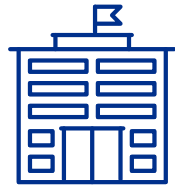


Academies of Anchorage

The plan for high school transformation in the Anchorage School District

Education plays a vital role in preparing students in the Anchorage School District to become engaged, productive members of our culturally rich community. Our community envisions students empowered by real world experiences with access to educational opportunities within and beyond the walls of school buildings. The Anchorage School District is boldly committed to transforming how we prepare students for life, college and careers within Alaska and across the globe.

Why the Shift?



College Ready

Over 70% of living wage jobs will require something beyond a high school diploma; we must ensure more students are academically prepared to access post-secondary learning opportunities such as **college and technical training**.



Career Ready

Anchorage's economic future depends on a robust, innovative workforce; we must provide educational pathways for all students that lead to **in-demand, high-wage career opportunities**.



Life Ready

College and career readiness programs have long focused on academic knowledge and behaviors, but social skills, interpersonal skills, and transition skills are taught separately; we must integrate these skills that are **critical to helping students navigate their paths through life**.

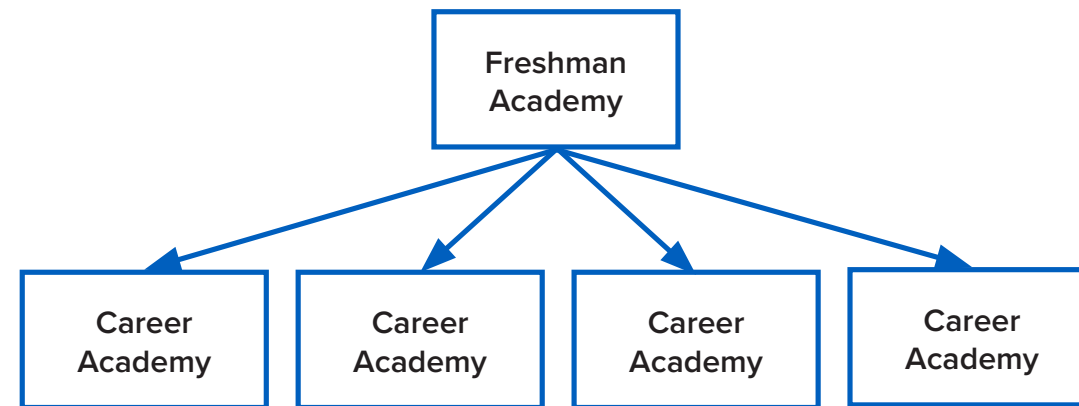
asdk12.org/ccl



Wall-to-Wall Career Academies

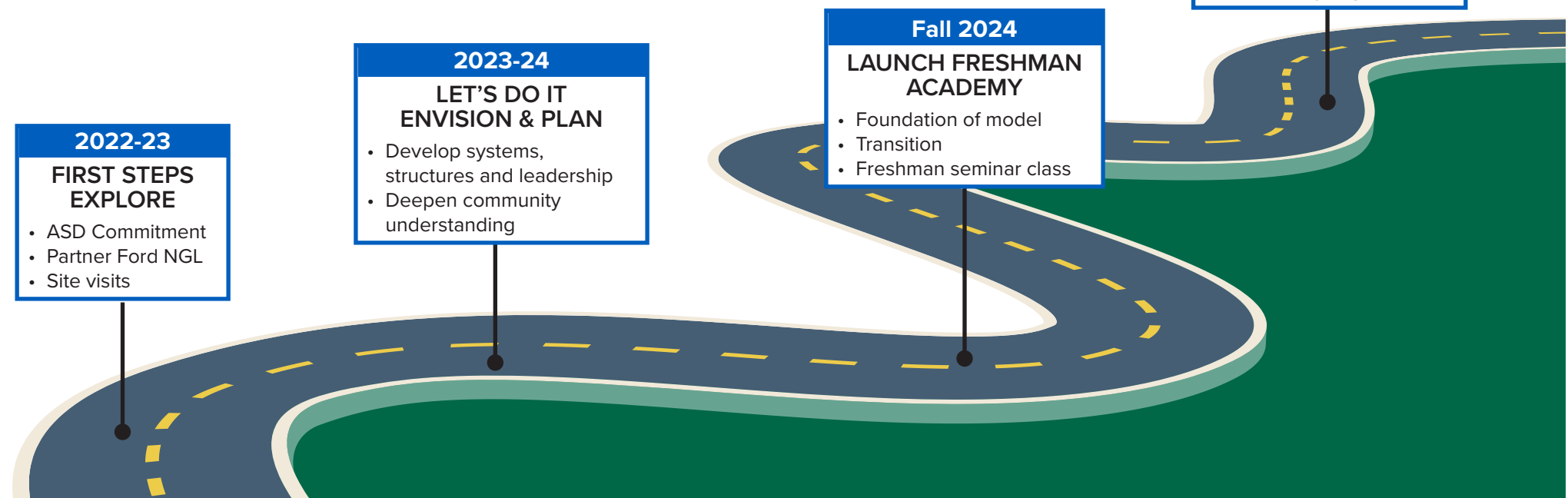
- CTE expansion and work-based learning
- Inclusive and equitable
- Focused small learning environment
- Community approach to meeting workforce needs

Academy Structure



The number of career academies at high schools will scale based on student population.

