

Ohio Aspire Transitions Framework

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Being an integral part of ODHE gives Ohio Aspire programs the ability to facilitate student success through partnerships among Aspire programs, community colleges, regional campuses, Ohio Technical Centers (OTC), and throughout community-based organizations.

The Ohio Aspire Transitions Framework is organized into three primary categories: Instruction, Support Services, and Collaborations.

- **Instruction** - Provide instruction aimed at addressing the gaps in knowledge and skills needed for success in postsecondary education and the workplace (e.g., algebra, reading, critical thinking).
- **Support Services** - Develop and implement supports that assist with transition including, but not limited to, career evaluation and counseling, and advising when the student has enrolled in a postsecondary option.
- **Collaborations** - Participate in collaborative activities to connect with agencies that can support Aspire students in meeting their goal of completing postsecondary education or workforce training.

The framework is constructed broadly to encompass requirements of both postsecondary and career/workplace transitions. It has been edited by state Aspire staff to align with the national adult career pathway model promoted by the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor and Health and Human Services.

All Ohio Aspire programs should operate within this framework. It is expected that all Aspire programs provide bridge programs and maintain formal partnership agreements among ODHE and local community partners. Programs should: define the desired adult career pathway system and program outcomes; determine how to measure system and program outcomes; establish how data will be collected, stored, tracked and shared as well as analyze data, revisit desired outcomes, and assess progress.

Aspire transitions services are defined as those services that facilitate students successfully transitioning to postsecondary education, training, and/or employment as a result of receiving Aspire services. Transition services are applicable to ALL students at ALL skill levels.

Career Pathways/Integrated Education and Training (IET)

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The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the federal legislation established to improve coordination between employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation activities. Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), of WIOA defines adult education (AE) to mean academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increases an individual's ability to:

- A. read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- B. transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- C. obtain employment.

In addition, WIOA defines career pathways to mean a series of rigorous and high-quality education and training strategies and other services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific occupational sector and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Elements of Career Pathways will:

- A. align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- B. prepare an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
- C. include advising to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- D. include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- E. organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent possible;
- F. enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
- G. help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is defined in WIOA Section 203(11) as: A service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities **concurrently and contextually** with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Required IET Components:

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- 1. Adult Education and literacy activities which must include one
- 2. Workforce preparation activities
- 3. Workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster

Creating Pathways for Education, Career and Life

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An Ohio Aspire Career Pathways Planning System has been designed to assess a program's current status in meeting career pathways related requirements under WIOA through a comprehensive gap analysis, followed by a planning process where programs can articulate the steps they will take to reach full compliance, if all required components are not in place. The goals of the process are to

- 1. Assess what programs are already doing through a full gap analysis in order to show

what, if anything, adheres to career pathways related requirements. Everything that is articulated in this planning document should clearly relate to career pathways.

2. Identify gaps in program services that are essential for a comprehensive career pathways system.
3. Develop a step-by-step action plan that will address the identified gaps (i.e., Planned New Activities) toward implementing a comprehensive career pathways service delivery model. This model will enable students to access needed education and training, transition successfully into postsecondary programs and employment, earn industry-recognized credentials and advance along a career path.
4. Integrate contextualized College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)-aligned instruction with occupational training while meeting individualized learning needs so that students achieve learning gains, meet their goals and become college and career ready.
5. Forge necessary partnerships among stakeholders involved in a local education and training pipeline that are essential to an effective career pathways system that help to leverage resources with other local, state and federal programs.

Programs should use the Career Pathways Plan as a 'living' strategic planning tool by documenting and regularly reviewing and updating career pathways related services that integrate education and training, provide necessary support services, align and bridge services to post-secondary education and employment, are supported by strategic partnerships with critical stakeholders, and enable students to move beyond adult education and succeed in college, career and life.

