



QUALITY INDICATORS FOR PATHWAYS DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION

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Funded by the Joyce Foundation, the Great Lakes College and Careers Pathways Partnership (GLCCPP) is building high-quality pathways that equip students to thrive in college, career, and beyond. Such pathways actively engage multiple stakeholders in aligning secondary and postsecondary education with career opportunities in high-demand industries. This structured approach enables students to graduate from high school with a credential valuable in the labor market, as well as pursue a two- or four-year degree.

The Joyce Foundation is generously investing in developing college and career pathways in each of the following regions:

- › The Central Ohio/Greater Columbus area
- › Madison, WI
- › Northwest Chicago suburbs served by Districts 211 and 214 and Harper College
- › Rockford, IL

The competitive grant process selected these regions based on their dedicated leadership, strong K-12 and postsecondary partnerships, vision for enhancing college and career pathways systems, student population needs, and high employer involvement.

The Joyce Foundation is also supporting three national leaders in pathways development to provide strategic technical assistance to the Great Lakes regions as they build and expand their pathways systems: ConnectEd - The California Center for College and Career, Jobs for the Future (JFF)'s Pathways to Prosperity team, and the Education Systems Center of Northern Illinois University.

GLCCPP has identified three focal areas critical for guiding pathways development and implementation: *secondary through postsecondary alignment*, *work-based learning continuum*, and *learning and teaching*.

The initiative has also defined the following set of quality indicators to assess progress toward each priority:

1. SECONDARY THROUGH POSTSECONDARY ALIGNMENT

- A. Equity
- B. Workforce alignment
- C. Secondary pathway structure
- D. Postsecondary articulation
- E. Personalized supports

2. WORK-BASED LEARNING CONTINUUM

- A. Continuum
- B. Integration
- C. Policy/procedure
- D. Regional capacity and infrastructure
- E. Continuous improvement

3. LEARNING AND TEACHING

- A. Rigorous, Relevant and Integrated Learning
- B. Collaborative learning
- C. Outcome-Focused and Student-Directed Learning
- D. Reflective Practice and Professional Learning
- E. Authentic Assessment



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Secondary through Postsecondary Alignment

Pathways engage students in rigorous academics integrated with real-world technical skills, work-based learning, and personalized supports that span grades 9-12 and extend and align through a postsecondary credential with value in the labor market. Pathways are designed to appeal to and engage ALL students in order to prepare them for success in the full range of postsecondary options and support their transition to a rewarding career with growth opportunities, while also meeting employer needs for talented young professionals.

A EQUITY

1. Pathways serve a range of students in a smaller learning community that reflects local demographics
2. A given pathway offers a level of rigor and opportunity equal to or greater than that of other pathways and of non-pathways program offerings

B WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

The pathway:

1. Is aligned to the regional/state economy and leads to high-demand, high-growth careers with living wages
2. Identifies key employers and their potential to work with faculty and students to design, deliver, and enhance curricular offerings and experiences
3. Collaborates with industry partners to support students' programs of study and career aspirations, and to assist in students' career-readiness development and career placement

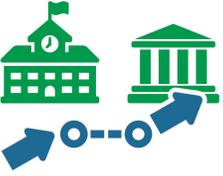
C SECONDARY PATHWAY STRUCTURE: INTEGRATED CORE & COHORT SCHEDULING

The pathway in high school has established a coherent 3- to 4-year program of study that:

1. Provides all students, regardless of prior academic achievement, with the opportunity to meet a full range of postsecondary eligibility requirements
2. Ensures that nearly all pathway students participate as a cohort in the program of study's academic and technical courses
3. Ensures that most faculty of academic and technical courses in each grade-level of the program of study share a common preparation period
4. Is aligned to grade-level academic and CTE standards
5. Integrates developmentally appropriate work-based learning experiences into the program of study's curriculum

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Secondary through Postsecondary Alignment



D POSTSECONDARY ARTICULATION

The pathway:

1. Has a system of policies and procedures making it possible for ALL students to earn postsecondary credits—including high-quality technical and general education courses—with parity in policies for dual credit and advanced placement
2. Is aligned from high school to/through postsecondary programs of study, with embedded opportunities to earn stackable, portable, industry-recognized credentials throughout the pathway, culminating in postsecondary credentials with value in the local labor market
3. Seamlessly connects the high school to postsecondary education transition through curriculum alignment, faculty collaboration, and the implementation of acceleration strategies
4. Includes systems to eliminate developmental education in college for all students but those with the lowest proficiency in literacy and math—and provides accelerated and contextualized developmental education to those who need it, with integrated supports and defined on-ramps to programs of study
5. Includes clear and efficient maps and transfer agreements that guide the pathways from 2-year to 4-year degrees

