

BRAIDING FUNDING TO SUPPORT EQUITABLE CAREER PATHWAYS

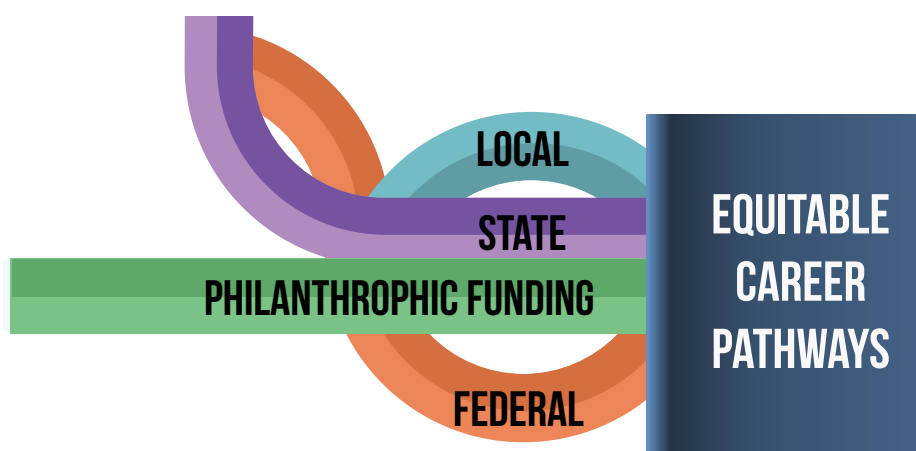


Introduction

To support the expansion and acceleration of high-quality and equitable career pathways, JPMorgan Chase & Co. launched the *New Skills ready network*, a national initiative consisting of six sites, each composed of state, regional and local partners. The initiative draws on cross-sector partnerships to facilitate systems work across these levels. The work of building sustainable career pathways systems at each level requires braiding funding and other resources by combining or leveraging funding streams to share costs for employees, equipment or systems outright between entities. To ensure that cross-sector work has the maximum impact, it is imperative that state and local agencies understand where their funding comes from, how to leverage this funding and how to connect funding and resources with other agencies at different levels to benefit rigorous, quality career pathways and equitable access for learners.

[*Without Limits: A Shared Vision for the Future of Career Technical Education* \(CTE Without Limits\)](#) similarly calls on leaders to build a cohesive, flexible and responsive career preparation ecosystem. To build such an ecosystem, leaders must work across systems, in conjunction with other state agencies and local leaders, to align funding streams and resources. As gaps continue to widen between well-resourced and under-resourced communities and institutions, state and local leaders should identify opportunities for flexible funding streams, target new sources of funding and resources and build upon and leverage partnerships to ensure that funding and resources go to the learners that need them most.

Braiding funding streams and sharing non-financial resources, systems and people to support career pathways contribute to aligned goal setting, eliminate duplication of services and focus the ability to



provide access to equitable career pathways. This brief highlights promising practices from Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Montana and Oklahoma for braiding resources of all kinds and shares potential steps for states and communities looking to begin or enhance their braiding of funding at all levels to support high-quality, equitable career pathways.

Braiding can take many forms, especially when considering the sheer number of available sources for funding and resources for career pathways. Most commonly, **braiding funding** means integrating at least two sources of funding from federal, state, local or philanthropic funding streams if one funding source is not enough to support a program, career pathway and/or the associated people and equipment needed to run that initiative. Because these resources come from separate sources, they will likely have their own accompanying accountability and reporting requirements or structures. Funds can also be braided for the purposes of scaling already successful programs, jumpstarting a new initiative or sustaining long-term growth. Another approach is **blending funding**, which means using funds interconnectedly without any restrictions or associated accountability measures. However, many experts and state and federal administrators use the terms interchangeably, especially because at least one of the funding streams will require an accountability structure; as such, this brief will use the term “braiding” as an umbrella term.

Potential Funding Sources

When reviewing potential funding streams to determine where braiding is possible, it is important to look for funding sources at all levels — federal, state and local — and through private sources. It is also vital to understand what the allowable uses for each source are to ensure that the funds can be leveraged for the needed purpose.

