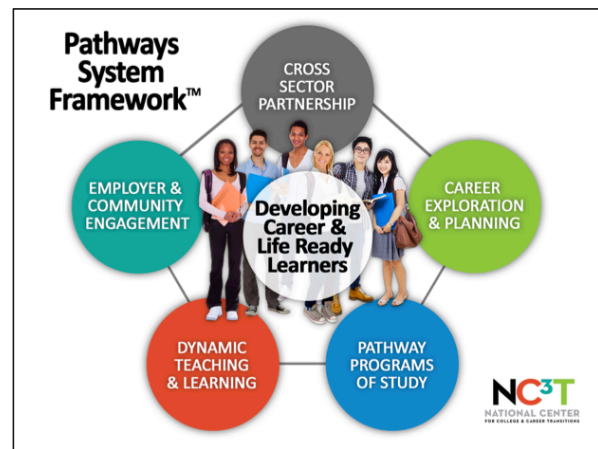


PATHWAYS SYSTEM FRAMEWORK™ EARLY ACTION STEPS

The National Center for College and Career Transitions, or NC3T, has developed a step-by-step approach to planning and implementing an effective and sustainable Pathways System that prepares students for college, career, and life. NC3T skillfully guides Pathways Partnerships throughout the entire process by providing ongoing technical assistance, proven resources and tools, expert coaching, and key meeting planning and facilitation. For a detailed look at the NC3T Pathways System Framework™ please refer to the *Design Specifications and Asset Inventory* document. This document offers Pathways Partnership members a list of early action steps for consideration.



KEY DEFINITIONS

A **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.

The **Program of Study** is designed to help students connect today's learning to tomorrow's college and career opportunities. Wherever possible, the **Program of Study** is co-designed with K-12 and postsecondary education partners and offers students the option of earning college credit.

A **Pathways System** is the framework on which all college and career pathways programs of study are organized. The success of a Pathways System relies heavily on the work of a Pathways Partnership, a well-developed leadership infrastructure that facilitates sustained collaboration among members of K-12 education, postsecondary education, employers, economic development and the local or regional workforce system.

The **Pathways System** offers similar (but not identical) learning opportunities to youths in high schools and to adults participating in postsecondary learning. At both the secondary and postsecondary levels, intensive career exploration and experiences are integrated into the learning environment.

EARLY ACTION STEPS

CROSS SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

- ❑ Organize an executive level steering committee among all key stakeholders including employer organizations, postsecondary education and training, K-12 school systems, career and technology centers, workforce systems, and other key youth-serving organizations and community-based organizations.
- ❑ Identify an organization that can act as a lead intermediary or facilitator to help manage the ongoing relationships among partners.
- ❑ Make staffing decisions regarding two key functions: 1) facilitating the relationship among the partners, and 2) coordinating employer involvement among the partner organizations.

CAREER EXPLORATION AND PLANNING

- ❑ Review current career exploration activities and identify gaps.

- Update district's career exploration plan.
- Meet with local employers to discuss ways in which they wish to be involved with K-12 career development activities; share tentative Pathways System plan with them.
- Designate one administrator to oversee career exploration and planning.
- Design a college and career individualized plan that students complete by the end of grade eight and refer to throughout high school.
- Invite business partners to act as guest speakers, host job shadows, and host worksite tours.

PATHWAYS SYSTEM AND PROGRAMS OF STUDY

- Conduct a curricula and resources review to identify possible programs of study.
- Review local economic and workforce analysis.
- Identify current challenges within the community and school district.
- Develop and announce a shared definition of a career and life ready student.
- Conduct a program of studies student interest survey.
- Conduct a program of studies teacher interest and talents survey.
- Draft a very broad and tentative Pathways System to gain a "big picture" perspective; identify the committees and working groups needed for planning and implementation.
- Create a communications plan.
- Begin to share vision with staff and community.

DYNAMIC TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Review district's professional development plan to determine if training that aligns to the implementation of a Pathways System is included. Revise plan as needed.
- Identify two or three instructional practices that all teachers will be expected to implement with fidelity, and develop focused professional learning opportunities to provide teachers with relevant training (e.g. project-based learning, team teaching, or integrated learning).

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

- Begin to organize employer/community committees for each academy or cluster of programs of study.
- Review existing or develop new guidelines and training protocols for school volunteers.
- Create regional industry sector committees to coordinate volunteers and involvement among all the school systems within the Pathways Partnership.

K-12 AND POSTSECONDARY COORDINATION

- Broaden collaboration between district administrators and college leaders; identify point of contact for each.
- Review current postsecondary awareness opportunities and determine effectiveness and/or gaps.
- Develop a college showcase for programs that align to the high school's Pathway Programs of Study.
- On a program-by-program basis, encourage teachers and college faculty members to meet and begin mapping curriculum.
- Identify courses that may become eligible for dual enrollment.