Partnerships and Coordination

Under WIOA, local Aspire programs must diligently seek out partnerships and coordination of services. Effective administrators must be willing to seek out partnerships to expand service to students and, as much as possible, reduce the duplication of services in their communities. Obtaining a copy of your local workforce development plan will help inform coordinators of the potential partners and services already established in the community.

Successful collaborations between Aspire programs and other agencies in communities are very important. They require consistent effort in the beginning phase and require continuous attention to be sustained in the later phases. Programs should collaborate with the communities they serve to develop and maintain partnerships that prove effective for all involved parties: students, adult education programs, businesses, the workforce, and postsecondary education. Elements that support the success of collaboration include:

- diversity of members
- strong leadership and an identification of shared needs and interests
- shared legislative priorities, goals, and outcomes
- readiness of agencies and their personnel to work together for non-duplication of efforts and sharing of resources (e.g., One-stop system)

Effective collaborations have the following characteristics:

- **Breadth and Depth of Membership** In collaborations, it is important for partners to understand the other organizations' systems, legislative drivers, policies, and parameters. This is important so that there is a better chance of sharing resources and reducing duplication of services to shared customers. In developing collaborations with

other agencies, local programs are cautioned not to create new bureaucracies, but take advantage of the strengths of each agency.

- **Good Communication** The key to building trust in collaborations is communication which is enhanced through setting up systems — personal, paper, and electronic — for sharing information, clarifying each entity’s responsibilities, expressing expectations, and listening. Communication must be open and frequent, using formal and informal channels. Privacy issues for customers may be discussed among all partners for their similar and different requirements. Professional development training and materials are provided for cross-training purposes among the partners.
- **Shared Vision** It is essential to have a shared vision. This common understanding of what the collaboration is trying to achieve includes an agreed-upon mission, objectives, and strategies. Building trust and commitment, the shared vision must involve the community at large and should make clear the expectations and responsibilities of each partner. Each organization should contribute uniquely to the collaboration to avoid duplicating efforts while respecting the missions of individual organizations. Concrete, attainable goals for accomplishing the vision heighten enthusiasm and sustain momentum in a partnership.
- **Effective Use of Resources** Programs should collaborate with their partners for the effective use of resources, including funding, technology, staff, and professional development. Financial resources include those that member organizations are able and willing to commit, and those that the group obtains from outside sources. Such outside resources may be comprised of in-kind contributions on the part of the partners, including: paid staff time; facilities, including custodial services; utilities; supplies; materials; or volunteer time. Human resources that can be committed to projects can include skilled coordinators, committed leaders, and a bountiful mix of knowledge, skills, and abilities among the collaboration’s members.

The benefits of collaboration can include:

- delivery of services where they have never been delivered and often result in fewer resources being needed
- resolved proprietary issues between organizations and agencies
- gains in ownership among all parties
- establishment of a systematic and consistent approach to problem solving
- provision of cost savings
- potential for additional revenue generation
- increased services and satisfaction of common customers

Shared resources can increase maximum capacity-building capabilities and provide added resources to the programs and services of all participating partners.

One-stop System Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Guide

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The foundation of the comprehensive reforms made possible by Title I of the WIOA of 2014 is the creation of a One-stop delivery system. The purpose of the system is to make it easier for individuals and employers to access education and training services as well as a diversity of other resources that help to build the capacities of communities to sustain economic and workforce development.

Ohio Aspire programs supported by Title II of the WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), are required partners of Ohio's One-stop delivery system (i.e., OhioMeansJobs). The One-stop provisions of Title I of the WIOA offer Aspire programs and other partners exciting opportunities to expand customer access to programs and services and help them to operate more efficiently. By working collaboratively, One-stop partners will collectively achieve goals that they may not be able to accomplish by working independently. With funding and other resources being increasingly difficult to secure and maintain by Ohio's respective workforce development delivery systems, it makes good economic and social sense to integrate a portion of these limited funds and other resources to maximize our return on our investments through the creation and implementation of One-stop systems.