

From Data to Opportunity: Outcomes of the Pathways to Success Program

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Executive Summary

The Pathways to Success program pilot—funded by ECMC Foundation and implemented through the ACT® Work Ready Communities® (WRC) initiative—met or exceeded all our targeted success measures at the two participating sites: College of Southern Nevada (CSN) and Metropolitan Community College (MCC) in Omaha, Nebraska.

For this pilot, we collected data from both sites about the participants' enrollment, persistence, credential attainment, continued education, and ACT® WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate™ (NCRC®) scores. Here are our main findings:

- 6,060 students from underserved and other high-priority populations enrolled as participants of the Pathways to Success program pilot at the two sites.
- 95% of these participants persisted in the program (i.e., continued the program for the subsequent one or more quarters or completed it within one quarter), a 126% increase from their persistence rates before the pilot.
- 34% of the participants who retested improved their WorkKeys NCRC level, exceeding the 25% target.
- 56% of the participants who were working on basic skills advanced their National Reporting System (NRS) educational functioning level (EFL), thereby achieving a measurable improvement in their skills.
- 87% of the intermediate- and advanced-level participants earned at least one short-term, stackable credential.
- 98% of the credential earners continued their education at the participating sites after earning their credentials.

These findings demonstrate that the WRC initiative provides a scalable community-based workforce development framework that advances both academic progress and career readiness. The Pathways to Success pilot further illustrates how programs can meet federal reporting requirements while using the results of the ACT® WorkKeys® assessments to generate workforce-aligned performance indicators that employers find meaningful.

Introduction

To help close the skills gap and equip people for success in the evolving world of work, ACT Work Ready Communities bring together disparate individuals and organizations. The WRC initiative incorporates data-driven strategies that connect a community's education and economic growth to provide a proven framework for workforce development. This framework

links workforce development to education; aligns with the economic development needs of communities, regions, and states; and matches individuals to jobs based on their skill levels. Since the launch of the WRC framework in 2012, over 590 communities across the United States have adopted it to align their local workforce, education, and economic development efforts and to close skill gaps through shared goals, data-driven strategies, and ACT WorkKeys tools, including the NCRC credential. The established Pathways to Success program offers a ready-made framework for providing innovative, community-driven workforce solutions to local communities.

Recognizing the strengths of this program, ECMC Foundation awarded ACT a grant on December 1, 2023, to pilot the Pathways to Success program through WRC. Using its existing infrastructure, the 2-year WRC initiative partnered with CSN and MCC to implement strategies that each community devised to expand talent development for its historically underserved and other high-priority populations. The program also served as a learning laboratory to explore ways to improve recruitment, enrollment, persistence, and credential attainment among individuals without formal postsecondary degrees. For additional information on the program, explore our website (<https://www.workreadycommunities.org>) and the toolkit developed during the pilot (<https://www.workreadycommunities.org/pathwaystosuccess>).

During the research design phase, we established the following five indicators to measure the success of the pilot program:

- Enroll over 2,000 students from underserved and other high-priority populations across the participating communities as participants of the Pathway to Success program.
- Improve WorkKeys NCRC levels of at least 25% of the participants by one level or more between the first and the second WorkKeys assessment administration.
- Increase semester-to-semester persistence of the participants in the program by 25%.
- Ensure that 70% of the participants attain a locally relevant short-term stackable credential.
- Ensure that 70% of the participants persist in continuing their education within 1 year of earning a short-term credential.

We selected these measures to evaluate the participants' access to the program, skill development, persistence, and momentum after earning their credentials at key points on their path from education to employment.

To measure these indicators, we collected longitudinal data from CSN and MCC for five consecutive quarters, starting July 1, 2024, and concluding at the end of September 2025. CSN and MCC provided the data that included the participants' demographic information, enrollment status, persistence, credential attainment, and continued education after earning their credentials. ACT collected participants' WorkKeys scores and NCRC levels, matching the scores to the data that the sites provided.

This issue brief summarizes our findings for each of these five measures of success and demonstrates how the pilot Pathways to Success program helped both the participants and the two communities.

Findings

The following findings summarize the outcomes from five consecutive quarters of data collected at the two pilot sites. Results are organized according to the program's five established measures of success: enrollment of historically underserved students, improved WorkKeys scores and NCRC levels, persistence, credential attainment, and continued education. Across all these indicators, the Pathways to Success program demonstrated strong performance, exceeding the goals set at the beginning of the WRC initiative.

