Texas Pathways Coaching Manual

Texas Success Center

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Texas Pathways

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Introduction

MESSAGE FROM THE TEXAS SUCCESS CENTER VICE PRESIDENT

The Texas Success Center, with generous funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Greater Texas Foundation, Houston Endowment, Jobs for the Future, Kresge Foundation, Meadows Foundation, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Teagle Foundation, T.L.L. Temple Foundation, and Trellis Foundation, coordinates Texas Pathways, a statewide strategy focused on building capacity for community colleges to design and implement structured academic and career pathways at scale, for all students. Closely based on the national Pathways Project led by the American Association of Community Colleges and building on emerging research and experience in the field, this project is intentionally designed to dramatically contribute to the state's strategic plan of increasing credentialed young Texans to 60% by 2030. Texas Pathways reflects the Success Center's commitment to support all 50 Texas community colleges districts' student success efforts through a major coherent and comprehensive strategy.

The purpose of this coaching manual and field guide is to provide information and guidance for coaches who work with Texas community colleges participating in this initiative. The manual is intended to be a resource for coaches as they support their assigned colleges through Pathways Institutes, virtual coaching, and on-site visits. The manual also provides an orientation to the program design and expectations for colleges based on their cadre assignment.

This manual will describe expectations and responsibilities for coaches, principles of effective coaching, and detailed plans for on-campus coaching, coaching at institutes, and virtual coaching. The manual will also include sections on guided pathways principles, guided pathways research, challenges and lessons learned, and logistics such as reporting procedures. This manual and field guide will establish greater consistency among Texas Pathways coaches, reinforce effective coaching strategies, and provide tools for coaches to build their skillset.

Cynthia Ferrell, Ph.D.
Vice President, Texas Success Center

WHAT IS THE "TEXAS PATHWAYS" MODEL?[1]

The Texas Pathways model is an integrated, system-wide approach to student success based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent and structured educational experiences, informed by available evidence, that guide each student effectively and efficiently from the selection of their high school degree program to her/his point of postsecondary entry through to attainment of high-quality credentials and careers with value in the labor market.

Central to the pathways model are clear, educationally coherent program maps—which include specific course sequences, progress milestones, and program learning outcomes—that are aligned to what will be expected of students upon program completion in the workforce and in education at the next level in a given field. Students are helped from the start to explore academic and career options, choose a program of study, and develop a plan based on the program maps. These plans simplify student decision-making, and they enable high schools, colleges, and universities to provide predictable schedules, frequent feedback, and targeted support as needed to help students stay on track and complete their programs more efficiently. They also facilitate efforts by teachers and faculty to ensure that students are building the skills across their programs that they will need to succeed in employment and further education.

TEXAS PATHWAYS ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

The four dimensions of the pathways model, together with essential practices of each, are the following:

1. **Clarify paths to student end goals**
    a. Simplify students' choices with default program maps developed by faculty and advisors that show students a clear pathway to completion, further education and employment in fields of importance to the region.
    b. Establish transfer pathways through alignment of pathway courses and expected learning outcomes with transfer institutions, to optimize applicability of community college credits to university majors.
    c. Align high school pathways (endorsements), including dual credit courses and student learning outcomes with community college academic or career and technology certificates and degree programs.

2. **Help students choose and enter a pathway**
    a. Bridge K-12 to higher education by assuring early remediation in the final year of high school, including a college prep course, jointly designed by high school and community college instructors, that accelerates remediation of basic prerequisite skills of community college pathways.
    b. Redesign traditional remediation as an a "on-ramp" to program of study, which helps students explore academic and career options from eighth grade through the beginning of their college experience, aligns math and other foundation skills coursework with a student's program of study, and integrates and contextualizes instruction to build academic and non-academic foundation skills throughout the high school and college-level curriculum, particularly in program "gateway" courses.
    c. Provide accelerated remediation to help *very poorly prepared* students, including those in Adult Education & Literacy programs, succeed in college-level courses as soon as possible.

[1] The Texas Pathways model and essential practices are based on the work of the Community College Research Center and the American Association of Community Colleges.

3. **Help students stay on path**
    a. Support students through a strong advising process, embedded and ongoing in the high school-to-college-to-career pathway experience and supported by appropriate technology, to help students make informed choices, strengthen clarity about transfer and career opportunities at the end of their chosen college path, ensure they develop an academic plan with predictable schedules, monitor their progress, and intervene when they go off track.
    b. Embed academic and non-academic supports throughout students' programs to promote student learning and persistence.

4. **Ensure students are learning**
    a. Establish program-level learning outcomes aligned with the requirements for success in employment and further education in a given field and apply the results of learning outcomes assessment to improve the effectiveness of instruction across high school, community college, and university programs.
    b. Integrate group projects, internships, and other applied learning experiences to enhance instruction and student success in courses across programs of study.
    c. Ensure incorporation of effective teaching practice, especially practice that promotes student engagement, throughout the pathways.

ESSENTIAL CAPACITIES FOR GUIDED PATHWAYS REFORMS

Research and experience in the field indicate the following capacities are essential for motivating and supporting higher education institutions and systems to undertake the broad-scale institutional reforms involved in implementing guided pathways effectively and at scale.

- Leadership demonstrating skills for managing and sustaining large-scale transformational change
- Broad and authentic engagement of college faculty and staff—particularly advisors—in the design, implementation, evaluation, and ongoing improvement of pathways for students
- Institutional will and capacity to use data and evidence to design academic and career pathways, monitor student progress, and implement needed improvements over time
- Technological tools and infrastructure appropriate to support student progress through guided pathways
- Commitment to the level of strategically targeted professional development that will be required to design and implement pathways at scale
- Policy conditions established at the state, governing board, system, and institutional level that provide incentives, structures, and supports for pathway design and implementation at scale while removing barriers
- A continuing action research agenda that examines the efficacy of guided pathways and develops practical knowledge and tools to support effective implementation at scale

Texas Pathways

TEXAS PATHWAYS DESCRIPTION

Texas Pathways is fundamentally grounded in solving systemic educational problems impeding student success caused by incoherent and misaligned structures that result in far too few Texans prepared for meaningful careers. For the state and its citizens to remain competitive and prosperous, the state's 60X30TX higher education strategic plan calls for 60% of our 25- to 34-year-olds to hold a quality certificate or degree by 2030. Unfortunately, only 42% of young adults in Texas have any postsecondary credential.[1] Only one of every five 8th grade student in Texas achieves this goal within six years of finishing high school. Worse yet, there are alarming disparities across race and gender. White students' rates of earning a college credential are two times higher than those of Latinx and Black students. And less than 9% of Hispanic and black 8th grade males earn any postsecondary credential within 11 years.[2] Given the growing Latinx population, inequitable achievement gaps in Texas are likely to widen absent a large-scale strategy to dramatically improve students' paths toward completion.[3]

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR REFORM AT SCALE IN TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A decade of intensive focus on improving student success in community colleges, both nationally and in Texas, has produced notable effects: a dramatic increase in awareness of the challenges and in commitment to college completion as a critical goal, a sea change in the use of data to assess and monitor student success and institutional performance, a growing body of evidence regarding effective educational practice in community colleges, and increasing numbers of institutions that are putting that knowledge into practice and demonstrating encouraging results. These promising developments can be attributed to the unprecedented efforts of a collection of philanthropies, national organizations, state systems, and institutions that have worked both collectively and individually to investigate practice, implement change, and produce results.

Now, there is a striking convergence of research and lessons of experience, as these people and their organizations have come to the shared understanding that progress, while evident in some places, is too slow; that the favored solutions of the past decade, while often necessary components of change, do not adequately address the magnitude of the challenges community colleges and their students face; and that typically, the changes thus far achieved have not been fundamental enough—and certainly not scaled enough—to achieve the improvements in completion of college credentials with strong labor market value, especially among low-income students and students of color, that are necessary to reclaim the American Dream.

Recognizing these realities and affirming the critical role of Texas' community colleges, the Texas Success Center has taken steps for supporting a statewide strategy focused on building capacity for community colleges to design and implement structured academic and career pathways for all their students. Building on emerging research and experience in the field, Texas Pathways reflects the Success Center's commitment to support all 50 Texas community colleges districts' student success efforts through a major coherent and comprehensive strategy. Based on the American Association of Community College (AACC) Pathways Model[2], Texas Pathways is an integrated, system-wide approach to student success based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent and structured educational experiences, informed by available evidence, that guide each student effectively and efficiently from

[2] The AACC Pathways Project is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and built upon three important design principles of guided pathways. First, colleges' program redesigns must pay attention to the entire student experience, rather than to just one segment of it, such as developmental education or the intake process. Second, a guided pathways redesign is not the next in a long line of discrete reforms, but rather a framework or general model that helps unify a variety of reform elements around the central goal of helping students choose, enter, and complete a program of study aligned with students' goals for employment and further education. Third, the redesign process starts with student end goals for careers and further education in mind and "backward maps" programs and supports to ensure that students are prepared to thrive in employment and education at the next level. Read more about the AACC project at https://www.aacc.nche.edu/programs/aacc-pathways-project/

the selection of their high school degree program (HB5 endorsements in five academic/career areas) to postsecondary entry through to attainment of high-quality credentials and careers with value in the labor market.

A SYSTEM APPROACH

The Texas Pathways Project boldly targets transforming the educational system across three sectors, starting with community colleges as leads with partners from public schools and four-year institutions. Texas Pathways is by its definition a system approach to broad scale change including the institutional and state policy support needed to bring about the transformation needed. First, Texas Pathways targets system change across the full spectrum of services provided within the community college where redesigns must pay attention to the entire student experience, rather than to just one segment of it. As a college-level system, programs, support services, and instructional approaches are redesigned and re-aligned to help students clarify their goals, choose and enter pathways that will achieve those goals, stay on those pathways, and master knowledge and skills that will enable them to advance in the labor market and successfully pursue further education.

