



Emil Pelz | Principal, Beloit Memorial High School | School District of Beloit

## June 2021 – The Many Advantages of the Academies at Beloit Memorial High School: Thinking Beyond Now

The School District of Beloit is proud to be the only District in Rock County offering a Career Academy system since the 2018-2019 school year. This type of programming is one of the many advantages of attending Beloit Memorial High School.

### Small Learning Communities: Discovering Passions

Career Academies offer a personalized small learning community involving a cohort of students and a team of teachers committed to each student's success in school and life. Students share smaller personalized environments with peers who have common interests and a team of teachers who serve as their advocates. The Academies empower students through career exposure, so they can make timely, informed decisions and discover their true passions while earning early college credit and nationally recognized industry certifications.

### Career, College, Technical Certification, And More

Career academies are for all BMHS students because they provide students the opportunity to acquire the 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills necessary for a successful future. Teachers across disciplines in each academy work together to create meaningful connections between their content and the career pathways offered within each academy.

Students who are pursuing post-secondary education or are entering directly into a career upon graduating from high school equally benefit from the opportunities afforded to students in the academy model. Students can take advanced coursework, earn college credit and explore careers. Opportunities also exist to earn an associate degree, technical diploma, and other industry certifications. When it's time to head to college or into a career, these opportunities and experiences will ensure our students are set up for success.

### Real-World, Relevant, Engaging Learning Experiences

Our Academies provide real-world, relevant, engaging learning experiences with local businesses and professionals; it is all about linking schoolwork and the workplace. Academy classes include core academic courses and a sequence of career-technical courses defined in a student's chosen pathway. We want to give our students every opportunity to learn about their areas of interest and form a deeper understanding of required academic subjects, electives, and specialized courses to prepare them for life beyond high school.





While enrolled in their academy, students can complete their choice of advanced academic classes and earn early post-secondary opportunities through Advanced Placement (AP) or CAPP courses, Early College Credit Program (ECCP), or Start College Now. Many of our pathways also offer dual credit or industry certification. Beloit Memorial High School students graduate with the advanced skills and education they need to be successful and productive in college, career, and life.

## Business and Community Partners Connect and Collaborate

Business and community partners are essential in preparing students for life after high school and are integral to the educational experiences students receive in our Academy model. Connections with business and community partners provide students with 21st-century skills for post-secondary and career success. There are various opportunities and experiences offered to our students beyond the classroom that each BMHS student can explore:

- College Visits / Tours
- Industry-Specific Field Trips
- Internships
- Apprenticeships
- Job Shadows
- Career Panels
- Mentoring and Career Coaching

## Beginning Freshman Year: A School Within a School

All Freshmen begin their experience at BMHS with the Freshman Academy. The Freshman Academy sets the foundation of our Career Academies and prepares students to select a Career Academy for their sophomore through senior year.

Students in the Freshman Academy have common expectations and shared experiences, creating a school within a school feeling as they transition into our high school. All Freshmen are required to take a Freshman Seminar course, where students focus on learning more about themselves, their interests, and aptitude, and learn study skills, life skills, employability / professional skills, and career knowledge.

After freshman year, all students declare an Academy based on their career interest areas. The Academy choices include BACH (Business, Art, Communication, and Hospitality); HHES (Health, Human, and Educational Services); or PACMES (Public Safety, Automotive, Construction, Manufacturing, Engineering, and Science).





## Associate Degree and Certifications

Being a member of an Academy means that you engage in instruction tailored to your chosen career pathway. All students, regardless of their Academy selection, can participate in our Collegiate Academy with the benefit of graduating high school, earning a two-year degree or with several professional certifications from Blackhawk Technical College at no cost to the student. Our 2019 graduates earned 151 Industry and State-Recognized professional certifications.

## Thinking Beyond Now

BMHS is dedicated to preparing students for post-secondary education and 21<sup>st</sup>-century careers through the high school experience. The BMHS Academy system provides real-life learning opportunities that benefit our students focusing on enrichment both on and off-campus.



KOLAK EDUCATION CENTER  
1500 FOURTH ST.



@SCHOOLDISTRICTBELOIT



SDB.K12.WI.US