

# Career Connections

**One million Ohioans lack a high school diploma or GED. This number grows each year by 24,000 when current high school students disconnect and disengage from school. They do not see the connection between the classroom and the real world of work.**

Today, children need to see a link between what they are learning and future work. Career Connections offers practical ways for teachers and families to show students, as early as in kindergarten, the types of jobs possible for them. The goal is to foster connections between what students learn in the classroom and workplace expectations like critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, leadership, innovation and creativity.

Career Connections is Ohio's vehicle for increasing students' awareness between classroom and careers by better engaging students. It does this by embedding career strategies and aligning local district efforts around college and career readiness.

## How does Career Connections work?

The initiative consists of three integral parts. They are an online career tool, a planning process to help districts design age-appropriate local programs for career exploration, and curriculum strategies centered on careers.

- OhioMeansJobs K-12 is a no-cost, online career development tool that enables teachers, parents and students to explore careers interests, research career options and evaluate education and training programs.
- The Career Connections Framework drives the big picture. It takes all the efforts across K-12 and aligns them so students have a continuous experience. It emphasizes career awareness in kindergarten through grade 5, career exploration in grades 6-8 and career planning in grades 9-12.
- Curriculum strategies provide grade-specific plans to help teachers connect learning with real-world jobs. They easily blend with Ohio's Learning Standards in reading, math, social studies and science.

**For more information visit:**  
[education.ohio.gov/careerconnections](http://education.ohio.gov/careerconnections)

## What's next?

Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, districts will adopt a local policy on career advising that includes developing Student Success Plans with students identified as at risk for dropping out of school. Districts will begin implementing strategies across K-12 classrooms and advising students beginning in middle grades on pathways for earning a high school diploma, industry-credentials and college credits.