

Student-Driven CTE Programs

Kalispell, Montana



Hello!

At Kalispell Middle School, we (Beth and Jenny) are excited to bring our students together for unique and meaningful community service projects. Combining our passions for food, fabrics, and students we are organizing student-driven events that showcase both culinary skills and textile creativity. These opportunities feature a variety of community organizations and stakeholders within our school district. Students take the reigns by planning and preparing the menu, creating beautiful textiles to complete a dining experience.

Through these projects, students not only learn valuable life skills but also experience the joy of serving others and building a stronger sense of community at our school.

Additionally, students gain insight into the service industry, learning how collaboration, attention to detail, and customer service play crucial roles in creating successful events.

By actively participating in the planning and execution of these meals, students develop a deeper understanding of the effort and teamwork required to serve and



Class Offerings

- FACS- 6th grade
- Fashion Design
- Textile exploration
- Mixed Media and Fiber Creation
- Patchwork
- Farm to Table
- Chef's Journey
- Culinary
- Culture and Cuisine
- Discover our Backyard (Local Tourism)
- Woods
- Automation and Robotics

Number of students sign ups going into 26/27 school year:

- Culinary-1029
- Textiles-324
- 6th Grade-96
- Travel and Tourism- 195
- Shop- 452

Courses are added and modified regularly to accommodate student interests and community needs.

Real World Program Design

Our middle school CTE programs are designed to provide students with meaningful, hands-on learning experiences that connect classroom knowledge to real-world applications. Through courses in areas such as culinary arts, hospitality and tourism, textiles and other areas of FCS as well as wood shop, students focus on career pathways, are encouraged to explore their interests, discover their strengths, and develop valuable life and career skills.

A key focus of our CTE offerings is exposure. Middle school is an important time for students to discover possibilities, and our programs provide opportunities for them to experience a variety of industries, careers, and learning environments. Through project-based learning, guest speakers, field experiences, leadership opportunities, and community engagement, students gain insight into careers they may not have otherwise encountered.

Students learn to collaborate, communicate effectively, solve problems, think creatively, and take ownership of their work. They are given opportunities to design, create, plan, present, and lead while building confidence in their abilities. Whether participating in a catering event, planning a tourism experience, creating a fashion project, managing an event or engaging in community-based learning, students are applying academic skills in authentic and meaningful ways.

Our goal is not only to teach technical skills but also to help students develop professionalism, responsibility, teamwork, adaptability, and a growth mindset. By providing diverse experiences both inside and outside the classroom, we help students make connections between their education and future opportunities while empowering them to become engaged learners, leaders, and contributors to their communities.

Through CTE, students are exposed to a world of possibilities, allowing them to explore potential career paths, build practical skills, and discover passions that may shape their future educational and professional journeys.



