



# Berkshire County Career Readiness System

*Creating a future skilled workforce!*



## Connecting Activities

<http://www.massconnecting.org/>

Connecting Activities (CA) is a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education initiative that leverages a statewide infrastructure to support college and career readiness for all students. The CA line item in the state budget, establishes public-private partnerships through the 16 local MassHire Workforce Boards to connect schools and businesses. The initiative provides structured work-based learning experiences and career awareness and exploration opportunities for all students that support both their academic and employability skill attainment.

*The MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board (MHBWB) has positioned itself as the regional lead in developing and coordinating all Career Readiness activities and programs for Berkshire County in-school and out-of-school youth. The MHBWB has established Connecting Activities as the 'overarching initiative' that encompasses all regional career awareness, exploration and immersion activities and has continued to work to strengthen partnerships and collaborations among school-based-staff, school district administration, regional employers and community-based professionals in expanding the College & Career Readiness system throughout Berkshire County.*

## Partners & Connected Initiatives

**MassHire Berkshire Career Center**  
youth services, WIOA and Youth Works Programming

**Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation**  
South County Fund – supporting South County’s Career Readiness initiatives

**Berkshire Compact For Education**  
Aspirations & Access Committee

**Berkshire Educational Resources K-12**  
Portrait of A Graduate

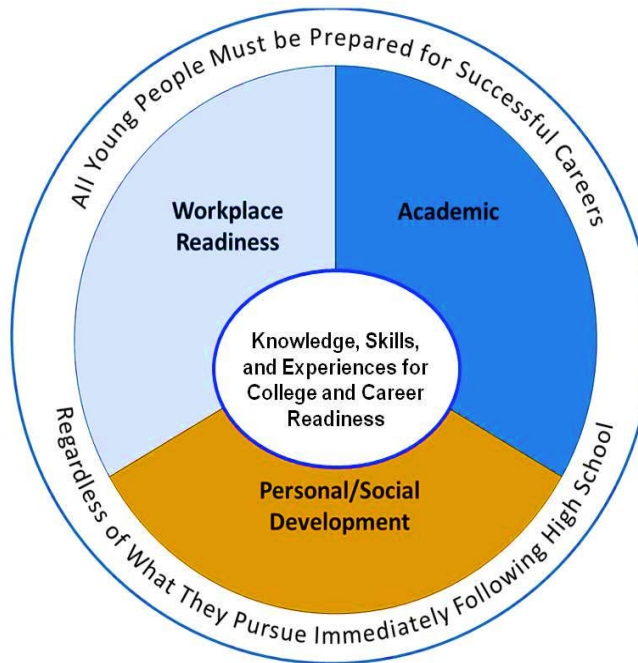
**Berkshire United Way**  
Positive Youth Development

## Regional Priorities

*Create a fully integrated career readiness system within the region’s school districts*

Keys to creating & expanding this system:

- MyCap / College & Career Planning System
- College & Career Teams
- Career Readiness experiences for all students, integrated curriculum
- College & Career Pathways
- Teacher Externships – Business & Educator connections
- Employer Engagement
- Career Readiness Professional Development



The Board of Higher Education and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to adopt a common definition of "college and career readiness" which established that workplace readiness is essential in preparing ALL students for success in a 21st century economy.

*College and career readiness means **EVERY** student has the requisite knowledge, skills and experiences in the academic, workplace readiness, and personal/social domains to successfully navigate to completion an economically viable career pathway participating in responsible citizenship.*

**For more information, please contact**

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<p><b>Career Awareness</b> <i>Becoming 'aware' of potential careers</i></p> <p><i>Can begin in Kindergarten -grade 6</i></p>	<p><b>Career Exploration</b> <i>'Exploring' career interest areas &amp; career readiness</i></p> <p><i>Can begin in grades 7-8</i></p>	<p><b>Career Immersion</b> <i>Learning the specifics skills &amp; knowledge within a career pathway area;</i> <i>Begins in High School</i></p>
<p><b>Career Interest Assessments</b> <b>Career Speakers</b> <b>Career Days / Career Fairs</b> <b>College &amp; Career Planning begins!</b> <b>Company Tours / Field Trips</b> <b>Labor Market Information</b> <b>Community Service Learning</b></p>	<p><b>Career Exploration Classes</b> <b>Career Focused Elective Courses</b> <b>Career Skills Workshops</b> <b>Financial / Economic Literacy Workshops</b> <b>Job Shadowing</b> <b>Mock Interviews / Informational Interviews</b> <b>Mentorship Programs</b></p>	<p><b>Work-Based-Learning (Jobs/Internships)</b> <b>Career Pathways &amp; CVTE Courses</b> <b>Capstone / Senior Project</b> <b>Entrepreneurial Programs</b> <b>Skills Portfolios</b> <b>Career Specific Courses with Field Experience</b> <b>Programs that lead to Industry Recognized Credentials</b></p>



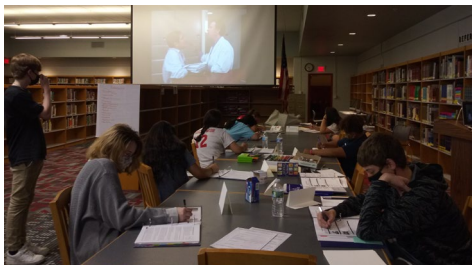
**High School internships**

**Berkshire County  
Accomplishments 1998 – 2023**

Internships / Structured Work Experiences	<b>10,741</b>
Employer Participants	<b>6,096</b>
Career Awareness, Exploration & Immersion Activities	<b>40,393</b>
Teacher Externships	<b>243</b>



**Career Fairs**



**Career Skill Workshops**

**MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board  
Creating a Career Readiness Integrated System for ALL youth!**

**Developing / Expanding Upon:**

- College & Career Readiness School-Based Teams*
- MyCap / College & Career Planning Systems in school districts*
- High Quality Innovation College & Career Pathways*
- Career-Vocational-Technical Pathways*
- Career Awareness, Exploration & Immersion Models*



**Summer Work Experiences**