Timeline



Academy Team Structure

- ✓ Common planning for teachers
- ✓ Students are cohort scheduled
- ✓ Scheduling is intentional
- ✓ Business and civic engagement



Academies of Anchorage Frequently Asked Questions

What is the academy model?

Academies are small learning communities that empower students through college and career exposure so they can make timely, informed decisions and discover their true passions while earning early college credit and nationally recognized industry certifications. General education content is taught through the lens of their academy while business and community partners provide authentic experiential learning opportunities at every level.

Why reimagine the high school model?

The Anchorage School District has a long history of providing students with a high-quality, comprehensive high school experience. We have the advantage of being located in a diverse economic community offering our students a variety of high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand career pathways after high school graduation. Our high schools can and should play a significant role in helping each student explore these opportunities as they make decisions about their future. We are reimagining high school because:

- We believe we can do more to connect the opportunities in our community to the talents and strengths of our students.

We want to expand our emphasis from “**college access**” to “**future success**” and the various postsecondary pathways that can help students achieve that goal.

- We want high school to be a place where each student is **intentionally and individually supported** to explore and even accelerate their plans for the future .
- We believe that building a stronger **network of community and industry partnerships** can create high schools where students not only continue to reach their academic potential but also strategically explore and experience connections between their learning today and their opportunities for future education, training, employment, and success.

How is Anchorage reimagining high schools?

The Anchorage School District has **partnered** with Ford Next Generation Learning (Ford NGL) to foster a community conversation around college and career preparedness and the types of experiences, skills, and competencies our students need to truly be ready for success beyond high school graduation, whether that means enrolling in college or trade school, enlisting in service to their country, or gaining employment in a local high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand profession with an entrepreneurial mindset.

What changes will be made to Anchorage high schools as part of this process?

The primary strategy for achieving transformation will be the creation of career-themed academies in our local high schools. The academies will provide students with planned elective pathways within each high school beginning with an orientation experience or Freshman Academy during their 9th-grade year.

Students will choose an academy pathway within one of the available career-themed academies at the end of their freshman year. The academy pathway is made up of a **sequence of at least three elective courses aligned to a viable college, trade school and / or career pathway** that are completed during the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.

The progression of courses will be coupled with learning experiences that bring businesses and college / trade school partners into the school setting and send

students out to college / trade school campuses and into the workplace to explore and apply what they are learning in high school at a deeper level.

These leaders will also participate in task forces focused on a variety of topics and develop detailed plans for implementation.

What is an academy pathway?

A pathway is a sequence of courses within a chosen academy **designed to help students prepare for a specific career area** while meeting the mandatory requirements for high school graduation.

How will this program provide exposure to career opportunities?

Participating high schools will be matched with local industry partners who will provide training, internship and job-shadowing opportunities for students, as well as support for teachers who work in specific career-themed academies.

Why not just support what we already have?

While many of the elective classes offered at our high schools will remain the same, we believe this initiative will significantly increase opportunities for students to **connect their classroom learning to career success**.

In particular, we are focused on building strong connections with industry partners to ensure that every high school offers robust job shadowing, college visits, career exploration and internship opportunities. While these activities have happened previously, the academies model will provide a framework to make sure they are a consistent part of every student's high school experience in the Anchorage School District.

What should my student do if they are not interested in the career pathways offered by their school?

As a first step, students can contact their first-year student counselor with questions about their pathway options.

We encourage families to keep in mind that this initiative does not lock students into a future career or college path. Instead, it is **designed to provide a deep dive into a particular area that will help them make informed choices** about their path after high school.

We believe that in most cases, students will be able to identify a career pathway at their zoned school that is beneficial for them. In some cases, these pathways may provide exposure to a career field that is a good fit for that student but was previously unfamiliar to them. In other cases, the chance to visit industry leaders or participate in job shadowing may raise awareness about related career fields or opportunities.

In addition, a student who is interested in a particular career – such as becoming an attorney – may not have a pre-law pathway available at their school. However, they may have the opportunity to job-shadow, take a field trip, or participate in an internship with the legal department of an industry partner.

Will advanced classes such as AP, IB, and Dual-Enrollment still be offered in an academy model?

In addition to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program at West High School and Alaska Middle College School, the academies will offer honors, Advanced Placement, and dual enrollment opportunities. **The goal is to increase the number of students taking advanced courses by increasing relevance and rigor in instructional practices.**

Will all students be part of an academy?

Yes. An academy is an opportunity for our young people to learn through a college and career lens of interest. This data-driven model shows academy students outperform their peers with higher grade point averages, increased attendance, and overall improved student performance. The Anchorage School District has embraced this model and wants to ensure all students have the opportunity to learn and apply their learning within a space that interests them while building a strong foundation for a successful future.

How will students with disabilities participate in the academy model?

All students will be included in an academy team, and support structures will be developed and provided for those students who need them. Ultimately, each young person's Individualized Education Program (IEP) will support their learning and will be implemented to ensure student success.

What if my student is new to the school or community?

This is a student-centered model that focuses on what is best for the student. Counselors and administrators will continue to work closely with students and their families to ensure students' needs are met.

Will students need to transfer to other schools?

Students will still attend their neighborhood schools and will have an option to lottery into other school choice programs.

View the complete list of questions and ask your own by scanning the QR code.



Connect with us online



AnchorageSchoolDistrict



AnchorageSchoolDistrict



@ASDSchools



@ASDSchools



@ASDSchools