Next, beyond the college-level system, Texas Pathways broadly targets three educational sectors as partners taking collective action to ensure students earn postsecondary credentials leading toward meaningful careers. Orchestrating collaborative strategies, Texas community colleges will take the lead in actively engaging their public school and four-year institutional partners in reviewing the alignment of programs and services with high school degree programs (HB5 endorsements), meta-majors, and efficient transfer. In so doing, the multi-sector strategy acts as a single system's approach to improving their shared students' experiences.

Rounding out the full Texas Pathways ecosystem, the strategy also includes state and institutional policy. The Texas Success Center gathers lessons from the pathways work to inform and support the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Texas Student Success Council on state policies that enable colleges implementing pathways at scale. Additionally, the annual Texas Success Center Board of Trustees Institute informs and challenges institutional policy and engages community college trustees in enabling successful pathways adoption and scale.

THE PATHWAYS INSTITUTE SERIES

The Texas Success Center built a series of institutes based on AACC Pathways Institutes, each two and a half days in length, designed to engage college teams of varying composition. All Texas Pathways Institutes support committed community colleges in work to design and implement clear, structured student pathways to high-quality credentials that are aligned to high school endorsements, university transfer, and jobs with value in the labor market.

Each Texas Pathways Institute focuses on a critical aspect of institutional change and pathway design and implementation, each requires advance work by the colleges, and each results in products developed by the participating college teams, including action plans. The institute format combines discussions with experts, technical assistance, and facilitated discussion and planning sessions for college teams. The Texas Success Center consults with AACC Pathways Project partners (Achieving the Dream, Aspen Institute, Center for Community College Student Engagement, Community College Research Center, Jobs for the Future, National Center for Inquiry & Improvement, and Public Agenda) to ensure lessons learned in the national model are realized in the development and execution of Texas Pathways institutes.

Texas Pathways Institutes, Round 1: Fall 2016-Spring 2019

Institute 1: Leadership for Transformational Change: Implementing Pathways at Scale

- Date and location: November 2-4, 2016 – Bastrop, Hyatt Lost Pines
- College team members: CEO, Pathways team lead, chief academic and student services officers, institutional researcher or Pathways data lead, faculty leader, and head of advising

Institute 2: Mapping Pathways through the Institution

- Date and location: March 5-7, 2017 – Dallas, Hotel InterContinental
- College team members: CEO, Pathways team lead, chief academic officer, chief student services officer, deans and/or department chairs representing meta-majors, and head of advising

Institute 3: Pathways to Transfer and Employment

- Date and location: November 6-8, 2017 – San Antonio, J.W. Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa
- College team members: CEO, Pathways team lead, chief academic and student services officers, college leader for university transfer, college leader for alignment with employers, faculty leader from an arts and science program, a faculty leader from a career and technical program, and head of advising

Institute 4: Front Door Academic Success

- Date and location: April 16-18, 2018 – Houston, Royal Sonesta Houston Galleria
- College team members: CEO, Pathways team lead, person primarily responsible for high school partnerships, person primarily responsible for dual credit, academic administrators responsible for developmental education, and Adult Education and Literacy director

Institute 5: Supporting Students on the Path

- Date and location: November 14-16, 2018 – Dallas, Hilton Anatole
- College team members: CEO, Pathways team lead, chief academic and student services officers, enrollment services manager, data lead, faculty representative, and key leaders in student support services

Institute 6: Ensuring Students Are Learning

- Date and location: April 24-26, 2019 – San Antonio, Hyatt Regency Riverwalk
- College team members: CEO, Pathways team lead, chief academic and student services officers, leader of professional development (center for teaching & learning, etc.); two faculty leaders, one student support services leader (academic support, advising, etc.)

Texas Pathways Round 2

The Texas Success Center, with generous funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Greater Texas Foundation, Houston Endowment, Meadows Foundation, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, T. L. L. Temple Foundation, Teagle Foundation, and Trellis Foundation, will kick off Texas Pathways round 2, the final three years of the five-year strategy, in fall 2019. This ongoing statewide strategy will continue to focus on building capacity for community colleges to design and implement structured academic and career pathways at scale and will provide additional support for colleges as they implement, evaluate, and improve scaled pathways for all students.

Texas Pathways colleges that demonstrate (a) significant progress toward scaling during Texas Pathways round 1 and (b) the readiness capacity to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of newly implemented changes and commit to making strategically targeted improvements will be selected to participate in cadre 1+. Likewise, the Center will release a rigorous application for cadre 1.2 support, open to any current cadre 2-4 college. Texas Pathways colleges able to demonstrate the readiness capacity and the commitment to implement pathways at scale will be selected to participate in cadre 1.2. All other Texas community colleges will be expected to move into cadres 2.2 or 3.2, as determined by the need and readiness capacity for these targeted supports.

Institute 1: November 2019
Institute 2: March 2020
Institute 3: November 2020
Institute 4: March 2021
Institute 5: November 2021
Institute 6: March 2022

FOUR CADRES OF TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

In the Texas Pathways strategy, community colleges are grouped into cadres based on their capacity to implement and scale guided pathways reforms. Cadre 1 colleges have committed to implementation of guided pathways at scale, cadre 2 colleges have committed to plan for full implementation, cadre 3 colleges have committed to build essential data capacities for implementation, and cadre 4 colleges have committed to explore guided pathways implementation and building a case for guided pathways. Colleges will apply to transition to a more advanced cadre in June 2019.

Cadre 1: Committed to Implementation at Scale

Cadre 1 was selected through a competitive application process using the AACC Readiness Assessment adapted for Texas. The Texas assessment identified 12 Texas Association of Community Colleges member colleges that demonstrated serious commitment to, and greatest capacity for, transformational work at scale, as well as strong partnerships with public schools and four-year institutions. Cadre 1 colleges represent all six regions of the state, including institutions of various sizes and settings. This regional distribution builds the foundation for regional leaders, regional support, and regional solutions. See Appendix A for a listing of Texas community colleges by regions and settings.

Texas colleges participating in the AACC Pathways Project were provided the opportunity to join Cadre 1 with the full support of the Texas Success Center. In addition to current support through the national effort, these colleges are provided additional coaching and assistance tailored to their individual capacity-building needs, complementing existing commitments to the AACC Pathways strategies, advance work, and national institutes. Additional opportunities are also available for these colleges to provide leadership and peer coaching among other Cadre 1 colleges.

Cadre 2: Committed to Plan for Full Implementation

The Texas Success Center supports broad statewide scaling in a second cadre of Texas community colleges demonstrating pathways readiness in some areas to launch work on pathways readiness, design, and implementation. This broad scaling of pathways supports Cadre 2 colleges in building capacities and readiness, and beginning to implement pathways reforms at scale.

Cadre 3: Committing to Build Essential Capacities for Implementation

The Texas Success Center supports the building of foundational data-related capacities of a third cadre of Texas community colleges to support readiness and capacity for pathways reforms. This work targets Texas colleges capacity building (a) to collect, analyze, and use data related to their students' pathways experiences, (b) to create broad engagement of faculty and staff in discussion about those data, and (c) to support baseline work on the case for pathways and rigorous readiness assessment. Cadre 3 colleges use tools and resources developed through the Student Success BY THE NUMBERS* (SSBTN) initiative[3] as well as the national AACC Pathways Project.

Cadre 4: Committed to Explore Guided Pathways Implementation

Cadre 4 colleges are committed to investigating key elements of guided pathways and building a case and foundational capacities for implementation. Cadre 4 strategies are designed to cover the essential practices for implementing at scale and support for building a data-informed case.

[3] Student Success BY THE NUMBERS (SSBTN) was a Greater Texas Foundation-funded project aimed at supporting Texas colleges' efforts to improve collection, analysis, and broad use of data on student success to inform institutional decisions.

Texas Pathways Coaching Model

Texas Success Center

Texas Pathways

TEXAS PATHWAYS COACHING MODEL DESCRIPTION

Because the Texas Success Center is committed to enhancing the capabilities of institutional stakeholders, coaching is an integral component of the five-year Texas Pathways strategic plan. Currently, 48 of the 50 community college districts in Texas, representing 99% of the 730,000+ community college students in the state, have committed to Texas Pathways.

Each college is assigned a coach who supports a team of administrators, faculty, and staff as they prepare advance work prior to institutes and finalize action plans that guide reforms on campus. Coaches engage in person with college teams during four team strategy sessions at semi-annual institutes. Texas Pathways coaches are familiar with Texas community colleges, have extensive knowledge of the college completion and equity agenda, and bring presidential or state/system-level perspectives to their work. They have experience supporting colleges as they design and implement guided pathways at scale and understand the strategies and challenges involved in major institutional change. This indispensable experience helps coaches establish credibility and demonstrate empathy, which enables them to effectively challenge college teams (Hawkins & Smith, 2013). The Texas Success Center has contracted all 14 coaches as outlined in the original strategic plan.

In the Texas Pathways strategy, coaches act as "critical friends" who ask provocative questions, offer alternative lenses through which to examine data (Costa & Kallick, 1993), and help colleges uncover the fundamental beliefs and values that shape institutional practice (Bloom, Castagna, Moore, & Warren, 2005). This view sees coaching as a partnership (Ciporen, 2015) that develops over time as the coach and college team build trust and mutual understanding (Farrell, 2001). Because they are external to the institution, Texas Pathways coaches approach the work of college teams with greater objectivity (O'Brien & Forde, 2011), bringing an outside perspective uncompromised by organizational norms and politics. Texas Pathways coaches provide the challenge and support college teams need to learn and grow (Hawkins & Smith, 2013).

