



Ohio is one of the 10 states selected to participate in New Skills for Youth (NSFY), an initiative enhancing state efforts to increase the number of kids across the country who are prepared for success in both college and career. NSFY is a \$75 million, five-year initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers, Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group.

In Phase One of the initiative, the Ohio NSFY team evaluated the state's career pathway infrastructure and developed a plan to designate and expand access to high-quality, in-demand career pathways throughout the state.¹

Phase Two of the NSFY initiative began in January 2017. This snapshot profiles Ohio's progress in the first year of Phase Two, including:

- **Defining high-quality career pathways:** Led by a cross-sector team, the state developed criteria for assessing high-quality career pathways at the secondary and postsecondary levels and worked to identify and scale up effective models.
- **Strengthening the high school diploma and integrating academic and technical learning:** Through a set of initiatives stipulated in the state's 2017-18 budget bill, the Department of Education developed new frameworks to award credit for work-based learning (WBL) through its credit flexibility provision. Additionally, the Department began developing guidance on awarding simultaneous credit through blended coursework.
- **Streamlining career pathways to postsecondary education:** With the support of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges, Ohio expanded opportunities for high school students to earn industry credentials and postsecondary credit for career pathway courses.

Foundations for High-Quality Career Pathways in Ohio

Strong support from state leadership has helped Ohio lay the foundation for strengthening an integrated career readiness system throughout the state. Governor Kasich has prioritized the creation and expansion of career pathways for Ohio students. The Governor's Executive Workforce Board,² which includes representatives from local industry, government and education, has laid out priorities for workforce development and spearheaded initiatives such as OhioMeansJobs,³ a wide-reaching workforce development campaign that supports career advisement and employer engagement in secondary schools.

As career readiness programs have expanded under Governor Kasich's leadership, the state has also developed robust career readiness accountability mechanisms. In 2012, the Ohio Legislature mandated the restructuring of the state's school accountability report card to integrate measures of

career readiness. The Ohio Board of Education responded by developing a school report card specifically focused on Career Technical Education (CTE), grading schools on an A-F scale based on a set of indicators such as technical skill attainment and placement after graduation.⁴

To further support career readiness in high school, Ohio rolled out new graduation pathways in 2014 that allow high school students to meet graduation requirements by earning industry-recognized credentials and a benchmark score on the ACT WorkKeys assessment.⁵ While these graduation pathways are expected to be revised in response to feedback from stakeholders (a stopgap measure was put into place for the graduating class of 2018), the state is committed to valuing credential attainment in high school graduation requirements and the inclusion of a CTE-specific pathway.

Under NSFY, Ohio plans to redesign and scale high-quality, in-demand career pathways for all students, particularly those who are currently underserved. Operating under the brand SuccessBound, the Ohio NSFY team plans to increase student enrollment in career readiness programs that align with the needs of state employers and provide students with the flexibility to either enter meaningful careers or continue their education after high school.⁶

Defining Quality Career Pathways

In 2017, the Ohio NSFY team, representing cross-sector state leadership and partnering with teachers and administrators in the field, developed criteria for high-quality, in-demand career pathways. The criteria are intended to help local program administrators evaluate the quality of their program offerings and make informed decisions about which to scale up and which to phase out. These career pathway guidelines are intended to help benchmark all career pathways, not just CTE programs, to help learners achieve career success.

The new criteria focus on four dimensions of successful high-quality, in-demand career pathways:

- **Business and community engagement:** building partnerships with local businesses, industry leaders, postsecondary institutions and other partners to provide a strong foundation for career pathway success.
- **Career pathway design:** examining course sequences and supports that provide students with postsecondary credits or technical credentials to ensure that students are gaining relevant skills.
- **Educator collaboration:** ensuring that instructors are prepared to teach and that relevant technical skills are integrated into curriculum.
- **Learning environment and culture:** putting adequate systems in place to give students individualized career advice based on their career pathway of choice.

