

Columbus, Ohio

2022-23 SNAPSHOT

THE NEW SKILLS READY NETWORK

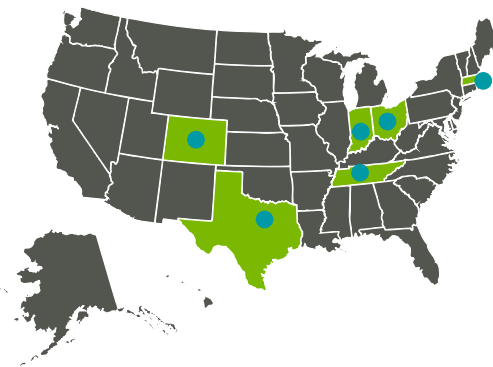
New Skills ready network, launched by JPMorgan Chase in 2020, bolsters the firm's efforts to support an inclusive economic recovery, as part of both their \$350 million, five-year New Skills at Work initiative to prepare people for the future of work and their \$30 billion commitment to advance racial equity. Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group are working with sites to improve student completion of high-quality career pathways in six US communities.

The six *New Skills ready network* sites are: Boston, Massachusetts; Columbus, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Denver, Colorado; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Nashville, Tennessee. These sites are formulating new partnerships between local school systems, higher education, employers, and government entities to develop pathways and policy recommendations that give underserved students access to higher education and real-world work experiences that lead to high-wage, in-demand jobs.

These snapshots provide an overview of sites' accomplishments in the third year of the *New Skills ready network* initiative, including the development of priority objectives and action steps toward those objectives. Through the *New Skills ready network* initiative JPMorgan Chase is looking to advance the following priority areas to prepare students for good careers and economic mobility:

- Strengthening the alignment and rigor of career pathways;
- Designing, implementing and scaling real-world work experiences;
- Building seamless transitions to support postsecondary success; and
- Closing equity gaps.

Columbus, Ohio, is one of the six sites participating in the *New Skills ready network*. This five-year initiative, launched by JPMorgan Chase in 2020, aims to improve student completion of high-quality career pathways.



NEW SKILLS READY NETWORK SITES:

- Boston, Massachusetts
- Columbus, Ohio
- Dallas, Texas
- Denver, Colorado
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Nashville, Tennessee

Starting in late 2020, the Columbus, Ohio, project team focused heavily on relationship and capacity building across partners to ensure that significant progress could be made in future years. The team also identified health care and information technology (IT) as key focus areas and began the process of reviewing labor market information, collecting internal information about programs and outcomes and examining quality indicators for career pathways. In the second year of this initiative, the Columbus, Ohio, *New Skills ready network* team focused on finalizing evaluations of career pathways across institutions and creating a communications and marketing plan informed by students and families for both IT and health care.

In year three, the Columbus, Ohio, *New Skills ready network* team built on much of the work from the second year of the initiative. Expanding upon the learner and family engagement focus groups conducted in years one and two, the project team developed career maps and increased advising efforts among education institutions. The initiative was also vital to the expansion of access to career pathways at the secondary level through transition to an open lottery system, laying the foundation for increased access to all Career Technical Education (CTE) programs citywide. The team also began to look at misaligned IT pathways and identify potential solutions. In addition, the project team focused heavily on employer engagement as a core component of work-based learning efforts, adding new project team capacity and driving conversations with new and existing employer partners.

COLUMBUS, OHIO



LEADERSHIP TEAM PARTNERS

- Ohio Excels (*site lead*)
- Columbus City Schools
- Columbus Partnership and One Columbus
- Columbus State Community College
- Ohio Department of Education
- Ohio Department of Higher Education
- The Ohio State University



VISION FOR SUCCESS

Columbus' goal throughout this project is the following:

All students in Columbus City Schools, Columbus State Community College, and The Ohio State University have the academic, technical, and professional skills they need to succeed, and that Columbus businesses have the workforce they need to prosper. Columbus students across the K12 and postsecondary spectrum are engaged in high-quality career pathways that fuel their aspirations, prepare them for success, and are supported through their transitions into high-wage, high-skill, in-demand careers in the Columbus region.

This goal will be met through developing a central Ohio career pathways system with cohesive partnerships that can strategically utilize resources and data to provide opportunities for learners at all levels, particularly those learners who are under-represented in higher education and workforce.

To be successful in this goal, all partners strive to align high-quality career pathways across the network to support learners through transitions in their academic and career journeys. The project team plans to align the strategic goals of partner institutions and create processes that allow for regular tracking and analysis of updated information.

