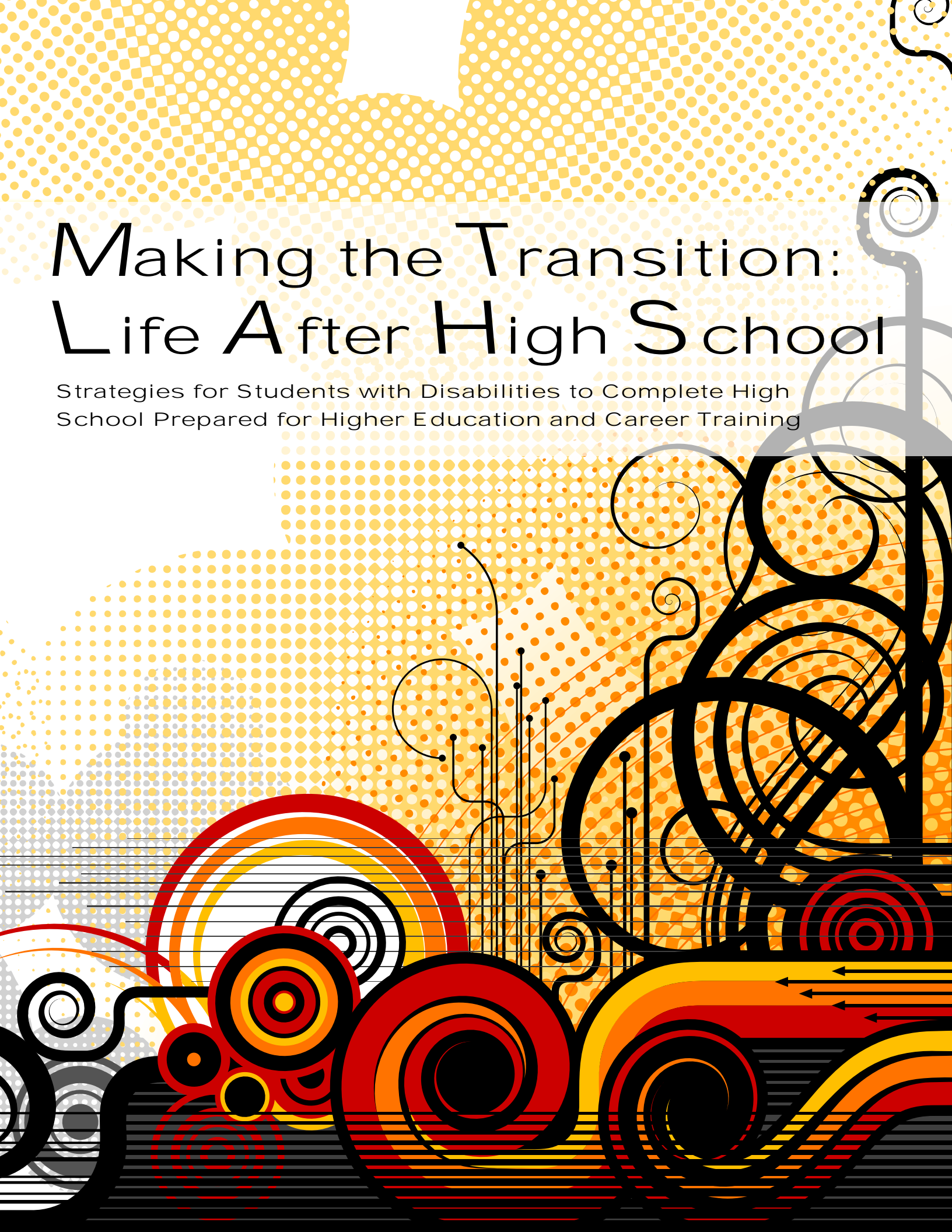


# Making the Transition: Life After High School

Strategies for Students with Disabilities to Complete High School Prepared for Higher Education and Career Training



## Introduction

Making The Transition: Life After High School was developed to provide common sense strategies for high school students with disabilities. These strategies will help to translate students' educational and career aspirations into action so they will receive appropriate and timely support services and reasonable accommodations. In addition, this booklet provides examples of essential career and technical education skills that are critical for students to successfully complete a **Program of Study**.

