

Illinois Program of Study Alignment Project

February 26, 2026

Education Systems Center at NIU



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EdSystems

EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER at
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Our Vision

Clear, unambiguous paths to college and career opportunities that equip students for meaningful participation in the global economy.

Pillars of Work

- **Policy:** Shaping systems for equitable college and career access
- **Practices:** Improving learner experiences and outcomes
- **Impact:** Driving systemic change through data and networks

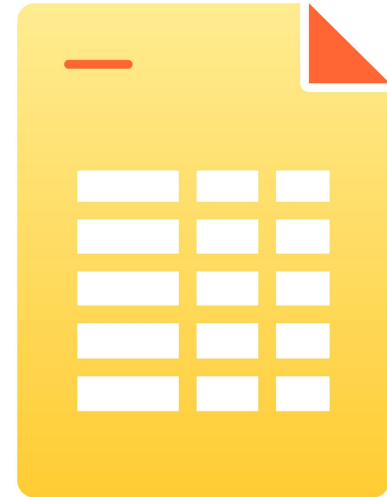
Areas of Practice

- College and career pathways
- Career-connected and work-based learning
- Transitional instruction
- Early college coursework
- Flexible learning
- Longitudinal data
- Collective impact networks



Agenda

- Welcome
- Project Overview and Timeline
- Value Proposition
- Project Expectations
- Labor Market Information Updates
- Review Pathways/Career Clusters
- Breakouts and Share outs
- Closing and Feedback



Timeline

- **January :** Project Kickoff
- **February:** Meeting 1 - Labor Market Information | Career Cluster/Pathway Review
 - EDU | IT | Health Science
- **March:** Meeting 2 - Course Sequencing
- **April:** Meeting 3 - Review Edits and Draft Maps
- **May:** Meeting 4 - Review Edits and Updated Documents
- **August:** Final Webinar - Statewide Invitation to Public Comment Period

Project Overview and Timeline



The Value Proposition

- Creates **one clear, aligned pathway system** from high school to college and careers.
- Improves **coherence and coordination** across high schools and community colleges.
- Ensures pathways are **consistently aligned to labor market demand** and high-value credentials.
- Clarifies and streamlines **dual credit and early college course sequences**.
- Strengthens Illinois' **statewide strategy** for college and career pathways and cross-agency collaboration.

Illinois College and Career Pathway Models

Career Pathway

A combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that aligns both vertically and horizontally across secondary education, adult education, workforce training and development, career and technical education, and postsecondary education systems, pathways, and programs.

Program of Study

A coordinated, non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical content at the secondary and postsecondary level.

Career & Technical Education (CTE)

Career and Technical Education (CTE) prepares individuals for high-skill, high-wage, in-demand employment and provides learners with the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to thrive in college and careers. All students benefit from career-connected learning that emphasizes real-world skills within a selected career focus.

College and Career Pathway Endorsement

A College and Career Pathway Endorsement is awarded on Illinois high school diplomas/transcripts to simultaneously demonstrate students' readiness for postsecondary programs and entry-level professional learning experiences in a selected career interest area. ([110 ILCS 148/ Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act](#))

2 Frameworks, 1 Program of Study Merge

ICCB Illinois Model Program of Study Guides



ISBE CTE Model Programs of Study

System Quick Links Search Careers at ISBE Contact Us Facebook LinkedIn YouTube Translate

Log Into ELIS Log Into IWAS Become a Teacher Public School District Lookup FRIS Inquiry IL Report Card About the Agency and Board Topics A-Z

For assistance, [contact ISBE](#) using our new help portal ServiceNow! Please view the [ServiceNow instructional video](#) for additional information.

