Name of Program: _____ Date: _____



NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

New Mexico Higher Education Department

Statewide Career Pathways Initiative

Career Pathways Planning System

PURPOSE OF STATEWIDE INITIATIVE:

1. To create and implement a comprehensive Career Pathways Service Delivery Model for Adult Education and to promote the development of innovative, effective, and sustainable career pathways instruction and related services, which may include Integrated Education and Training opportunities, for New Mexicans with low literacy levels and other significant barriers to employment.
2. To encourage local Adult Education programs and other education providers serving similar demographics to form productive partnerships with each other, and with other agencies, organizations, employers, and workforce development stakeholders that are—or might be---meaningfully engaged with providing education, training, support, employment services, and jobs to adults with low literacy levels and other significant barriers to employment.

RELEVANT DEFINITIONS FROM THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Adult Education Services:

- Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) defines adult education (AE) to mean academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increases an individual's ability to:
  A. read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
  B. transition to postsecondary education and training; and
  C. obtain employment.

Career Pathways:

- WIOA defines career pathways to mean a series of rigorous and high-quality education and training strategies and other services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific occupational sector and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Elements of career pathways will:
  A. align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;

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B. prepare an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
C. include advising to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
D. include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
E. organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent possible;
F. enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
G. help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Integrated Education and Training (IET):

- Defined in WIOA Section 203(11) as: A service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.
- Required IET Components as specified in C34 CFR 463.36:
  1. Adult Education and literacy activities as described in 463.30
  2. Workforce preparation activities as described in 463.34, and
  3. Workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, which can be any of the training services defined in section 134(c)(3)(D) of WIOA.

PURPOSE OF CAREER PATHWAYS PLANNING SYSTEM:

- To ensure New Mexico's adult education programs meet the federal definitions of adult education, career pathways, and integrated education and training; as well as to meet WIOA requirements and the rigor established through various professional development efforts provided by NMHED. Local adult education providers are encouraged to use this Career Pathways Planning System to evaluate their progress with career pathways implementation; identify areas that are missing and/or could be strengthened or enhanced; and develop a plan to move forward toward a comprehensive career pathways service delivery system. This template should be used as a strategic planning document, that can be reviewed and revised annually among staff, to assist programs with identifying gaps, assessing needs, establishing goals, determining resources, and evaluating progress relevant to career pathways services.

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Members of staff/stakeholder team who developed this plan:

CAREER PATHWAYS PLAN:

This planning system is a 3-step process designed to assess a program's current status by conducting a gap analysis that identifies (1) what the program has in place and (2) what the program is missing; and then (3) creating a plan with the steps needed to move forward toward delivering services within a comprehensive career pathways model. The first part (steps 1 and 2) is a gap analysis; the second part (step 3) is developing an action plan indicating the steps the program will take to fill in the gaps, if all necessary components of a comprehensive career pathways model are not currently in place. **Note:** It is possible that a program may have aspects of all the components in place; in this instance, those programs are encouraged to focus on strengthening or enhancing aspects within the components as a continuous improvement effort.

3-Step Process:

1. **Identify what is in place: CURRENT ACTIVITIES**
2. **Identify what is missing: PLANNED NEW ACTIVITIES**
3. **Create a step-by-step plan on a timeline to implement was is missing: PLAN**

If you have questions as you develop your Career Pathways Plan, contact NMHED state staff to discuss specific aspects of career pathways and this planning process.

NOTE: There should be a direct correlation between what is identified in Step 2 (PLANNED NEW ACTIVITIES) and Step 3 (PLAN).

It is highly recommended as the program develops its Career Pathways Plan, that it seeks connections to what already exists locally before creating something new to avoid duplication of efforts within the workforce development system. Please understand, no matter where you are in the career pathways process, either starting out or far along, **you can always make improvements and move forward**. Also, in order to

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better ensure successful implementation of this Plan, it is recommended that a program take a few steps forward at a time and stagger its implementation timeline.