Federal Funding Sources

Multiple federal sources can be leveraged to support career pathways. For a more comprehensive review of example statutes that can support career pathways and their allowable uses, refer to the Appendix. The most direct connection to career pathways is the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), which allocates almost \$1.3 billion annually to states to expand opportunities for learners to explore, choose and follow Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways that result in credentials of value.¹ Perkins V offers flexible funding streams, including the Reserve Fund and the State Leadership Funds, both of which can be leveraged to support statewide systems alignment, particularly in career pathways systems. Local districts and colleges also have a lot of flexibility in how they spend their Perkins V allocations. To support secondary learners, agencies and local districts can leverage parts of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which includes CTE in its definition of a “well-rounded education” and requires the coordination of ESSA and Perkins plans.² For increasing equitable access to postsecondary education, the Higher Education Act (HEA) can be used to serve learners through programs such as TRIO and Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) can help ensure that career pathways and the supports embedded within them are available to learners with disabilities as they prepare for postsecondary and career success, including through pre-employment transition services.³




Other federal funding sources affecting CTE programs can be braided with federal education funding to support equitable career pathways for all learners. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has a variety of statutes that support tuition and training costs, work-based learning opportunities

Other federal programs such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) can be used to support adult education and workforce training programs. For example, SNAP has an embedded Employment and Training program that can be used to offset costs associated with enrollment in post-

secondary CTE programs and to expand credential and degree attainment goals.⁴ Alignment with these programs and WIOA can also be included in a CSP.⁵ Beyond funding allocated through federal legislation, government agencies regularly grant funds for specific uses. States can apply for these grants and use them for new pilot programs or incorporate them into activities already in place.

Leveraging Federal Stimulus and Stabilization Funding

Over the past year, multiple states have leveraged various federal coronavirus stimulus funds including the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, the Coronavirus Relief Fund and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund to support career pathways. The following are a few examples of how states are braiding this historic funding to bolster and expand opportunities for learners:

-  **Colorado** supported its existing Career Development Incentive Program with \$1.75 million from American Rescue Plan State/Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The program provides financial incentives for school districts to encourage students in grades 9-12 to complete qualified industry credential programs, internships, residencies, pre-apprenticeship programs or qualified Advanced Placement courses. The program, launched statewide in 2018, is additionally funded through \$1 million in state allocations.⁶
-  **Delaware** used ESSER funds braided with GEER and philanthropic funds to help launch a \$15.8 million expansion of the state Delaware Pathways initiative called Delaware Pathways 2.0, expanding the program to reach 6,000 middle school learners and more than 12,000 additional secondary learners. The expansion specifically targets career pathways in health care, information technology, finance and engineering.⁷
-  **Indiana** launched competitive grants using state ESSER funds to encourage school leaders to partner with employers and community-based organizations to design and execute career pathways programs. The granted programs will help provide opportunities for work-based learning and other career-oriented out-of-school learning opportunities.⁸

Braiding funding streams and sharing non-financial resources, systems and people to support career pathways contribute to aligned goal setting, eliminate duplication of services and focus the ability to provide access to equitable career pathways.

State Funding Sources

Many states provide funding for CTE programs and career pathways beyond the standard per-pupil funding amount based on enrollment. While significant variation exists among state funding models, most states have multiple funding sources for career pathways through the state's legislated budget, including for enrollments in CTE courses (per pupil or through full-time equivalencies), for property or equipment, and for additional grant and scholarship funding. Each of these sources can be leveraged to support aspects of career pathways in conjunction with federal and local funding. **Delaware**, for example, has a variety of state funds that can be operationalized and braided for career pathways at the secondary and postsecondary levels. At the secondary level, CTE unit funding is allocated based on the number of individual student enrollments in a particular CTE program and includes funding to offset staffing costs at the local level, a weighted cash fund available to operational programs at the school level that can be used for dual enrollment fees or costs associated with industry credential attainment, and a separate fund for energy and maintenance costs of school buildings. Other states have legislative grants geared toward specific career pathways, such as those aligned with in-demand careers or with particularly high delivery costs.

Local Funding Sources

Local funds often are braided with state and federal dollars to support career pathways, particularly at the secondary level. While variations in funding at the state level are significant, even more variation exists at the local level, in large part due to a lack of financial transparency. The most significant funding sources are derived from local property taxes and levies and contribute to a learner-centered funding model with a base funding amount and added weights for demographics and other characteristics. Beyond local public funding, community-based organizations and other intermediaries can help close gaps in funding by providing in-kind or contracted services and often have the flexibility to push into schools or provide person-oriented supports for learners.