Cadre 1
Implement Pathways at Scale

- CEO commitment to oversee the work. CAO or CAO/CSSO leads.
- Commitment to data depicting students' experiences connecting, entering, progressing and succeeding.
- Commitment to institution-wide engagement implementing guided pathways at scale for all students.
- In round 2: Commitment to evaluating and improving implementation, partnerships, and institutional program review.

Cadre 2
Build Capacity & Begin Implementing

- CEO commitment to oversee the work. CAO or CAO/CSSO leads.
- Commitment to data depicting students' experiences connecting, entering, progressing and succeeding.
- Commitment to strategically targeting improvements in readiness to implement pathways at scale.
- In round 2: Commitment to implementing pathways at scale.

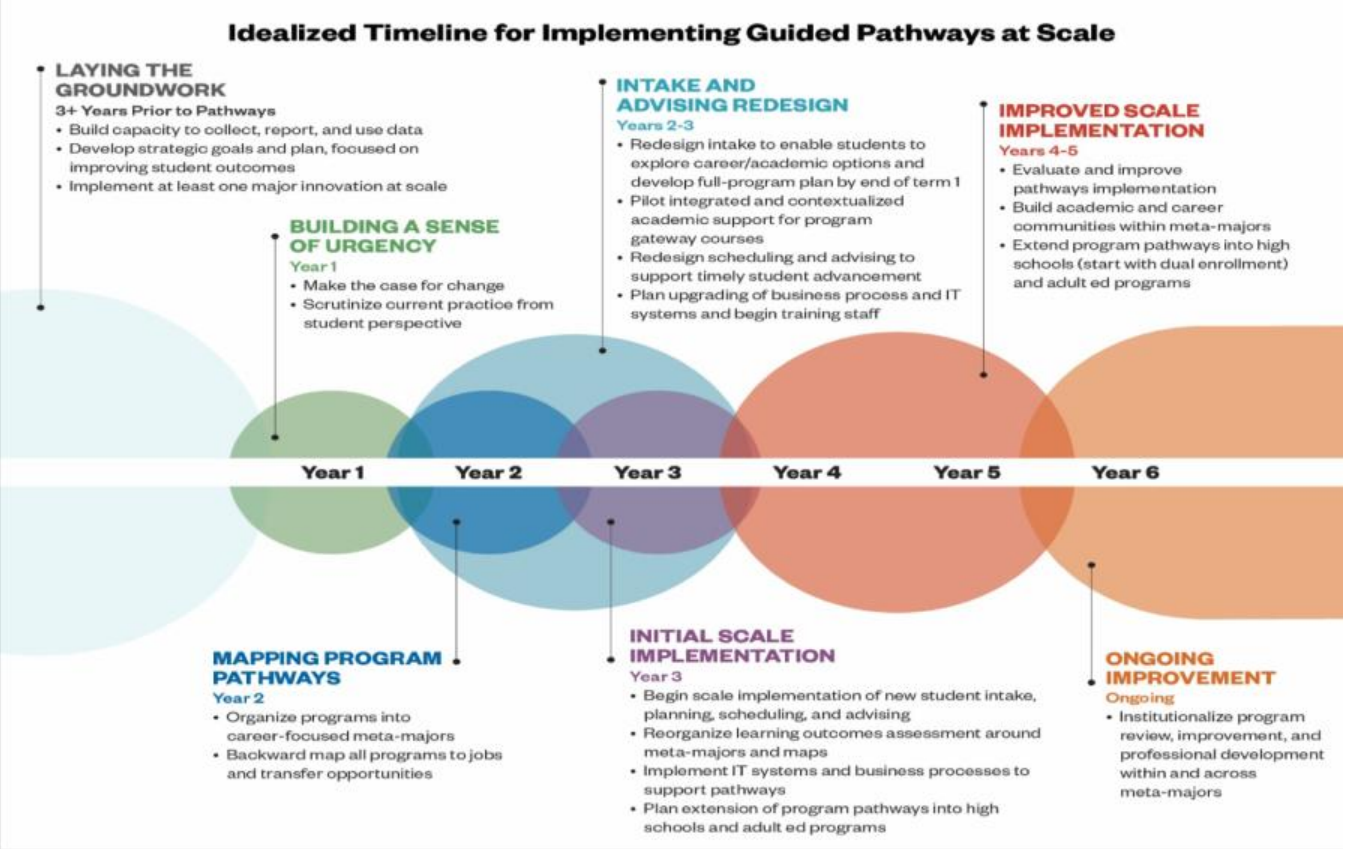
Cadre 3 **Build Data Capacity & Begin Implementing**	Cadre 4 **Build a Case & Foundation for Pathways**
• CEO commitment to oversee the work. CAO or CAO/CSSO leads. • Commitment to building capacity to collect, communicate and use data depicting students' experiences connecting, entering, progressing and succeeding. • In round 2: Commitment to building readiness capacities and begin implementing pathways.	• CEO commitment to oversee the work. CAO or CAO/CSSO leads. • Commitment to investigating and assessing readiness capacities and building a data-informed case to increase readiness to begin implementing. • In round 2: Commitment to building data and readiness capacities.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE & COMMON CHALLENGES

Each coach in Texas Pathways is assigned to colleges within a cadre whose commitments to progress can benefit from the coach's area of expertise. Although colleges vary in their unique pathways progress and cultural context, in general, coaches address college challenges and capacity needs which are common within cadres, such as the following:

- Cadre 1
  - Scaling guided pathways reforms
  - Overcoming challenges in implementation and scaling
  - Assessing and modifying reforms
- Cadre 2
  - Implementing systemic guided pathways reforms
  - Bringing at least one major component to scale
  - Overcoming challenges in implementation and scaling
  - Merging various initiatives together into one coherent strategy
  - Assessing reforms
- Cadre 3
  - Building a case and a sense of urgency
  - Broadening engagement
  - Creating a culture of inquiry
  - Collecting data
  - Analyzing data
  - Acting on data
  - Implementing guided pathways reforms
- Cadre 4
  - Building a case and a sense of urgency
  - Broadening engagement
  - Seeing the college's work from a student's perspective
  - Creating a culture of inquiry
  - Focusing on student success
  - Understanding guided pathways reforms

Texas Pathways coaches sharpen their practice and increase their coaching knowledge by examining the pace and scope of implementation of early adopters of the pathway model. The following is a visualization produced by CCRC that represents an idealized conceptualization of the process and timeline of implementation, based on their observations of AACC Pathways colleges. While the authors note that actual implementation is much messier than implied, the timeline's description of the general progression of colleges from their first efforts in "laying the groundwork" through implementation to "ongoing improvement" informs Texas coaches of all cadres as they encourage college progress from where they are to their next best step toward full implementation and institutionalized program review. The visual will be useful to coaches, acting as critical friends, inquiring about how the colleges' action planning and implementation progress compares to an anticipated timeline for building capacity and scaling.



To further inform the coaching practice and learn from the progress and challenges of Cadre 1 colleges during their early adoption efforts, the Texas Success Center administered and calibrated (standardized) the results of the Scale of Adoption Assessment, an instrument designed by CCRC and modified to the Texas context by the Center. The assessment captured the 13 colleges' accomplishments from the time they committed to Texas Pathways in Fall 2016 through the assessment and analysis in spring 2018.

The following are practices that CCRC and the Texas Success Center have found that often challenged early adopters when trying to implement guided pathways at scale. They are listed under each of the four guided pathways essential practices along with examples of good practice in Texas cadre 1 colleges. Since effective coaches are skillful at insightful inquiry to help colleges deeply consider their reform efforts, sample questions are

also offered for each essential practice for each cadre. These questions will be useful to coaches as they probe about how a college is approaching a particular practice and whether they are truly implementing as envisioned by the Texas Pathways model that coaches are both advocating and supporting.

1. Clarify Paths to Student End Goals

CCRC has found the following overall common challenges with this essential practice within AACC Pathways Project colleges:

- Mapping transfer pathways
- Connecting programs of study to employment opportunities
- Identifying critical courses and program milestones
- Ensuring that program maps are readily accessible and actually being used in advising and guiding students.

The Texas Success Center found the following cadre 1 college examples of practice and common challenges with components of this essential practice:

Meta-Majors

Texas Context:

As of April 2018, cadre 1 colleges had made significant progress defining meta-majors, and each college classified programs into five to 10 clusters. At all colleges, faculty and advising staff were involved in defining pathways. Colleges used various titles for these groups of programs, including career interest areas, career pathways, areas of study, meta-majors, or career and academic pathways. Most were aligned with groups of disciplines such as social and behavioral sciences, health careers, and liberal arts; some are a combination of discipline areas and career areas such as chemical and refining industry or public service. In most cases, meta-majors included a combination of transfer areas and workforce programs. Colleges were either actively using the pathways in spring 2018 or were ready to begin to use the structure with entering fall 2018 students. A few were still finalizing meta-majors and program maps.

Texas Examples:

- South Texas used four criteria to define the meta-major categories finalized in spring 2018: 1) student end goals, 2) shared curriculum, 3) student interest, 4) shared advising.
- Brazosport began discussions with faculty based on meta-major learning outcomes with a focus on sequencing learning rather than courses.

Common Challenges:

- Orchestrating communications and broad engagement, especially across large districts
- Starting with too many meta-majors
- Managing the cultural shift toward the pathways intent
- Addressing faculty concerns, especially job security

Program Maps

Texas Context:

As of April 2018, cadre 1 colleges had grouped programs in meta-majors. For years, all colleges have had detailed program plans for workforce certificates and AAS degrees. Most transfer program map development had been

undertaken during the 2016-17 academic year. Program maps for transfer requirements had been developed in various ways— analyzing university catalog information, conducting discussions with faculty, or determining common requirements across multiple local transfer institutions.

