

# Dallas, Texas

2022-23 SNAPSHOT

## THE NEW SKILLS READY NETWORK

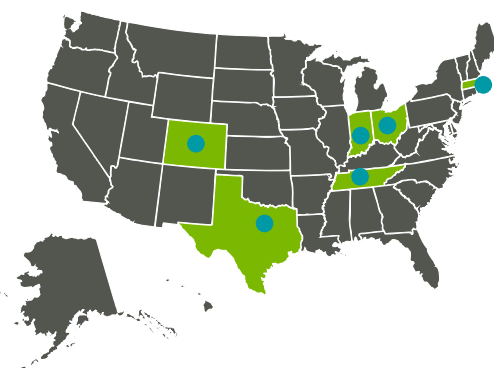
*New Skills ready network*, launched by JPMorgan Chase in 2020, bolsters the firm's efforts to support an inclusive economic recovery, as part of both their \$350 million, five-year New Skills at Work initiative to prepare people for the future of work and their \$30 billion commitment to advance racial 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.

Dallas, Texas, 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

In the first year of this initiative, the Dallas, Texas, *New Skills ready network* team's successes included getting buy-in and alignment on key data sources and definitions for labor market information, launching a virtual internship toolkit and mapping the data elements needed to track and monitor student college and career readiness.

During the second year, Dallas, Texas, focused on reorganizing its leadership structure to build the foundation for supporting learners in career pathways in Dallas Independent School District (ISD) beginning in middle school through their postsecondary experience. In the third year, the Dallas, Texas, team focused their efforts on building cohesion among the leadership team and implementers, which has deepened the relationship across partners, increased learner opportunities aligned with workforce development, expanded work-based learning training access within the cybersecurity pathways and supported the development of a personalized career pathway data tool.

In 2022-23, the Dallas, Texas, *New Skills ready network* team focused on:

- 1 Establishing and convening workgroups to align unique opportunities for economic mobility work across all institutions;
- 2 Strengthening collaboration between the K-12 district and two-year postsecondary partner in support of learner progression; and
- 3 Expanding work-based learning and training access within cybersecurity pathways to increase opportunities for learners interested in information technology (IT).



## LEADERSHIP TEAM PARTNERS

- Commit Partnership (*site lead*)
- Child Poverty Action Lab
- City of Dallas
- Dallas College
- Dallas Independent School District
- Dallas Regional Chamber
- United Way
- University of North Texas – Dallas
- Workforce Solutions



## VISION FOR SUCCESS

The *New Skills ready network* work in Dallas, Texas, is being driven by a vision for success that is anchored in a community-wide strategy called [Dallas Thrives](#), which aims to create pathways out of poverty for the youngest residents. The “north star” of this work is to double living-wage attainment, with a focus on achieving racial equity in living-wage employment, by 2040. By braiding the Dallas Thrives strategy, momentum and community support with the *New Skills ready network* framework and partner expertise, the team is looking to create a career pathway design and maintenance process that is financially sustainable after the grant ends and scalable across the community as pilot projects evolve into routine practices and programs. Through true systems change, the community can make measurable and sustainable progress toward its economic mobility goals for learners and young adults.

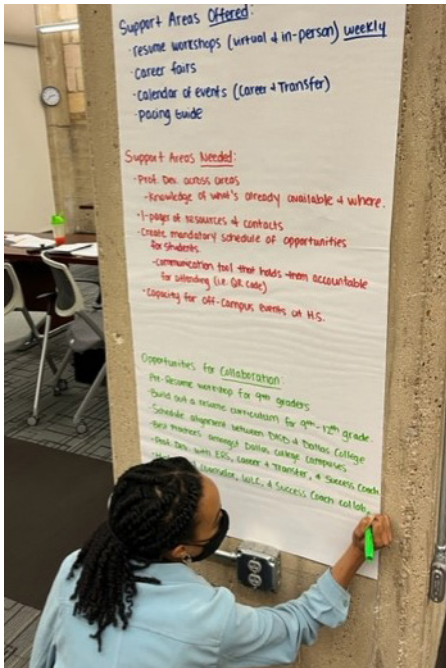
## PRIORITY 1

### Establishing and convening workgroups to align unique opportunities for economic mobility work across all institutions

The steering committee established in year two bolstered the collaboration and alignment of the Dallas Thrives Board within the Dallas, Texas, *New Skills ready network* leadership team. Subsequently, the Dallas, Texas, team identified a need for and established three different workgroups in year three to bring together partners across the network. These workgroups help to centralize capacity and coordinate the participating institutions. The workgroups focused on data; work-based learning; and college, career and military readiness.

Formalization of the data sharing process across Dallas ISD, Dallas College and the University of North Texas – Dallas (UNT Dallas) was at the center of the Dallas, Texas, team’s work and has helped catalyze the data workgroup. Data showing learner persistence in career pathways was previously presented in different ways through work initiated with [Dallas County Promise](#). As a result of the desire for insight into learner performance in career pathways, a priority of the data workgroup has been to consolidate and communicate large amounts of data across institutions. This data consolidation process aims to help capture career pathway experiences for learners as they matriculate through middle school, high school and postsecondary to provide insight on equity and enrollment across institutions. Additionally, the intent is to increase data capacity for the institutions with the support of [Economic Mobility Systems](#), a solutions-focused partner committed to developing equitable outcomes for learners. The data architecture, inclusive of dashboards and tools such as a personalized career pathways tool, will simplify systems and promote insight into learner outcomes and performance in career pathways to communicate to stakeholders including learners, families and institutions.