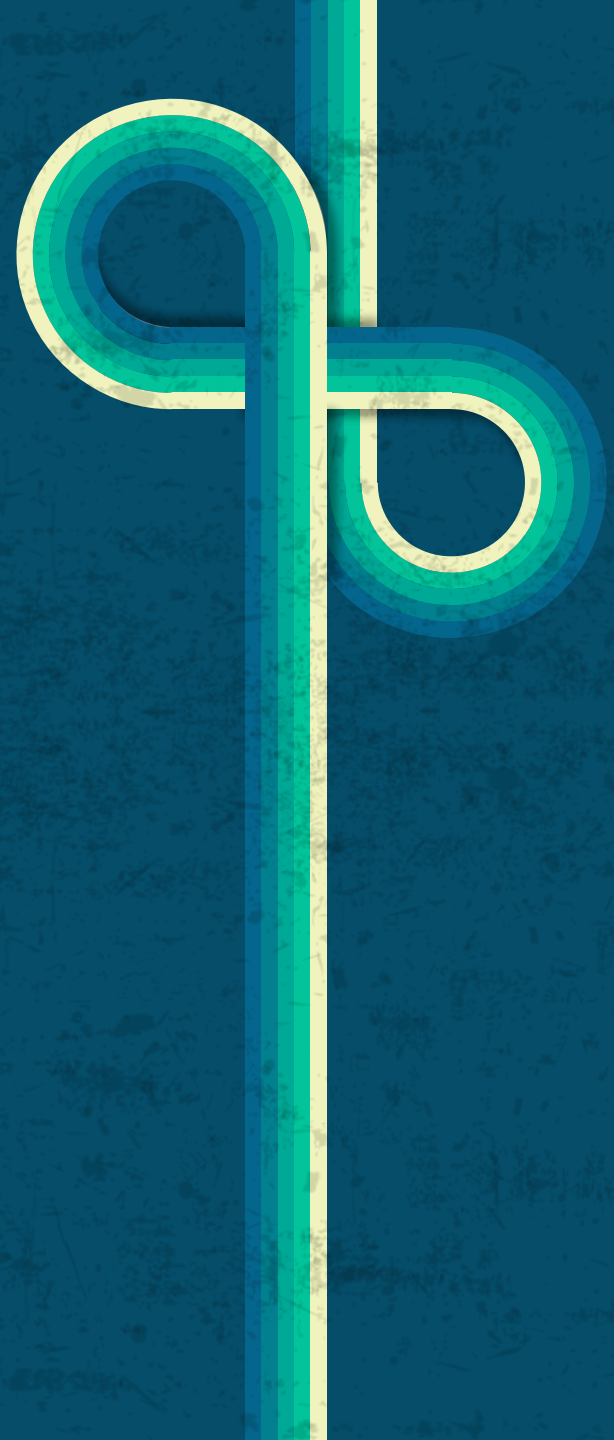
- Russell Elementary- Food truck/ Art Show (200)
- Superintendent breakfast (50 plus)
- Cabaret (300)
- PCBE Teams (75)
- ECE Providers (25)
- FVCC Chamber event (200)
- OPI (12)
- Brave Pack Rising (25)
- Opportunity/Analysis (25)
- Feeding the Flathead (170)
- Veteran's Day ((24)
- Governor's office (25)
- Knowledge Works (25)
- Community /District Stakeholders (25)
- School staff events (120)

**Grand total of people
we have been able to
serve since creating
this concept (2 years)
1,326**



District Wide Collaboration

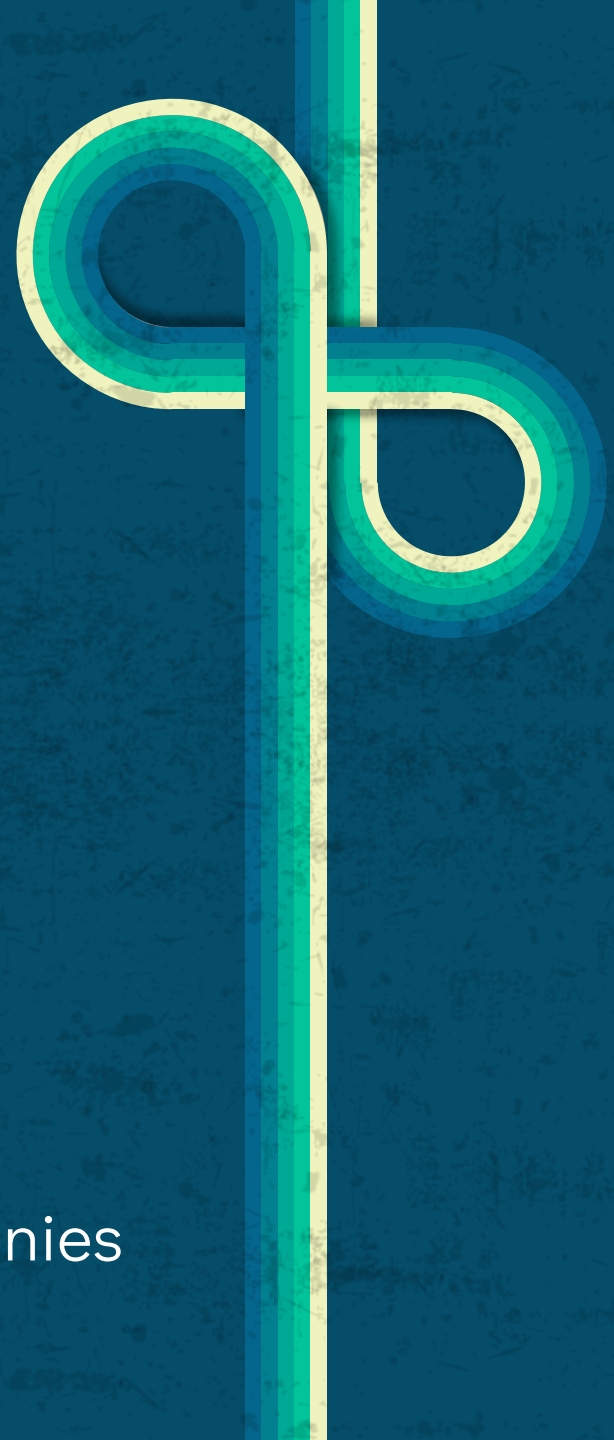
- Access to beef, lamb, and pork raised by high school students
- Purchase plant starts from the high school FFA program to start our school garden.
- KMS school garden provides perennial fruits and herbs for the culinary program.
- Fall garden bounty is harvested and processed in classes. Using canning, freezing, and dehydration techniques produce is preserved for use throughout the school year.
- KMS shop program works to help curate decorations or set items for events



