



Tennessee Pathways Certification Rubric

Design

The following rubric will be used as a scoring guide to determine which pathways earn the Tennessee Pathways Certification. The rubric is divided into six sections—five mirroring the sections of the Certification application and one additional bonus section. The rubric is intended to assess the quality of a pathway against specific criteria derived from national and state best practices. The rubric was developed in partnership with district stakeholders, the department of education, and JFF, a national nonprofit organization focused on education and workforce policy.

Use

The primary function of the rubric is to ensure a fair, impartial review of every application. Second, the rubric will allow applicants and Tennessee Pathways regional coordinators to identify opportunities for districts and schools to strengthen their pathways regardless of whether the Certification is awarded or not.

Each of the five required sections of the Certification application, along with relevant supporting documentation, will be scored against a list of criteria in Sections 1-5 below and awarded between 0–10 points. Each scoring section is divided into sub-categories to assist reviewers in determining the appropriate score and level of implementation (Does Not Meet, Approaching, Demonstrating, Excelling). Within the “Demonstrating” and “Excelling” sub-categories, the list of “required evidence” must be demonstrated in the application and supporting documentation to earn the minimum number of points for that sub-category. Criteria listed under “advanced evidence” in these sub-categories will help reviewers to determine whether an applicant earns any additional points.

The final bonus section of the rubric is designed to assess how the component parts of the pathway interact to create a coherent student experience focused on preparation for college and career. This final section on coherent pathway design is where schools can earn up to four bonus points to add to their total score in the first five sections.



Scoring Rubric

Section 1	Does Not Meet (0 points)	Approaching (1-4 points)	Demonstrating (5-7 points)	Excelling (8-10 points)
Labor Market Justification: Certified Tennessee Pathways should be aligned with state, regional, or local economic and labor-market opportunities, as demonstrated by available labor market information.	<input type="checkbox"/> Application provides little to no state, regional, or local labor market data to justify the pathway and/or does not cite data sources.	<input type="checkbox"/> Application provides general labor market data to justify pathway. <input type="checkbox"/> Application identifies clear industry sectors that are aligned with proposed pathway, but does not go into detail about specific occupations. <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides some information (e.g., job growth or wage information) about industry sectors that are aligned with proposed pathway, but does not provide adequate supporting information.	Required Evidence (5): <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides state, regional, or local labor market data to justify pathway from several sources, including TNECD, 2018 LEAP Occupational Analysis, Jobs4TN, and/or InformTN that includes, but is not limited to, projected growth and retirement metrics. <input type="checkbox"/> Application identifies clear industry sectors aligned with proposed pathway. <input type="checkbox"/> Application utilizes labor market data to identify occupations that offer livable wages (MIT Living Wage Calculator for a single adult or 75% of the median wage for the region).	Required Evidence (8): <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides comprehensive and rigorous state, regional, and/or local labor market data to justify pathway from several sources, including TNECD, 2018 LEAP Occupational Analysis, Jobs4TN, InformTN that includes, but is not limited to, projected growth and retirement metrics. <input type="checkbox"/> Application identifies clear industry sectors, sub-sectors, and specific occupations aligned with pathway. <input type="checkbox"/> Application utilizes labor market data to identify occupations that offer livable wages (MIT Living Wage Calculator for a single adult or 75% of

