



In today's economy, it's more important than ever for students to graduate prepared to succeed in the working world that awaits them after high school. That's why states are leading the way to develop innovative career readiness initiatives.

This week's newsletter highlights the ways states are prioritizing work-based learning, helping students explore multiple pathways, and collaborating with local employers to ensure students are prepared to succeed beyond high school.

Visit StatesLeading.org and follow #StatesLeading on social media to learn more and join the conversation.

State Spotlights



In March, the **Rhode Island** Department of Education hosted more than 250 educators, industry partners, students, and community leaders at the first-ever PrepareRI Summit dedicated to career education. Stakeholders engaged in conversations about aligning educational programs with workforce demands.

"Rhode Island's economy has changed, and education needs to change with it," said Governor Gina M. Raimondo. "We need to give our students challenging, work-based learning opportunities that ignite their passions and prepare them with the skills they need to be successful after graduation. That's what PrepareRI is all about."

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To create new and broader opportunities for future graduates, the **Nevada** State Board of Education recently approved standards that will allow students to earn a College and Career Ready High School Diploma.

To receive the diploma, students must obtain either a college-ready or career-ready endorsement through coursework or experience that has prepared them to succeed in college or job training in high-demand occupations.

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Vermont Acting Secretary of Education Heather Bouchey and Division Director for Personalization and Flexible Pathways Jess DeCarolis recently wrote about the importance of students being “life ready.”

The state is putting this belief into practice by providing students with opportunities for dual enrollment and early college, work-based learning, online and hybrid learning, career and technical education, and expanded personalized learning opportunities to better equip students to be prepared for both college and the workplace.

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States are working hard to implement various types of career education programs. **Tennessee**, **Rhode Island**, **Massachusetts**, and **Nevada** are investing millions of dollars in grants to enhance career education and pathway programs to ensure students have access to work-based learning.

[Tennessee](#) has awarded \$2.2 million to support the creation of Career Pathways in 88 school districts and one postsecondary institution, and [Rhode Island](#) awarded \$1.2 million to expand access to career education for historically underserved students. [Massachusetts](#), focusing on early college programs, is awarding high schools \$673,500 to help combine traditional high school

courses with an opportunity to earn college credit at a public college or university aligned to a particular career pathway.

[Nevada](#) launched LifeWorks, a first-of-its-kind education-to-workforce initiative, inspiring students to achieve careers in high-demand industries in the state.

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To improve their ability to educate a qualified workforce that meets industry needs, the **Nebraska** State Department of Education (NSDE) launched reVISION, a process to help school districts analyze their current career education system and collaborate with postsecondary education and regional workforce development leaders.

Once school leaders identify areas of growth for their school's CTE program, a coordinator hired by the NSDE connects with regional employers who can speak to the talent gaps and relevant competencies to address their needs and offer recommendations for improvement.

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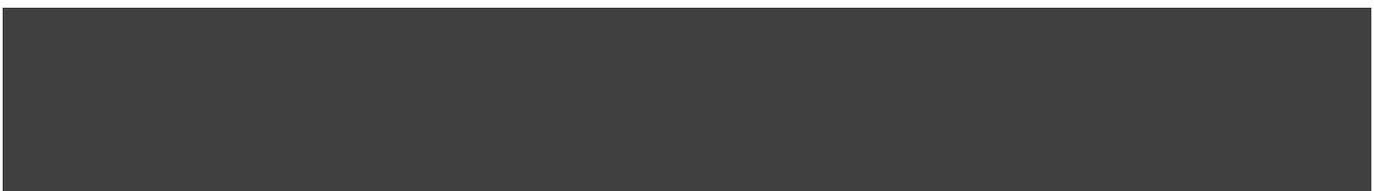


Last year, the **Montana** State Department of Education started the Montana Ready initiative to promote STEM careers by bringing industry leaders into classrooms--and bringing classrooms out to industries.

State Superintendent of Public Schools Elsie Arntzen noted, "Students must be aware as early as middle school that there is no single pathway to career success." Being Montana Ready could include any combination of college, the military, apprenticeships, technical degrees, two-year degrees, and certifications.

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Through its New Skills for Youth Grant, **Oklahoma** will launch a Learning Community Online Platform that will expand college and career readiness resources for students. This platform will enable educators to counsel students on postsecondary options using an all-in-one tool.

The tool will also help connect educators with local employers, parents, and other educators in hopes of building local college and career readiness strategies specific to each student.

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The **Louisiana** Department of Education's Jump Start Summers initiative equips high school students with college, career, and life skills through paid, on-the-job training in high-demand industries.

The program gives students the opportunity to attain industry-based credentials, master essential workplace behaviors, and make their academic schoolwork more relevant.

In addition to the summer program, Louisiana will be hosting a series of statewide professional development sessions designed to enhance career and technical education for more than 650 educators at this year's Jump Start Super Summer Institute. Secondary and postsecondary educators will have the opportunity to earn industry-based certifications aligned with the Jump Start pathway they teach.

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Must Read

All states are welcome to join CCSSO's new Career Readiness Collaborative to bring together state teams to receive technical assistance, resources, and peer support on improving access to a high-quality education that provides pathways into college and a career for each and every child. The new Career Readiness Collaborative will begin on July 1, 2018 and run through June 30, 2019.

Interested states should contact Adam Peterman (Adam.Peterman@ccsso.org).

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Tools & Resources



This Education Commission of the States blog post, *How States Can Leverage ESSA's Momentum to Follow Through on Their Commitments to Career Readiness*, breaks down all of the opportunities ESSA implementation provides for advancing career readiness.

Opportunities include reviewing gaps in access, ensuring equitable provisions are in place, providing professional development, and expanding public reporting.

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NASBE outlines the incentives ESSA provides states to integrate and align core academics with career technical education in this policy update, *Career Readiness and CTE in a Post-NCLB World*.

This resource highlights Kentucky, Tennessee, and California for leading the way in advancing students towards postsecondary success.

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We want to hear from you!

Send your state's stories or organization's resources to communications@ccsso.org



The States Leading campaign celebrates the progress states are making toward providing equitable education for all students through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and innovative policies in other key areas of education, such as early childhood education, teacher preparation, and career readiness, among others.

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Our mailing address is:

One Massachusetts Avenue NW

Suite 700

Washington, DC 20001

202.336.7000

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