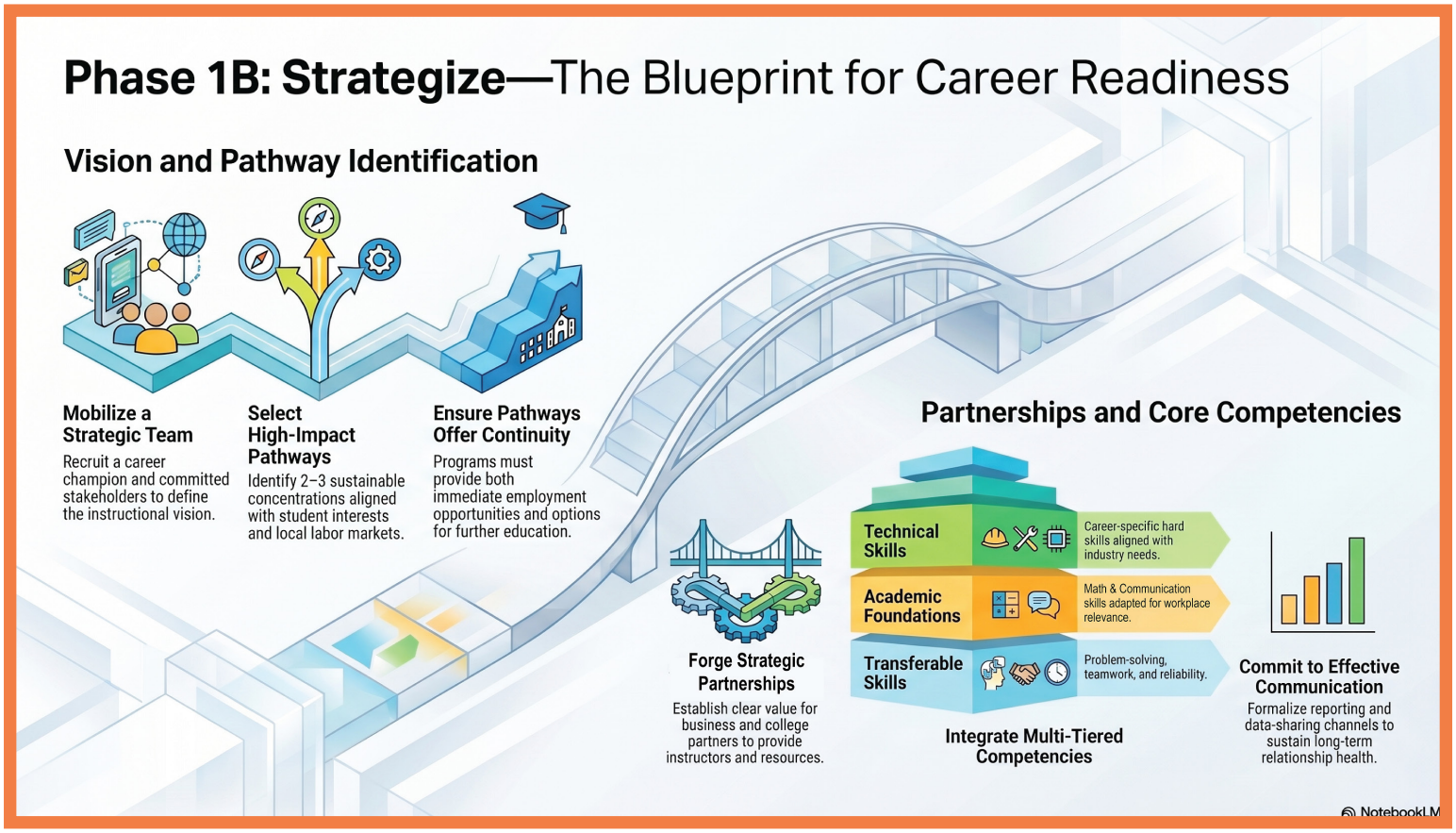


Phase 1B: Strategize

Phase 1B offers guidance for building a team to develop, communicate, and realize a career readiness plan that is right for your students and community. While a principal provides crucial visionary leadership, most principals have too many diverse concerns to bring about an ambitious career program. Identifying, working with, and empowering a team of committed, effective change-makers—and a qualified, dynamic champion to lead them—is a crucial step in making the vision a reality.



Click on image to enlarge

This explainer video reviews Phase 1B's goals and objectives.



Phase 1B

PURPOSE

Work collaboratively to develop the vision of career readiness for all.

ACTIVITIES

- 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 partners) play key roles and care about expanding students' career options?
- What skills and mindsets would we like graduates to display?
- 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)**

PURPOSE

Develop a sequence of career readiness activities that can reach all/most students and offers choices as to level of participation.

ACTIVITIES

- Identify a set of career exposure, experience, and application activities that all students would benefit from and could participate in.
- Organize them broadly across high school grade levels 9-12 and identify which are for all students and which are for large numbers of interested students.
- Embed career readiness into core academic courses/instruction.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How can we provide all students with career exposures through a combination of activities (e.g., field trips, speakers, career fairs, videos, etc.)?
- How can we provide all students with career guidance at appropriate levels from 9th to 12th grade?
- How can we provide career experiences that would collectively engage large numbers of students (e.g. work-based learning, school-based jobs, entrepreneurship and business clubs, internships, problem based learning aligned to community needs, etc.)?
- How do we provide career-based learning opportunities for students not interested in a full pathway (e.g., CTE certificates, dual enrollment courses with CTE focus, etc.)?
- 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?
- What professional development do staff need to offer career-focused instruction?

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 and broader career exposures, experiences, and applications for all students.
- 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)**

PURPOSE

Identify specific, relevant career pathways or concentrations.

ACTIVITIES

- 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
- Identify key academic competencies (e.g., math, communications) needed for specific career pathways.

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?
- Do students feel like they belong in the spaces our pathways lead them to?
- How can instruction be aligned and scaffolded so that students have skills needed for success in specialized CTE courses?
- How can business and higher ed partners help us provide instruction in career-specific technical 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)**
- **The Modernized National Career Clusters® Framework Guidebook (Advance CTE)**
- **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)**
- **Massachusetts DESE**
- **New Skills Ready Network (Columbus, OH)**
- **New Skills Ready Network (Indianapolis, IN)**
- **FRNYC School Playbook (Future Ready NYC)**