

# Postsecondary Pathways

## Establishing a statewide definition of high-skill, high-demand, high-wage (H3) jobs for Workforce Pell; Connecting CTE expenditures to H3 occupations; implementing common course numbering, common general education, and corequisite remediation in Iowa's community colleges

The Iowa Department of Education's Postsecondary Pathways bill strengthens Iowa's community college system by establishing statewide consistency in course numbering, general education requirements, and remedial education delivery. These reforms will improve transparency, efficiency, and transferability for students while supporting clearer pathways between Iowa's community colleges and public universities.

### 1. Advancing Common Course Numbering & General Education Framework

**The Issue:** An informal community college common course numbering system has resulted in inconsistencies in course numbers, titles, and learning outcomes, creating barriers to seamless transfer.

**The Solution:** This legislation codifies a common course numbering system that will include:

- Consistent alphanumeric prefix, course numbers, and titles; and
- Common course descriptions and shared learning outcomes developed by faculty, while maintaining local control over instructional design and delivery.

This legislation also requires the Department, in consultation with the State Board and stakeholders, to conduct a comprehensive study on the systemic implementation considerations of statewide lower division general education framework and common course numbering systems across public institutions of higher education.

**Why It Matters:** A uniform community college common course numbering system will provide a strong foundation for the transfer of credits between community colleges and four-year postsecondary institutions and more transparency between institutions on course learning objectives. Periodic reviews led by the Department will ensure alignment with transfer requirements and workforce needs.

### 2. Scaling Community College Corequisite Remediation

**The Issue:** The prerequisite remedial education model, requiring completion of non-credit, remedial coursework prior to enrollment in credit-bearing coursework within a degree program, delays progress toward completion of a degree, increases cost of attendance for students, and reduces the likelihood of program completion.

**The Solution:** This legislation establishes a statewide definition of corequisite remedial coursework and requires community colleges to offer corequisite remedial coursework with integrated academic support in mathematics and English.

**Why It Matters:** The corequisite remedial coursework model accelerates time to completion and removes unnecessary barriers to degree completion. The model integrates academic support directly into credit-bearing coursework and ensures students earn college credit for courses they are paying for, while receiving the needed wraparound supports to be successful.

*Contact:*  
*Eric St Clair, Legislative Liaison*  
*Iowa Department of Education*  
[eric.stclair@iowa.gov](mailto:eric.stclair@iowa.gov)  
515-326-0274

### 3. Defining H3 and Aligning Regional Planning Partnership (RPP) expenditures

**The Issue:** Iowa does not currently use consistent statewide definitions to determine its high demand occupations. Statute currently does not require RPPs to expend allocated funds in a manner that achieves a strategic workforce outcome.

**The Solution:** This legislation develops a consistent, comprehensive statewide definition of high-demand, high-skill, and high-wage (H3) and requires that definition to be used across a variety of workforce and education programs. It also requires RPPs to plan, budget, and distribute funds to promote secondary CTE programs aligned to H3 careers.

**Why It Matters:** This legislation focuses limited state funding on those industries most in-demand, and most likely to yield high paying salaries for students.

### 4. Aligning to the National Career Cluster Framework

**The Issue:** Iowa's Career and Technical Education (CTE) service areas do not align with the current National Career Clusters Framework.

**The Solution:** This legislation aligns CTE service areas with the current National Career Clusters Framework.

**Why It Matters:** CTE programs use the National Career Clusters Framework to design coherent course sequences, ensure standards-based instruction, and communicate program purpose and outcomes consistently to students, families, employers, and policymakers.