## Programs of Study

Programs of Study are a clear sequence of academic and career and technical education courses that often begin in the ninth grade and lead to an industry-recognized certificate, and/or licensure after completing an associate degree and/or a baccalaureate degree. Programs of Study are developed, implemented, and maintained in partnership with Minnesota high schools, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities two-year colleges, businesses, employers, WorkForce Centers and community-based organizations. Existing Programs of Study lead to rewarding careers and are available to all students, including students with disabilities.

If you are a student, parent, or professional working with a student with a disability in high school and will be helping them plan the transition to college this booklet is for you! This booklet is meant to be a guide and does not claim to have all the answers or guarantee success.



# Minnesota Career Pathways/Programs of Study: Secondary Essential Knowledge and Skills for Career Development

## **Why are Career Pathways/Programs of Study Important?**

Counselors and teachers are using Career Pathways/Programs of Study to help all students, including students with disabilities, understand the connections between what they learn in school and their future career. Programs of Study provide this connection by highlighting the path from high school to college and careers. Understanding what employers expect for each Career Pathway/Program of Study helps students know what skills and experiences they need to have before applying for jobs. Knowing about Pathways/Programs of Study can also help when choosing a college that has Programs of Study matching your interests and abilities. Under the federal Carl D. Perkins legislation, Minnesota high schools are partnering with local employers and all two-year public colleges to design Programs of Study.

## **Expecting the best . . .**

Today's national and state education policies reflect an expectation that most special education students, if given appropriate accommodations, services, supports, and instruction, can learn grade-level content and achieve grade-level academic and career and technical education standards. In addition, research shows that teachers' and parents' expectations of student achievement do matter: What they expect of their students/sons & daughters is typically what they get!

## **The following are examples of suggested information and skills for career development, beginning no later than the freshman year:**

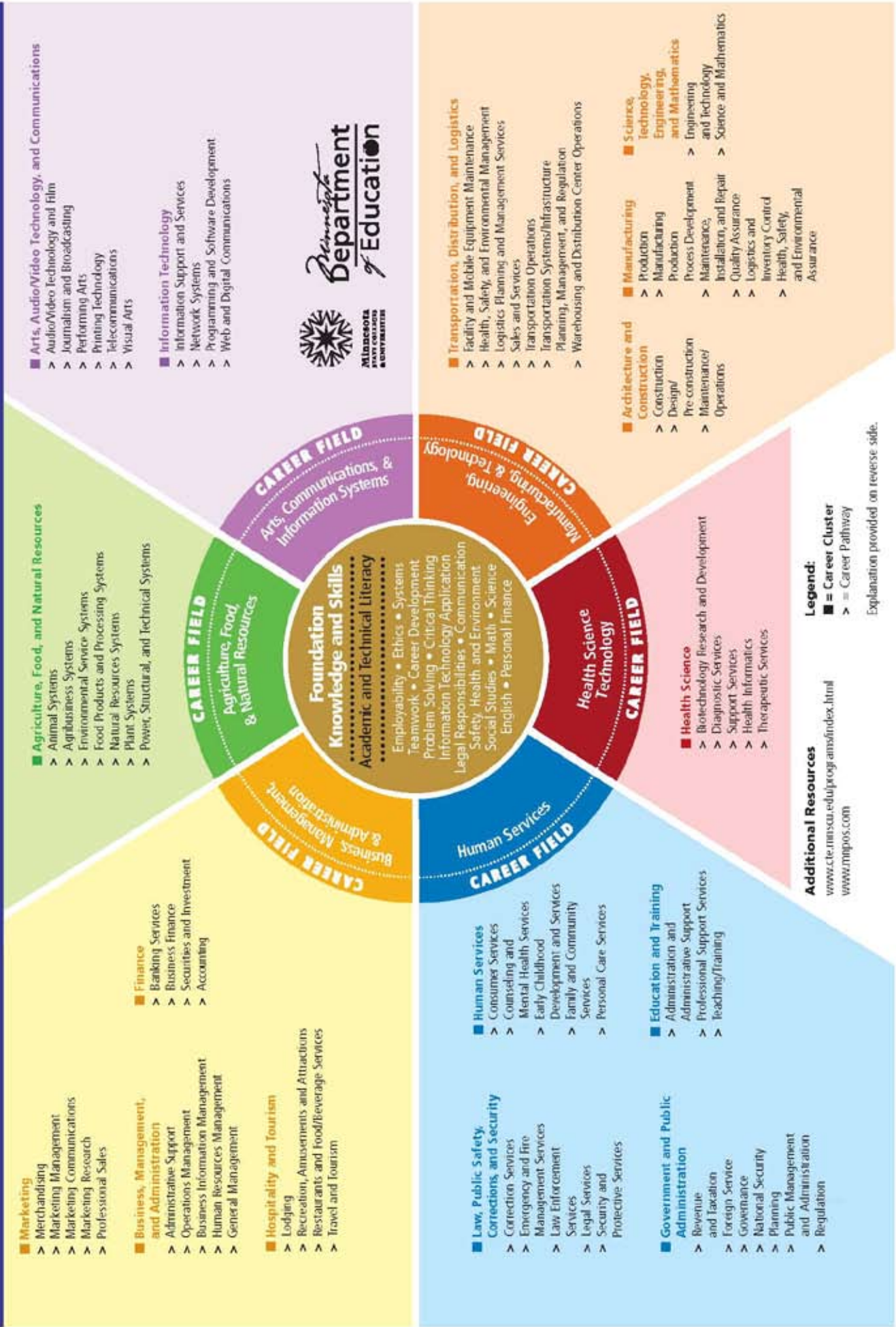
- **Using the Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways Chart (see pages 13 &14), students explore one or more career cluster and pathway of interest. Student are expected to:**
  - o investigate career opportunities within the pathways;
  - o explore careers of personal interest;
  - o understand the academic and career and technical education requirements for careers of personal interest; and
  - o understand the local/state/national certification and educational requirements for careers of personal interest
- **Students are able to analyze the effect of personal interest and aptitudes upon educational and career planning. Students are expected to:**
  - o complete a formal career interest and aptitude assessment; and
  - o match interests and aptitudes to career opportunities.
- **Students are able to explore personal interests and aptitudes as they relate to education and career planning. Students are expected to:**
  - o explore the career clusters as defined by the U.S. Department of Education and as specified in the Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways Chart;
  - o summarize the career opportunities in a cluster of personal interest;
  - o be aware of current and emerging fields related to personal interest areas;
  - o determine academic and career and technical education requirements in career fields/programs of study related to personal interest areas; and
  - o explore how career choices impact the balance between personal and professional responsibilities.
- **Students know how to locate, analyze, and apply career information. Students are expected to:**
  - o access career information using print and on-line resources to complete an educational and/or training plan for a program of study;
  - o access career information using interviews with business and industry representatives to create a career resource file;