Texas Examples:

- Dallas, Tarrant, and Grayson shared the work with the North Texas Consortium on AAS to BAAS collaboration on map development. Some are using the template to help with other transfer program maps.
- Midland reviewed the most common programs for the top five transfer institutions and developed maps based on requirements for specific majors. Advisors are using these as a guide but refer to university requirements for specifics.
- Austin went through three phases of program mapping and asked faculty to make "contextualized choices" for suggestions of course options.
- Temple divided health professions into two areas—nursing (intend to transfer for a BSN) and Health Professions with a defined basic set of courses for other programs.

Common Challenges:

- Developing clear, complete maps with all university with different requirements
- Specifying core courses
- Dedicating time required to complete the maps
- Scheduling regional meetings with universities and multiple colleges

Math Pathways

Texas Context:

As of April 2018, cadre 1 colleges were in varying stages determining math requirements for programs within meta-majors. Most worked with the Dana Center on multiple college-level entry courses but some were in the process of determining the number of sections required. Several colleges expressed difficulty with ensuring the right math has been identified for each major for each university. Some had asked faculty to identify the appropriate math for meta-majors but they did not have the assurance it actually can be applied to the specific university major. Some institutions were just beginning these discussions, which are ongoing at most colleges.

Texas Examples:

- Lone Star's curriculum teams were identifying appropriate math.
- Brazosport worked with the Dana Center to examine algebra and non-algebra areas and determined courses based on learning requirements.
- Houston had identified College Algebra for STEM/Health Sciences meta-majors; Contemporary Math for Liberal Arts, Humanities and Education meta-majors; and Statistics for Social and Behavioral Sciences meta-majors.
- Several colleges were having students determine meta-major and program choice during first term, which may delay starting math pathway.

Common Challenges:

- Advising to help students identify the appropriate math pathway
- Changing culture from a focus on what faculty teach to supporting students across programs
- Determining the number of sections needed for various math choices

- Coordinating with universities who still use College Algebra as the default course
- Balancing the complication of corequisites discussions and decisions

Website Redesign

Texas Examples:

- AlamoInstitutes https://www.alamo.edu/enroll/explore/
- Odessa College
  - Schools https://www.odessa.edu/programs/Schools/index.html
  - Degree plans https://www.odessa.edu/programs/_documents/pdfs/Master%20Catalog%202018-2019%2003.pdf#page=86
- Brazosport College Programs and Pathways https://brazosport.edu/programs/

Common Challenges:

- Dedicating resources to make time-consuming large-scale changes
- Maintaining progress during staffing changes
- Securing website resources and expertise
- Including specific job information on transfer programs

2. Help Students Choose and Enter a Path

CCRC has found the following overall common challenges with this essential practice within AACC Pathways Project colleges:

- Providing career and program exploration from the start for all new students
- Ensuring every student has a full-program plan
- Aligning math pathways to program meta-majors and pathways
- Moving from prerequisite to integrated academic support for all college-level critical program courses
- Pushing pathways down into the high schools

The Texas Success Center found the following cadre 1 college examples of practice and common challenges with components of this essential practice:

Facilitated Onboarding with Career and Program Exploration

Texas Examples:

- South Texas included employment opportunities and jobs in New Student Orientation.
- Amarillo, Temple, and Brazosport used a “zero” week for engaging students in career exploration, orientation, etc.
- Colleges used various tools including Colleague Student Planning, PeopleSoft, Career Coach, or Career Navigator to assist with processes.
- Colleges required activities prior to enrollment to better prepare students for choosing a pathway.
- Colleges offered a Learning Frameworks course or another student success course, with some requiring it of all first time in college students and others strongly suggesting students take the course.
- Austin had students take a two-hour information session based on area of study and students see an advisor six times in the first semester.

Common Challenges:

- Utilizing available tools to implement new processes with existing resources
- Managing time constraints and scheduling
- Redefining staff roles for advisors, career coaches, navigators, and others

Making an Educational Plan

Texas Examples:

- Grayson had developed an in-house Student Planner to capture the student's academic plan.
- Several colleges were using general program maps until specific transfer maps could be completed.
- Colleges were providing training for advisors and faculty on meta-majors and maps as they provided career exploration tools to students and asked them to choose a program within the first term.

Common Challenges:

- Determining how to record the student's choice of pathway and education plan
- Using general maps while finalizing meta-majors and programs to guide students
- Utilizing current resources available and adding new resources

Embedding Support into Gateway Courses

Texas Examples:

- Lone Star was reviewing course success data to identify critical courses.
- Colleges described labs, supplemental instruction, and tutoring as examples for support in gateway courses.
- Austin was preparing for faculty in a small number of gateway courses to meet with students individually during the first three weeks, give an assessment during the first three weeks, help students understand challenges they face, and discuss support options available, and in some cases, assign student services to students.
- Tarrant had a robust supplemental instruction program with many sections in a variety of courses.

Common Challenges:

- Identifying gateway courses in meta-majors and program maps
- Developing corequisite plans with embedded support

Intensive Support for Poorly Prepared and Adult Education and Literacy Students

The Texas Context:

As of April 2018, colleges were working with Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) students in various ways. Some colleges have organized AEL within the college's academic area while others keep it as a separate unit. In some instances, the AEL division has advisors, but colleges indicated they need to ensure information is available on pathways work and a seamless process is in place for directing students into college-level programs. Colleges are reviewing organizational structures, and some have added a dedicated AEL director or coordinator. All institutions indicated this is an area to strengthen.

Texas Examples:

- To reduce silos, Tarrant created an instructor counselor position on the credit side to work with students placed in BASE levels.

- Southwest Texas had added an AEL director in the last year to and will be aligning the program more closely with the academic area of the college.

Common Challenges:

- Overcoming the long-standing divide between AEL programs and colleges programs
- Aligning AEL with college-level SLOs to avoid additional costs and time in developmental education
- Getting students on the college campus if AEL is located elsewhere
- Gaining access to data on AEL student success

Extending Pathways into High Schools

The Texas Context:

As of April 2018, colleges were partnering with area high schools in guided pathways work. Colleges had considered Texas endorsement decisions of local high schools as they developed and aligned programs within meta-majors. Dual credit is an increasingly significant proportion of college enrollment, and colleges had been working for many years with area independent school districts to offer dual credit options and initiate early college high schools. Colleges were adding activities to help students and parents make decisions based on career exploration in the high school.

Texas Examples:

- Austin is starting academies to expand understanding and attitudes about workforce programs in high schools.
- Colleges host career nights and parent sessions to provide information about meta-majors and program requirements.
- Some colleges expressed concern with high schools using the interdisciplinary endorsement that will be difficult to align with college programs.
- Most colleges expressed there is much work to be done in this area to help students understand the implications of decisions.

Common Challenges:

- Identifying which endorsements and high school classes are available at each high school
- Aligning courses in early college high schools with program maps
- Communicating with high school leadership about guided pathways work

3. Help Students Stay on the Path

CCRC has found the following overall common challenges with this essential practice within AACC Pathways Project colleges:

- Ensuring that every student is monitored along her/his plan
- Helping student revise their plans when needed
- Responding to early alerts
- Redirecting students who are unlikely to be accepted to selective programs
- Ensuring that scheduling and registration are linked to students' plans

The Texas Success Center found the following cadre 1 college examples of practice and common challenges with components of this essential practice.

Monitoring Student Progress

Texas Context:

As of April 2018, most cadre 1 colleges were considering how to redesign, and in some instances reorganize, counseling and advising structures and processes for documenting each student's program map and monitoring progress to completion. Several had made significant changes and were implementing processes for students and advisors to monitor progress. Some colleges shared they were engaging in discussions to redefine the intent of ongoing advising. Roles were changing, and faculty were then included in conversations with students as they move through program requirements. Monitoring student progress had been evident in workforce programs and was then expanding to transfer programs. Some colleges were reviewing the support provided to special student populations and determining how to extend that support to all students.

Texas Examples:

- Colleges have moved to a case management model and are assigning students to advisors as they enter the college and/or determine a meta-major.
- Grayson included in Student Planner sequenced program requirements. Students can shift courses within a designated term but must contact an advisor if they want to take courses defined in a different term.
- McLennan uses a Pharos 360 software system to tie advisors, admissions staff, faculty, and financial aid representatives to monitor student progress.
- Midland, as well as several other colleges, have focused on training for advisors and faculty about monitoring student progress.
- Colleges use various tools to help students monitor progress. Some institutions require students to see someone if they attempt to register for courses outside their plan. Examples of tools include Civitas, Ellucian Student Planning, and Jenzabar.

Challenges:

- Capturing individual program plans instead of relying on generic program plans
- Redefining advisor roles and adding additional advisors
- Separating early alert activities within courses and monitoring the student's progress through program requirements
- Identifying specific milestones and establishing a systematic process for reaching out to students was challenging for some colleges
- Moving away from "encouraging students to reach out to an advisor" toward "assigning the limited number of advisors available to specific students" was challenging for some colleges

Course Scheduling

Texas Examples:

- Grayson is moving to an eight-week schedule for most of their offerings.
- Colleges are aware of need to schedule courses required for completion of program requirements.

Common Challenges:

- Lack of data from new program maps that would inform faculty and other leadership to build multiple-term schedules.
- Recent implementation of new tools to capture program maps and limited impact of use of maps in registration practices.

