

DEFINITIONS RELATING TO CAREER PATHWAY SYSTEM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

PURPOSE OF DEFINITIONS

For local Pathway Systems to operate effectively, all stakeholders need to develop and buy into shared definitions, goals and processes. This document lays out model guidance that the Career Council may choose to adopt and offer as technical assistance to local Pathway System leaders.

SECTORS & INDUSTRY

In discussions about Career pathways, the terms industry and sector are often used interchangeably to describe a group of companies that operate in the same segment of the economy or share a similar business type. In the world of investing and economic analysis they have slightly different meanings.

This difference pertains to their scope; a sector refers to a large segment of the economy, while the term industry describes a much more specific group of companies or businesses.

CAREER CLUSTERS

A career cluster is group of careers that share common features. Career Clusters are used within the education sector to describe groupings of career pathways. The Indiana Department of Education has adopted 12 Career Clusters, adapted and customized to Indiana from a national model developed by the coalition of state Career Technical Education directors.

The Indiana State approved Clusters are:

Agriculture (3 pathways); Architecture and Construction (3 pathways); Arts/A/V Technology, and Communications (2 pathways); Business and Marketing (1 pathway, 3 concentrations); Education and Training (1 pathway, 2 concentrations); Health Science (4 pathways); Hospitality and Human Services (4 pathways); Information Technology (2 pathways); Manufacturing (5 pathways); Public Safety (3 pathways); STEM (1 pathway); Transportation (6 pathways).

CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAM OF STUDY¹

An Indiana Career Pathway Program of Study is an integrated collection of courses, learning experiences and services intended to develop students' core academic, career-specific and employability skills, and provide them with ongoing education and training experiences, so that they can successfully enter and advance in a Career Pathway. A number of career pathways feed into each Career Cluster.

¹ synonymous with Career Pathway or College and Career Pathway

CAREER PATHWAYS SYSTEM

A career pathways system (or initiative) operates at a local/community level, consisting of a partnership among employers and employer organizations, postsecondary colleges, universities and training providers, career technology centers, primary and secondary schools, workforce and economic development agencies, labor groups and social service providers to offer a variety of Pathways Programs of Study for youth and adult learners. The Career Pathways System has defined expectations, processes, and policies to guide the development and delivery of Pathways Programs of Study, and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all involved stakeholders.

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DEFINITIONS WITH KEY COMPONENTS

CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAM OF STUDY

An Indiana Career Pathway Program of Study is an integrated collection of courses, learning experiences and services intended to develop students' core academic, career-specific and employability skills, and provide them with ongoing education and training experiences, so that they can successfully enter and advance in a Career Pathway.

PROGRAM OF STUDY COMPONENTS

- **Sequence of Classes and Learning Experiences**
- **Alignment to Workforce Needs and Opportunities**
- **Learner-Centered Program Design**
- **Career Development and Exploration**
- **Focus on Multiple Workforce Entry Goals**
- **Employer-Business-Industry Connections to Education and Training**

Sequence of Classes and Learning Experiences

- The **Pathway Program of Study** is a sequence of interconnected academic and elective classes revolving around a career or subject theme. Meaningful learning opportunities outside of the school walls and with substantive employer involvement are a key component of each program of study.

Alignment to Workforce Skills

- The Program of Study is aligned to locally-adopted academic standards and recognized career-related skill standards and validated by employer advisory committees.

Career Development and Exploration

- The Program of Study continues to guide the learner in exploration and career development throughout the course of the program, including awareness of other related career pathways that utilize related skill sets.

Employer-Business-Industry Connections to Education and Training

- The Program of Study includes a range of employer-connected learning opportunities, including mentorships, job shadows, and work-and-learn experiences, appropriate to the age of the participant.

Focus on Multiple Workforce Entry Goals

- The Program of Study is designed to --

Ensures a secondary diploma or its equivalent for every learner.

Includes the learner can earn at least one postsecondary credential or industry-recognized certification through the course of the full POS.

Prepares the learner for a full range of postsecondary opportunities including postsecondary education, training, apprenticeship, or direct entry into skilled careers.

Learner-Centered Program Design

- Where possible, the program of study integrates foundational skills (literacy, numeracy and employability) into **skills training or offers them concurrent** for secondary and postsecondary learners.
- Where possible, the program of study contextualized higher level mathematics and science content into the skills training to make this content more accessible to all students.
- Through flexible scheduling and competency-based advancement, **is designed to accelerate** the educational and career advancement opportunities of each individual as much as possible

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COMPONENTS OF A PATHWAY SYSTEM

- **Leadership and Management Structure**
- **Measurement and Communications**
- **Alignment to Workforce Needs and Opportunities**
- **Career Development and Exploration:**
- **Employer-Business-Industry Connections to Education and Training**
- **Focus on Multiple Workforce Entry Goals**
- **Learner-Centered Program Design**

Leadership and Management Structure

- The Pathways Systems **creates a leadership and management structure** that actively engages the relevant stakeholders as equal partners, including Employer organizations, workforce systems, postsecondary education and training, K-12 school systems, career technology centers, worker-representative organizations, youth-serving and other community based organizations.
- The pathways System Leadership Structure **identifies common goals and priorities**, and formalizes the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders around achieving these common goals.
- The Pathways System **provides or arranges for the offering of technical assistance and support to individual organizations affiliated with the Pathways System.**

Measurement and Communications

- The Pathway System sets expectations for Program Performance and stakeholder participation, and creates **appropriate indicators to measure and report system and stakeholder performance.**
- The Pathway System **creates common communication tools**, including branding, messages, written and electronic information, to present a common message to the public about the Pathways System.

