



# Central Pennsylvania Career Pathways Partnership

## **A new approach for promoting college, career and life readiness Community Talking Points *INTRODUCTION TO THE CPCPP***

The Central Pennsylvania school district's and career and technical center are creating a Pathways System to enhance the college, career and life readiness of its students and young adults transitioning to the workforce. The Pathways Partnership includes five school districts, career and technical institute and includes businesses, community organizations, postsecondary education, economic and workforce development partners.

### ***THE CHALLENGE***

Most communities in Pennsylvania, including the Central Pennsylvania Region, and across the nation are challenged by having many young adults who are not fully prepared for the demands of postsecondary education and training, skilled employment, and civic participation. As a result, individuals, families, educators, employers, and the community are experiencing unemployment and underemployment, skill gaps in the workforce, slow economic growth, poor student achievement, and low college completion rates.

Also, many of our students say that they see no connection between school today and their future pursuits. This results in of high school seniors and young adults do not have a strong sense of career direction, even when attending college. This lack of direction drives up the percentage of major changes and college transfers, and ultimately making college more expensive, increasing student loan debt loads.

### ***THE OPPORTUNITY***

There is good news. The Central Pennsylvania region is coming together to break down organizational silos and create a pathway system that will engage learners – both youth and adults – with opportunities that clearly connect learning to real-world work experiences and in-demand careers.

These pathway programs, offered through K-12 education systems, career and technical education, postsecondary education and adult education programs, help spark individual motivation and aspiration. As learners gain a sense of success, their forward momentum allows them to experience program success and move efficiently into high-demand careers, well matched to their interests and aptitudes. Thus, as a result of career pathways, individual and community prospects brighten significantly.

## **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

**Student learners, both youth and adults**, engage in programs and activities that connect learners directly to their future, gaining highly relevant academic, employability, and career skills needed for success in postsecondary education and the workplace.

**Employers** (private, non-profit, and government sectors) have access to a highly qualified, well-prepared workforce that is ready to contribute to company growth and effectiveness. This is particularly true for industry sectors like manufacturing, information technology, and health care, which are experiencing difficulty finding skilled, qualified workers.

**Parents and supportive family members** gain greater awareness of ways in which they can assist their youth and adult children in making successful transitions into postsecondary education, training and careers.

**Postsecondary and training educators** enroll students who have stronger academic and technical skills along with a clearer understanding of career demands and expectations, enhancing student completion of programs.

**Community and elected leaders** realize the many benefits of having higher rates of skilled employment and individuals earning family sustaining incomes.

**Educators** gain insight into and understanding of the workforce; they hone instructional practices that engage students and connects rigorous curriculum and activities to postsecondary and career expectations. Schools see improved graduation rates, an increase in postsecondary enrollment, an energized school culture, and staff members who work together rather than in isolation.

## **KEY DEFINITIONS**

### ***Pathway Program***

*A Pathway Program is a program of interconnected academic and elective classes revolving around a career or subject theme.*

*Each Pathway Program is integrated with experiential learning and close connections between secondary and postsecondary education, training, and apprenticeship.*

*The program is designed to support the development of Career and Life Readiness for the learner, so that the individual can successfully enter and advance in a career path.<sup>1</sup>*

### ***Pathways System***

*A Pathways System is the coordinated interaction of key components – career development, pathway programs, dynamic teaching and learning, employer and community engagement, and cross-sector partnerships.*

*The Pathways System is designed to develop a high level of career and life readiness among youths and adults in schools, colleges, workforce programs and the across the broader community, resulting in enhanced workforce competitiveness and community prosperity.*

## **GOING DEEPER: DATA TALKING POINTS**

### **Did you know?**

- In the United State about 66% of all high school graduates enroll in a postsecondary institution. **Only about 40% receive a degree in.....6 years!**
- **A Globally-Connected Economy.** Driving fast-paced changes across the U.S. and Pennsylvania workforce
- **Changing Demographics.** Thousands of Baby-boomers are leaving the workforce each day, *The Silver Tsunami!*
- **Skilled Worker Gap.** Many employers face extreme difficulty filling job openings for skilled workers, from construction and manufacturing workers, to health care providers, teachers, and drivers, among others.
- **Employability Skills Gap.** Employers indicate that, among the new college graduates they hire, only about 30 percent of them are really prepared with critical workplace and employability skills.
- Pennsylvania Ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Nation for **Student Debt.**
- There are about **5.5 Million young people disconnected from work and school**, hard costs to our National economy....26 Billion dollars per year!

### **Local Postsecondary Completion Rates-PASSHE EdHub**

- In **2011, 59%** of students who graduated from **Northumberland County schools** enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 16 months of graduation.  
**37%** of the 59% earned some level of postsecondary credential by August 2017.
- In **2011, 66%** of students who graduated from **Union County schools** enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 16 months of graduation.  
**49%** of the 66% earned some level of postsecondary credential by August 2017.
- In **2011, 59%** of students who graduated from **Snyder County schools** enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 16 months of graduation.  
**39%** of the 59% graduates earned some level of postsecondary credential by August 2017. <https://public.analytics.oei.passhe.edu/StateSystemEdHub/#!/pipeline>

## **GETTING INVOLVED**

**For more information about the Partnership and how to get involved, visit: [www.pathtocareers.org](http://www.pathtocareers.org)**