

**Innovation Pathways**

**Designation Criteria
*Revised* April 2020**

Massachusetts Executive Office of Education

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Background and Introduction**

In the summer of 2017, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Commonwealth) embarked on a new chapter in college and career readiness for its students, launching a “High Quality College and Career Pathways” (HQCCP) initiative. This initiative was the outgrowth of a number of complementary bodies of work that began several years prior in Massachusetts, overseen by the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC). [[1]](#footnote-1)

Among its priorities is the development of career pathways for residents of the Commonwealth, an effort significantly supported by 1) the early college work based in part on the [report](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Camx%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CY91ZRRS7%5Ccdn.ey.com%5Cparthenon%5Cpdf%5Cperspectives%5CEarly-college_Report_final_web.122016.pdf) by the Parthenon-EY group that led to the creation of Early College Joint Committee in 2016, and 2) the state’s receipt of a highly competitive New Skills for Youth (NSFY) grant from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to address the need at a national level for greater career preparation and access to high quality career pathways.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Through its Early College and NSFY work, the Commonwealth developed a set of guiding principles that provide a powerful context for all HQCCPs, as well as a more specific set of characteristics that define these pathways. The Commonwealth identified two types of HQCCPs, referred to as “Early College” (EC) and “Innovation Pathways” (IP).[[3]](#footnote-3) The Commonwealth now offers its local education agencies and institutions of higher education the opportunity to obtain formal designation for these two types of pathways. This entails a two-step process described below that cumulates in official designation for those pathways that satisfy rigorous levels of quality.

These pathways will provide participating students in the Commonwealth with supportive, rigorous academic experiences and career development education relevant to their next steps after high school. State agencies will work collaboratively with schools and districts to provide students with equitable access to a pathway deemed a strong individualized fit, with on and off ramps across different pathways throughout high school, ensure that they graduate with a well-designed post-secondary plan, and a robust knowledge of Massachusetts’ workforce opportunities with realities for employment.

The related Pathway designation approval process was designed collaboratively by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Higher Education to ensure that new college and career pathways are carefully designed to offer high quality preparation for college and career.

**Two Complementary Initiatives**

In [January 2017](http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/FY2017/2017-01/joint-itemI1.html), the Boards of Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education jointly approved five **Guiding Principles** for Early College pathways that are also relevant to Innovation pathways. To receive designation as either type, an applicant will be required to demonstrate that its pathways are rooted in all five of these guiding principles:

## **Guiding Principle 1: Equitable Access**

*Designated programs should prioritize students underrepresented in education enrollment and completion. To facilitate this, programs should be structured to eliminate barriers to student participation. Design might therefore include, but not be limited to, tuition-free participation, open enrollment without regard to prior academic performance, student supports to promote success, scalability, multiple entry points for students, and student supports to prepare students for entry into the program.*

## **Guiding Principle 2: Guided Academic Pathways**

*Designated programs should be structured around clear and detailed student academic pathways from secondary to post-secondary education with regard to coursework, sequencing, and experiences beyond the classroom. Programs should offer students substantive exposure to career opportunities in high demand fields, allowing them to make an informed decision about which career pathway to pursue. Students should also be exposed to the authentic experience and academic rigor of postsecondary education.*

## **Guiding Principle 3: Enhanced Student Support**

*Designated programs should incorporate sufficient wraparound services to promote academic success and course completion, taking into consideration the needs of diverse populations of students.*

## **Guiding Principle 4: Connection to Career**

*Designated programs should expose students to a variety of career opportunities, including greater depth in careers relevant to their selected pathway, by providing, for example, opportunities for targeted workforce and career skills development, career counseling, and elements of experiential and work-based learning.*

## **Guiding Principle 5: Effective Partnerships**

 *Innovation Pathway programs require a formal partnership with a workforce development ([MassHire](https://www.mass.gov/about-masshire)) board and or one or more employers or an employer association. Programs should be sufficient in size to capture economies of scale goals and to ensure long-term sustainability.*

**Detailed characteristics of new pathways**. Using national research and data, the CCSSO identified six core components for high quality career pathways for its NSFY initiative. Massachusetts has elected to adopt these six characteristics for its new pathways, recognizing that a structured pathway that integrates these into a coherent set of strategies and services for participating students ensures the quality of the pathway.

