



March 2025

To: Michigan Legislators

From: Teach Plus Michigan Policy Fellowship, Transition to Postsecondary Education & Career Working Group

Policy Goal:

Our goal is to establish a centralized tracking system to ensure equitable access to postsecondary opportunities, internships, mentorship programs, and industry-recognized certifications for high school students, particularly those from underrepresented and marginalized communities. We advocate for creating a statewide system to track postsecondary planning, mandating standardized career readiness software like Xello, Naviance, or My Next Move in all Michigan high schools, and providing dedicated funding for paid internships, apprenticeships, and credentialing opportunities for underserved students. As referenced in Michigan Public Act 227 of 2018, which emphasizes career exploration and readiness, we must strengthen accountability measures to guarantee that all students receive the necessary resources and support to succeed in their chosen college and career pathways.

Why This Issue Is Important:

We are educators from districts across Michigan and members of the Teach Plus Michigan Policy Fellowship. We are committed to ensuring that state policies equitably serve all students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. Michigan's post-secondary preparation system lacks accountability, leaving many students without clear career pathways. Without intervention, Michigan risks falling further behind in workforce development and economic competitiveness.

For Students:

- **Increased Postsecondary Enrollment:** Seniors who complete FAFSA are 85% more likely to enroll in higher education ([Detroit Regional Chamber](#)).
- **Equity in Career Readiness:** Our recommendations would help close the opportunity gap by tracking and supporting career exploration from an early age.
- **Financial Empowerment:** Paid internships and expanded credentialing programs reduce financial barriers and provide practical experience.

For Schools:

- **Intentional Postsecondary Planning:** Embedding career readiness tools in coursework ensures students are actively preparing for postsecondary success.
- **Standardized Accountability:** A statewide tracking system for career planning activities provides schools with data to measure student engagement and outcomes.
- **Workforce-Ready Graduates:** Expanding paid internships and credentialing programs equips students with real-world experience and certifications, aligning with schools' goals of producing graduates who are ready for both college and the workforce. Prioritizing underserved communities ensures equitable opportunities for those who need them most.



For Michigan:

- **Stronger Workforce Development:** Supports Sixty by 30 (60% credential attainment by 2030) ([Michigan.gov](https://www.michigan.gov)).
- **Economic Growth:** Strengthen workforce readiness and economic growth.
- **Closing the Skills Gap:** Ensure students graduate with industry-relevant skills. ([Michigan.gov](https://www.michigan.gov)).

Key Data:

- Requiring career readiness tools in coursework ensures students are prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce. Data shows that Michigan ranks 31st in FAFSA completion, with only 50.5% of seniors applying ([TICAS](#)).
- In 2022, Michigan students left **\$182.6 million** in federal aid unclaimed ([NCAN](#)). A statewide system to track student participation in career planning ensures that all students have access to postsecondary preparation.
- Expanding paid internships and credentialing programs provides real-world experience ([Teach Plus](#)) and perpetuates disparities in career preparation, particularly in underserved communities.

Recommendations:

- ✓ **Establishing a centralized tracking system:** Create a statewide tracking system for postsecondary planning.
- ✓ **Mandating standardized career readiness software:** Require career readiness software (e.g., Xello, Naviance, My Next Move) in all Michigan high schools.
- ✓ **Providing dedicated funding:** Fund paid internships, apprenticeships, and credentialing for underserved students.

The Impact:

- 📌 **For Students:** More equitable access to financial aid and workforce training.
- 📌 **For Schools:** Consistent, standardized career readiness programs across all districts.
- 📌 **For Michigan:** A skilled workforce driving economic growth and meet industry needs.

By fully implementing Michigan's postsecondary preparation programs and strengthening accountability measures, Michigan can close equity gaps, reduce barriers to postsecondary success, and cultivate a competitive workforce. Let's make postsecondary readiness a reality for all students.

Respectfully Submitted,

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