Creating A Comprehensive Career Pathways Model

Gap Analysis and Plan

Essential Component 1: Partnerships

Description: Partnerships are critical to an effective career pathways system. They help align services within a community and create a seamless education and training pipeline. Partnerships should be strategic and mutually beneficial.

Considerations -

- Put relationships in writing. Create formal written agreements with partners critical to an effective career pathways system. These partners include postsecondary institutions, WIOA core and required partners (essential are Department of Workforce Solutions and Workforce Connection Centers), employers, community agencies, and any other stakeholder relevant to the workforce development system. The agreement should include partner roles and responsibilities, services provided, expected outcomes, how resources will be shared, and when the agreement will be revisited.
- Programs may convene a Career Pathways Advisory Group with relevant stakeholder representation to guide career pathways efforts.
- Have an effective referral network in place with stakeholders to streamline services. Determine how the program handles referrals from other agencies and how the program will make referrals to other agencies.

Current Activities:	**Planned New Activities:**
Include a list of formal partnerships that already exist. Indicate who the partner is and the nature of the partnership.	**Include a list of formal partnerships the program would like to establish or partnerships that already exists, but the program would like to strengthen. Indicate who the partner is and what the program would like the nature of this partnership to be.**

Plan:	**Timeline:**
Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above. Include how the program will go about establishing or strengthening the partnerships listed in "Planned New Activities" above.	

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Essential Component 2: Career Culture

Description: Programs should create a career pathways culture, one that promotes college and career readiness. Career Pathways should impact every aspect of a program and includes messaging, attitudes, environment and speak.

Considerations -

- The program's vision and mission statements should align with the local workforce development system and should reflect a workforce focus.
- Does the program name effectively communicate career pathways services? If not, the program might need a new name or a career pathways tagline.
- A program's promotional materials should emphasize the future beyond the program rather than the endpoint (i.e., college, career and life success over getting a HSE certificate).
- Programs should create an environment that inspires students toward college and career opportunities (i.e., the language that is used, the visuals seen around the facility, the attitudes toward and expectations of students).

Current Activities: **Include a list of what the program already does to create a career pathways culture.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Include a list of what the program could do to enhance a career pathways culture.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above. Include what the program will do specifically to create or enhance a career pathways culture in the program.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 3: Labor Market Information (LMI)

Description: Career Pathways systems are driven by local labor market information. Labor market information describes current and projected local workforce needs. This information can be helpful when guiding students with career planning as well as with planning instructional services and IET programs. It is important that programs analyze and utilize labor market information to design and implement career pathways models. New Mexico's Labor Market Information can be found at https://www.dws.state.nm.us/ . Programs should be sure to access LMI specific to their regional or local area within the state.

Considerations –

- Engage employers that align with local workforce needs.
- Share labor market information with students to help inform their career exploration and planning efforts.
- Develop contextualized instruction and IET programs in in-demand industries.

Current Activities:	**Planned New Activities:**
Include an analysis of local LMI, i.e. what the current and projected local workforce needs are. Include a list of how the program currently uses LMI to inform career pathways efforts.	**Include a list of how the program will use LMI to inform career pathways efforts (either enhancing what is already being done, or beginning to use this information if it is not being used currently in a meaningful way).**

Plan:	**Timeline:**
Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.	

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Essential Component 4: Onboarding: Intake, Assessment and Orientation

Description: The process of enrolling students, gathering the necessary information to serve students effectively and establishing appropriate expectations of participation in the program. This process should emphasize career pathways and college and career readiness.

Considerations -

- Have students register with Workforce Connection.
- Provide both managed and open enrollment strategies.
- In addition to required standardized assessments, administer career-related assessments and provide opportunities for career exploration. Some programs have a separate career exploration and planning course. Utilize ReadyNM for career exploration and planning.
- Use career pathways maps/visuals to illustrate career advancement. Career Pathways Maps for New Mexico can be found on Propel website.
- Help students identify support services they may need to enhance persistence and the probability of success. Some programs administer a Barrier to Employment Assessment to identify support services.
- Have a comprehensive orientation process, such as a Start Smart course, with all necessary onboarding elements. Once the orientation is complete, students then begin instruction.