Enrollment of Underserved Students

The first measure of success emphasized enrolling historically underserved students in programs at the two participating colleges as part of the Pathways to Success pilot. The goal for the pilot program was to enroll 2,000 students from the two communities, but 6,060 students participated, much higher than our intended goal.

Both sites use a tiered approach to meet students where they are and to offer them suitable pathways to reach educational and career success. For example, MCC provides three levels of training to meet its students' needs: entry level (Tier I), intermediate (Tier II), and advanced (Tier III). Students in Tier I often lack foundational skills. Most are enrolled in an English as a second language (ESL) or a graduate equivalency degree/high school equivalency (GED/HSE, hereafter abbreviated as HSE) program. These students are building the foundational academic and language skills necessary to successfully transition into postsecondary training, credential-bearing programs, and employment. As students enter Tier II or Tier III, their attainment of stackable, industry-recognized credentials helps them reach the training and career pathway. Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants by levels. Overall, across the two sites, 4,842 participants were at entry level (Tier I), and 1,218 participants were at an intermediate (Tier II) or advanced (Tier III) level. (CSN uses different names for the levels in its system, so we mapped CSN's levels to MCC's tiers.)

Table 1. Enrollment at the Two Sites

| Participants | CSN | MCC | Total |
|--|-------|-------|-------|
| Entry level (Tier I) | 1,847 | 2,995 | 4,842 |
| Intermediate or advanced level (Tier II/III) | 269 | 949 | 1,218 |
| Total | 2,116 | 3,944 | 6,060 |

Improvement of WorkKeys Scores and NCRC Levels

The second measure of success focused on improving WorkKeys scores between the first and second assessment administration and thereby increasing the level of the NCRC attained. The WorkKeys assessments measure the foundational work skills needed for success in jobs across

many industries and occupations. The assessments provide both level scores and scale scores. If a student completes the three assessments—ACT® WorkKeys® Applied Math, ACT® WorkKeys® Graphic Literacy, and ACT® WorkKeys® Workplace Documents—and achieves level scores of at least 3 on each assessment, the student is issued a WorkKeys NCRC. The four NCRC levels require minimum level scores on the three WorkKeys assessments: bronze is awarded for scores of 3, silver for scores of 4, gold for scores of 5, and platinum for scores of 6.

Retesting was not originally built into each program’s design, and therefore it was optional for participants to take any of the WorkKeys assessments a second time. Encouraging participants to take a second set of tests proved challenging for several reasons:

- **Time and effort.** Completing the three WorkKeys assessments requires approximately 3 hours of testing, which is a significant commitment for students already balancing coursework and other responsibilities.
- **State requirements.** In Nebraska, MCC is required to use a state-mandated assessment for reporting purposes, making WorkKeys an additional set of assessments.
- **Logistical barriers.** Both sites faced difficulties securing proctors and testing space, which limited opportunities for retesting.

Despite these challenges, both CSN and MCC worked to integrate testing and retesting into their programs throughout the Pathways to Success pilot. Table 2 displays the number of participants from each site who completed a second administration of the three WorkKeys assessments within the time frame of the Pathways to Success pilot.

Table 2. Number of Participants Who Retested in One or More WorkKeys Assessments

| WorkKeys | CSN | MCC | Total |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| NCRC level recalculated | 73 | 94 | 167 |
| Applied Math | 69 | 62 | 131 |
| Graphic Literacy | 66 | 42 | 108 |
| Workplace Documents | 73 | 34 | 107 |

Once a participant had a new score in one or more of the three assessments, their NCRC level was recalculated. Table 3 displays the numbers and percentages of participants who improved their WorkKeys level scores by at least one level from the first to the second test administration. Among the participants who retested, 34% of them improved their NCRC level by at least one level, exceeding our goal of 25% of participants. Compared to the percentage of participants who improved their overall NCRC level, a higher percentage of participants who retested in each of the three WorkKeys assessments improved their level scores between the first and second testing: 38% for Applied Math, 35% for Graphic Literacy, and 37% for Workplace Documents.

