

Appendix: Federal Funding for Support Services

This appendix provides additional information on how a wide variety of federal sources can be used to fund support services for participants in career pathway initiatives. Adequately funding these services emerged as a significant challenge as states began to use Funding Career Pathways as a tool for braiding funding. This appendix provides additional guidance to help interagency state teams identify and use federal resources to fund the support services components of career pathway programs. State teams can use this appendix to:

- Understand the types of support services that are important for participants in career pathways;
- Identify how federal resources can support these key components and tasks, and
- Pinpoint state policy changes or other state actions needed to maximize federal funding opportunities for support services.

Highlighted in this section are four categories of support services and a matrix outlining the potential use of ten federal programs for support services. To more fully explore opportunities to use federal funds for these services, it includes three federal programs that are not profiled in the toolkit itself.⁵³

The 10 federal programs included in this appendix are:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I (Adult and Dislocated Worker);
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I (Youth);
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act);

- Pell Grants;
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins CTE);
- TRIO, Student Support Services Program (TRIO SSS);
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG);
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T); and
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Support services are defined as the range of supports that should be available to students to help them persist in and complete career pathway programs.

THE OPPORTUNITIES OF FULLY INTEGRATING SUPPORT SERVICES

Federal programs provide critical funding that helps states, as well as education and training providers, offer the support services necessary for nontraditional students to persist in and complete their programs of study. To use federal resources most effectively, states and local providers should:

- **Take an entrepreneurial approach to providing and finding resources for support services.** This includes seeking and securing philanthropic and other private funds for support services; engaging in unique partnerships to provide these services (e.g., with AmeriCorps, civic organizations, and libraries); and considering technology solutions (e.g., through online career explorers and navigators). Supplementing public funding for support services with these atypical resources and partnerships can stretch limited public dollars.
- **Braid together funding sources to provide support services.** Because of limits on how funds may be used, programs with a diverse customer base may need to braid funding from different streams in order to provide the full range of needed services. Some programs have found that they need a dedicated staff member or a reliable partner who can organize and blend these streams into a cohesive funding scheme while meeting the specific requirements of each program. Dedicating staff to braid funding, including assembling, managing, and accounting for public funds, can be challenging if programs are already understaffed.⁵⁴
- **Form partnerships to bring together resources necessary for providing support services.** Many partners in career pathway efforts or potential partners in the community offer or have the capacity to offer some support services. Community-based organizations, one-stop career centers, and human services agencies may already provide career counseling and financial assistance for child care, transportation, or other expenses to participants. Community colleges and other postsecondary education entities may provide academic advising and other academic supports. Many of these partners, as well as employers, can assist with finding jobs or arranging internships for participants. The key is to organize

these resources into a cohesive plan that draws on the strengths of all relevant partners.⁵⁵

Support services are frequently underfunded components of career pathways and may be seen as add-ons rather than as vital supports necessary for students to persist in their coursework and complete their programs of study.⁵¹ Though many support services are allowable activities of federal programs, a lack of funding and misaligned accountability systems may lead program administrators to use scarce funds for other priorities.

CATEGORIES OF SUPPORT SERVICES

This appendix describes four types of support services:

- Financial stability support;
- Personal support;
- Academic support; and
- Career preparation support.

These categories encompass a full range of supports that should be available to help students persist in and complete career pathway programs. Depending on their individual circumstances, income, and other indicators of eligibility, students may benefit from services in only one category or in multiple categories.

Financial Stability Support includes financial support that falls outside the traditional system of financial aid. The purpose of this support is to ensure students can meet the financial demands of participating in career pathway programs. The cost of participation can be much more than the amount adults and youth pay in tuition and fees. Books and other training and educational expenses increase the cost to participants, and the opportunity cost of spending time in training rather than working is significant. Student parents must often pay for child care in order to attend training. In addition, they must continue to meet basic living expenses—rent, utilities, food, transportation, and health care—for themselves and their families. In some cases, career pathway participants experience unexpected financial emergencies, such as a car that requires repair.⁵⁶ For low-income individuals, these issues can serve as roadblocks to completing career pathway programs. One strategy for improving students' financial stability is to help them

secure public support. Low-income students frequently qualify for federal programs designed to assist low-income individuals. These programs can increase financial support for adults and youth and help them care for their families, and they may help them reduce their work hours while enrolled in training. Financial assistance may include, but is not limited to, food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the free and reduced-price school lunch program for children; cash assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and state general assistance programs; subsidized health insurance, most frequently

through Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP); and housing assistance through the Section 8 Program and other housing programs.