4. Ensure Students are Learning

CCRC has found the following overall common challenges with this essential practice within AACC Pathways Project colleges:

- Ensuring program learning outcomes are aligned with the requirements of employers and university major programs
- Providing experiential learning opportunities for students in all programs (not just in select occupational/CTE programs)
- Ensuring faculty use the results of learning outcomes assessment for professional and program improvement

The Texas Success Center found the following cadre 1 college examples of practice and common challenges with this essential practice.

Texas Examples:

- Colleges have program learning outcomes in workforce programs.
- Workforce programs include a capstone experience such as co-ops or internships and some specific programs, such as an honors program or a business program, include opportunities for students to apply learning in a program or career area.
- Most colleges are using course evaluations as foundation for assessment and are gathering the results to assess core outcomes.

Common Challenges:

- Aligning new program maps with program learning outcomes, success in further education, and employment outcomes
- Expanding program learning outcomes to transfer programs
- Providing broad opportunity for students to document their learning to share with employers and universities

SAMPLE COACHING QUESTIONS

"Clarify Paths to Students End Goals"

1. You say that you have pathways in place for your CTE pathways, but what about transfer pathways?
2. Are your academic programs and faculty actively working with universities to map out transfer programs? Are they doing this by meta-major or just mapping out general education transfer requirements? What are their plans to do so?
3. In what ways is the college showing or planning to show the connection of all programs—both CTE and arts/sciences—to employment opportunities?
4. What is the status of course sequencing, identification of critical courses, milestones, and co-curricular learning activities for all programs? Has this program mapping work been a collaborative effort involving both academics and student services colleagues?
5. How accessible are program maps to students and to what extent are they being used to help all entering students build an educational plan?

"Help Students Chose and Enter a Path"

1. Are all entering students helped to explore career and college options and choose a direction? Is this process required of all entering students who have not decided on a field or program of interest? Are all students helped to develop a full-program plan (i.e. to program completion and for transfer students to baccalaureate programs in the students' major field of interest)? How are these plans used? Is students' progress on the plans monitored after the plans are set?\What is the scale of your developmental education reforms, and are they aligned with guided pathways work? How are poorly prepared students helped to pass critical program gateway courses?
2. What determines which math pathway students follow when they enter? How are the college's math pathways aligned with guided pathways work?
3. Approximately what percentage of entering students take non-algebra/calculus math courses? How many sections are available in these other pathways (i.e. is this practice at scale)?
4. Do all students take a college-level course in their field of interest in their first term?
5. In what ways is the college helping very poorly prepared students take and pass college-level courses within their first year? Are these students helped to explore and choose part of the guided pathways intake redesign, or do students have to go through multiple levels of pre-requisite developmental education before they are considered to be in a meta-major or on a program path?
6. Does the college actively use its pathways to recruit high school students and ensure that they are prepared not only for college but to enter specific college fields after high school? Are dual credit students exposed to meta-majors and pathways?

"Help Students Stay on the Path"

1. Who monitors the progress of students along their plans? Is every degree-seeking student's progress monitored? When a student needs to adjust her/his plan (if they change their mind or are not making good progress), what does this process look like? Who identifies these students, reaches out to them, and ensures that they meet with someone to help revise the plan?
2. Can students easily see how far they are on their plan, what courses they've completed, what courses they still need to take, and how long it will take to complete their degree? Is this information kept up to date?
3. Does the college have an early alert system to identify students struggling in critical courses? If so, how many courses or sections are involved? What's the process for following up once an alert is triggered? Do advisors/faculty actively identify and redirect students who aren't likely to be accepted into limited access program early in their program?
4. Are students able to schedule their next semester courses based on their customized educational plan? And is the scheduling process tied to registration? Can students register for courses that are NOT on their plan? What happens when they try to do this?
5. Is the college creating class schedules based on the courses in students' plans (as opposed to courses that were rolled over from the previous year's schedule)? During a given semester, can students pre-register for classes in the next semester based on the courses they will need to take next on their plans?

"Ensure Students are Learning"

1. Are program learning outcomes more than just aggregated course learning outcomes? That is, are they aligned with the requirements of employers and universities? To what extent are employers and university colleagues actively involved in defining program learning outcomes?
2. What is the scale of the internships, clinicals, coops, and other experiential learning opportunities available to students? In which programs are they required? Are these activities identified on the program maps?

3. How do faculty assess whether students are mastering program learning outcomes, and how is this information used for program improvement purposes?
4. In what ways are assessments of student learning outcomes used to improve teaching and learning practices?
5. In what ways is the college helping students develop portfolios and other means of demonstrating their learning outcomes?

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS

Pathways coaches are individuals with expertise appropriate to the work of Texas Pathways. Each coach demonstrates strong experience facilitating group discussions, strong understanding of data-informed planning and decision-making, familiarity with student engagement surveys (CCSSE and SENSE), and strong understanding of longitudinal student cohort tracking and metrics for monitoring student progress and success.

Responsibilities of pathways coaches include the following:

- Become familiar with Texas Pathways' purpose, institute model, and agendas.
- Participate in pathways coach conference calls and/or webinars when scheduled.
- Remotely coordinate with designated contact persons at assigned colleges to ensure institutional teams are prepared to participate in the forthcoming Pathways Institute.
- Answer questions and provide support as institutional team members complete advance work.
- Review institutions' readiness assessment and advance work.
- Conduct conference calls with pathways leads prior to Pathways Institutes to discuss advance work, review institute objectives and agenda, and identify and address concerns and questions.
- Attend each of the two-and-a-half–day institutes, which are core to Texas Pathways.
- Attend a pre-institute pathways coaches and Texas Success Center staff meeting beginning early morning of the first day of each institute, which will in each case require travel on the day before the institute begins. Thus, the time commitment for both institutes, including travel, is 4 days x 2 institutes = 8 days over the period 2018-2019, plus time to review advance work and post-institute work and to participate in conference calls with the institutions assigned.
- Meet and work with assigned institutions during each team strategy session at the institutes.
- Facilitate dialogue, ensuring that all voices are heard, that teams stay on track, that they engage in thoughtful and courageous conversations, and that they progressively complete the short-term action plan that is a major product of the institute experience.
- Provide expert guidance and assistance as assigned teams review pertinent data and delve into issues associated with design and implementation of guided pathways for students.
- If requested, deliver or moderate breakout session(s) and/or contribute to another type of session as part of the institute agenda.
- Participate in a one-hour debriefing session immediately following adjournment of the institute and complete written evaluations of each institute.
- Remotely coordinate with designated contact persons at assigned colleges to ensure institutional teams have accomplished objectives from the Pathways Institute.
- Answer questions and provide support as college team members complete post-institute work.
- Review institutions' post-institute work.
- Provide feedback on post-institute work and, as necessary, conduct conference calls with Pathways leads to discuss post-institute work and identify and address concerns and questions.

INSTITUTE PREPARATION & PARTICIPATION

Because Texas Pathways coaches are already familiar with coaching principles and practices, the Texas Success Center provides specific professional development related to Texas Pathways. Prior to each institute, after advance work is issued, coaches and pathways leads participate in a webinar that frames the topic of the institute, describes logistical details about the meeting, explains advance work assignments, and addresses any questions. By participating on this webinar, coaches are familiar with the work expected of college teams and the questions colleges ask.

Coaches receive advance work from colleges about a month prior to the institute. Pathways leads upload advance work to the Texas Success Center's website, and coaches download work from their colleges. Coaches review advance work and contact pathways leads prior to the institute to confer about college progress and challenges.

The evening before the institute begins, coaches are invited to an informal dinner so they can better get to know each other, catch up since the last institute, and bond as a group. On the first day of the institute, coaches participate in a structured meeting from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The agenda for this coaches meeting includes discussion about the following topics:

- Institute agenda
- Institute objectives
- Objectives for each team strategy session
- Major news or updates (e.g., changes in executive leadership, restructuring, participation in other initiatives) and potential challenges of individual colleges
- Coaching guides specific to each cadre
- Cadre-specific coaching strategies, with conversations conducted in small groups by coaches supporting colleges in the same cadre

Before the first plenary session of the institute, coaches may meet with leads from their assigned colleges to talk through the institute agenda, share relevant resources, identify concerns, and locate rooms for team strategy sessions.

Throughout the institute, coaches should reinforce the basic premises undergirding Texas Pathways by reiterating the following:

- Its purpose—to support the socio-economic mobility of Texas community college students by redesigning students' experiences across educational systems
- Texas Pathways' role as the colleges' 60x30TX plan
- The type and magnitude of institutional change needed to implement at scale
- The imperative of monitoring what matters (wide use of data)
- Examples of challenges and successes, especially pathways college efforts to implement at scale

Often during institutes, due to space constraints, two coaches and their same-cadre college teams share a room during team strategy sessions. Coaches sharing space collaboratively plan team strategy sessions to direct team discussions and provide opportunities for them to learn from each other.

Following the conclusion of the final team strategy session of the institute, coaches meet for a debrief lunch, which involves a structured conversation about elements of the institute including logistics, team strategy time, concurrent sessions, plenary presentations, and follow-up and college engagement. A note-taker records the conversation, and notes are analyzed by Texas Success Center staff and the external evaluator.

Pathways leads submit short-term action plans three to four weeks after the institute. These plans are shared with coaches, who review the teams' work and provide feedback to the colleges via email or phone.

THE PATHWAYS COACHING ROLE: WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT IS NOT[4]

The Texas Pathways coach serves as a credible, trustworthy, and supportive resource for the colleges with which she/he works. The coach asks probing questions, challenges assumptions, facilitates discussions, questions the status quo, helps the college attain clarity, offers substantive knowledge, provides resources (such as references, links, college examples, referrals), celebrates progress, and occasionally, when appropriate, provides guidance or advice.