- **Students understand that many skills are common to a variety of careers and that these skills can be transferred from one program of study to another. Students are expected to:**
  - compile a list of multiple career options matching interests and aptitudes; and
  - create a presentation portraying transferable skills among a variety of programs of study.
- **Students understand the process of career planning. Students are expected to:**
  - identify high school courses related to specific programs of study;
  - select high school courses and experiences to develop a graduation plan that leads to a specific program of study; and
  - prepare an educational and career plan that begins with where they are academically and vocationally in high school and continues through a postsecondary education and/or training program.
- **Students recognize the impact of career choice on personal lifestyle. Students are expected to:**
  - prepare a personal budget reflecting lifestyle desires;
  - use print or on-line information to determine monthly salaries of at least two career choices; and
  - select the career most closely matching the student's personal lifestyle budget.
- **Students are able to analyze college and career and technical education opportunities. Students are expected to:**
  - determine academic and career and technical requirements for transition from one learning level to the next;
  - explore opportunities for earning college credit in high school such as advanced placement courses, dual credit, college in the high school credit, and local/statewide articulated credit; and
  - develop an awareness of financial aid, scholarships, and other sources of income to support postsecondary education.
- **Students explore the professional skills needed for college and career success. Students are expected to:**
  - articulate the importance of both strong academic and career and technical skills to meet personal academic and career goals;
  - explore the importance of curricular, extracurricular, career preparation, and extended learning experiences;
  - identify professional associations affiliated with a specified program of study;
  - recognize the value of community service and volunteerism; and
  - demonstrate characteristics required for personal and professional success, including work ethics, integrity, dedication, perseverance, and the ability to interact with a diverse population.
- **Students understand that their chosen program of study will require them to pass a technical skill assessment that is aligned to industry-recognized standards. Students are expected to:**
  - be familiar with the various types of technical skill assessments that have been state approved for their chosen program of study;
  - have an understanding of the types of written and/or performance measurements will be required to pass the test; and
  - know if passing the technical skill assessment will grant them college credit.
- **Students will explore job-seeking skills. Students are expected to:**
  - identify the steps for an effective job search;
  - describe appropriate appearance for an interview; and
  - participate in a mock interview.
- **Students will create professional documents required for employment. Students are expected to:**
  - develop a resume;
  - write appropriate business correspondence such as a letter of intent and thank you letter; and
  - complete sample job applications.



# Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways



# Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways Chart Explanation

## FOUNDATION KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Foundation Knowledge and Skills, located in the centermost circle of the Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways chart, represent the base from which to build work and college readiness.

See Reverse Side



Minnesota STATE COLLEGE & UNIVERSITIES



The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system and the Minnesota Department of Education are Equal Opportunity employers and educators.

## CAREER FIELDS

Career Fields, which are identified in the segmented ring around Foundation Knowledge and Skills, are the organizing structure for the 16 career clusters and 81 pathways. The fields represent the broadest aggregation of careers. Students are normally exposed to career field exploration in middle school and early high school. Career fields have been identified as:

- ~ Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources
- ~ Arts, Communications, & Information Systems
- ~ Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology
- ~ Health Science Technology
- ~ Human Services
- ~ Business, Management, & Administration

## CAREER CLUSTERS

Career Clusters, which are identified in the bold, colored bullets (■), represent a grouping of occupations and broad industries into a national classification of 16 clusters that are based upon common knowledge and skills. Career clusters include hundreds of occupations that may be grouped into pathways around which educational programs of study can be built.

- ~ Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- ~ Hospitality and Tourism
- ~ Architecture and Construction
- ~ Human Services
- ~ Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communications
- ~ Information Technology
- ~ Business, Management, and Administration
- ~ Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- ~ Education and Training
- ~ Manufacturing
- ~ Finance
- ~ Marketing
- ~ Government and Public Administration
- ~ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- ~ Health Science
- ~ Transportation, Distribution, Logistics

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Career Pathways, which are identified by the symbol (>) under each cluster heading, represent an organization of related occupational areas within a specific career cluster. Each of these pathways has identified knowledge and skills validated by industry from which programs and pathways of study are developed.


# Minnesota Programs of Study

The Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways chart, on the reverse side, graphically depicts the organizing framework of the foundation knowledge and skills, career fields, career clusters, and career pathways that Minnesota will use for developing programs of study in career and technical education. Once developed, learners at various levels (high school, collegiate, or workforce training level) will then be able to choose from several individual programs within a program of study in order to attain the specific knowledge, skills and abilities needed to pursue a career of their choice.

**Programs of study** are sets of aligned programs and curricula that begin at the high school level and continue through college and university certificate, diploma and degree programs. The following are some of the key elements that underlie the definition:

- ~ Competency based curricula tied to industry expectations and skill standards;
- ~ Sequential course offerings that provide strategic entry and exit points as needed throughout a lifetime - this leads to manageable "stepping stones" of skill building, high school graduation and postsecondary education completion;

- ~ Flexible course and program formats convenient for learner segments;
- ~ Course portability for seamless progression;
- ~ Multiple entry and exit points to support continuing education, returning adults, and dislocated workers;
- ~ Connections between high school and postsecondary education, skill progression, and career opportunities that align academic credentials with job advancement in high-skill, high-wage or high-demand occupations.



# Postsecondary Enrollment Timeline for Students with a Documented Disability

Although Programs of Study provide a connection for students between high school and postsecondary by highlighting the path from high school to college and careers, as well as an understanding of what employers expect for each Career Pathway/Program of Study, it is helpful for students, educators, and parents to have a framework or timeline by which students should acquire necessary skills to make that transition. The following timeline can be used as a guide to customize and personalize a framework for the specific needs of youth for whom you are using this booklet.

## **Freshman Year**

- Learn about your disability and be able to explain it to others.
- Learn what your accommodations are and how they help you to be successful.
- Know how you learn best; understand your learning style.
- Review and adjust your future goals in the five transition areas.
- Begin career exploration. Take career aptitudes and interest inventories.
- Learn to be organized, independent and to manage your time.
- Participate in your IEP meeting.

