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# Pathways Implementation in the Dayton Region

**A Summary of Themes and Recommendations for Continued Growth**

## At a Glance

Montgomery County Educational Service Center has made significant progress in supporting school districts across the Dayton region to start and enhance pathways for students into in-demand industries. This report features themes from research about the pathways work over the past five years and recommendations for how MCECSC can support districts to scale pathways going forward.

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## About Jobs for the Future

Jobs for the Future (JFF) transforms the U.S. education and workforce systems to drive economic success for people, businesses, and communities. [www.jff.org](http://www.jff.org)

# Overview of Pathways Research

Over the past five years, the Montgomery County Educational Service Center (MCESC) has taken a strategic approach to preparing students for success in the regional labor market by designing and supporting the implementation of pathway models across six high-demand industries. Developed with support from Jobs for the Future (JFF), these models demonstrate the full vision of pathways—starting with identifying high-wage, high-demand occupations and mapping backward to the educational opportunities to prepare students for those jobs. This includes aligned postsecondary programs, high school coursework, and college and career preparation activities. The regional pathway models are designed to promote the alignment of regional stakeholders, including employers, higher education, K-12 education, and workforce, creating more seamless transitions from high school to college and career.

In preparation for updating the pathway models in 2026 and beyond, MCESC partnered with JFF during the 2024–25 school year to conduct exploratory research. The goal was to assess current pathway implementation, identify success factors and challenges, and generate insights to inform future model updates and strategies to support scaling and sustainability.

JFF consulted with key stakeholders, including district leaders, and career navigators served as key informants about pathways implementation. A full list of the research questions and a summary of the data collection activities can be found in the appendix of this brief.

## Key Themes

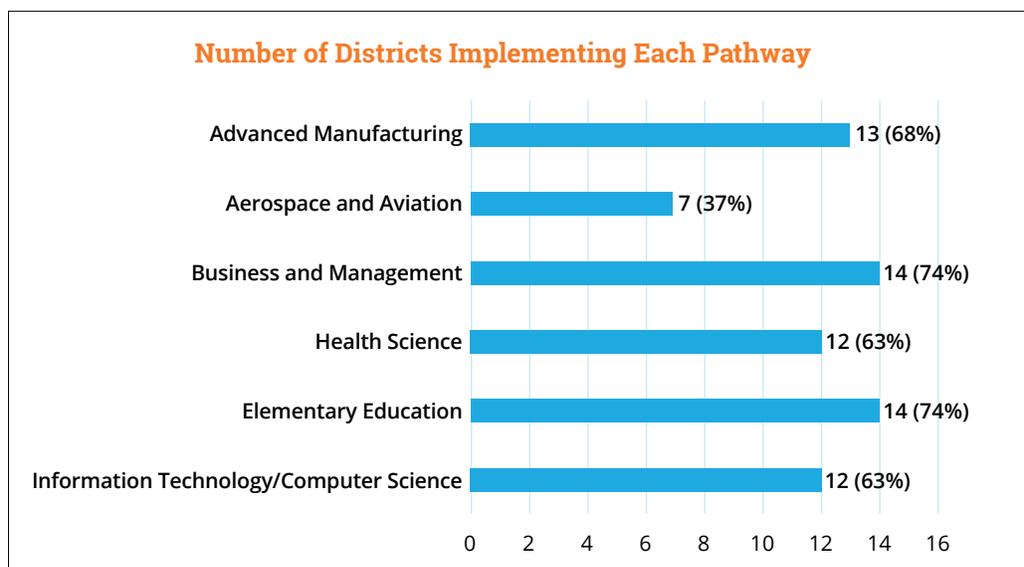
Districts across the region are engaged in pathways efforts at varying levels, with a range of factors contributing to the successes and limitations of implementation to date. The research findings are organized into the six thematic areas listed below and point to strategic opportunities for MCESC to expand its support, guidance, and resources to accelerate quality implementation and scale.

