



Getting Started with Linked Learning

A GUIDE FOR PATHWAYS

This ***Getting Started with Linked Learning*** guide provides a vision and concrete steps to design and implement high-quality college and career pathways using the Linked Learning approach. It covers the foundational structures and systems that need to be developed at the site level, and to implement the three major strands of the approach that are defined by [Linked Learning Certification Standards](#).

At the heart of this guide are five major sections, grounded in the Linked Learning standards. Each section includes a set of guiding questions to consider and resources to use. We suggest beginning with sections 1 and 2, but your pathway team can start or work in any particular area based on priority needs and your local context.

If you have an existing pathway, academy, or career technical program, you can also use the [Linked Learning Self-Study Tool](#) to provide a quick self-assessment of your program against the Linked Learning standards. We also encourage you to review the Linked Learning Silver and Gold standards that are aligned with this guide and the self-study tool.

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About the Linked Learning Certification Standards

Research shows that quality is key to Linked Learning experiences that deliver positive outcomes for students, communities, and employers. Linked Learning Certification establishes clear standards for quality and equitable practice in integrated college and career preparation.

The standards are focused on integration and differentiate Linked Learning from more traditional approaches to pathways and career and technical education. The Linked Learning Certification process uses the standards to drive high-quality implementation, which ensures positive student and community outcomes. **Certification** is based on a series of standards identified by leaders in the Linked Learning field as crucial for improving student outcomes and preparing all students for college and career. Certified Linked Learning pathways demonstrate their fidelity to the approach and commitment to the quality implementation associated with improved student outcomes.

Pathways achieve Gold certification by meeting standards organized into three strands:

- **An integrated program of study** that is student-centered and connected to postsecondary and industry expectations.
- **Work-based learning** delivered through a continuum of meaningful experiences with work and real-world application of learning.
- **Integrated student supports** that meet the developmental needs of each young person to equip all students for a successful transition to college and career.



Pathway Development Process at a Glance



SECTION 1

Develop a Shared Vision, Mission, and Outcomes

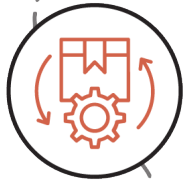
Identifies key stakeholders to be part of the pathway design or redesign and guides teams through the process of developing a shared vision, mission, and set of outcomes for the pathway.



SECTION 2

Ensure Strong Pathway Leadership and Capacity Building

Highlights the importance of having a committed group of leaders involved in both the pathway design and the pathway team. It also describes the key capacities necessary for the pathway team.



SECTION 3

Design a Meaningful Integrated Program of Study

Describes the role of partners in the pathway program of study design and the essential elements of Linked Learning.



SECTION 4

Engage Partners to Develop Authentic Work-Based Learning

Focuses on the importance of engaging partners and an advisory board and developing a continuum of work-based learning for pathway students.



SECTION 5

Create an Integrated Student Support System

Discusses the importance of pathway equity and access and developing a coherent and collaborative student support team.



1. Develop a Shared Vision, Mission, and Outcomes

This section identifies key stakeholders to be part of the pathway design or redesign and guides teams through the process of developing a shared vision, mission, and set of outcomes for the pathway.

1. **Engage a Pathway Design Team:** When designing a new pathway or redesigning an existing program, it is important to begin with an inclusive process. Assembling a pathway design team can help engage key stakeholders and build commitment for the pathway design. The pathway design team will work collaboratively to develop a shared vision, mission, and outcomes.

The pathway design team should comprise a range of stakeholders, such as:

- Site administrators
- Career technical education (CTE) teachers
- Academic teachers
- Counselors
- Work-based learning coordinators
- Postsecondary partners
- Workforce partners
- Community partners
- Parent and students

The pathway design team should start by reviewing current CTE programs, staffing, local labor market information, and aligned postsecondary programs. They should have a clear and shared vision for pathway design and redesign and understand the needs the pathway will address within the school and community. This includes ensuring that the pathway leverages existing school- and community-based efforts and builds on other site and district initiatives or strategic plans.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Who should be part of your pathway design team? Consider who has historically been involved and whose voices still need to be engaged.
- What will be the composition of your pathway team(s)?
- How will you build the capacity and knowledge of Linked Learning with the pathway design team and other stakeholders?
- How will you build school- and community-based support for Linked Learning and the pathway with key stakeholders?
- What existing local assets and resources can you leverage to advance your pathway design work?