Community Connections

- Ladybug's Cabin
- Glacier Quilts
- Quilt Gallery
- Mercantile
- Mary's Mountain Cookies
- Food Bank
- Longview Lavender Field
- Ranger Joes
- Mini Mountain Mini Golf/ Store
- Flathead Industry

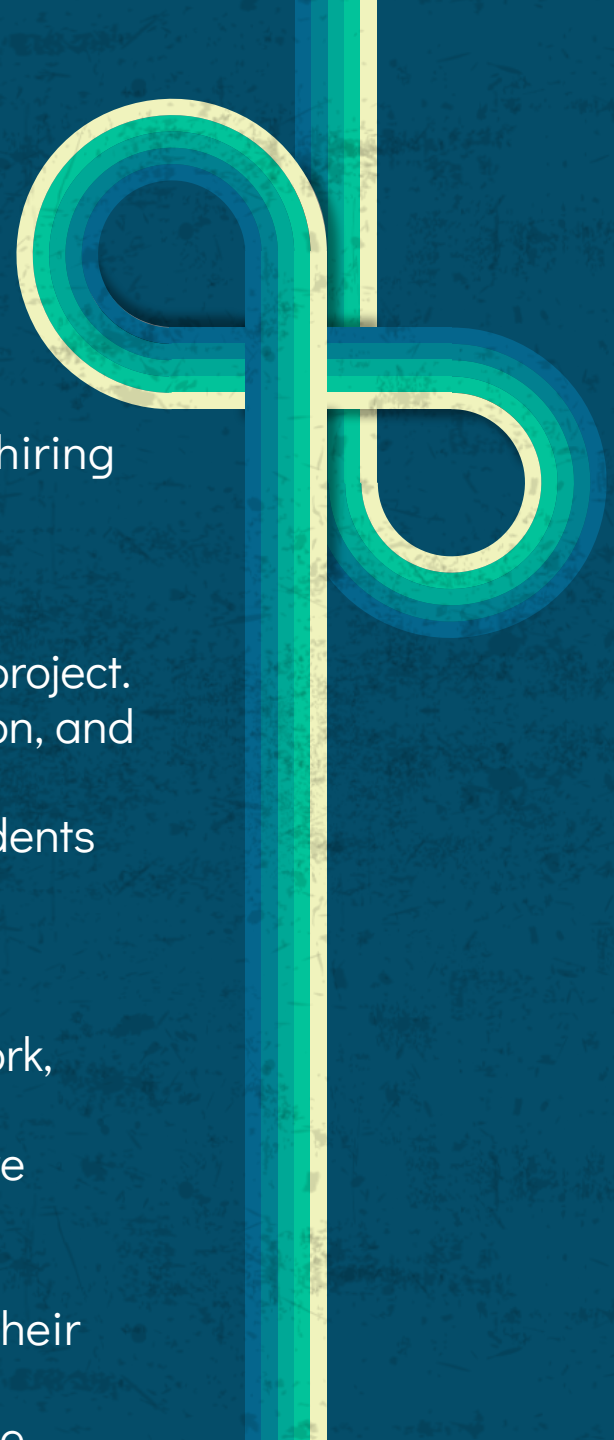
We have had some of our students go to work for these companies after visitina and learning more about their establishment.



