

INNOVATIVE



SCHOOL MODELS



Updated July 18, 2022

Guidance for Districts

Overview

Despite consistent improvements in our state's high school graduation rates, ACT performance, EPSO attainment, and seamless college enrollment rates since 2015, less than 30 percent of high school graduates are completing a postsecondary credential within 6 years of graduation. The biggest gap in the education-workforce pipeline occurs at the transition from K-12 to postsecondary education and training—meaning, many students who are academically qualified to earn a postsecondary credential never pursue one.

Moreover, the structural barriers to completing postsecondary training disproportionately affect vulnerable student populations. As we imagine a future that works, we must address the inequities in our current systems. A clear opportunity for our work is to remove the physical and logistical barriers that separate education and employers by physically co-locating high school, college, and industry partners and/or removing physical and logistical barriers that prevent students from pursuing high-quality career pathways (e.g., lack of transportation, lack of technology, prohibitive costs, inadequate academic preparation).

The \$500M state investment in Innovative School Models (ISM) is a way to eliminate these structural barriers that exist between high school, workforce and postsecondary systems while allowing students the ability to seamlessly make connections ensuring that all students graduate high school prepared to successfully complete a postsecondary credential or attain high-quality employment.

ISM is the department's strategy to empower schools to transform the traditional high school and middle school models to foster a culture of college and career awareness and readiness.

This document provides the following information:

- Program overview
- Program impact and background
- Overview of funding allocations
- ISM key components
- Implementation guidance and examples
- Minimum program requirements and expectations
- Allowable uses of funds
- Technical assistance and support
- Monitoring and reporting expectations

Intent to Apply: Districts who wish to participate in Innovative School Models must complete and submit the [Intent to Apply](#) Form by **11:59 p.m. (CT) on July 22, 2022**.

Districts may also reference the following resources for support in completing their ISM application.

- ePlan Application Guidance Document
- ISM Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Recorded Webinar

Office Hours: To support districts exploring the ISM opportunity, the department will host Office Hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting on **Tues., Aug 2** from 1 to 2 p.m. CT via Microsoft Teams.

Microsoft Teams Link: [Join Microsoft Teams with Video](#).

Please note that, upon award, districts will be required to sign grant assurances with terms and conditions relating to the award and compliance with state and federal requirements.

About Innovative School Models

What is the mission of Innovative School Models?

Innovative School Models empower schools to transform the traditional high school and middle school environment to foster a culture of college and career awareness and readiness.

The program will provide middle schools and high schools with the resources, flexibility, and technical support to successfully reimagine time, space, partnerships, and modes of learning engaging all learners in grades 6-12.

ISM in **Middle School**

- Supports students making connections to their interests and aptitude earlier allowing for a seamless transition to high school and beyond.
- Provides opportunities for students to explore specific college and career paths based on their aptitudes, skills, and interests,
- Encourages students to make intentional decisions about future goals aligned to their interests with expert advising from trained educators: high school course selection, postsecondary options, major selection and/or career placement.
- Improves students' knowledge of career options and empowers students to set goals and make concrete plans (i.e., postsecondary education & training) aligned with interests and skills,
- Motivates students to persevere and extends the probability that students will pursue

postsecondary opportunities,

- Excites the minds of students about their career possibilities and enhances their academic performance by connecting academic content to real-world applications.
- This may also provide middle school students with the opportunity to take an introductory CTE course or the first CTE course in a series before high school. As a reminder, under the new TISA rules, middle School CTE courses will be funded.

ISM in **High School**

- Empowers districts to reimagine the use of time, space, partnerships, and modes of learning to accelerate and increase student attainment of high-quality, in-demand postsecondary credentials.
- Aligns high school programs to regional career pathways in partnership with employers, industry, and postsecondary,
- Removes physical barriers for students to access college-level and/or industry-aligned coursework,
- Allows students to earn college credits and industry certifications alongside high school requirements,
- Creates access for students who are historically underrepresented and/or disadvantaged,
- Incorporates career exploration and academic advising, and
- Integrates employability skills and competencies (commonly referred to as “soft skills”) into daily instruction, curriculum, and experiences.

What amount of funding will districts be eligible to receive?

The State will invest **\$500 million** over the next **4 years** to give all traditional, public high schools and middle schools the opportunity to establish an Innovative School Model. Funding will be awarded to schools as follows:

- **High schools** serving **more than 100 students** are eligible for up to **\$1,000,000.00**.
- **Middle schools** serving **more than 100 students** are eligible for up to **\$500,000.00**.
- Schools **combining** both middle and high school grades that serve more than 100 students are eligible for up to **\$500,000.00**.
- Middle schools and high schools serving **less than 100 students** are eligible for up to **\$200,000.00**.