2. **Develop a Shared Pathway Vision and Mission:** The pathway design team works with key stakeholders to develop or refine a shared vision and mission that describes how the experiences and outcomes for students will be different and improved. The pathway vision and mission can be developed iteratively over time as you move through the design or improvement process.
 - a. A Linked Learning **pathway vision** should:
 - Describe what will happen for students upon completing your pathway
 - Provide a clear sense of what students will experience through the unique pathway
 - Have a clear connection to the industry theme
 - b. A Linked Learning **pathway mission** should:
 - Describe what actions the pathway team and community will take to realize your vision
 - Convey what the students and the team may experience
 - Have a clear connection to the industry theme



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What process will you use to develop or refine a pathway vision and mission that aligns with your community's vision for its students and your school/district's stated goals and priorities?
- How will you ensure an inclusive and transparent process for the pathway design or development?
- How will you anchor the pathway design or development in equity?

RESOURCES TO USE

- [Sample pathway website with a recruitment video](#)

3. **Determine Pathway Outcomes and Success Metrics**

- **Pathway Outcomes:** Pathway instructional design is based on a defined set of interdisciplinary student outcomes and graduate profile (if one is in place). The pathway should establish a set of pathway-specific student learning outcomes aligned with academic content standards, career and technical education (CTE) standards, and college and career readiness expectations.

Pathway outcomes:

- Identify what a college- and career-ready pathway graduate can do after successfully completing the pathway program of study
 - Are relevant and applicable across multiple grade levels and multiple subjects
 - Provide an instructional framework that drives the pathway's program of study, instruction, and assessment
 - Identify skills, knowledge, or dispositions integral to success within the industry sector or pathway theme
 - Are created and validated by the pathway's workforce, community, and postsecondary partners
 - Align with district graduate profile outcomes and school or district student learning outcomes
- **Pathway Success Metrics:** A successful pathway ensures all pathway graduates are qualified to attend a full range of postsecondary education options without the need for remediation because they have mastered a curriculum that meets college entrance requirements. Pathway outcomes should align with both postsecondary and workforce expectations.

The pathway design team and stakeholders should agree on defined and established metrics, data, and benchmarks that the pathway regularly tracks, reports, and utilizes to inform pathway development and improvement. Workforce and postsecondary partners should be evaluating student products and experiences. Data should include student outcomes in work-based learning experiences and at both secondary and postsecondary levels.

Teams should review the outcomes in the Linked Learning standards for a suggested set of metrics.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What are the current equity challenges that you hope pathways can help address?
- How can you collaboratively develop pathway student outcomes based on the district graduate profile and with postsecondary, community, and workforce partners?
- What knowledge, skills, and dispositions should students be able to demonstrate upon completion of the pathway?
- How will you measure the success of the pathway? What data will you use to assess the development of the program?



2. Ensure Strong Pathway Leadership and Capacity Building

Linked Learning hinges on strong and distributed leadership at the school and pathway level. This section outlines the vital leadership roles and capacities necessary to sustain a robust pathway.

1. **Build a Leadership Team:** A pathway leadership team—a representative group of stakeholders across the district and community—must play a lead role in informing the development of practices and policies and keeping close watch over the implementation of those policies to ensure that they are carried out in service of the vision. In order to be both authentic and effective, the team must be developed thoughtfully with deep consideration of representation. That means bringing to the table influential changemakers and empowering individuals who offer new, valuable insight and perspective, but who may not already be positioned to play a leadership role in these conversations. Successful implementation and sustainability of Linked Learning is most likely when there is a cross-district Linked Learning leadership team with representatives from several district offices, schools, and pathways, including:
 - a. **Site-Level Pathway Leaders:** Pathway leadership may include a pathway lead who oversees the pathway, a dedicated administrator, and a counselor who contribute to pathway design and development. The pathway leadership team supports the advisory board, communicates with stakeholders, manages pathway operations, helps to coordinate professional development, and cultivates workforce, postsecondary, community, and parental involvement.
 - b. **Site Administrators:** Since Linked Learning is a school improvement strategy, it is critical that the high school principal and other leaders are knowledgeable about the pathway, advocate for it publicly, and are actively involved in funding, staffing, and master scheduling. A school leader's investment in Linked Learning is essential to implementation because they oversee the systems, structures, and resources needed to sustain successful pathways.
 - c. **School Counselors:** Support from the counselors, non-pathway teachers, and classified staff is essential for a fully integrated and high-quality pathway. Counselors are members of the pathway team, well-versed in the theme of their dedicated pathway, and experts in supporting postsecondary and career opportunities within the pathway theme. They understand the need for cohort scheduling and ensuing pathway students are scheduled appropriately. Counselors also play a critical role in ensuring a coherent and proactive approach to integrating comprehensive student supports.
 - d. **Students:** Linked Learning pathways consistently engage students as leaders and active partners. Student leadership and voice should inform pathway design, including practices and policies (see LL Gold Standard 3.4). Students should also be provided ample opportunity to share their pathway perspectives and experiences with school, district, and community leaders to build buy-in for Linked Learning.