On the other hand, the pathways coach is not a consultant, not an expert on every topic, not a therapist, and not ever to be confused with the college CEO. The coach refrains from attempting to set the college's agenda, specify the college's priorities, or solve the college's problems, opting instead to help the people of the college do those things for themselves.

Guidelines

The following guidelines for effective coaching are experience-based and intentionally succinct. Additional guidance and resources are provided in the AACC Pathways Coaching Guide.

Do the appropriate homework.

Prior to initial meetings with college leaders and others, review key print and digital materials: the institution's strategic plan, website, catalogue, and documents describing both foundational and advanced work on guided pathways. Continue review of pertinent materials throughout the coaching engagement.

Build trust and relationships.

Time spent with key individuals and small groups in the college pays important dividends in terms of earned trust and strong relationships. Building informal time into coaching engagements—as well as occasional unstructured conversations—is helpful, as are efforts to explicitly acknowledge the college's work, achievements, and challenges. Confidential communications will always remain confidential, even as the coach encourages openness and candor.

Listen and observe actively.

Effective coaching typically involves more listening than talking. Astute listening and observation can produce insights for the coach regarding college culture, as well as about particular factors that may strongly affect approaches to and progress on large-scale institutional change: role definitions, communication and leadership styles, competing priorities, decision-making processes, relationships, and so on. Thoughtful and timely reflection of these insights, delivered with care and in the appropriate setting, may help college personnel recognize aspects of their culture and their organizational behavior and processes that have not always been made explicit.

Ask strong questions.

Central to effective coaching is the art of asking good questions—that is, questions that produce information important to the coach's understanding of the college, and also questions that help to illuminate (for the coach and for the client) college values, achievements, challenges, policies, processes, strategic decisions, and operational

[4] This section of the coach training guide was adapted for Texas community colleges by the Texas Success Center from the AACC Pathways Coaching Guide: https://www.pathwaysresources.org/toolkits/pathways-coaching-guide/

choices. Worth noting is that "why" questions often communicate an implied critique, so coaches will be aware of the difference in tone, for example, between "Why would you do that?" and "Please elaborate on your thinking in regard to that decision."

Request, review, and refer to data about student progress, outcomes, and equity.

In particular, pathways coaches will strongly encourage colleges to collect, distribute, and discuss key performance indicators that reflect early momentum of students in guided pathways. KPIs typically should include the following:

- Number of college credits earned in students' first term
- Number of college credits earned in students' first year
- Completion of college-level gateway math and English courses in students' first year
- Number of college credits earned in students' programs of study in the first year
- Persistence rate from term 1 to term 2
- Rate of college-level course completion in students' first academic year

To monitor progress toward equity in student progress and outcomes, all of these data will be routinely disaggregated by student race, ethnicity, gender, and (if possible) economic status. Further, colleges should track each entering first-time-in-college student cohort through these early momentum points and then on to completion (or not) of certificates, degrees, and transfer. Ultimately, the efficacy of guided pathways also will be reflected through strengthened tracking of post-transfer and post-graduation outcomes in transfer institutions and in the labor market.

Coaches will seize the opportunity to model good questions and observations about the data— to understand data definitions and denominators, to commend clear and uncluttered data presentations, to encourage use of short, plain-English explanations of data, and so on. Often coaches will also model facilitation of data discussions, beginning with structured questions about what the data say and progressing to questions about "what else do we need to know?" and "so what?" and "what now?"

Help the college affirm, celebrate, and build on prior work and achievements.

Guided pathways reform involves institution-wide change and thus extensive work by many people within the college. The tasks of embarking and progressing on that work benefit greatly from frequent messages about the college's prior work, achievements gained in terms of improved student success and equity, and the ways such work can serve as building blocks for the next level of improvement effort. An important step in planning for pathways is in fact to ask cross-functional college groups to map their previous and current initiatives in terms of the pathways model—that is, appropriately categorizing work that helps the college to (a) clarify the paths, (b) help students choose and enter a path, (c) help students stay on their paths, and (d) ensure learning through the pathways. This can permit committed people to see both the fruits of their labor and also how disparate initiatives might be integrated into a clearer and more coherent educational experience for the college's students.

Promote campus-wide engagement.

There can be no substitute for broad, authentic engagement of the college's constituent groups, first in informational and case-making discussions about guided pathways, and then in sessions wherein the work of designing and implementing pathways actually gets done. Good intentions notwithstanding, effective engagement does not happen by itself, but must be intentional and systematic. Further, engagement is not an event, but a continuing and multi-faceted process, and the topical focus will evolve as the work proceeds. The

pathways coach can provide valuable assistance in prompting development and frequent updating of an explicit engagement plan.

Facilitate discussions.

Prospective pathways coaches typically will bring considerable experience in facilitation of discussions and will bear in mind key techniques for these tasks: making clear the purpose of the discussion and the desired outcomes (information sharing? input on a decision? setting an agenda? solving a problem? developing a proposal? planning an event? making a final decision? etc.); ensuring that all voices are heard and welcomed; keeping discussions on task, on topic, and on time; summarizing the discussion clearly and succinctly; helping the group identify conclusions, decisions, and next steps; and managing emotion and conflict in ways that preserve civility and personal dignity while encouraging openness and candor. These are learned skills, honed through observation and practice; and training/professional development opportunities are available from a variety of sources.

Support difficult discussions.

A special kind of facilitation involves the difficult discussions that almost inevitably will need to occur when a college takes on the work of large-scale institutional change—change that involves questioning long-held assumptions, beliefs, and practices; potential shifts in role definitions and daily work; perceived threats to cherished traditions, jobs, teaching load, position power, and/or territory; and so on. The experience of colleges that have worked through these conversations suggests the need to expect a certain amount of genuine and understandable grief as people see that they must let go of past practice in order to emerge better and stronger and ever more student-centered. The grieving process should be recognized, respected, and supported.

Pointedly, most colleges will need also to consider head-on both unacceptably poor student outcomes across the board and the persistent equity gaps that separate groups of students by race, ethnicity, income level, and first-generation status. Helping colleges to identify disproportionate outcomes for certain student groups and then to address potential causes—including unconscious bias and institutional racism—is a central challenge for coaches.

These conversations are critical and not to be under-estimated or taken on without serious thought and a respectful, non-judgmental approach. Coaches without extensive experience may well wish to seek expert assistance, mentoring, role-playing opportunities, and additional training.

Provide support for change leadership.

This explicitly includes leadership at all levels of the college organization—governing boards, CEOs and their leadership groups, mid-level administrators, faculty, and staff. In each instance, current and prospective leaders will need to understand critical roles that they can play in promoting transformational change with students at the center. Across the institution, leaders will need to be equipped with strategies and tools for key tasks: describing the pathways approach; making the case for large-scale change and creating a sense of urgency; developing systematic plans for continuing and authentic campus-wide engagement in pathways planning and implementation; constructive uses of data depicting the student experience; resource allocation and reallocation aligned with the pathways work; policy review and modification; and effective communication regarding the work, how people can be involved, the timeline, who makes what decisions, and what is being accomplished.

Lift up student voices.

The work of designing and implementing guided pathways is, above all, about students. It is about ensuring effective, efficient, and coherent educational experiences for students. It is not about us (the college, the faculty, the advisors, the administrators, the coach). To keep students at the center of the work requires that colleges

listen systematically to students. That is to say, while there may be value in having student representatives on work groups or committees, the greater value is in work that helps faculty, staff and administrators gain understanding of the typical student experience, as contrasted with one student's experience or the best student experience. Thus, the pathways coach will encourage the college to elicit students' perspectives on their experience through well-designed surveys and focus groups.

Remember always who is the college CEO.

No one other than the college CEO understands so intimately the expectations of the governing board and/or system leader, the political pressures of the job, the competing priorities for limited attention and resources, the array of disparate challenges that need to be addressed. An effective coach can serve as a sounding board, help to clarify options and priorities, encourage focus, provide examples, and aid in delineating the path forward; but it is the CEO who was appointed to the leadership position and who is accountable for decisions made and actions taken. That position warrants respect and support.

COACH SITE VISITS

Following the first year of Texas Pathways, the Texas Success Center determined remote coaching does not provide sufficient support for the transformational change required to implement and scale guided pathways. To help coaches understand their colleges' context well enough to be effective critical friends, the Texas Success Center provides two one-and-a-half-day on-site visits for each college each year. The Texas Success Center engages coaches in professional development and provides explicit structure and expectations for each visit to include the following:

- Meetings with CEOs reinforcing the imperative role of CEO and board of trustees to support the institutional transformation required for full implementation of guided pathways at scale.
- Discussions with core leadership teams to support data collection, analysis, and use, including explicit support for the use of:
    - Disaggregated KPIs, reinforcing the equity discussion throughout
    - Student voices
    - K-12 and dual credit student entry data
    - Underprepared student entry data
    - Adult Education & Literacy student entry data
    - Progress data
    - Transfer data
    - Completion data
    - Workforce data
- Progress on pathways action plans and components of the Scale of Adoption Assessment as a living comprehensive guide to implementation at scale
- Meaningful completion of advance work and post-institute homework
- Institution-wide engagement and professional development

The center will design on-site visit objectives and coaches are expected to assist colleges in setting visit agendas that allow for robust discussions that press colleges to go beyond basic report-out sessions to substantive working sessions with the coach asking thoughtful probing questions that require colleges to identify gaps in their reform efforts and to plan for sustainable implementation at scale. Through regular site visits, coaches will develop stronger relationships with college teams, resulting in more effective interventions and improved student outcomes, as described below in the Data, Evaluation, & Evidence section.