College and Career Readiness > Career Technical Education > Programs of Study

COLLEGE & CAREER PROGRAMS OF STUDY

A program of study means a coordinated, non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical content at the secondary and postsecondary level that:

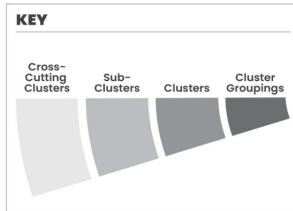
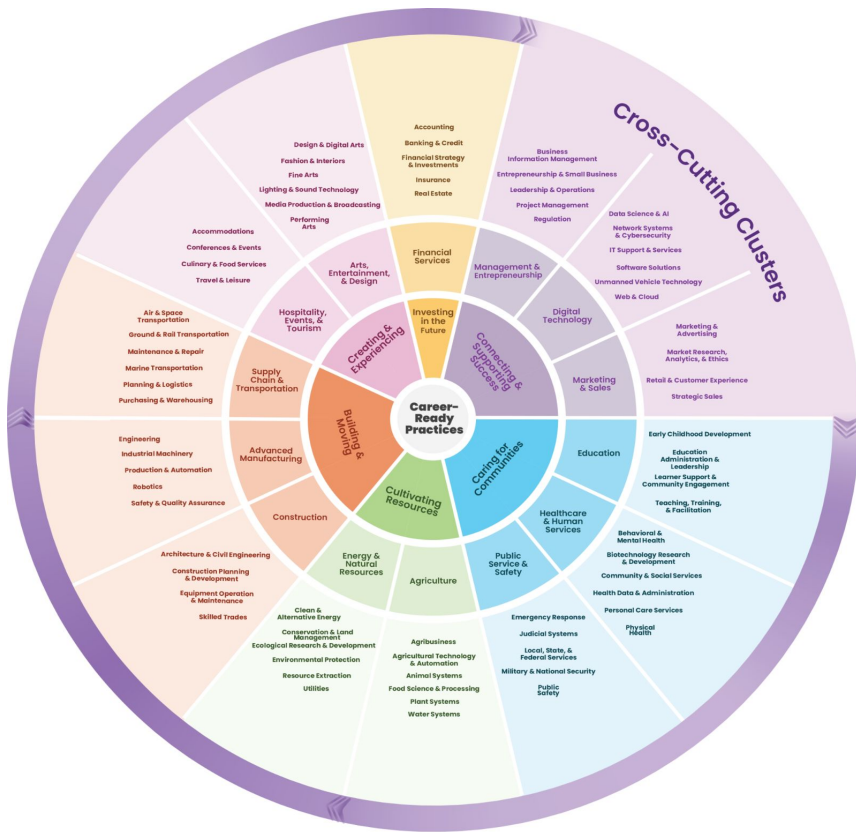
- A. incorporates challenging State academic standards;
- B. addresses both academic and technical knowledge and skills, including employability skills
- C. is aligned with the needs of industries in the economy of the State, region, Tribal community or local area
- D. progresses in specificity
- E. has multiple entry and exit points that incorporate credentialing; and,
- F. culminates in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential. A program of study provides students with a strong experience in and comprehensive understanding of all aspects of industry.

A program of study provides students with a strong experience in and comprehensive understanding of all aspects of an industry and should align to the 2021-2024 CTE Program Size, Scope, and Quality .

Model Programs of Study

Modernized Career Cluster Framework

from Advance CTE



Endorsement Areas + CTE Crosswalk

Model Program of Study Guides (ICCB) and/or Endorsement Area	Current CTE ISBE Program of Study	NEW Career Clusters (From National Career Cluster Framework)
AFNR (Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources 	Agriculture
A&C (Arts and Communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts (Performing and Visual), Audio/Video Technology and Communications 	Arts, Entertainment, & Design
FBS (Finance and Business Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Management and Administration Finance Marketing Hospitality and Tourism Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (Logistics Pathway) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Services Business Management & Administration Marketing & Sales Supply Chain & Transportation
HPS (Human and Public Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Training Government and Public Administration Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Public Service & Safety Human Services combined into Healthcare & Human Services
HST (Health Sciences and Technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Sciences 	Healthcare & Human Services
IT (Information Technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology 	Digital Technology
METT (Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology, and Trades)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architecture and Construction Manufacturing STEM (particularly Engineering and Technology Pathway) Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (Transportation Technology) Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Advanced Manufacturing (Engineering primarily moved here) Energy & Natural Resources Supply Chain & Transportation



Role of Advisory Committee

Expertise and guidance:

- What industry trends aren't reflected in the labor market information?
- What credentials are emerging as most promising?
- How does our desk analysis relate to implementation?
- What are the future of work implications?