2. **Build Pathway Capacity:** Since a pathway places teachers and other adults into roles not typically included in their previous training, it is critical to provide adequate professional development time, leadership, and support. To build commitment and capacity, the school and pathway should offer comprehensive professional development to ensure pathway educators have the skills and knowledge to design student-centered and interdisciplinary educational practices. Pathway staff should be provided with common planning time within the school schedule for program coordination, the alignment of student supports, and curriculum planning and integration.
- a. **Prioritize Professional Development:** The school and district provide pathway staff with continuous learning and improvement opportunities to ensure that pedagogy is culturally informed and has inclusive instructional strategies (see LL Gold Standard 1.2). Critical areas for pathway professional development may include:
- Instructional practices that utilize student-centered, collaborative, and project-based learning in the classroom and opportunities for students to reflect and provide feedback on their learning experiences
 - Effective collaboration and working as a community of practice
 - Equitable grading and performance assessments
 - Equitable master scheduling that supports flexible use of time, cohort scheduling, and teacher collaboration
- b. **Build in Common Planning Time:** Common planning time is essential for building a dynamic pathway program—and for that time to be useful, pathway teachers must be willing to collaborate. The site administrator ensures that pathway staff are provided common planning time within the high school schedule for program coordination, curricular integration, partner engagement, and pathway continuous improvement.
- c. **Design a Pathway Community of Practice:** Building an integrated academic and technical curriculum with aligned work-based learning opportunities requires strong communication within the pathway team. To make it work, pathways must have an engaged group of educators who come together as a community of practice to develop an integrated curriculum, deliver high-quality instruction, reflect on student learning and teaching, tackle common challenges, and ensure timely and coordinated support for students.





3. Design a Meaningful Integrated Program of Study

A Linked Learning integrated program of study emphasizes cross-subject, student-centered learning with solid career and postsecondary integration, combined with student supports that ensure equitable opportunities for all students. The integrated program of study provides student-centered learning connected to postsecondary and industry expectations. Academic and technical course faculty within and across grade levels have systematic opportunities for collaboration (e.g., common preparation period, professional development, etc.) to align and integrate curriculum and plan for and coordinate personalized student supports.

This section describes the role of partners in the pathway program of study design and the essential elements of Linked Learning.

1. **Designing the Integrated Program of Study:** A Linked Learning integrated program of study is designed to provide meaningful learning opportunities that are connected to postsecondary and industry expectations. The pathway theme is often tied to regional and state labor market needs and aligned to high-wage and high-growth careers. Lastly, pathway programs of study should have a level of academic rigor and opportunity equal to or greater than that of non-pathway programs of study to create a culture of high expectations for all.

Supportive site structures allow for the integration of teaching and learning across the pathway curriculum and program of study, including integrated project-based learning, pathway student portfolios, and work-based learning experiences.

In a Linked Learning pathway, students are part of a pathway cohort class for approximately 50% of their schedule, or two academic courses and one CTE/career-themed course. A pathway cohort constitutes a common curricular experience with the same teacher among a group of students participating in the same pathway. English language learners and those participating in an individualized education program should have equitable access to classroom learning in this cohort (see LL Gold Standard 1.1).

a. **Industry and Postsecondary Based Pathway Design**

- **Partners and Program of Study:** Postsecondary, industry, and other partners should inform and validate the design and implementation of the pathway program of study, including pathway outcomes and student assessments. These partners should assess the effectiveness and quality of the program on an ongoing basis, and this input is used to improve alignment to industry and postsecondary needs and expectations.

