

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOLS

CTE STUDENT SURVEY

2026

hollis + miller
architects





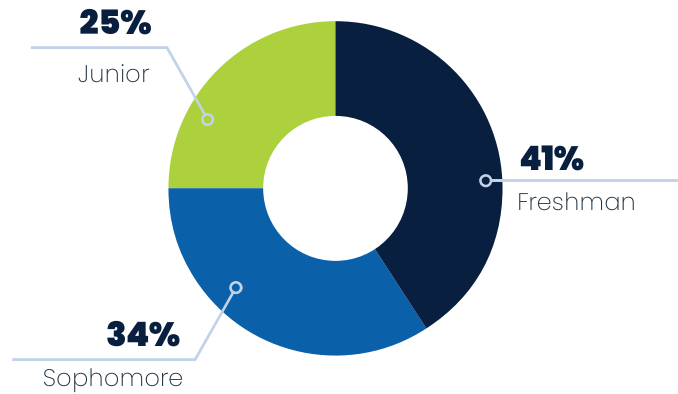
Respondent Demographics

High School Responses

- Blue Valley West - **604**
- Blue Valley High School - **502**
- Blue Valley North - **490**
- Blue Valley Northwest - **432**
- Blue Valley Southwest - **239**

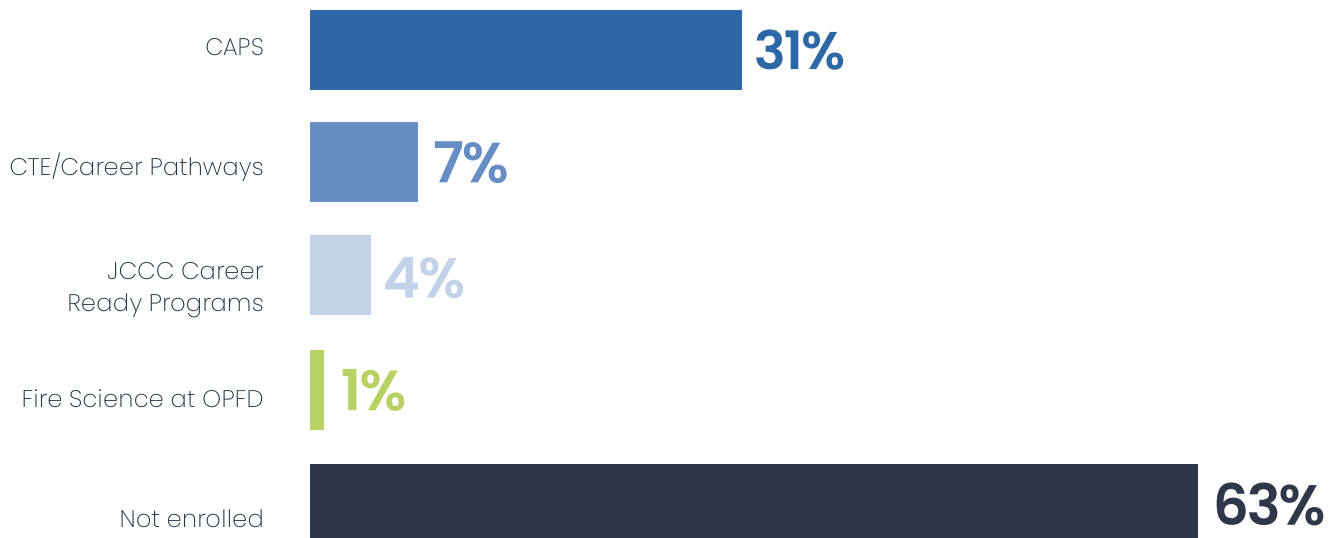
8th Grade Responses

- Aubry Bend Middle School - **193**
- Pleasant Ridge Middle School - **169**
- Blue Valley Middle School - **167**
- Leawood Middle School - **154**
- Lakewood Middle School - **129**
- Prairie Star Middle School - **103**
- Oxford Middle School - **90**
- Overland Trail Middle School - **86**
- Harmony Middle School - **63**



Career Ready Programming Enrollment

Students were able to select multiple programs



01 State of current programming

Interest in career-focused programming remains strong, with **over one-third of respondents currently enrolled or planning to enroll in these programs**, the greatest proportion of which is affiliated with CAPS. Students seem to be most drawn to these programs for their practical utility in students' desired career paths, although their interest in different focus areas certainly plays a role as well.