Inform key decision points:

- Pathway map approach
- Selecting strategic early college credit courses
- Identifying key competencies (building from IL's existing technical competencies)



Strategic Courses

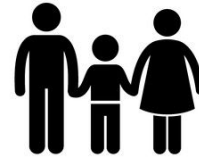
- Analyze promising credential program requirements at various community colleges in Illinois
- Tally and label all of the career-focused & general education courses across programs to determine which of these courses:
 - Are **most common** across targeted programs
 - Are more likely **accessible** for dual credit
 - Have the potential for **transferability** and currency (via Illinois Articulation Initiative) or **industry credentials**

Labor Market Information

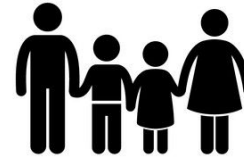


Living Wage =

The minimum salary you need in order to cover the cost of living expenses (i.e., pay all your bills) based on typical expenses in your community.



Single Child



Family with 2 Children



Big Family

Depends on:

- 1) # of adults and children in a family
- 2) # of working adults
- 3) where you live

The [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#) breaks down the living wage by family size and region of the country; updated annually.

Program	Typical Job(s)	Living Wage Potential*	Median Hourly Wage**	IL Growth: Change over 10 years ***	IL Annual Job Openings***	Typical Educational Requirements
Guided Transfer	Computer and Information Systems Managers	High	\$78.01	8.0%	1,828	Bachelor's Degree
	Software Developers or Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	High	\$52.44	18.0%	6,256	
	Database Architects	High	\$66.32	5.6%	526	
Computer Information Systems & Programming	Computer User Support Specialists	Medium	\$27.93	4.1%	1,539	Some College
	Database Administrators	High	\$49.18	5.6%	526	Bachelor's Degree
	Computer Systems Analysts	High	\$49.45	4.2%	2,306	
Web Development	Web and Digital Interface Designers	Medium	\$35.94	7.3%	548	Bachelor's Degree
Networking, Cloud Computing, & Cybersecurity	Computer Network Support Specialists	Medium	\$33.95	3.4%	999	Associate Degree
	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	High	\$42.72	3.1%	804	Bachelor's Degree
	Information Security Analysts	High	\$54.18	25.3%	428	

Selected Occupations, Wages, and Job Growth for IT

* Living wage potential is based on MIT's Living Calculator (livingwage.mit.edu) for Illinois in 2024. Occupations with median salaries higher than the living wage for 1 adult + 1 child (\$39.63/hour) are considered as having a "high" living wage potential. Occupations with median salaries only higher than the living wage of 1 adult, no children (\$22.86/hour) are considered as having a "medium" living wage potential, and occupations with median salaries below the living wage of 1 adult, no children (less than \$22.86/hour) are considered as having a "low" living wage potential.

** Illinois Department of Employment Security (2022). Wage Information: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (Statewide). Retrieved April 2, 2024, from ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/oews.html

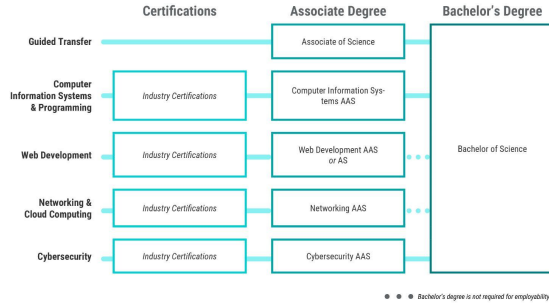
*** Illinois Department of Employment Security. Employment Projections (Long-Term Occupational Projections 2020-2030). Retrieved April 2, 2024, from ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/employment-projections.html

