



### The Problem: Students Lack Traction for College and Careers

- American high schools are encountering high dropout rates. Our country does not have competitive college completion rates compared to the rest of the industrialized world. Millions of young adults now arrive at their mid-20s without a postsecondary degree and/or a route to a viable job.
- Most young people from all backgrounds have only the vaguest of notions about how to choose a career or the skills and knowledge required to succeed in them.
- We are also seeing disconnect between the skills Tennesseans have and what is required at work, resulting in many good jobs left begging for talent. The economy will continue to generate high-tech and "middle-skills" jobs in many fields ranging from data security and advanced manufacturing to nursing and trades that pay middle-class wages (and better).
- It is time to build a more finely articulated pathways system—one that is richly diversified to align with the needs and interests of today's young people and better designed to meet the needs of a 21st century economy.

### The Solution: Career Pathways for State Success

- For the past few years, Tennessee has been working to establish seamless career pathways from grades 7-14/16. We are modernizing career and technical education programs and expanding innovations such as early college high schools and work-based learning initiatives.
- The goal of this initiative is to provide education opportunities that reflect a community's need for increased education and skills required to be competitive in today's workforce. Students learn these 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through hands-on work experiences through their chosen education path.
- These programs lead seamlessly to degrees or industry-specific certificates and credentials in areas of high demand. We are particularly focused on industries—such as information technology and computer science, health care, advanced manufacturing and pre-engineering, and other STEM fields—that research says are rapidly growing across the United States.
- Pathways are flexible and take into account that the path for youth after high school is often not linear
- Must be inclusive of adults returning to education institutions for degree completion or retraining
- Tennesseans can enter and exit postsecondary education and job training or switch career interests while accumulating credit and gaining real traction toward career goals.

### The Implementation:

- Success is: *highly **educated**, highly **employable** Tennesseans **with abundant career opportunities**.*
- Leaders in education, industry, and local government work together in their communities to expand education and workforce opportunities for all Tennesseans.
  - Schools create early and sustained career information and advising systems.
  - Postsecondary institutions align programs of study with workplace skill demands.
  - Employers provide a continuum of workplace learning opportunities.
  - Intermediaries recruit business, nonprofit, and public employers as partners.
  - Proponents advocate for supportive state policies.



### Regions Implementing Local Pathways Initiatives:

- Upper Cumberland (Jackson, Overton, Putnam, White)
- Southeast (Hamilton, McMinn, Bradley, Marion)
- Southwest (Madison, Chester, Haywood)
- Northwest (2015)
- East (2015)
- Northeast (2015)

### Pathways Tennessee Framework

- Active industry involvement in student learning, starting in middle school.
- Strong integration of student supports, interventions, and counseling.
- Utilization of early warning indicators and remediation strategies.
- Allows students to acquire postsecondary credits and/or industry certifications in high school.
- Supports seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education institutions.
- Participants have multiple entry and exit points throughout grades 13-16.
- Program completers are competitive in Tennessee's fastest growing sectors.