## **Sophomore Year**

- Begin to explore colleges (programs/degrees, entrance requirements, graduation requirements).
- Take classes that will prepare you for college.
- Practice requesting your own accommodations. Do not let your case manager do it for you.
- Actively plan your IEP meeting with your case manager. Plan to speak on your own behalf at the meeting.
- With the help of your case manager, investigate other service providers that you can contact for assistance after graduation.
- Talk with the counselor about college, career choices, and preparing for entrance exams.
- Begin career exploration activities (skill inventories, career aptitude, career investigation).

## **Junior year**

- Narrow your career choices and match them to college programs.
- Invite outside agencies that provide assistance after graduation to your IEP meeting (rehab services, social worker, Center for Independent Living, etc.).
- Assist your case manager in planning and running your IEP meeting and in writing your IEP.
- Explore assistive technology that might be helpful in college.
- Learn when, if, and how to disclose your disability to others.
- Develop time management and study skills to become as academically independent as possible.
- Talk with the admissions and enrollment department about scholarships, financial aid programs, and college.
- Take any assessments test that colleges require
- Take the Armed Forces ASVAB test, if applicable.
- Attend college fairs and open houses.
- Plan a visit to several colleges by contacting the Disability Services Coordinator for arrangements.



## Senior Year

- Immediately begin a “Graduation File.” Keep copies of all information about you that will be needed during the year.

Contents may vary based upon your goals, but if you are going to college, the following categories are minimal:

- \_\_\_ College applications
- \_\_\_ Disability documentation
- \_\_\_ Scholarships
- \_\_\_ Financial aid
- \_\_\_ Support Services and other agencies
- \_\_\_ High school records
- If necessary, retake the ACT, SAT.
- Complete college applications (most can be entirely or partially completed on line). Earlier is better; generally in the fall, but check college websites for deadlines.
- Plan for applications fees because each college admissions application requires a fee.
- Make a copy of all applications before sending.
- Take the ACCUPLACER (Community and Technical College’s entrance exam).
- Prepare a “disability confirmation” packet. In order to access accommodations you need to verify that you have a disability.
- Contact the college’s Disability Coordinator at each college to confirm the documentation requirements.  
Make sure you have a
  - current (within 3 years) evaluation/assessment report.
  - current IEP. The college will be especially interested in the adaptations section to understand your past accommodations.
  - A medical evaluation, if appropriate.
  - Apply for scholarships. You do not have to be an honor student to get a scholarship. Many are based on participation or volunteering. Some are related to your parents’ employment or your racial heritage or your disability.
- \_\_\_ Talk to admissions about scholarships that are appropriate for you.
- \_\_\_ Search the web. There are sites that will send you scholarship information based on questions you complete.
- \_\_\_ NEVER pay for a scholarship search. All the good ones are FREE.
- \_\_\_ Place copies of all scholarship applications in your file.
- Apply for financial aid Free Application For Student Assistance (FAFSA) online. (Some outside funding sources will require the FAFSA to be completed)
  - \_\_\_ Ask your parents to complete their income tax returns EARLY the year you are a senior because this information is needed for the FAFSA.
- Visit the college before you accept admission. You cannot tell if a place is good for you by what is on paper. You need to tour the campus with the assistance of the college’s Disability Services staff.
- Review the “high school vs. college” pages.
- Make your senior year as close to college as you can:
  - \_\_\_ Use a day planner to record your assignments and appointments
  - \_\_\_ Take challenging academic classes without modification.
  - \_\_\_ Use only accommodations available at college and use them only upon request by you.
  - \_\_\_ Practice explaining your disability and describing the accommodations that work best for you.
  - \_\_\_ Complete assignments on time.
  - \_\_\_ Run your own IEP meeting.





# Making the Transition from High School to College and a Vocational Career

The Postsecondary Enrollment Timeline is extremely helpful in providing students and their families with a break down of the steps in the preparation for postsecondary education. In addition, students should know ahead of time that there are many differences between high school and college. This transition to the next step is not difficult for students with disabilities as long as they understand and prepare for the new challenges they will face. To get off to the right start the student should contact the college's Disability Office. They will ask to see the student's documentation proving they have a disability. This documentation cannot be older than three years to be relevant.

It is important to realize that there are many types of postsecondary schools and each type provides students with different opportunities and outcomes. The following chart illustrates the differences between a technical college, a community college, and a University.