Current Activities: **Describe the program's current onboarding process. Provide a list of all elements of the process, including any career-related activities.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Describe what the new process will look like, if any changes will be made to the onboarding process. Provide a list of career-related activities the program will include.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 5: Individual Education, Career and Life Plans

Description: Adult education students should have an individual education, career and life plan that he/she is involved in developing, and that is used to guide their program services in a manner that accelerates the student's educational and career advancement. It should include highlights of formal and informal assessment results, academic and career goal setting, any support services that have been identified, persistence strategies, and a plan for instructional services and transition.

Considerations –

- Integrate career-related elements to an Individual Learning Plan making it an Education and Career Plan.
- Involve students in creating their plan, and help them understand how to use it to guide them toward academic, career and life success.
- Consider utilizing the Career Pathways Maps as part of this effort.
- Review several samples of individual education and career plans, choose or create a template that will work for the program.

Current Activities: **If the program currently uses an Individual Learning Plan or Individual Education and Career Plan, list the elements included in the template. Include how the plan is developed and used, and how students are involved in the process.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Indicate if the program will use (create new or revise existing) an Individual Education, Career and Life Plan for every student? Include a list of the elements that will be included in the template, how it will be created and used for each student, and how students will be involved in the process.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above. Describe how the template will be created, what elements will be included in the template, how the program will create and use these plans for each student, and how students will be involved in creating and using their individual plan.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 6: Career Advising

Description: Career advising in adult education is providing guidance to students on academic and career services. Advisors help students develop strategies and skills to explore and pursue academic and career options, as well as develop and implement a plan for academic, career and life/family success. Advising services should be ongoing, incorporate use of the student's individual education and career plan, and continue through transition to next steps.

Considerations -

- Offer advising through partnerships, use of volunteers, or as part of the program's staffing structure (i.e., create a Career Advisor position).
- Create a process that provides for ongoing advising services: Initiation Stage, Progress Stage, Transition Stage.
- Utilize LMI, ReadyNM and the Career Pathways Maps during student advising sessions.
- Include the Individual Education and Career Plan in the advising process.
- Determine the qualifications of a Career Advisor and identify training requirements.
- Outline in writing what the Career Advisor should be doing with students so that advising services are applied consistently.

Current Activities: **Include a description of how career advising services are currently provided by the program, if they are being provided at all. Include how often students connect with advising services and how the student's Individual Education and Career Plan is used in the advising process.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Include a description of how career advising services will be provided by the program (either getting started, if it does not currently exist; or strengthened, if it already exists). Include how often students will connect with advising services and how the student's Individual Education and Career Plan will be used in the advising process.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 7: Contextualized Instruction, Workforce Preparation and Job Training

Description: Curricula and instructional practices in adult education programs should be rigorous, relevant and research-based (Title II, Subtitle C Sec. 231(e)(6)). The scope of instructional services should include academic skills, workforce preparation and job training. Programs should offer a competency-based, contextualized curriculum in addition to Integrated Education and Training programs for both ABE and ELL students.

Considerations -

- Align instruction to the College and Career Readiness Standards and/or the English Language Proficiency Standards.
- Integrate workforce preparation (soft skills) and contextualization (career and life learning activities) into instructional delivery to meet student needs.
- Offer IET programs that align to Labor Market Information and meet local workforce needs. Use the IET Design Toolkit.
- Have students utilize resources in Workforce Connection.
- Involve employers and other partners in the design and delivery of instructional and career-related services.
- Use technology to support career pathways efforts.

Current Activities: **Include a description of how the program currently offers career pathways instructional services, i.e., contextualized instruction, workforce preparation, job training and IET.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Include a description of how the program will offer (begin or strengthen) career pathways instructional services, i.e., contextualized instruction, workforce preparation, job training and IET.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 8: Alignment of Services

Description: WIOA requires a seamless education and training pipeline in a local area or region.; therefore, programs should work to ensure the services they provide align to next steps students take when they leave the program. This includes transitioning into employment, post-secondary programs, and advanced job training without the need for remediation.