The Ohio NSFY team is also working to identify areas for expansion and to scale proven career readiness models. A few examples include:



Figure 1: SuccessBound Continuum: Elements of a quality career pathway program

- The Marion City School District’s partnership with OhioHealth and Marion Technical College has been recognized and shared with other districts for its success with the medical assistant program, filling a critical local workforce gap.⁷
- Stark State College’s Learn to Earn program, developed as a direct result of the NSFY initiative, provides high school students an opportunity to engage with business leaders in their community and earn an industry-recognized credential.⁸
- Governor Kasich’s Ohio Cyber Collaboration Committee (OC3) is a partnership of the Ohio Department of Higher Education, the Ohio National Guard, and representatives from the education and business communities. Through this work, the Ohio Department of Education is developing cybersecurity career pathways with the aim of developing a stronger cybersecurity infrastructure and workforce.

Strengthening the High School Diploma and Integrating Academic and Technical Learning

In 2017 Ohio moved to integrate its academic and technical education systems with several initiatives helping students to apply CTE credits toward their high school diplomas. This effort was largely spurred by the passage of H.B. 49, the 2017-18 state budget bill, which directed the Department of Education, in consultation with the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Office of Workforce Transformation, to develop guidelines for offering simultaneous credit and granting course credit for WBL.⁹

Chief among these initiatives is the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal, which enables students to demonstrate the skills necessary to enter the workforce.¹⁰ To earn the seal, students must receive recommendations from three mentors confirming that they possess a set of 15 industry-validated skills. These skills, which were announced in December 2017, include qualities and competencies such as leadership, punctuality and problem solving. Students who earn the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal will have it printed directly on their transcripts and high school diplomas. Early responses from the business community have been positive, with business leaders expressing appreciation for the ability to validate necessary skills when hiring new employees. The OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal is available starting with the high school class of 2018.

Another major component of the SuccessBound strategy is the integration of academic and technical instruction into high school curricula. Under H.B. 49, the Ohio Department of Education was directed

15 Essential Professional Skills Documented by the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal

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| ❖ Drug Free | ❖ Professionalism | ❖ Oral and Written Communication |
| ❖ Reliability | ❖ Learning Agility | ❖ Digital Technology |
| ❖ Work Ethic | ❖ Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving | ❖ Global/ Intercultural Fluency |
| ❖ Punctuality | ❖ Leadership | ❖ Career Management |
| ❖ Discipline | ❖ Creativity/ Innovation | |
| ❖ Teamwork/ Collaboration | | |



to develop guidance for offering simultaneous credit to high school students, allowing students to meet core graduation requirements through the integration of academic and technical courses. Ohio is also developing a web-based application called Standards by Design that will allow local school districts to design model courses of study that meet local educational and workforce needs, while also ensuring that academic content standards are being taught.

Ohio is taking advantage of the resurgence of WBL by taking measures to integrate WBL into the traditional high school experience. Notably, WBL experiences for Ohio students must be aligned with the student's program of study and have joint supervision from employers and educators to ensure that learning is aligned with program outcome goals. To support such experiences, Ohio compiled resources and materials to ensure that schools and districts can implement WBL in a more systemic way.¹¹ Additionally, H.B. 49 directed the state Department of Education to develop a plan¹² to allow students to earn credit through WBL starting in the 2018-19 school year.¹³ Programs will be customized to students' needs at the district level and will enable students to use their employment as a substitute for or enhancement to a high school course.

The Department of Education also partnered with the staffing company Adecco to expand opportunities for high school students to receive both wages and credit for their work.¹⁴ Under the agreement, Adecco takes on the liability for student placements, minimizing the risk for employers, a strategy previous employed in Kentucky. In 2018, Adecco staff will work to expand enrollment and match more students with WBL opportunities.

