


Governor Launches Pathways to Prosperity Initiative for Delaware Students

[Photos from today's event](#)

More than \$1 million in grant funding to support schools offering intensive training and credentials in key industries

Newark, DE – School districts will have access to programs that prepare high school students to thrive in growing industries under a statewide effort announced by Governor Markell today. Initially previewed in the Governor's [State of the State address](#), the Pathways to Prosperity initiative will establish partnerships with Delaware employers, universities, and school districts to prepare students for a bright future in high-demand fields and careers. Markell said the state is dedicating more than \$1 million of its federal career and technical education funding over the next year to offer school districts grants to defray the cost of providing these programs.

Through this effort, students will take hundreds of hours of specialized instruction and hands-on training. They will have the opportunity to graduate with industry-recognized certificates and with college credits for courses that are most relevant to those industries, giving them a head start on  getting a job and earning a degree.

“Today, we take an important step toward ensuring that Delaware will be one of those places where students of today and of generations to come will enter the workforce fully armed with the skills to compete for good jobs, develop new innovations, and make the most of their extraordinary talents,” **said Markell**, who thanked business leaders,


including Delaware Workforce Investment Board Chair and Delmarva Power President Gary Stockbridge, for their commitment to offering Delaware students the most relevant training.

The Governor spoke at the Delmarva Power Conference Center where leaders from the business and education community gathered at a Pathways to Prosperity Conference. School district representatives had the opportunity to ask questions of industry leaders, college representatives, and government officials about the process of starting these programs.

The co-leader of the national [Pathways to Prosperity Network](#) at Harvard University, Bob Schwartz, also spoke about national and state workforce needs and the importance of more opportunities like these for students to find a path to a successful career in industries with many available jobs.

“We have long known that educational attainment is tied to career success,” **said Schwartz**. “What’s different now is that it’s no longer simply about how much education you get, but specifically whether you are learning the right skills. The types of career and technical education programs we’re discussing today are increasingly valuable.”

Program Details

This fall, the state will launch pathways statewide in information technology and computer science in partnership with code.org, as well as in the culinary arts and hospitality industries in partnership with the Delaware Restaurant Association. The following year, the Department of Education will expand the network to include two more of the state’s fastest growing industries – financial services and healthcare. 

Markell said the state is already seeing that this model can work when employers work with education leaders to develop the

programs. He cited [the manufacturing pathway started last fall](#) when Colonial and New Castle County Vo-tech School Districts partnered with Delaware Tech and the Delaware Manufacturing Association. More than 30 juniors in New Castle County are spending part of each week at Delaware Tech. They learn math and other skills most important for that industry and work with equipment. Those students are already making great progress and, this summer, they'll get paid internships at Delaware companies like Agilent Technologies, PPG, Kuehne and Siemens.

“The manufacturing program has demonstrated the power of partnering our business community and college with school districts to create a curriculum that engages students in learning skills most valued in the economy,” **said Delaware Tech President Mark Brainard**. “Delaware Tech has an important role in these efforts given our work with industry to shape our course offerings. We look forward to taking part in other pathways so that students in more fields receive the most beneficial classroom instruction and hands-on training opportunities to prepare them for jobs in growing industries.”

Markell announced today that the Department of Education is making available more than \$500,000 this spring to support school districts that adopt these programs. An additional \$500,000 will be made available in the fall to fund programs for the following school year. Districts will be able to use that funding in a variety of ways to support students and staff, and to provide the services and materials required to offer courses and hands-on training opportunities.

The Department is providing curriculum support for each pathway program and has secured articulation agreements with Delaware colleges to ensure that students who complete a program will be eligible for college credit at one or more institutions of higher education.

The second half of today's conference is focused on giving

school district representatives the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the individual programs. More information on each program and funding applications for districts are available on the Department of Education's website at <http://dedoe.schoolwires.net/Page/293>.

“As our world is transformed by new technology, jobs of the past are now outsourced to other countries or handled by machines. However, incredible opportunities exist for those who can use that technology and for those whose abilities fit with the changing needs of growing industries,” said Markell. “Every Delaware student must have access to an education that best prepares him or her for this new era. That’s why we are here today.”

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