

Luxemburg-Casco School District: Area districts collaborate with Bellin College to offer healthcare career pathway

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LUXEMBURG, Wis. – Three Green Bay-area school districts are collaborating with Bellin College to offer their high school students new curriculum – starting in August 2022 – that leads to a career pathway in healthcare. Students from the Luxemburg-Casco, Kewaunee and Denmark districts will come together to participate in a pathway into the Bellin College Healthcare Academy.

The Board of Education of the three school districts have approved the curriculum and funding at their respective scheduled meetings, and students now are in the process of registering for courses that will begin in the first semester of the 2022-23 school year.

Bellin College currently offers individual healthcare-focused courses at area high schools, but this will be its first full-scale healthcare program. Participating students can earn up to 42 college credits while in high school.

“We are excited about this new partnership with Bellin College and Bellin Health,” says Mike Snowberry, director of learning services for the Luxemburg-Casco School District. “By the three neighboring districts coming together, we are able to offer our students more coursework choices as they select career pathways. We already are seeing strong interest among our students in these classes.”

“The Bellin College Healthcare Academy is a partnership that allows us to create ‘real-life’ career and academic experiences for Kewaunee High School students interested in the healthcare field,” says Kewaunee School District Superintendent Scott Fritz. “College is an expensive career exploration program, so our hope is to create as many opportunities for our students to experience career pathway opportunities while still in high school.”

“The real importance of participating in the Bellin College Healthcare Academy is to fulfill the mission of the Denmark School District, which is to provide the highest level of educational programming to ensure student success within school and beyond,” says School District of Denmark Administrator Luke Goral. “With the current, exceptional job market and the ever-increasing cost of post-secondary education, taking advantage of post-secondary opportunities and business partnerships, combined with work-based curriculum, the Bellin College Healthcare Academy will give our students an extra advantage after graduating from high school.”

Students who complete the Bellin College Healthcare Academy coursework while in high school have the potential to receive a bachelor’s degree in nursing at Bellin after only two additional years of post-secondary study. Students essentially will have completed the entire first year of study at Bellin while in high school. The normal degree progression at Bellin is eight semesters over three years, including two summer sessions.

Bellin has prior and current engagement with area high school students around upper-level science courses, but this will be its first complete, fully immersive experience, according to Phil Schaible, director of sports medicine and orthopedics for Bellin Health.

“From our perspective, this partnership is a win for everyone,” says Schaible. “It is consistent with the Bellin mission and vision for our community to be as healthy as it can be, and for us to give back to the community. We not only are supporting the school districts, but also the students and their families.

“At Bellin, we had real staffing concerns before COVID-19. Coming out of the

pandemic, that has heightened dramatically. Students have familiarity with doctors and nurses. What about all of the other careers within healthcare that people just don't know about? We hope to create a healthy pipeline of young people who have been exposed to healthcare, allowing them to make choices that make sense to them. Through our collaboration with Bellin College, we are able to offer students an academic platform into a meaningful career pathway."

Initial exploratory coursework will rotate between the three participating high schools, offering students the opportunity to affirm their interest in the healthcare field through study and job shadow opportunities. These classes include Introduction to Healthcare, Medical Terminology, Customer Service in Healthcare, Health Communication and Nursing Assistant.

Students then apply and interview for admittance to the Bellin College Healthcare Academy. Once accepted they begin upper-level coursework, online and in-person at the Bellin campus. Paid internship opportunities also are available to students from this point forward.

Among the upper-level courses available to Healthcare Academy students are History of Healthcare, General Chemistry, Developmental Psychology, Medical Ethics, Anatomy and Physiology I and II, Statistics, and Diversity Issues in Healthcare.

Students can begin the healthcare-focused courses during their freshman year, but there will be entry points into the curriculum for older students.

The bachelor of science degree programs at Bellin College include Nursing, Radiologic Services, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Diagnostic Cardiac Sonography, Radiation Therapy, and Surgical Technology/Surgical Assisting.

"We applaud Bellin College, along with the Kewaunee and Denmark school districts, for their collaborative efforts to bring this new partnership forward in a rather short time period," adds Snowberry. "Our initial conversation happened in mid-February, and just over two months later we are excited to offer courses to students in the

healthcare career pathway.”

More than 40 students between the three school districts already have expressed initial interest in taking part in the new program.