Finally, private funding is available at the national, state and local levels and can provide grants to support career pathways. Philanthropic dollars can range from small-scale hyperlocal grants for individual equipment purchases to significant foundation funding, such as through the *New Skills ready network*.

Braiding Funding to Support State Career Pathways Systems

Operationalizing the available funding sources through braiding can take many forms, and many states are leveraging multiple funding sources to support career pathways.

Alabama connected a wide variety of funding streams to develop, establish and fund the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT), a separate entity from the state's workforce, K-12 education and postsecondary education agencies. This office is designed to increase labor force par-

ticipation, surpass postsecondary attainment goals and develop career pathways for a wide variety of learners. To achieve its goals, the GOEWT is tasked specifically with “braid[ing] Alabama’s federal education and workforce development funding streams to support an education-to-workforce pipeline,” which involves modifying ESSA, Perkins and WIOA state plans to support the Alabama Career Pathways Model.⁹ The GOEWT also lists a significant number of local supports to be provided as part of this system, funded in large part by braiding WIOA and Perkins State Leadership and Administration dollars. These local supports include developing staff capacity, providing technical assistance in carrying out activities described in the Perkins state plan (and in particular, through the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment) and supporting local development of industry and sector partnerships.¹⁰

Often, a specific barrier for braiding funds is a misaligned data and accountability structure. Alabama is working to overcome this hurdle through the creation of the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways. This statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) was funded through a combination of funds from the GOEWT, the Alabama Workforce Council and a \$3.25 million SLDS grant from the U.S. Department of Education. ATLAS will help agencies, businesses and individuals make data-informed decisions on where and how to spend scarce resources, and GOEWT and other agencies will use ATLAS to regularly adjust career pathways programs (as well as other statewide programs) to meet the needs of Alabama’s economy.¹¹

Delaware leverages federal, state, institutional and private funding streams to support career pathways through an initiative called [Delaware Pathways](#), which coordinates and organizes education and workforce development systems for youth and adult learners within a statewide career pathways system for the purpose of achieving Delaware’s postsecondary attainment goals. Because this initiative brings together dozens of national, state and local partners, a named priority of the strategic plan is to coordinate financial support for career pathways and to braid funding to ensure long-term success. This priority is broken into three major work strategies:

- Developing a structure for philanthropic contributions and investment;
- Coordinating state and federal supports to leverage additional resources; and
- Developing a catalog of additional funding opportunities.¹²

Because Delaware Pathways is fully aligned with the Delaware Promise, a statewide goal that 65 percent of Delaware residents complete a college degree or industry-recognized credential by 2025, Delaware is able to unite agencies and stakeholders around a common, coordinated goal. While competition for funds often derails efforts to braid funding, Delaware circumvents this challenge by aligning priorities, funding streams and goals into a streamlined, concerted effort. The result is reflected in accomplishments over the past year, which include the partnering agencies/organizations having raised more than \$24 million dollars to support phase two of the initiative through multiple philanthropic and federal grants as well as those federal discretionary funds listed above, and ESSER and GEER stimulus funding.

Braiding Funding to Support Career Pathways at the Program Level

Though funding can be braided to support career pathways at all levels, there is opportunity to braid funds to support specific programs at the state and local levels, especially through partnerships between stakeholder groups. First, states leverage braided funds to implement and support state-level career pathways programs. Because **Oklahoma** has both the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) and the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), braiding resources is vital to the implementation of the state Perkins V plan. The state highlighted its braided funding within its Perkins V plan, demonstrating how federal funding and accountability structures will be linked to support learner programming at the secondary level: “Oklahoma has several examples of partnering and braided funding in terms of federal programs—ESSA, WIOA, and the Higher Education Act. CTE programs in K-12 receive funding from both OSDE and ODCTE to prepare students to enter the workforce or continuing education.”¹³ The state’s plan also called out how these agencies collaborate through the sharing of funds to support workforce development: “ODCTE, Oklahoma Works and higher education contribute to braided funding in workforce development. All three federal grants [Perkins V, WIOA, and HEA] are used to equip individuals with technical skills for Oklahoma’s businesses and industry. One place where this is seen is in apprenticeship development. Technology centers with apprenticeship programs work together with Oklahoma Works to develop the programs.”¹⁴

Operationalization of this type of braided funding can take many forms, but one specific program for which Oklahoma has leveraged braided funding and these partnerships is a statewide Meat Processing Workforce Education program.¹⁵ Through a partnership between the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and ODCTE in collaboration with the American Meat Science Association, the state developed this 64-hour program to respond to growing workforce needs in this sector. As a component of work-based learning in this career pathway, the state has a [mobile meat processing truck](#) that travels from local institution to local institution to deliver a hands-on learning component to the program.