The table below shows the range of financial stability support that should be available to participants in career pathway and bridge programs.

CATEGORIES OF FINANCIAL STABILITY SUPPORT	DEFINITIONS
Assistance accessing traditional financial aid	Information about and assistance obtaining various sources of financial aid, including federal and state grants, such as federal Pell Grants, as well as information about student loans
Assistance using nontraditional sources of aid to pay for education and training	Assistance accessing and paying for the direct costs of training and education, such as tuition, books, and fees, from sources other than traditional financial aid. These may include private or institutional scholarships, TANF, or federal programs that offer individual tuition support.
Funding for child care and transportation	Assistance with paying for or providing child care and transportation services for students
Funding for living expenses ⁵³	Assistance with meeting living expenses, such as rent, utilities, food, and health care, for participants and their families

Personal Support assists participants in addressing non-financial, nonacademic barriers to academic progress, so that they can fully engage in their learning. These supports address the challenges that arise as students balance the demands of training participation, work, and family. If these services are not available at the community organization or college campus, students may have to be referred to off-site services.

Personal support has implications for the financial stability of program participants. For example, for a student who does not have affordable health care, accessing

counseling to address a mental health issue could quickly become a financial crisis. Additionally, an individual who does not have the knowledge or skills to manage debt, follow a budget, and plan financially for the future is likely to experience challenges meeting financial responsibilities. Effective financial coaching and education could mitigate these challenges.

The table that follows shows the range of personal support that may be available to participants in career pathway and bridge programs.

CATEGORIES OF PERSONAL SUPPORT	DEFINITIONS
Mentoring	One-on-one relationships between participants and experienced adults who can provide help and advice about navigating academic and employment challenges
Case management	One-on-one assistance to participants meant to optimize financial, personal, and academic outcomes through needs assessment, resource identification, referrals, and service facilitation
Mental health, substance abuse, or other counseling	Counseling for domestic violence, mental health, substance abuse and other personal obstacles
Group support (group counseling, learning communities, cohort support)	Use of groups to support participants, often with similar characteristics, such as student parents, first-generation students, and disadvantaged students. This may include group counseling and learning communities that are designed to provide peer-to-peer support to cohorts of students.
Financial coaching/financial literacy workshops	Assistance with budgeting, financial goal setting, saving, accessing financial products, building assets, understanding financial opportunities and consequences, and strategies for improving an individual's financial situation

Academic Support helps participants meet the academic requirements of career pathway programs. Many adults and youth enter career pathways unprepared to complete the academic work or fail to understand what is required of them. They may be the first in their family to attend such a program, or they may be returning to education and training many years after finishing high school. These supports help students plan for a program of study

and its requirements and provide them with the study skills and course support needed to succeed. These supports help students plan for a program of study and its requirements and provide them with the study skills and course support needed to succeed. The table below shows the types of academic support that can help students persist in and complete their programs of study.

CATEGORIES OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT	DEFINITIONS
Integrated education and training	Individual or group assistance with course concepts, completing assignments, or remedial work
Academic advising (e.g., course planning)	Information and guidance on planning a course of study and selecting courses and instructors
Academic preparation and course support (e.g., study skills)	Preparation of students to meet program expectations; includes teaching study skills and how to access college and community resources, integrated education and training to provide concurrent and contextualized foundational skill building workforce preparation and occupational training.

Career Preparation helps participants use the knowledge and skills they acquire in their training to plan for a career pathway and secure employment. Students identify their interests, explore careers, and develop plans. They may also need assistance with securing an internship or other work-based learning opportunity

while they are enrolled and with finding a job at the end of the program.

The table below describes three types of career preparation.