- **Postsecondary Alignment:** Pathways programs of study should be aligned from secondary to and through postsecondary with embedded opportunities to earn stackable, portable, industry-recognized credentials throughout the pathway and culminating in postsecondary credentials with value in the local labor market.
- **High-Wage and High-Growth Careers:** Pathways should align to the regional and state labor market and lead to high-demand, high-growth careers with living wages. In partnership with employers and postsecondary partners, current and projected labor market data should inform pathway program of study offerings.

b. **Essential Program of Study Elements**

- **Integration:** A fully integrated program of study includes all courses necessary for a student to meet the qualifications for entrance to the state public university system. The program of study also consists of a CTE/career-themed sequence of three or more courses. Core academic courses have some career content, and vice versa (e.g., through thematic units, projects, or fully integrated courses) (see LL Silver Standard 1.2).
- **Work-Based Learning:** A continuum of developmentally appropriate work-based learning experiences are integrated into and aligned with the program of study's curriculum throughout the pathway.
- **Early College Credit:** Most pathway students participate in and complete early college credit opportunities through formal dual enrollment partnership(s) or equivalent opportunities (see LL Gold Standard 1.4).
- **Supportive Site Structures and Master Schedule:** It is vital to work with site leaders to review the master schedule and identify design principles and priorities for developing a schedule to support pathway vision, including teacher collaboration time, professional learning, and student cohorting.





QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How have you determined what pathways and courses are needed?
- Who has been involved in this process and what data has informed your strategy?
- How can students and partners be involved in the process of designing or reviewing the program of study?
- What do you already have in place that you can build from or grow (e.g., existing sequence of CTE courses, relevant academic courses, work-based learning, accelerated college opportunities, and strategic partnerships)?
- What principles do you currently use to guide your master schedule development?
- What principles guide your decision making during master schedule development?
- How many and what classes will be involved in the pathway, and at what grade levels?
- What staffing will be needed to ensure success?

RESOURCES TO USE:

- Review the [Integrated Program of Study template](#) and sample integrated programs of study and example narratives from Gold certified pathways.
 - [Sample program of studies](#) from Gold Pathways.
 - Watch a webinar on [strategic master scheduling for equity](#).
2. **Develop Effective Interdisciplinary Instruction and Assessment Practices:** Students in Linked Learning pathways should be provided hands-on, authentic experiences that engage students in their learning and build skills aligned with future workforce needs. Students should also be required to publicly demonstrate their mastery of interdisciplinary course content connected to a career theme, as well as the skills, knowledge, and habits of mind necessary for success in college and the workplace, through formative and summative performance-based assessments (e.g., an internship project, capstone project, exhibition, and/or defense of learning).
- a. **Instructional Practices:** Pathway core content (English language arts, math, science, social studies) and career technical education (CTE/career-themed courses) are built on a foundation of cross-subject and industry-infused curriculum and instructional design, giving students opportunities to make connections across academic content

areas and between academic and career-based content. The pathway provides students with multiple interdisciplinary learning opportunities throughout the pathway experience, including meaningful work-based learning (see LL Gold Standard 1.2).

The pathway team shares a guiding framework or definition of high-quality teaching and learning and ensures collaboration and coordination related to instructional strategies.

Linked Learning pathways require students to complete one or more interdisciplinary projects for each grade level. These projects integrate learning from the academic and CTE/career-themed courses that form the program of study and require students to engage with and demonstrate the achievement of interdisciplinary learning outcomes.

- b. **Assessment and Grading Practices:** Assessments should align with graduate profiles and measure pathway student outcomes. They should be designed to provide evidence of students' critical thinking skills and complex understanding of the integrated curriculum. Assessment design provides multiple opportunities throughout the pathway course of study for students to receive feedback and demonstrate their learning to a broader audience of peers, industry representatives, and other community members. The pathway team should have grading practices that accurately measure essential student skills and capacities, are bias-resistant, and are motivational for students.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What core instructional and assessment practices are currently in place?
- What type of experience do teachers and students have with project-based learning and interdisciplinary projects?
- What professional learning will be needed to ensure student-centered and equitable instruction and assessment?

