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STUDENT UPWARD MOBILITY INITIATIVE

Student Upward Mobility Initiative Request for Proposals

August 2025 (Updated)

The Opportunity in Brief

The Student Upward Mobility Initiative (SUMI) seeks studies that identify and measure the skills and competencies in late high school (grades 11–12) that propel students into economic mobility and the ways in which skill development and access to opportunity in early high school and middle school shape those trajectories. We expect to award $3 million in grants up to 24 months in length, ranging from $50,000 to $500,000, with most projects falling below $350,000. We especially prize innovative, audacious projects that make creative use of novel data sources and study designs to make frame-breaking advances in what we know about the drivers of mobility and how we can measure them. Applicants must submit mandatory letters of inquiry by Friday, October 10, at 5:00 p.m. ET. Those invited to submit full proposals must do so by Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET.

SUMI works to support students' economic mobility by identifying the PK–12 skills and competencies across the categories of academic achievement; cognitive, social, and emotional skills; health and well-being; social capital; and career preparation that drive long-term success, especially for those from backgrounds of economic disadvantage.[1] This request for proposals (RFP), which builds on our first, represents an additional step toward our long-term vision of equipping education policymakers and practitioners with a short list of key mobility drivers and measures of them around which to design systems and structures and better understand the role of short- and long-term benefits of earlier skill development.

This RFP: Developing and Measuring Skills High School Students Need for Success

SUMI aims to deepen our collective understanding of the skills that matter most for long-term economic mobility and how and when students—especially those growing up in or near poverty—develop them. Within this broader agenda, high school represents a critical, but often underleveraged, inflection point. This RFP focuses on the later years of high school—not because they are the only years that matter but because they offer a strategic vantage point to assess whether earlier skill development has translated into real opportunity and whether system design is reinforcing or disrupting inequities.

Today, students leave high school with vastly different skill sets. As a result and in combination with the dynamic interaction between skills and post–high school opportunities, students face unequal chances of achieving economic security. Yet education policymakers and practitioners lack clarity on what specific skills matter most, when and how they're best cultivated, and how system-level decisions affect students' ability to access and build those skills.

[1] In the past, we referred to cognitive, social, and emotional skills as "noncognitive skills." Our shift in terminology reflects widespread debate in the field about the best way to characterize these skills and is not meant to signal a substantive change. Other similar terms include durable skills, character skills, and soft skills.

BOX 1

What We Mean by Skills and Competencies

SUMI focuses on skills and competencies (as opposed to experiences and credentials) as potential drivers of economic mobility because our primary aim is to identify what policymakers, educators, and researchers should target or track if their goal is to increase upward mobility. For example, if we better understand which math skills or which higher-order skills students most need to achieve upward mobility, the field can then work to understand which types of instruction or interventions best teach those skills.

Existing metrics—such as high school graduation, dual enrollment participation, and career and technical education pathway completion—are widely used to signal college and career readiness. But these indicators serve as proxies: they measure credentials or experiences, not the actual underlying skills students acquire (e.g., critical thinking skills, academic subject–specific skills, and persistence). Even metrics like AP and IB (Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate) completion and performance, which are linked to positive long-term outcomes, are blunt instruments if the goal is understanding students' attainment of key skills—or rather, what competencies are specifically driving the long-term outcomes.[2]

SUMI aims to move beyond proxies by identifying skill-based measures that are both meaningful and actionable. These measures can be particularly powerful when conceptualized and analyzed in relation to contextual and structural factors—such as access to high-quality instruction, supportive environments, and cross-system alignment—as seen in tools like the Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework.

Although the focus of this RFP is on late high school, we welcome proposals that examine how experiences earlier in high school or even in middle school influence skill development and opportunity in later years. We view late high school as a culminating point in a broader trajectory—one that is shaped by cumulative access to opportunity and prior investment in skill building.

This RFP and the work we fund are important steps to ensure SUMI's work supports broader efforts to ensure that more students, particularly those furthest from mobility, leave high school ready to thrive in the next stage of life. In short, this RFP seeks to generate insights and anchors that will support high school redesign, career-connected learning, and competency-based education efforts and provide them with the information they need to make evidence-based, strategic choices to ensure students leave high school ready to succeed by improving programming, policy, interventions, and investments.[3]

We invite projects that help the education-to-upward-mobility field answer big-picture questions:

- What skills and competencies do high schoolers need to be on track for upward mobility?
- Which skills are necessary for all mobility-boosting next steps out of high school, and which are key for specific next steps in college, career, and the military (e.g., entry into mobility-boosting colleges, into postsecondary training opportunities, and directly into mobility-boosting careers)?