By braiding funding and connecting resources across agencies, initiatives are often forced to focus their efforts to achieve a specific and targeted goal, rather than working toward more diffuse goals for each agency, institution or stakeholder.

Other states braid distinct federal funding with their state dollars to support career pathways programs. **Arkansas**, for example, uses SNAP and TANF funding in part to support its [Career Pathways Initiative](#) (CPI), which supports educational and workforce training while providing additional non-academic supports. The initiative requires coordination and support from the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE), the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and the state’s 22 two-year colleges and three technical

centers. ADHE directly allocates CPI funding to each of the institutions based on a formula of enrollment of students with low income, completion rates, credential attainment and employment outcomes. Since 2005, the Arkansas CPI has provided services to more than 30,000 qualifying students enrolled in career-oriented programs in community and technical colleges.¹⁶

Finally, educators and support staff can be hired or shared through collaboration among agencies, departments or institutions. For example, to support learners with disabilities in career pathways, special education counselors can be hired through collaboration between a department of education (with state IDEA funding) and a state's vocational rehabilitation services office (through WIOA vocational rehabilitation funding).¹⁷ These funds can cover half of the counselor's salary while the local school district covers the other half through its local funds. Other instructors can be shared across institutional levels. **Delaware** Technical Community College (Del Tech) hires and funds instructors at the community college level, but regularly shares instructors with local secondary institutions through partnership agreements and shared time education models that blur secondary and postsecondary education, especially when programs are co-located at Del Tech. Similarly, Delaware's Adult Technical Centers (New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District, POLYTECH School District, and Sussex Technical School District) share instructors across their secondary and postsecondary divisions to support high school youth participation in the state's registered apprenticeship system and related technical coursework, limiting the need for similar staff at both institutions.

Benefits of Braiding Funding

Braiding funding and resources provides many benefits, in large part due to the coordination and organization required to do this work effectively. Because state and local partners must collaborate on goals, especially across agencies and systems, the practice of braiding funding incentivizes ongoing conversations about how to better streamline and maximize efforts. Even if the goal was established before the system to support it was, agencies can build the muscle of cross-system alignment through regular coordinated practices. Because Alabama's workforce development strategy is coordinated by the GOEWT, the office can leverage the funds and resources needed to implement that strategy through a singular, aligned effort. Similarly, Delaware Pathways is fully aligned with the aforementioned Delaware Promise, the state's postsecondary attainment goal. By braiding funding and connecting resources across agencies, initiatives are often forced to focus their efforts to achieve a specific and targeted goal, rather than working toward more diffuse goals for each agency, institution or stakeholder.

Braiding funds and resources also can increase access to career pathways for historically marginalized learners, including learners with special population status. At the federal level, Perkins V's list of subgroups intentionally overlaps with subgroups in ESSA, and a separate "special populations" list aligns with WIOA's listed "individuals with a barrier to employment."^{18, 19} These alignments encourage states to collect data for populations in a way that can be shared and applied to accountability measures for these different laws. With intentionality, states can ensure that funding goes toward the populations who most need the support to address opportunity

gaps and increase access. Alabama, for example, has a statewide list of these discrete sub-populations served by braided funds, especially through Perkins and WIOA, and breaks down attainment goals by these learner groups, allowing the state to direct the braided funds in a coordinated and aligned way where they are needed most. The following chart shows the estimates for each sub-population, including how many contributed to attainment and labor force participation (LFP) goals.