RESOURCES TO USE:

- [Integrated Program of Study template](#)
- [Integrated Program of Study samples](#)
- [Webinar: Integrated Project Design](#)
- [Behaviors of Learning and Teaching Framework](#)



4. Engage Partners to Develop Authentic Work-Based Learning

Pathways provide a continuum of equitable high-quality work-based learning experiences for all students (see LL Gold Standard 2.2). Industry and community partners can help a pathway create a continuum of meaningful experiences with work and relevant applications of learning in a variety of sectors within the industry theme. In addition to the student work-based learning experiences, it is essential that teaching faculty have opportunities to engage industry professionals (e.g., externships, individual and team-based field study visits).

An engaged advisory board is particularly critical to providing students in Linked Learning pathways with quality career learning and work-based learning experiences. They serve as professional mentors to young people, build students' social capital and professional networks, inform curriculum and projects that integrate real-world applications of the industry theme, provide teacher externships, deliver feedback on student work, and connect students to high-quality work-based learning experiences.

This section focuses on the importance of engaging partners and an advisory board and developing a continuum of work-based learning for pathway students.

1. **Advisory Board:** The most effective advisory boards help pathways develop curricula, assess student performance, and identify work-based learning opportunities. Pathway teachers typically do not have the level of industry knowledge of advisory board members and thus value opportunities to collaborate with them to incorporate real-world applications of the pathway theme into their instruction. Before contacting prospective advisory board members, pathways need to have a clear sense of the role of these advisors. Some roles that an advisory board can support include:
 - Assist in the recruitment of additional advisory members, as needed, from business, higher education, community-based organizations, professional associations, etc.
 - Help develop or refine the pathway vision, mission, and outcomes to align with workforce and postsecondary expectations
 - Identify and develop work-based learning opportunities and identify additional partners
 - Review and support pathway curriculum, projects and assessments and provide feedback on student work or products
 - Recommend materials, resources, and equipment to meet current industry standards
 - Host student experiences and opportunities
 - Sponsor teacher externships

When establishing or developing an advisory board, consider the following elements:

- a. **Vision:** Establish a shared vision with partners that build on each organization's existing goals and assets.

- b. **Purpose:** Determine a clear purpose for the advisory board with clear leadership structures and decision-making processes.
- c. **Structure:** The advisory board's structures and meetings should be focused on supporting and improving the pathway student experiences. Advisory boards should convene at least quarterly, with defined agendas, outcomes, and meeting minutes. The advisory board helps to develop the pathway, review the program of study, develop resources, and identify work-based learning opportunities.
- d. **Leadership:** The chair of the advisory board should be a business leader; this gives credibility to the board. The role of the chair is to work with the pathway lead to plan the agenda, facilitate the meeting, and set expectations for how the board will operate.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What key partners are already involved with the school, district, or CTE program?
- What would be the primary purpose of the advisory board?
- Who could lead the advisory board and ensure coordination between educators and industry partners?
- What capacities will be needed to develop an effective advisory board?

- 2. **Work-Based Learning Continuum:** The pathway should develop a work-based learning continuum that provides a strategic sequence of experiences for students to gain awareness of a broad range of careers within the industry theme, explore specific careers of interest, and participate in work-based learning opportunities (see LL Silver Standard 2.1). Work-based learning experiences are aligned and sequenced with academic and technical coursework in the program of study. Employers and educators collaborate on the creation, design, and delivery of high-quality experiences along the work-based learning continuum.

Work-based learning is an essential pathway instructional strategy that:

- Benefits the student, the partners, the high school and the community
- Connects what students are learning in both career technical and academic classes with the workforce
- Involves an intentional set of interactions with business, community, and postsecondary partners
- Provides students with career awareness, career exploration, and career preparation integrated with both career technical and academic courses
- Includes a continuum of equitable experiences for all students
- Aligns with student learning outcomes and prepares students for success in postsecondary education and careers

Work-based learning experiences support student progress toward attaining pathway learning outcomes. The pathway should provide a range of experiences (career awareness, career exploration, and career preparation) that prepare all students to set career and education goals and help them develop professional skills (see LL Silver Standard 2.2).

