Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework
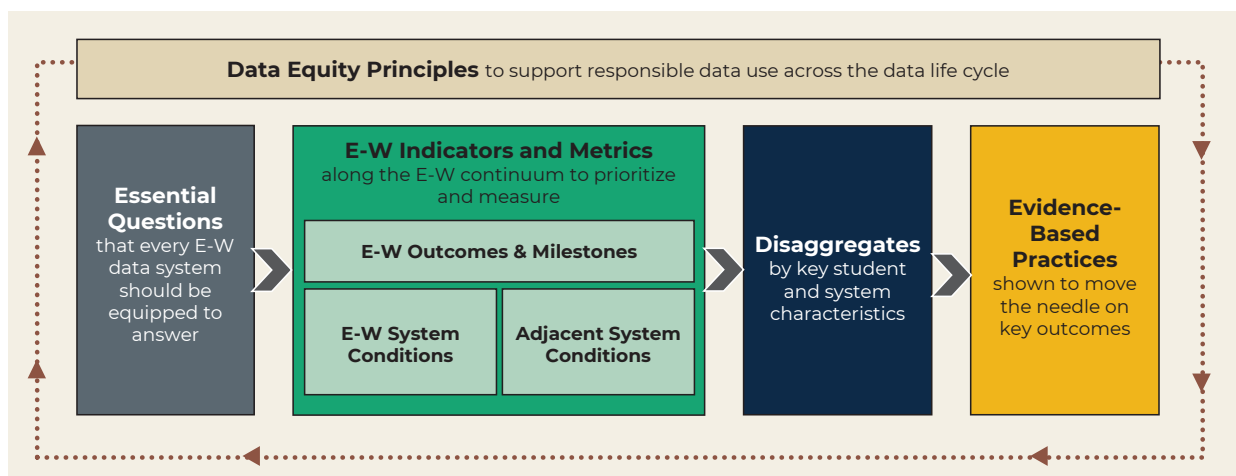
Student Pathways

The **Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework (E-W Framework)** is designed to promote data collection and use to advance educational and economic opportunity for all. The framework offers guidance for ethical and effective data use, essential questions and data that matter most, ways to disaggregate data to inform action, and evidence-based practices to drive positive change.

This **supplemental resource** explores **student pathways** to success and how education and workforce systems can support the journey.

Data Equity Principles to support responsible data use across the data life cycle

Essential Questions that every E-W data system should be equipped to answer

E-W Indicators and Metrics along the E-W continuum to prioritize and measure

E-W Outcomes & Milestones

E-W System Conditions

Adjacent System Conditions

Disaggregates by key student and system characteristics

Evidence-Based Practices shown to move the needle on key outcomes

Student Pathways

The E-W Framework values and embraces **multiple pathways to success**, recommending indicators that capture diverse experiences and reflecting the reality that—especially in high school and beyond—individuals can take varied and indirect pathways to achieve economic mobility and security. The pages that follow offer two sample student pathways that help illustrate multiple paths through education and into the workforce, along with the choices each student makes on their journey. Kiara and Javier take different paths, have different educational experiences, and choose different professions. Ultimately, both students are successful in obtaining a job that offers fair pay and benefits, opportunities for advancement, and support to continue developing their career skills. The graphics show the paths Kiara and Javier chose as well as potential alternatives, offering insight into how paths can overlap and include points of entry and re-entry into education systems, such as leaving school to work then re-enrolling later.

> Each student's journey is unique, and the paths taken through education and into the workforce are increasingly varied. There is no one "correct" path; rather, there are many pathways toward success and a meaningful life.
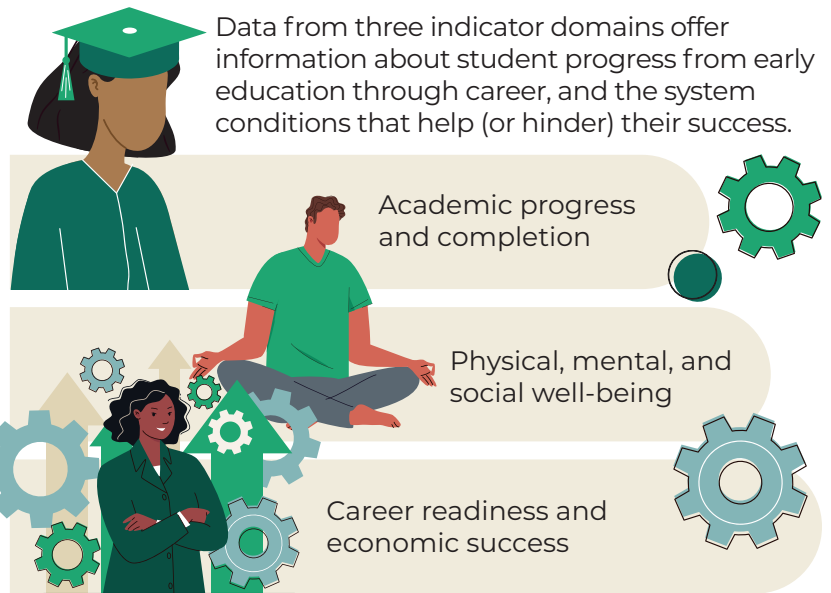
To help students succeed, education and workforce organizations need to understand how students progress from early education through their career. The E-W Framework recommends indicators for this purpose and highlights connections needed between systems to support students as they transition along their journey, regardless of the pathway they take.

