

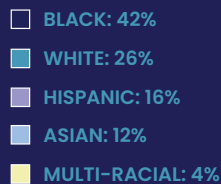


THE PROMISE CAREER INSTITUTE

FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

PROFILES IN PATHWAYS INNOVATION

DISTRICT OVERVIEW



44%
ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED



WHAT IS THE PROMISE CAREER INSTITUTE?

Fulton County Schools' (FCS) **The Promise Career Institute (PCI)** is a different path to high school graduation where students graduate with a high school diploma and two technical college certificates. It follows the Middle College model: a high school alternative program involving collaboration between a high school and community or technical college to provide a more independent learning environment. In collaboration with [Atlanta Technical College](#), PCI provides a relevant and career-ready curriculum for students. Institute students take core academic courses while focusing their remaining coursework training in high-wage, high-skill, in-demand career fields.

PCI is part of the Bridge to Success Plan, the district's three-year comprehensive plan and transformational investment funded by the American Rescue Plan to help students recover from learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed budget for FCS PCI is \$2.7M to include the purchase of equipment for the programs that will be supported and funds for contracted services and other needs to get the school started.

PCI is aligned to a dual enrollment program that is unique in Georgia, called the [Accelerated Career Diploma program](#). Using the Accelerated Career Diploma program, students can graduate with their high school diploma while being exempted from certain academic course requirements. These students must complete specific courses during their ninth and tenth grade year. During their remaining two years of high school, students will earn two technical certificates of credit (from a selection of approved certifications), which may lead toward a technical college diploma or an associate degree. Students who meet these requirements will be issued a high school diploma.



INVESTING IN STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

“We are intentionally investing in our families,” said Dr. Jason Stamper, principal of PCI. “We were finding that some of our students just weren’t being successful within the existing framework of graduation requirements. And we found out that it was because the learning lacked relevance. School wasn’t interesting. The pandemic really revealed to us, as a district, how different the kids were and that their needs were different. We had students at the high school level that just weren’t coming back to school.”

The district created an opportunity for students to receive the Accelerated Career Diploma, which would provide core academic courses, but left room for greater career exploration, hands-on experience, and ultimately, credentials in high-skill, high-need, and high-paying career fields. PCI will address the immediate needs of students and their families to explore these career fields while also building a strong foundation for future academic and career opportunities.

“This is incredibly important,” said Dr. Stamper. “These opportunities that we are creating for students will allow them to leave high school and immediately enter the workforce, if they choose that pathway, making \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year. That is generation-changing opportunity.”



EDUCATION + ECONOMIC GROWTH = MOBILITY

PCI will offer six pathways for students. The district is in the midst of a \$40 million renovation to add labs that will offer hands-on opportunities for students in Computer Networking, Cybersecurity, Design & Media Production Technology, Distribution - Materials Management, Early Childhood Care and Education, and Welding. Students can access three additional pathways on the Atlanta Technical College’s campus, via district-provided transportation, including Avionic Technology, Automotive Technology and Diesel Engine Technology.

All of these pathways are driven by local industry growth, Dr. Stamper explained. “Atlanta is home to many movie studios—including Tyler Perry’s studio—it’s just such a booming industry here. Additionally, Atlanta is home to the busiest airport in the U.S., so having strong pipelines for students to receive training in welding, logistics, avionic technology, automotive technology and diesel technology is so critical to the growth of this community. As a matter of fact, we have jobs waiting for our students once they graduate.”



BEYOND TRADITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORTS

Students have access to a workplace learning coordinator to help them better identify and engage with job shadowing internships and gain deeper exposure to these careers. They also are assigned a graduation coach to help them navigate requirements and stay on track. This support is incredibly important to ensure that students stay engaged and successfully earn their diploma and certifications.

And because PCI is a dual enrollment program, the school offers additional counseling supports for students to help instill a mindset of perseverance so that students not only understand the challenges that may lie ahead, but are given tools to tackle them.

Additionally, the school has built financial literacy into the curriculum, to help students proactively manage their future earnings. “At the end of the day, they will be making more money than they’ve ever imagined,” said Dr. Stamper. “We want to make sure they are able to manage and sustain that.”



ADVICE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

“You have to have the resources available. There’s no sense of trying to do something if you’re going to do it halfway, because it will fizzle and that is a disservice to the kids and to the community. There are staffing needs to support this type of programming, and these investments in human capital, as well as resources have to be there to pull it off. It takes intentional curriculum planning. And the kids have to be supported properly, academically and socially, so that they can succeed in a more rigorous college environment.”

— DR. JASON STAMPER, PRINCIPAL, *The Promise Career Institute (PCI)*