- **Model Implementation**
- **General Supports Provided**
- **School Characteristics and Infrastructure**
- **Partnerships**
- **Scale and Sustainability**
- **Career Navigator Support**

## Model Implementation

The research focused on exploring which schools are implementing each pathway model, the extent to which key components are being implemented, and whether longer-established models show more advanced implementation. The team used a very broad definition of implementation—one that includes any elements of the pathway model being implemented in a district. Establishing a baseline understanding of the districts' work in each pathway will give MCECSC a short list of districts that are in need of additional pathway-specific supports.

- **Pathways offered:** The pathways most commonly implemented in the region are health science and business and management, with 74% of reporting districts implementing elements of those pathways. The health science pathway has been in existence the longest, and many of the districts had elements of this pathway in place before the pathway models were released. Additionally, many schools historically offered business and management-related courses and career exploration opportunities prior to the pathway model being created in 2024. Many of the districts that reported offering advanced manufacturing primarily embed pieces into part of an engineering or construction pathway, versus its own stand-alone pathway.



**Note:** This chart reflects data collected from 19 of the 26 member districts of the Business Advisory Council. The data includes CTE and non-CTE pathways.

- **Academic coursework:** Schools that reported implementing a pathway often offer foundational courses in that subject area at the high school level (e.g., entrepreneurship, introduction to programming, anatomy and physiology) and, in some cases, introductory courses at the middle school level (e.g., aviation and health care exploration courses at New Lebanon). All schools offer Ohio's version of dual enrollment, College Credit Plus (CCP) courses, whether in their building, online, or on a college campus, with a number of different postsecondary partners. Core academic courses are the primary CCP offerings, with limited ability to offer career-focused CCP courses in non-CTC settings due to teacher credentialing barriers.

- **Career connections:** All school districts offer a range of career-connected learning activities for students across elementary, middle, and high school levels. Districts most frequently offer a range of career awareness and exploration activities across different sectors, including those not covered by the Business Advisory Council (BAC) pathways. Most districts coordinate work-based learning experiences with local employer partners and SOCHE, however, the participation numbers are low in comparison to overall student populations.
- **Competencies:** Districts are aware of the technical competencies, but there is opportunity to improve by embedding these into courses or career exploration and preparation activities in a more strategic way. Employability skills are more often incorporated into a specific course, advisory, or as part of a preparatory activity for a work-based learning experience.
- **Pathways design process:** Districts approach their pathways design in different ways based on their individual school context, community, and existing career and technical education (CTE) programs or pathways efforts. Districts use their own local labor market information and student interest and aptitude data as key inputs. The selection of a pathway and which components to prioritize is also impacted by the mindset, capacity, and priorities of key personnel.

## General Supports Provided

Over the past five years, MCECSC has provided a range of support to districts on their pathways implementation, including design and implementation labs, Career Champions and BAC meetings and events, and individual consultation. The research explored the effectiveness of guidance provided by MCECSC, how pathway model documents were used by school personnel and stakeholders, and what additional supports proved valuable.

- **Use of pathway model documents:** There is widespread awareness of the pathway model documents, and school personnel use pieces of the pathway models document in their work.
  - Some districts created their own pathway model documents to add more specificity about their schools' offerings. These could be better aligned to the regional models, however some school personnel said that they aren't sure how to select and incorporate the elements from the regional models into their own. Many districts expressed an interest and intent to revisit their current course and pathway offerings leveraging YouScience data.
  - Career navigators are regularly using the pathway model documents in practice to help make decisions about overarching pathways design, select courses, and advise students and families. The section referenced most frequently is the Academic Coursework section. Navigators also use the documents in advising sessions with students and families to help them understand the components and the postsecondary and work opportunities available.