The six core characteristics that are required for designation, and that help fulfill the Guiding Principles described above, are as follows:

* **Career Advising**

Career advising supports each student to complete a college and career plan during high school that identifies areas of aptitude and interest, explores career opportunities, and establishes a transition path to college, apprenticeship, and/or employment training. This includes helping students surmount obstacles to completion of their plan.

* **Labor Market Information**

The pathway is justified by labor market information related to employer demand and career opportunities.

* **Integrated Instruction**

Students participate in a carefully designed sequence of integrated, rigorous instructional courses relevant to their pathway, including both academic and technical subjects.

* **Work-based Learning**

Students participate in structured work readiness activities and work-based learning experiences.

* **Credential Preparation**

The pathway enables students to make progress toward attainment of an industry-recognized credential or college credits toward a Certificate, Associates, or Baccalaureate degree.

* **Postsecondary Linkages**

Students participate in a wide range of college awareness and engagement activities to inform their postsecondary plan, relating to college, apprenticeship and/or training programs.

The evidence sought from applicants about these six characteristics is embedded in the five Guiding Principles, as shown below, so that the two are aligned and seamless.

# **Innovation Pathways Defined**

For over thirty years, educators, employers, community-based organization and government agencies have collaborated to develop and implement Career Pathways strategies. Early models focused primarily on youth oriented vocational education programs and academies with strong contextualized instruction. The efforts have transitioned to wider and deeper Career Technical Education efforts championed by the US Department of Education.

Over the last decade new career pathway implementation models supported by the US Department of Labor, US Chamber of Commerce and National Governors Association have focused on meeting high demand workforce needs. In July of 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was enacted to support industry, education and workforce system to collaborate to build systematic solutions to provide career opportunities in high demand fields.

These Career Pathway programs include strong industry engagement, secondary and post-secondary partnerships, and are constructed to align to local, regional or states sector based economic development initiatives. The programs often feature customized approaches to meeting the unique needs of specific student populations coupled with industry sector relevant academic, career and work -related experiences.

Innovation Pathways are structures within our high schools that are designed to connect student learning to a broadly-defined industry sector that is in demand in the regional and state economy.  **Schools will leverage strong partnerships with local MassHire boards and employers to provide students career awareness and work-based learning activities.** **Students will participate in a series of courses and experiences relevant to achieving industry recognized credentials.** Participation in this kind of pathway can lead students to opportunities for meaningful careers in that industry sector upon the completion of needed postsecondary education and training.

*Massachusetts’ Innovation Pathways draw on three decades of successful practices and are designed to support schools to enhance a student’s ability to gain awareness and preparedness of future employment opportunities, fully prepare academically, and make informed choices related to post-secondary pathways in the industry of their interest.*

**A note about eligibility for federal Perkins funding:** Designated Innovation Pathway programs generally meet many of the requirements for federal funding under [**Perkins V**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/perkins-v/). Specific Perkins requirements that are not inherently covered by the Innovation Pathway designation criteria are outlined explicitly below. Schools and districts should consider whether or not they wish to pursue federal Perkins funding as part of the designation process, bearing in mind that there are additional reporting, performance, accountability and monitoring expectations.

# **Innovation Pathways Designation Process Overview**

In order to ensure a measured and thoughtful process for Massachusetts Innovation Pathway applicants, the designation process entails two stages: “Part A” and “Part B.”

All programs seeking designation must first submit a **Part A application**. Applicants’ initial, Part A submissions will be evaluated by a team from DESE and EOE to determine if the applicant has completed sufficient planning and design in alignment with the Preliminary Criteria as framed by the Guiding Principles. Those applicants who have been approved at Part A will be invited to submit Part B Final applications.

**Final Designation** will require that the applicant fulfills essential elements of Innovation Pathway program design and provides sufficient evidence that the program has enrolled students as defined by the Designation Criteria, or that the applicant has developed all necessary infrastructure to begin enrolling students by the subsequent fall..

The Part B Final Designation application will be due winter (see date posted on the [DESE Innovation Pathways page](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/innovation-pathways/)) for eligible applicants.

Final designations will be issued as five-year performance contracts, with annual reporting obligations, opportunities for participation in technical assistance, and a review/check-in after the first three years.