Table 3. Number (Percentage) of Participants Who Improved WorkKeys Level Scores by One Level or More Between First and Second Testing

| WorkKeys level score | CSN | MCC | Total |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| NCRC | 24 (33%) | 32 (34%) | 56 (34%) |
| Applied Math | 26 (38%) | 24 (39%) | 50 (38%) |
| Graphic Literacy | 18 (27%) | 20 (48%) | 38 (35%) |
| Workplace Documents | 24 (33%) | 16 (47%) | 40 (37%) |

Table 4 shows the patterns of improvement among those who increased their NCRC levels. Overall, 30% of participants did not earn an NCRC in the first testing but earned a Bronze NCRC in the second testing; 36% improved their NCRC from Bronze to Silver, 13% from Silver to Gold, and 9% from Gold to Platinum. Additionally, several participants improved by more than one level, including 9% from no NCRC to Silver and 4% from Bronze to Gold.

Table 4. Distributions of WorkKeys NCRC Level Improvement

| NCRC level | CSN (<i>n</i> = 24) | MCC (<i>n</i> = 32) | Total (<i>n</i> = 56) |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| No NCRC to Bronze | 11 (46%) | 6 (19%) | 17 (30%) |
| No NCRC to Silver | 2 (8%) | 3 (9%) | 5 (9%) |
| Bronze to Silver | 7 (29%) | 13 (41%) | 20 (36%) |
| Bronze to Gold | 0 | 2 (6%) | 2 (4%) |
| Silver to Gold | 3 (13%) | 4 (13%) | 7 (13%) |
| Gold to Platinum | 1 (4%) | 4 (13%) | 5 (9%) |

In addition, we compared participants' scale scores between the first and second test administration. Scale scores are often used to track growth in skills over time and are set to range from 65 to 90. Table 5 displays the average scale scores in the three assessments for the first and second testing. We conducted three *t* tests to check whether there was a significant difference between the scores in each. The results showed that scale scores in WorkKeys Applied Math and Workplace Documents were significantly higher on the second test than on the first, indicating another positive outcome of the Pathways to Success program.

Table 5. WorkKeys Scale Score Differences

| WorkKeys | 1st testing (mean) | 2nd testing (mean) | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| Applied Math (<i>n</i> = 131) | 76.03 | 77.11 | 3.49 | <.01 |
| Graphic Literacy (<i>n</i> = 108) | 76.01 | 76.33 | 1.17 | .24 |
| Workplace Documents (<i>n</i> = 107) | 77.01 | 78.17 | 3.29 | <.01 |

Increased Persistence in the Program

Another measure of success of the pilot was to increase the persistence of the participants in the program by 25%. Before the Pathways to Success pilot, the semester-to-semester persistence rates were 25% at CSN and 59% at MCC.

Because the data were collected by quarter rather than by semester, in this brief we define persistence as participants' enrolling in more than one quarter of the program or completing it within one quarter during the pilot. (The analysis excluded participants who joined the program in the last quarter of data collection [Q5] because their persistence data were not available by the end of this study.) Table 6 shows the number of participants who persisted with the program and the persistence rates at both sites. The overall persistence rate for the two sites was 94.8%. Compared with the average rates of persistence prior to the program (25% at CSN and 59% at MCC), the current persistence rates at both sites were much higher than before. The 126% increase greatly exceeded our intended goal of a 25% increase.

Table 6. Persistence of Participants in the Program

| Persistence of participants | CSN | MCC | Total |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| Participants who persisted | 1,613 | 2,948 | 4,561 |
| Participants who completed the program within 1 quarter | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| Total participants enrolled before Q5 | 1,621 | 3,196 | 4,817 |
| Persistence | 99.5% | 92.5% | 94.8% |

Credential Attainment

The next measure of success focused on whether participants attained locally relevant short-term stackable credentials after enrolling in the Pathways to Success program. A stackable credential, built upon students' prior learning, can be applied toward further education or training and is part of a recognized career pathway or framework. The possibility of attaining a stackable credential depends on a student's skill level upon entry into the program. As mentioned previously (in the Enrollment of Underserved Students section), both sites use a tiered approach for educating students: entry level (Tier I), intermediate level (Tier II), and advanced level (Tier III).