- **Implementation Labs:** The Implementation Labs were beneficial for helping attendees make new connections with the cross-sector attendees, learn what's working for other districts, and collaborate on plans to start or strengthen a pathway. For one school, the implementation lab helped them understand what they didn't know about pathways—this eye-opening helped them identify what gaps existed at their school and begin making action plans to address them.
- **Other guidance and support provided:**
  - Career champions meetings achieve their intended purpose—to help champions learn more about programs and opportunities during site visits. The champions report the meetings are also a valuable opportunity to connect with new partners and network with peers.
  - All career navigators highly value the community of practice meetings and regular collaboration and resource-sharing with one another. The opportunity to consult with one another on problems of practice and strategize solutions helps generate new ideas and increasing efficiency.
  - MCESC helped districts launch and offer opportunities they could not have on their own, including employability courses and pathway-specific courses.

## School Characteristics and Infrastructure

To better understand the factors that impact pathway implementation, the research investigated how school characteristics and infrastructure—such as existing school teams, culture, and policies—influence pathway implementation and shape student access to those pathways.

- **School staff engaged:** The most common staff roles that collaborate together on pathways-related efforts are administrators (e.g., superintendents, building principals, assistant principals), counselors, and curriculum directors. The depth and type of engagement with counselors varies depending on how their role is structured at their school. Some counselors are deeply involved in executing career awareness and exploration activities, whereas others have a larger focus on attending to social-emotional and academic needs. Other schools' personnel involved in designing or executing pathways varies based on the courses and career-connected learning opportunities offered. These other roles include internship teachers, employability skills teachers, and guidance staff that work with students without a postsecondary plan.
- **Key enablers** of pathways implementation include:
  - Support from the superintendent and building principals for pathways and getting dedicated time in front of key personnel to share the goals, vision, and plan for pathways work in the early stages of starting a new pathway, or launching new components for an existing pathway, is critical to early success.
  - Aligning pathways strategies to the school's vision or strategic plan helps to generate buy-in for the overall plan and specific activities (e.g., targeted

approaches for engaging students in career exploration, incorporating career exploration in early grades, assigning teachers to teach new pathway-aligned courses, etc.).

- Career exposure strategies are most effective when they are clearly aligned to and integrated with other courses, activities, and practices.
- Using a common tool, YouScience, helps stakeholders use the same language between the college and schools and ground decisions or recommendations in data.
- Having personnel dedicated to owning and driving key pieces of the work, such as career navigators and employer engagement staff, to develop strategy, track needs and opportunities, and execute key activities customized to each school or district's needs.
- **Key barriers** to pathways implementation:
  - Time, capacity, and resources impact a district's ability to expand programs (e.g., build a facility) or incorporate new offerings (e.g., offer a new course).
  - Shifting the mindsets of different school stakeholders to advance new strategies or activities, (e.g., teachers understanding importance of and encouraging students to invest time in career-oriented activities, employers understanding investment in different types of career exploration work-based learning opportunities).
  - Finding a regular time for stakeholders to meet and collaborate together within schools and across a district.
  - Inconsistent implementation of YouScience and a lack of data systems that allow districts to track student data and progress related to pathways.
- **Student access:** Students are primarily directed to courses and career-connected learning activities based on their interests, however with more consistent YouScience implementation over the past two years, many schools are also using student aptitude data to advise and connect students to aligned opportunities. Career navigators designated to implement PACCE have the capacity to strategically identify "missing middle" students and provide individualized advising to support their enrollment and progression in a pathway.

## Partnerships

The regular reporting by career champions to MCESC captures the wide-ranging types of partnerships districts have established and maintained to support career-connected learning activities. Our research examined the factors that contribute to effective collaboration with regional stakeholders.

- **Partner engagement:** All districts partner with local employers for career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities, whether through connections from the BAC, the school's own advisory council, or school or personal connections. Schools have gotten creative in identifying potential employers to engage via families and alumni.

