



Monterey Bay Regional Career Pathways Toolkit

Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) and the Bright Futures Education Partnership (Bright Futures) are partnering to support existing career pathways and to foster the development of new career pathways in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties. Many of the components of this toolkit were developed through a collaborative process that sought input from high schools, regional occupational programs, Career and Technical Education programs, community colleges, universities, community partners, workforce investment boards, city economic development departments, and industry representatives. The ultimate goal is to maximize the impact of career pathway programs to increase the number of individuals who can be trained for high-wage and high-growth careers and contribute to the economic viability and strength of the region.

Monterey Bay Regional (MBR) Career Pathways are structured and sequenced programs of study that enable students to obtain the stackable, industry-recognized credentials they need to enter and progress in living-wage careers. MBR Career Pathways are sector- and data-driven – informed by labor market data and leveraging employers for industry insights and opportunities. MBR Career Pathways seek to resolve inequities in education and employment outcomes among diverse student groups by providing support services and flexible formats, locations, and times for classes. Seamless entry, exit, and re-entry enable learners to participate in education and training throughout their lifetimes. MBR Career Pathways are evaluated using multiple forms of data (e.g. qualitative and quantitative) including industry, employers, and workforce partners. Outcomes are displayed and shared in multiple ways to help stakeholders understand results, improve accountability, and continuously improve.

Opportunity in the Tri-County Region

The tri-county region is often described as an “hourglass” economy: a divided labor market with a small number of highly skilled, highly paid workers and a much larger number of low-skill, low-paid workers in the hospitality and agriculture industries. Livable-wage, middle-skills jobs are essential in order to develop a thriving regional economy. There is high demand for many of these middle-skilled jobs by local employers, and it would be best

to fill this need with local residents. However, those that might benefit from such opportunities are often unaware of the jobs and do not know what training/education is required to obtain them.

The tri-county area population is significantly Latinx and low-income, with low educational attainment. College readiness and college-going rates at regional schools are low. High percentages of potential college students are the first in their family to attend college. Many students arrive at college unprepared for college-level math and English, and struggle to complete critical gateway courses. Many students (both traditional and returning) are non-native English speakers.

2017-18 College Readiness (Sources: Appendix A)	% Latinx ¹	% Below Poverty Limit ²	% less than Associate's Degree ³	% College and Career Ready ⁴	College-Going Rate ⁵	% Met/ Exceeded 11th grade English Standard ⁶	% Met/ Exceeded 11th grade Math Standard ⁷
Monterey	58%	15%	68%	40%	61%	48%	21%
San Benito	59%	10%	72%	49%	62%	54%	28%
Santa Cruz	33%	15%	51%	32%	66%	58%	33%
Total	49%	14%	62%	38%	63%	49%	22%

As many of these students have other responsibilities (e.g. family and work), attending daytime classes can be challenging. With the urgency to increase their skills to find viable employment, students must be able to complete the necessary coursework as efficiently as possible. The financial burden of attending college adds to this urgency. Students must be able to leave and re-enter, responding to changes in their circumstances. Student services and supports are critical to student success.

The Value of Career Pathways

Career Pathways are an excellent way to prepare individuals for middle-skilled jobs. They provide a clear set of required steps to efficiently acquire marketable credentials and skills. Essentially, a career pathway is a series of manageable educational steps leading to successively higher credentials and employment opportunities in growing occupations. Each step is designed to prepare students for the next level of employment and education, and also provide a credential with labor market value.

As Career Pathways are structured in such a way that each exit point results in an opportunity, the learning opportunities must be available at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries. They are designed to serve not only those who transition directly from high school to college, but also those who enter postsecondary education and training while working or after spending time in the workplace.

Effective Career Pathways engage and retain a diverse population, as well as integrating promising instructional strategies, supports, and employer connections. Monterey Bay Region businesses, labor, educators, community-based organizations and others must work together in order to create a resilient and prosperous workforce.

The Toolkit

What is this toolkit?

