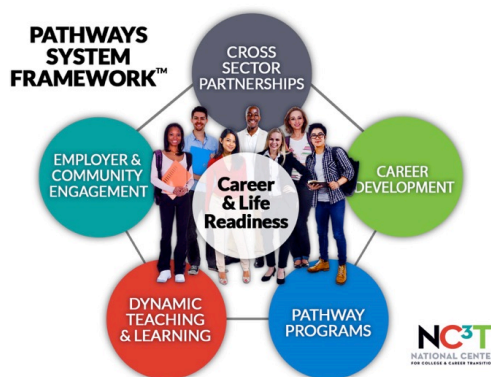


## 2019/20 CAREER PATHWAYS SYSTEM & CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRESS

This report reflects 2019/20 accomplishments of the **Erie County Career Pathways Alliance (ECCPA)** and **Career Street**, which are both Erie Together programs. ECCPA and Career Street efforts are closely intertwined. Recommendations, resources and experiences developed by the ECCPA Leadership Team and Industry Advisory Groups are generally implemented and/or promoted through Career Street.

Over the years, the ECCPA has received technical assistance from the National Center for College and Career Transitions (NC<sup>3</sup>T), made possible with the support of the PA Department of Education's Bureau of Career and Technical Education. This report is organized to communicate progress according to NC<sup>3</sup>T's *Pathways System Framework*, below, which is guiding much of our work.



The ECCPA's **Mission** is to implement a countywide career pathways system that successfully prepares Erie County students for post-secondary education and training and future careers. Its **Vision** is a community where all students graduate high school on time, with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in life after high school and to thrive in their community.

### Progress: Cross Sector Partnerships

*Together, they identify the key knowledge, skills, and attributes that help youth and young adults succeed in education, the workplace, and civic life.*

- The **ECCPA Leadership Team continues to meet monthly** to guide pathways system and career exploration efforts.
- This year, **the Business, Finance & Information Technology Advisory Group was launched**, and now three of five planned industry advisory groups are in place. The other two are Engineering & Industrial Technology and Science & Health. These groups are advising school districts, post-secondary providers, and workforce developers on:
  - Expected skills and knowledge in the industry
  - Employment trends
  - Making programmatic improvements to meet workforce needs, and
  - Connecting students in the workplace.

- We created a special “task team” of Erie Together participants to develop **career pathways flyers** for review and approval of industry advisory groups. One flyer was finalized and distributed (Science & Health), a second (Engineering & Industrial Technology) was recently finalized and will soon be distributed, and a third (Business, Finance & Information Technology) is currently being drafted. Flyers, once completed, are posted here: <https://www.careerstreeterie.org/resources/resource-documents>
- We **expanded relationships with outside funding partners**:
  - Secured a Community Promise Grant from Hamot Health Foundation in April 2019 to support Science and Health career pathways and exploration-related efforts.
  - Secured a Business/Education Partnership Grant through NWPA Job Connect/PA Dept. of Labor & Industry to support Business, Finance & Information Technology Advisory Group efforts.
  - Secured EITC status from PA DCED; received an EITC contribution from Erie Insurance to host career pathways-related informational sessions with students and families.
  - Secured a mini grant from NC<sup>3</sup>T to help underwrite the costs of ECCPA facilitation.
  - Wrote a Teacher in the Workplace grant on behalf of the region (no decision yet).
- Career Street worked with local companies/employees to create and publish **36 Newspapers in Education articles** this year. Over 110 pieces, organized by industry, are now hosted as a library of resources for students and educators on Career Street’s website here: <https://www.careerstreeterie.org/resources/newspapers-in-education>
- We utilized our Science & Health Advisory Group to secure meaningful feedback from local employers to help **inform Erie County Technical School planned programming**.
- We conducted a **Career Street strategic planning session** to take the program to next level.

**Progress: Career Development**

*All learners experience meaningful and expansive career exploration and their parents or guardians are actively engaged in the process. A well-planned career exploration program encourages students to identify personal aptitudes and interests, explore career options through multiple methods, and make informed postsecondary education and training decisions... Postsecondary partners utilize an aligned career development framework for their adult learners.*

- Industry advisory groups are identifying and prioritizing experiences. This year we **finalized six (in red)** and drafted six (in blue) templates to date. Final templates have been placed on Career Street’s website here: <https://www.careerstreeterie.org/resources/experience-templates>

**Engineering & Industrial Technology  
Advisory Group**

- Employer Panels
- Job Shadowing
- Internships
- Real-World Job Description Review
- Mock Interviews
- Plant Tours (in-person and virtual)
- Career Café
- Entrepreneurship Day