In 2022-23, the Columbus, Ohio, *New Skills ready network* team focused on:

- 1 Improving access to and the quality of career pathways;
- 2 Communicating career pathway options to learners and families; and
- 3 Strengthening work-based learning and employer engagement capacity.

PRIORITY 1

Improving access to and the quality of career pathways

Over the course of the first two years, the project team worked closely to determine the alignment of career pathways across and between education institutions, reviewing these career pathways against quality rubrics to determine ideal ones for improvement. After mapping the career pathways, the project team chose to specifically focus on five career pathways across the health care and IT sectors. In the third year of this initiative, progress continued in earnest to improve access to and the quality of career pathways in these two sectors.

To improve access to career pathways, Columbus City Schools (CCS) moved to a fully open lottery system with no prerequisites or qualifying criteria. CCS champions this shift as a key equity win, as learners now have full opportunity to participate in these programs regardless of barriers. The change is already paying dividends; CCS has accepted 20 percent more CTE learners, including a health care program that is at 100 percent capacity (up from 86 percent last year) and an IT program that is at 97 percent capacity (up from 33 percent last year). CCS also improved curricular alignment,



switching to the [CodeHS](#) curriculum and instructional supports. This change in curriculum realigns the middle grades computer science curriculum with the secondary IT curriculum, which will allow for approximately 2,500 additional learners to participate in secondary IT pathways.

New Skills ready network funding was also leveraged to improve quality in career pathways. For example, The Ohio State University (OSU) hosted and facilitated a design thinking lab for IT programs, which brought together instructors and administrators to redesign and realign four-year IT programs. While work is still underway, OSU is developing a bachelor's degree in IT, stacked with previous coursework and credentials at the other institutions. Procurement processes were started in both the IT and health care spaces to acquire important equipment that will provide learners at all levels with hands-on classroom experiences that will prepare them for work-based learning opportunities.

In year four of the initiative, the project team will continue ongoing processes to remove barriers for learners, including developing a math bridge course between CCS and Columbus State Community College (CSCC) to ease curricular burdens on learners. The team is also exploring future career pathways in new sectors in a process built upon lessons learned from improving IT and health care pathways.

PRIORITY 2

Communicating career pathway options to learners and families



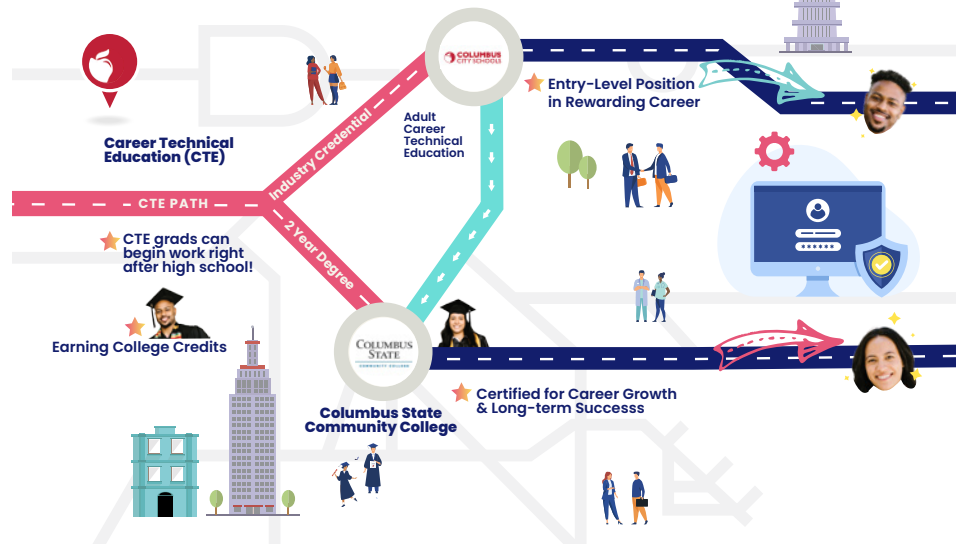
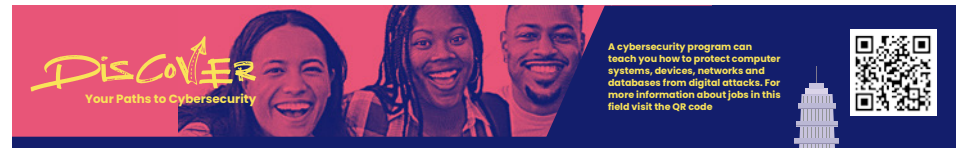
Discover Your Path to Success communications materials at a Columbus Family Resource Fair

One major focus of previous years in this initiative was communicating about career pathway options to learners and their families, and this focus continued through this year of the initiative. Progress in year three largely involved developing a communications plan to better message career pathways options to learners and their families in a way that is culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of community stakeholders. Communications workgroup members worked with a consultant to collect feedback from more than 100 learners and family members through focus groups, interviews and direct outreach efforts.