31%

CAPS



7%

CTE/Career Pathways



4%

JCCC Career Ready Programs



1%

Fire Science OPFD



63%

Not Enrolled

Students were able to select multiple programs



Enrolled students say the best part about their program is:

#1

Learning about topics relevant to my goals and interests

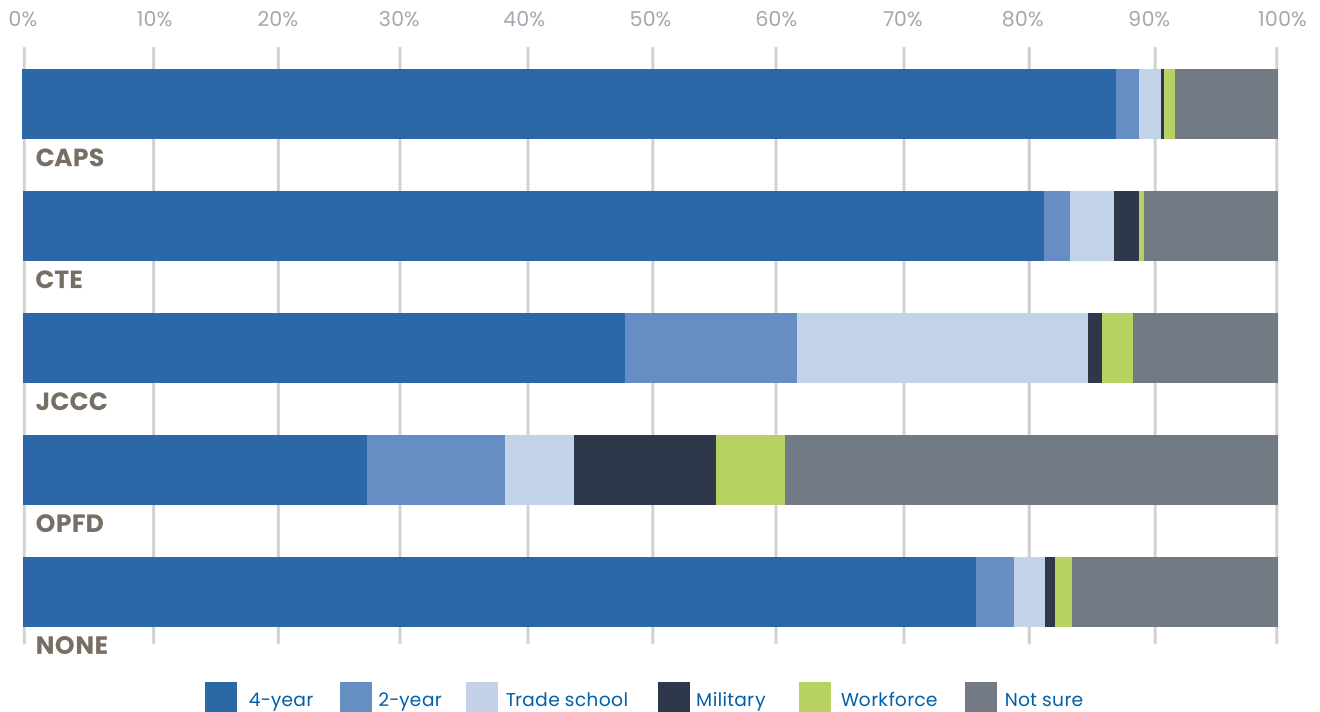
#2

Hands-on projects and real-world experiences

These priorities are reinforced by emergent trends in the different programs students choose to participate in depending on their post-high school plans. The overall distribution of student's future plans strongly favors pursuit of a 4-year college degree, which is reflected among those who are enrolled in CAPS or CTE Pathways. This may indicate that students view these programs as useful to their development toward college coursework and/or the careers they hope to pursue after receiving a college degree. Meanwhile, those in the OPFD fire science program are more likely to be unsure about their future plans or to be planning to join the military or enter the workforce, and those enrolled in JCCC Career Ready Programs are more likely to be looking toward trade school or a 2-year degree following graduation.

