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Pathways for Academic Career and Employment Program Legislative Report

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Department of Education

PACE Program Overview

The Pathways for Academic Career and Employment (PACE) program was established by the Iowa Legislature to provide funding to community colleges for the development of programs that will lead to gainful, quality, in-state employment for members of target populations. This program provides target populations with effective academic and employment training to ensure gainful employment and customized support services.

Target Populations

Individuals included in target populations are those who meet one or more of the following:

- Are deemed by definition to be low-skilled
- Earn incomes at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level
- Are unemployed
- Are underemployed
- Are dislocated workers.

Eligibility Criteria for Programs

Programs eligible for PACE funding are those that further the ability of members of target populations to secure gainful, quality employment; that further partnerships linking community colleges to industry and nonprofit organizations; and that allow participants to achieve the following program outcomes:

- Acquire and demonstrate competency in basic skills
- Acquire and demonstrate competency in a specified technical field
- Complete a specified level of postsecondary education
- Earn a National Career Readiness Certificate
- Obtain employer-validated credentials
- Secure gainful employment in high-quality local jobs

Programs should assist in meeting economic and employment goals such as the following:

- Economic and workforce development requirements in each region served by the community colleges, as defined by regional advisory boards
- Needs of industry partners in areas including, but not limited to, the fields of: information technology, health care, advanced manufacturing, transportation and logistics and any other industry designated as in-demand by regional advisory boards

Program Component Requirements

Program components for a PACE program implemented at a community college shall:

- Include recruitment, assessment and referral activities
- Integrate basic skills and work-readiness training with occupational skills training
- Combine customized supportive and case management services with training services to help participants overcome barriers to employment
- Provide training services at times, locations and through multiple, flexible modalities that are easily understood, and readily accessible, to the target populations. Modalities shall

support open-entry individualized learning and flexible scheduling, and may include online remediation, learning labs and cohort learning communities, tutoring and modularization.

Pipeline Program

Each community college receiving PACE funding shall develop a pipeline program in order to better serve the academic, training and employment needs of the target populations. A pipeline program shall have the following goals:

- Strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations and industry representatives.
- Improve and simplify the identification, recruitment and assessment of qualified participants.
- Conduct and manage an outreach, recruitment and intake process, along with accompanying support services, that reflect sensitivity to the time, financial constraints and remediation needs of the target populations.
- Conduct orientations for qualified participants to describe regional labor market opportunities, employer partners and program requirements and expectations.
- Describe the embedded educational support resources available through such projects.
- Outline the basic skills participants will learn, and describe the credentials participants will earn.
- Describe success milestones, and ways in which time constraints and instructional barriers have been minimized or eliminated.
- Review how individualized and customized service strategies for participants are developed and provided.

Career Pathways and Bridge Curriculum Development Program

Each community college receiving PACE funding shall develop a career pathway and bridge curriculum development program designed to serve the academic, training and employment needs of the target populations. A career pathway and bridge curriculum development program shall have the following components:

- Courses and course sections (modules): The articulation of courses and course modules, the mapping of programs within career pathways and the establishment of bridges between credit and noncredit programs.
- Integration and contextualization of basic skills education and skills training: This process
  shall provide for seamless progressions between adult basic education and high school equivalency programs, and continuing education and credit certificate, diploma and degree programs.
- Career pathway development: The creation of career pathways that support the attainment of industry-recognized credentials, diplomas and degrees.

Pathway Navigators

Community colleges may use PACE funds to employ pathway navigators, who assist students applying for, or enrolled in, eligible PACE and employment programs.

Pathway navigators shall provide services and support students in selecting PACE programs that will result in gainful, quality, in-state employment, and ensure students are successful once enrolled in PACE programs. Services the pathway navigators may provide include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interviewing and selecting students for enrollment in PACE programs.
- Assessing students' skills, interests and previous academic and work experience for purposes of placement in PACE programs.
- Working with students to develop academic and career plans, and to adjust such plans as needed.
- Assisting students with applying for, and receiving, financial aid resources and other forms of tuition assistance.
- Assisting students with the admissions process, remedial education, academic credit transfer, meeting assessment requirements, course registration and other procedures necessary for successful completion of PACE programs.
- Assisting students with identifying and resolving obstacles to their successful completion of PACE programs.
- Connecting students with useful college resources or outside support services, such as access to child care, transportation and tutorial assistance, as needed.
- Maintaining ongoing contact with students enrolled in PACE programs, and ensuring students are making satisfactory progress toward successful completion of programs.
- Providing support to students transitioning from remedial education, short-term training and classroom experience to employment.
- Coordinating activities with community-based organizations that serve as key recruiters for PACE programs, and assisting students throughout the recruitment process.
- Coordinating adult basic education services.

Regional Industry Sector Partnerships

Funding (state allocation and carryover) available to support regional industry sector boards and partnerships was transferred from the Iowa Department of Education to Iowa Workforce Development beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024.