E-W Framework indicators can inform how well systems are serving students in their chosen pathway and help identify what new or improved practices should be implemented to promote success.

Data can be a powerful tool to support decision making, for systems and for students. Kiara and Javier's pathways offer examples of where and how data can be used to influence decisions, foster pathway opportunities, and determine whether the right conditions are in place to help students succeed. Because early education settings vary less, the pathways emphasize high school and beyond.

The E-W Framework recommends data needed to understand and track student pathways.

INDICATORS

Data from three indicator domains offer information about student progress from early education through career, and the system conditions that help (or hinder) their success.

Academic progress and completion

Physical, mental, and social well-being

Career readiness and economic success

The E-W Framework offers evidence-based practices that can support and strengthen student pathways to success.

One example is intentionally designed career pathway programs.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES | Intentionally designed career pathway programs

Key elements of program design can make a career pathway more effective at helping students earn credits, complete an industry-recognized credential, and gain employment and higher earnings. Effective career pathway programs offer students a clear blueprint for educational and employment advancement and multiple "on and off ramps" to accommodate different needs and life events.

Visit our website to see a program example!
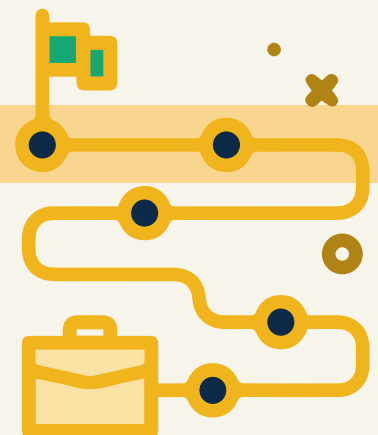
Kiara's Path

As a child, Kiara watched her dad battle cancer and saw the important role medication and therapies played in recovery. She knew she wanted to help people like her dad and that a career in health care felt like the right path, but she wasn't sure how to get there. **Students** like Kiara need information to make decisions, navigate their path, and ultimately reach their goals. **Systems** need information on how well they are serving students and supporting multiple pathways.

Student Experience

Early childhood & pre-K

elementary and middle school

In high school, Kiara participates in a health care CTE program where she learns about jobs in the health care field and develops practical career readiness skills.

Work as a pharmacy clerk

Certificate or Diploma

Earn certificate from accredited pharmacy technician training program

Kiara's selected pathway

Career Technical Education (CTE) Program

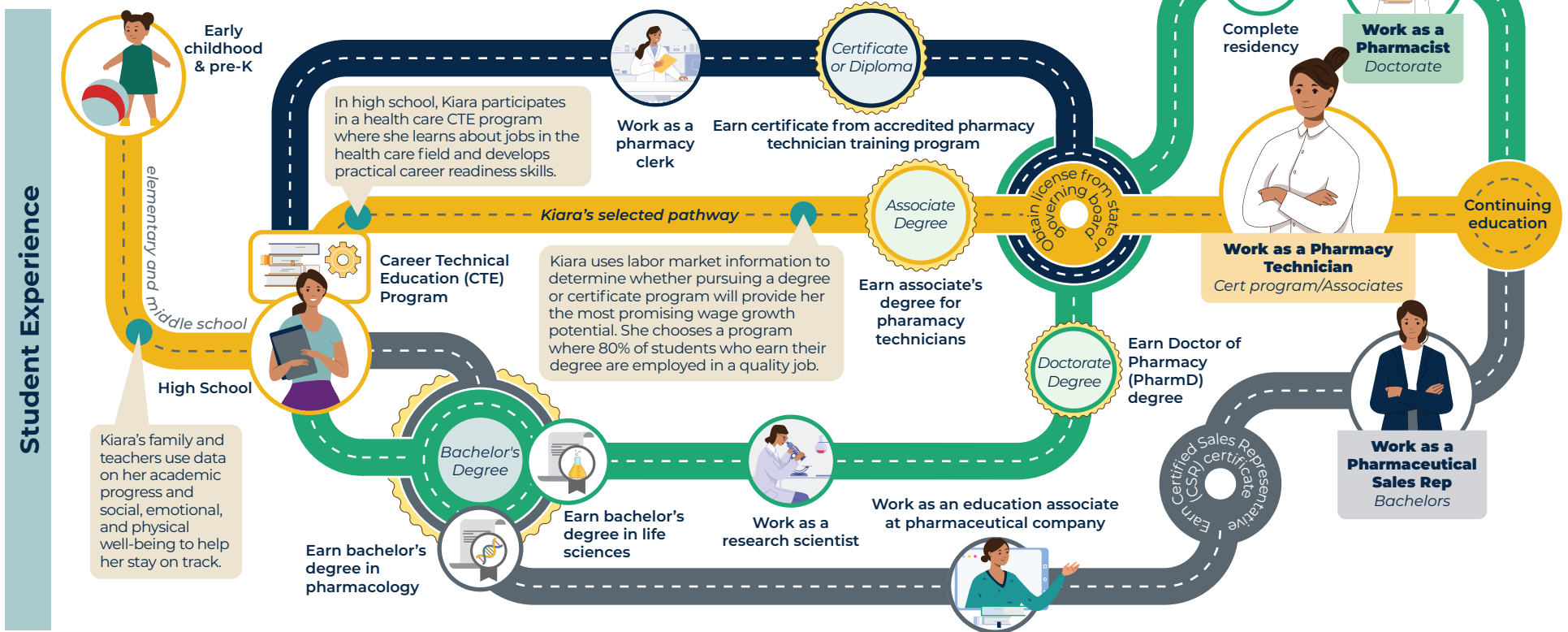Kiara uses labor market information to determine whether pursuing a degree or certificate program will provide her the most promising wage growth potential. She chooses a program where 80% of students who earn their degree are employed in a quality job.