			<p>Advanced Evidence (6-7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes written documentation from local employer(s) stating explicit labor market needs aligned with the pathway. 	<p>the median wage for the region).</p> <p>Advanced Evidence (9-10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes written documentation from major local employers stating explicit labor market needs aligned with the pathway. <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides additional supporting materials and resources (e.g., a letter from the local chamber of commerce that shows their own analysis of labor market trends and or specific needs identified by local employer(s)) related to labor market data that are utilized by school officials in the selection of the pathway.
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Section 2	Does Not Meet (0 points)	Approaching (1-4 points)	Demonstrating (5-7 points)	Excelling (8-10 points)
Elective Focus and Aligned Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs): Certified Tennessee Pathways will offer a sequence of courses for the pathway and EPSOs as a component of, or in addition to, elective focus coursework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application does not list any courses related to the pathway. Pathway does not include at least three course names and associated course codes. Pathway does not include a minimum of two EPSOs as a component of, or addition to, elective focus coursework. □ Application does not provide documentation of master schedules for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years showing course offerings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Pathway does include at least three course names and associated course codes but does not include a minimum of two EPSOs offered as a component of, or in addition to, elective focus coursework. □ Application provides documentation of master schedules for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years showing course offerings. 	Required Evidence (5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application lists a sequence of courses for the pathway and demonstrates how it will serve as an intentional progression of coursework leading or accelerating to a credential and/or degree. □ The course sequence includes at least three course names and associated course codes that make up the pathway and a minimum of two EPSOs offered as a component of, or in addition to, elective focus coursework. □ Application provides documentation of master schedules for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years showing course offerings. 	Required Evidence (8): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application lists a sequence of courses for the pathway and demonstrates how it will serve as an intentional progression of coursework leading or accelerating to a credential and/or degree. □ The course sequence includes at least three course names and associated course codes that make up the pathway, as well as a portfolio of two or more EPSO types offered as a component of, or in addition to, elective focus coursework indicating an intentional progression leading toward a credential or degree. □ Application provides documentation of

			<p>Advanced Evidence (6-7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application indicates the possible credentials and degrees that students will earn as a result of the pathway (e.g., technical certificate or an associate's degree in engineering systems technology as a part of a mechatronics pathway). 	<p>master schedules for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years showing course offerings.</p> <p>Advanced Evidence (8-10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application indicates the possible stackable credentials and degrees that students will be able to pursue. □ Application includes data on current levels of EPSO enrollment and credit attainment disaggregated by student group. □ Application presents an overview of the school's existing career-focused learning courses (i.e. work-based learning capstone or clinical courses) and data on student participation, disaggregated by subgroup.
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Section 3	Does Not Meet (0 points)	Approaching (1-4 points)	Demonstrating (5-7 points)	Excelling (8-10 points)
Postsecondary Articulation Agreement(s): Certified Tennessee Pathways will have clear partnership agreements with postsecondary institutions that create opportunities for EPSOs, accelerated credential or degree completion, and/or concurrent credential or degree completion (e.g., associate's degree).	<input type="checkbox"/> Application provides little to no information about relationships with postsecondary institutions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Application describes relationships with postsecondary institutions, but does not provide evidence of clear articulation agreement/MOU/letter of support that outlines transfer of credits for courses associated with the pathway or specific details of how the postsecondary institution partners with the school.	Required Evidence (5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides evidence of a formal written partnership (articulation agreement/MOU/letter of support) describing the nature of the partnership between the school and postsecondary institution (e.g., transfer of credits, accelerated degree or credential completion, direct and ongoing engagement with students, etc.). Advanced Evidence (6-7): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application describes the types of services offered to high school students by partnering postsecondary institutions (e.g., access to tutoring, computer labs, or other forms of academic support or facilities). 	Required Evidence (8): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides documentation of a formal articulation agreement with at least one postsecondary institution that in addition to accepting credit for EPSOs confers a degree from a TCAT or community college (e.g., technical certificate or an associate's degree). <input type="checkbox"/> Application describes the types of services offered to high school students by partnering postsecondary institutions (e.g., access to tutoring, computer labs, or other forms of academic support or facilities). <input type="checkbox"/> The articulation agreement/MOU/letter of support shows evidence that all partners are deeply engaged (e.g., shared vision statement)