## ***Differences Between a Technical College, a Community College and a University***

### ***Technical College***

Technical colleges offer technical training programs in a specific career -- automatic mechanic, computer technician, administrative assistant, phlebotomist, carpenter, etc. Though some general courses maybe required, most programs focus on training for a specific career. Programs can offer a certificate, diploma, and/or degree.

### ***Community College***

Community colleges offer AA (Associate of Arts), AAS (Associate of Applied Science) or/and AS (Associate of Science) degrees. Most courses are general education (liberal arts) courses but students also have the opportunity to take career courses in fields such as nursing, business, computers, etc. Students who are unsure of their career plans or apprehensive about starting at a major university can take two of general study at a smaller, community college. After graduating, students can transfer to a university to complete their Bachelor's degree. Because all colleges/universities transfer credits differently, students should work with an advisor to ensure they are meeting the requirements.

### ***University***

They offer Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BS) and Masters degrees. The courses of study cover a wide variety of topics, from art to zoology. They are designed to be completed in about four years of study.

# Differences Between High School and College

The differences between college and high school can be overwhelming but they can also be very exciting. These differences may scare and intimidate students, or they can provide students with a sense of independence. The key is to understand the differences so that students are prepared for them. The following is a comparison between high school and college. This is not an exhaustive list, however, there is enough variety to get a sense of how college operates.

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>
* High school is <i>mandatory</i> and usually <i>free</i> .	* College is <i>voluntary</i> and <i>expensive</i> .
* Time is structured by others.	* Time is managed by the student.
* Parents and teachers to remind students of responsibilities and provide guidance in setting priorities.	* The student must balance responsibilities and set priorities and will face moral and ethical decisions never faced before.
* Classes progress each day in the same order Monday through Friday with 6 hours a day--30 hours a week--in class.	* Often students have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening with only 12 to 16 hours each week in class.
* Most classes are arranged for students.	* Students arrange their own schedule in consultation with their adviser. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.
* Guidance counselors keep track of progress toward graduation.	* Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. The student is expected to complete the applicable program requirements for graduation.

In addition the above differences between college and high school, there are many differences to learn between high school and college once enrolled and attending classes. The chart below lists just some of those differences.

<b>Going to High School Classes</b>	<b>Succeeding in College Classes</b>
* The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some don't.	* The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.
* Most studying is done at school or in class, with homework as a back-up.	* Most studying is done outside of class (at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class) with lectures and other class work serving as only part of the content students are expected to acquire.
* Textbooks are provided.	* Textbooks are costly-- usually more than \$300 each semester. Textbooks must be bought promptly. There is no assurance there will be enough textbooks for all students.
* Short reading assignments are often given, discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	* Substantial amounts of reading and writing are assigned on a continual basis. These assignments may not seem to relate, but are still required.

There are even more differences between high school and college when you consider the teachers and their teaching styles. The list below provides some examples of these differences.

<b><i>High School Teachers</i></b>	<b><i>College Professors</i></b>
* Teachers check completed homework.	* Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume the student can perform the tasks on tests.
* Teachers ask if the student needs assistance.	* Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect the student to initiate contact if they need assistance.
* Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	* Students are expected to get notes from classmates from when they miss a class.
* Teachers often write information on the board to be copied.	* Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting the student to take notes to identify important points in their notes.
* Teachers often take time to remind students of assignments and due dates.	* Professors expect students to read, save, and use the course syllabus (outline).

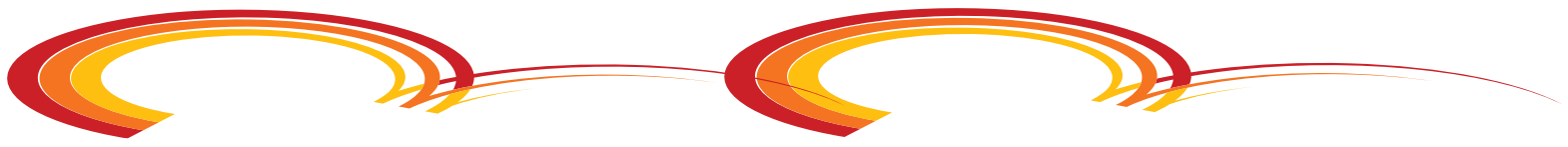
Another common difference between high school and college is the manner in which students are tested. The following list provides some examples of these differences.