COACH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Texas Success Center is committed to continually improving services provided by Texas Pathways coaches and enriching their professional development. Coach feedback has indicated many college teams have not fully grasped the paradigm shift that must occur to truly implement and scale guided pathways. To be effective, Texas Pathways coaches will need to help colleges understand that acting on good intentions within their current worldview is insufficient to accomplish transformational change (Hawkins & Smith, 2013). To help Texas Pathways coaches deepen their skills and augment their impact, the Texas Success Center has expanded coach training, more fully integrating best practices and explicitly incorporating the experiential learning cycle (Kolb & Kolb, 2005), as described in Figure 1. As coaches continue to learn, they refine skills, improve their ability to critically reflect and solve problems, and validate their own professional practice (Hobson, 2003).

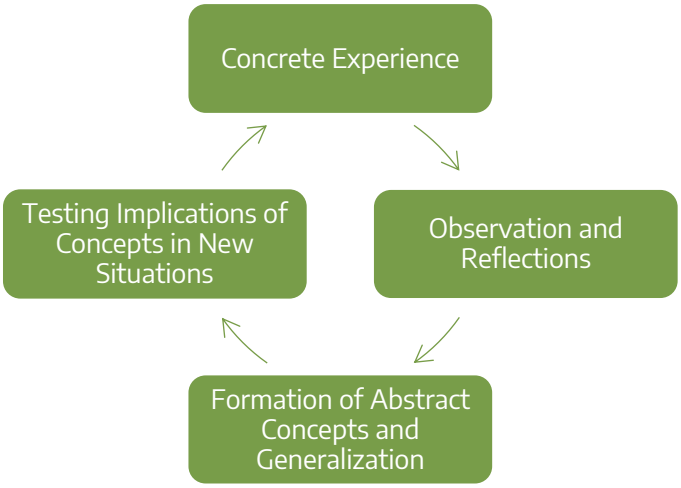


Figure 1. *Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb & Kolb, 2005)*

Over the first year of the five-year Texas Pathways strategic plan, the Texas Success Center has learned more about the variation in readiness and capacity to implement and scale guided pathways reforms among Texas community colleges. As coaches have worked with cadres of college teams, they have realized each cadre needs more customized support. In addition to the information and resources provided in this manual, the Texas Success Center emphasizes "just-in-time" learning (Hawkins & Smith, 2013) by holding coach meetings at intervals throughout Texas Pathways Institutes rather than only at the beginning and conclusion of events. Sharing experiences and conferring on real issues in real time deepens coaches' learning and improve their practices (Hawkins & Smith, 2013). With many experienced coaches, the Texas Success Center has a unique opportunity to strengthen coaching capacity through peer learning. Knowledge developed through peer learning will be incorporated into future editions of this coach manual and field guide.

Table 1 describes the sequence of current and proposed activities through the fall of 2020. The Texas Pathways strategy will continue through the fall of 2022.

Table 1: *Sequence of Events*

Date	Event
October 2018	Texas Pathways coaches review advance work submitted by colleges and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone.
November 14-16, 2018	Colleges engage in in-person coaching at Texas Pathways Institute #5. Coaches participate in orientation, just-in-time meetings, and debrief sessions.
December 2018	Texas Pathways coaches review short-term action plans submitted by college teams following Texas Pathways Institute #5 and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone. Texas Success Center analyzes participant evaluations and shares results with coaches.
January-February 2019	Texas Pathways coaches conduct site visits and engage college teams on campus. Texas Success Center administers Scale of Adoption Assessment, distributes additional advance work, and conducts webinar about institute and advance work.
March 2019	Texas Pathways coaches review advance work submitted by colleges and communicate with college teams remotely via email a phone. Texas Success Center updates coaching manual and field guide.
April 24-26, 2019	Colleges engage in in-person coaching at Texas Pathways Institute #6. Coaches participate in orientation, just-in-time meetings, and debrief sessions.
May 2019	Texas Pathways coaches review short-term action plans submitted by college teams following Texas Pathways Institute #6 and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone. Texas Success Center analyzes participant evaluations and shares results with coaches. External evaluator submits annual report. Texas Success Center updates coaching manual and field guide.
June 2019	Colleges complete application to advance to subsequent cadre.
July-August 2019	Texas Pathways coaches conduct site visits and engage college teams on campus. Cadre selections announced.
September 2019	Texas Success Center distributes advance work, including KPI reporting requirements, and conducts webinar about institute and advance work. Expert coaches create first draft of curriculum in coaching manual and field guide for 2019-2020 coaching activities. Texas Success Center updates coaching manual and field guide.
October 2019	Texas Pathways coaches review advance work submitted by colleges and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone.
November 2019	Colleges engage in in-person coaching at Texas Pathways Institute #1.2. Coaches participate in orientation, just-in-time meetings, and debrief sessions.
December 2019	Texas Pathways coaches review short-term action plans submitted by college teams following Texas Pathways Institute #1.2 and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone. Texas Success Center analyzes participant evaluations, shares results with coaches, and updates coaching manual and field guide.
January-February 2020	Texas Pathways coaches conduct site visits and engage college teams on campus. Texas Success Center administers Scale of Adoption Assessment, distributes additional advance work, and conducts webinar about institute and advance work.
March 2020	Texas Pathways coaches review advance work submitted by colleges and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone.
April 2020	Colleges engage in in-person coaching at Texas Pathways Institute #2.2. Coaches participate in orientation, just-in-time meetings, and debrief sessions.
May 2020	Texas Pathways coaches review short-term action plans submitted by college teams following Texas Pathways Institute #2.2 and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone. Texas Success Center analyzes participant evaluations and shares results with coaches. External evaluator submits annual report. Texas Success Center updates coaching manual and field guide.

Date	Event
July-August 2020	Texas Pathways coaches conduct site visits and engage college teams on campus.
September 2020	Texas Success Center distributes advance work, including KPI reporting requirements, and conducts webinar about institute and advance work.
October 2020	Texas Pathways coaches review advance work submitted by colleges and communicate with college teams remotely via email and phone.

DATA, EVIDENCE, & EVALUATION

The Texas Pathways strategic plan includes a detailed explanation of how the Texas Success Center uses evidence, inquiry, and evaluation to advance and support strategic college change efforts. Effective coaching contributes to positive changes on each of these measures. The Texas Success Center has created a culture of assessment to continually monitor and improve services to colleges. To measure college progress and the impact of programming, the Texas Success Center uses multiple strategies, including the following:

- **Cadre advancement targets**: Whether and when colleges move into a more advanced cadre will indicate the level of progress colleges have accomplished and sustained.
- **Student Success Points**: In Texas, community colleges are funded in part based on performance through measurable attainments called Student Success Points. Colleges earn Student Success Points, with corresponding funding, as their students become college ready; successfully complete their first college-level math, reading, and writing courses; successfully achieve credit hour benchmarks; earn a postsecondary credential; or transfer to a senior institution with at least 15 semester credit hours. The Texas Success Center uses these data as indicators of college progress.
- **Key performance indicators**: Each year, the Texas Success Center collects key performance indicator (KPI) data from colleges. KPI data demonstrate student outcomes along the continuum of their college experiences. Because these are longitudinal cohort data, the Texas Success Center can compare the impact of change over time. Colleges report data disaggregated by student preparedness, dual credit attainment, sex, and race/ethnicity and use these data to examine equity in student outcomes. The Texas Success Center is exploring using Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) tools that will standardize KPIs with those collected across the country.
- **Scale of Adoption Assessment**: Texas community colleges complete the Scale of Adoption Assessment annually to document progress in the implementation and scaling of guided pathways essential practices. The Texas Success Center analyzes these data by college and by cadre and has conducted phone calls to validate college responses on the instrument. The Texas Success Center will continue to administer the Scale of Adoption Assessment annually and will review the online version of the tool to determine whether to transition to the web-based platform.
- **College engagement scans and qualitative reports**: As part of their advance work, colleges have completed worksheets measuring the engagement in pathways reforms of different campus populations (e.g., faculty, staff, executives) and the proportion of impacted students using quantitative data. This year, the Texas Success Center will collect qualitative reports of colleges' curricular reforms, use of data, successes, and challenges as they implement and scale guided pathways.

- **External evaluation**: The Texas Success Center contracts with an external evaluator who analyzes center leadership, operations, events, resources, and data collection and analysis. Reports from the external evaluator are used to improve practices and are shared with coaches, funders, and other stakeholders.
- **Participant evaluation**: After each event coordinated by the Texas Success Center, participants are surveyed for feedback about the utility of the event's content and the efficacy of its structure. We will incorporate questions about coach interaction and support in future evaluations to gauge participant perceptions of the impact of coaching. We will provide this feedback to coaches to reinforce what they are doing well and to offer constructive input about how they can be more effective partners to college teams. This feedback will be used to update the Texas Success Center coaching manual and field guide.

