



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **WakeEd Partnership Announces New “Accelerate” Initiative Focused on Career Pathways and Future-Ready Students**

RALEIGH, N.C. – [WakeEd Partnership](#) (WakeEd), a business-backed nonprofit organization committed to supporting teachers and students in Wake County, today announced “Accelerate”, a new education and workforce development initiative that partners area businesses with teachers and students to bring authentic, real-world learning experiences to Wake County classrooms and connect students with employers to explore career pathways. Accelerate brings together both new and existing workforce-focused educational initiatives that will help Wake County students become more future-ready for any career and college opportunity.

“We are fortunate to live in such a dynamic and growing area when it comes to new jobs and opportunities, yet too many students aren’t positioned to take advantage of the fast-growing economy for a variety of reasons,” said Keith Poston, President, WakeEd Partnership. “We know all companies want future employees who are critical-thinkers, problem-solvers, and excellent communicators with great teamwork skills. If we better align those attributes with the right academic coursework and real career pathways right here in Wake County, it will be transformative for students and families as well as the local economy.”

“One of our top priorities with these new programs and the alignment across our initiatives is to make sure that historically marginalized groups, including low-income, students of color, and English Language Learners, have every choice and every opportunity available to them,” Poston added. “Too often these students don’t see themselves in these careers, may not know these jobs exist, or can’t see the path to get there. Our goal with Accelerate is to bridge that gap for students and teachers.”

WakeEd Partnership’s **Accelerate** includes:

### **Programs for Students**

**Career Accelerator (NEW PROGRAM):** Career Accelerator is a new workforce development program created to provide high school students in 10th through 12th grade with immersive experiences with local companies exploring targeted career fields. This program will be hosted at one site in each of the Wake County Public School System’s nine regions beginning this summer. In addition to immersion experiences, students will receive coaching and instruction in other workforce development areas, such as CV building, social media use, and interviewing skills. Nearly 1,000 Wake County Public School System students are expected to participate.

**Career Exploration (NEW PROGRAM):** Career Exploration is a new workforce development program providing middle school students in 7th grade with short burst immersive experiences to explore career opportunities in a multitude of career fields. This program includes a short immersion with a company, a post-immersion Q&A with company employees, and career guidance from a school Career Development Coordinator. This program will launch in Fall 2022.

**Career Conversations:** Career Conversations connects employers and students digitally through a growing online library of video interviews with professionals from a variety of jobs. Together, we are providing additional opportunities for middle and high school students to connect with diverse industries and employers, great leaders, and even potential mentors.

### **Programs for Teachers:**

**SummerSTEM:** SummerSTEM is a program that enriches educators' understanding of the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the workplace using Project-Based Learning (PBL) with an emphasis on STEM businesses and careers.

**Connecting Industry to Math Instruction (CIMI):** CIMI is a partnership between Wake Technical Community College, WCPSS, and WakeEd Partnership, that seeks to connect direct math instruction with real-world industry practices.

For more information about Accelerate including how your business can get engaged, visit our web site at: <https://www.wakeed.org/programs/> or contact Douglas Price, WakeEd's Director of Programs, at [dprice@wakeed.org](mailto:dprice@wakeed.org).

### **About WakeEd Partnership**

WakeEd Partnership is an independent, nonprofit organization composed of business and community leaders committed to improving public education. Since 1983, the Partnership has advocated for excellent educational opportunities for all students in the Wake County Public School System. For more information, please visit [www.wakeed.org](http://www.wakeed.org).

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