As Blue Valley School District looks toward expanding CAPS and career-ready programs at the secondary level, it's heartening to see that students maintain a steady interest in these types of programs, and that the large proportion of students who aim to pursue a 4-year degree continue to see CAPS as a viable program to build skills relevant to their career interests. With current district considerations for incorporating more industrial and trades-related strands, it will be important to consider how these programs appeal not only to students' interests, but also to their desire for programming that will set them up for future success no matter their path.

Program Enrollment by Future Plans

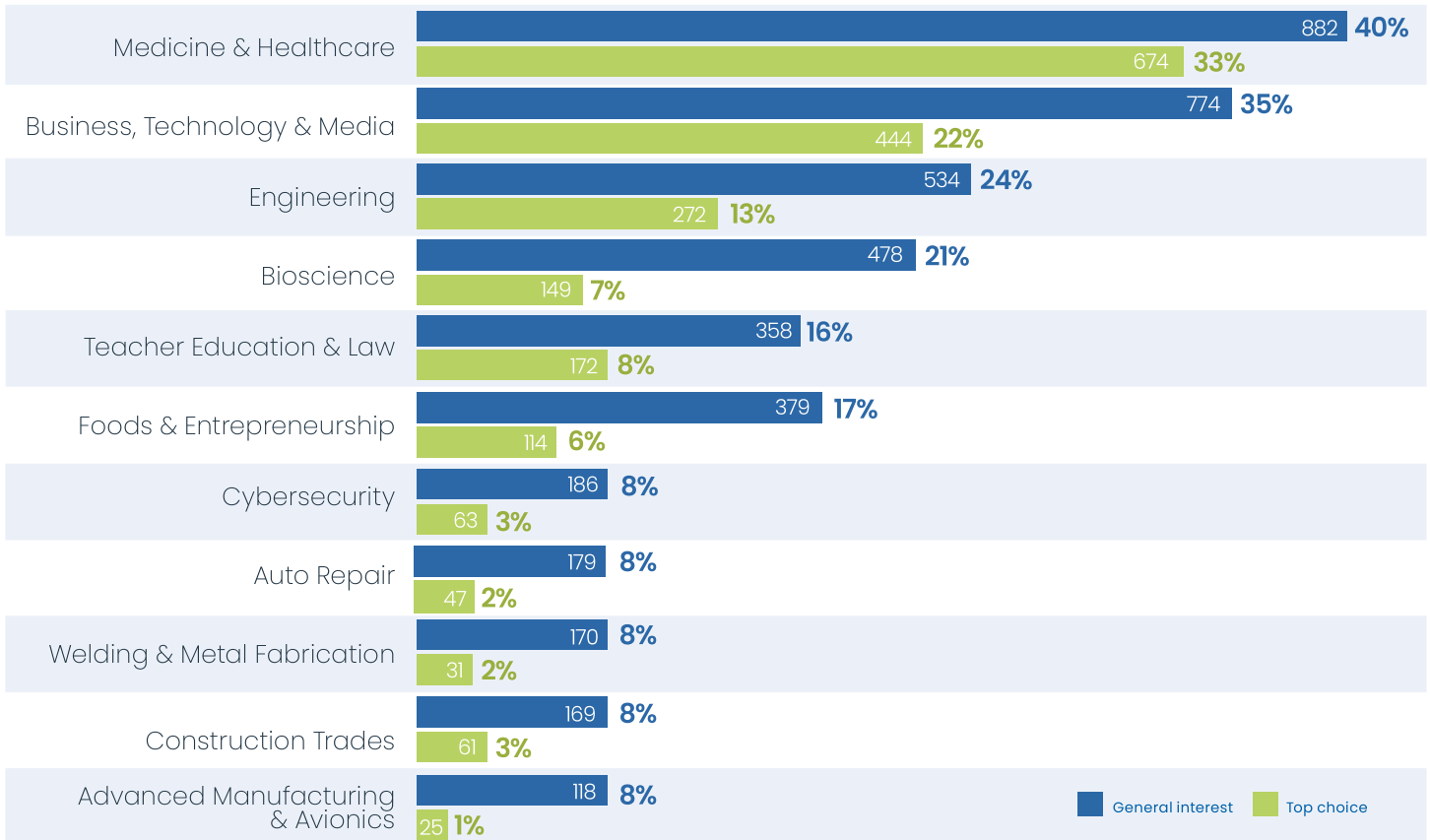


02 CAPS expansion & improvement

As the district explores opportunities to expand CAPS programming, it's important to consider the areas of interest and types of programming current and future students are interested in participating in. **Survey responses demonstrate a sustained interest in existing CAPS programs and emerging**

interest in proposed program additions. With students having received little to no information or messaging on what these new programs might look like, it's positive to see interest in them expressed, even if to a lesser degree than the existing CAPS strands.

High School – CAPS Program Area of Interest