**Science and Health Advisory Group**

- Classroom Speakers
- Employer Panels
- Job/Career Fairs
- Soft Skills Training
- Job Application "Boot Camp"
- Mock Interviews
- Career and Lifestyle Budgeting
- Identify and Explain Career Ladders
- Longer-Term Career Planning and Employment Forecasting



- Pathways flyer development is well underway (see above) and **career pathways-related information sessions for parents and students** are in the planning stages.
- **Career Street focused program growth on younger grades**, developing and offering new age-appropriate career exploration experiences for students in elementary and middle school. There were **eight science and health experiences this year, impacting 481 students in grades 3-8**. There were an additional **11 non-science and health experiences impacting 391 students in grades 3-8**. (Note: COVID-19 required postponement of several scheduled experiences which will be revisited in the 2020/21 school year.) All in all, Career Street impacted **3,711 students** in grades 3-12 through **77 career exploration experiences**.
- Working with our partners, we enrolled **26 students in the Edinboro Quality Assurance/GECAC Soft Skills program**, and **11 students in the Penn State Behrend/GECAC Plastics Pre-Apprentice and Soft Skills Program**. Both programs were identified as priorities and developed with guidance of the ECCPA Engineering & Industrial Technology Advisory Group, and each received state funding support.

### **Progress: Pathways Programs**

*A pathway program of study is a sequence of interconnected academic and elective classes revolving around a career or subject theme, integrated with experiential learning and close connections between secondary and postsecondary education, training, and/or apprenticeships.*

- As aforementioned, we utilized our Science & Health Advisory Group to secure meaningful feedback from local employers to **inform Erie County Technical School planned programming**.

### **Progress: Dynamic Teaching and Learning**

*Teachers and faculty members employ evidence-based instructional practices that are highly engaging, rigorous, and relevant to each pathway program of study. Teachers continue to implement important required curricular reforms, and there is an ongoing emphasis on problem-based, project-based, and inquiry-based learning in all pathway programs of study. Targeted professional development, peer collaboration, and instructional coaching provide ongoing teacher support.*

- We worked with NC<sup>3</sup>T to develop and offer the following **professional development resources** at the request of ECCPA-participating school districts:
  - Middle and high school **career exploration course scope and sequence and learning resources** (2018/19).
  - **CareerSmart Classroom** resources to help **teachers connect core subjects to careers**. These resources were originally shared with ECCPA-participating districts through workshops, binders, and Google Docs, but now NC<sup>3</sup>T finalized a new web-based system to house the CareerSmart Classroom resources and ECCPA-participating districts have been given registration instructions.
- Career Street hosted **seven educator tours, visiting 26 local employers** including discussions on key knowledge, skills, and attributes that help youth and young adults succeed in education and the workplace.

**Progress: Employer and Community Engagement**

*Employers and community organizations are essential partners, helping to provide students with skill development and career exploration experiences in the workplace and bringing highly relevant work-based activities, content, and role models into the classroom.*

- We continue to maintain and grow employer and community involvement through the ECCPA's **cross-sector Leadership Team** and dynamic, active **Industry Advisory Groups**.
- As aforementioned, this year we **expanded funding partnerships** to support this work.
- This year, we **strengthened mutually beneficial working relationships with community partners** including Northwest Tri-County IU #5, NWPA Job Connect, GECAC, Edinboro University, Penn State Behrend, and others.
- We **leveraged relationships** we built through Erie Together's facilitation of the "County Level Workforce Development Team" to grow the ECCPA Science and Health Advisory Group.
- We continued our relationship with the **Erie County Data Center** to inform the ECCPA's data-driven decision-making process.
- Career Street maintained engagement with the NWIRC's "**What's So Cool About Manufacturing**" video contest, MBA's **Mfg Day**, and Erie Together's **Youth Civic Engagement Symposium**.
- We featured ECCPA's work through **media opportunities** and other **public communications** mechanisms including TalkErie radio, WQLN Radio – We Question & Learn (airing in May), Erie Together's website and blog (<https://www.erietogether.org/news/erie-together-unlocks-pathways-to-prosperity-safety-and-service>), NC<sup>3</sup>T's statewide monthly newsletters, and Erie Together and Career Street social media channels.

**LONG-TERM INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Effective career pathways implementation within school districts with robust, relevant core and elective courses and co-curricular activities.
- Informed students and families, leading to better career choices based on student interests, aptitudes and earning potential, etc.
- Streamlined ways for business and industry to advise districts to help prepare students for future careers.
- Greater connections between school districts and post-secondary institutions to continue career pathways beyond high school.
- A better prepared local workforce and stronger local economy.