The Scale of Adoption Assessment, KPI data, engagement scans and qualitative reports, and other college-generated materials are components of advance work that are reviewed by coaches and discussed with college teams. During the coach orientation prior to each institute, in groups organized by cadre, Texas Pathways coaches discuss common challenges and strategies to assist their assigned colleges.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Texas Community Colleges by TACC Region & IPEDS Setting

Community College	Region	Setting
Alamo Colleges District	South	City: Large
Alvin Community College	Southeast	Suburb: Large
Amarillo College	West	City: Midsize
Angelina College	East	Town: Remote
Austin Community College District	Central	City: Large
Blinn College	Central	Town: Distant
Brazosport College	Southeast	Suburb: Small
Central Texas College	Central	Suburb: Midsize
Cisco College	North	Town: Remote
Clarendon College	West	Rural: Remote
Coastal Bend College	South	Town: Distant
College of the Mainland	Southeast	Suburb: Midsize
Collin College District	North	Suburb: Midsize
Dallas County Community College District	North	City: Large
Del Mar College	South	City: Large
El Paso Community College	West	City: Large
Frank Phillips College	West	Town: Distant
Galveston College	Southeast	Town: Fringe
Grayson College	North	Rural: Fringe
Hill College	Central	Town: Distant
Houston Community College	Southeast	City: Large
Howard College	West	Town: Distant
Kilgore College	East	Town: Fringe
Laredo College	South	City: Large
Lee College	Southeast	City: Small
Lone Star College System	Southeast	City: Large
McLennan Community College	Central	City: Midsize
Midland College	West	City: Midsize
Navarro College	Central	Town: Distant
North Central Texas College	North	Town: Distant
Northeast Texas Community College	East	Rural: Distant
Odessa College	West	City: Midsize
Panola College	East	Town: Distant
Paris Junior College	East	Town: Remote
Ranger College	North	Rural: Distant
San Jacinto College District	Southeast	Suburb: Large
South Plains College	West	Town: Distant
South Texas College	South	City: Midsize
Southwest Texas Junior College	South	Town: Remote
Tarrant County College District	North	City: Large
Temple College	Central	City: Small
Texarkana College	East	City: Small
Texas Southmost College	South	City: Midsize
Trinity Valley Community College	East	Town: Distant
Tyler Junior College	East	City: Midsize
Vernon College	North	Rural: Fringe
Victoria College	South	City: Small
Weatherford College	North	Town: Fringe
Western Texas College	West	Town: Remote
Wharton County Junior College	Southeast	Town: Distant

Appendix B: Texas Pathways Cadres, CEOs, & Pathways Leads

College	Cadre	CEO Name	CEO Title	Pathways Lead Name	Pathways Lead Title
Alamo Colleges	1 AACC	Mike Flores	Chancellor	Ruth Dalrymple	Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Partnerships and Initiatives
Alvin Community College	3	Christal Albrecht	President	Cynthia Griffith	Vice President, Instruction
Amarillo College	1	Russell Lowery-Hart	President	Tamara Clunis	Vice President, Academic Affairs
Angelina College	4	Michael Simon	President	Cynthia Casparis	Vice President, Academic Affairs
District	1	Richard Rhodes	President	Charles Cook	Provost & Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs
Blinn College	3	Mary Hensley	Chancellor	Max Hibbs	Academic Dean, Division of Mathematics, Business, Engineering and Technology
Brazosport College	1	Millicent Valek	President	Lynda Vilanueva	Provost & Vice President, Academic & Student Affairs
Central Texas College	3	Jim Yeonopolus	Chancellor	Ellen Falkenstein	Professor, Developmental Studies & ESOL Department
Cisco College	N/A	Thad Anglin	President	N/A	
Clarendon College	N/A	Robert Riza	President	N/A	
Coastal Bend College	4	Beatriz Espinoza	President	Carry DeAtley	Vice President, Instruction
College of the Mainland	4	Warren Nichols	President	Warren Nichols; Vicki Stanfield	President; Vice President, Student Services
Collin College	4	Neil Matkin	District President	Jon Hardesty	Vice President & Provost
Dallas County Community College District	1	Joe May	Chancellor	Anna Mays	Associate Vice Chancellor, Educational Policy & Student Success
Del Mar College	4	Mark Escamilla	President	Beth Lewis	Executive Vice President & Chief Academic Officer
El Paso Community College	1 AACC	William Serrata	President	Angeles Vazquez	Manager, Institutional Research
Frank Phillips College	4	Jud Hicks	President	Jason Price	Associate Dean, Academic Support Services
Galveston College	4	Myles Shelton	President	Cissy Matthews	Vice President, Instruction
Grayson College	1	Jeremy McMillen	President	Dava Washburn	Vice President, Instruction
Hill College	2	Pam Boehm	President	Jessyca Brown	Vice President, External Affairs
Houston Community College	1	Cesar Maldonado	Chancellor	Betty Fortune	Executive Director, Success and Completion
Howard College	4	Cheryl Sparks	President	Bryan Stokes	Director, Student Support
Kilgore College	2	Brenda Kays	President	Staci Martin	Vice President, Institutional Planning
Laredo Community College	4	Ricardo Solis	President	Marisela Rodriguez	Dean, Arts & Sciences
Lee College	2	Dennis Brown	President	Christy Ponce	Executive Vice President
Lone Star College System	1	Steve Head	Chancellor	Jamie Posey	Associate Vice Chancellor, Office of Completion
McLennan Community College	1	Johnette McKown	President	Fred Hills	Vice President, Instruction
Midland College	1	Steve Thomas	President	Deana Savage	Special Advisor to the President
Navarro College	4	Kevin Fegan	District President	Carol Hanes	Vice President, Academic Affairs
North Central Texas College	2	Brent Wallace	Chancellor	Andrew Fisher	Vice President, Instruction
College	4	Ron Clinton	President	Toni LaBeff	Director, Institutional Effectiveness & Research
Odessa College	1+	Gregory Williams	President	Kimberly McKay	Vice President, Student Services
Panola College	3	Gregory Powell	President	Gregory Powell	President
Paris Junior College	1 AACC	Pam Anglin	President	Pam Anglin	President
Ranger College	3	William Campion	President	John Slaughter	Director, Institutional Research
San Jacinto College District	1 AACC	Brenda Hellyer	Chancellor	Laurel Williamson	Deputy Chancellor and College President
South Plains College	4	Robin Satterwhite	President	Ryan Gibbs	Vice President, Academic Affairs
South Texas College	1	Shirley Reed	President	Murad Odeh; Nancy Garcia	Learning; Director, Comprehensive Advisement & Mentoring Services
Southwest Texas Junior College	1	Hector Gonzales	President	Mark Underwood	Vice President, Academic Affairs
Tarrant County College District	1 AACC 2.0	Eugene Giovannini	Chancellor	Nancy Curé	Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Temple College	1	Glenda Barron	President	Susan Guzmán-Treviño	Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs
Texarkana College	2	James Henry Russell (2018); Jason Smith (2019+)	President	Donna McDaniel	Vice President, Instruction
Texas Southmost College	4	Jesus Roberto Rodriguez	President	Joanna Kile	Vice President, Instruction
College	4	Jerry King	President	Wendy Elmore	Vice President, Instruction
Tyler Junior College	2	L. Michael Metke	President	Bryan Renfro	Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs
Vernon College	4	Dusty Johnston	President	Lisa Crandall	Vice President, Instruction
Victoria College	2	David Hinds	President	Patricia Rehak	Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Assessment
Weatherford College	4	Tod Allen Farmer	President	Andra Cantrell	Affairs
Western Texas College	4	Barbara Beebe	President	Stephanie Ducheneaux	Dean, Instructional Affairs
Wharton County Junior College	2	Betty McCrohan	President	Leigh Ann Collins	Vice President, Instruction

Appendix C: Texas Pathways Coach Contract Sample

This Temporary Service Contract (the **"Contract"**) states the terms and conditions that govern the contractual agreement between the Texas Community College Education Initiative (**TCCEI**), having its principal place of business at 1304 San Antonio St., Suite #201, Austin, Texas, and COACH (the "**Contractor**"), whose primary place of residence is, ADDRESS, who agrees to be bound by this Contract. TCCEI and the Contractor (individually, each a "Party" and collectively, the "Parties") agree as follows:

I. Services

TCCEI shall employ the Contractor as a Texas Pathways Coach for the Texas Success Center (the "Position"). The Contractor accepts employment with TCCEI on the terms and conditions set forth in this Temporary Service Contract and agrees to the performance of her/his duties under this Contract. The Contractor will provide the services as set for in **Exhibit A**, Statement of Work, attached hereto and incorporated for all purposes ("the Services"), to the satisfaction of TCCEI.

II. Term

The term of this Temporary Service Contract shall commence on DATE and continue through DATE. The Texas Community College Education Initiative (TCCEI) agrees to contract with the Contractor for a part-time, temporary contract position.

III. Termination

At any time, either party may terminate contract with written notice to the other Party.

IV. Compensation

Upon fulfillment of the Pathways Coaches responsibilities outlined in **Exhibit A**, the Contractor shall be compensated with a stipend of $X ("Fee Cap"). TCCEI will also reimburse for travel costs associated with attending the institute, not to exceed a maximum of $X ("Expense Cap") without the prior written approval of TCCEI.

The Fee Cap and the Expense Cap are sometimes collectively referred to as the "Contract Amount." The total Contract Amount will not exceed $X per institute.

V. Payment Schedule

Upon completion of each Pathways Institute, the Contractor will submit an invoice for services to CONTACT, along with a travel reimbursement form, provided by TCCEI, that must be signed and submitted with receipts for meals, transportation, and any other travel expense. For mileage reimbursement, a mileage map must also be provided.

VI. Nature of Position

As a part-time and temporary contractor, the Contractor is not eligible to participate in any organizational benefit programs. The Contractor understands that the part-time and temporary status does not entitle the Contractor to any special consideration for permanent or full-time employment.

VII. Return of Property

Within seven (7) days of the termination of this Temporary Employment Contract, whether by expiration or otherwise, the Contractor agrees to return to TCCEI, all products, samples, or models, and all documents, retaining no copies or notes, relating to TCCEI's business obtained by the Contractor while representing TCCEI.

VIII. No Modification Unless in Writing

No modification of this Contract shall be valid unless in writing and agreed upon by both Parties.

IX. Applicable Law

The Temporary Service Contract and the interpretation of its terms shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal and state courts located in Travis County, Texas.

In WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the Parties has executed this Temporary Service Contract, both Parties by its duly authorized officer, as of the day and year set forth below.

[signatures of TCCEI CEO and pathways coach]