Leveraging other federal laws such as IDEA, especially in combination with ESSA, Perkins and WIOA, provides additional opportunities to support students with disabilities in career pathways, with the added benefit of ensuring that local special education instructors, counselors and administrators are aware of the funding sources and resources that are available to their learners.²¹

Finally, successfully braiding funding and resources can limit the duplication of services, as resources are used in connection with one another instead of at odds. Given how many agencies and entities are working to support career pathways at the state and local levels, there are often redundancies and gaps across programs and supports. By working in conjunction with other agencies at the state and local levels, an institution can create buy-in and expand available career pathways and services for learners, instead of doubling up on already existing services for different populations of learners. **Montana's** Advancing Agricultural Education grants support the growth of new programs and have significant flexibility in how to support career pathways in the agriculture sector, including stipends for out-of-school learning, transportation costs, facility upgrades and teacher professional development.²² These grants, funded as a partnership between the Montana Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Montana Department of Agriculture, limit the overlap in the delivery of these programs, as both agencies have a significant stake in their success.

FIGURE 1: SUB-POPULATIONS IN ALABAMA COMBINED WIOA/PERKINS PLAN ATTAINMENT AND OUTCOMES²⁰

SUCCESS+ Goal = 500,000

Annual LFP Goal = 40,000

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	280,438	24,027	2,403	2,303
Caregiver	154,574	25,651	2,565	2,465
Adults with Aging Dependents	134,990	10,038	1,004	1,054
Unemployed or Underemployed	83,565	66,241	6,624	0
Low-Income	849,699	113,888	11,389	10,645
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	27,311	788	79	68
People with Disabilities	775,390	82,689	8,269	8,229
Older Individuals	1,065,625	29,908	2,991	2,891
Ex-Offenders	15,224	10,690	1,069	1,069
Homeless Individuals	17,546	3,844	384	374
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	572	827	85	85
English Language Learners	20,725	7,024	702	580
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	48,998	28,663	2,863	2,488
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	106,217	22,076	2,208	2,208
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	18,266	3,797	380	379
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	8,565	3,430	343	343
Single Parents	178,243	46,215	4,622	3,991
Long-Term Unemployed	15,960	11,939	1,194	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	3,708	371	371
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	8,750	4,557	456	456

Key Steps to Braid Funding and Resources

To effectively braid funds and resources and circumvent the barriers associated with doing so, state and local administrators can work through three key action steps: aligning around a common goal, conducting an analysis of career pathways-aligned funding sources and streams and having a sustainability plan. Braiding funding often takes significant time and additional resources, but these promising practices are critical to supporting career pathways in an organized and seamless way.

1 Align stakeholders and systems around a common goal.

While connecting funding streams inherently leads toward a common goal, understanding what the expected outcomes are and how braided funds can affect equity gaps in those outcomes for specific sub-populations is important. Action steps include:

- **Engage leadership at all levels.** Braiding funding and resources requires political will and support from leadership across the spectrum, including state and local administrators. Alabama's GOEWT was organized through legislative support and gubernatorial direction, as Governor Kay Ivey helped to sponsor and coordinate this office. This support from the governor provides credibility and authority to the office, especially in making decisions that will affect the futures of all Alabamians.
- **Collaborate with all stakeholders.** To understand how funding and resources will affect all stakeholders, leaders can go to a wide variety of stakeholder groups, including learners and parents, business and industry and multiple state and local agencies. When building out a shared work-based learning playbook as part of its career pathways system, **Montana** engaged the Department of Labor, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, business leaders and education administrators to help identify the needs of each group.
- **Agree to a common language.** To ensure that each funding stream is aligned in an appropriate way, stakeholders must communicate using the same data sources and terminology. Alabama ensures that all state agencies are making decisions about learners using a common language by requiring that they use three source documents — a statewide list of in-demand careers, a comprehensive list of recognized credentials and competency statements or profiles (occupational ontology). This requirement allows for coordinated decisionmaking about career pathways at all levels.²³
- **Reconsider which agency “owns” certain programs or processes.** To streamline career pathways programs, ownership over a certain program, equipment or funding source may need to change to allow for most effective use of that resource. For example, **Nevada** used state legislation to move the Office of Workforce Innovation from the Office of the Governor into the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation for the purpose of improving financial processes affecting career pathways.²⁴

2 Conduct an analysis of career pathways-aligned funding sources and streams.

Taking this step will require:

- **Reviewing all available federal, state and local funding sources**, including the populations they serve and their projected outcomes, eligibility requirements and allowable uses. The review should also include information about who administers and has access to these resources.
- **Getting direct input from states or local agencies about various state and federal funding sources, including allowable expenses.** The **District of Columbia** provides [guidance](#) about allowable uses of federal funding streams, including coronavirus stimulus funds, Perkins V and IDEA.²⁵ See Figure 2 for an

example of this guidance. This type of documentation helps to organize funding streams around a particular use.