In addition to expanded programming, Blue Valley might seek to improve the reach and delivery of programs like CAPS. In terms of reach, students frequently cite scheduling issues as barriers to enrollment, including not having enough time in their schedules or these programs' incompatibility with their preferred approach to high school coursework (AP classes, electives, etc.).

Numerous students also describe a lack of programming in their area of interest and freshmen and sophomores mentioned a lack of certainty about their future plans or the usefulness of these programs in relation to their career goals. This underscores the previously identified emphasis that students place on the utility of these programs in serving their future goals.

Non-enrolled juniors say they don't participate because:

Students were able to select multiple programs

52% I don't have time in my schedule

30% It doesn't fit with my academic approach (AP classes, electives, etc.)

29% There isn't a program related to my area of interest



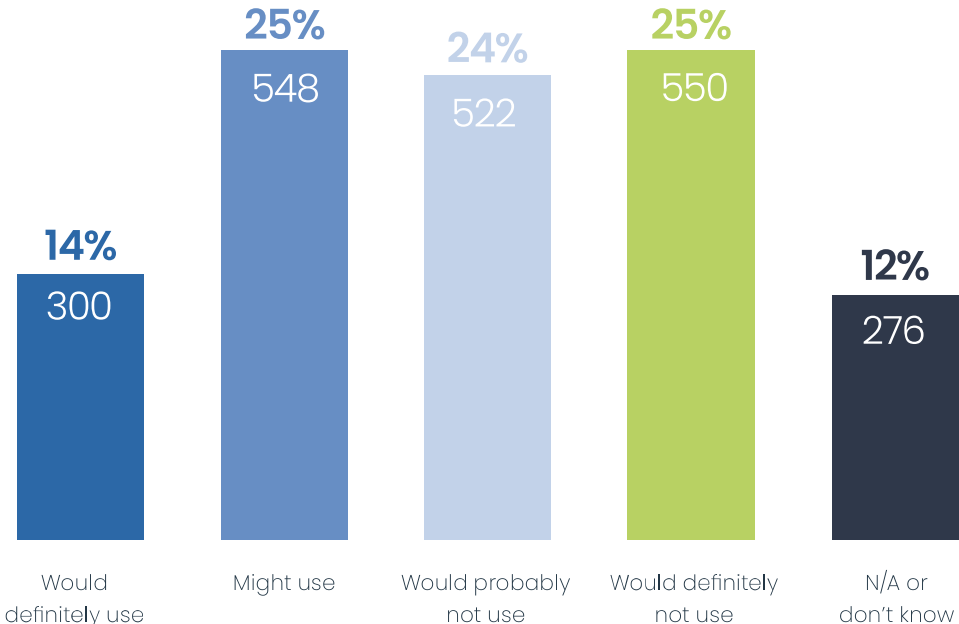
Providing transportation options may also help expand the reach of these programs. Although only 7% identified transportation challenges as a barrier to participation, **39% of students said they would use district-provided transportation to these programs at least some of the time.** This suggests that although logistical challenges may not seem like the greatest barriers to students, finding ways to ease these challenges may ultimately make these programs more broadly accessible.