[2] Most AP and IB performance measures do not provide subscore details that would theoretically be more indicative of skills.

[3] For example, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Utah are working to operationalize competency-based education; the XQ Institute and New Schools are investing in redesigned schools focused on personalized learning; and Skills for the Future and America Succeeds are working to expand measurement and teaching of "noncognitive" or "durable" skills.

- Which skills develop during middle school and show continued development in high school? What mechanisms drive that improvement, especially for students close to poverty? How do skill development timelines and trajectories vary by student characteristics and why?
- How do course-taking patterns (e.g., tracking, pathways, disenrollment at common attrition points in early high school) factor into all the above?
- How do school structures and access, such as options for advanced coursework, tutoring, and career-connected learning, solidify skill development?

Two Proposal Tracks

We invite projects that support these areas of inquiry across two tracks: (1) developing better measures of likely mobility drivers and (2) identifying and validating mobility drivers. Hybrid projects are permitted.

TRACK 1: DEVELOPING BETTER MEASURES OF LIKELY MOBILITY DRIVERS

In the measure development track, we are especially interested in scalable measures of skills and competencies in key categories that educators, communities, and employers have elevated as particularly important for students' later economic mobility. We encourage the development or repurposing of measures that are readily available in state or local education agency (SEA or LEA) administrative records, as well as those that could easily be implemented by SEAs or LEAs.

Namely, we request projects that do one or both of the following:

- Develop improved measures of cognitive, social, and emotional skills; social capital; and career preparedness skills and competencies[4] needed in the middle-to-high-school transition, in high school, and beyond, ideally demonstrating how they perform (e.g., content alignment and validity and reliability) compared with existing measures that are not widely used in schools, especially for economically disadvantaged populations, or in terms of implementation burden for schools.
- Use classroom technologies and assessment platforms commonly used in middle or high school or other existing data (e.g., administrative records) as measurement data sources for new or improved constructs.

TRACK 2: IDENTIFYING AND VALIDATING MOBILITY DRIVERS

For our second track, we apply a tighter focus on high school and focus on a slightly different subset of potential mobility drivers.

We are looking for projects that do one or both of the following:

- Link high school skills and competencies in the categories of cognitive, social, and emotional skills; social capital; and/or academic achievement subskills[4] to adult mobility outcomes.
- Examine the role and relative weight of contextual and structural factors (e.g., variability in number of options available in rural versus urban schools; school tracking and ability grouping practices) in explaining long-term outcomes in comparison or in addition to individual skills.

Strong track 2 proposals may also take one or more of the following methodological approaches:

- Link middle school and early high school skills and competencies to late high school and long-term outcomes to examine skill development (including knowledge acquisition) trajectories from middle to high school or some portion of that time.
- Investigate clusters of skills and competencies, especially across the academic and cognitive, social, and emotional categories, to cast light on how they relate to mobility outcomes independently and interactively.

[4] See a list of priority skills and competencies in these categories in the appendix.

- Use credible experimental, quasi-experimental, or other study designs that help us understand the causal effects of skills and competencies on adult outcomes and the mechanisms of their effects, thereby more credibly validating whether those skills or competencies are mobility drivers or not.

Program or intervention impact evaluations are eligible as long as they align with SUMI's focus on the skills and competencies that drive upward mobility. These studies may also shed light on whether program or intervention status outcomes are strong proxies for skills and competencies and vice versa.

Projects across both tracks are expected to consider sources of variation and individuals in context, including how outcomes differ by school and environmental characteristics in addition to race, gender, economic background, and any other factors. Strong proposals will explore, conceptually and empirically, why and how much contextual factors matter.

BOX 2

What We Mean by Upward Mobility

We are interested in understanding how PK–12 skills and competencies relate to long-term success, with a focus on students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Although adults' wages are the most widely available data to measure economic status and upward mobility, economic mobility is not defined solely by income and wealth. We are interested in a broader conception of mobility.