<b><i>Tests in High School</i></b>	<b><i>Tests in College</i></b>
* Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	* Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.
* Makeup tests are often available.	* Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, the student needs to request them.
* Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.	* Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.

Another very significant difference between high school and college are the federal laws that govern what services must be provided to students with disabilities and how those services are accessed. The list below illustrates these differences.

<b><i>Special Education in High School</i></b>	<b><i>Disability Services in College</i></b>
*(IDEA) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	*504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
*(FAPE) Free and Appropriate Public Education	*(ADA) Americans with Disabilities Act
*Behavior can be viewed as a manifestation of the disability.	*Student must meet essential educational, behavioral, and other standards.
*Accommodations and modifications are communicated to the teachers by the case manager.	*Students must request accommodations and provide professional documentation.
*Services are delivered to the student.	*Students must request services at the college's disability services office.
*The school informs the parents of the student's progress.	*The school cannot communicate with the parents without the student's permission.
*The case manager and/or parent act as the student's advocate.	*The student advocates for himself.
*Services may include individually designed instruction, curriculum modifications and accommodations based upon the IEP.	*Only reasonable accommodations are available based on professional documentation.
*There are regular meetings to discuss the student's progress.	*Students are responsible to monitor their own progress.
*Personal care, assessment, and physical therapy are provided by the school.	*Students are responsible for personal service and care as well as medical and related requirements.





## Documentation of a disability

Documentation of a disability is the basis for providing accommodations. Understanding what the disability is, and determining how to accommodate the student in the postsecondary setting, is the main focus of providing support services. In order to receive disability services in college, students will need to have current documentation of their disability. The legislation states that in order to receive services from a postsecondary institution, a person with a disability must first disclose his/her disability to the college's Disability Services Office. Additionally, appropriate documentation must meet the following criteria:

***Documentation must be comprehensive and establish that there is "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities." This is the ADA definition of a disability. Ideally, students should have their high school conduct a comprehensive evaluation/assessment during their senior year. For specific disability documentation guidelines, contact the college's Disability Services Office.***

### ***What Kind of Documentation Do Postsecondary Schools Require?***

Postsecondary schools require disability documentation establishing that a student has a disability as defined by the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Because these laws are different from the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which applies to students in K-12, new and/or additional documentation may be needed for college. Documentation should provide sufficient information so the accommodations that permit equal access to educational activities can be determined.

### ***Postsecondary Schools General Disability Documentation Essential Components Must Include:***

- A certified/Licensed Professional (medical doctor, psychologist, neurologist, etc.) on professional stationery (no prescription pad notes)
- A clearly stated diagnosis that is current (within three years)
- A description of assessment and relevant history
- A description of functional limitations or educational impact
- Recommendations for accommodations (what has worked, medications, strategies, etc.)



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

### **As a student with a disability leaving high school and entering postsecondary education, will I see differences in my rights and how they are addressed?**

Yes. Section 504 and Title II protect elementary, secondary and postsecondary students from discrimination. Nevertheless, several of the requirements that apply through high school are different from the requirements that apply beyond high school. For instance, Section 504 requires a school district to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability in the district's jurisdiction. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual's education needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of students without disabilities.

Unlike your high school, your postsecondary school is not required to provide FAPE. Rather, your postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate accommodations as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. In addition, if your postsecondary school provides housing to nondisabled students, it must provide comparable, convenient and accessible housing to students with disabilities at the same cost. Other important differences you need to know, even before you arrive at your postsecondary school, are addressed in the remaining questions.

### **Can colleges deny an applicant admission because he or she has a disability?**

No. If an applicant meets the essential requirements for admission, an institution may not deny that applicant admission simply because he or she has a disability, nor may a college exclude an applicant with a particular disability as not being qualified for its program. A college may, however, require an applicant to meet any essential technical or academic standards for admission to, or participation in, the college and its program. A college may deny admission to any student, disabled or not, who does not meet essential requirements for admission or participation.

### **Can students with disabilities request changes in on entrance exams for college?**

It depends. Federal law requires changes to the testing conditions that are necessary to allow a student with a disability to participate as long as the changes do not fundamentally alter the examination or create undue financial or administrative burdens.

Examples of changes in testing conditions that may be available include, but are not limited to:

- Alternative format (e.g.: Braille, large print, audio);
- A scribe;
- Frequent breaks;
- Extended testing time;
- Quiet exam setting;
- A sign language interpreter for oral tests and/or directions.



