

WISCONSIN

2018 SNAPSHOT

Wisconsin 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 learners across the country who are prepared for success in both college and career. NSFY is a \$75 million national initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase & Co. in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers, Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group.

The Wisconsin NSFY team has worked to design and pilot a regional career pathways model for promoting college and career readiness with the aim of eventually scaling the model statewide. The NSFY team has worked with administrators and business leaders throughout the state to designate new high-quality career pathways and strengthen career advising services for students.

In 2018, Wisconsin's main areas of focus were:

- **Expanding access to career pathways through Pathways Wisconsin:** The NSFY team continued its work in four pilot regions to develop and roll out new career pathways relevant to the needs of regional labor markets.
- **Implementing Academic and Career Planning (ACP):** The state continued to provide support for the implementation of the new statewide ACP framework, now in its first full year of implementation.
- **Collecting college and career readiness indicators statewide:** Wisconsin has established a central data collection system for college and career readiness indicators, which is expected to increase transparency at the school level.

The Wisconsin Context

Prior to the NSFY initiative, many individual schools, districts and regions in Wisconsin were already employing elements of successful career pathways, but the state lacked central definitions and a cohesive statewide framework to guide college and career readiness. Several "islands of excellence" throughout the state had already established connections between schools and local employers to ensure that learners were building career-relevant skills, and the Wisconsin Technical College System was already recognized for robust postsecondary career pathways.¹

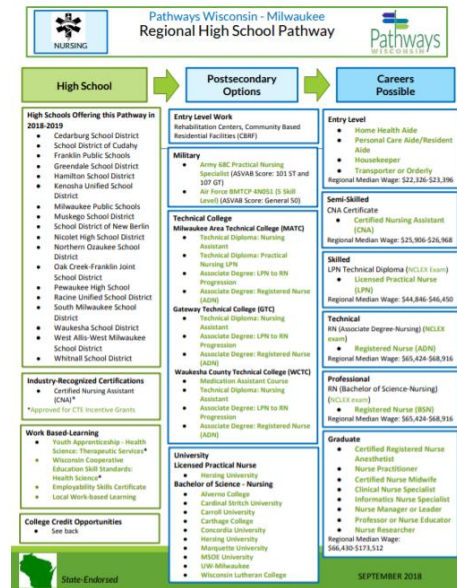
In the first two years of the NSFY initiative, Wisconsin designed a strategy to define and scale high-quality career pathways throughout the state by piloting the Regional Career Pathways Project program, or as it known publicly, Pathways Wisconsin. Wisconsin has adhered to a regional approach, appointing cross-sector teams in four pilot regions — Indianhead, Madison, Moraine Park and Milwaukee — to identify human resources gaps in local labor markets and deploy coordinated educational initiatives to expand access to high-quality career pathways. Simultaneously, the

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has been working to implement and scale ACP, a comprehensive academic and career planning mandate that was passed by the state Legislature in 2013. ACP serves as the backbone for an integrated career readiness strategy that marries career pathways opportunities with college and career planning.

Expanding Access to Career Pathways Through Pathways Wisconsin

In the first two years of NSFY, Wisconsin identified successful components of high-quality career pathways and used that framework as a model for successfully designing and implementing one new career pathway in each of the four pilot regions in 2018. The career pathways were selected based on their connection to high-skill, in-demand industries; regional significance; and level of buy-in from



Pathways Wisconsin Milwaukee Nursing Regional Pathway One-Pager. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/pathways-wisconsin>

leaders in local and state government and industry. The Milwaukee region has served as a model for the other Pathways Wisconsin regions, leveraging existing partnerships and local leaders in the area to stand up two full career pathways, one in the nursing industry and one in construction. Additional career pathways in each region are under development for implementation in the 2019-20 school year.