- Districts are strategic in the types of activities they engage employers in to be appropriate for the grade level. Getting employers more engaged with elementary students poses a challenge because employers don't directly see or understand the benefit of engaging with younger students.
- Schools and employers benefit from centralized opportunity databases such as Handshake that streamline connections between workplace opportunities and educational institutions.
- Several districts have started or deepened collaboration with Ohio Means Jobs (OMJ), particularly in Warren County.
- **Sinclair partnership:** The transition advisors are seen as key partners and additional capacity to help students and families understand grades 9–14 pathways and create academic plans with transferable credit. Sinclair is seeing fewer students enroll in CCP courses that aren't a part of an articulated pathway and schools generally have positive feedback about the Sinclair transition advisors. Students are more likely to take more CCP courses (i.e., an increase in credit hours) if there is a transition advisor in the high school building, also leading to an increase in credential attainment.

## Scale and Sustainability

Another component of the research was exploring plans for future growth and the funding sources, policies, and resources they are pursuing to support long-term sustainability.

- **Growth over time:** Student interest has historically been the primary catalyst to start or grow a pathway. Based on student interest, districts often initially start by adding new courses, which may or may not be aligned to a pathway model, add middle school opportunities like Project Lead the Way, and begin offering career exploration and preparation opportunities. As districts develop the systems for managing these components, they are then better positioned to offer these opportunities to more students (e.g., replicating Power Lunches).
- **Future growth:** Districts consistently reflected that they want to continue increasing student completion of YouScience and use the data to more strategically to inform pathways strategies (e.g., career preparation activities, work-based learning, etc.). Individual districts are in different places with their strategy to have students complete YouScience, with some “catching up” students in higher grades with the intention of more systematically integrating into grades 8 and 10.
  - Most districts understand the value of pathways and want to expand further, however limited capacity—and overreliance on individuals in a particular roles, like counselor, to lead the effort—makes identifying where to get started and how to execute overwhelming.
  - Several districts mentioned that they are exploring how to start or deepen a partnership with a career center to bring in instructors to teach pathways-specific courses.

- Deeper employer investment in pathways, especially work-based learning, and teacher credentialing solutions, are critical for growth within existing pathways or offering new ones.
- **Resources for scale:** Districts use various funding sources to support current work and growth. This includes CTE funds, the general fund, special grants, employer or community contributions, or in-kind resources. To expand offerings despite staffing limitations, schools have incorporated no- or low-cost resources into their course offerings (e.g., Edmentum, Learning Blade).

## Career Navigator Support

The research explored the supports career navigators have provided to schools and the value they have added to pathway implementation efforts. It also examined the capabilities the career navigators bring to the role, as well as the conditions that enable them to be effective.

- **Role structure:** The types of work career navigators lead at their schools are similar. However, the approaches to the work, key school partners, and scale vary widely. This work is impacted by the level of administrative support, staffing structure, and the length of time the navigator has been in the school.
  - New career navigators spend the first school year investing in building relationships, especially with teachers.
  - In the second year, as trust is established, they can begin to offer new ideas and change existing practices related to the navigator's role.
  - Most navigators focus on approaches that support both planning with key staff and working directly with students. At one district, the navigator doesn't interact directly with students and families, which poses some challenges in ensuring that students are receiving the appropriate guidance.
- **Work focus:** All career navigators focus on YouScience completion and data use; help organize career awareness, exploration and planning activities; and drive alignment across schools within a district. In particular, career navigators help augment the wide-ranging efforts already underway at middle and elementary school levels, leading toward more consistency and coherence across a district over time. The specific priorities and activities of the career navigators designated to implement PACCE can be found in the PACCE Quick Start Guide.
- **School collaboration:** Clear communication from the superintendent down to building administrators, staff, students, and parents about the purpose of the career navigator role and the importance of the work the navigators are focused on is important for driving a career-connected learning strategy forward.
- **Navigator skills and strengths:** All navigators have an education background, which is a helpful foundation for navigating school systems. The core attributes that make navigators effective in their role include being a systems thinker with the ability to foster relationships across different stakeholder groups (e.g., teachers, administrators, students, and families), initiate and drive actions and

culture change without formal authority, and leverage data to inform practice and decisions. A background in career counseling is helpful, although not all current navigators have this background.