- This toolkit is designed to help align career pathway strategies and curriculum with best practices in the field in order to design, establish, and continuously improve effective programs to create a more vibrant and relevant local labor force.
- It can be used as a framework to plan a new or expanded career pathway, or to evaluate and improve upon an existing pathway.

Who is this toolkit for?

- Planners and managers of career pathway programs (i.e. people responsible for planning the curriculum, partnerships, transitions, and monitoring and evaluation for pathways).
- Higher education administrators responsible for overseeing and leading career pathway programs (e.g. department chairs, deans, academic and student affairs leadership, etc).
- Development professionals responsible for communicating and attracting resources to support pathway programs.

How should this toolkit be used?

- Review each principle (Principles A-F) to evaluate the degree to which a pathway aligns with the Monterey Bay Regional Career Pathways principles and elements.
- Rate the degree to which each measure is being met (0-3).
 - 0: We are not implementing this element
 - 1: We are planning to implement this element
 - 2: We are implementing this element
 - 3: We are implementing this element at a high level
- Using the Robustness Rubric at the end of the toolkit, tally your ratings and consider next steps for your pathway(s).

Overview of MBR Career Pathways Principles

Principle	Guiding Statement
A. Sector-Focused	Career pathways deliver value and talent to employers. Pathways focus on high demand, livable wage careers and are informed by labor market data and regional employers.
B. Career-Centric Learning	Curricula reflect real-world scenarios, utilize applied (contextualized) learning techniques, and integrate technical, academic and foundational professional skills to prepare students to think, act and perform effectively as they enter and/or advance in their careers. The pathway includes work-based awareness and learning (e.g. presentations in classrooms, workplace visits, internships, apprenticeships, etc.)
C. Modular and Linked Structure	Pre-defined career pathway course sequence and options are developed across organizations. Learning content, structure, and credit is consistent, non-duplicative, and transferable across organizations. Within the pathway, credentials are stackable. There are multiple entry and exit points with clearly mapped transition points and each designed exit offers market-recognized career value.
D. Access, Equity, and Opportunity	Pathways provide opportunities for upward mobility and are accessible geographically and to students from all backgrounds (e.g. first generation, returning adults, CalWorks participants, etc.). Pathways are linked to special supports that address barriers to completion and close equity gaps. Pathways encourage and provide venues for culturally relevant social support networks, cohorts and/or alumni groups for students from high school through career.
E. Partnerships	Partners participate in shared pathways planning, development, and outcomes measurement, have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities, and commit to leveraging resources to educate, train, support, and/or locate employment for individuals. Partners adjust existing policies or adopt new policies and structures as needed to support pathways.
F. Measurement & Accountability	Qualitative and quantitative data are used to measure student outcomes, value to employers, and identify areas for continuous improvement over time.

Principle A: Sector-Focused

Discussion

Career pathways deliver value and talent to employers. Pathways focus on high demand, livable wage careers and are informed by labor market data and regional employers.

Key elements of the Sector-Focused principle:

- Selects careers targeted by the pathway based on sector data and predictions
- Has a sector advisory group that convenes at least annually
- Sector advisory group and other key stakeholders influence curriculum and program development

Principle A: Sector-Focused
Pathway Element Assessment

Element	Measures of success	Included in Program? (Rate 0-3)	<i>Provide evidence for how the element is included and any needed program changes to improve</i>
Selects careers targeted by the pathway based on sector data and predictions	Sector employment data (including wage, demand and growth projections) is collected and analyzed annually		
	Pathway occupational data is presented to employers, students, and educational institutions annually		
	Pathway offerings align with employment data and lead to high wage, in-demand, growing occupations		
Has a sector advisory group	A sector advisory group comprised of local employers is convened at least annually		
Sector advisory group and other key stakeholders influence curriculum and program development	Pathway administrators seek input from the sector advisory group on curriculum development and updates		
	Sector advisory group is regularly consulted on new skills needed from pathway graduates		
	Total:		

0: Not implementing this element / 1: Planning to implement this element / 2: Implementing this element / 3: Implementing this element at a high level

Principle B: Career-Centric Learning

Discussion

Curricula reflect real-world scenarios, utilize applied (contextualized) learning techniques, and integrate technical, academic and foundational professional skills to prepare students to think, act and perform effectively as they enter and/or advance in their careers. The pathway includes work-based awareness and learning (e.g. presentations in classrooms, workplace visits, internships, apprenticeships, etc.)