***Please note: these funds are not only for purchasing equipment. The expectation is to include expenses needed to build a comprehensive innovative package that produces the intended outcomes for students.**

What flexibilities do districts have for participating?

Participation is optional. Districts will have the ability to design an Innovative School Model that fits the needs of their district. Schools may implement projects that are specific to the needs of the individual school, or a district may develop collaborative project/s with multiple schools either 1) implementing a project with the same vision, purpose, and intended outcomes, or 2) pooling resources to develop a multi-school initiative. Innovative School Models will allow for districts to have increased autonomy to make decisions regarding scheduling, program requirements, instructional hours, etc. to make innovative programming possible.

What are some of the components of a successful Innovative School Model?

Below are examples of many components that should be considered in developing a successful Innovative School Model. It is important to note that some of these components must be included but cannot be the only components in an effective innovative school model.

Middle School Program Components	
Career Assessments	Career Awareness Activities
Academic Advising for High School	EPSO Awareness Activities
Learning Loss Gap Programming	Summer Learning Opportunities
Project-Based Learning Opportunities	Industry Field Trips
On-Site and Virtual Job Shadowing	School-Based Enterprises
Practical Learning Environment Development	Career Cluster Academies
Multiple Modality Course Development	Mentorship Opportunities with Partners
Non-Academic Standard and Competency Development for Employment Success	Course Content Revisions to Incorporate Information on High-Demand Occupations
Course Content Revisions to Increase Knowledge of High School CTE Pathways	Career Pathways Student Portfolio Development

High School Program Components	
Early Postsecondary Opportunities	Postsecondary Credential Attainment
Industry Credential Attainment	Work-Based Learning Opportunities
Intentional Academic Advising	Mentorship Opportunities with Partners
Programming to Address Industry Skill Gaps	Access to industry-specific equipment
Extended Learning Opportunities	Accelerated Learning Opportunities
Summer Learning Opportunities	Revising District Academic Requirements for Postsecondary Courses or Enrollment
Revising District Graduation Requirements to Better Align with Employment Standards	Sharing Instructional Staff Across Partnering Organization
Offering high school courses at employer sites	Offering high school courses at postsecondary education institutions
Multiple Modality Course Development	Supportive Specific to High School to College Transitions
Non-Academic Standard and Competency Development for Employment Success	Mentorship Opportunities with Partners

How will schools implement Innovative School Models?

Middle and high schools, along with postsecondary and community partners, will be required to establish innovative practices to accelerate credential attainment through:

- Reviewing and reimagining their **current policies and requirements**, especially regarding scheduling, admission or employment requirements, academic remediation and support, and/or modes of learning (e.g. revising academic requirements for postsecondary courses or enrollment; revising educator requirements to serve as adjunct faculty; revising graduation requirements to better align with employment standards);

- Reviewing and reimagining their **instructional practices** and improve how they share vital human capital such as teachers, counselors, and advisors through effective partnerships among secondary, postsecondary, and community organizations (e.g. sharing advisors to support students across the bridge from high school to college or employment, sharing instructional staff across institutions, collaborating to share professional development resources across partners);
- Reviewing and reimagining how they use **employer and community-based partners** to provide students with the mentorship, training, and competencies that are vital to workplace success (e.g. providing work-based learning in virtual or hybrid formats, co-developing non-academic standards and competences for employment success, helping students build social capital through mentorship and work-based learning).

Important!!

- **Funds are not for purchasing equipment only. The expectation is to include expenses needed to build a comprehensive innovative package.**
- **The comprehensive innovative school model must have a sustainability plan built out.**

What are some examples of innovative practices?

Innovative Practice	Examples
Reimagining Time	In this example model, district, postsecondary and industry partners utilize equipment, staff, and other resources to extend learning opportunities outside the traditional school day to accelerate completion of valuable industry or postsecondary credentials. Extended opportunities can be in-person, virtual, or hybrid.
Reimagining Space	In this example model, learning takes place onsite with an employer or on a postsecondary campus . Students complete their high school requirements alongside opportunities for work-based learning, dual enrollment, or other early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs). This model reduces the burdens of transportation and costs to students and creates efficiency for schools and partners. Students can earn an associate degree or postsecondary credential alongside their high school diploma.
Reimagining Partnerships	In this example model, STEM-focused courses are co- designed and co-taught by high school teachers and employers . Course content will be taught both in classroom settings (remote and in-person) and through applied learning that uses the workplace as a laboratory, enabling students to simultaneously earn early postsecondary credit and gain workplace skills that prepare them to enter and succeed in STEM careers.
Reimagining Modes of Learning	In this example model, programs of study maximize the number and variety of college-credit courses by leveraging remote course delivery models and other innovative practices, especially for rural students. Teachers receive ongoing professional development focused on instructional strategies and student engagement in virtual settings.