E PERSONALIZED SUPPORTS

1. All students receive comprehensive counseling and advising for both college and career. There are robust and active systems and structures in place to ensure all students receive high-quality counseling and advising services
2. All students have individualized college and career plans (There is much evidence that all students understand the various college and career options)
3. Supports are individualized based on student needs and goals
4. Students have access to supplemental academic supports within the context of the pathway

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Work-based Learning Continuum

All students participate in a personalized and coordinated continuum of work-based-learning (WBL) experiences designed to help them master and demonstrate academic, technical, and 21st Century skills to enhance their success with the demands of college and career. WBL occurs in-person and online, and at the workplace, the community, and at school.

A

CONTINUUM

The regional partnership has a published work-based learning continuum of experiences that extends from middle school through postsecondary serving as a guide for equitable student access to high quality work-based learning.

The pathway:

1. Provides every student with a personalized and high quality sequence of experiences along the WBL continuum in secondary through postsecondary
2. Culminates in a paid or for credit intensive WBL experience
3. Has WBL opportunities that are aligned with the needs identified by industry

B

INTEGRATION

The pathway:

1. Ensures work-based learning experiences integrate with academic and technical coursework
2. Ensures that all WBL experiences support student progress toward attaining the identified pathway student learning outcomes
3. Ensures that employers work with educators to create, design, and deliver high quality experiences along the WBL continuum
4. Includes an assessment of student attainment of non-academic and non-technical skills needed for success in college, careers, and life (i.e., 21st Century skills, employability skills, social-emotional skills, etc.)

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POLICY / PROCEDURE

The pathway:

1. Uses labor market data to develop a set of policies and procedures for program offerings and experiences
2. Establishes a policymaking body to ensure equity, alignment, and funding
3. Develops an outreach/marketing plan to address appropriate constituents and a consistent message and brand

Work-based Learning Continuum



D REGIONAL CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

One or more organizations within the region's pathways ecosystem fulfills each of the following functions and activities:

1. Recruits and convenes key stakeholders from across sectors to champion and hold the vision for the work
2. Engages employers, sector organizations, non-profits, and other community-based organizations and manages relationships to increase employer interest and involvement
3. Develops a strategic plan for the start-up, growth, and continuous improvement of the WBL delivery system
4. Monitors supply and demand of WBL opportunities
5. Distributes and coordinates school site and work site WBL opportunities across institutions
6. Creates selection/matching protocols, internship job descriptions, supervisor training, and other processes to support youth WBL opportunities
7. Problem-solves logistical challenges (e.g., transportation)
8. Places and supports students in WBL opportunities during in-school and out-of-school time
9. Establishes specific WBL goals and objectives and defines responsibilities for organizations within the delivery system
10. Develops a business plan for sustainable funding for WBL

E CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The region will develop a mechanism for supporting the continuous improvement of work-based learning at scale to include:

1. Collaboration between education and employer partners to regularly assess WBL quality with regard to student and partner experience
2. Assessment criteria to measure the effectiveness of a pathway's WBL plan, including identification of needed improvements to the program design and implementation
3. A system for data tracking and metrics and benchmarks for program development and operation that include outcomes related to student experiences in WBL activities

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Learning and Teaching

Pathway students engage in inquiry- and project-based learning that is outcome-focused, rigorous, relevant, and collaborative. Members of the pathway community of practice have regular collaboration to develop and articulate a standards-aligned pathway with grade-level, course, and project outcomes to organize the pathway's program of study that guides assessment, curricular, and instructional planning. They also design and use performance assessment tasks with common rubrics to assess, monitor, and support every student's progress toward mastery of the pathway learning outcomes. Students have access to up-to-date facilities and equipment, and instructors bring techniques from the field into the classroom. Pathway teams provide field visits, talks from practitioners, and other "real world" connections to the labor market. The pathway team actively searches for opportunities to involve employer partners in the design and assessment of tasks and projects.