### **What is an accommodation for testing?**

An accommodation is a change in the testing conditions to help students demonstrate their knowledge without lowering or changing the standard or level of the test. Accommodations “level the playing field” by reducing or eliminating the effect of the disability.

Adjustments may be made in the way the information is presented; the way the student responds; the setting in which the test is taken; or in the timing and scheduling of the test. For example, a student with a fine motor impairment might need a note taker to write their answers. A student with attention difficulties may need to have the test broken into segments. The test is the same; only the conditions under which it is taken are different.

### **What accommodations must a postsecondary school provide me?**

Appropriate accommodation must be determined based on your disability and individual needs. Accommodations may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity. Examples of such accommodations are arranging for priority registration; reducing a course load; substituting one course for another; providing note takers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, extended time for testing and, if telephones are provided in dorm rooms, a TTY in your dorm room; and equipping school computers with screen-reading, voice recognition or other adaptive software or hardware. In providing an accommodation, your postsecondary school is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements. For example, although your school may be required to provide extended testing time, it is not required to change the substantive content of the test. In addition, your postsecondary school does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens.

Accommodations are designed to give students equal access to the learning environment. An individualized plan of accommodations is designed based on disability documentation. Students must meet with the college’s Disability Services Office to request accommodations at the onset of a new course or semester, as needed. Accommodations are not retroactive. In addition, the student should have ready professional documentation of their disability (medical doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc.). IEP’s alone are not accepted as professional documentation, unless they accompany a current evaluation/assessment.

### **What colleges are NOT required to provide?**

It depends. Federal law requires changes to the testing conditions that are necessary to allow a student with a disability to participate as long as the changes do not fundamentally alter the examination or create undue financial or administrative burdens.

Examples of changes in testing conditions that may be available include, but are not limited to:

- Readers for personal use or study.
- Any special tutorial services other than what is provided for the general student population.
- Specific auxiliary aids as long as colleges provide methods of assistance that allow for equal opportunity.
- Course substitutions when the academic requirements are essential to a program of study or necessary to meet licensing prerequisites.
- Accommodations if this would place an undue burden on the institution.

### **When should I request an accommodation?**

Although you may request an accommodation from your postsecondary school at any time, you should request it as early as possible. Some academic accommodations may take more time to provide than others. You should follow your college's procedures to ensure that there is enough time to review your request in order to provide an appropriate accommodation in a timely manner.

### **Are students required to inform college that they have a disability?**

No. The only reason a student would disclose that they have a disability is if they need an accommodation. The disclosure of a disability is always voluntary. For example, a student who has a disability that does not require services may choose not to disclose his or her disability.

### **Who is responsible for obtaining documentation of a disability?**

The student. Colleges are not required to conduct or pay for an evaluation to document a student's disability and need for an accommodation, although some institutions do so. If a student with a disability is eligible for services through the state VR Services program, he or she may qualify for an evaluation at no cost. If students with disabilities are unable to find other funding sources to pay for necessary evaluation or testing for college, they are responsible for paying for it themselves.

### **May a postsecondary school charge me for providing an accommodation?**

No. Furthermore, it may not charge students with disabilities more for participating in its programs or activities than it charges students who do not have disabilities.

### **Once the college has received the necessary documentation from me, what should I expect?**

The college will review your request in light of the essential requirements for the relevant program to help determine an appropriate accommodation. It is important to remember that the college is not required to lower or waive essential requirements. If you have requested a specific accommodation, the college may offer that academic accommodation or an alternative one if the alternative also would be effective. The college may also conduct its own evaluation of your disability and needs at its own expense. You should expect your college to work with you in an interactive process to identify an appropriate accommodation. Unlike the experience you may have had in high school, however, do not expect your postsecondary school to invite your parents to participate in the process or to develop an IEP for you.

### **What if the college accommodations are not working?**

If the accommodations provided are not meeting your needs, it is your responsibility to notify the Disability Coordinator as soon as possible. It may be too late to correct the problem if you wait until the course or activity is completed. You should work with the Disability Coordinator to resolve the problem together.

### **What can I do if I believe the school is discriminating against me?**

Most all postsecondary schools must have a person—frequently called the Section 504 Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, or Disability Services Coordinator—who coordinates the school's compliance with Section 504 or Title II or both laws. You may contact this person for information about how to address your concerns.



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