Model Programs of Study in Information Technology

Recommended Courses

	GRADES 9–10 Orientation	GRADES 10–12 Skill Development	GRADE 12 Capstone	1ST YEAR* Postsecondary
Computer Information Systems, Programming, & Web Development	Computer Applications for Business [C]	Mobile applications or web development courses [C] Choose 1: • Introduction to Computer Information Systems [C] • Computer Science Principles [C]	Choose 1: • Computer Science I [C] • Computer Science A [C]	Computer Science I [C] Computer Science II [C] Intro to Web Development [C]
Networking		Hardware or operating system courses [C] Choose 1: • Introduction to Computer Information Systems [C] • Computer Science Principles [C]	Intro to Networking [C]	Continue Course Sequence [C]
Work-Based Learning	Career Exploration (2)	Choose 1: Career Development Experience or Youth Apprenticeship		
	Team-Based Challenge (2); may be offered through Career and Technical Student Organizations			
Math	Math sequence: highest-level course possible	Math sequence: highest-level course possible	Choose 1: • College Algebra [C] • Pre-Calculus [C] • Transitional Math: STEM [C] • Calculus [C] • Statistics [C]	Choose 1: • Calculus [C] • Statistics [C]
English	English sequence	English sequence	Choose 1: • Transitional English [C] • English Composition [C]	Choose 1: • English Composition [C] • Oral Communication [C] • Business Communications [C]
Science	Science sequence	Science sequence	Science sequence	Science sequence
Social Science	Social science sequence	Social science sequence	Social science sequence [C]	Social science sequence [C]
KEY:	[C] AP or dual credit course [C] Dual credit course with IAI	[C] Dual credit course [C] Postsecondary course with IAI	[C] College & Career Pathway Endorsement [C] Course prepares for industry credential	
	*If credit was already earned through an early college course, take the next requirement in the sequence or, if none, additional AAS or major course			

Postsecondary Opportunities



Selected Occupations, Wages, and Job Growth

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Web Development, Networking, Cloud Computing, & Cybersecurity	Web and Digital Interface Designers	Medium	\$35.94	7.3%	548	Bachelor's Degree
	Computer Network Support Specialists	Medium	\$33.95	3.4%	999	Associate Degree
	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	High	\$42.72	3.1%	804	Bachelor's Degree
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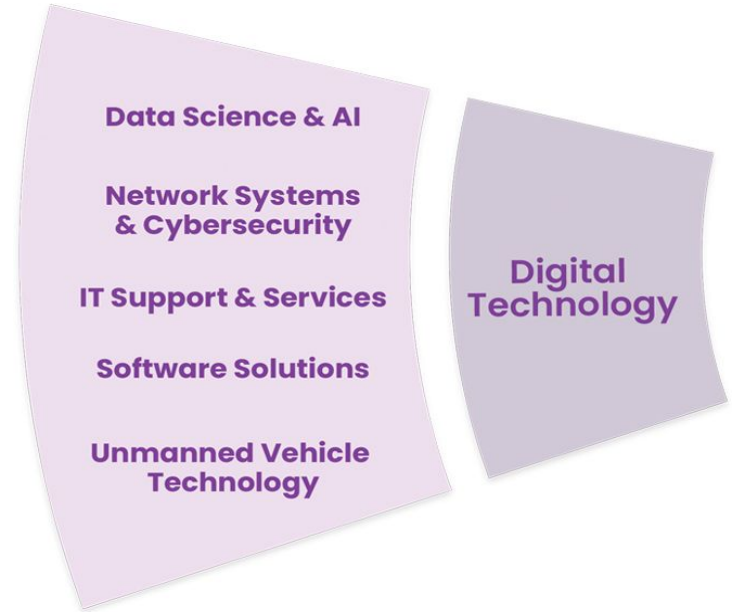
Information Technology

Program	Typical Job(s)	Living Wage Potential (Footnote 1)	Median Hourly Wage (footnote 2)	Growth in Illinois: % Change over 10 years (footnote 3)	Illinois Annual Job Openings (footnote 3)	Educational Requirements
Guided Transfer: Computer Science and Programming	Computer and Information Systems Managers	High	\$79.67	11.0%	1,900	Bachelor's Degree
	Software Developers	High	\$61.43	20.0%	4,580	
	Software QA Analysts/Testers	High	\$48.12	14.0%	600	
	Computer Systems Engineers/Architects	High	\$48.23	5%	600	
	Data Scientists	High	\$54.56	30%	630	
	Data Warehousing Specialist	High	\$64.66	2.0%	90	
Computer Information Systems	Database Architects	High	\$64.66	2.0%	90	High School Diploma, Some College
	Computer User Support Specialists	Medium	\$27.18	1%	1,820	
	Database Administrators	High	\$48.59	4.00%	320	
Web Development	Computer Systems Analysts	High	\$46.12	4.0%	1,370	Bachelor's Degree
	Web Developers	High	\$49.66	13.0%	290	
Networking, Cloud Computer and CyberSecurity	Web and Digital Interface Design	High	\$45.51	13.00%	260	Bachelor's Degree
	Computer User Support Specialists	Medium	\$27.18	1.0%	1,820	
	Computer Network Support Specialists	Medium	\$31.15	3%%	750	Associate's Degree
	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	High	\$46.46	0.0%	630	Bachelor's Degree
	Information Security Analysts	High	\$54.95	23.3%	420	