Wisconsin's commitment to regional delivery of career pathways brings both opportunities and challenges. With four regional directors now in place from different parts of the state, each with its own distinct labor market and industry profiles, ensuring consistency in career pathways development and delivery across the pilot regions has at times been difficult. The pilot regions have shown the importance of strong central leadership in establishing the criteria and requirements for career pathways designation, but heavy input from a range of stakeholders is also necessary to align career pathways with the needs of local labor markets. By the end of the initiative, Wisconsin aims to have 50 percent of the high schools in each pilot region providing access to at least one career pathway and 10 percent of learners in each school enrolled in career pathways.

Wisconsin also plans to establish connections between secondary and postsecondary institutions within each region to facilitate seamless transfer along each career pathway. The Wisconsin NSFY team aims to have 50 percent of higher education institutions in each pilot region participate in the program by offering dual credit in at least one career pathway. By the end of 2018, three out of the four pilot regions had already reached this milestone. Additionally, the pilot program has generated discussion throughout the state around the value of dual enrollment.

In 2018 Wisconsin received a moderate increase in state funding for its Career Technical Education (CTE) incentive grants, which provide up to \$1,000 to students who both attain a high school diploma and earn an approved industry-recognized credential. The Legislature increased funding for the program by \$500,000 for the 2018-19 school year, bringing the total amount appropriated for the program to \$3.5 million. The additional funding provides necessary resources to help implement the Pathways Wisconsin model, which requires learners to earn an industry-recognized credential to complete a state-endorsed regional career pathway.

Implementing ACP

The Wisconsin NSFY team also continued supporting implementation of ACP, which was passed into law in 2013 and piloted in the 2015-16 school year. ACP in Wisconsin is closely tied to the Pathways Wisconsin model, and the state considers new regional career pathways “ready-made ACP plans” for students in the pilot regions.²

Under new ACP standards, school districts must provide all students in Wisconsin with career development and planning services beginning in the sixth grade.³ In addition, local business-education electronic platforms allow staff and students to connect to career opportunities in their regions. Trained staff in each school district help students explore careers and design customized

Local Highlight: Fond du Lac High School’s ACE Academy

The construction industry in Wisconsin is estimated to grow by more than 12,000 additional jobs by 2020, but industry employers have noted a lack of skilled workers to meet the demand. Fond du Lac County, which is located in the Moraine Park pilot region, is aiming to address this shortage with the construction of the Fond du Lac High School Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) Construction Academy. Starting in fall 2019, the academy will train an estimated 78 students in construction-related skills. Students will have access to a range of learning opportunities, including job shadowing, site visits and CTE. Credits earned at the academy will be applicable toward degrees at the state’s two-year technical colleges through Pathways Wisconsin.⁴

plans to identify and achieve their career goals. The new ACP framework plays a particularly important role in ensuring that students in Pathways Wisconsin regions can pursue and succeed in state-endorsed career pathways. ACP includes an advising protocol for all potential student career pathways, CTE, work-based learning, and academic preparation for university or other postsecondary education.

Ensuring the success of the new ACP framework is a priority for Wisconsin. The Wisconsin NSFY team has been working with University of Wisconsin’s Center for Education Research to identify challenges and successes thus far. DPI is also providing trainings for school administrators and counselors with the help of ACP coordinators, who are designated by local Cooperative

Education Service Agencies to assist with the delivery of ACP. These coordinators are responsible for leading local collaboration on ACP implementation and forging connections around educational and collaborative programming based on individual district needs.⁵

ACP is integrated into DPI’s budget, and school districts receive state funding for ACP software and trainings. DPI has also put mechanisms in place to better communicate goals for the initiative, as well as to encourage networking and the sharing of best practices across districts. These mechanisms include an ACP guide for district leadership teams and informational videos for school administrators, parents and students.⁶

In 2019, Wisconsin will begin analyzing available data on ACP implementation and the use of the state-provided software and other tools to identify infrastructural elements that positively affect student outcomes.⁷ As Pathways Wisconsin continues to develop, the state will also focus on the integration of designated high-quality career pathways into local ACP delivery to ensure a comprehensive approach to career readiness.