	Definition according to the Upward Mobility Framework	Example operationalization from current grantees
Economic success	When a person has adequate income and assets to support their and their family's material well-being	Unemployment insurance wage records, Internal Revenue Service income records, credit bureau data about family income estimates and debt, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families records See also minimum economic return, economic mobility, economic security, food security, and access to jobs paying a living wage in the Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework for examples of other relevant indicators
Power and autonomy	When a person can have control over their life, make choices, and influence larger policies and actions that affect their future	Health insurance coverage See also health insurance coverage in the Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework for examples of other relevant indicators
Dignity and belonging	When a person feels the respect, dignity, and sense of belonging that comes from contributing to and being appreciated by people in their community	Voting records See also civic engagement in the Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework for examples of other relevant indicators

We are eager to hear about ways these definitions can be operationalized and improved so that, over time, we can agree upon and have data to better understand adult measures of economic success, power and autonomy, and dignity and belonging. We prefer studies that measure mobility in adulthood directly, but we are open to studies that use earlier proxies (e.g., attending or graduating from colleges shown to increase economic mobility) in cases where the potential mobility outcome is especially compelling and a direct link to mobility data is not possible. We also ask grantees to define economic mobility in their proposals. For instance, some of our current cohort use wages at ages 25 and 30, others use growth from parental income, and some use a combination of increases in income and ability to meet basic needs.

Principles

The Student Upward Mobility Initiative will create a community of grantees whose projects are oriented around these principles:

- **Alignment with the initiative**. Research should deepen our understanding of the skills and competencies students develop during PK–12 education that drive economic mobility, especially for students from low-income families, and how to measure those skills. Doing this well will mean considering how structural and other contextual factors affect our core focus on the validation and measurement of skill and competency mobility drivers.
- **Feasibility and rigor.** All projects will have access to data, a capable team, realistic plans, and clear strategies to address project challenges and must adhere to field best practices and be able to withstand peer review. Letters of support or data agreements are expected at the full proposal stage. Projects that involve development or refinement of measures should apply the highest professional standards for evaluating validity, reliability, and fairness.
- **Ingenuity.** We seek bold, field-advancing projects that ask novel research questions and make use of innovative measures, data, and technology (e.g., artificial intelligence) to advance what we know about the PK–12 skills and competencies that drive mobility.
- **Actionability.** We want research that can be scaled quickly (e.g., by using existing district- or state-collected data), is generalizable to broader contexts, and consensus can be built around. Research-practice partnerships or teams that can partner with districts that have detailed formative assessment data or novel assessments might also be at an advantage.
- **Field building.** To broaden and strengthen the field of education-to-economic-mobility research, we seek proposals representing different perspectives and experiences (e.g., place, discipline).

Application Materials

Eligible applicants should submit materials to the SUMI application site by the deadlines outlined below. The SUMI team will review each letter of inquiry to understand the project, determine how it fits within the initiative's goals and principles, and assess the likelihood of success. Invited full proposals will be evaluated by the SUMI team and external reviewers on more thorough explanations of the project, with different length requirements for small and large budget categories.

Would you like a quick reaction to your project idea before applying? Please send a one-paragraph idea via this form by Friday, September 19, 2025, and we will provide you a bit of guidance. The earlier you submit this idea, the longer you will have to use our feedback to inform your letter of inquiry.

The tables below outline the required content for the letters of inquiry and full proposals. Gray-shaded rows indicate uploads or other details teams will enter within the application itself. Unshaded rows indicate the sections (and suggested section lengths) of one document that teams will compile and upload. Please label each section within your proposals.

Mandatory Letter of Inquiry: Open Call, Due Friday, October 10, 2025, 5:00 p.m. ET

Section	Information needed	Format / suggested length
Administrative details	Primary contact information Organization name and organization's minority-serving institution status[a] (if institution of higher education) Primary track: Measure development (track 1), identifying and validating drivers (track 2), or hybrid (tracks 1 and 2) Primary skill or competency of interest (multiple if cluster) Primary age range of skill or competency Primary mobility outcome for track 2 and hybrid Geographic area for sample Small or large budget category, amount, and brief explanation of costs Grant duration Disclosure of connections to advisory council and SUMI team Project name	Within form
Letter of inquiry: firm 3-page limit, single spaced		
Project summary	Describe your project, research questions, and methodology.	1 ½ pages
Individuals in context	How will you engage with structural and system conditions in your research, from study conceptualization and articulation of theory to study design and analysis plan and meaning making?	½ page
Benefit to field	If you are successful, what will you have learned, and how will the field benefit?	½ page
Risks to success	Present major obstacles to the success of your project and any planned and active efforts to mitigate those risks. Describe availability of data you will use.	½ page

[a] See "Lists of Postsecondary Institutions Enrolling Populations with Significant Percentages of Undergraduate Minority Students," US Department of Education, https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html.
[b] We define the research team as all significant contributors on the project (i.e., individuals contributing to the scientific development or execution of the project and whose time is covered in the budget).