Associate Degree

Earn associate's degree for pharmacy technicians

Obtain license from state or governing board

High School

Kiara's family and teachers use data on her academic progress and social, emotional, and physical well-being to help her stay on track.

Bachelor's Degree

Earn bachelor's degree in pharmacology

Earn bachelor's degree in life sciences

Work as a research scientist

Work as an education associate at pharmaceutical company

Doctorate Degree

Earn Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree

Complete residency

Work as a Pharmacist
Doctorate

Work as a Pharmacy Technician
Cert program/Associates

Continuing education

Earn Certified Sales Representative (CSR) certificate

Work as a Pharmaceutical Sales Rep
Bachelors

System Conditions

All students must make choices that shape their future, choices that are influenced by the systems they navigate. The E-W Framework can help those working to support students measure what matters most to ensure educational opportunity and economic security are accessible and achievable through multiple pathways.

The E-W Framework offers guidance across the pre-K-to-workforce continuum to support **students** and **systems** identify and access the information needed to successfully navigate any path.

PRE-K

By focusing on essential questions about students' experiences, such as whether children are enrolled in quality, full-day pre-K programs, system administrators in Kiara's community helped ensure Kiara had access to high-quality early learning.

K-12

Monitoring indicators of system conditions such as *access to in-demand CTE pathways* and *school–family engagement* and collecting data on what types of experiences schools are providing helped educators at Kiara's schools better address her and her peers' needs.

POSTSECONDARY

Monitoring key conditions outside the postsecondary education system that affect college students, like access to transportation and affordable housing, alerted community leaders and administrators to affordability challenges. In response, they created equity scholarships offering flexible funds to help students with financial need like Kiara cover costs beyond tuition.