- a. **Career awareness** gives all students an understanding of the range of careers available in the industry field. Examples include guest speakers and career fairs.
- b. **Career exploration** allows individual students to explore specific careers that interest them and learn more about them. Examples include informational interviews and job shadows. These experiences provide opportunities for students to interact with professionals over one or more grade levels.
- c. **Career preparation** includes internships and other opportunities to interact with and receive professional feedback from industry professionals on an ongoing basis.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What are the current opportunities for work-based learning?
- How is work-based learning aligned with student learning outcomes or integrated with curriculum or courses?
- What are the current barriers to scaling equitable work-based learning experiences?
- How will work-based learning be mutually beneficial for students, educators, and partners?
- What virtual work-based learning opportunities are available to improve student access?

RESOURCES TO USE:

- [Work-Based Learning Continuum](#)
- [Work-Based Learning Planning Templates](#)
- [Sample Work-Based Learning Plans](#)
- [Leveraging Your Advisory Board Resources](#)
- [How Education and Industry Partner on Work-Based Learning: Lessons Learned from an Evaluation of Oakland Health Pathways](#)



5. Create an Integrated Student Support System

Linked Learning pathways ensure equitable access to college- and career-based educational opportunities and meet the developmental needs of each young person to prepare them for a successful transition to college and career. Student selection of pathways is an underlying principle of the Linked Learning approach, but student choice-driven enrollment may reinforce stratification by race, class, and achievement level. To achieve equitable pathway enrollment, schools and districts must be intentional about the distribution and location of pathways and the policies and recruitment practices that influence student preferences and access to pathways.

Attention to equitable access to instruction for all students is ensured through instructional scaffolding and attention to building academic mindsets and developing socio-emotional learning competencies (see Linked Learning Gold Standard 1.2). Plans are developed and implemented to identify and address gaps and barriers to improve student success in pathway programs of study, particularly for historically marginalized students. Pathways should be designed to serve a diverse body of students that reflect local demographics.

Individual needs of all students, including those with special designations (ELL, SPED, foster youth, etc.), are addressed through a range of strategies that include contextualized and proactive acceleration strategies in literacy and mathematics, social-emotional learning, and counseling services. These supports reach beyond the academic domain and are embedded in the pathway program of study and coordinated by a cross-section of pathway, school, and district resources or through community partnerships. This section discusses the importance of pathway equity and access and developing a coherent and collaborative student support team.

Ensuring a seamless continuum of integrated student supports and equitable access to Linked Learning opportunities depends on the following:

1. Pathway Student Support Structures

- a. **Pathway Student Support Team:** The pathway team should monitor student academic, personal, and social-emotional needs and provide culturally responsive and timely interventions as necessary. The pathway should adopt and implement a systematic system for assessments and referrals for students who need academic or social-emotional supports. Interventions should be personalized and engage students' families as appropriate. A system should be in place to assess the efficacy of student supports based on the progress of identified subgroups (see Linked Learning Gold Standard 3.3).
- b. **Recruitment:** Pathways need student recruitment materials and plans that reach all students, especially those from historically marginalized communities. Recruitment materials may include flyers, labor market data, pathway webpage, recruitment videos, and programs of study. Recruitment plans should be informed by families,

community, and business partners to ensure strategies will effectively reach and engage all students regardless of race and socioeconomic status. Materials should be made accessible to all and conveyed in a culturally appropriate manner.

- c. **Orientation:** All students should be prepared for pathway success through orientation activities that communicate pathway-specific academic and work-based learning expectations. In addition, all students should be made aware of academic and social-emotional support resources available to them and how those resources may be accessed. As appropriate, these orientations should be tailored to ensure preparation for success at each grade level.
2. **Integrated and Comprehensive Student Supports:** A pathway student support team, in collaboration with families, should identify and addresses the academic, personal, social, and emotional needs of every student so they may achieve their personal college, career, and civic engagement goals.

