

Governor Markell announces initiative to expand Pathways to Prosperity program

Program provides high school students with classroom instruction and college credit, industry certifications, and hands-on experience that prepares them for careers in high-growth fields

Wilmington, DE – Governor Markell visited [Agilent Technologies](#) today to sign Executive Order 61, which creates a permanent steering committee to coordinate the continued expansion of [Pathways to Prosperity](#), a statewide workforce development program that's helping to ensure that Delaware High School students graduate prepared for their next steps, whether in college, other education and training programs, or the workplace.

“The Pathways to Prosperity program is about ensuring our students are prepared to compete for the jobs of the future and it's critical to our efforts to achieve the Delaware Promise,” Governor Markell said. “I am thrilled to see the enthusiasm for this program among students, educators, and employers that has produced career opportunities for young people and contributed to our skilled workforce. The steering committee we've established will help build on that progress and ensure that more of our high school students have access to high quality professional development opportunities for years to come.”

The Pathways to Prosperity initiative was created by Governor Markell during the 2014-15 school year. Since its inception, the Department of Education, Department of Labor, Economic Development office, Delaware Technical Community College, Rodel Foundation, and many private-sector employers and non-

profit organizations have directly supported its work.

“Delaware Tech is a proud founding partner in the Pathways Initiative and is honored to help carry on the work of Governor Markell to prepare our youth for the workforce of tomorrow”, said Dr. Mark Brainard , President of Delaware Tech. Dr. Brainard will serve on the newly created Delaware Pathways to Prosperity steering committee.

The Delaware Pathways to Prosperity program provides students with classroom instruction and work based learning experiences in a professional field, allowing them to earn certifications recognized by employers and credits towards a college degree. Curriculums are developed in close collaboration with employers, ensuring the students learn the skills that are needed to excel in their chosen field. The program, which began with one Career Pathway and a few dozen students in three high schools, now exists in every high school in the state, with a total of ten Career Pathways from which schools can choose offerings for their students. [This fall, more than 5,000 students will participate.](#)

“Our district is fortunate to have great support within our community and area employers who are vital for us in expanding career pathway opportunities for students in high-demand occupations,” said Kevin Dickerson, Superintendent, Milford School District, “we appreciate the Governor’s leadership and the collaborative efforts behind Delaware Pathways, which has helped our district to fulfill one of our most essential responsibilities—to prepare all students to be college and career ready upon graduation.”

The program’s career pathways align with fields that are projected to have a high potential for growth in the future. These currently include Manufacturing Logistics and Production, Biomedical Science, Engineering, Engineering Technology, Computer Networking and Programming, Finance, Healthcare, and Culinary & Hospitality Management. New

pathways in Nursing, Education, and Environmental Science will be available in some schools starting this upcoming school year. Students who participate in the program are also given the opportunity to participate in an internship with Delaware companies that are associated with their chosen field.

“The Appoquinimink School District is working hard to build partnerships with local businesses, colleges, and universities to ensure students can participate in work-based learning opportunities, dual-enrollment coursework, and earn industry-recognized certifications that lead to high-demand career fields,” said Mike Trego, Coordinator of Career and Technical Education, Appoquinimink School District, “our business partners are able to interact in a number of ways with our students, including industry sponsored projects, worksite visits, job shadowing, and internships.”

The Governor proposed the Pathways program as an important part of achieving the Delaware Promise – a commitment made by Governor Markell and supported by the General Assembly to ensure that by 2025, 65 percent of Delaware’s workforce will have earned a college degree or professional certificate – matching the same percentage of jobs that will require one.

Agilent Technologies, a global leader in life sciences, diagnostics and applied chemical markets with a facility in Northern New Castle County, was one of the first companies to participate in the program, accepting interns from the Manufacturing Pathway. Three Pathways interns currently work at Agilent this summer and the company recently hired a previous Pathways intern who has since graduated from High School as a full time employee.

“I would like to thank all of the people who recognized early on the potential impact of this program and whose efforts have contributed to its success, including President Brainard and the staff at Delaware Tech, Gary Stockbridge with the Workforce Development Board, members of my cabinet and their

staff, Paul Herdman and the staff at Rodel, members of our business community, and so many others,” said Markell.