PACE Financial Reporting, FY23

PACE funds are allocated pursuant to the community college state general aid distribution formula established in Iowa Code, and are eligible to be carried forward to the next year. In FY23, Iowa's community colleges received a state appropriation of $4,800,000 to support the program, with an additional $311,552 carried forward into FY23 from FY22, totaling $5,111,552 (Table 1). The majority of funds (90.0 percent) were spent during FY23.

Table 1. PACE Program Allocation, Expenditures and Carryover by Community College, FY23

College	Carryover FY23	Allocation and Carryover FY23	Expenditures	Carryover to FY24
Northeast Iowa	$14,913	$248,550	$214,989**	$33,561
North Iowa Area	$4,551	$234,832	$230,386	$4,446
Iowa Lakes	$0	$208,355	$181,611	$26,744
Northwest Iowa	$33,095	$140,265	$67,234	$73,031
Iowa Central	$22,402	$298,437	$280,350	$18,087
Iowa Valley	$8,272	$212,871	$205,028	$7,843
Hawkeye	$0	$319,821	$319,821	$0
Eastern Iowa	$45,981	$455,337	$404,287	$51,050
Kirkwood	$0	$750,946	$750,946	$0
Des Moines Area	$0	$857,422	$857,422	$0
Western Iowa Tech	$7,627	$275,721	$275,721	$0
Iowa Western	$684	$298,172	$238,677	$59,495
Southwestern	$147,337	$256,288	$79,158	$177,130
Indian Hills	$5,142	$338,779	$336,551	$2,228
Southeastern	$21,548	$215,756	$156,571	$59,185
Total	**$311,552**	**$5,111,552**	**$4,598,751**	**$512,801**

** Expenditures include $4,037.74 in sector board support.
*Totals may vary throughout the report due to rounding methods.

In FY23, colleges spent a total of $1,170,476 on tuition and books, equipment, fees, tutors and testing, including support unique to individual students, and resources towards their pursuit and acquisition of employment. The majority of funds were spent to support student education ($795,361), followed by $359,428 applied toward student personal support and $15,685 for career support. Additionally, $4,037 was spent to supplement support for sector (industry) partnerships. An estimated $512,801 will be carried over into FY24 to support students who were previously identified as program support recipients prior to the end of the fiscal year (Table 2).

Table 2. PACE Student Financial Support by Type, FY23

College	Education Support - Financial	Personal Support - Financial	Career Support - Financial	Total
Northeast Iowa	$657	$1,372	$0	$2,029
North Iowa Area	$49,154	$17,008	$0	$66,162
Iowa Lakes	$0	$0	$0	$0
Northwest Iowa	$15,310	$0	$175	$15,485
Iowa Central	$33,150	$16,159	$0	$49,308
Iowa Valley	$23,988	$70,024	$2,216	$96,228
Hawkeye	$66,561	$25,360	$4,298	$96,220
Eastern Iowa	$22,254	$0	$0	$22,254
Kirkwood	$154,352	$52,709	$6,282	$213,343
Des Moines Area	$366,740	$46,617	$598	$413,955
Western Iowa Tech	$1,836	$300	$0	$2,136
Iowa Western	$18,160	$575	$0	$18,735
Southwestern	$5,359	$4,610	$265	$10,234
Indian Hills	$30,878	$121,437	$1,851	$154,166
Southeastern	$6,963	$3,258	$0	$10,220
Total	**$795,361**	**$359,429**	**$15,686**	**$1,170,476**

* Totals may vary throughout the report due to rounding methods.

A total of $3,215,124 was spent on staff, faculty and instruction for approved participants; and $234,334 was spent on supplies and equipment, travel and training, marketing, communications and program development (Table 3).

Table 3. PACE Financial Expenditures by Category, FY23

College	Personnel	Travel	Supplies and Equipment	Other	Total
Northeast Iowa	$167,283	$1,998	$524	$39,118	$208,922
North Iowa Area	$164,084	$140	$0	$0	$164,224
Iowa Lakes	$181,611	$0	$0	$0	$181,611
Northwest Iowa	$50,312	$168	$1,269	$0	$51,749
Iowa Central	$227,643	$837	$567	$1,994	$231,042
Iowa Valley	$106,213	$1,843	$348	$397	$108,801
Hawkeye	$219,482	$3,229	$360	$531	$223,602
Eastern Iowa	$380,706	$428	$898	$0	$382,033
Kirkwood	$462,712	$11,755	$1,690	$61,446	$537,603
Des Moines Area	$422,364	$7,697	$3,611	$9,794	$443,468
Western Iowa Tech	$272,654	$372	$495	$67	$273,588
Iowa Western	$176,042	$2,238	$441	$41,221	$219,942
Southwestern	$62,677	$4,213	$1,056	$977	$68,924
Indian Hills	$180,919	$645	$775	$45	$182,384
Southeastern	$140,420	$1,914	$3,959	$57	$146,350
Total	**$3,215,125**	**$37,478**	**$15,994**	**$180,862**	**$3,449,458**

* Totals may vary throughout this report due to rounding methods.