			<input type="checkbox"/> The articulation agreement/MOU/letter of support shows evidence that all partners are deeply engaged (e.g., shared vision statement) and clearly defines roles of each partner.	<p>and clearly defines roles of each partner.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Application also includes details about how students may leverage EPSOs to count toward specific programs and Tennessee Transfer Pathways. <p>Advanced Evidence (9-10):</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes a staffing plan that includes lists of faculty, teachers, and staff who will support the program with details regarding who will be teaching EPSOs and in what locations. <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides details of additional articulation agreements and partnership activities with other postsecondary institutions that include details about the nature of partnership (e.g., transfer of credits, accelerated degree completion).
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Section 4	Does Not Meet (0 points)	Approaching (1-4 points)	Demonstrating (5-7 points)	Excelling (8-10 points)
Employer Partnerships: Certified Tennessee Pathways will have strong workforce partners to collaborate on career-related activities and experiences for high school students. These experiences will allow students to explore careers aligned to this pathway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application indicates very few or no current or potential employer relationships. □ Application provides little or no detail on career exploration and work-based learning opportunities available to students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application provides a list of potential employer partners, but does not provide documentation or evidence of any established relationships. □ Application indicates career-related activities are coordinated on an ad hoc or case-by-case basis, not necessarily offered to all students. □ Application does not indicate a spectrum of career-related activities offered at intentional points across grades 9-12. 	Required Evidence (5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application provides a list of all employers and intermediaries (e.g., a chamber of commerce or local workforce development board) that are helping to establish and/or expand education-industry partnerships. □ Application indicates a spectrum of career exploration and work-based learning opportunities that progressively build on one another as students move through the pathway with at least one work-based learning opportunity per grade level (9-12). □ Application provides documentation of at least one formal employer partnership in the form of a written letter of support or an 	Required Evidence (8): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application provides a list of all employers and intermediaries (e.g., a chamber of commerce or local workforce development board) that are helping to establish and/or expand education-industry partnerships. □ Application indicates a spectrum of career exploration and work-based learning opportunities that progressively build on one another as students move through the pathway with at least one work-based learning opportunity per grade level (9-12). □ Application provides documentation of a written letter of support or an MOU with one employer outlining a capstone work-based

			<p>MOU/MOA outlining career-related experiences for students in each grade level (9-12) and a short description of the career-related activities.</p> <p>Advanced Evidence (6-7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application specifies all career-related activities and experiences offered to high school students and the corresponding employer partner that provides these experiences. □ Application describes structures for supporting students in work-based learning experiences, including central points of contact for supervisors and other supports, such as transportation and scheduling. 	<p>learning experience like an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship offered by the employer for students in the pathway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application goes into detail about the nature of career-related experiences and how the specific employer partnership(s) provides opportunities for students in grades 9-12 to explore or experience careers aligned to this pathway. <p>Advanced Evidence (9-10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application describes structures for supporting students in work-based learning experiences, including central points of contact for supervisors and other supports, such as transportation and scheduling. □ Application provides evidence of formalized processes and protocols, such as those in the department's Work-
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				<p>Based Learning Toolbox, used to recruit and engage employers based on pathway(s) needs and alignment to regional labor/workforce data analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application provides examples of applications, forms, and assessments completed by students and employers engaged in work-based learning opportunities. □ Learning experiences are co-designed by education and industry partners across the secondary-postsecondary continuum, as demonstrated by activities such as employer input on curriculum units, project-based learning, classroom visits, etc.
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Section 5	Does Not Meet (0 points)	Approaching (1-4 points)	Demonstrating (5-7 points)	Excelling (8-10 points)
College and Career Advisement: College and career advisement is an integral part of the Tennessee Pathways Certification as it provides students with the tools necessary to make informed decisions as they prepare for their futures. College and career advisement will assist students in finding a postsecondary “match” based on interests, talents, and goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Application does not provide details on advisement structures or activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Application provides some details on advisement structures, activities, and experiences, but does not distinguish activities and key college and career readiness milestones by grade level. <input type="checkbox"/> Application does not describe outcomes of current college and career advisement activities for participating high school students in the 2018-19 school year.	Required Evidence (5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application clearly outlines advisement structures, activities, and experiences offered across grades 9-12. <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes a timeline that identifies when experiences are generally offered to students in the pathway and evidence of events (e.g., flyers, photos, sign-in sheets, student surveys, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Application references key milestones in line with the department’s Student Milestones for College and Career Readiness to be achieved by students in grades 9-12 and describes how educators and structures support students in reaching these milestones. 	Required Evidence (8): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application clearly outlines advisement structures, activities, and experiences offered across grades 9-12 and how these structures connect to the comprehensive school counseling program. <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes a timeline that identifies when experiences are generally offered to students in the pathway, evidence of events (e.g., flyers, photos, sign-in sheets, student surveys, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Application describes outcomes of current college and career advisement activities for participating high school students in the 2018-19 school year (e.g., increasing seamless postsecondary enrollment, attainment