In exploring the role and focus of different career navigators in the region, three primary models emerged. The distinguishing characteristics of the different models are how the role is funded and managed and the role’s direct connection to a centralized navigation strategy. No one model is ideal, with each having its own unique benefits and challenges. Understanding the different models, MCEC and districts can implement strategies to address the known challenges.

- **Centralized Navigator:** A navigator is employed by MCEC with days at one or more school districts and is required to participate in a centrally organized career navigation strategy.
- **Embedded Navigator:** A navigator is employed by and based at one school district and is required to participate in a centrally organized career navigation strategy.
- **District Navigator:** A navigator employed by and based at one school district. Does not participate in centrally organized navigation strategy.

**Table 1. Career Navigator Models**

|                              | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Centralized Navigator</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A navigator’s work is grounded in a uniform strategy and goals</li> <li>• A structure exists for peer navigators to share best practices and resources</li> <li>• There is a centralized process for tracking implementation and impact</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It takes considerable time to develop trusting, collaborative relationships and understand a district’s priorities, norms, and processes</li> <li>• There is less flexibility or time to respond to all of a district’s needs or requests</li> </ul>                |
| <b>Embedded Navigator</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep integration into the district enables quicker implementation of strategy and goals</li> </ul> <p><i>Includes benefits of the centralized navigator and district navigator.</i></p>                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing regional strategy with district’s customized needs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>District Navigator</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established relationships with district and school personnel supports collaboration</li> <li>• Deep understanding of the district’s strategy, policies, processes, and priorities</li> <li>• Complete customization to the district’s needs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaches may or may not align to a broader regional navigation strategy</li> <li>• Less frequent opportunities for connecting with peer navigators for best practice and resource sharing</li> <li>• No uniform way to track implementation and impact</li> </ul> |

# Recommendations to Support Quality and Scale

Over the past five years, MCEC's thoughtful and steady approach to pathways design has contributed to meaningful growth in career-connected learning activities and course offerings, increased use of student data to inform programming, and stronger cross-sector collaboration across the region. By balancing tailored district support with regional coordination through structures like the Business Advisory Council, MCEC has earned the trust of stakeholders and established itself as a credible partner in supporting the design and implementation of high-quality, in-demand pathways.

Building on this foundation, MCEC is well positioned to take a more assertive role in guiding and supporting districts in the next phase of pathways implementation. To strengthen regional capacity, deepen expertise, and expand collaborative infrastructure, JFF recommends several strategies aligned with the key findings from this research. These recommendations are grouped into five areas:

1. **Regional Technical Assistance**
2. **District and School-Based Technical Assistance**
3. **Career Navigators as Leaders**
4. **Pathway Model Updates and Enhancements**
5. **Partner Engagement**

Implementing these recommendations will require coordination across MCEC departments and close collaboration with core regional partners, including Learn to Earn Dayton, Sinclair Community College, SOCHE, and members of the Business Advisory Council. MCEC will also need to consider adding staff capacity, or reallocating staff time, to implement the recommendations and steward this next phase of work.

## 1. Regional Technical Assistance

MCEC should build upon its existing training and convening offerings to help districts and regional stakeholders move from widespread awareness of the pathway models to more strategic and coordinated implementation. Recommended actions include:

- **Design and deliver “Implementation Lab 2.0” sessions** for each pathway focused on cross-partner sharing of lessons learned, best practices, emerging innovations, and new programs and collaboration opportunities in the region.
- **Create additional implementation resources** by expanding the current user guide to include the following:
  - An in-depth overview of high-quality pathways and clear guidance on how to use the pathway model documents

- An assessment and tracking tool with quality indicators for each pathway component, enabling districts to assess current offerings and monitor progress over time
- Strategies to address common design and implementation challenges
- **Facilitate biannual YouScience strategy sessions** and data reflections to support districts in planning their approach for students to complete YouScience assessment, identifying trends in students' data, and workshop strategies to use the results for targeted career-connected learning experiences and coursework
- **Expand Career Champions offerings** by integrating new opportunities, such as convening counselors and key staff from neighboring districts to share localized best practices and explore joint initiatives (e.g., shared career fairs, streamlined employer communications) and creating a shared online library for pathways-related resources.
- **Replicate the pathway days at Sinclair Community College for other industries** to continue bridging student understanding of pathway-specific opportunities. Build upon the established model from the Computer Science and IT Day and consider assigning shared planning responsibilities to the centralized career navigators at MCEC.

