



Joliet Township High School - District 204

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JTHS Alternate School to Become JTHS Pathways Academy

This expansion will provide academic, social emotional, and vocational supports for general education students as well as students with special services.

At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, Joliet Township High School's Alternate School will become the JTHS Pathways Academy, an in-district program that runs during the school day for students who struggle academically or behaviorally in the traditional learning environment. The JTHS Board of Education approved the recommendation for the creation of the JTHS Pathways Academy on February 19, 2019. The concept for the JTHS Pathways Academy was created collaboratively by a committee of JTHS stakeholders, including district employees, families, and community members.

The JTHS Pathways Academy will empower general education and special education students to experience success through various academic, social emotional, and vocational supports and pathways.

Currently the Alternate School only serves special education students; however, the JTHS Pathways Academy will provide structured supportive services for up to forty general education students and up to fifty-five special education students in a small-school setting.

In order to enroll in the JTHS Pathways Academy, a student must receive a recommendation to the program on behalf of existing district Special Education IEP teams, Behavioral Health Teams, or through JTHS administrators. Parents or guardians must attend a conference and students must participate in an entrance interview prior to receiving acceptance into the program.

Once enrolled in the JTHS Pathways Academy, students will receive guided instruction through the APEX online learning system that is aligned to the JTHS district curriculum and geared towards providing students college and career readiness skills, along with vocational skills and experiences. In addition to the online learning platform, social and emotional supports will be integrated into the curriculum and a full-time guidance counselor will be on-site to support students.

Facility upgrades will include the construction of a welcoming main entrance, and classrooms will be redesigned to include Learning Labs and foster learning and collaboration in a welcoming environment. The expansion will be funded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal Title I Program, and evidence-based funding.

JTHS Director of Special Services, Iman Ellis-Bowen, said, "I am excited to see all of the committee's planning and recommendations materialize. We as a district strive toward ensuring that we have phenomenal services and supports for all students. The programs that will be offered within the JTHS Pathways Academy will allow us to tap into students' potential and assist them with accessing not only the academic environment, but the Joliet community. The academy will create additional Pathways towards empowering students to compete and contribute positively to community and global society by providing structured supportive services."

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