Alignment to Workforce Needs and Opportunities

- The Pathways System creates a structure to continually monitor the emergence and declines of industries and career pathways within those industries, as well as monitors the changing skills, knowledge, and technological proficiencies needed for individual entrance and advancement within a career pathway.
- The Pathway System uses **national and state sources of workforce and economic data**, as well as formal and informal processes to gather **information, input and guidance from local employers**.
- The Pathways System is particularly **attuned to the emerging industries and career pathways that are in high-demand**, and serve as economic drivers of the local, regional and state economy.
- **Employer organizations and employers are actively engaged** at the regional level to validate, inform, and give real-time input to the Alignment Process.
- The Pathway System creates an ongoing conversation with schools and colleges that offer programs of study to **ensure that local programs are well aligned to current and projected workforce needs**.

Career Development and Exploration

- The Pathway System support an **extensive and ongoing program of career awareness, career exploration and career development**, delivered in a manner appropriate to the age of the participant.
- The Pathway System **elaborates activities and experiences for career exploration** that are appropriate for primary, secondary and postsecondary learners.
- The Pathway System provides **guidance on the roles of parents and families** in help youth and adults make career-related decisions.
- The Pathways System **provides all learners with non-biased information** about a range of career options and postsecondary education opportunities.
- The Pathways System **organizes career pathways information** about each career pathway or career cluster, including salaries, description of work, educational and training requirements
- The Pathways System organizes career pathways information that clarifies the **current and projected employment opportunities at a local, regional, statewide**, and if appropriate, national level.
- The Pathways System **makes consistent electronic tools available** for career interest assessment, career search, postsecondary exploration, and organization of relevant career-related information for the user.
- The Pathway Systems provides guidance to primary, secondary and postsecondary programs so that **various activities are designed around a shared approach to Career Development**: This shared approach would shape activities such as field trips, job shadows, employer volunteerism, college visits, career and college fairs, and transition activities from one level of education to the next.

Employer-Business-Industry Connections to Education and Training

- The Pathway System creates a **structure and support for a variety of Employer-Business-Industry working groups and partnership committees**. These working groups include a focus on critical demand sectors, but also are organized to inform and shape the work of all Pathways Programs of Study.
- The Pathway System organizes meaningful interactions with employers, educators, youth-serving organizations, and other community partners to create a **shared approach to defining and reinforcing Employability Skills**. This operational definition of Employability Skills will address the following elements:
 - PERSONAL SKILLS • Integrity • Initiative • Dependability & Reliability • Adaptability • Professionalism
 - PEOPLE SKILLS • Teamwork • Communication • Respect
 - APPLIED KNOWLEDGE • Reading • Writing • Mathematics • Science • Technology • Critical Thinking
 - WORKPLACE SKILLS • Planning & Organizing • Problem Solving • Decision Making • Business Fundamentals • Customer Focus • Working with Tools & Technology
- The **Pathway System will also identify promising practices for incorporating Employability Skills into Programs of Study**, and measuring learner attainment of these skills.
- The Pathways System creates **common definitions, resources and training (for both instructors or employer volunteers)** to strengthen the active engagement of employers, including:
 - Involvement in Business Partnership Committees;
 - Offering work-and-learn experiences;
 - Conducting Work-site tours and Job Shadows;
 - Offering Internships or Mentorships;
 - Running school-based enterprises that simulate the workplace;
 - Coaching student teams for program competitions;
 - Offering school-based presentations on technical skills, employability skills, personal career management, and personal financial management.
- The Pathway System creates **tools to measure and recognize the involvement of employers**, and to gauge the intensity and effectiveness of their involvement against goals established by the Partnership.

Focus on Multiple Workforce Entry Goals

- The Pathway System helps **manage ongoing connections among K-12, postsecondary education and training, and apprenticeship programs** to ensure that each Program of Study offers a variety of program outcomes.
- The pathway Systems **monitors and sets expectations about what industry-based credentials and postsecondary degrees** most appropriately represent readiness to enter a career pathway upon program completion.
- The Pathways System monitors and reports on the success of students earning secondary degrees and postsecondary degrees and industry-based credentials.

Learner-Centered Program Design

- The Pathway System continuously **conducts research about effective program design**, particularly in ways that can accelerate the academic and skills progress of learners.
- The Pathway System will gather and share information **about how employers can support the growth in skills and knowledge of their current employees** through integrated work-learning programs.
- The Pathway System **arranges for professional development for teachers, faculty and program managers** to ensure that programs are incorporating effective practices, such as academic/technical integration, contextualization.
- The Pathways Systems develops processes to **innovate with teaching and program design, measure effectiveness and share results.**

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