## 2. District and School-Based Technical Assistance

To complement existing services and resources, MCEC should offer customized technical assistance to tailor support based on a district's current implementation, priorities, and local conditions. These sessions may broadly focus on auditing current pathway offerings and identifying actionable steps for integrating components of the regional pathway models. Specific areas of technical assistance may include:

- Mapping academic courses, including CCP offerings, and outlining action steps to launch course(s)
- Recommending career awareness and exposure delivery strategies based on student level YouScience data
- Reviewing curriculum to identify opportunities to integrate career awareness activities and pathway-specific competencies
- Enhancing advising strategies and materials to better support student decision-making and pathway engagement

Based on a district's needs, the services may be provided by an MCEC director or an experienced career navigator. MCEC should consider a fee-for-service model, with tiered pricing based on district size and the level of support needed.

## 3. Career Navigators as Leaders

Career navigators play a vital role in driving pathways planning and delivering core components within districts. As the number of career navigators grows in the region, MCEC should take steps to codify and promote a unified navigation framework to support consistent execution of pathways—while still allowing for customization based on a district's needs and context. The following recommendations build on the

components of PACCE and offer strategies applicable across districts, including those not participating in PACCE.

- **Develop a region-wide career navigation best practices guide**, drawing upon the PACCE model and MCEC’s conceptual pathways framework. The guide should highlight the core elements of effective career navigation systems and activities, including clear definitions of Tier 1 and Tier 2 experiences spanning elementary to high school levels. The guide can be used both as a foundation for districts without navigators to assess and build upon their current navigation efforts and as a planning tool for navigators to tailor their district-specific strategies.
- **Create a community of practice** for career navigators and related roles (e.g., work-based learning coordinators) to regularly share best practices, resources, and strategies, building upon the existing PACCE structure.
- **Offer ongoing professional development** for career navigators, initially prioritizing training on labor market information and workforce trends, work-based learning design and quality standards, and employer engagement to deepen knowledge and ensure consistent understanding. Until a region-wide best practices guide is created, professional development may also include offering training on the six core elements of PACCE.

#### 4. Pathway Model Updates and Enhancements

To ensure that the pathway models remain aligned with evolving regional needs, JFF recommends reviewing and updating each pathway model on a five-year cycle. Specifically:

- Refresh labor market information to ensure that each pathway reflects current and projected regional demand
- Re-verify the relevance and alignment of mapped credentials, degrees, and competencies
- Review academic course offerings to confirm continued alignment with postsecondary programs of study.

The table below reflects the recommended year each model should be updated.

**Table 2. Recommended Time Frames to Update Pathway Models**

| Model                                          | Created        | Update |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------|
| <b>Information Technology/Computer Science</b> | August 2021    | 2026   |
| <b>Health Science</b>                          | August 2021    | 2026   |
| <b>Advanced Manufacturing</b>                  | January 2022   | 2027   |
| <b>Aerospace and Aviation</b>                  | September 2023 | 2028   |
| <b>Business and Management</b>                 | September 2024 | 2029   |

In the event of significant labor market change, such as the arrival of a major employer or the emergence of a new industry, related pathway models should be revised sooner to address the region's shifting talent needs. This may also require creating a new pathway model, depending on the emerging industry trends.

As the pathway models are updated, MCEC should also consider incorporating enhancements, such as career exposure and preparation activities for lower grades, and designing student- and family-facing versions for advising activities.

