

# What is Bridges?

## A program overview for students and parents

**Bridges Career Academies & Workplace Connection** was created to help the next generation of workforce become better prepared to meet the demands of local employers.

**Bridges Career Academies** are courses focusing on career pathways. Courses provide hands-on learning activities combining technical, academic, and employability skills related to a specific career. The Academies offer students the opportunity to explore a career pathway through courses delivered by high school instructors with support from industry representatives through a variety of activities.

**Bridges Career Awareness** efforts include the annual Career Exploration Day and a video library featuring high demand regional careers. **Bridges Career Experiences** connects schools and businesses to integrate work-based learning through career camps, business tours, a speakers bureau, and the Career Depot — a jobs website exclusively for 14-18 year olds.

### How do students enroll in a Bridges Academy?

Bridges Career Academies are offered to students in grades 9-12. Students should contact their high school counselor for more information. Students and parents are encouraged to check their high school's student course registration guide for detailed information regarding Bridges Career Academy courses.

### How will an Academy help a student after graduation?

Some Academies include courses that receive college credit. These courses provide opportunities for credit advancement/transfer to a post-secondary program.

For more information, contact your Bridges Career Academies Coordinator:

*Northern Region:*

**Judy Richer**, (218) 760-7838  
Judy@BridgesConnection.org

*Southern Region:*

**Betsy Picciano**, (320) 260-1827  
Betsy@BridgesConnection.org



### Current Career Academies at Pillager Area Charter

- Career Exploration
- Finance
- Outdoorsman
- Sustainability and Renewable Energy

*See Benefits for Students on other side*



# What are the Benefits for Students?

## 1) Supports Individualized Learning Plans

Bridges Career Academy courses are organized in specific career pathways. Courses integrate academic and technical skills with hands-on learning. Students select Academy courses based on career aspirations.

## 2) Practical Learning Opportunities

Bridges Career Academies provide practical learning opportunities within the course work. Students gain transferable skills that can be used beyond the school day. (For example, students in a Welding Academy use technical skills to repair snowmobiles or four-wheelers. Students in a Hospitality Academy can use team-building skills in a community project).

## 3) Career Advancement

Bridges Career Academies provide students with information about their chosen career pathway. Students develop an understanding of career progression and are exposed to personalized experiences within the “world of work.”

## 4) Integrated Learning

Academy courses provide integrated learning combining technical, academic and employability skills essential to specific career pathways. (For example, Robotic Academy students learn electronics needed to design a robot, mathematics to complete design calculations, writing strategies to record design elements and participate as a member of a design team.)

## 5) Recognition

Students who complete a Bridges Career Academy will be recognized at their high school with a Bridges certificate and a green honor cord.

## 6) College Credit

Some Bridges Career Academies include courses that receive college credit. These courses provide opportunities for credit advancement and/or transfer to a post-secondary program.

## 7) Business and Industry Partnerships

All Bridges Career Academies provide students with opportunities to engage with business and industry.