What is the potential student impact of participating in ISM?

By implementing Innovative School Models in each traditional middle school and high school in Tennessee, over 500,000 students will be positively impacted each year.

In May 2021, the Department announced 21 school districts and district consortiums to receive an Innovative High School Models (IHSM) Grant. A total of \$30,000,000 in federal ESSER funds were invested in high schools committing to implementing Innovative School Models over the following 2 years. Within the first year of implementation, these districts have successfully reimaged the high school environment and proven the potential impact that a significant investment in innovation can make in promoting college and career readiness within the state of Tennessee.

In 1 year, IHSM has made it possible for students to

- Complete flight training to be on track to earn a private pilot license before finishing high school.
- Design and construct a robot that won World Championship Autonomous award.
- Obtain a CNA certification and earn dual enrollment credit hours in pre-practical nursing.
- Build electric cars through the Greenpower program.
- Gain real world experience, high school credit, and cash through summer work-based learning.
- Be on track to finish an associate degree prior to high school graduation.
- Receive advisement and support resulting in individualized educational and career plans.
- Make an economic impact, with students from one district earning over \$490,000 working in jobs made possible through IHSM!

In 1 year, IHSM has made it possible for schools to

- Expand and modernize CTE programs with new equipment and instructional resources.
- Enhance an online learning platform enabling students to complete high school coursework while also working up to 30 hours per week with over 25 different partnering businesses.
- Establish a Teaching as a Profession program that is accessible to all high school students in the district.
- Establish Innovation Impact Institutes within 7 district high schools that each have a specialized focus in a high-demand field.
- Allow teachers to travel to organizations and companies that inspire them to think differently about their content area.
- Revive unused classroom space to create a state-of-the-art manufacturing space.
- Hire Work Support Coaches to provide transportation to students participating in work-based learning.
- Develop new programs of study in STEM, Construction (MEP), and Transportation.
- Integrate intentional course scheduling for freshman and sophomore years to give students more time to earn postsecondary credits and industry certifications during their junior and senior years.
- Train staff members to become Certified Career Advisors.
- Make progress toward establishing a 240,000 square foot space that will be used in collaboration with over 30 partners to provide work-based learning, early postsecondary opportunities, CTE programming, and pre-apprenticeships and certifications.
- Develop and deliver 50 asynchronous online courses as part of a newly established virtual learning academy.

Innovative School Model is a game-changing initiative that will have a long-term impact on the quality of education and workforce development in the State.

ALL traditional middle schools and high schools will now have the resources and supports necessary to develop an Innovative School Model.

What is required for a district to participate in Innovative School Models?

All schools that wish to implement an Innovative School Model must apply and schools that are approved for funding will demonstrate a clear and comprehensive plan for success. Additional guidance regarding the application process will be available at the end of June. Each ISM within a district should include the following minimum requirements:

1. Submit an intent to apply by **July 22, 2022**
2. **Application opens August 2, 2022.** There will be **three applications windows**. See page 9.
3. Plan out a clear vision for an Innovative School Model. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The application components will include:
 - a. A clear and thorough description of the vision and purpose of the project.
 - b. An assessment of the needs that informed the project.
 - c. A detailed description of how the project will transform the school experience for students.
 - d. A commitment from at least one postsecondary education partner and one employer partner to directly contribute to the project.
 - e. A description of at least one strategy or best practice that will be implemented within each of the following focus areas: time, space, and modes of learning.
 - f. A plan for sustainability of the project, including aligning and/or matching funding sources.
 - g. Development of action steps, outcomes and evaluation strategies for implementation.

What are some examples of relevant measures and outcomes?

Middle School	High School
Participation in career exploration activities	
Career and academic advising expansion	
Increase in industry, community, and postsecondary partnerships	
CTE course offerings and career pathways expansion	
High school curriculum alignment	Postsecondary curriculum alignment
Project-based learning offerings and participation	EPSO offerings, enrollment, and credits earned
Learning loss programming implemented	WBL offerings and participation
Career awareness course enrollment	Industry credentials offered and earned

What are allowable uses of funds for Innovative School Model implementation?

Innovative School Model funds may be used for expenses falling within the following categories. A more detailed breakdown of allowable/non-allowable uses of funds may be found on the website.