PACE Participants and Completions, FY23

In FY23, there were 4,373 PACE applications submitted to Iowa community colleges. Of those, 58.8 percent (2,572) met the eligibility requirements and were newly approved. Totals of participants approved and categorized as credit or noncredit will not equal due to the previously-noted overlap in fiscal years, and the timing of program enrollment. However, it is notable that the number of participants enrolled in both credit (1,942) and noncredit programs (1,366) increased from FY22 to FY23 (Table 4).

Table 4. Applicant and Participant Counts, FY2020 to FY2023

Participants	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Completed Applications	4,342	3,652	4,323	4,373
Approved Participants	2,906	2,697	2,867	2,572
Credit Participants	1,818	1,430	1,335	1,942
Noncredit Participants	1,173	1,561	998	1,366

In addition to financial support to students (total 1,665 instances), PACE pathway navigators provided 5,383 instances of non-financial support to active participants through educational, personal and career and support services during the course of FY23 (Table 5).

Table 5. Instances of Support by Type, FY23

Support	Credit	Noncredit	Total
Financial Support			
Education	650	418	1,068
Personal	244	185	429
Career	28	140	168
Total	922	743	1,665
Non-financial Support			
Education	1,814	1,147	2,961
Personal	823	263	1,086
Career	899	437	1,336
Total	3,536	1,847	5,383

Tables 6A and 6B identify the total supports by student count, both financial and nonfinancial, by category (unduplicated), and the unduplicated count of students served in both the noncredit and credit programs. Not all colleges utilize PACE for both credit and noncredit students equally. For example, Northwest Iowa Community College uses their PACE allocation to support eligible credit students through educational support.

Table 6A. Noncredit Student Instances of Support and Total Student Count, AY 2023

College	Personal	Career	Education	Unduplicated Count
Northeast Iowa	3	9	263	263
North Iowa Area	18	22	28	15
Iowa Lakes	6	13	1	18
Northwest Iowa	0	0	0	0
Iowa Central	53	52	57	52
Iowa Valley	2	0	41	42
Hawkeye	111	70	70	70
Eastern Iowa	5	29	120	121
Kirkwood	48	59	84	71
Des Moines Area	90	59	479	312
Western Iowa Tech	2	1	1	1
Iowa Western	13	0	193	184
Southwestern	16	16	16	14
Indian Hills	35	33	44	32
Southeastern	46	214	168	171

Table 6B. Credit Student Instances of Support and Student Count, AY 2023

College	Personal	Career	Education	Unduplicated Count
Northeast Iowa	1	1	564	292
North Iowa Area	88	73	182	105
Iowa Lakes	2	17	5	19
Northwest Iowa	0	0	20	16
Iowa Central	56	39	67	39
Iowa Valley	71	1	41	78
Hawkeye	99	56	87	53
Eastern Iowa	14	55	144	143
Kirkwood	30	3	9	20
Des Moines Area	118	110	745	582
Western Iowa Tech	522	521	521	521
Iowa Western	0	0	8	8
Southwestern	5	0	3	5
Indian Hills	52	44	50	43
Southeastern	9	7	16	18

In FY23, there were 2,419 awards conferred for either credit or noncredit program completion. Each program may require a different time frame for completion, so some students in the FY23 cohort may have started their programs in different academic years. In total, there were 394 associate's degrees, 333 career and technical education diplomas and 304 certificates awarded in FY23. In addition, 400 Gap program-specific awards, 463 industry credentials and 525 third-party credentials were awarded for noncredit programs (Table 7).

Table 7. Awards Conferred to PACE Students, FY2023

College	Credit Awards						Noncredit Awards			Total
Northeast Iowa	1	0	1	62	56	5	4	12	4	145
North Iowa Area	3	1	0	21	11	18	0	3	0	57
Iowa Lakes	0	0	0	2	2	0	3	5	12	24
Northwest Iowa**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Iowa Central	2	0	0	0	7	1	53	66	52	181
Iowa Valley	0	0	0	24	28	8	26	38	27	151
Hawkeye	0	0	0	4	6	1	39	49	53	152
Eastern Iowa	2	0	0	37	35	13	0	8	1	96
Kirkwood	0	0	0	9	4	0	0	31	41	85
Des Moines Area	1	2	4	137	55	110	124	201	267	901
Western Iowa Tech	0	0	0	61	113	140	0	0	2	316
Iowa Western	0	0	0	1	0	0	89	0	0	90
Southwestern	0	0	0	0	4	2	8	6	8	28
Indian Hills	1	0	0	18	11	0	26	35	30	121
Southeastern	0	0	0	0	1	6	28	9	28	72
Total	10	3	5	376	333	304	400	463	525	2,419

* There were zero AAA and APS degrees awarded to PACE participants in FY23.
** Northwest did not report their awards for PACE in the Management Information System in FY23.