Key elements of the Career-Centric Learning principle:

- Streamlined course requirements lead to skills for a livable wage job
- Curricula incorporate real-world scenarios, tools, and contexts
- Passive Exposure (classroom visits, workplace visits)
- Work-based learning (internships, apprenticeships, etc.)

Principle B: Career-Centric Learning
Pathway Element Assessment

Element	Measures of success	Included in Program? (Rate 0-3)	<i>Provide evidence for how the element is included and any needed program changes to improve</i>
Streamlined course requirements lead to skills for a livable wage job	A sector advisory group or data is used to inform hard and soft skills needed for sector occupations on at least an annual basis.		
Curricula incorporate real-world scenarios, tools, and contexts	Hard skills are included as part of pathway curricula.		
	Soft skills are included as part of pathway curricula.		
Passive Exposure (classroom visits, workplace visits)	Curricula includes passive exposure (i.e. workplace and classroom visits).		
Work-based learning (internships, apprenticeships, etc.)	Curricula include work-based learning (e.g. internships, apprenticeships).		
	Total:		

0: Not implementing this element / 1: Planning to implement this element / 2: Implementing this element / 3: Implementing this element at a high level

Principle C: Modular and Linked Structure

Discussion

Pre-defined career pathway course sequence and options are developed across higher education organizations. This supports completion of a certificate, associate degree and/or bachelor degree across multiple institutions.

Learning content, structure, and credit is consistent, non-duplicative, and transferable across organizations. Within the pathway, credentials are stackable with each leading to greater skills and earning potential.

There are multiple entry and exit points with clearly mapped transition points. Each designed exit offers market-recognized career value.

Key elements of the Modular and Linked Structure principle:

- Pathway is well articulated with clear on-ramps and off-ramps
- Learning content, structure, and credit is aligned, non-duplicative, and transferrable
- Each exit point leads to a career with a livable wage

Principle C: Modular and Linked Structure
Pathway Element Assessment

Element	Measures of success	Included in Program? (Rate 0-3)	<i>Provide evidence for how the element is included and any needed program changes to improve</i>
Pathway is well articulated with clear on-ramps and off-ramps	The pathway has at least two entry and exit points.		
	Students can exit pathway and return to similar placement at a later date.		
	Successive stages of the pathway have options available that can accommodate the number of students who complete early stages (i.e. not impacted).		
Learning content, structure, and credit is aligned, non-duplicative, and transferrable	Paperwork, testing, credit, etc. is non-duplicative in the pathway.		
	Materials are available to students/the public that describe the inter-connectedness and non-duplicative aspects of the organizations (e.g. shared paperwork, testing, credit, etc.)		
Each exit point leads to a career with a livable wage	Data is collected and shared that shows each exit point leads to occupational options with higher wage potential than previous exit point.		
	Total:		

0: Not implementing this element / 1: Planning to implement this element / 2: Implementing this element / 3: Implementing this element at a high level

Principle D: Access, Equity, and Opportunity

Discussion

Pathways provide opportunities for upward mobility and are accessible geographically and to students from all backgrounds (e.g. first generation, returning adults, CalWorks participants, etc.). Pathways are linked to special supports that address barriers to completion and close equity gaps. Pathways encourage and provide venues for culturally relevant social support networks, cohorts and/or alumni groups for students from high school thru career.