Traditional CTE to Student Led

How Our Program is Different

- **Students Apply for Positions** – Learners complete applications, interviews, and hiring processes for classroom and leadership roles, mirroring real-world employment experiences.
- **Division of Labor with Purpose** – Students work within specialized teams, each responsible for critical functions that contribute to the success of the business or project.
- **Ownership of the Product** – Students are accountable for the quality, presentation, and outcomes of the products and services they create.
- **Teacher as Coach, Not Boss** – Instructors guide, mentor, and support while students make decisions, solve problems, and lead operations.
- **Real Business Operations** – Students manage planning, production, marketing, customer service, and evaluation rather than simply completing assignments.
- **Authentic Workplace Skills** – Communication, leadership, accountability, teamwork, adaptability, and professionalism are practiced daily in meaningful contexts.
- **Student-Driven Innovation** – Learners are encouraged to develop ideas, improve processes, and take initiative to meet goals and needs.
- **Learning Through Responsibility** – Successes and challenges become powerful learning opportunities as students experience the consequences and rewards of their decisions.
- **Industry Relevant Experiences** – The classroom functions like a workplace where

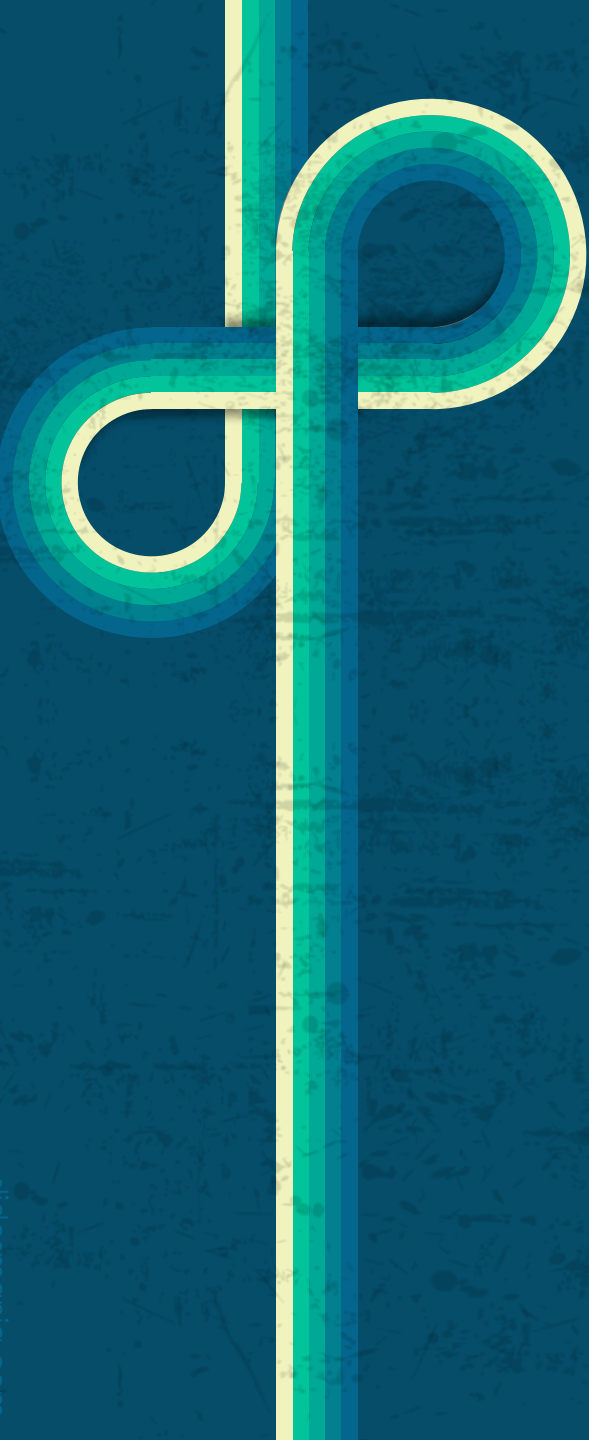




Kids being AWESOME!

Quick peek into our events





"Collaboration in education empowers students to apply their knowledge in real-world settings, helping them develop essential skills that shape their future success."

– Unknown