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## **[Marion City Schools to offer Harding students support after graduation](#)** Presidential Pathway program unites partners to provide wrap-around services

The Marion City Schools District and its partners are preparing to embark on a new program dedicated to helping students succeed after they graduate from high school.

Presidential Pathway, part of the Diploma Plus Acceptance initiative, will offer college and career counseling to Marion Harding High School graduates throughout the year after they graduate. The support will be provided by a team of Harding guidance counselors, GEAR UP advisors and staff from Marion Technical College and The Ohio State University at Marion.

Advisors will work to build relationships with students throughout their senior year then contact them at least three times throughout the year after graduation. Referrals can also be made to Ohio Means Jobs – Marion County and the Marion County Family and Children First Council.

“Students graduating from Harding will have a plan,” said Mandy Wright, senior outreach coordinator for The Ohio State University at Marion. “Presidential Pathways will support them on implementing the plan.”

The Diploma Plus Acceptance initiative is dedicated to preparing students for success after graduation. The goal is that every student leave the district with a plan and acceptance into a two-or four-year college or university, an apprenticeship, the military or a high-paying, in-demand job.

Amy Wood, director of educational programming and grants for Marion City Schools, said the question came up about what to do if students encounter difficulties after they graduate and get accepted into college, a career or the military.

Through Presidential Pathway, she said, “They could come back to us and we could provide some sort of support to help them go forward.”

The program got its Presidential Pathway name from Harding’s new marketing class. Students in the class gathered suggestions and narrowed it down to Presidential

Pathway. The class continued to work with the advisory committee to promote the program to other students.

Diploma Plus Acceptance is funded through a state-issued Straight A Funds grant given to innovative educational programs around the state. Money from the grant must specifically go towards the program and cannot be used for other expenses.

Diploma Plus Acceptance creates pathways or career clusters that align with the demands of regional businesses and industries.