# **Eligible Applicant Criteria**

The lead applicant for Innovation Pathway program designation must be a Massachusetts school district or charter school and it must apply in collaboration with a local MassHire Board and an Employer partner as a supporting partner, evidenced by a letter of agreement to partner. Letters of support may be submitted from additional partners.

# **Innovation Pathways Designation Process Timeline**

To assist the Commonwealth in planning technical assistance, interested applicants are invited to submit a nonbinding Letter of Intent.

**The Innovation Pathways Part A Application is due in September. (See the** [**Innovation Pathways webpage**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/innovation-pathways/) **for the exact date.)**

Review of Part A Applications will be completed in mid-October, at which time applicants will be notified of their application status. Applicants who meet the Part A criteria will be invited to apply for Final Designation, and they will submit the Part B application **in January.**

Between November and January, the departments will offer technical support as qualified applicants prepare materials for submission.

DESE will award Designation to applicants who have met all requirements in the spring with the expectation that designated programs will launch in the following fall.

# **Innovation Pathway Designation Criteria Framed by Guiding Principles**

## A description of the key characteristics of Innovation Pathways is presented here, embedded in the five Guiding principles listed earlier, with details about the evidence that will be needed at each stage of the designation process. As indicated above, the second stage (“Part B”) generally will require further evidence that the applicant has all of the elements in place to enroll students in its proposed Innovation Pathway, building on the evidence submitted at the preliminary stage.

## **Guiding Principle 1: Equitable Access**

*Designated programs should prioritize students underrepresented in higher education enrollment and completion and/or high demand industry sectors. To facilitate this, programs should be structured to eliminate barriers to student participation. Design might therefore include, but not be limited to, open enrollment without regard to prior academic performance, student supports to promote success, scalability, multiple entry points for students, tuition-free participation in dual enrollment courses, and student supports to prepare students for entry into the program.*

**Preliminary Criteria to demonstrate Equitable Access:**

1. Program is designed and funded such that it is offered free for all student participants.
2. Enrollment in program is open to all students in the secondary school, without respect to prior academic performance.[[4]](#footnote-4)
3. Should student applications exceed program capacity, participation should be determined by a lottery among applicants.
4. The program will present a plan for outreach and recruitment of students with recommended additional strategies to address challenges for students who are traditionally under-represented (low-income students, students of color, English language learners, students with disabilities and potential first-generation college-goers). A plan for outreach to parents, community stakeholders and industry in the region should also be included.
5. Program design aims to reflect admissions and placement policy that ensures that at-risk and other underrepresented students are fully able to participate.

**Final Criteria to demonstrate Equitable Access:**

The applicant shall continue to meet all criteria requisite for Preliminary Designation. In addition, the applicant must demonstrate:

1. Long-term program design reflects a reasonable plan to target enrollment of significant scale relative to school/school district size.
2. Program design reflects thoughtfulness and opportunity with regard to student entry and exit points in the program. A program will demonstrate a clear pathway for students but will also be designed to allow for multiple entry points for students. Program design will also be structured such that should a student need to exit the program, the student will be able to transition out of the program and back into the traditional or a different high school program in a coherent way.
3. The applicant will also submit the following:
	1. Longitudinal data showing student enrollment projection trends.
	2. A needs assessment demonstrating potential district need for such a program in the district or region.
	3. Written recruitment plan, including a timeline of recruitment and enrollment events, and recruitment materials for distribution at feeder schools and other appropriate locations in the community (e.g., recruitment schedule).
	4. Written communication plan for targeting identified audiences, parents, community members, school board, higher education personnel, etc.
	5. Materials used for outreach, including but not limited to, brochures and marketing in Spanish, English, and/or relevant second language(s).
	6. Written admission policy, including a potential lottery process and minimum program enrollment requirements.
	7. Calendar of family/parent outreach events and other opportunities to educate students, counselors, principals, parents, the school board, and community members on the Innovation Pathway.

