

Supporting career readiness in a world of rapid change

High school graduation marks the start of a new journey as young adults set out to make their way in the world — including choosing a career. The career decisions that high school graduates make can shape the rest of their lives.



Many career paths are available:^{1,2}



Enrolling in a certificate program or technical school.



Attending a two- or four-year college.



Joining a service organization.



Going directly into the workforce.



Going into the military.

But graduates must be prepared to navigate shifting labor demands and rapidly changing technology.²

By 2020, an estimated **65 percent** of jobs will require training or education beyond high school.² The highest demand will be for workers who can handle **complex** tasks and have strong **communication, analytic, and leadership** skills.²

To ensure a competitive workforce, states are using research and data to understand how best to strengthen career planning and supports; align curricula, instruction, and learning experiences with labor market needs; measure students' career readiness; and close opportunity gaps.

References

¹ Carnevale, A. P., Strohl, J., & Ridley, N. (2017). *Good jobs that pay without a BA: A state-by-state analysis*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Retrieved from <https://goodjobsdata.org>

² Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2013.). *Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Retrieved from <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/recovery-job-growth-and-education-requirements-through-2020>

The goals of MCRRA are to

- 1 Increase the Midwest region's capacity to access, conduct, interpret, and make sense of career readiness research.**
- 2 Support the use of career readiness research in decisionmaking at the state and local levels.**

The primary focus of MCRRA is on career readiness in Minnesota. In addition, a community of practice connects key stakeholders across the region and is an active partner in the research process.

Projects

For more information about the alliance and associated projects, please visit <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest>.



Research

Examining Minnesota high school graduates' postsecondary pathways.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is interested in learning more about the postsecondary pathways of Minnesota public high school graduates and the opportunity gaps that students encounter on their college and career pathways. Drawing on data from Minnesota's Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System, REL Midwest researchers are examining the postsecondary pathways taken by Minnesota students immediately after high school graduation, along with their postsecondary and labor market outcomes six years later. MDE and MCRRA will use the results to develop a longer term research agenda focused on the college and career readiness of Minnesota students.



Coaching

Supporting districts in strengthening Minnesota's future workforce.

REL Midwest conducted a scan of 198 district World's Best Workforce (WBWF) summaries and presented the information to MDE staff. REL Midwest and MDE are using the information learned from the scans to develop and provide regional trainings to increase district staff capacity to implement the goals in their WBWF plans. This project aligns with other Minnesota college and career readiness efforts being led by the Midwest Comprehensive Center and the College and Career Readiness and Success Center.



Engaging our region.

Connecting and sharing research, training, and coaching projects with stakeholders and practitioners is critical to MCRRA's goal of encouraging the use of research in decisionmaking.

Some of MCRRA's engagement efforts include an [e-newsletter](#) highlighting the alliance and its work and a [webinar](#) on culturally responsive strategies to promote career readiness for American Indian students. Other planned engagement includes an infographic highlighting the findings of the postsecondary pathways research study, a video, and a public TV documentary.

For more information

visit us at
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest>

follow us on Twitter
[@RELMidwest](https://twitter.com/RELMidwest)