- **Examining potential untapped funding opportunities for populations of students not historically served by CTE.** To support middle school learners, Alabama developed a middle school innovation grant to help start CTE programming in collaboration with the Alabama STEM Council. Leaders across agencies should also review state and philanthropic grant opportunities in collaboration to limit competition for funding that supports the same populations.

FIGURE 2: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE ON ALLOWABLE USES FOR IDEA

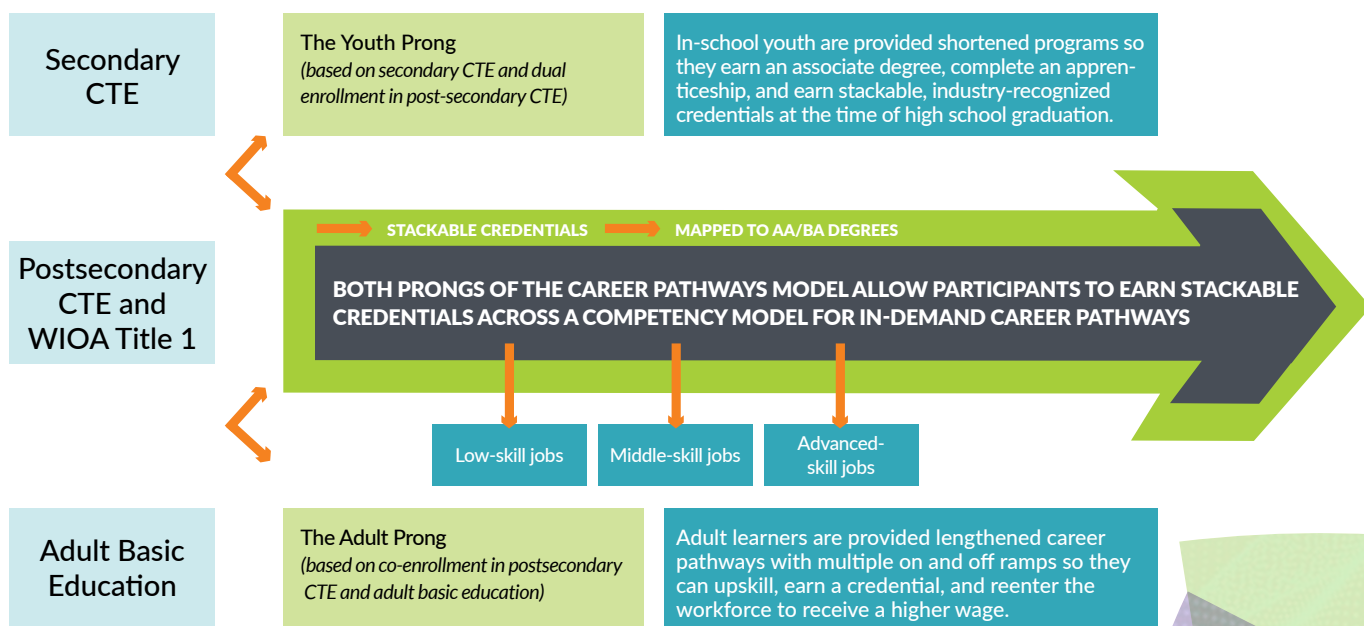
ADMINISTRATION + PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	CURRICULUM + INSTRUCTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative/indirect costs • Advertising for program offerings only (e.g., newspapers, radio, television, direct mail, exhibits, electronic or computer transmittals, etc.) • Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fax, phone, postage, etc. • Contracted special education, related services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Document processing; professional development/contracted staff training; policy development, review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books, periodicals • Curriculum development • ESY • Job coaching • Materials, supplies • Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Includes computer software, computer leasing/rental, technology-related supplies • Vocational education fees
INFRASTRUCTURE	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive technology • Automatic door openers (if specified in an IEP) • Equipment maintenance, repair • Facilities (requires prior OSSE approval) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Includes building leases/rentals of space for SWDs, new construction, alterations to existing structures to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) • Health services equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Equipment for physical, occupational therapy • Office equipment used exclusively by special education staff • Special education-specific classroom furniture, equipment, equipment maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference registration fees, travel-related expenses • Job coaches • Professional membership organization dues (for a position, not an individual) • Staff development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Includes conference expenses, providers, registration fees, travel
	STUDENT SUPPORT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child find activities • ESY • Student evaluations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Includes psychologists, social workers, other personnel, as well as supplies and contracted services • Transition services
STAFFING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive education • Aides • Audiologists Consultants • Educational interpreters • IEP team coordinators, interpreters, translators • Occupational therapists, occupational therapist assistants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paraprofessionals • Physical therapists, physical therapist assistants Secretarial, clerical staff when performing special education support duties • Psychologists • Social workers • Special education teachers • Speech and language pathologists • Substitute teachers

