

Building Connections

PREPARING FUTURE-READY GRADUATES

March 2026

Welcome

CONSTRUCTION CAREER DAYS, DISRUPTIVE TECH SUMMIT, AND UPDATED CREDENTIALS

Welcome to the March edition of the “Building Connections” newsletter for the 2025-2026 school year!

This monthly resource provides career and college readiness materials for Catholic school leaders, students, educators, and families. This edition's spotlight is on Construction Career Days, AI education for teachers and students, and an update on the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Credential Redesign.

A big thank you goes to the Allied Construction Industries, Catholic Business Advisory Council, Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council, and Ohio Association for Career and Technical Education for their assistance with this issue!



Mari K. Thomas, Ph.D.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS, CAREER PATHWAYS



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For Students

CONSTRUCTION CAREER DAYS: ALLIED CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES (ACI)

We are excited to share the details about ACI's upcoming Construction Career Days, May 6-7, 2026. With 100 highly interactive experiential commercial construction exhibitors, the career exploration attracts 3200+ students from more than 60 schools.

ACI Construction Career Days highlights the many facets of the built environment and allows students to experience a variety of trades as they engage with the area's top employers, educators, trade schools, and apprenticeship programs.

In 2025, Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval spoke to industry leaders and media. In 2024, Ohio Lt. Governor (now Senator) Jon Husted toured the event and presented ACI with a commendation for Construction Career Days.

In addition, the event welcomed 200+ Student VIPs: individuals who expressed interest in a career in commercial construction and who are eligible for work. Check out [this video](#) to learn more.

Schools can start the registration process [here](#).

CONSTRUCTION CAREER DAYS

May 6-7, 2026

8:30 am – 3 pm

[Warren County Fairgrounds – Lebanon, Ohio](#)



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For Educators

2026 DISRUPTIVE TECH SUMMIT: AN INDUSTRY-EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE EVENT

HCESC is hosting a Disruptive Tech Summit on April 20, 2026, from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm. The Summit will explore how innovative technologies, including AI, are shaping the future of work. Students and Educators will interact closely with leaders in engineering, manufacturing, and IT/Cybersecurity industries. The summit schedule is as follows:

- Keynote
- Industry Breakout sessions
- Working Lunch with Industry Panel
- Interactive Design Sprint
- Closing and Recognitions



The cost is \$49.00 per person. To register, scan the QR code.

For Community

Upcoming Redesign of K-12 Industry-Recognized Credentials Will Support Student Workforce Preparation

Ohio Excels and the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce are launching a three-year partnership with Watershed Advisors and Accenture to modernize K-12 career credentials. By analyzing current labor market data and gathering stakeholder feedback, the team will create a transparent framework to identify high-value certifications. This initiative ensures students' credentials align with Ohio's economy, and it provides hands-on technical support for school districts during the transition.

Learn more about the timeline and the work on the [Department's industry-recognized credentials webpage](#).