Account Number	Description
Regular Instructional Program (71100)	The Regular Education Program includes activities that provide students in grades K through 12 with learning experiences to prepare them to become productive citizens, family members, and members of the work force. Expenditures for instructing students should be recorded in this program.
Vocational Education Program (71300)	The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program includes instructional activities that provide students with the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for employment in an occupational area. Activities include training both in the classroom and in a supervised work environment.
Other Student Support (72130)	Other Student Support includes services to students in addition to attendance and health services. These include guidance services, and evaluation and testing services for Regular Education students, Special Education students, and Vocational Education students.
Support Services/Regular Instruction Program (72210)	Regular Education Program includes activities primarily for assisting instructional staff in planning, developing, and evaluating the process of providing learning experiences for students. These activities include curriculum development, techniques of instruction, child development and understanding, and staff training.
Support Services/Vocational Education Program (72230)	Career and Technical Education Instructional Staff Support includes activities primarily for assisting instructional staff in planning, developing, and evaluating the process of providing learning experiences that give students the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for employment in an occupational area. These activities include curriculum development, techniques of instruction, child development and understanding, and staff training.
Education Technology (72250)	Technology services are designed to provide internet and other technical services to support instruction, attendance, health, administration, testing, and other areas as needed. Major categories include supplies, materials, and other expenses such as internet connectivity. 72550 should only be used for school connectivity/technology infrastructure.
Transportation (72710)	This may include items such as diesel fuel, gasoline, vans and vehicles, specialized transportation services, car services, and vehicle repairs.
Regular Capital Outlay (76100)	Regular Capital Outlay includes activities such as site acquisition services, site improvement services, architecture and engineering services, building acquisition and construction services, and building improvement services. Expenditures under this series include new upgrades to current facilities and plants.

What technical assistance and support can districts expect to receive while implementing Innovative School Models?

Districts will be provided ongoing regional technical assistance to support the implementation and sustainability of each Innovative School Model. In addition to having access to regional consultant support, districts will also be provided training led by department staff on core project areas (EPSOs, WBL, Career Advising and Exploration, etc.). Opportunities for ISM collaboration across districts to identify best practices will also be ongoing. **The State will provide intensive support for districts through regional networks. Networks will be led by highly trained experts with extensive expertise in implementation practices.**

What are the reporting and monitoring expectations for districts?

Districts will be required to participate in ongoing technical assistance calls, as well as to participate in periodic site visits upon request. Each district will be required to submit quarterly reports for each Innovative School Model, which will report data demonstrating progress toward meeting anticipated goals and outcomes. Depending on the grant application approval date, the monitoring and disbursement dates will be as follows:

Monitoring and Disbursement		
Early Adopters	Recommended Window	Highly Recommended Window
Application received by Sept. 15, 2022	Application received by Nov. 15, 2022	Application received by Feb. 1, 2023
Application approved by Oct. 31, 2022	Application approved by Jan. 15, 2023	Application approved by Mar. 24, 2023
Grant Disbursement #1 By Nov. 15, 2022	Grant Disbursement #1 By Feb. 1, 2023	Grant Disbursement #1 By Apr. 3, 2023
2023	2023	2023
May 15 – Monitoring Report #1	May 15 – Monitoring Report #1	May 15 – Monitoring Report #1
July 31 – Grant Disbursement #2	July 31 – Grant Disbursement #2	July 31 – Grant Disbursement #2
Sept. 15 – Monitoring Report #2	Sept. 15 – Monitoring Report #2	Sept. 15 – Monitoring Report #2
2024	2024	2024
Jan. 30- Annual Report #1	Jan. 30- Annual Report #1	Jan. 30- Annual Report #1
Feb. 15 – Monitoring Report #3	Feb. 15 – Monitoring Report #3	Feb. 15 – Monitoring Report #3
June 14 – Monitoring Report #4	June 14 – Monitoring Report #4	June 14 – Monitoring Report #4
July 31 – Grant Disbursement #3	July 31 – Grant Disbursement #3	July 31 – Grant Disbursement #3
2025	2025	2025
Jan. 30 – Annual Report #2	Jan. 30 – Annual Report #2	Jan. 30 – Annual Report #2
Feb. 14 – Monitoring Report #5	Feb. 14 – Monitoring Report #5	Feb. 14 – Monitoring Report #5
June 13 – Monitoring Report #6	June 13 – Monitoring Report #6	June 13 – Monitoring Report #6
July 31 – Grant Disbursement #4	July 31 – Grant Disbursement #4	July 31 – Grant Disbursement #4
2026	2026	2026
Jan. 30 – Annual Report #3	Jan. 30 – Annual Report #3	Jan. 30 – Annual Report #3
Feb. 16 – Monitoring Report #7	Feb. 16 – Monitoring Report #7	Feb. 16 – Monitoring Report #7
May 15 – Monitoring Report #8	May 15 – Monitoring Report #8	May 15 – Monitoring Report #8
June 13- Final report Due	June 15- Final report Due	June 15- Final report Due