CATEGORIES OF CAREER PREPARATION	DEFINITIONS
Career navigation	Assistance understanding job and career information, assessing career interests, exploring career options, understanding various steps in a selected career, and developing career plans
Job search assistance and placement	Assistance with preparing a resume, preparing for interviews, understanding the job market and recent trends, understanding the job search process, identifying employment opportunities, and getting placed into jobs
Assistance gaining work experience, searching for an internship, and getting a placement	Developing or identifying work experiences (e.g., summer employment opportunities, internships related to the course of study, and work-study placements) and getting placed into jobs

The matrix on the following page is a guide to the support services that can be funded by 10 federal programs administered by 5 federal departments:

The U.S. Department of Labor

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title I (Adults and Dislocated Worker)
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I (Youth)

The U.S. Department of Education

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act)
- Pell Grants
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins CTE)
- TRIO, Student Support Services Program (TRIO SSS)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

A solid circle on the matrix indicates that a funding source is generally or commonly used to provide the support to eligible participants. A hollow circle indicates that a funding source can be used to provide the support, but it may not be used widely as a result of limited funding, program eligibility requirements, or other reasons. Federal funding for most of the programs profiled in this appendix does not go directly to an individual; rather, it flows to states, cities, educational institutions, or local programs, which can provide the support directly to the participant or pay for the support on behalf of the participant. State teams should use the matrix in conjunction with the lengthier descriptions of most of the programs in the body of this toolkit, along with the notes following the matrix, which provide information on program-specific eligibility requirements, allowable activities, and other limitations on program-specific eligibility requirements, allowable activities, and other limitations.

Federal Funding for Support Services in Career Pathways

PROGRAM	FINANCIAL STABILITY SUPPORT				PERSONAL SUPPORT				ACADEMIC SUPPORT			CAREER TRANSITION			
	Funding for living expenses	Funding for child care and transportation	Assistance using nontraditional sources of aid to pay for education and training	Assistance accessing traditional financial	Financial coaching/ financial literacy workshops	Group support (e.g., group counseling, learning communities)	Mental health, substance abuse or other counseling	Case management	Mentoring	Integrated Education and Training	Academic advising (e.g., course planning)	Academic preparation and course support (e.g., study skills, integrated education and training)	Career navigation	Job search and placement	Assistance gaining work experience, internship search, and placement
WIOA Title I Adult & Dislocated Worker	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
WIOA Title I Youth	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
WIOA Title II	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Pell Grants	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Perkins CTE	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TRIO SSS	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
TANF	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
CSBG	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SNAP E&T	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
CDBG	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

● Funding source is commonly used for the specified support service

○ Funding source can be used for the specified support service, but is not widely used due to limited funding, program restrictions, etc.

LIMITATIONS ON THE USE OF TEN FEDERAL PROGRAMS TO FUND SUPPORT SERVICES

(to be used in conjunction with the preceding matrix)

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I

(Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs): These WIOA funds can be used for a range of financial, personal, academic, and career transition supports, such as tuition assistance, career counseling, job search assistance, and assistance with gaining work experience. Supportive services under WIOA, which include funding for transportation, child care, dependent care, and other services, are restricted in several ways. They must be necessary to enable an individual to participate in services, and individuals must be unable to obtain these services through other programs. Needs-related payments may be provided to adults and dislocated workers who qualify for them and who require them to participate in services. Supportive services and needs-related payments are optional and may not be available to WIOA participants in every local area because of limited funding or local policy choices.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I

(Youth Program): WIOA youth funds serve out-of-school youth aged “16 to 24 and in-school youth ages 14 to 21” most of whom must meet specific income-eligibility requirements or live in high-poverty areas and face barriers to continued education and employment. Supports provided depend on the specific service strategy designed for each participant, based on an individualized needs assessment. One of the 14 required program elements is supportive services, including child care, transportation, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments. These supports are provided when necessary to participate in youth activities. Youth participants may also receive a range of other WIOA-funded financial, personal, academic, and career transition supports, such as tuition assistance, career counseling, and assistance with gaining work experience.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act): When awarding WIOA Title II grants to local adult education provid-

ers, states must consider whether supportive services (e.g., child care or transportation) are available to enable individuals to attend and complete programs. Due to limited funding under WIOA Title II, supportive services linked to these programs are often funded with other sources, such as through partnerships with local community-based organizations or community colleges. In addition, an increasing number of states and local providers are hiring “transition coordinators” to help students transition from basic skills courses to postsecondary education or training. Transition coordinators may help participants complete financial aid applications, navigate career choices, or connect to community resources or federal benefits for which they may be eligible. Though adult education students may also be enrolled in postsecondary institutions, instruction funded by Title II can only support coursework below the postsecondary level.