Full Proposal: Invite Only, Due Tuesday, January 6, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET

Section	Information needed	Format / suggested length
Administrative details	Organization's legal name Employer identification number Mailing address W-9 Authorized signatory contact information Grant management contact information (for banking info)	Within form and upload
Abstract	Briefly describe the project (one paragraph)	Within form
Drivers and outcomes	Primary skill or competency of interest (multiple if cluster) Primary mobility outcome for track 2 and hybrid	Within form
Budget	Template will be provided	Upload
Budget narrative	Describe each person's role and contribution, time on the project, and any other applicable costs	Upload
Timeline	Outlines milestones and quarterly goals throughout the project; integrates grantee expectations	Upload
Grantee expectations	Agreement with grantee expectations	Within form
Lobbying	Agreement that project will not include any lobbying	Within form
Personally identifiable information disclosure	Agreement that team will not share any personally identifiable information with SUMI or Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors	Within form
Human subjects	Will your research necessitate institutional review board approval?	Within form
CVs	Upload for key personnel	Within form
Data access plan	Data use agreements or letters of support; clear documentation on access to data, including any costs, timelines, and expectations to get data access	Within form
Sample	For correlational or causal projects, include a table outlining the years of data you will use, the grades associated with the school-level data, and the ages associated with outcome data. This table should include approximate sample sizes.	Within form
Subaward letters	Mandatory if any subawards, outlining role and commitments	Within form
Full proposal (small): firm 6-page limit, single spaced; full proposal (large): firm 11-page limit, single spaced		
Project description	Clear description of the project, research questions, data, and population to be studied	Small: 2 pages Large: 4 pages

Section	Information needed	Format / suggested length
Benefit to field	State what we will learn from this study, demonstrate your contribution to the extant literature and alignment with the initiative, and explain how this project will move the field forward	Small: ½ page Large: 1 page
Individuals in context	Explain how contextual variables will be treated in your analysis plan (e.g., as mediators or moderators) and why (based on theory or empirical findings).	Small or large: ½ page
Methods	*Measurement only*: Describe the purpose, setting, process, and feasibility of data collection; outline how you will collect validity evidence, including estimates of measurement error; how will the context and methods support generalizability of scores; who is your sample; how will the measures be robust to practices that could lead to gaming and inflating scores; provide examples of existing or proposed items, rubrics, or protocols *Correlational or causal only*: Describe your methods and how the data support them; describe how your findings will be robust and address any validity concerns; describe sample and setting; provide power estimates if relevant; please include a table (can be an appendix) outlining the years of data you will use, the grades associated with the school-level data, and the ages associated with outcome data. This table should include approximate sample sizes; be clear about how you will operationalize key variables and measures and contextual factors *All*: How will you study structural and system conditions in your research, from study conceptualization, articulation of theory, study design and analysis plan, and meaning making?	Small: 1 ½ pages Large: 3 pages
Feasibility	Describe how the team, budget, and timeline will make this project a success; describe experience as it relates to this project (professional and lived)	Small: ½ page Large: 1 page
Risks to success	Describe major obstacles to the success of your project and any planned efforts to mitigate those risks, including limitations of scaling your work	Small or large: ½ page
Audiences and products	Who are the audiences who should hear about your work, and how will you reach them? Outline how you will publish this work (e.g., working papers, policy reports, presentations) or share it with the broader field beyond the grantee expectations	Small or large: ½ page

Key Dates

September 3 and 9: Informational webinars and Q&A sessions

September 19: Last day to request feedback on a one-paragraph project idea

October 10: Mandatory letters of inquiry due at 5:00 p.m. ET

November 11: Finalists invited to submit a full proposal

January 6: Full proposals due at 5:00 p.m. ET

February 9: Award notifications sent

March 1: Projects begin

Budget Guidance

The Student Upward Mobility Initiative expects to fund up to $3 million in grants up to 24 months in length, ranging from $50,000 to $500,000, with most projects falling below $350,000. Teams should request the amount of funding they need to complete their proposed research projects, including direct and indirect costs for the duration of the grant. Budget size should correspond to the project's likely impact and proposed activities.

The application requirements for final proposals will be based on whether budgets fall into the small grant or large grant grouping, as outlined below. We provide example budget types but emphasize that teams should propose budgets aligned with their project's activities and outputs. SUMI and teams may request reasonable modifications to the budget between the letter of inquiry and full application.