3 Have a sustainability plan to mitigate shifts in funding.

Braiding funding helps programs persist through shifts in funding, but losing a large portion of the braid or transitions in leadership can contribute to delays and gaps in program delivery. Having a sustainability plan helps to overcome these transitional barriers and allow career pathways programs to continue long term. Taking this step will require:

- Institutionalizing career pathways model design to ensure that partners are involved in long-term success.** Alabama's Two-Pronged Career Pathways Model (Figure 3) demonstrates how the state organizes its career pathways designs to ensure that state agencies collaborate to support career pathways while not duplicating program design.²⁶ Other state agencies such as the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship are also aligned with this model through state code.²⁷
- Engaging partners that will serve as champions through transitional periods of funding,** including business and industry representation, labor groups and community-based organizations. [Delaware Pathways' strategic plan](#) illustrates this type of organization and large-scale representation to diversify stakeholder groups long term. The plan was under-signed by dozens of public and private partners, and the plan's core priorities are led by a variety of state agencies, non-profit organizations and educational institutions, demonstrating cross-sector leadership.
- Using philanthropic and employer groups to supplement gaps in funding and encourage cross-sector collaboration to support local programs.** For example, the **New Hampshire Charitable Foundation** and the **Business and Industry Association of New Hampshire** fund up to \$10,000 for career pathways programs that partner area businesses with local chambers of commerce and educational institutions. The grants must also include strategies for increasing access for learners from marginalized or under-represented groups.²⁸

FIGURE 3: THE TWO-PRONGED ALABAMA CAREER PATHWAYS MODEL



Appendix: Examples of federal funding provisions that could be braided to support career pathways^{29,30,31}

Funding Source	Specific Provision	How It Supports Career Pathways
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Title I, Part A	Defines “well-rounded education” (WRE); local education agencies and Title I schools may include in a WRE Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, dual/concurrent or early college coursework; career exploration activities; work-based learning; or other programming that supports transitions to postsecondary education, training or work.
	Title I, Direct Student Services Funds	May be used by states to fund Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, dual/concurrent or early college coursework and CTE that leads to credentials.
	Title II, Part A	Supports providing learners from low-income backgrounds with high-quality educators. Funding can be used to support “grow your own” programs to train high-quality local teachers and expand experiential education programs and education career pathways. ³²
	Title IV ³³	Holistically supports 21st Century Schools, including implementing programs that coordinate with other schools and community-based organizations or may be conducted in collaboration with an institution of higher education, business, non-profit organization, community-based organization or other public or private entity. These funds can be braided at both the state and local levels to support collaboration around and involvement in career pathways systems and related activities.
	Title IV, Part B	Promotes a WRE that may include (among other elements) work-based learning and field-based experiences and college and career guidance and counseling.
	Title IV, Part F	Refers to “pipeline services,” meaning a continuum of coordinated supports, services and opportunities for children from birth through entry into and success in both postsecondary education and career attainment, including activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness, which may include job training, internship opportunities and career counseling.
Higher Education Act (HEA)	TRIO, GEAR UP ³⁴	Provide services that can be leveraged to support and expand equitable and flexible programs of study and career pathways.

