

# Building a Systemic Framework for Education and Workforce Development in Alaska

## Alaska Tech Prep Consortium

- Forty four school districts
- Twelve university campuses and Regional Training Centers
  - Business/industry
  - DOLWD, AKDEED

Alaska Tech Prep Consortium since 2004 has been providing the opportunity for high school students to:

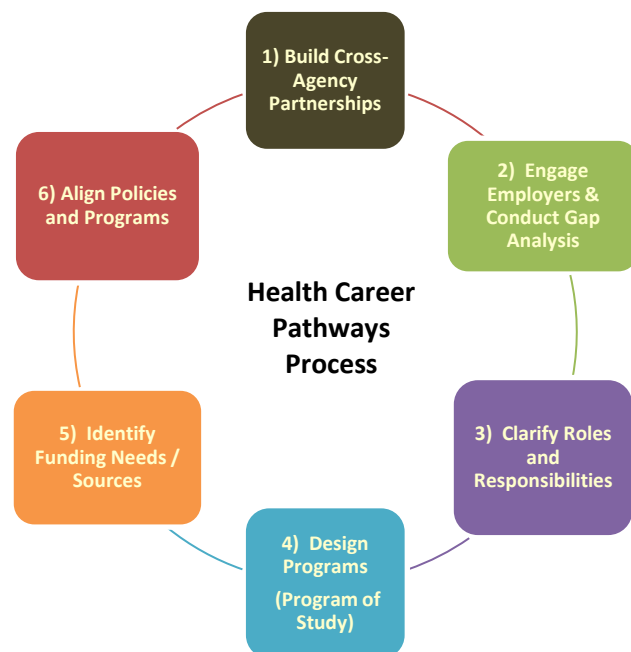
- **Earn college credit while they are still in high school** – over 35,000 college credits earned by students in high school since 2007 – through aligned curriculum.
- **Save money on college tuition** – over \$3.5 million in tuition savings since 2007 - with reduced tuition for college courses taught in the high school.
- **Reduce their need for remediation** and be better prepared for college and careers through rigorous course content.
- **Save time to completion** of a certificate, degree or industry credential with up to six college credits earned on their college transcript when they graduate high school.

## What are we proposing?

### A Systemic Framework

Alaska Tech Prep Consortium envisions a systemic change that will impact all students in Alaska through the implementation of the Career Pathways process.

**Career Pathways** is a nationally recognized and researched process that continues to provide students the opportunity to earn college credit in high school, save time and money and reduce their need for remediation **PLUS** engage business, industry and employers in meaningful conversation about the **skills and abilities** that potential job applicants should have to become successful employees. In addition, the connection between the employers and the education systems will better inform the development of curriculum to prepare students for entry into the workforce.



## Implementation June 2012

The creation and implementation of the **Health Career Pathway** in direct response to the Alaska Health Workforce Coalition (AHWC) Action Plan focus on Systems Change and Capacity Building priority to “Engage and prepare Alaskan youth for health careers”. The Career Pathway program specifically addresses the following objectives:

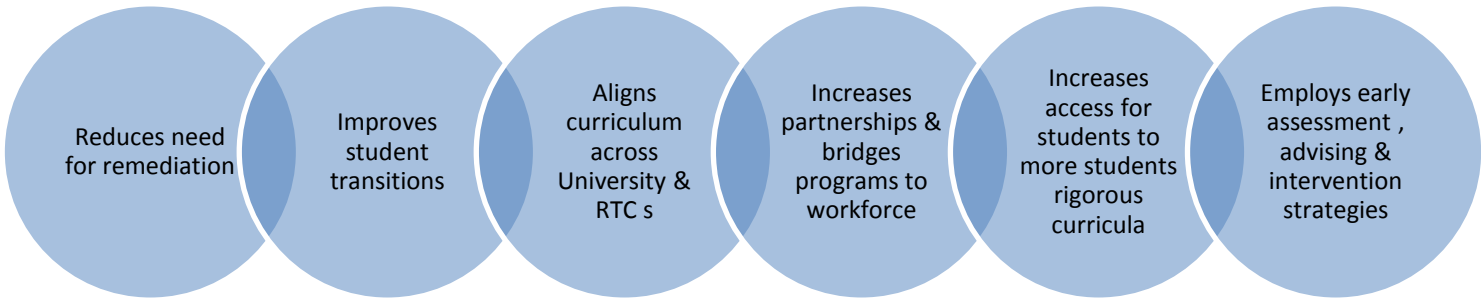
- Develop an integrated **Program of Study framework** with a focus on healthcare careers by June 2012.
- Implement the Health Program of Study in three local school districts beginning in fall 2012.

Already in a collaborative relationship, the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium and the AHWC will align secondary and post-secondary institution offerings closely with industry coalition member **skill** requirements. The program design leverages AHWC and Alaska Tech Prep to link education with local employer needs for a skilled workforce.

# A SOLUTION FOR SYSTEMIC COOPERATION:

**HIGHER EDUCATION & CAREER READINESS (HECR):** Our work directly aligns with the CTE Plan’s six strategies and HECR Report, strategies:

- 1.A** The Legislature should fund implementation of the Alaska Career & Technical Education (CTE) plan to improve statewide delivery of programs in career and technical training. *Rationale: The Alaska CTE plan addresses many of the problems identified by the Task Force. Plan strategies will improve student success starting in early grades along paths through secondary and higher education. CTE plan objectives aim at what students need to advance in school, graduate, be ready for work or postsecondary and college education and earn a degree.*
- 1.B** Schools, Districts and the University of Alaska should collaborate to either expand existing or create new bridging program similar to RAHI and reach deeper into the student pool to inspire students to perform better in high school and positively affect the perceptions of and preparations for attending postsecondary study.
- 1.D** The Task Force supports the objectives of the Alaska Performance Scholarship program relative to encouraging all students to challenge themselves academically and work hard in school. *Rationale: A robust, rigorous curriculum coupled with the financial incentives of the new Alaska Performance Scholarship serves to challenge students into setting high goals, working harder, and achieving academic success. It also serves to encourage school districts to meet the demand for these more rigorous curricula by offering more courses aligned to it.*
- 3.C** The University of Alaska Board of Regents and the state Board of Education are encouraged to collaborate in the use of skills assessment tools for students to gain a realistic appraisal of their existing skill level early on so they can prepare for college level work while still in high school. *Rationale: Standardized tests such as the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), the SAT, the ACT, WorkKeys, or ACCUPLACER, are assessment tools widely used by postsecondary institutions nationwide to help students identify their academic strengths and needs to assist in planning an appropriate schedule of coursework. Further, when a student enters college, that coursework is no longer free of charge. If we encourage students to make an assessment earlier, they can recognize their needs and take the appropriate coursework in high school, when it is still free for them.*



**STUDENT ACCESS TO CAREER PATHWAYS:** Applying the Career Pathways model will create a systemic framework for education and workforce development that is accessible to all students in Alaska.

**BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT:** This nationally-recognized Alaska-formatted framework establishes a process for meaningful conversation and engagement with employers to better match workforce skills.