NOVEMBER 2017

Pathways To Education

Research, Analysis, And Implementation Options For London's Child & Youth Network

Prepared For

Child & Youth Network

Prepared By

KG KOVACS GROUP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW 3
1.1 PURPOSE 3
1.2 SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES IN LONDON 3
1.3 PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION SUMMARY 3
1.4 DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY 4
1.5 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE 5
SECTION 2.0 PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION PROGRAM MODEL 6
2.1 GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR PATHWAYS 6
2.2 EVIDENCE BASE 7
2.3 PROGRAM COMPONENTS 8
2.4 STUDENT-PARENT SUPPORT WORKER 10
2.5 PROGRAM SCOPE 11
2.6 PROGRAM PARTNERS 11
2.7 IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH 14
2.8 FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND OPERATIONAL COSTS 16
SECTION 3.0 PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION IN PRACTICE 19
3.1 PATHWAYS OTTAWA 19
3.2 PATHWAYS HALIFAX-SPRYFIELD 22
3.3 PATHWAYS WINNIPEG 27
3.4 PATHWAYS KITCHENER 30
SECTION 4.0 THEMES AND INSIGHTS 35
4.1 PROGRAM COMPONENTS 35
4.2 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION 36
4.3 A “TYPICAL” PATHWAYS PROGRAM 38
SECTION 5.0 LONDON’S SERVICE DELIVERY CONTEXT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE 41
5.1 LONDON’S CHILD AND YOUTH NETWORK 41
5.2 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN LONDON 43
SECTION 6.0 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION 46
6.1 OPTION 1: STATUS QUO 46
6.2 OPTION 2: APPLY TO BE A PATHWAYS SITE 47
6.3 OPTION 3: DEVELOP A PATHWAYS-PARALLEL FOR LONDON 48
6.4 OPTION 4: DEVELOP A DISTRIBUTED MODEL OF ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM DELIVERY 49
SECTION 7.0 THE PATH FORWARD 51
7.1 PROPOSED PATHS 51
APPENDIX A: REFERENCES 52

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the staff at Pathways to Education Canada and host organization staff at Pathways to Education sites in Ottawa, Halifax-Spryfield, Winnipeg, and Kitchener for generously sharing their experiences and insights.

SECTION 1.0

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2017, London's Child and Youth Network (CYN) engaged Kovacs Group Inc. to research Pathways to Education (Pathways) and determine viable options for implementing the program – or a similar program – in London.

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present background data and outline options for implementing Pathways in London, Ontario. The information will be used to establish a direction for service providers in London to develop a coordinated, community-wide model to increase secondary school graduation rates in the community.

1.2 SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES IN LONDON

A 2015 impact assessment of the CYN revealed that more than one in five young people in London do not graduate from secondary school. These population-level statistics have remained largely unchanged since the CYN began tracking them in 2008.

Other indicators of educational attainment at different age levels reveal similar challenges: more than one in four London children are not ready to learn in Grade 1, many London students in Grades 3 and 6 fall below provincial averages for reading and writing, and one in four London students who participated fully in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test are not successful (Child and Youth Network, 2017).

1.3 PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION SUMMARY

Founded in 2001 in the Regent Park neighbourhood of Toronto, Pathways is a holistic wraparound program that provides a comprehensive set of academic, financial, social, and one-to-one supports for young people with the goal of increasing high school graduation rates.

Implementation of Pathways focuses on neighbourhoods with higher incidences of low income and lower incidences of educational attainment. A host organization manages the implementation of Pathways locally and staff members, including "Student-Parent Support Workers," work closely with young people to address barriers to educational success.

A more detailed overview of the Pathways model is provided in Section 2.0: Pathways to Education Program Model.

1.4 DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Literature Review

A literature review on Pathways was conducted to develop an understanding of the Pathways program model, the evidence base used to develop the model, and the impact of the approach. Information was derived from publically available literature, including the Pathways website and various research and evaluation reports. A full list of sources accessed is available in Appendix A: References.

