

**256.39 Career pathways program.**

1. If the general assembly appropriates moneys for the establishment of a career pathways program, the department of education shall develop a career pathways grant program, criteria for the formation of ongoing career pathways consortia in each merged area, and guidelines and a process to be used in selecting career pathways consortium grant recipients, including a requirement that grant recipients shall provide matching funds or match grant funds with in-kind resources on a dollar-for-dollar basis. A portion of the moneys appropriated by the general assembly shall be made available to schools to pay for the issuance of employability skills assessments to public or nonpublic school students. An existing partnership or organization, including a regional career and technical education planning partnership, that meets the established criteria, may be considered a consortium for grant application purposes. One or more school districts may be considered a consortium for grant application purposes, provided the district can demonstrate the manner in which a community college, area education agency, representatives from business and labor organizations, and others as determined within the region will be involved. Existing regional career and technical education planning partnerships are encouraged to assist the local consortia in developing a plan and budget. The department shall provide assistance to consortia in planning and implementing career pathways program efforts.

2. To be eligible for a career pathways grant, a career pathways consortium shall develop a career pathways program that includes but is not limited to the following:

a. Measurement of the employability skills of students. Employability skills shall include but are not limited to reading for information, applied mathematics, listening, and writing.

b. Curricula designed to integrate academic and work-based learning to achieve high employability skills by all students related to career pathways. The curricula shall be designed through the cooperative efforts of secondary and postsecondary education professionals, business professionals, and community services professionals.

c. Staff development to implement the high-standard curriculum. These efforts may include team teaching techniques that utilize expertise from partnership businesses and postsecondary institutions.

3. In addition to the provisions of [subsection 2](#), a career pathways program may include but is not limited to the following:

a. Career guidance and exploration for students.

b. Involvement and recognition of business, labor, and community organizations as partners in the career pathways program.

c. Provision for program accountability.

d. Encouragement of team teaching within the school or in partnership with postsecondary schools, and business, labor, community, and nonprofit organizations.

e. Service learning opportunities for students.

4. Business, labor, and community organizations are encouraged to market the career pathways program to the local community and provide students with mentors, shadow professionals, speakers, field trip sites, summer jobs, internships, and job offers for students who graduate with high performance records. Students are encouraged to volunteer their time to community organizations in exchange for workplace learning opportunities that do not displace current employees.

5. In developing career pathways program efforts, each consortium shall make every effort to cooperate with the juvenile courts, the economic development authority, the department of workforce development, the department of health and human services, and the new Iowa schools development corporation.

6. The department of education shall direct and monitor the progress of each career pathways consortium in developing career pathways programs.

7. Notwithstanding [section 8.33](#), unencumbered or unobligated funds remaining on June

30 of the fiscal year for which the funds were appropriated shall not revert but shall be available for expenditure for the following fiscal year for the purposes of [this section](#).

[95 Acts, ch 196, §2](#); [96 Acts, ch 1186, §23](#); [2003 Acts, ch 180, §7](#); [2011 Acts, ch 118, §85, 89](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1026, §61](#); [2016 Acts, ch 1108, §32](#); [2017 Acts, ch 29, §59](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §988](#)

Subsection 5 amended