



Phase
1B

The following activities highlights goals to pursue and questions to ask at each step of the process of developing a more robust, comprehensive career readiness program for your school in a format meant to be accessible and user-friendly. While it does not provide a step-by-step how-to for each activity, the resource links offer further detailed guidance, practical examples, and case studies.

ACTIVITY

Work collaboratively to develop the vision

PURPOSES

- Recruit a career-focus champion to take the lead
- Mobilize a small team of committed stakeholders
- Define together your vision for high-quality instruction and programming to prepare students for post-secondary education and employment

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Who has the needed energy, competencies, and availability to champion this work?
- Who among school staff (and possibly community) play key roles and care about expanding students' career options?
- What skills and mindsets would we like every graduate to display, regardless of their specific academic path (portrait of a graduate)?
- What is our vision for our relationship with community partners?

ACTIVITY RESOURCES

Internet Resources

- [Principal Playbook for Unlocking Career Success \(All4Ed\)](#)
- [Adopting a Whole School Approach to Career Development in High School \(NCDA\)](#)
- [Designing and Implementing a CTE Program in Your District \(Edmentum\)](#)

Examples

- [A School Leader's Approach to Career Education \(Edutopia\)](#)
- [Portrait of a Graduate \(Gwinnett Co. Public Schools\)](#)

ACTIVITY

Identify specific, relevant career pathways or concentrations

PURPOSES

- Identify two to three specific, sustainable career pathways or concentrations aligned to local labor markets and student interest
- Set objectives and outcomes for CTE programs that include career exploration and specific skill and employability development

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do selected pathways offer both immediate employment opportunities and options for further education and training?
- How do these pathways correlate with students' interests and aspirations?
- What partnerships and structural adjustments are needed to implement these pathways?
- How can we ensure inclusivity that brings students from different backgrounds together in career pathways?

ACTIVITY RESOURCES

Internet Resources

[The Modernized National Career Clusters® Framework Guidebook](#) (Advance CTE)

Examples

[Massachusetts DESE](#)

[New Skills Ready Network](#) (Columbus, OH)

[New Skills Ready Network](#) (Indianapolis, IN)

[FRNYC School Playbook](#) (Future Ready NYC)

ACTIVITY

Structure key partnerships

PURPOSES

- Identify key business, higher ed, and community partners needed to implement selected pathways
- Establish and communicate program value to potential partners (what's in it for them)
- Identify clear objectives for new or existing partnerships
- Establish communications channels and commitments (e.g., meetings, reports, data-sharing) with partners

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What local businesses, organizations, and two- or four-year colleges are already engaged in this sector?
- What key people could help us develop these partnerships?
- How could partnering with us help these organizations address workforce or enrollment needs?
- What resources (instructors, funding, equipment, space...) can these organizations help provide?
- How will we sustain these relationships and ensure good communications with partners?
- What different formats for exploration and instruction should we consider?

ACTIVITY RESOURCES

Internet Resources

[Four Essential Best Practices for Engaging Partners and Practitioners to Advance Economic Mobility \(WestEd\)](#)

[6 Elements of an Effective Career Education Program \(EdWeb.Net\)](#)

[7 tips for Schools to Strengthen Career and Technical Education Programs \(K-12 Dive\)](#)

[Partnerships in Practice: How to Engage With CTE Programs \(JFF; resource for employers\)](#)

ACTIVITY

Focus on key competencies

PURPOSES

- Identify key transferable employability (soft) skills (e.g., problem-solving, teamwork, reliability, etc.) to focus on for your students
- Identify key academic competencies (e.g., math, communications) needed for specific career pathways
- Identify hard skills critical to specific career pathways

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How can we embed soft skills as well as academic growth into the core curriculum?
- How can core curricula be adapted to spotlight workplace relevance?
- How can instruction be aligned and scaffolded so that students have skills needed for success in specialized CTE courses?
- What professional development do staff need to offer career-focused instruction?
- How can we business and higher ed partners help us provide instruction in career-specific hard skills?

ACTIVITY RESOURCES

Internet Resources

[Common Employability Skills Framework](#) (National Network of Business and Industry Associations)

[What is "Career-Ready"?](#) (ACTE)

[AVID College and Career Readiness Framework](#)

[Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce](#) (NACE)

[6 steps to a future-focused blueprint: Supporting students in making career decisions](#) (K-12 Dive)

Examples

[Teaching Global Competencies through Children's Stories](#) (Participate Learning)