The concept of integration suggests that adults must take collaborative actions to weave all the interventions and supports available in a school into a coherent pathway educational experience. As described in [A Guide to Integrated Student Supports for College and Career Pathways: Lessons from Linked Learning High Schools](#), comprehensive student supports build or scaffold student competencies in five domains of learning and support:

- a. **Support for Academic Learning** ensures that all students, regardless of their academic background, are supported to graduate from high school with a level of academic competence that prepares them for postsecondary education.
- b. **Support for Technical Learning** ensures that all students have the technical skills and knowledge to complete the requirements of specific career-themed pathways, to successfully engage in work-based learning experiences, and to prepare for high-skill, high-wage employment in those fields.
- c. **Support for Workplace Learning** provides students with tools to engage in successful work-based learning experiences by advancing their knowledge of career opportunities, workplace etiquette, and job site expectations.
- d. **Support to Advance College and Career Knowledge** helps students and their families to develop realistic expectations and an understanding of the college application process, financial aid opportunities, the long-term benefits associated with college completion, and the demands of a specific career. Students understand and reflect on the connection between their academic and career goals and are supported to create a plan that incorporates their personal, academic, and career goals. The student and parents/guardians, counselors, and advisors review progress on this plan.
- e. **Support for Social and Emotional Learning** fosters the development of mindsets, social and emotional skills, and adaptive behaviors.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What supports are in place in the following areas?
 1. Academic Learning
 2. Technical Learning
 3. Workplace Learning
 4. College and Career Knowledge and Planning
 5. Social Emotional Learning
- How does the pathway and school identify and place students in support services?
- How do adults and partners work together to integrate student support as part of the pathway educational experience?
- What resources (time and human capital) are currently dedicated to the effective coordination of services.
- Who is involved in student support and what role do counselors and other student support staff play as part of the pathway student support team?
- How does the pathway and school use data to track student progress?

RESOURCES TO USE:

- [Integrated Student Supports Resources](#)
- [Equitable Access by Design](#): A Conceptual Framework for Integrated Student Supports within Linked Learning Pathways
- [Preparing High School Counselors to Support College and Career Readiness](#)

Let's Talk

The Linked Learning Alliance is available to assist with ongoing planning and implementation. Contact us to learn more and get started.

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Appendix

About Linked Learning

Students work harder and dream bigger when their learning connects with them and connects them to the world. School districts develop Linked Learning pathways to combine rigorous academics with relevant career experience—and chart a clear path for their students toward success in postsecondary education, the workforce, and civic life.

In contrast to a more traditional, less equitable approach to schooling that separates students into vocational or academic tracks, Linked Learning pathways integrate four core components throughout the learning journey for all students:

- Rigorous academics that prepare students to succeed in college
- Sequenced career technical education courses that emphasize real-world applications of academic learning
- Work-based learning that provides exposure to real workplaces and teaches the professional skills needed to thrive in a career
- Comprehensive support services

When core academic subjects are linked to real-world professions, students are introduced to career possibilities they might never imagine on their own. They see the importance of a college degree as the way to turn their aspirations into a rewarding career. [Independent evaluation](#) speaks to the efficacy of the Linked Learning approach. Students grow motivation and confidence to succeed in high school. They gain social-emotional development along with knowledge and skills that prepare them to thrive after graduation.



Achieving equity and impact together

The Linked Learning Alliance helps create public will for equity and excellence in education, elevate the practice of Linked Learning, and advance policies that serve and support all youth. No matter their life circumstances, every young person should have genuine access to postsecondary education as well as the support they need to earn a credential and enter a high-skill job by age 25.

Together with a network of partners, the Alliance is bringing this impact to scale by:

- Spotlighting research and promising practices that promote discourse and public understanding of the value of the approach
- Advocating for increased public and private support for the development of integrated, engaging pathways that help young people persist through college to a rewarding career
- Providing students with high-quality experiences in college and career pathways through in-person and virtual networking opportunities and events, and a [rigorous certification program](#)

Learn more about this approach and the Linked Learning Alliance at [LinkedLearning.org](https://www.linkedlearning.org).



About the Linked Learning Alliance

The Linked Learning Alliance is the engine that drives a movement to help every young person determine their own future through a proven approach to education called Linked Learning. Linked Learning integrates rigorous academics with real-world learning and strong support services to prepare students for success in college, career, and life. The Alliance helps create public will for equity and excellence in education, elevate the practice of Linked Learning across America, and advance policies that serve and support all youth.

Learn more at [LinkedLearning.org](https://www.linkedlearning.org)

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