			<p>Advanced Evidence (6-7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application describes outcomes of current college and career advisement activities for participating high school students in the 2018-19 school year (e.g., increasing seamless postsecondary enrollment, attainment of industry certifications, increases in EPSO enrollment, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes details on recruitment and outreach efforts starting in middle school, including outreach to parents/guardians, that ensures students are prepared to make informed choices about pathway selection prior to entering high school. 	<p>of industry certifications, increases in EPSOs enrollment, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application includes details on recruitment and outreach efforts starting in middle school, including outreach to parents/guardians, that ensures students are prepared to make informed choices about pathway selection prior to entering high school. <input type="checkbox"/> Application references key milestones in line with the department's Student Milestones for College and Career Readiness to be achieved by students in grades 9-12 and describes how educators and structures support students in reaching these milestones. <p>Advanced Evidence (9-10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application describes how educators are oriented to labor market data and trends and
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				<p>trained on ways to incorporate labor market data into advising practices and strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Application describes opportunities for educators to gain industry knowledge and become familiar with updates in industry-specific technology and business practices through externships and other professional development experiences outside the classroom. <input type="checkbox"/> Application provides details on the school's systems and structures to identify and support students who are not yet college-ready and may need developmental education and other services.
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Section 6	Applications that articulate strong alignment between K-12, postsecondary, and employer partnerships to build a coherent pathway focused on student outcomes related to postsecondary and career readiness may earn up to four additional points on their application.
<p>Coherent Pathway Design:</p> <p>Effective pathways require the integration and alignment of all components in order to create seamless experiences for students that blend core academics and career-focused learning and bridge secondary and postsecondary education. This requires the development of a pathways infrastructure that engages partners from across K-12, postsecondary, industry, and workforce. Cross-sector partners work together to design pathways and plan for continuous improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Application describes strategies for continuous improvement of curriculum, instruction, and student supports for courses in the pathway. ❑ Application describes current leadership and governance structures, including cross-sector steering committees and/or advisory boards that support the early college and career experiences and advisement structures in the pathway. ❑ Application provides detailed information on a range of strategies and approaches to ensure course enrollment policies and practices promote access and equity in the pathway and student data to show that these policies and practices are closing student group gaps in postsecondary enrollment and attainment. ❑ Application provides evidence of multiple mechanisms for making data-informed decisions on the pathway's design and implementation (e.g. student feedback after participation in work-based learning experiences, EPSO completers by student group, EPSO credit attainment rate by student group, percentage of pathway(s) completers by student group, annual reassessment of labor market information) to measure impact and improvement of the pathway over time).



Reviewer Scores and Notes

Section	Points Possible	Points Awarded	Notes
Labor Market Justification	10		
Elective Focus and Aligned EPSOs	10		
Postsecondary Articulation Agreement(s)	10		
Employer Partnerships	10		
College and Career Advisement	10		
Coherent Pathway Design (bonus)	4		
Totals:	50 (+4 bonus)		