Key elements of the Career-Centric Learning principle:

- Outreach to specific target populations to encourage/promote participation in pathways
- Cultural relevance is critical to all aspects of program (social support networks, mentors, teachers, etc.)
- Pathways are available at locations, times, etc. that allow participation by people in a wide variety of contexts (working, family responsibilities, etc.)
- Support services are available throughout the pathway (and before and after) to promote student success

Principle D: Access, Equity, and Opportunity
Pathway Element Assessment

Element	Measures of success	Included in Program? (Rate 0-3)	<i>Provide evidence for how the element is included and any needed program changes to improve</i>
Outreach to specific target populations to encourage/promote participation in programs	Completion data is collected and analyzed by subgroups, at a minimum, race, gender, social class, generation		
	Income is considered in cost charged to student for pathway participation		
	Public information about the program is available in at least English and Spanish		
Cultural relevance is critical to all aspects of program	Efforts are made to make outreach, supports, and teaching culturally relevant		
Programs are available at locations, times, etc. that allow participation by people in a wide variety of contexts	Courses are available in the evening or on weekends		
	Courses are available in more than one location		
Support services are available throughout the program (and before and after) to promote student success	Supports are instituted for subgroups with low completion rates		
	Total:		

0: Not implementing this element / 1: Planning to implement this element / 2: Implementing this element / 3: Implementing this element at a high level

Principle E: Partnerships

Discussion

Partners participate in shared pathways planning, development, and outcomes measurement, have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities, and commit to leveraging resources to educate, train, support, and/or locate employment for individuals. Partners adjust existing or adopt new policies and structures as needed to support pathways.

Key elements of the Career-Centric Learning principle:

- Alignment in goals and strategies for pathway
- Coordinated efforts for employer engagement, student support services, and obtaining funding & other resources
- Advocacy for change needed to make pathways successful

Principle E: Partnerships
Pathway Element Assessment

Element	Measures of success	Included in Program? (Rate 0-3)	<i>Provide evidence for how the element is included and any needed program changes to improve</i>
Alignment in goals and strategies for pathway	At least one formal agreement/document exists between at least two organizations planning the pathway		
	Publicly available information references collaboration between at least two organizations		
Coordinated efforts for employer engagement, student support services, and obtaining funding & other resources	At least two organizations are meeting annually (at a minimum) to discuss the pathway		
	At least two organizations share or contribute resources to the pathway		
Advocacy for change needed to make pathways successful	At least two organizations are collaborating to design the pathway		
	Total:		

0: Not implementing this element / 1: Planning to implement this element / 2: Implementing this element / 3: Implementing this element at a high level

Principle F: Measurement and Accountability

Discussion

Qualitative and quantitative data are used to measure student outcomes, value to employers, and identify areas for continuous improvement over time.

Key elements of the Career-Centric Learning principle:

- Leverages third party data to inform pathway selection.
- Conducts primary research to evaluate pathway and program success.
- Shares research/data across organizations
- Incorporates data into process improvement process

Principle F: Measurement and Accountability
Pathway Element Assessment

Element	Measures of success	Included in Program? (Rate 0-3)	<i>Provide evidence for how the element is included and any needed program changes to improve</i>
Leverages third party data to inform pathway selection	Data is being used on an annual basis (at a minimum) to improve aspects of the pathway		
Conducts primary research to evaluate pathway and program success	Student completion rates are being tracked		
	Student job placement rates are being tracked		
	Living wage attainment by completers is being tracked		
Shares research/data across organizations	Primary research is conducted annually (at a minimum) to understand employer needs and improve satisfaction		
Incorporates data into process improvement process	Primary research is conducted annually (at a minimum) to identify and improve supports for student needs		
	Total:		

0: Not implementing this element / 1: Planning to implement this element / 2: Implementing this element / 3: Implementing this element at a high level

Robustness Rubric

Principle	Principle Score Total	Principle Robustness Index	Rating (Low, Medium, High)
A: Sector-Focused (p. 7)		0-6: Low 7-12: Medium 13-18: High	
B: Career-Centric Learning (p. 9)		0-5: Low 6-10: Medium 11-15: High	
C: Modular and Linked Structure (p. 11)		0-6: Low 7-12: Medium 13-18: High	
D: Access, Equity, and Opportunity (p. 13)		0-7: Low 8-14: Medium 15-21: High	
E: Partnerships (p. 15)		0-5: Low 6-10: Medium 11-15: High	
F: Measurement and Accountability (p. 17)		0-6: Low 7-12: Medium 13-18: High	

Next Steps

Depending on your overall rating for each of the Principles, consider the following questions with your team.

