

Career Pathways

A New Model for High School Career Education/ Vocational Technical and Community College Collaboration

Prepared by CEANCI and Rock Valley College

Mission The collaboration between secondary and post secondary educational institutions will create career pathways for middle and high school students leading to further education and meaningful full-time jobs that provide a reasonable quality of life and contribute to the economic vitality of the Rock River Region.

Definition The primary goal of a career pathway is an associate degree, an industry-recognized certificate or licensure, or a baccalaureate degree that leads to a rewarding job that will sustain a reasonable lifestyle.

Shared Values Regional educational institutions and businesses will partner to provide a dynamic and seamless model program of compatible high school and college classes and apprenticeships, with a focus on the following:

1. Interaction, cooperation and collaboration between high school and college educators
2. Joint planning, driven by faculty and focused on integrated curriculum from high school to college, leading students to employable skills
3. Coordinated class sequencing and co-located programs
4. Engagement of business partners, not only in an advisory capacity, but also as critical part in developing employability skills
5. Sharing or leveraging resources, including faculty, facilities and funds, and working together to submit grants that advance the mission of the partnership.

Key Elements

1. Connecting high school and college to support student success
 - High school and college curricula align across educational sectors and career requirements
 - High school academic and technical curricula is aligned with college curricula so the high school courses naturally segue into college courses
 - Students complete high school courses that prepare them for and connect to future postsecondary course work, as well as the job market
 - Articulation agreements between high school and college are developed that encourage dual enrollment and dual credit whenever course competencies learned in high school courses are equivalent to the college course

2. Including business partners as vital members of the CEANCI – RVC Collaboration
 - Employers help schools select occupational pathways to ensure that students are prepared for economically viable jobs
 - Employers advise faculty and program administrators on curriculum issues
 - Employers provide students with work-based learning and job-shadowing experiences to enhance classroom learning
 - Employers help students gain employment in their career pathways field, either part time for those still in school or full time after graduation
3. Development of an educational plan with an education profile for high school graduation.
 - Advisors and counselors present a career pathway as a viable and attractive option
 - High schools should provide additional preparation and sufficient rigor to ensure college readiness
 - High school graduation requirements provide opportunity to students to complete courses necessary to attain career pathway
4. Regularly collect, maintain, and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data to document effectiveness and to support planning for continuous improvement

Guiding Principles

- High school students will be encouraged to consider career pathways as a viable educational option. Central to understanding this option, high school and college counselors and advisors will provide information and assessment needed to make well-informed choices.
- Once a career pathway is chosen by a student, an educational plan will be prepared, profiling courses needed to complete a high school diploma, noting the college credit that will be awarded, and outlining the remaining college courses necessary for a degree or certificate.
- High school and college articulation agreements will focus on awarding dual credit for high school courses of comparable rigor to college courses, with a focus on college degree completion.
- The alignment of high school and college courses/programs will conform to ISBE and ICCB approval processes to maximize career and technical education formula reimbursement and apportionment funding.
- Career and technical education funding (both secondary and post secondary), as well as other state and federal funding possibilities, will be pooled to most effectively promote the career pathway concept.

- CEANCI consortium members agree to share costs for dual credit coursework, and to share resources to meet student needs. Programming priorities will be directed to meet students' career readiness needs in ways that are mutually beneficial to the high school and the college.
- A portion of the joint funding will be used to seek additional grant funding to expand and enhance programmatic opportunities for regional students in the consortium.

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