MODERNIZING GRADUATION PATHWAY MANAGEMENT

PASSPORT FOR GOOD®

Using Technology to Manage NYS Graduation Pathways

New York State is transforming its approach to high school graduation. In 2015, the Board of Regents approved multiple new graduation pathways. This expanded the ways in which students can meet graduation requirements, emphasizing a holistic view of student readiness. This new approach values practical experiences like internships, technical training, community service, and capstone projects alongside, rather than solely relying on, Regents exams. [1][2]

Setting the Stage

The multiple pathways, or "4+1" model, is the foundation of New York's updated high school graduation requirements. It requires students to pass four core Regents exams (one each in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) and then complete a fifth "+1" assessment, choosing between eight pathways. Three of the pathways (Arts, Humanities, and STEM) are straightforward, requiring an additional course and a corresponding Regents exam. The other five pathways are more complex, requiring unique tracking and verification. [3][4]

The five complex pathways are listed below:

Civics

A student passionate about civics and community involvement can choose this pathway. They earn the Seal of Civic Readiness as their "+1" assessment by accumulating points through a combination of civic knowledge (like passing social studies courses) and civic participation, such as completing a 25-hour service-learning project or a more intensive capstone project. [6]

Individual Arts Assessment Pathway (IAAP)

Students complete a three-unit sequence in an arts discipline like visual arts, music, or theater. For their "+1" assessment, instead of a traditional exam, they would complete a state-approved portfolio of their work, which demonstrates their growth and skill over time. [5]

Languages Other Than English (LOTE)/ Biliteracy

A student who is proficient in a language other than English can pursue this option. Their "+1" assessment would be a state-approved examination in that world language, which can also lead to earning a Seal of Biliteracy on their diploma. [4]

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

A student enrolled in a state-approved CTE program, such as automotive technology or culinary arts, can use this pathway. Their "+1" requirement is fulfilled by passing a rigorous, three-part technical assessment in their specific field, which includes written, performance, and portfolio components. [4]

Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS)

This pathway is focused on career readiness. To fulfill the "+1" requirement, a student must earn the CDOS Commencement Credential. This involves creating a career plan, completing 216 hours of career-focused learning (including at least 54 hours of hands-on, work-based learning), and developing an employability profile documenting their skills. [4]

Why It Matters

Key Challenges

The multiple pathways model embraces each student's individuality, promoting better preparation for college, career, and civic life. This model, however, presents significant challenges for most school districts today, as it necessitates complex tracking, personalized planning, and real-time insights. [7]

- **Administrative Overload:** School administrators typically do not have the tools to independently track and verify all requirements for complex pathways. [10]
- **Opportunity Gaps:** Under-served students are 3-4x more likely to earn non-college-prep diplomas, limiting their post-secondary options. [11]
- **Documentation Burden:** Complex pathways often require portfolio artifacts and verified hours. Without a purpose-built system, school districts may default to basic technology, such as simple spreadsheets, which does not scale or audit well. [13] [14]

The Opportunity

To effectively meet these challenges, schools need practical tools to simplify data collection and analysis while providing meaningful insights on a student's personalized graduation path. This is exactly where specialized technology becomes essential.

Purpose-built technology can provide valuable insights by monitoring student progress to guide academic planning and help schools align curriculum and resources with long-term goals. Aggregate data provides administrators with a clear picture of student engagement, allowing them to make better decisions on resource allocation and apply for grants with concrete data. [8]

Student-led graduation tracking technology can make the entire graduation process more engaging and relevant for students, boosting their motivation to participate actively.

Personalized Learning Experiences:

The digital portfolio, or "non-academic transcript," offers a personalized record. It acknowledges each student's distinct achievements and successes, thereby affirming a more expansive view of accomplishment that goes beyond standardized test results.

Tracking Practical and Technical Work:

Many complex pathways require precise logging of students' practical skills, certifications, and work-based experiences. It is important that this work is properly tracked and verified, ensuring that students are adequately prepared for graduation and career success.

Interactive Learning:

Student-driven technology can make learning interactive and engaging, encouraging active student participation. Students are motivated by a tangible sense of pride as they take ownership of their achievements and observe their service hours and accomplishments grow.

Solution: Passport For Good

What is Passport For Good?

Passport For Good is...

..a simple, powerful platform made to capture, manage, and celebrate the entire student journey. It is used to track and verify student experiences both in and out of the platform, such as club participation, volunteer hours, and internships.

...based out of the Capital Region of New York and run by graduates of NYS schools. They are highly attuned to the needs of NYS schools. *Passport For Good* is backed by NYS BOCES contract, meaning that schools in the BOCES system can be eligible for state-aid to support their purchase of the platform [15]

...known for their attentive and personalized support of customers. They facilitate comprehensive training and are highly responsive to addressing any questions or support issues that can arise. This level of support can be hard to get from larger companies that often outsource to call centers.

...uniquely equipped to handle the requirements of complex graduation pathways. It succeeds in this goal by: capturing student achievement data, allowing students to upload portfolio artifacts, tracking pathway progress and achievements, and easily verifying out-of-classroom experience by obtaining confirmation from external supervisors.

What are the Benefits of Passport For Good?

Passport For Good streamlines administrative work. Students are responsible for logging their work into the platform, which then automatically displays achievement progress by calculating the value of each course within a pathway. Educators can access centralized dashboards which showcase coursework progress. [14]

Passport For Good reveals opportunity gaps with real-time student participation data. [15] This solution can help identify students who may be at risk of not graduating on time by flagging disengagement early.

By fostering a sense of belonging and recognizing diverse achievements, this technology can improve student retention. *Passport For Good* provides a platform where all students can showcase their strengths by documenting their experiences. This recognition helps students become better connected with the meaning and purpose of academics.

Solution: Passport For Good

What Educators Are Saying

> "*Passport For Good* has changed our community service program. Students can monitor their hours and see their progress towards their goals. It is user friendly and the support from *Passport For Good* for our staff has been tremendous." [14]
>
> *- Margaret Ronai, Manhasset UFSD*

> Our students, staff, and administration can easily track participation hours, manage schedules, and create, sign up for, and track attendance for events. It has been a powerful tool for our district to make decisions, increase student involvement, and grow our enrichment programs" [14]
>
> *- Jennifer Reynolds, Arkport CSD*

Call to Action

Purpose-built student engagement technology is an invaluable tool for managing high school graduation pathways. By providing efficient tracking, data-driven insights, streamlined processes, personalized support, and enhanced engagement, this technology helps ensure students stay on track, overcome obstacles, and successfully complete their high school education. For New York State to fulfill the promise of its visionary reforms, its educators must be equipped with the modern tools necessary to manage this new, more complex educational landscape.

It's time to turn bold ideas into everyday practice. Let's build an infrastructure that delivers accessible and data-driven results for every student in New York.

Passport For Good has the flexibility to help your school manage complex pathways. To learn more, schedule a demo of *Passport For Good* today at https://www.passportforgood.com/ or contact us at sales@passportforgood.com!

Sources

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