**Guiding Principle 2: Guided Academic Pathways**

*Designated programs should be structured around clear and detailed student academic pathways from secondary and post-secondary education with regard to coursework, sequencing, and experiences beyond the classroom. Innovation Pathway Programs should offer students substantive exposure to career opportunities in their defining industry sector as well as other fields, allowing students to make an informed decision about which career pathway to pursue. Students should also be exposed to the academic rigor of postsecondary education through participation in college level courses. Further, programs should enable students to take courses on college and university campuses where possible, and otherwise offer experiences intended to acculturate students to the post-secondary experience.*

**Preliminary Criteria to demonstrate Guided Academic Pathways:**

An Innovation Pathway Program must be aligned with career opportunities in broad industry sectors with high employer demand.[[5]](#footnote-5) It should provide students the opportunity to make progress toward obtaining an industry-recognized credential, or college credits toward a Certificate, Associates, or Baccalaureate degree.[[6]](#footnote-6) The program must be a clearly articulated, thoughtfully designed, and fully integrated pathway for students, including:

* 1. Career and postsecondary education exploration, grounded in essential workplace skills and labor market information.
	2. Program design reflects an integration of course taking, career exploration and work-based learning aligned to the identified broad industry sector, which must be one of the four identified above.
	3. The pathway, starting at grade 9, is designed to prepare students for college level courses to be taken in grade 12, if not sooner, and students must complete MassCore by graduation.
	4. College and career exploration and course taking is linked with the broader college-going experience, such that where feasible, students participate in activities on the campus of a postsecondary partner institution.
	5. Program is designed so that at the conclusion of high school, students will have a clear understanding of the postsecondary pathways and courses of study available to them, and how those courses of study will help facilitate their career aspirations.
	6. Students will also be fully familiar with, and prepared to pursue, their next steps in postsecondary education (application, admission, enrollment, financial aid, scholarship resources, self-pay), as documented in their college and career plan.
	7. An Innovation Pathways program must include in its scope and sequence of courses a minimum of 4 of high school courses related to the industry sector category.
		1. A minimum of 2 courses must be technical courses related to the pathway’s industry sector concentration, which must be one of preordained priority areas, as specified in the application materials.
		2. A minimum of 2 courses must be advanced courses, as defined by DESE for the purposes of accountability reporting.[[7]](#footnote-7) We recommend that the courses selected provide the student an opportunity to gain college credit. Methods to gain college credit may include articulation agreement, college dual enrollment, or challenge exam (AP, CLEP, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), etc.), and may align to apprenticeship standards.
		3. The 2 technical courses may not overlap with the required 2 college-level courses that are required for students in Innovation pathways. There must be a 4-course sequence.
		4. To the extent possible, these courses, if dual-enrollment, should fall under the [MassTransfer Gen Ed Foundation](http://www.mass.edu/masstransfer/gened/coursesearch.asp) and align with established “[A2B Mapped” Degree Pathways](http://www.mass.edu/masstransfer/a2b/home.asp).

**Perkins Eligibility Note:** If the proposed Innovation Pathway program seeks or wishes to maintain eligibility for federal Perkins funding, the program must cover **all aspects of the industry** that students are preparing to enter as outlined in the [**Perkins Checklist**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/perkins-v/checklist.docx).[[8]](#footnote-8) In particular, the program should pay attention to coverage of occupational safety and health knowledge and skills and management and entrepreneurship knowledge and skills. In addition, for Perkins consideration, the **two** **technical** **courses** must each be a **full-year equivalent** (such as 2 courses that are year-long; 4 half-year courses; 2 block schedule courses) or **two semesters** of college-level courses at a postsecondary institution.

**Final Criteria to demonstrate Guided Academic Pathways:**

The applicant shall continue to meet all criteria requisite for Preliminary Designation. In addition, the applicant must provide:

1. Scope and sequence evidencing a course of study allowing for all students who complete the program as designed to graduate with at least 4 courses relevant to the industry sector as indicated in the Preliminary Designation, plus satisfaction of local graduation requirements and alignment with MassCore.
2. Evidence of curricular alignment between high school and college courses, as well as targeted credentials relevant to the industry sector.
3. Proposed schedules for students enrolled in the Innovation Pathway.
4. Examples of how student’s MyCAP will include connections between areas of interest and exposure to career opportunities.
5. Proposed high school course catalogs or additions to existing catalogs, including program outlines and course descriptions and syllabi.
6. Written policy for placement of students into technical and college courses that includes strategies for assuring student preparedness.

