

## Bridging Business and Education for the 21st Century Workforce: A Strategic Plan for Virginia's Career Pathways System

Virginia has released its first Statewide Career Pathways plan that involves a Governor led, multi-agency approach to improving workforce development, economic development, and education in Virginia. The plan serves as a model for the nation and calls for improved coordination of labor market data, transitions for students at all levels of education, and increasing completion rates. To learn more, read the complete report:



<http://www.vccs.edu/workforce/careerpathways>

# **State Career Pathways Definition and Criteria for Career Pathways**

Developed collaboratively with VDOE, SCHEV, VCCS, Department of Labor and Industry, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and Virginia's Workforce Council, and the Governor's Office

## **Career Pathways Definition**

A career pathway is a series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education or employment in that sector. Each step on a career pathway is designed explicitly to prepare for the next level of employment and education.

## **Career Pathways Goals**

Career pathways deliver success by:

- Providing employers with a connection to a skilled workforce.
- Providing Virginia residents with education and training opportunities to develop and adapt their skills to a changing economy.

Career pathways in Virginia will:

- Align and connect education and training systems with the business community.
- Inform and advise learners and workers about seamless career and training opportunities in key industries.
- Utilize degrees, certificates, diplomas and certifications that are meaningful to employers and portable for individuals to prepare for changing careers.
- Ensure access to postsecondary education by providing all learners with career and educational advising including assistance with college admissions and financial aid.
- Create opportunities for individuals to progress in education and training through articulation agreements to foster smooth transitions to higher levels of education.
- Provide experience based learning including cooperative learning, internships, service learning, or business based projects to foster employability skills.
- Encompass all individuals including K-12 students, postsecondary students, unemployed and underemployed youth and adults, registered apprentices and incumbent workers.
- Provide system flexibility to respond to evolving business needs.