Students in Tier I often lack foundational skills and usually are in either an ESL or HSE program, so the training focuses on building these students' foundational skills. Because obtaining locally relevant short-term stackable credentials is not yet relevant for Tier I students, we therefore excluded them from our credential-related analyses. However, as students enter Tier II and Tier III, their attaining stackable, industry-recognized credentials is important for their training and pathway to career success. Table 7 presents the numbers and percentages of Tier II and Tier III participants who earned at least one locally relevant short-term stackable credential at both sites after participating in the Pathways to Success pilot. Overall, 87% of Tier II and Tier III participants attained at least one of these credentials by Q5, exceeding our intended goal of 70%. Some participants were still in the process of earning a credential at the close of Q5, so we expect the final percentage will be even higher once they complete their training.

Table 7. Locally Relevant Short-Term Stackable Credentials

| Short-term credentials | CSN | MCC | Total |
|---|-----|-----|-------|
| Participants attaining 1 or more short-term credentials | 231 | 826 | 1,057 |
| Total Tier II/III participants | 269 | 949 | 1,218 |
| Credential attainment | 86% | 87% | 87% |

Continued Education After Earning Credentials

The final measure of the success of the Pathways to Success pilot focused on continued education, with the goal of 70% of participants continuing their education within 1 year of earning a short-term credential. As noted in the previous section, because these credentials do not apply to Tier I participants, we included only Tier II and Tier III participants in our analysis. Additionally, because data collection covered only five quarters, our analysis included only the participants who earned a short-term credential between Q1 and Q4. In this context, continued education is defined as participants' remaining in the program for at least one additional quarter after earning a locally relevant short-term credential. Table 8 shows the number and percentage of participants who persisted after earning a credential. Nearly all these participants (98%) stayed in the program for at least one more quarter, surpassing our intended 70% goal.

Table 8. Continued Education After Earning a Short-Term Credential

| Continued education | CSN | MCC | Total |
|--|------|-----|-------|
| Participants who persisted in the program after earning a short-term credential in Q1–Q4 | 193 | 748 | 941 |
| Participants who earned a short-term credential in Q1–Q4 | 193 | 766 | 959 |
| Persistence rate after earning a short-term credential | 100% | 98% | 98% |

Measurable Skill Gain

For Tier I students at MCC, the college's primary emphasis is to develop their foundational academic and workforce skills before they can enroll in short-term credential programs. Accordingly, credential attainment was not an appropriate outcome measure for the Tier I participants during the Pathways to Success pilot, so we examined alternate data sources to assess their progress. (Although CSN provided Tier I data, the sample size was insufficient to permit statistically meaningful analysis.)

Under National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines, measurable skill gains (MSGs) may be demonstrated through multiple methods; however, this analysis focuses on assessment-based indicators of academic progress relevant to Tier I students. MCC measures its students' Tier I academic progress by using Nebraska's state-mandated adult education assessment to assign educational functioning levels (EFLs) for NRS reporting. Although ACT WorkKeys is federally approved to measure MSGs, Nebraska's state policy requires educational institutions to use the designated state assessment for NRS reporting, precluding the use of WorkKeys assessments for this measure. Because WorkKeys scale scores can be aligned with EFLs, WorkKeys

assessments have the potential to serve both workforce signaling and academic progress monitoring functions in future implementations of the Pathways to Success program.

An EFL is a standardized federal benchmark describing an academic skill level in reading or mathematics. Each EFL corresponds to defined scale score ranges on Nebraska's state-mandated assessment and represents a distinct level of academic functioning. Six EFL levels are established under the NRS framework, and advancement from one level to the next constitutes a federally recognized MSG.

Tier I students typically enroll in either ESL or adult basic education (ABE) programs. Both ESL and ABE are organized into six EFLs for federal reporting. Students generally begin in ESL and transition to ABE after reaching ESL EFL Level 6. Within this structure, MSGs occur through three pathways: (a) advancing one or more EFL levels in ESL, (b) advancing one or more EFL levels in ABE, or (c) completing ESL and transitioning to ABE.

During the data collection period, 56% of the Tier I participants at MCC achieved an MSG. Gains were most frequently achieved during ESL participation (36% of all Tier I participants), reflecting the importance for them to acquire English language early to progress. An additional 20% achieved gains during ABE enrollment. Notably, 16% of Tier I participants advanced two or more EFL levels within the reporting period, indicating accelerated academic progression beyond a single-level gain. Because advancement of one EFL level represents a significant increase in measured academic functioning under NRS benchmarks, this movement across multiple levels reflects substantial skill development.