- **Small grants, $50,000 to $150,000**: Projects that use existing data with minimal novel or high-cost cross-system matching and linkages, are pilot-testing measures, or are conducting long-term follow-ups of earlier studies with new administrative data
- **Large grants, $150,001 to $500,000**: Projects that collect original data, are newly linking administrative data across domains, or paying for costly previously matched data or computing costs

Supported Activities

SUMI funds may be used to support a range of research activities for up to 24 months, including research planning, sample recruitment, data collection, data purchase or storage costs, focus groups or interviews, data analysis, writing research, and external communications. Funds may be used for project management and partnership activities if they are necessary for project success and are reasonable. Travel costs for project activities or dissemination can be proposed. Grant funds may not be used to develop or implement programs or interventions.

Mandatory Travel

Please add a separate line item for sufficient travel costs to your budget to support one project team member to participate in DC-based SUMI convenings in 2026 and 2027. These convenings will last no more than two days, and meals during the convening times will be covered.

Indirect Costs

SUMI accepts indirect costs up to 15 percent of the direct project costs.

Budget Format

For the letter of inquiry, teams should propose total costs (including indirect costs), rounded to the nearest $5,000. Teams should briefly name the included costs (e.g., principal investigator two-course releases, one graduate research assistant, and $10,000 for data purchases and storage costs, indirect at 15 percent).

SUMI will provide a budget template and instructions to applicants invited to submit a full proposal. Applicants will also need to provide a complete budget narrative. SUMI and teams may request reasonable modifications to the budget between the letter of inquiry and full application.

Eligibility

Teams should be led by principal investigators with experience conducting research and an affiliation with an eligible nonprofit organization, such as an academic institution, public entity, or state or local government agency. All organizations must be based in the United States or its territories. We do not award grants to individuals.

FAQs

Please see our FAQ page, which will be updated weekly if answers are added during the application period.

Grantee Expectations

To receive funding, grantees will enter into agreements with Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, the fiscal sponsor for the Student Upward Mobility Initiative. As part of that agreement, grantees will be required to do the following:

- agree to or negotiate grant terms, including intellectual property and attribution clauses
- provide banking information through the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors portal and over the phone in a timely manner
- obtain institutional review board approval from their institution (if required) before beginning work
- adhere to their field's best practices in research design, methods, and integrity
- publish findings in a working paper or policymaker-oriented publication (regardless of what they show)
- participate in an annual in-person SUMI convening
- grant reporting:
    - 30 to 45 days after grant execution: Progress update meeting with SUMI
    - Biannually: Present work and engage with the grantee community in the biannual virtual community of practice; financial reports
    - Biannually: Progress update meeting with SUMI
    - End of project: Work with SUMI to develop communication products that convey your project and its findings to broader audiences; financial report

About Our Funding

The Student Upward Mobility Initiative is currently funded by the Walton Family Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and the Overdeck Family Foundation. We are grateful to them and to all our funders, who make it possible for Urban to advance its mission. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders. Funders do not determine research findings or the insights and recommendations of Urban experts.

Further information on the Urban Institute's funding principles is available at urban.org/fundingprinciples.

About the Urban Institute

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit research organization founded on one simple idea: To improve lives and strengthen communities, we need practices and policies that work. For more than 50 years, that has been our charge. By equipping changemakers with evidence and solutions, together we can create a future where every person and community has the opportunity and power to thrive.

Appendix

Work to Date

SUMI launched publicly in 2024 with a call for research proposals to identify and validate drivers of economic mobility. We received 115 letters of inquiry and, after a rigorous process, awarded $3.4 million to 16 innovative projects spanning the disciplines of education, economics, sociology, and psychology.

As part of our broader efforts to build out the field of education-to-economic-mobility research, we have engaged an advisory council of leading researchers and policy experts, adjusted our strategy based on insights from people closest to intergenerational poverty, developed field resources on the topic, refined our strategy for building data assets, broadcasted field insights through our blog, and held our first research conference in March 2025. We also continue to engage with policymakers, practitioners, and field leaders to ensure the usefulness of our research, including through our partnership with the National Governors Association's Let's Get Ready initiative.

Our Partnership with the National Governors Association

Ensuring high-quality education is part of a state's commitment to a robust economy, thriving communities, and civic well-being. The National Governors Association, chaired by Colorado Governor Jared Polis, launched the Let's Get Ready initiative to help states take up this charge. Given our work to identify the PK–12 skills and competencies that drive long-term economic success and mobility, SUMI was invited to play a strategic role supporting the initiative, specifically focused on identifying what skills students need at the end of high school to be prepared for success.