Finally, Ohio is developing strategies to measure and evaluate WBL performance and is considering adding WBL indicators to the state's accountability system. WBL participation is now integrated into high school graduation and honors diploma requirements, and the state's Registered Pre-Apprenticeship certificate is integrated into the "Prepared for Success" indicator, which also measures credential attainment, dual enrollment and other criteria. The state is currently working to develop mechanisms and business rules that will allow for more reliable measurement of WBL participation and performance.

Streamlining Career Pathways to Postsecondary Education

A major priority for Ohio's career readiness strategy is ensuring that career pathways are flexible and offer plenty of opportunity for advancement. Ideally, students will be able to build on their career pathway through a series of continued learning initiatives, including postsecondary certificates and degrees and industry-recognized credentials.

What They Are Saying: OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal Employer Testimonials

"The merits of the Seal, as well as personal development through the use of mentorship/coaching, closely reflect values that Kokosing works to demonstrate daily and will help us greatly in preparing the construction workforce of the future."

- Mark Osborn, Corporate Field Workforce Manager, Kokosing, Inc.

"The 15 professional skills required by students to achieve the Ohio Means Jobs-Readiness Seal are fundamentals that we look for when hiring talent throughout our organization."

- Dennis Nash, Executive Chairman, Kenan Advantage Group

Additionally, Ohio has worked in conjunction with the Ohio Association of Community Colleges and the Ohio Secondary Career-Technical Alignment Initiative to develop articulation agreements for CTE courses to allow high school students to earn credit toward postsecondary degrees. These articulation agreements, called Career Technical Assurance Guides (CTAGs), lay out standards for aligning high school courses with postsecondary curricula.¹⁵ In 2017, the state created CTAGs for an additional 60 CTE courses, meaning that students can now earn postsecondary credit for 40 percent of all grade seven through 12 CTE courses offered in the state.

Looking Ahead

In Year One, Ohio made progress in both strengthening the quality of secondary career pathways and blurring the lines between high school and postsecondary education. With the establishment and expansion of high-quality, in-demand career pathways, high school students in the coming years will have many more opportunities to demonstrate career readiness and get a head start on college and careers.

As Phase Two unfolds, Ohio will continue working under the interdepartmental SuccessBound brand, which represents this educational approach of connecting business and education, to expand access to meaningful career pathways for all students. The state also aims to improve data collection around WBL to further embed opportunities within secondary career pathways and develop robust measures of WBL outcomes that could one day be integrated into the state's accountability system. In the year ahead, Ohio will advise local teachers and administrators on the expansion of career readiness components in K-12 curricula by developing professional development opportunities, along with guidance and tools to integrate technical competencies into traditional academic courses.

¹ <https://careertech.org/resource/ohio-phase-one-nsfy-snapshot>).

² <http://workforce.ohio.gov/Board>

³ <https://www.ohiomeansjobs.com>

⁴ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/Report-Card-Resources>

⁵ <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-Graduation-Requirements/News/Two-additional-graduation-options-available-for-th/GradReq2018.pdf.aspx>

⁶ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/New-Skills-for-Youth/SuccessBound>

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5XwUHh5tRs>

⁸ <https://www.starkstate.edu/admissions/collegecreditplus/learntoearn/>

⁹ <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA132-HB-49>

¹⁰ <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/New-Skills-for-Youth/.../OhioMeansJobs-Readiness-Seal>

¹¹ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Career-Tech/Career-Connections/Work-Based-Learning>

¹² <https://www.ohea.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/07/HB-49-Analysis.pdf>

¹³ <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Career-Tech/Career-Connections/Work-Based-Learning/Work-Based-Learning-for-Schools-and-Educators/WBL-Credit-Options.pdf.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/New-Skills-for-Youth/SuccessBound/OhioMeansJobs-Readiness-Seal/OhioMeansJobs-Readiness-Seal-Testimonials>

¹⁵ <https://www.ohiohighered.org/transfer/ct2/ctags>