Interviews

A one-hour phone interview was held with staff members from Pathways to Education Canada (Pathways Canada), the national charitable organization that manages Pathways, to understand how the program is managed nationally, community assets that facilitate program success, and future directions for the organization.

One-hour phone interviews were also held with staff members from host organizations at four Pathways sites recommended by the Pathways Canada staff. To understand how the Pathways program model is implemented in practice, paying close attention to trends and variation across sites. The interviews also provided an opportunity to build out understanding of the program model developed through the literature review.

Interviews were held with the following organizations:

Organization	Site	Date of Interview
Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre	Ottawa	September 14, 2017
Chebucto Connections	Halifax-Spryfield	September 14, 2017
Community Economic Development Association Winnipeg	Winnipeg	September 14, 2017
Pathways to Education Canada	National Organization	September 18, 2017
Carizon Family and Community Services	Kitchener	September 21, 2017

Interviews with Pathways site staff followed a standard set of open-ended questions related to implementation. The interview with Pathways Canada staff focused on the conceptual approach and administration of the program nationally. Note that respondents emphasized different aspects of their programs in their responses.

Local Program Search

The purpose of the local program search was to provide more information on London's existing service delivery context for youth, with a particular focus on educational attainment. Understanding what programs exist locally assists with determining London's potential to undertake Pathways using available community resources, important for two of the options under consideration. The methodology employed a web search[1] for programs that align with components of the Pathways program model.

1.5 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This report contains seven sections. Section one presents the context for the research and the methodology used. Section two provides a summary of the Pathways model, including the program elements and administrative approach. Section three presents a site-by-site summary of how four communities are implementing the Pathways model. Section four articulates an analysis of themes (recurring ideas) and insights (individual observations that are important to consider) derived from Pathways literature and interviews. Section five considers existing programming and collaborative approaches in London that align with Pathways to inform potential made-in-London approaches to implementation. Section six presents four options for how Pathways could be implemented in London, with discussion of advantages, considerations, and further questions for each option. Finally, section seven describes a summary analysis of the report and outlines suggested next steps.

[1] Web sources accessed include: familyinfo.ca, Information London, The Health Line, 211, Pillar Nonprofit Network members list, and the CYN members list.

SECTION 2.0

PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION PROGRAM MODEL

Pathways was founded in 2001 in the Regent Park neighbourhood of Toronto as a wraparound program intended to help local youth graduate from secondary school and transition successfully to post-secondary education, training, or meaningful employment. Pathways operates across Canada, with program locations in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

Information in this section is drawn from Oreopoulous and Brown (2017), multiple resources available on the Pathways website (2015, 2016a, 2016b), and the results of the interview with Pathways Canada staff.

2.1 GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR PATHWAYS

Vision

Breaking the cycle of poverty through education.

Mission

For youth in low-income communities, Pathways to Education provides the resources and network of support to graduate from secondary school and build the foundation for a successful future.

Values

- Strength and potential are starting points.
- Partnerships power us.
- Excellence is achieved through evidence.
- Adaptability is our advantage.
- Impact is the end game.

A Brief History of Pathways to Education

- 2001: Pathways to Education founded in the Regent Park neighbourhood of Toronto
- 2005: Pathways to Education Canada established
- 2007: BCG Consulting assessment validates impact of model
- 2017: 20 Pathways programs operational in eight provinces

Principles

Though not stated in the program model literature, Pathways Canada staff emphasized the following principles as essential to the Pathways approach:

- Community Engagement
- Relationship-Driven
- Youth-Centric
- Holistic
- Importance of Mentorship

The key metric that drives Pathways is secondary school graduation rates. However, Pathways recognizes the need to create impact beyond secondary school for the program – and its participants – to be successful. For example, during their interview, the Pathways Canada respondents understood the core focus of the program as "help[ing] young people achieve their full potential, however they define that." In this framing, successful graduation of high school becomes a platform young people use to transition to future successes that are defined by the young people themselves.

The Pathways Canada respondents suggested the element that matters most to young people is a positive relationship with a caring adult, which may occur through multiple different roles, including parents, teachers, and staff associated with Pathways.