A RIGOROUS, RELEVANT AND INTEGRATED LEARNING

The majority of pathway teaching and learning time consistently involves:

1. Student-centered, research-based instructional and learning strategies that align with the indicators listed below
2. Complex and extended standards-based, project- or problem-based learning that:
 - › Integrates academic and technical content
 - › Aligns with the pathway theme
 - › Reflects the processes and products of industry professionals
 - › Includes employer partners in the planning of curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment of learning
 - › Embeds the learning of in-demand technical and professional skills identified through labor market information and by employers
 - › Involves critical thinking and creativity and requires students to make connections across the curriculum
 - › Provides students the opportunity to publicly demonstrate their work

B COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

All pathway faculty:

1. Ensure that all students have extended activities that require them to work in heterogeneous pairs or groups
2. Provide specific skill instruction and differentiated support to students in collaborative learning
3. Assess students regularly and ensure that all students demonstrate effective teaming skills, including project management, group roles and accountability, and conflict resolution
4. Ensure that students have regular opportunities to collaborate with industry, postsecondary, and community partners in collaborative learning

Learning and Teaching



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OUTCOME-FOCUSED AND STUDENT-DIRECTED LEARNING

Pathway faculty involve all students in outcome-focused, student-directed learning and set up structures in which all students:

1. Set short-term learning goals that are aligned with the pathway's student learning outcomes
2. Revise work based on feedback until it meets or exceeds identified standards
3. Provide evidence of reflection, growth, and progress on specific skills being assessed, as well as overall growth as a student

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The pathway team has a coordinated, strategic, and practice-embedded approach to professional development that:

1. Focuses on a variety of research-based instructional strategies
2. Uses data from student work and other sources to inform teacher practice
3. Builds instructional knowledge and skills that support full inclusion of special populations
4. Develops skill in creating single discipline and interdisciplinary standards-based units, projects, and authentic assessments
5. Provides faculty with industry experiences related to the pathway theme, including externships and short individual and team-based field study visits

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AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

All pathway faculty:

1. Regularly use a variety of formative and summative disciplinary and interdisciplinary performance assessments to assess the quality of student products and performances, student demonstrations of content learning and application of knowledge and skills, and student progress toward achievement of the learning outcomes
2. Engage industry, community, and postsecondary partners as project consultants, assessors, and authentic audiences
3. Use results from formative and summative performance assessments to inform and improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment



ABOUT CONNECTED

ConnectEd partners with school, district, and community leaders to transform education through Linked Learning pathways so that all students, regardless of background, are prepared to succeed in college, career, community, and life. This approach is designed to make school more relevant for all students, regardless of background, and prepare them for lasting success in further education, career and life. A six-year evaluation of Linked Learning implementation in nine large to mid-sized districts in California found in December 2015 that compared with peers, students in certified Linked Learning pathways earn more credits during high school, are more likely to graduate, and report greater confidence in life and career skills. Founded in 2006, ConnectEd currently works with over 20 districts in California, as well as in Texas, Michigan, Wisconsin, and New York. For more information, please visit <http://www.connectedcalifornia.org>.



ABOUT EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER

Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University plays a central role in developing policies and programs to support career pathways across Illinois. EdSystems has strong experience in understanding the state policy aspects of local pathway system-building, structuring and implementing sector-based and regional partnerships, and defining roles for four-year postsecondary institutions to strengthen secondary to postsecondary pathway design and implementation. For more information, please visit <http://edsystems.niu.edu/edsystems/>.



ABOUT JOBS FOR THE FUTURE & THE PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY INITIATIVE

Jobs for the Future (JFF) is a national nonprofit that builds educational and economic opportunity for underserved populations in the United States. The Pathways to Prosperity initiative—a collaboration of states and regions, Jobs for the Future, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education—seeks to ensure that many more young people complete high school and attain postsecondary credentials with value in the labor market. Each state and regional member is engaging educators and employers in building a system of grades 9-14 career pathways, combining high school and community college, that launches young people into initial careers while leaving open the prospect of further education. For more information, visit www.jff.org and www.PtoPNetwork.org.

TheJoyceFoundation

ABOUT THE JOYCE FOUNDATION

The Joyce Foundation works with grantee partners to research, develop, and advance policy solutions to improve quality of life, promote community vitality, and achieve a fair society. Based in Chicago, we focus grant making in the Great Lakes region and also seek national impact. We believe a community is healthiest when benefits are shared widely among its people, and that there are certain essentials our public systems must get right in areas such as quality education for all and employment opportunities for disadvantaged workers. For more information, please visit www.joycefdn.org or follow us at @JoyceFdn.