Appendix: Examples of federal funding provisions that could be braided to support career pathways (continued)

Funding Source	Specific Provision	How It Supports Career Pathways
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Part B	May be used to develop and implement processes that support a learner's Individualized Education Plan and, in particular, their transition to post-secondary activities, including technical skills training.
	Part B State Level Activities Use of Funds	May be used to create statewide transition programs, including those to support coordination of systems, and to develop appropriate accommodations, including for learners in CTE programs. ³⁵
Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)	State Leadership Funds ³⁶	Have a variety of allowable expenses but can be leveraged in combination with other federal funds to support career pathways systems in a flexible way.
	Reserve Fund ³⁷	Can be leveraged to address performance and opportunity gaps, particularly in career pathways systems. ³⁸
	Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment	Can be leveraged to engage stakeholders around the needs of a given community, including increasing the input of industry on the needs of a local economic system and collecting input from historically under-represented groups.
Workplace Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)	Governor's Reserve Fund ³⁹	Can include no more than 15 percent of state WIOA funds. Governors can reserve these funds for statewide activities and can braid these funds with Perkins V Reserve Funds to align and integrate statewide career pathways systems.
	State Flexibility ⁴⁰	Allows for inter-state collaboration and investments, among other flexibilities. State leaders can leverage these flexibilities to support career pathways systems, including transition across levels, credential attainment and data sharing, especially with other states in their immediate geographic region that may share labor markets. ⁴¹
	Title I Youth Activities	Requires that local agencies identify service strategies for career pathways that include education and employment goals and provide services, such as career awareness and career exploration, that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area. ⁴²
	Youth and Vocational Rehabilitation ⁴³	Allows for collaboration between state CTE offices, statewide vocational rehabilitation and WIOA youth offices to meet the education and employment needs of the learners who have the most barriers to access and success. ⁴⁴

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New Skills ready network, launched by JPMorgan Chase & Co. 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 new \$30 billion commitment to advance racial equity.⁴⁵ Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group are working with sites to improve student completion of high-quality career pathways in six U.S. 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.

Endnotes

- ¹ U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.) *Perkins V*. <https://cte.ed.gov/legislation/perkins-v>
- ² "WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION.—The term 'well-rounded education' means courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the State or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience." Every Student Succeeds Act, 4 U.S.C. § 8002 (52) (2015). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/11774>
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- ¹¹ Alabama Workforce Council. (2021). *2021 Annual Report*. <https://alabamaworks.com/wp-content/uploads/AWC-2021-Annual-Report-%E2%80%93FINAL.pdf>
- ¹² Delaware Pathways. (2017, April). *Learning to Work: Delaware Pathways Strategic Plan*. <https://delawarepathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Delaware-Pathways-Strategic-Plan-March-2017-1.pdf>
- ¹³ Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. (2020). *Oklahoma Perkins V State Plan*. https://s3.amazonaws.com/PCRN/docs/stateplan/OK_2020_State_Plan.pdf
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ *Meat Processing Workforce Education*. (2021). Oklahoma Career Tech. <https://www.okcareertech.org/educators/resource-center/meat-processing-workforce-education/meat-processing-workforce-education>
- ¹⁶ DeRenzi, B. & Kaleba, K. (2016, October). *Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative: How TANF can support skills for low-income parents, and how policymakers can help*. National Skills Coalition. <https://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/how-tanf-can-support-skills-for-low-income-parents-and-how-policymakers-can-help-1.pdf>
- ¹⁷ Cushing, E., English, D., Therriault, S. & Lavinson, R. (2019, March). *Developing a college- and career-ready workforce: An analysis of ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA*. American Institutes for Research. https://ccrscenter.org/sites/default/files/Career-ReadyWorkforce_Brief_Workbook.pdf
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ *WIOA Populations with barriers to employment*. (n.d.). [https://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WorkforceProf/Docs/AttachmentA PopulationswithBarriers.stm#:~:text=Attachment%20A%3A%20WIOA%20populations%20with%20barriers%20to%20employment,-Type&text=Has%20a%20physical%20or%20mental,is%20age%2055%20or%20older](https://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WorkforceProf/Docs/AttachmentA%20PopulationswithBarriers.stm#:~:text=Attachment%20A%3A%20WIOA%20populations%20with%20barriers%20to%20employment,-Type&text=Has%20a%20physical%20or%20mental,is%20age%2055%20or%20older)
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³⁶ Perkins V Section 124(b)(13)

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