Considerations –

- Offer a curriculum that covers all of the College and Career Readiness Standards.
- Intentionally integrate workforce preparation (soft skills) into the instruction as these are skills employers demand.
- Determine the content of remedial courses (i.e., developmental education courses) offered by local post-secondary programs and ensure students acquire and master those skills.
- Identify the skills needed for many entry level positions and ensure the program helps students acquire and master those skills. These skills are included on the NM Career Pathways Maps and on the ONET Online website.
- Use LMI to inform career pathways efforts.

Current Activities: **List what strategies the program currently uses to ensure alignment of services.**	**Planned New Activities:** **List what new strategies the program will use to ensure alignment of services.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 9: Serving Populations with Barriers to Employment

Description: WIOA requires programs give priority of services to the "hardest to serve" and "most in need". This requires that programs prioritize services to populations with barriers to employment, including the lowest-skilled adults, adults with disabilities, homeless individuals, Native Americans, and justice-involved individuals (among others).

Considerations -

- Provide screening for barriers to employment during the onboarding process, or other types of screenings (i.e., learning disabilities screening, support services checklist, etc.).
- Establish formal partnerships with local agencies that serve vulnerable populations as an outreach effort to access students with barriers to employment, i.e., corrections, probation and parole, court system, vocational rehabilitation, homeless shelters, community agencies, etc.
- Provide strategies in instructional practice that address barriers to employment.
- Ensure barriers to employment issues are addressed in the Individual Education and Career Plan and in advising services.

Current Activities: **Describe how the program currently recruits and provides services to populations with barriers to employment.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Describe how the program will recruit and provide services to populations with barriers to employment. Include what will be added or strengthened.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.**	**Timeline:**

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Essential Component 10: Support Services

Description: Research suggests that when service agencies collaborate and provide holistic services to vulnerable populations, they have better persistence and performance outcomes. Support services are those services that address critical issues beyond the scope of the program, but are necessary for student success. They are accessed while the student is in the program to support persistence and achievement. For adult education programs in a career pathways environment, support services extend beyond the traditional transportation and child care services to include such things as transition services and job exposure opportunities.

Considerations -

- Offer job exposure opportunities, i.e., mentoring, internships, job shadowing, apprenticeships
- Connect students directly to workforce services, i.e., American Job Centers (in New Mexico they are Workforce Connection Centers)
- Provide direct linkages to community services, i.e., mental health, substance abuse, vocational rehabilitation, housing
- Assist students with the development and implementation of a transition plan
- Help students connect to and prepare for post-secondary programs, i.e., financial aid applications, college tours, meet current college students, meet specific program contacts, etc.
- Offer a career or community services speaker series: invite professionals or service providers to program to meet with and speak to students

Current Activities: **Include a list of support services the program currently offers. Describe how these services are identified and accessed.**	**Planned New Activities:** **Include a list of support services the program will offer (include what will be added or strengthened). Describe how these services will be identified and accessed.**

Plan: **Include a step-by-step action plan on how the program will implement each item in "Planned New Activities" above.**	**Timeline:**

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Sustainability

Description: In order to ensure the success of this Career Pathways Plan, programs should have a sustainability plan. A sustainability plan should include data collection and monitoring, establishing policies and procedures for new services, an annual review of formal partnerships, and accessing professional development.

Considerations –

- How will career pathways efforts resulting from this Career Pathways Planning System be sustained?
- Determine when staff will come together to discuss progress of this Career Pathways Plan (review and revise for continuous improvement).
- Establish performance measures that will be monitored to determine success of career pathways efforts.
- Create written policies and procedures to institutionalize new practice once something is proven successful.
- Identify any professional development needs of staff that will ensure the success of this Career Pathways Plan.

Plan:	**Timeline:**
Include a step-by-step action plan on what the program will do to ensure sustainability of this Career Pathways Plan. Be sure to include at least 3 specific professional development needs the program anticipates for its staff to support the success of this Career Pathways Plan.	

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