Executive Order 61 calls for the creation of a 14 member steering committee in charge of setting the long term direction of the program. The steering committee will help to develop and approve new pathways, improve existing pathways, and set long term performance goals.

Text of Executive Order 61

TO: HEADS OF ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

RE: ESTABLISHING A DELAWARE PATHWAYS STEERING COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, in 2015, Governor Markell established the Delaware Promise, a commitment that the state will combine education and workforce efforts to provide opportunities for our students as they prepare to enter and advance in a career;

WHEREAS, Governor Markell’s administration has established “Delaware Pathways”, a collaborative workforce development partnership which will create a fluid relationship between our public education system, post-secondary education, non-profit, and employer communities to ensure that the pathway to college and a well-paying job is accessible for every Delawarean, and to help the state fulfill the “Delaware Promise” of ensuring that 65% of our workforce earns a college degree or professional certificate by 2025, and that all of our students graduate high school;

WHEREAS, a Steering Committee is necessary to ensure that the program’s long term sustainability and adaptation proceeds in a manner that aligns its offerings to the needs of the workforce and to the students and parents who participate, along with ensuring that the budgetary priorities of the program are identified and outlined in a transparent and collaborative manner;

WHEREAS, we must work to continue to expand access to these programs in order to provide Delaware students with the opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential, early college credit, and relevant work experience in high-demand fields in our state and regional economies.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JACK A. MARKELL, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Delaware, do hereby declare and order the following:

1. The Delaware Pathways Steering Committee (“Steering Committee”) is hereby established to set the strategic direction of the Delaware Pathways work and provide recommendations for future development and growth of the program, and ensure that program offerings are properly aligned with current and expected employer demand.

2. The Steering Committee shall consist of 14 members as follows:

- a. The Secretary of the Department of Education.
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Labor.
- c. The Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services.
- d. The Director of Economic Development Office.
- e. Chair of the Delaware Workforce Development Board.
- f. The President of the Delaware State Board of Education.
- g. The President of Delaware Technical Community College.
- h. One superintendent of a public school district appointed by the Governor.
- i. One superintendent of a vocational technical school district appointed by the Governor.
- j. Two business representatives appointed by the Governor.
- k. Three members of community or non-profit organizations appointed by the Governor.

3. Members serving by virtue of position may appoint, in writing and in advance of a particular scheduled meeting or on a permanent basis, a designee to serve in their stead and at

their pleasure. Members appointed by the Governor shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

4. The Steering Committee shall, at least annually, and no later than January 15th of each calendar year perform at least the following:

a. Advise the Governor on the priorities, policy issues, and specific plans for the ongoing implementation of Delaware Pathways.

b. Review the policies of existing statewide programs and funding streams to make recommendations and take actions that align education, higher education, and workforce development programs in the state.

c. Provide guidance and leadership to agency staff involved in implementing this work for the development, expansion, and improvement of Delaware Pathways.

d. Set and track annual goals for Delaware Pathways.

e. Assist in convening stakeholders and increasing participation in Delaware Pathways programs throughout the state.

5. The Governor shall designate from the members one Chairperson of the Steering Committee. The chairperson will be appointed biennially.

6. Members appointed to the Steering Committee shall serve renewable terms of 2 years, except in the case of public employees who are not school district superintendents and who are continuing in the same designated position, and in the case of initial appointment terms, which shall be either one or two years.

7. The initial appointment terms of non-public employees and school district superintendents shall be either one or two years, such that three of the appointed non-public or school district superintendents shall serve a one year term, and the other four shall serve a two year term. The terms of each individual appointment shall be at the discretion of the

Governor, but after the initial term is served the position shall be for a renewable term of 2 years.

8. The Steering Committee shall meet at the call of the Chairperson, but not less than semiannually.

9. Any vacancy occurring in the appointed membership must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

10. Administrative support shall be provided by the Department of Education.

11. Nothing in this Order is to be construed to create a private right of action to enforce its terms.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.