## 5. Partner Engagement

Sustained collaboration with regional partners has been critical for advancing high-quality pathways, as demonstrated by the historic work of the BAC. To build on this foundation, strengthen alignment, and foster innovation, MCEC should consider the following:

- **Co-develop a shared regional vision for cross-sector collaboration on pathways** by convening regional stakeholders, including representatives from MCEC, Ohio Means Jobs, Sinclair Community College, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, the Dayton Development Coalition, and select school districts. This effort can inform new ways of collaborating on pathways efforts (e.g., better alignment and utilization of OMJ programs and resources) and sustain momentum generated through team time at Pathways to Prosperity Institutes.
- **Create employer-facing guidance** on how to effectively engage with schools and educators on pathways to accompany the new employer engagement menu. This guidance may include both a tangible resource and a presentation version of the guidance for use during existing employer convenings (e.g., DRMA, Tech First, GDAHA, etc.).
- **Create an employer engagement guide** with regional standards and best practices for engaging employers to drive and align the approaches of individual districts.

# A Promising Foundation for Scaling Pathways

Significant progress has been made across the region in raising awareness of pathways and expanding key components. MCEC is well positioned to build on this momentum by providing structured, responsive support tailored to each district's needs. By offering a range of tools, training, and technical assistance, MCEC can help districts implement pathway components more strategically and consistently. Advancing a more unified regional approach will create new opportunities to measure progress and improve student outcomes. While conditions may never be perfect, implementing pathways is an ongoing process—one that requires persistence, innovation, and collaboration to move closer to realizing the full vision of pathways.

# Appendix

## A. Research Priorities

| Areas                                            | Key Questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Model Implementation</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which schools are implementing each pathway model?</li> <li>• Which components of each pathway model are being implemented at each school?</li> <li>• Are models that have been around longer further along in implementation?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Support—General Resources</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What resources contribute positively to the implementation?</li> <li>• What guidance was provided by MCEC to each school and to what extent was that guidance effective?</li> <li>• How were the pathway model documents utilized by school personnel and stakeholders?</li> <li>• What other types of support or resources have been effective?</li> </ul>                                                          |
| <b>Support—Career Navigators</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What supports have career navigators provided to each school?</li> <li>• What value or benefit have career navigators added for the schools?</li> <li>• What knowledge, skills, or abilities do the career navigators possess that support pathway implementation?</li> <li>• What conditions enable career navigators to effectively execute their responsibilities?</li> </ul>                                     |
| <b>School Characteristics and Infrastructure</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What school characteristics (e.g., size, location, established programs, culture, other resources, data systems, policies) impact the implementation of each model? How so?</li> <li>• How do these structures or conditions impact student access to pathways?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Partnerships</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What new partnerships have formed as a result of the new pathway models?</li> <li>• What approaches strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders (e.g., Sinclair Community College, employers)? What shifts were required (e.g., shifting power, mindsets, and narratives)?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Scale and Sustainability</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What growth (e.g., pathways offered, components added, students participating) has there been in the pathways over time within each school?</li> <li>• How are schools planning to expand their pathways in the future?</li> </ul> <p>Research Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What funding sources, policies, or other resources are schools pursuing to support sustainability?</li> </ul> |

## B. Summary of Data Collection

| Stakeholder Group                             | Method                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Timeline                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>MCESC key staff</b>                        | Interviews                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | November–December 2024   |
| <b>MCESC key staff, district/school staff</b> | Document collection                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | November 2024–April 2025 |
| <b>Career Navigators</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JFF led a session in December 2024</li> <li>• Individual interviews with all navigators</li> <li>• Supported Career Navigator Day</li> <li>• Periodically attended PACCE meetings and coordination with PACCE team</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                     | December 2024–June 2025  |
| <b>District and school staff</b>              | <p>Surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligned and incorporated questions into May end-of-year Career Connections report</li> <li>• Synthesized other monthly Career Connections reports</li> </ul> <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JFF led interviews with seven employees from five schools and Sinclair Community College</li> <li>• Synthesized takeaways from MCESC school visits in Q3 and Q4</li> </ul> | January–May 2025         |