WORKFORCE

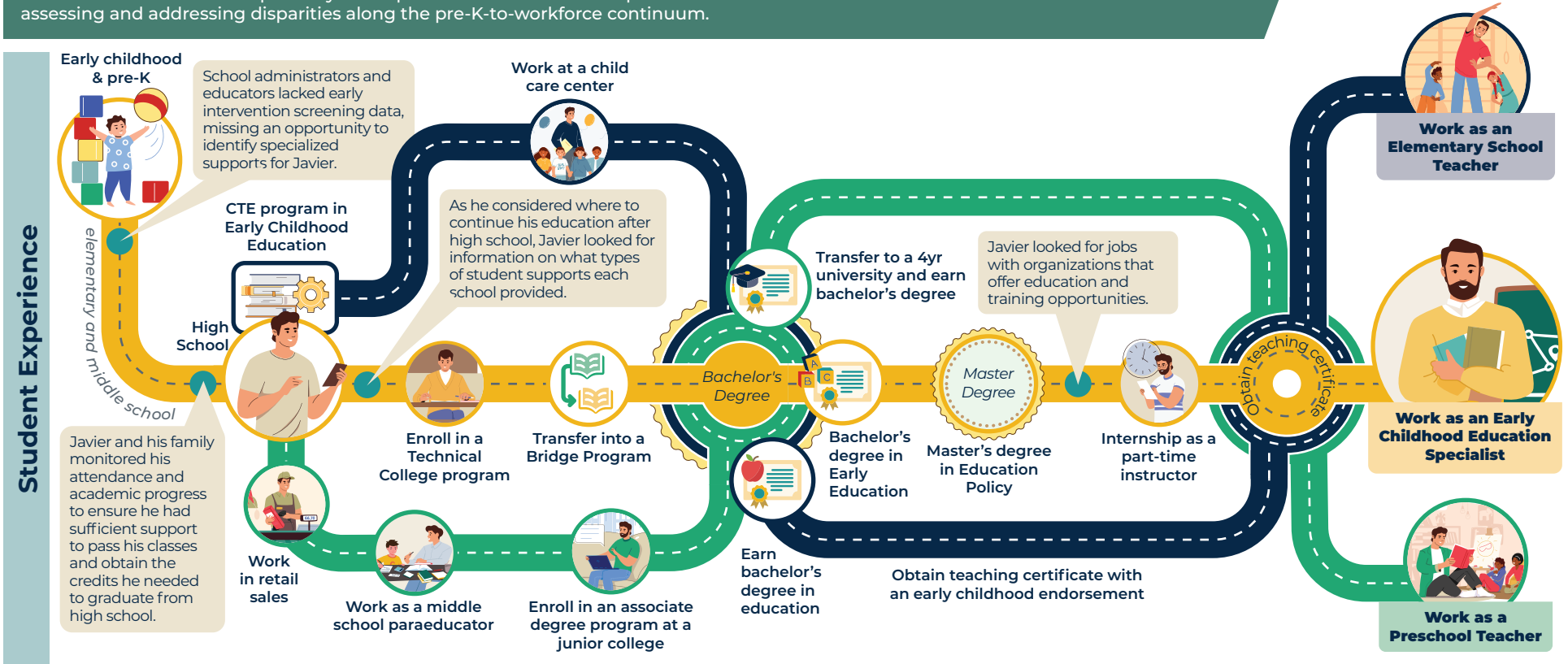Pharmacy career options are in high demand, and local workforce data show jobs are expected to grow by 15% in the next 10 years. Education and training providers in Kiara's area used data like these to make decisions about course offerings and degree programs. Staff from Kiara's high school collaborated with healthcare professionals to adapt the CTE program she attended to better align with industry trends.

Javier's Path

Javier was a determined and resilient child. Despite an undiagnosed disability and lack of accommodations, he persisted in his education and became an educator himself. Had system conditions been more supportive, Javier could have benefited from the accommodations he needed much earlier in his pathway. His experience illustrates the importance of access to information and cross-sector collaboration in assessing and addressing disparities along the pre-K-to-workforce continuum.

Student Experience

Early childhood & pre-K

School administrators and educators lacked early intervention screening data, missing an opportunity to identify specialized supports for Javier.

elementary and middle school

High School

Javier and his family monitored his attendance and academic progress to ensure he had sufficient support to pass his classes and obtain the credits he needed to graduate from high school.

CTE program in Early Childhood Education

Work at a child care center

As he considered where to continue his education after high school, Javier looked for information on what types of student supports each school provided.

Work in retail sales

Enroll in a Technical College program

Work as a middle school paraeducator

Transfer into a Bridge Program

Enroll in an associate degree program at a junior college

Bachelor's Degree

Transfer to a 4yr university and earn bachelor's degree

Bachelor's degree in Early Education

Earn bachelor's degree in education

Javier looked for jobs with organizations that offer education and training opportunities.

Master Degree

Master's degree in Education Policy

Internship as a part-time instructor

Obtain teaching certificate with an early childhood endorsement

Obtain teaching certificate

Work as an Elementary School Teacher

Work as an Early Childhood Education Specialist

Work as a Preschool Teacher

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PRE-K

Javier was shy and afraid to tell anyone that he could not see well, which affected his learning. An early intervention screening at Javier's school could have revealed he needed eyeglasses much sooner.

K-12

Javier faced challenges in school and struggled academically, especially on tests. Javier's K–12 schools lacked the resources and screening tools to accurately diagnose his learning needs. Luckily, with support from his family, Javier sought out additional supports, such as tutoring and mentoring, that helped him persist through high school. Monitoring indicators of system conditions such as *teacher experience* and *institution's contributions to student outcomes* can help students get the services they need to succeed.

POSTSECONDARY

Javier knew support services would be important for his success. He connected with the Office of Student Accessibility at his college and got the learning accommodations he needed. Using data to monitor the accessibility of support services can help educators and administrators make transitions more seamless for students like Javier.

WORKFORCE

Employers who offer ongoing training and professional development opportunities such as internships and on-the-job training help employees develop new skills and earn higher wages. Javier was able to secure an internship that gave him practical experience and confidence he was on the right career path.