

# HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

WESTON WAMP

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## **Mayor Wamp Proposes More Than \$3 million Towards Enhanced Vocational Programs Across Several Area Schools**

*Investments Aimed at Increasing CTE Opportunities, Strengthening Technical College Pathways*

Hamilton County Mayor Weston Wamp today proposed more than \$3 million towards Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Hamilton County high schools. The investments benefiting six area high schools will bolster existing programs, significantly expand student capacity, and create an all-new career pathway in partnership with Hamilton County Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

“Each of these opportunities to expand career and technical education was identified over the last year and a half as I visited these programs firsthand,” said Mayor Wamp. “It’s encouraging to see more and more students pursue a skilled trade through our local schools, and I look forward to working alongside the County Commission and Hamilton County Schools to further expand career pathways for students across Hamilton County.”

The County Mayor’s office worked with leaders at the local technical college, TCAT-Chattanooga, and CTE leaders with Hamilton County Schools to identify investments that would improve the connectivity from the high school experience to the technical college experience. The \$3+ million proposal will fund capital improvements to four different programs, affecting six public schools, and 20 different CTE pathways.

“The county’s commitment to ensure Southeast Tennessee is future workforce-ready complements the HCS just cause of seeing all students thrive and experience a future without limits,” said HCS Superintendent, Dr. Justin Robertson. “The CTE programs at East Ridge High School, The Howard School, and Harrison Bay Future Ready Center have a long history of preparing our students for existing and emerging career paths. Receiving an investment at these schools will help our district continue its groundbreaking work to immerse middle and high school students in the principles, technologies, and skills they will encounter following graduation.

### Proposed Investments

- **Harrison Bay Future Ready Center: \$1.5 million**  
(Serves students at Central High School, East Hamilton High School, and Ooltewah High School)
  - With a waiting list of more than 100 students, this investment will create four new classrooms, enabling enrollment to double from 250 to 500 students over the next three to five years.
  - Installation of an elevator guaranteeing accessibility for all students

-Upgrading equipment for Advanced Manufacturing and Architecture and Construction pathways ensuring students train on the latest technologies so they are prepared to enter the workforce

- **The Howard School: \$1 million**

-Addition of a state-of-the-art ventilation system for welding classrooms, enhancing the health and safety of students and teachers while expanding the number of students who are able to participate in the program

- **East Ridge High School: \$500,000**

-Providing industry-standard construction and automotive equipment to ensure the school's growing CTE pathways provide students with the proper hands-on training that will prepare them to enter the workforce upon completion of programming

- **Hixson High School: \$250,000**

-Hamilton County Schools' first "pipeline partnership," in which students in a CTE program can receive hands-on training with Hamilton County Emergency Medical Service and an opportunity to earn a job with the agency upon graduation.

"Our local workforce is guaranteed to benefit from the elevation of traditional CTE pathways to cutting edge programming, ensuring students are ready for higher education or the high-wage, high-demand jobs in Southeast Tennessee," said Commissioner Mike Chauncey, who represents East Ridge. "I appreciate Mayor Wamp's bold investment into vocational education, which will attract employers to the region knowing our public schools are producing highly-skilled individuals ready to get to work."

The Hamilton County Commission will vote on the \$3+ million proposal benefitting Harrison Bay Future Ready Center, The Howard School, East Ridge High School, and Hixson High School Wednesday, April 17th.

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