## **Guiding Principle 3: Enhanced Student Support**

*Designated Innovation Career Pathway programs should incorporate sufficient wraparound services to promote academic success and completion, taking into consideration the needs of diverse populations of students.*

**Preliminary Criteria to demonstrate Enhanced Student Support**

1. The program identifies potential academic and nonacademic challenges for all potential student participants.
2. Plans for supports for academic, nonacademic, and career-related courses and activities are included. These plans should incorporate evidence-based strategies and consider the supports offered by programs such as Connecting Activities and post-secondary partners.
3. An outline of potential academic supports, such as tutoring, peer mentoring, or career coaching is provided.
4. An appropriate contact for student support is named in the application. Full contact information for this individual is provided, along with a description of the role. If the role requires staff to be hired, a proposed job description is included.
5. Appropriate safety procedures for students related to off school site industry or post-secondary activities are addressed.

**Final Criteria to demonstrate Enhanced Student Support:**

The applicant shall continue to meet all criteria requisite for Preliminary Designation. In addition, the applicant must provide:

1. A comprehensive plan for ongoing academic and non-academic support so students will be on a pathway to take college courses in high school; the plan must address supports for English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and first-generation college students.
2. Student schedules evidencing advisory/or academic support/college access/ readiness and support time built into the program.
3. Advisory/study skills curriculum material and tutoring schedules.
4. A detailed calendar of postsecondary awareness activities for current and prospective students, including application assistance, financial aid counseling, and college and career advising.
5. A policy on communicating to students that they are at risk for failing a course, supports for helping the student get back on track, and actions that may or may not be taken if a student fails a course or multiple courses.

## **Guiding Principle 4: Connection to Career**

*Designated programs should expose students to a variety of career opportunities including greater depth in careers relevant to their selected pathway, for example, by providing opportunities for targeted workforce and career skills development, career advising, and elements of experiential and workplace learning.*

**Preliminary Criteria to demonstrate Connection to Career:**

1. The IP must be developed based on one of the predetermined industry sectors, and the Applicant must identify the local Workforce Development Board (MassHire) who will confirm the need for the program in its region, informed by the Workforce Skills Cabinet Regional Plan.
2. A range of well-designed career development education activities, by grade level, are included in the pathway, including exploration, awareness, and immersion, as defined by DESE.[[9]](#footnote-9)
3. Aligned career and college counseling is a required part of the Pathway Program, including the guided use of Individualized Learning Plans (MyCAP) beginning in 9th grade.[[10]](#footnote-10)
4. Program uses an online tool (i.e., MEFA Pathways, formerly known as Your Plan for the Future or Naviance: College and Career Technology Solution, Mass CIS, Xello and other similar platforms) for college and career counseling that aligns to the necessary elements of MyCAP (as defined by DESE).
5. Innovation Pathway Programs must create an opportunity for student to complete 100 hours of a career immersion experience in either an internship or capstone class, offering structured work readiness activities and work-based learning experiences. The applicant will need to identify which of these is being selected. This experience must be captured with a SCS course code, so that it is a part of a student’s transcript and is available for state data monitoring. To ensure the quality of the internship program or capstone, the following must be incorporated, and details about these will be required in the Final Designation process:
	1. For Internship experiences[[11]](#footnote-11):
		1. At least 100 hours at a work site, which may be paid or unpaid, with a preference for paid experiences.
		2. Use of the MA Work-Based Learning Plan as a structured assessment tool, with a pre and post review of the student’s performance in the internship.[[12]](#footnote-12)
		3. A staff liaison who supports the student at the work site.
		4. Regular and ongoing journal-writing that is reviewed by staff, that provides the student with the opportunity for reflection, and, where possible, a time during the week when students in work-based learning experiences can share their reflections.
		5. An end of internship culminating product created by the student, such as a written report, oral presentation, video, or other product.
	2. For a capstone class:
6. A well-designed process for identification of individual or team student project that ensures an alignment with the industry sector.
7. At least one hundred hours of activity by the student outside of the classroom, in the form of research, service-learning, or other related activity, that supports the capstone project.
8. The participation of an advisor with knowledge of the industry sector that defines the pathway, ideally an external partner not part of the school staff, who guides the development of the project.
9. The creation of a high-quality end product governed by a rubric, with each student’s product judged to meet or exceed minimums defined by the school.
10. An appropriate staff person for implementing the above immersive experience is named in the application. Full contact information for this individual is provided, along with a description of the role. If the role requires staff to be hired, a proposed job description is included.