Collecting College and Career Readiness Indicators Statewide

Regional variations in college and career readiness planning combined with limited technology for collecting CTE data resulted in historically fragmented reporting and evaluation practices for CTE programs. To ensure more consistent data collection and transparency, the Wisconsin Legislature passed Act 59 in 2017, which directs DPI to collect and report specific measures of career readiness in state accountability report cards.⁸ Those measures include:

- The number and percentage of pupils attending a course through the Early College Credit Program (dual enrollment);
- The number and percentage of pupils participating in youth apprenticeships;
- The number of pupils earning industry-recognized credentials;
- The number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered to, and AP credits earned by, pupils; and
- The number of community service hours provided by pupils.⁹

In 2017, the NSFY team began the work to integrate data reporting and collection for college and career readiness into DPI's data collection and reporting systems. This work started with the NSFY team establishing specific data collection requirements for the data points listed above. These requirements were built into the WISEdata data collection system. In prior CTE collection methods, only districts that received funds under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 reported data to DPI, and they reported only on CTE concentrators. All districts participate in WISEdata, greatly expanding access to and understanding of student participation and outcomes for these particular college and career readiness indicators.

With these new indicators now collected in the statewide system (starting in the 2018-19 school year), districts are collecting and reporting course-level data on student participation in local CTE programs of study and state-endorsed career pathways. NSFY is working with state and school administrators to determine how to best leverage and analyze this new information and how to best use it to inform college and career readiness initiatives through Pathways Wisconsin. The collection of these indicators is a first step toward achieving more accurate data collection that will inform policymaking, decisionmaking, and reporting of these measures in the state accountability report cards.

Looking Ahead

Under the leadership of newly elected Gov. Tony Evers, a Democrat and the former superintendent for public instruction, the NSFY team is confident it can complete the Pathways Wisconsin pilot and scale the model statewide. In his time as superintendent, Gov. Evers oversaw the design and launch of the new ACP guidelines, and his administration has expressed commitment to the continued rollout of career readiness and Pathways Wisconsin initiatives.

As the Pathways Wisconsin pilot regions progress and WISEdata makes more career pathways data available, DPI and other state authorities will have a better idea of how existing career pathways programs affect student outcomes and of what changes might be necessary to ensure equitable access and outcomes for students. DPI is particularly interested in expanding access to career pathways for students of color, and collecting participation data via WISEdata will allow for a better understanding of access and uptake of career pathways for students across the state. In the final year of NSFY, Wisconsin will continue establishing a sustainable statewide system for high-quality career and college pathways development. The rollout of new career pathways in the four Pathways Wisconsin pilot regions will continue, and data from these pilot programs will help inform the development of an eight-module training program to help regional directors with future career pathways implementation. The Wisconsin NSFY team is also working with partners to explore different

funding models — including private options and regional funding streams — to ensure that career pathways development is supported after the NSFY initiative comes to an end.

Acknowledgments

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¹ Advance CTE. (2017). *New Skills for Youth phase one snapshot: Wisconsin*. Retrieved from <https://careertech.org/resource/wisconsin-phase-one-nsfy-snapshot>

² Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Pathways Wisconsin. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/pathways-wisconsin>

³ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2016). *ACP in Wisconsin: Implementing Academic and Career Planning*. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/acp/DPI%20Guide%202016%20FINAL%20web.pdf>

⁴ FDL Reporter. (2018). Fond du Lac High School's ACE facility set to build careers. Retrieved from <https://eu.fdlreporter.com/story/news/2018/04/18/fondy-highs-ace-facility-set-build-careers/524887002/>

⁵ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. ACP implementation. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/implementation>

⁶ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. ACP communication tools. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/communication-tools>

⁷ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Toolkit: Evaluating your ACP program. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/quality>

⁸ Wisconsin Act 59. (2017). Retrieved from <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/related/acts/59>

⁹ *Ibid.*