Pell Grants: Pell Grant recipients must: demonstrate financial need (as calculated using information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA); be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen; have a high school diploma or its equivalent or be a student in an eligible career pathway program and qualify through a test score, earning 6 college credits toward an academic award, or another state-specified process (or be an eligible home-schooled student); have resolved any issues related to drug convictions; not be in default on a federal student loan; make “satisfactory progress” in his or her academic program; and not have completed requirements for or earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. If any Pell Grant funds remain after the college applies this and other student aid to tuition and fees, the student gets a refund check and may use these funds to pay for books and supplies necessary for their programs, as well as room and board, child care, and transportation expenses. Students may experience delays in receiving aid due to FAFSA processing time requirements by the U.S. Department of Education and the postsecondary institution. Students may not receive Pell Grants for more than six academic years (prorated for part-time students). Some shorter vocational programs may not qualify for student aid. Practitioners should work with student aid administrators, college deans, and faculty to

maximize program eligibility for student aid, especially for career pathway programs.

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins CTE): Perkins CTE funds can be used for programs that include a broad range of personal, academic, and career transition supports, such as mentoring, the development of learning communities, academic advising, assistance with internships, and career development. However, the ability to provide direct assistance to individuals is strictly limited. Direct assistance is defined to include tuition, books, supplies, child care, dependent care, and transportation, and it may be provided only to members of special populations who are participating in CTE and require such assistance to address barriers to participation. Direct assistance must also be part of a larger set of strategies to meet the needs of special populations and must supplement, not supplant, assistance that is otherwise available from non-federal sources.⁵⁹

TRIO, Student Support Services (SSS): TRIO SSS is a competitive grant for which postsecondary institutions apply. Competitions for funding take place every five years. Therefore, unless an institution already receives the grant, it may be difficult to access funds. Most SSS programs serve only a small portion of the students who qualify. At each participating institution, the population served by SSS must be two-thirds low-income and first-generation students or students with disabilities. Among those who are disabled, one-third must be low income. To qualify, students must be U.S. citizens and be eligible for Pell Grants. Students who have unmet need after federal financial aid can receive grant aid through SSS or assistance accessing other financial resources. Funds are also used to meet living expenses for a subset of SSS students—those who are homeless, current foster youth, or foster youth who have aged out of the foster care system—to assist them in securing temporary housing during breaks.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): TANF is a highly flexible funding stream that can be used to support all types of support services. However, with limited exceptions, TANF funds may be spent only on benefits and services for members of low-income fami-

lies with children. Because of TANF’s flexibility, there are many competing demands for its use. Many states have adopted “work-first” approaches under TANF that emphasize immediate employment and provide limited support for recipients to attend school. A few states use TANF funds to support education and training-related services for members of low-income families with children regardless of whether they are receiving cash assistance; however, in most cases, services are only provided to families receiving assistance. For more information, see CLASP resources that highlight innovative state strategies for using TANF for education and training participants.⁶⁰

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): CSBG is a flexible block grant that can be used to provide a wide array of anti-poverty services to individuals with incomes below the poverty level (125 percent of poverty at state option). Funding is allocated to all 50 states and distributed through local grantees, typically Community Action Agencies (CAAs). The CAAs establish program priorities through a community needs assessment and use CSBG funds to address the causes and conditions of poverty in local communities. CSBG is often used to provide support services to participants in career pathway programs to help individuals and families reach self-sufficiency.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T): SNAP E&T provides employment-and-training-related services, including some support services, to individuals who are receiving food assistance through SNAP (Food Stamps) and are not receiving TANF cash assistance. SNAP E&T funds may not be used to remediate barriers to employment that would have qualified recipients for an exemption from work registration under SNAP. The SNAP E&T program may not be charged more for services than what is charged to the public or other programs for the same activities. Therefore, it may not be used to pay for activities that are otherwise available to students free of charge. However, it may be used to provide supplemental services that are not otherwise available to training participants who are receiving SNAP. For more information, see CLASP resources that highlight innovative

state strategies for using SNAP E&T for participants in education and training.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Funds from this flexible block grant are predominantly used for developing suitable, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families and for other economic development activities that improve communities. CDBG funds are allocated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to large cities, urban counties, and states. States, in turn, spend their funds in smaller communities. With few restrictions, grantees have significant flexibility in determining how CDBG funds will be used. Communities may spend no more than 15 percent of the grant on public services, including employment, child care, education, and welfare needs, which may include support services. Many communities spend much less on these activities.⁶¹ The only activities that grantees are expressly prohibited from using CDBG funds to support are overtly political activities and some cash payments.⁶² While funds cannot be allocated directly to individual participants, they could subsidize a program's cost, as long as the program meets eligibility and national objective requirements.