

## New Skills for Youth

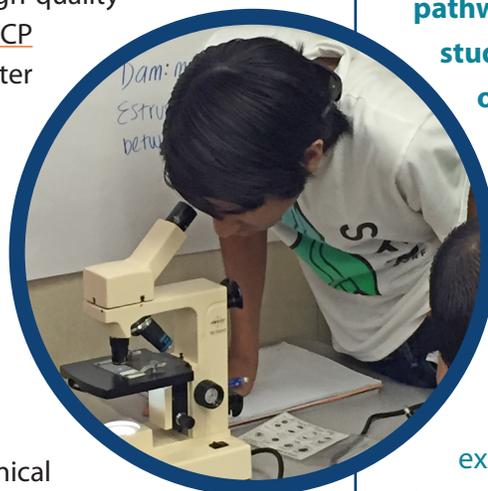
## MASSACHUSETTS

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Massachusetts was one of 10 states selected to participate in New Skills for Youth (NSFY), an initiative enhancing state efforts to increase the number of learners across the country who are prepared for success in both college and career. Between 2016 and 2019, Massachusetts strengthened its career readiness system through NSFY by:

### Designing and launching a college and career pathways designation program

Following recommendations from the Early College Joint Committee in 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Department of Higher Education designed and launched a new initiative to expand access to high-quality college and career pathways (HQCCPs). The HQCCP initiative bundles three types of programs: Chapter 74 Career/Vocational Technical Education Programs; new Innovation Pathways, which connect student learning to broadly defined, in-demand industry sectors; and Early College Programs, which enable students to earn at least 12 college credits in high school. Programs must align with five key design principles, including equitable access and connections to career. Once programs are designated as HQCCPs, they are eligible for technical assistance, supports, and in some cases, financial assistance to strengthen implementation.



“ We have students who carry desires of what they want to do in a career but do not have the resources, the people or the tools to actually fulfill their desires. **The pathway program provides students with that sense of purpose.** ... I knew that I wanted to go into the health field, but I didn't know how I would get the knowledge to do it. ... I got hands-on learning that told me what to expect in the career that I wanted to pursue and the knowledge and skills that I will need in the future. ”

— Chizaram Asia, Student,  
Burncoat High School

## Consolidating and coordinating workforce planning

In Massachusetts, cross-agency workforce development efforts are coordinated by the governor's Workforce Skills Cabinet, which includes leadership from the Executive Offices of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development. In 2017, the Workforce Skills Cabinet developed [regional labor market blueprints](#), which identify the economic priorities and critical skills gaps in each of Massachusetts' seven workforce regions. The blueprints have since been used to inform policy and planning in each region and align pathways designated as HQCCPs to regional labor market needs.

## Refreshing college and career advising across the commonwealth

DESE developed a new [college and career advising framework](#) that focuses on career development and college and career planning in grades 9-12. To support implementation of the framework, DESE conducted a three-part series of professional development workshops with school-based teams of counselors, administrators and other staff so they could build out school-wide strategies. DESE also developed a new tool called My Career and Academic Plan to help students explore college and career opportunities and map out a plan for their futures.

## MAJOR STATE POLICY WINS

### House Bill 4569 (2016) [↗](#)

This law funded the new Workforce Skills Capital Grant Program at \$45 million over three years to support Career Technical Education (CTE) and training equipment purchases that connect individuals to economic opportunities in high-demand industries.

### Early College Joint Committee (2017) [↗](#)

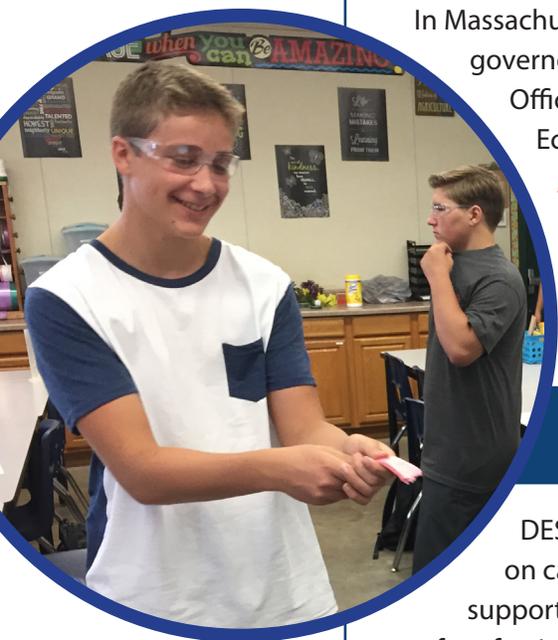
The Board of Higher Education and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education issued a joint resolution to create the Early College Joint Committee, which was charged with designing and coordinating an Early College Program. The committee's work led to the creation of the HQCCP initiative.

### FY 2019 Budget (2018) [↗](#)

The commonwealth's FY 2019 budget included \$1.8 million in new funding to establish high-quality Early College Programs and \$5 million (\$1.5 million over FY 2018 levels) for the Connecting Activities initiative, which provides work-based learning opportunities for high school students.

### FY 2020 Budget (2019) [↗](#)

The Massachusetts FY 2020 budget included an additional \$400,000 for the Connecting Activities work-based learning program; \$500,000 for planning and implementation grants to expand existing and develop new CTE programs; and a total of \$2.5 million for the development and implementation of high-quality Early College Programs, an increase of \$700,000 from the previous fiscal year.



# Massachusetts NSFY Impact *by the Numbers*

17

Number of designated Early College partnerships, which combined involve 34 high schools and 15 colleges

61

Number of designated Innovation Pathways delivered through 26 high schools and 20 workforce partners

62,000

Number of students enrolled in HQCCP programs as of the 2018-19 academic year

345

Number of school personnel who participated in the college and career advising professional development series in the 2018-19 academic year





# Sustainability Strategy



With dedicated funding in the annual state budget, the HQCCP designation process is now the way Massachusetts does business. In the future, Massachusetts plans to select new cohorts of Innovation Pathways and Early College Programs with the goal of doubling current enrollment in HQCCP programs by 2027. As Massachusetts aims to scale HQCCPs across the commonwealth, state leaders are working to build internal capacity to provide meaningful technical assistance sustainably and continue holding all designated programs accountable for quality.

## Massachusetts NSFY Local Impact: Worcester Public Schools

Worcester Technical High School is the only Career/Vocational Technical Education School in Worcester, MA, one of the largest urban areas in the commonwealth. While any student in the district can apply to the school, many students are waitlisted every year due to high demand. The HQCCP initiative has helped Worcester expand access to Early College Programs and Innovation Pathways through the comprehensive high schools. Since the initiative began, Worcester has expanded Early College Programs and Innovation Pathways to all six comprehensive high schools. These programs help connect Worcester students to work-based learning, dual credit and career advising that they would not have been able to access otherwise.

## ABOUT NSFY

NSFY is a \$75 million national initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase & Co. As part of this initiative, the Council of Chief State School Officers, Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group worked with states to improve their career readiness systems. NSFY consisted of two phases. During Phase One (March-October 2016), states conducted a comprehensive needs assessment and developed action plans to examine and transform their career readiness systems and expand the opportunities available to learners. During Phase Two (January 2017-December 2019), states executed their three-year plans to transform their career readiness systems.