the liminal space between student and employee. As adults, we have different identities that we exist and operate within. At what point do we acknowledge this isn’t about classroom discipline? This is about a job.”</p>	

	them. A student can lose income, experience, and an employment opportunity regardless of job performance.			
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