In terms of improvements to the delivery of these programs, Blue Valley might consider expanding opportunities for students to gain real work experience, as students identify these opportunities as the ones they are missing from their high school experience. While

they also might like more opportunities for hands-on experience with technology and tools relevant to their field or to work with a mentor on a project, **both enrolled and non-enrolled students are most likely to say they want more opportunities to shadow a professional in the field or complete an internship.**

As the district seeks to evolve career-focused programs to have greater impact, it will be important to consider both the reach and delivery of programs to ensure they not only cover topics that are of interest to students, but that they do so in such a way that is both accessible and of value to students who are eligible and inspired to participate.

Would you use transportation to/from CAPS if provided?

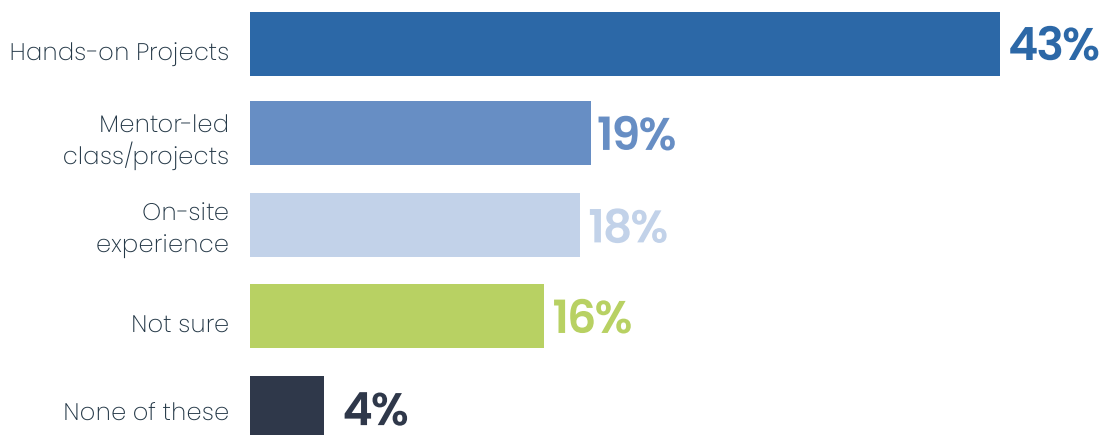


03 Looking to the future

Much of this data focuses on currently enrolled or eligible high school students, many of whom will not see the impact of the district's current expansion work. However, perspectives from eighth grade students suggest that trends identified here will likely persist as these younger students reach high school. When they imagine their high school experience, **eighth-grade students**

are most drawn to programs that allow them to do hands-on projects with peers who have similar interests, an opportunity that closely reflects CAPS programming. Additionally, like their high school counterparts, the eighth-grade respondents were most likely to express interest in the existing CAPS program areas, with emerging interest in the areas proposed for expansion.

Most Desirable High School Experience for 8th Grade



Student preferences vary in how they want to learn more about career ready programming. It might be most impactful to take a scaled approach, providing information in a **presentation format** in which participating **students share their experiences**, and send prospective students home with **digital and/or printed materials** to review with their parents.

Another component of looking to the future includes considering how significant cultural changes and technological advances may influence students' career goals and opportunities. The impact of AI is evidently a consideration of current students, with only 17% saying they haven't given much thought to how this rapidly advancing technology might impact their career. **Most students believe AI will impact them, although they are split on whether they aim to embrace the technology, or to build skills in a career that won't see as much impact.** Students who are interested in a 2-year degree or trade school are more likely to say they hope to build skills in a more AI-resistant field. Blue Valley's

CAPS expansion, proposed to include new programming in trades and technical industries, comes at a good time to be able to serve these students who view these fields as less likely to be impacted by current technological advancements. However, as public opinion continues to evolve surrounding the use and impact of technologies like AI, these priorities and related enrollment trends may fluctuate

As Blue Valley looks toward the future and considers the long-term impact of proposed expansions to CAPS programming, survey data presented here suggest these changes will have positive impact for years to come.

Perspectives on AI in Careers