**Final Criteria to demonstrate Connection to Career:**

The applicant shall continue to meet all criteria requisite for Preliminary Designation. In addition, the applicant must provide:

1. Proposed career development education activities, by grade level, that include awareness, exploration, and/or immersion (internships, proposed career pathways) that consider labor market information.
2. A multi-year plan for proposed career development education activities, by grade level, for students with contact information, evidencing a commitment of community businesses and other partners to expose students to a variety of potential career options and possible internship opportunities.
3. Identification of the partnering employer’s (employers’) commitment and resources to help support connections between education and career.
4. Detailed description of its plans for incorporation and integration of an online tool for use in college and career counseling (e.g.., Naviance or MEFA Your Plan for the Future, Mass CIS, Xello or another similar platform).
5. A detailed evidence of the implementation of the quality elements of the Internship or Capstone experience, as described in No. 5 in the Preliminary Designation.

## **Guiding Principle 5: Effective Partnerships**

*Designated programs should be a partnership between one public secondary school and/or district, a MassHire board and at least one employer from the relevant industry that guides program development and implementation. The MassHire board and employer should continue as active partners to support the program once implemented. The intent of the Innovation Pathway is to deeply involve one or more employers in the Career exploration and immersion elements of the pathway. Partnerships should present evidence that the program is consistent with any relevant collective bargaining agreements, and memoranda of understanding detailing the nature of governance, budget, sustainability, scheduling, respective responsibilities, and performance measures. Programs should be sufficient in size to capture economies of scale goals and to ensure long-term sustainability.*

**Preliminary Criteria to demonstrate Effective Partnerships:**

1. For Innovation Pathways, the local MassHire Board is involved from the outset in the design of the pathway.
2. Applicant must identify a minimum of two employers who agree to support students in the immersive experiences intended, whether internship or capstone.
3. Where there is a requirement for local bargaining relating to any aspect of the pathway (such as where dual enrollment is used to satisfy college-level course offerings), local requirements must be followed. The proposal outlines plans to have discussions concerning collective bargaining agreements, at both the K-12 and higher education level, as needed.
4. Each partner has identified personnel empowered with the authority to enter into memoranda of understanding discussions.

**Perkins Eligibility Note:** If the proposed Innovation Pathway program seeks or wishes to maintain eligibility for federal Perkins funding, the program will need to have an established advisory group comprised of representatives from the relevant industry sector(s) and postsecondary education. Note that the program must have a review by this advisory within the last two years; this includes consultation on the required Perkins [comprehensive local needs assessment](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/perkins-v/needs-assessment-template.docx).

**Final Criteria to demonstrate Effective Partnerships:**

The applicant shall continue to meet all criteria requisite for Preliminary Designation. In addition, the applicant must provide:

1. A joint or common vision statement agreed upon by partners, and ideally the value add of each partner.
2. A current, signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that defines an active partnership between the school district(s), the MassHire Board, lead employer partner, and, if relevant (such as where dual-enrollment is used to fulfill the college-level requirement), the lead post-secondary partner that addresses topics including, but not limited to:
	1. the anticipated costs and planned funding sources for all instruction and internship or capstone costs and for all support, logistical, administrative and other activities, including but not limited to costs for tuition, fees, and textbooks;
	2. student transportation;
	3. program coordination plan;
	4. student support plan;
	5. faculty support plan; and
	6. career partnership coordination plan.
3. The MOU shall also include the following necessary components:
	1. grading periods and policies;
	2. courses of study;
	3. curriculum alignment;
	4. instructional materials;
	5. instructional calendar;
	6. student enrollment and attendance policies;
	7. provisions and processes for collecting, sharing, and reviewing student and teacher data to assess the progress of the IP program;
	8. policy for advising students on the transferability of all college credits offered and earned;
	9. professional development for IP faculty;
	10. policy to ensure the IHE, if party to the program, transcripts college credit earned through dual credit in the same semester that credit is earned;
	11. policy addressing the role of each partner in the resolution of student issues (including student conduct, investigative procedures, consequences); and
	12. indication of how often the MOU will be reviewed.
4. The MOU shall also detail performance measure goals, and how the data attached to those measures will be collected, analyzed, and disseminated. Those measures should include but not be limited to the following:
	1. Program retention rate of participating students;
	2. high school graduation rate of participating students;
	3. skill gain of students in internship or capstone as measured through the MA Work-Based Learning Plan for internships, and an equivalent tool for capstone projects;
	4. percentage of participating students who complete the program;
	5. percentage of participating students who gain postsecondary credits and how many credits;
	6. percentage of participating students who achieve an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree within three or six years of high school graduation; and
	7. college and/or career outcomes of students.
5. Detailed MOUs for any other partnerships, including community-based organizations, businesses, and other partners.
6. The application should also include the following for the program in the aggregate:
	1. budgets;
	2. staffing plans;
	3. faculty and teacher qualifications;
	4. job descriptions for individuals supporting the IP Program;
	5. training or professional development and support plans;
	6. student mentor/induction program plans; and
	7. faculty and teacher assignments.
1. The WSC was [created by an Executive Order](http://www.mass.gov/governor/press-office/press-releases/fy2015/exec-order-to-address-workforkforce-skills-gap-signed.html) of Governor Charlie Baker in early 2015. The Cabinet aligns the Executive Offices of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development toward a comprehensive economic growth agenda. The Cabinet is charged with creating and implementing a strategy to ensure that individuals can develop and continuously improve their skills and knowledge to meet the varying needs of employers in the Commonwealth. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The NSFY initiative was designed to support the development of new and effective strategies to scale high-quality career pathways across the country, and significantly expand student access to, participation in, and successful completion of pathways that culminate in meaningful postsecondary and workforce credentials. Its intent was to ensure that many more young people are well prepared to prosper in the competitive global economy, a goal perfectly aligned with the goals of the Commonwealth. CCSSSO based the NSFY initiative on the conclusions of its report titled “[Opportunities and Options: Making Career Preparation Work for Students](http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2014/CCSSOTaskForceCareerReadiness120114.pdf).” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. To learn more about the Early College model, refer to the Early College [summary](http://www.mass.edu/strategic/ec_home.asp) and [designation criteria](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/resources/EarlyCollegeCriteria.docx). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This aspect of program design is subject to and may account for appropriate processes to address suitability for special populations of students, such as those with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Programs may also be designed to require students to meet reasonable benchmarks of participation, engagement, and performance to continue participation. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Applicants may seek designation in one of five pre-selected sectors, namely: Advanced Manufacturing; Information; Environmental and Life Sciences; Health Care and Social Assistance; and Business and Finance*.* For more information about these sectors, please see the Part A Application, posted on the [Innovation Pathways webpage](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/innovation-pathways/), and the[*2017 NAICS Manual*](https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/2017NAICS/2017_NAICS_Manual.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Department of Higher Education, in collaboration with the three segments of public higher education, has developed “A2B Mapped” degrees in specific disciplines and meta-majors that seek to make create a seamless transition from two-year to four-year institutions. These pathways guarantee the transfer of general education and foundational courses, and a minimum of 60-credits to be applied towards the baccalaureate degree. To the extent possible, high school Innovation Pathway Programs and course offerings should be aligned with the “A2B” mapped degrees, and these types of course offerings should be carefully examined as an essential aspect of any Innovation Pathway design process. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Applicants should refer to the [2020 District and School Accountability Reporting: List of Advanced Courses.](http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/advanced-courses.docx) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The term ‘all aspects of an industry’ means strong experience in, and comprehensive understanding of, the industry that the individual is preparing to enter. See Perkins V Checklist and Appendix for what this means in Massachusetts. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The Career Development Education Guide is available here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/resources/?section=tools>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For information on MyCAP, including the Implementation Guide, visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/mycap/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. For guidance on high quality internships, see the [Massachusetts Elements of Model Internship Programs](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/resources/?section=tools)

[Resource Guide](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/resources/?section=tools)***.*** This resource guide, from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for College, Career, and Technical Education, provides advice, forms, letters and other materials to support the creation of internship programs. Materials for the guide were contributed by School to Career Connecting Activities partner schools from around Massachusetts. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For “how to” information about using the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan and about using the Massachusetts Career Readiness (MA-CR) Database, visit <http://skillspages.com/masswbl/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)