Workforce development is a centralized component of all partners collaborating on the Dallas, Texas, team. To foster more intentional development of this initiative priority, the team established a work-based learning workgroup. This workgroup seeks to increase learner access to industry partners that provide real-world career experiences and to accelerate the Workforce Scholars program through Dallas College, the two-year postsecondary partner. The Workforce Scholars program is designed to increase capacity at Dallas College while providing work-based learning experiences for Dallas ISD learners. Since launching the program in 2022, Dallas College has hired 41 high school juniors at \$15 per hour across its seven campuses. This work, learn and earn model not only has increased capacity at Dallas College, but it also has exposed learners to career pathway options within the college. One challenge identified by the Dallas, Texas, team is that more Workforce Scholars participants were from the northern area of Dallas than the southern area, which includes a larger population of under-served learners. To increase access and participation for learners in the southern area of Dallas, the team is developing family engagement opportunities, including family information sessions, to deepen relationships and close equity gaps.

Finally, the Dallas, Texas, team developed a college, career and military readiness workgroup to cultivate partner relationships in exploration of high-quality career pathways. The workgroup has been leveraging the analysis of Dallas ISD's programs of study, which started in year one, to determine whether to retire, expand or create new career pathways. This analysis is also encouraging the group to select school feeder models to pilot middle school career pathway exploration with supports from the middle school advising opportunities developed during year one of the initiative.

Importantly, the partner buy-in established with the workgroups will further drive a priority of the initiative – closing equity gaps. As the Dallas, Texas, team continues to find best practices for establishing high-quality career pathways, the work put forth by the workgroups will be vital to respond to learner needs.



## PRIORITY 2

### Strengthening collaboration between the K-12 district and two-year postsecondary partner in support of learner progression



Strengthening collaboration between Dallas ISD and Dallas College has been a focus for the Dallas, Texas, team to intentionally design a personalized career pathways tool. The tool will outline and track learner performance within a career pathway. Plans are underway to roll out the tool during the next school year. When it is launched, the new tool will further automate monitoring by both Dallas ISD and Dallas College of learner progress within career pathways toward the attainment of certifications and diplomas.

This tool will provide a variety of opportunities for Dallas ISD and Dallas College to have insight into learner persistence in a career pathway. Practitioners will have the ability to project course enrollment and see trends in learner grades and career pathway completion, allowing them to get alerts in real time about learners who are at risk of going off track. As learner persistence is observed, automated alerts will trigger reports about the need for strategic interventions and communications in support of the learner. These alerts will also enable opportunities for family engagement through conversations related to learner performance in career pathways.

Practitioners leveraging this tool will have insight across schools starting within Dallas ISD to determine learner success in combination with use of formulas to connect milestones for learner success. Additionally, learners will have a holistic view of their own recorded progress. The real-time alignment and supports will ultimately be the gateway for roughly 8,500 learners enrolled in Dallas ISD and Dallas College career pathways.

## HIGH-PRIORITY INDUSTRY SECTORS



Health Care



Information Technology

## PRIORITY 3

### Expanding work-based learning and training access within cybersecurity pathways to increase opportunities for learners interested in IT

While IT is recognized as an in-demand, high-wage career pathway for learners in the Dallas region, the Dallas, Texas, team decided to expand opportunities in this area by increasing efforts to provide work-based learning and training connected to a cybersecurity career pathway. The convening power of the broader *New Skills ready network* exposed Dallas, Texas, team partners to the work happening in Denver, Colorado, with a cybersecurity pathway. This exposure motivated the site leadership team to take a closer look at labor market data connected to IT and work with partner institution leaders to determine the potential impact of such career pathways.

The cybersecurity pathway will be designed to connect all partner institutions with learners and will ultimately include a lab experience at the four-year postsecondary institution partner, UNT Dallas. The goal is to have learners exposed to this career pathway as early as middle school with opportunities to earn credentials.

The progress of the cybersecurity career pathway implementation discussion has required partners to have intentional conversations about seamless articulation agreements and data to support storytelling for the development of the talent pipeline in this field. The team is leveraging resources from the initiative to cultivate plans for the sustainability of IT-focused career pathways that have the potential to engage more industry partners and double living-wage attainment.



## LOOKING AHEAD

The establishment of workgroups is helping the Dallas, Texas, team build cohesiveness among their core leadership and forging progress for the work ahead. With this structure, the team can continue work to identify high-quality career pathways connected with in-demand, high-wage careers; expand access to these career pathways within comprehensive high schools; and ensure quality programming for all learners. Leveraging the Dallas Regional Chamber's data and marketing campaign for IT will have a greater impact on employment in the field, helping meet labor market needs.

As the team continues developing supportive data structures, plans for increased family engagement are underway to increase learner opportunities in career pathways. The plan for year four is for learners to have more opportunities to learn about and access work-based learning options throughout Dallas ISD.

**NEW SKILLS**

READY NETWORK