MCC's Tier I MSG rate of 56% compares favorably with NRS national data for the 2023–24 program year, during which approximately 44%–50% of ESL and ABE participants achieved an MSG. Importantly, MCC's rate reflects assessment-based EFL gains, whereas national rates aggregate multiple federally approved MSGs. As such, these findings suggest relatively strong performance within the Tier I group.

Table 9. Measurable Skill Gains Among Tier I Participants at MCC

| Progress type | Progress pattern | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| ESL-based progress | 1 EFL increase (ESL) | 24 |
| | 2 or more EFL increases (ESL) | 10 |
| | ESL completion with transition to ABE | 2 |
| ABE-based progress | 1 EFL increase (ABE) | 14 |
| | 2 or more EFL increases (ABE) | 6 |
| Total achieving MSG | | 56 |

Note. Percentages reflect the proportion of Tier I participants at MCC whose MSG data were available ($n = 2,791$).

Discussion

Based on the analysis of the outcomes, the Pathways to Success pilot exceeded all five of our measures of success. The program enrolled 6,060 historically underserved students. The participants' score improvements on the WorkKeys assessments are evidence of their skill gains. Among the participants who retested, 34% improved their WorkKeys NCRC by at least one level, and more participants showed score improvements across all three WorkKeys assessments. Scale scores for the Applied Math and Workplace Documents assessments were significantly higher during the second test administration than in the first. Also, persistence in the program reached 95%, far exceeding the rates at the two sites before the pilot (25% at CSN and 59% at MCC) and greatly surpassing the intended goal of a 25% increase. Additionally, 87% of participants at intermediate and advanced levels (Tier II and Tier III) earned at least one locally relevant short-term stackable credential after enrolling in the program. Nearly all these participants (98%) continued their training in the Pathways to Success program after earning their credentials.

The strong outcomes observed across these five measures reflect not only that the participants made progress but also that the implementation strategies used by the participating sites worked well. Throughout the pilot, CSN and MCC devised and then applied structured approaches that worked for each community. These approaches are documented in the Pathways to Success Toolkit (<https://www.workreadycommunities.org/pathwaystosuccess>). Some examples are aligning partners around shared goals, streamlining resources for students, and using data to guide continuous improvement. By capturing these practices, the toolkit provides a practical resource for other Work Ready Communities seeking to replicate and scale similar results locally.

Implementation Strategies and Lessons Learned

More than half of the Tier I participants at MCC achieved MSG. Importantly, although Nebraska requires a state-mandated assessment for NRS reporting, the Pathways to Success pilot demonstrated that ACT WorkKeys can be administered alongside that assessment without conflict. Tier I participants showed substantial academic growth as measured by EFL advancement, while participants who participated in WorkKeys retesting demonstrated improvements in foundational workplace skills and NCRC levels. Together, these findings suggest that academic skill development and workforce readiness can be advanced concurrently. Unlike EFL advancement, which is primarily used for federal reporting, the NCRC provides a portable, employer-recognized credential that signals foundational workplace competencies across industries. For students at the earliest stages of skill development—many without any prior credentials—the NCRC offers an immediate, industry-recognized signal of competence, expanding their access to employment opportunities while they continue to develop their academic skills. The pilot illustrates how programs can meet federal NRS accountability requirements while simultaneously using the WorkKeys assessments to generate workforce-aligned performance indicators that are meaningful to employers and community partners. Because WorkKeys scale scores can be aligned with EFLs, future implementations of the program could potentially streamline assessment systems by administering only the

WorkKeys assessments to support both federal reporting and workforce signaling at the same time.

Why This Matters for States, Communities, and Employers

The outcomes of the Pathways to Success pilot have implications that extend beyond the success of an individual student to the success of state systems, local communities, and employers seeking scalable workforce solutions, which include the following:

- **Reduction in assessment burden.** The alignment between MSG and WorkKeys NCRC levels highlights the potential to reduce students' assessment burden while educational institutions meet both federal accountability and workforce signaling needs. Although state policies may require specific assessments for reporting to the NRS, the pilot demonstrated that workforce-relevant assessments such as WorkKeys can be implemented alongside the required assessments without conflict, creating opportunities for more integrated assessment strategies in future implementations of the program.
- **Scalable model of adult education.** The use of tiered education and training at the participating sites illustrates a scalable model for adult education and workforce systems. By differentiating the supports and outcomes for students at varying skill levels—from foundational skill development to credential attainment—the Pathways to Success model can be adapted across different state and local contexts while maintaining consistent performance expectations. This flexibility supports broader adoption within adult education systems that serve diverse student populations.
- **Return on public investment in stackable credential pathways.** The finding that 98% of credential earners in the pilot continued their education after earning a short-term credential underscores the high return on public investment in stackable credential pathways. Rather than serving as an end point for credential earners, their attainment of short-term credentials functioned as an entry point for them to continue training and developing skills, reinforcing the value of credential pathways as a strategy for generating sustained workforce advancement and long-term economic mobility.
- **Signal of foundational workplace skills.** These results demonstrate how employers in communities can use NCRCs as a common, portable signal of the foundational workplace skills of prospective employees. Employers in Work Ready Communities can rely on NCRC data to broaden talent pipelines, reduce reliance on traditional ways to evaluate job candidates (such as requiring them to have prior credentials), and engage more confidently with adult students transitioning into the workforce. At the community level, aggregated WorkKeys scores and NCRC levels provide a concrete way to communicate workforce readiness to current and prospective employers, strengthening these communities' ability to attract talent and retain employees while simultaneously aligning with educational and economic development strategies.

Limitations and Future Directions

In addition to the five measures of success already discussed, future evaluations of the Pathways to Success program could incorporate additional indicators to further demonstrate the program's efficacy. Examples of these measures include changes in employment status, change of salary, and number of job promotions after enrolling. Subjective measures could also be gathered through surveys or interviews: For instance, it would be valuable to collect information from the participants about their perceptions of skill development, confidence in making career-related decisions, and job satisfaction and burnout (if employed). Beyond expanding the types of data collected, long-term longitudinal tracking is also essential for us to assess the sustained impact of the program. For example, collecting data at 6 and 12 months after program completion may reveal its long-term impact. Overall, these additional data points would help us present a more holistic picture of the effectiveness of the Pathways to Success program.

Despite these strong outcomes, two implementation and data challenges emerged during the pilot: low participation in retesting and missing data.

The first challenge is that not many students participated in WorkKeys retesting because of the issues of time and effort, state requirements, and logistical barriers (mentioned in the Improvement of WorkKeys Scores and NCRC Levels section). Despite these limitations that caused low participation, the retest results demonstrated that participants made meaningful gains in foundational workplace skills, suggesting the potential value of incorporating structured retesting into future models of the Pathways to Success program. Future models should encourage students to take the WorkKeys tests multiple times: The retest results could help measure the skill improvement of students and identify their training needs as well as allowing them to earn an NCRC to demonstrate those skills to prospective employers. Future models of the program could explore streamlined assessment strategies that support both NRS reporting and workforce skill documentation. Embedding planned retesting cycles into the program's design—rather than relying on voluntary participation—could strengthen instructional feedback loops, provide clearer documentation of skill growth over time, and increase opportunities for students to earn an NCRC or improve their NCRC level. In addition, because WorkKeys scale scores can be aligned with EFLs, future implementation models could explore more integrated assessment strategies that support both federal NRS reporting requirements and workforce skill documentation. Such alignment may reduce redundancy in testing while enhancing the ability to track progress concurrently in academic and career readiness.

The second challenge was that some data were missing, which made it hard to demonstrate the participants' improvement in other areas. For example, much of the data regarding employment status and salary changes were missing. Such data could have helped demonstrate that the Pathways to Success program was beneficial for students' finding better employment.

Addressing these implementation and data challenges in the future would strengthen the evidence base for linking academic skill gains, workforce readiness credentials, and employment outcomes.

Conclusion

The Pathways to Success pilot delivered strong outcomes across five measures: enrollment, persistence, skill development, credential attainment, and continued education. By relying on the ACT Work Ready Communities framework, the pilot expanded access to meaningful educational and workforce opportunities for thousands of historically underserved students, advancing ACT's aim to build stronger, more equitable talent pathways nationwide.

The Pathways to Success Toolkit (<https://www.workreadycommunities.org/pathwaystosuccess>) documents the strategies devised by the two participating sites, thereby translating the outcomes of this pilot into specific actions for other communities seeking to implement and scale similar approaches within the Work Ready Communities framework.



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