Low

- What concrete next steps can we take to improve in this area?
- What resources can we draw on to improve?
- What new skills or knowledge might we need in order to improve?
- What partners do we need to engage to improve?

Medium:

- What is going well in each area?
- Where is there still room for improvement?
- What have we learned from implementing the activities in each area?
- How can you increase the positive and reduce the negative?

High

- What enabled us to get to this point?
- What do we need to do to ensure continued success in this area?
- What could we do to get even better?
- How might we support others in achieving similar success?

Appendix A: Monterey Bay Region Student Data Sources

1. % Latinx: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates.
https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml
2. % Below Poverty Limit: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Selected Economic Characteristics.
https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml
3. % less than Associate's Degree: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Educational Attainment.
https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml
4. % College and Career Ready: California Department of Education, California School Dashboard and System of Support, College/Career Indicator. <http://www3.cde.ca.gov/researchfiles/cadashboard/ccidownload2018.xlsx>
5. College-Going Rate: California Department of Education, DataQuest, College-Going Rates.
<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/page2.asp?level=County&subject=CGR&submit1=Submit>
6. % Met/Exceeded 11th grade English Standard: California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics.
<https://caaspp-elpac.cde.ca.gov/caaspp/CompareReport?ps=true&lstTestYear=2019&lstTestType=B&lstGroup=1&lstSchoolType=A&lstCds1=27000000000000&lstCds2=35000000000000&lstCds3=44000000000000&lstNav=srch>
7. % Met/Exceeded 11th grade Math Standard: California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics.
<https://caaspp-elpac.cde.ca.gov/caaspp/CompareReport?ps=true&lstTestYear=2019&lstTestType=B&lstGroup=1&lstSchoolType=A&lstCds1=27000000000000&lstCds2=35000000000000&lstCds3=44000000000000&lstNav=srch>

Appendix B: Bright Futures Education Partnership Career Pathway Indicators

Definitions (See page 29 of the [Alliance for Quality Career Pathway Metrics Framework](#))

- **Pathway Participants:** An individual who has enrolled in and is attending specific courses or activities or is receiving services(or combinations thereof) that have been designated as specific entry points for a career pathway.
- **Pathway Leavers:** A career pathway participant who is no longer enrolled in pathway courses, services, or activities and has not re-enrolled in pathway courses, services, or activities for a period of at least one year. Career pathway leavers include: A) participants who attained one or more of the interim outcomes or pathway education and training outcomes attainable in a career pathway prior to leaving the pathway; and B) participants who did not attain one of these interim or pathway outcomes prior to leaving the pathway.
- **Pathway Completers:** A career pathway participant who attained one or more of the pathway education and training outcomes attainable in a career pathway prior to leaving the pathway. These outcomes include marketable credentials as designated by the local/regional career pathway partnership, such as a license, industry certification, certificate, diploma, or degree. Career pathway credential completers include: A) participants who have left the career pathway after attaining one of the above credentials; and B) participants who are still enrolled in career pathway courses after attaining one of the above credentials, with the goal of attaining further credentials.

Indicators

- % of pathway participants who earn a credential (micro-credential, certificate, Associates, Bachelor's or higher) through participation in the program.
- % of pathway participants who gain at least one educational level through participation in the program.
- % of pathway leavers who are employed in the second calendar quarter after leaving the career pathway.
- % of credential completers who are employed in the second calendar quarter after completion.
- % of pathway leavers who are employed one year after leaving the career pathway.
- % of credential completers who are employed one year after completion.
- Median wage of pathway leavers who are employed in the second calendar quarter after leaving the pathway. (Referred to as initial earnings)
- Median wage of credential completers who are employed in the second calendar quarter after completion. (Referred to as initial earnings)
- % of employers indicating high levels of employer satisfaction with pathway leavers two quarters after employment.
- % of employers indicating high levels of satisfaction with credential completers two quarters after employment.
- % of pathway participants who are earning a living wage within two years of completing a career pathway.
- % of credential completers who are earning a living wage within two years of completing a credential.
- % reduction in targeted talent supply/demand employment gaps.