- **50-state scan with All4Ed**: We analyzed how states currently define and measure college and career readiness in their accountability systems.
- **Evidence review**: We assessed which of these measures are most strongly linked to long-term economic and life outcomes.
- **State Student Readiness Index**: We proposed a comprehensive, evidence-based set of indicators that states can use to

    - guide budgeting and planning;
    - align education, workforce, and economic development systems; and
    - evaluate how investments affect students' adult success.

Our recommendations include both immediate steps states can take to improve readiness measurement and a long-term road map for integrating new skill and competency indicators developed through SUMI. These insights are now part of the broader Let's Get Ready playbook, offering governors actionable strategies across the PK–12 continuum. Our close collaboration with the National Governors Association has underscored the unique value SUMI brings: providing policymakers with clear, evidence-based measures of student readiness. The collaboration has also deepened our understanding of state leaders' priorities and challenges—insights that will shape SUMI's future research, partnerships, and investment strategies.

Resources for Measure Development Projects

- American Educational Research Association, *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014).
- Andrew Ho, "Towards Assessment Literacy: Questions to Ask about Educational Tests" (2023).
- Angela L. Duckworth and David Scott Yeager, "Measurement Matters: Assessing Personal Qualities Other Than Cognitive Ability for Educational Purposes" (2015).

Priority Mobility Drivers

The following is a noncomprehensive list of the mobility drivers SUMI is prioritizing in its second RFP. The list was informed by multiple inputs: (1) what educators, communities, and employers say are the skills and

competencies that drive long-term success and upward mobility; (2) the subset of those skills and competencies that are generally within the control of PK–12 schools; (3) the gaps in the literature validating those skills and competencies as drivers (inclusive of emerging work from our first cohort of grantees); and (4) the gaps in what we know about how to measure those drivers, particularly informed by the emerging and evolving indicators from the Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework.

Given the fuzzy boundaries between these categories and the fact that skills can be hard to definitively place in one versus the other, we are not sticklers about what goes where. Instead, we think of the categories as a useful organizational tool as we think about our grantmaking and the field's development more broadly.

Academic Skills and Competencies: Academic subject–specific knowledge and abilities	
Core subject subskills	Performance on subcomponents of subject-specific assessments (formative, summative, SAT and ACT, AP or IB) in math, language arts, science, civics, and other subjects.
Career preparation skills and competencies: Knowledge and abilities related to seeking out, acquiring, and performing the technical requirements of a job or career	
Digital skills	Digital information literacy; ability to engage with commonly used digital tools, platforms, and artificial intelligence, and other technology required for workforce success.
Entrepreneurial skills	Ability to act on opportunities and ideas and transform them into value for others.
Job and career exploration skills	Writing a résumé and cover letter, conducting a job search, awareness of career options and paths, interview skills, etiquette and ethics.
Job knowledge	Awareness of job and career options and paths.
Technical skills	Specialized ability related to a specific job or field (e.g., coding or plumbing).
Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Skills and Competencies: Abilities related to how people think, feel, behave, and perform intellectual tasks that support people's school, work, and community lives	
Learning and "higher-order" skills	Cognitive abilities, including complex reasoning, critical thinking, creative thinking, memory, executive functioning, speed, and metacognition.
Mindsets	Belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort; beliefs students hold about themselves, their abilities, and the learning process that influence their academic behavior and performance.
Relationship skills	Ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacity to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed (adapted from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, or CASEL).
Responsible decisionmaking	Ability to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacity to consider ethical standards and safety concerns and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being (CASEL).

Self-awareness and identify development	Ability to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and possible futures and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacity to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose (CASEL).
Self-management	Ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacity to delay gratification, manage stress, feel motivation and agency, and demonstrate self-control and resilience to accomplish personal and collective goals (CASEL).
Social awareness	Ability to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts. This includes the capacity to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports (CASEL).
Social Capital Skills and Competencies: Skills and competencies related to building and using one's social network and the various kinds of support contained within them	
Career-connected network-building skills	Seeking and acquiring durable connections through the completion of internships, apprenticeships, and other career-connected learning
Network mobilization skills	Ability to tap into one's network to gather informational, material, emotional, and esteem support
Overcoming help-seeking aversion	The mindsets and confidence to seek out help and support (i.e., to build and mobilize a network)
Social capital literacy	An understanding of what social capital is, how it operates as an engine of opportunity in our society, and how to build it