



## **MNPS Career Academy Partnership Councils**

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) is implementing career and themed academies in each of its 12 non-magnet comprehensive high schools. Career academies are a national model for **all** students: those who will be pursuing higher education after high school, as well as those who may enter the workforce immediately after graduation. Beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students choose to participate in a particular academy based on their interests. All students take required core academic subjects, electives and specialized courses in their career area to provide academic *rigor*. Career academy teachers incorporate real-world examples from their career area into all academic and specialized courses to create *relevance* for students. Students move through their academy in high school with the same team of teachers and their fellow students, building stronger *relationships*.

The most successful career academies across the country have strong involvement and support from the business community. Businesses can get involved with MNPS career academies in several different ways. Seven Metro high schools opened career academies for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in August 2008; this created an immediate need to develop an ongoing, structured dialogue between industry and teaching professionals to help recruit and coordinate the broader business participation in MNPS career academies.

MNPS career academies fall within six broad industry groupings:

- Arts, Media & Communications**
- Business, Marketing & Information Technology**
- Engineering, Manufacturing & Industrial Technology**
- Health**
- Hospitality & Tourism**
- Human & Public Services**

The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and PENCIL Foundation are recruiting business members to serve on six ***Career Academy Partnership Councils***, representing each of the above industry areas. A career academy partnership council is composed of volunteer business leaders and MNPS educators from each school that has a career academy in that industry grouping. A partnership council typically meets for 90 minutes every one or two months. The leadership of partnership councils consists of an industry chairman and a MNPS vice chair.

The role of a business leader serving on a career academy partnership council includes:

- Regular attendance at partnership council meetings (typically every one or two months)
- Communicating the workforce needs, skills and qualifications of that business or industry
- Advising MNPS of significant trends, issues or challenges facing that industry that have an impact on future workforce
- Working with industry colleagues and peers to connect business resources to MNPS career academies (recruiting guest speakers and teacher externship hosts, identifying job shadow opportunities, etc.)
- Recommending or assisting in the development of new career academy courses
- Working with MNPS educators on the council to ensure all career academies in a given industry have access to adequate industry resources and business partners
- Advocating for an industry's MNPS career academies in the broader community