

Frequently Asked Questions About Trade & Industry Clusters / Pathways

- 1. We currently teach a course that is similar to one of the courses on the approved list of courses. Can we keep using our existing course?**

A- In order to have an approved, funded pathway, you must use the courses from the approved list, with their attached competencies. You may add competencies of your own to each course, but the Core competencies must remain. The reason is consistency. This makes it much easier for transfer students to be placed in the correct courses. It also assists business & industry to know the skill sets students have achieved when they have completed a sequence of courses.
- 2. Can a course be pulled from one pathway to be taught in another pathway?**

A- Only courses that are actually listed as being a part of the pathway will be accepted for approval and funding. There are several courses that crossover to other pathways. They are listed in each pathway where applicable.
- 3. Can the introductory course(s) be taught at the 8th grade level?**

A- Yes, the introductory course can be taught at the 8th grade level, but there will still need to be three full credits of additional courses in the sequence that are taught at the high school level.
- 4. Can you explain what is meant by, “all pathways must have a work-based element”?**

A- All students must be exposed to “all aspects” of the industry. This includes hands-on application of the skills taught. Most of the application level courses have this built in to them. This stops short of (but may include) requiring an In-House Training or Internship opportunity for the students. It would be great if all students could get the face-to-face communication skills of working directly with a client or customer, and we encourage this whenever possible, but realize that in small rural communities it is not always possible. An internship may be a requirement in some of the other cluster pathways, but it is not currently required for the Trade & Industry cluster pathways.
- 5. What about the End of Pathway Assessment for pathways? When does that requirement start?**

A- All pathways will eventually have a third-party end-of-pathway assessment. In some cases it will be a nationally recognized assessment that already exists (i.e., The National Health Assessment). For other pathways, KSDE is working with CETE to develop end-of-pathway assessments. Some have just been completed and some are now in the validation process. Once they are complete they will appear as options to select in Section Four of the CPPSA Maintenance Applications.
- 6. Once a Third-Party Assessment is developed for a pathway, will the Competency Profile for that pathway be done away with?**

A- In lieu of an end-of-pathway assessment, schools are required to report the success of the students by completing the rating scale on the Competency Profiles. The end-of-pathway assessment will replace the rating scale on the Competency Profiles, but will not replace the profiles themselves. The Competency Profiles for the pathways will still exist as they list the required core competencies for each course.

7. What if the postsecondary institution in our area does not offer a program similar to ours and we can't get an Articulation Agreement?

A- You are required to have an Articulation Agreement with a postsecondary institution to get the pathway approved. If your local postsecondary institution does not have a program that aligns with your pathway, you have a couple of options. You can work with any postsecondary institution that has an aligned program to set up an articulation agreement. The other option is to utilize one of the Statewide Articulation Agreements developed through KSDE. You do not have to articulate with the "closest" postsecondary institution, but you should articulate with one that is "reasonable" for your students to utilize. For example, If your school is in SE Kansas and both Wichita Area Technical College and Dodge City Community College have a program that aligns well, you would most likely want to articulate with Wichita as it is closer to SE Kansas and would be more convenient for your students.

8. Can we utilize any of the Statewide Articulation Agreements that are for the Pathway our school offers?

A- Each statewide articulation agreement has its own requirements set by the postsecondary institution. A high school pathway must meet all requirements in the agreement in order to utilize it with students and in the CPPSA Maintenance Application. All agreements must be read carefully to ensure that your pathway contains all courses and/or certifications required by the agreement.

9. What is the process for getting courses added to a pathway?

A- All pathways are scheduled to go through a formal Review Process. Part of this process will include looking at possible courses to add and/or delete from the existing pathways. Anyone who has suggestions for new courses should send them to the appropriate consultant at KSDE. The review timeline for Trade & Industry clusters is as follows:

Architecture & Construction – 2013-14

Manufacturing – 2014-15

Transportation – 2015-16

10. Do you have to have an approved pathway in order to qualify for the Senate Bill 155 certification incentives or for the tuition reimbursement?

A- No. Senate Bill 155 is legislation enacted by the Kansas Legislature. As long as a student qualifies under the legislation, they and/or the high school can benefit from the free tuition and/or the certification incentive.