



MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION

DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RE-ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

WHAT ARE MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION?

Multiple pathways are defined as a variety of structured academic opportunities for students to achieve their goal for high school graduation and postsecondary success. Each pathway is defined by its programming and is accessed by each student based on the individual student's academic interest and unique needs. Examples include CTE Programs, credit recovery and acceleration, Concurrent Enrollment, and flexible scheduling as well as different school options such as Alternative Education Campuses and online schools.

WHY USE MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION?

Developing multiple pathways requires creating programs, schools or systems that are tailored to address the major factors contributing to student drop-outs.

Using data and needs assessments as a guide, school leaders can choose pathways that are most appropriate for the needs of their students.

- If data indicates drop-outs are over-age and under-credit schools and districts may look for strong credit recovery options.
- If students work to support themselves or their families schools and districts may consider flexible scheduling and evening classes
- If data suggest student disengagement, CTE programs or other real-world learning opportunities may keep students in school who would otherwise dropout.

It is important for schools to consider the needs of their special populations including, but not limited to, differently abled students, pregnant or parenting teens, homeless students or students who have been incarcerated.

When schools and districts provide students with options these multiple pathways allow students to customize their education to meet their unique needs and circumstances and gain real-world knowledge, skills, and experiences.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

In addition to these targeted program offerings, it is important to look at the school structure and typologies of the various options. Research has shown that small learning communities and real-world learning are often key factors in re-engaging students. Nationally a majority of recovered drop-outs are re-enrolled in alternative education schools or online schools. Alternative education schools

Colorado Facts and Figures for Multiple Pathways

- Given more time to graduate, American Indian and Hispanic/Latino youth show the largest percentage gains in 5- and 6-year graduation rates.
- Nearly 100 Alternative Education Campus programs are currently approved in Colorado.
- By 2020, 74% of all jobs in Colorado will require education beyond high school.
- Through Concurrent Enrollment or ASCENT programs, 2,758 students earned some type of postsecondary credential in 2017-18 while still in high school. This is nearly a 37 percent increase over the 2016-17 total credential-completion number of 2,017.



often have innovative pedagogies, small learning environments, and real-world learning connections.

Alternative options and multiple pathways do not overlook the core principles that help all students achieve success, and they include:

- Positive relationships with caring adults;
- Quality educational instruction;
- Opportunities to engage in learning experiences that connect school to life beyond; and
- Support and resources to help them figure out what they want to do once they have earned their diploma
- Individualized pathways based on students' unique interests and academic needs

Common elements critical to multiple pathways and student success include strong leadership, a shared commitment to vulnerable youth, effective cross-sector collaboration, a personalized learning approach, student empowerment, supportive relationships, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Multiple Pathways and Graduation Rates

Beginning in 2010, Colorado students was assigned an Anticipated Year of Graduation (AYG) when they entered their freshman year. The early and late graduates are reflected in 3-year, 5-year, 6-year, and 7-year graduation rates based on their assigned Anticipated Year of Graduation.

Research shows that extended graduation rates are beneficial for both high achieving students earning college or industry credit, and lower achieving students needing more time to graduate. Schools are incentivized to support students in determining their unique pathway and timeline by having various ways to communicate their graduate rate.

Multiple Pathways References and Materials:

[Dropout Prevention Best Practice Guide References](#)

[Dropout Prevention Resources](#)

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/multiplepathways>