This communications plan was fully implemented in year three as part of the Discover Your Path to Success campaign. The campaign demonstrates clear progression through a career pathway using a visual map, which helps secondary learners who are interested in entering that career pathway. Boxes specific to that career pathway are then filled to help learners understand what opportunities are available at all education levels, including postsecondary options in the IT and health care sectors.

Communication was also improved through career advising and training to ensure alignment across institutions and with existing programs and processes. CSCC contracted career educators to talk to high school students more broadly about career options and career development beyond specific academic programs in their respective fields. Since May 2022, career educators from CSCC have engaged more than 4,000 prospective students through 80 career-specific information sessions, including almost 40 visits to technical schools. Project team members attribute a 35 percent increase in applications to CSCC from technical schools to this process.

SchooLinks, a college and career readiness software platform, was also introduced in CCS for advising and planning purposes and will be used to track career awareness activities and work-based learning opportunities for learners. Internal CCS dashboards have been correspondingly updated to include CTE program data to better inform advising efforts. Finally, professional development opportunities for counselors, career advisers and work-based learning coordinators from all three education institutions were developed to increase alignment in career advising and learner success planning and to help practitioners better connect to resources from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and [OhioMeansJobs](#).



Columbus City Schools

- Informational Technology Pathway
- Only Available to Seniors

What You Need on Your Journey

- Enrollment at Columbus Downtown High School
- Completion of IT+ or A+ exam

What You Will Learn On This Journey

- Basics of cybersecurity
- Skills include
 - Network security
 - Compliance & operational security
 - Threats and vulnerabilities
 - Applications
 - Data and host security
 - Access control
 - Identity management and cryptography

Your Achievement!

- Industry-Recognized Credentials
 - Network + Certification
 - Security + Certification

Columbus State Community College

CYBERSECURITY ASSOCIATES DEGREE

What You Need to Start Your Journey

- Placement into ENGL 1100 and MATH 1075
- Computer accessibility

What You Will Learn On This Journey

- Learn foundational tools for addressing cyber threats
- Be ready to start your career
- Acquire the capability to earn nationally recognized certificates

Your Achievement!

- Associates Degree

PRIORITY 3

Strengthening work-based learning and employer engagement capacity

Progress on work-based learning and employer engagement strategies began in very nascent stages in years one and two of this initiative, as collective work across education institutions required ample time to build partnerships and relationships and determine value for each employer. It became clear to all three education partners that each institution offered a different approach and type of learner engagement and that the project team needed a comprehensive employer engagement strategy.

In year three, the project team worked to move the needle on employer engagement in a variety of ways. To better understand gaps and needs, site partners worked both internally and externally. Internally, CCS leveraged an ODE-created [employer toolkit](#) to help industry partners better understand the opportunities and challenges associated with work-based learning. Externally, the project team engaged with [OhioX](#) to better understand employer needs in the IT sector and how these needs could be filtered across education institutions based on the right match for learner and employer alike.

Finally, and perhaps most crucially, the Columbus, Ohio, project team, in close collaboration with the [Columbus Partnership and One Columbus](#), hired and onboarded an emerging talent manager. This role is responsible for further identifying the strengths and needs of different employer groups and serving as an intermediary between education and industry. They will also support the development of new relationships with emerging industry sectors in the area as high-profile employers with significant employment need enter the region.

In the coming year, the project team will work to expand work-based learning opportunities at all levels by continuing to implement the projects started in 2022 and formalizing relationships with employer groups. The team also hopes to further explore employer-led simulated work experiences that could circumvent transportation, cost and other equity barriers while minimizing in-person liability risks incurred by employer partners.

HIGH-PRIORITY INDUSTRY SECTORS



Advanced Manufacturing



Construction Management



Health Care



Information Technology



LOOKING AHEAD

Progress is ongoing as the Columbus, Ohio, *New Skills ready network* team builds upon projects that started in year three. In the fourth year of this initiative, the project team will start revision processes for new career pathways sectors across all three partner institutions, such as construction management or advanced manufacturing, with the goal of implementing updates where needed in these career pathways starting in the fifth year. Increasing access to work-based learning opportunities across identified sectors is also a major priority for the project team.