CTE Career Cluster: Digital Technology

Pathways:

- Guided Transfer: Computer Science and Programming
- Computer Information Systems
- Web Development
- Networking, Cloud Computer and Cyber Security



Health Science

Program	Typical Job(s)	Living Wage Potential (Footnote 1)	Median Hourly Wage (footnote 2)	Growth in Illinois: % Change over 10 years (footnote 3)	Illinois Annual Job Openings (footnote 3)	Educational Requirements
Guided Transfer Pre-Professional	Chiropractor	Medium	\$32.51	7.0%	102	Doctoral or Professional Degree
	Dietitians & Nutritionists	Medium	\$32.58	5.1%	152	
	Occupational Therapists	High	\$49.85	8.0%	430	
	Physical Therapists	High	\$49.70	10%	500	
	Physician Assistants	High	\$59.13	20.3%	370	
	Optometrists	High	\$65.48	7.0%	50	
	Speech Language Pathologist	Medium	\$39.66	20.0%	720	
Nursing	Nursing Assistant	Low	\$21.22	2.1%	8,450	Postsecondary Certificate
	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Medium	\$31.74	3.0%	1,510	
	Registered Nurse	High	\$41.51	3.1%	7,960	Bachelor's Degree
	Nurse Practitioners	High	\$61.84	41.1%	850	Doctoral or Professional Degree
OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONS & RELATED CLINICAL SERVICE	Dental Hygienist	High	\$46.39	7.0%	620	Associate Degree
	Radiological Technologist	Medium	\$37.45	0.0%	400	
	Respiratory Therapists	Medium	\$39.09	9.0%	330	
	Diagnostic Medical Sonographer	High	\$49.09	10.8%	191	
	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Medium	\$30.63	26.0%	400	
	Physical Therapist Assistants	Medium	\$31.07	23.0%	780	
	Surgical Technologist	Medium	\$30.06	3.0%	230	
	Emergency Medical Technicial	Medium	\$27.52	9.0%	680	Postsecondary Certificate
	Massage Therapist	Medium	\$29.15	16.0%	900	
	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	Medium	\$32.18	4.0%	690	
	Phlebotomists	Low	\$21.93	5.0%	660	
	Paramedics	High	\$50.94	9.0%	290	

CTE Career Cluster: Health Science (Physical Health)

Pathways:

- Guided Transfer: Pre-Professional
- Nursing
- Allied Health Programs

Physical Health includes, but is not limited to:
Allied Health, Nursing, Pharmacy Tech,
Physical Therapy, Radiology, Sports Medicine



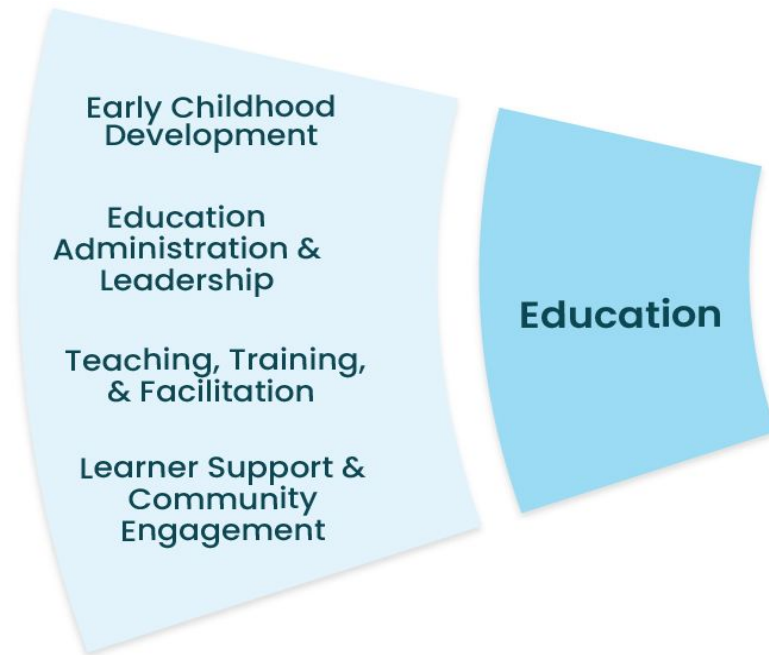
Education

Program	Typical Job(s)	Living Wage Potential (Footnote 1)	Median Annual Wage (footnote 2)	Growth in Illinois: % Change over 10 years (footnote 3)	Illinois Annual Job Openings (footnote 3)	Educational Requirements
GUIDED TRANSFER IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	Education Administrators, Elem. & Secondary	High	\$108,560	3.0%	900	Master's Degree
	Elem. School Teachers, Ex. Special Ed.	Medium	&64,160	3%	4,080	Bachelor's Degree
	Middle School Teachers, Ex. Special/Voc Ed	Medium	\$64,800	3.0%	1,580	
	Secondary Teachers, Ex. Spec/Voc. Ed.	Medium	\$77,020	3.0%	2,910	
	Special Education Teachers, K-garten.	Medium	\$76,170	2%%	810	
	Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	Medium	\$61,210	6.0%	1,080	
	Instructional Coordinators	Medium	\$79,109	3.0%	780	
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	Ed. Administrators, Preschool & Child Care	Medium	\$47,470	4.0%	190	Associate's Degree
	Preschool Teachers, Ex. Special Education	Low	\$37,220	12.0%	2,430	
Other	Teaching Assistants, Preschool, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School, Except Special Education	Low	\$35,780	3.0%	6,500	Some college, no degree

CTE Career Cluster: Education

Pathways:

- Guided Transfer: Teacher Education Programs
- Early Childhood Education:
 - Education Administrators
 - Preschool and Childcare Centers
 - Preschool Teachers



Updated Document Component Parts

Examples from ICCB MPOS

- Key Terminology
- Labor Market Information
- Credentials, degree programs, certifications, etc.
- Instructional Sequence
 - ISBE CTE course category descriptions
 - WBL description
- Competency Descriptions: Strategic Dual Credit Courses and Technical and Essential Employability Competencies
- CCPE Framework
- WBL Continuum

Examples from ISBE POS

- CTE Course example listing
- Full Sequence for 7th and 8th grade
- Additional opportunities - Student Organizations/Leadership Development

Group Discussion



Our Goals

Goal 1: Confirm priority occupations to ensure pathway design is aligned with statewide labor market demand.

Goal 2: Confirm pathways aligned with the appropriate CTE Career Cluster, this will ensure that each pathway courses and credentials are coherently sequenced and clearly connected to a recognized CTE cluster for consistency across secondary and postsecondary systems.

Goal 3: Prioritize programs with labor market value, dual credit opportunities, and accessibility to most students statewide

Discussion

- Consider the document component parts and/or labor market information
 - Where do you see clear alignment, or misalignment?
 - What can we do to enhance the utilization of these documents?
- Which occupations appear most feasible to support through secondary, postsecondary pathways, based on required credentials, timelines, and student access?
 - What entry-level and mid-skill occupations offer strong advancement potential and should be prioritized when designing or refining pathways?
 - Which occupations or industry clusters would benefit most from a shared, statewide pathway model?
 - What additional information would strengthen statewide decisions about launching, scaling, or sunseting pathways?
 - Which careers/academic programs should we consider for mapping?
 - Are there other components that should be added to the documents?

Share out!



Next Steps: Join us for Guide Development

Education



<https://forms.gle/7ATVecv5FdEcxFw67>

Friday 3/20/26 noon - 1pm

Health Science



<https://forms.gle/b7YGNwvqg4WqMMU96>

**Wednesday 3/18/26 noon -
1pm**

Information Technology



<https://forms.gle/iuWdgtw9yumBf7v6A>

**Tuesday 3/17/26 at 2pm -
3pm**