2.2 EVIDENCE BASE

The Pathways program model was developed on a robust platform of evidence-driven research. Ongoing research and evaluation findings are incorporated into the program model to refine it over time. Research findings that inform the Pathways program model include the following:

- Socioeconomic status is the strongest predictor of educational attainment.
- The strongest school-based predictors of educational attainment include attendance, credit accumulation, and behaviour.
- No single factor can reliably predict a student's decision to drop out.
- Families, schools, and communities affect a student's likelihood of dropping out.
- Dropping out is a process, not a single event.
- Effective responses include:
    - Multi-faceted, individualized supports;
    - A case management approach;
    - Mentoring supports that include positive role models; and
    - Social and academic engagement strategies for young people and their parents.

2.3 PROGRAM COMPONENTS

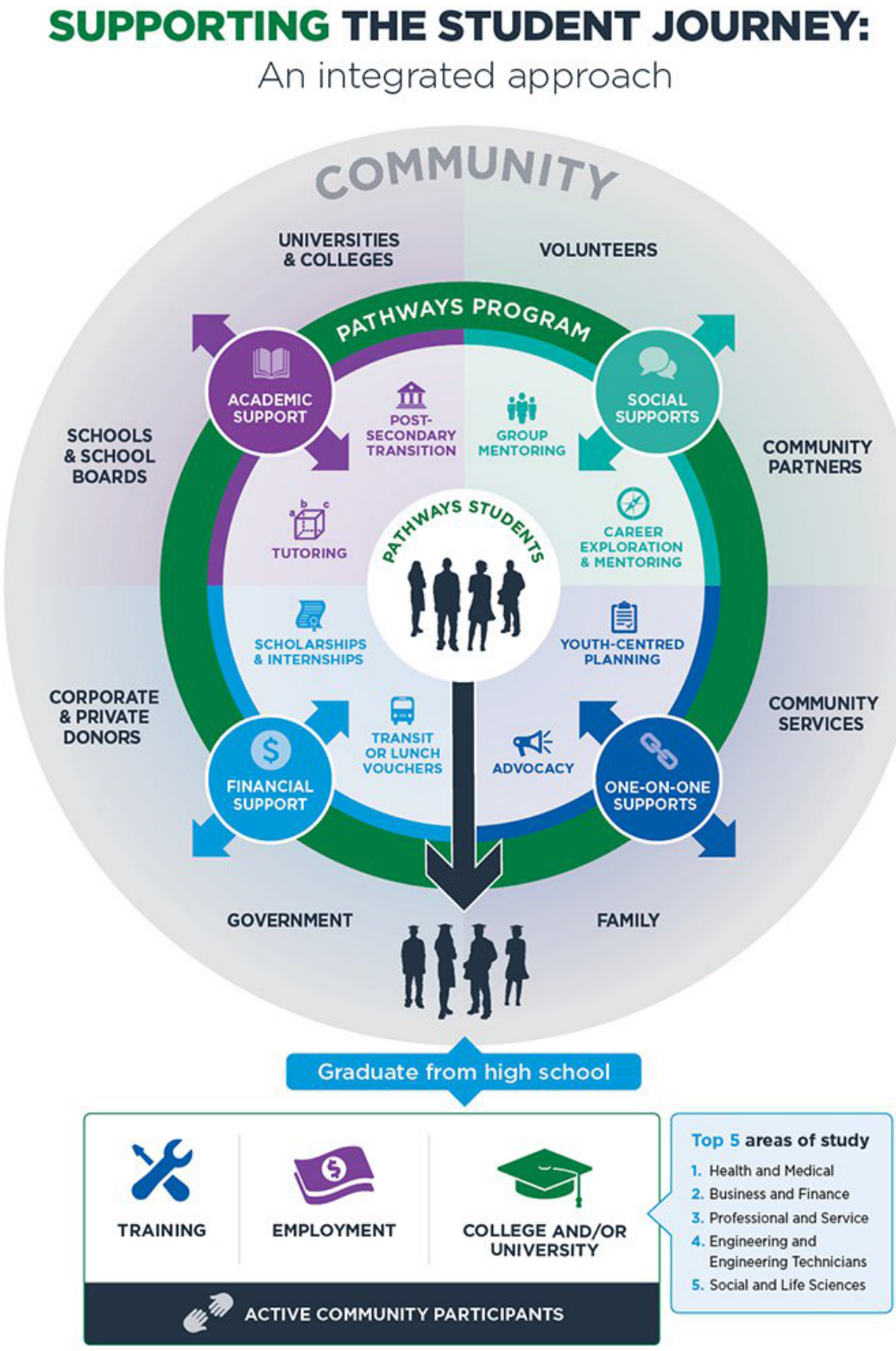
The program approach relies on collaboration between the host organization, governments, community partners, schools, school boards, volunteers, parents, and young people themselves to deliver on the following four components of the Pathways program model:

1. Academic Supports
2. Social Supports
3. Financial Supports
4. One-to-One Supports

The Pathways Canada interview respondents noted that the core components are found consistently across sites, but the approach to implementation varies as local organizations respond and adapt to community needs, assets, and opportunities. The respondents also recognized that the types of barriers – and therefore supports – vary throughout a program participant's four years in secondary school. Different approaches and relationships may be required to maintain commitment to Pathways' youth-centric, holistic principles.

The relationship between the components, their sub-components, and roles of supporting partners are captured in the program diagram in Figure 1, below. Details on how each of these program elements works in practice at various sites are provided in Section 3.0: Pathways to Education in Practice.

Figure 1. Pathways To Education Program Model Diagram



2.4 STUDENT-PARENT SUPPORT WORKER

Every participant in Pathways is assigned a Student-Parent Support Worker (SPSW). The SPSW develops a close relationship with the young person and serves as the primary link between the young person and the program, acting as a key mentor, facilitator, motivator, and system navigator. Often, SPSWs are active in schools, holding one-to-one meetings with program participants, connecting with teachers and administrators, and providing information on upcoming opportunities.

Programmatically, the SPSW supports each component area in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:

1. Academic Supports
    a. Encourages participation and addresses barriers to attendance.
    b. In some cases, provides tutoring.
2. Social Supports
    a. Collaborates with community partners to create mentorship, leadership, and skill development opportunities responsive to young people's needs and interests.
    b. Encourages participation and addresses barriers to attendance.
3. Financial Supports
    a. Provides transit or food vouchers to incentivize participation.
    b. Supports the young person's commitment to the program in order to receive yearly scholarship.
4. One-to-One Supports
    a. Works with the young person to develop a plan for educational success.
    b. Advocates on behalf of the young person, where necessary, to remove barriers and support achievement of goals.

The SPSW is the key driver of the Financial and One-to-One Supports program components and is also an essential element in the other components. In practice, the program components often overlap, and the SPSW serves as the holistic link between them.

The maximum ratio of SPSWs to students is 1:50. Some communities have lower ratios depending on the needs of the students, total number of students in the program, and additional duties some SPSWs perform.

2.5 PROGRAM SCOPE

This section articulates how Pathways typically approaches the "where" and the "who" of implementation through consideration of site and neighbourhood selection, typical program size, target populations to serve, and considerations for implementation.

Geography

The Pathways program is typically targeted to one or two neighbourhoods to facilitate an intensive intervention in a smaller area. Catchment areas may be defined by targeted postal codes, city streets, or even particular buildings or residential complexes. However, the Pathways Kitchener interview respondents cautioned that a catchment area that is too focused (e.g. identifying a particular apartment building) could create stigma.

Some communities, such as Winnipeg, are implementing the program across multiple neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood-focused approach can alleviate transportation concerns by providing all program activities within a relatively small geographic area. The Pathways Canada interview respondents noted some communities were moving to wider geographic areas to accommodate high mobility within the community and respond to contemporary urban planning strategies (e.g. revitalization, mixed income housing). This approach can help avoid program participants "falling through the cracks," but the Pathways Canada interview respondents cautioned it can create logistical and operational challenges in managing program delivery. The respondents expressed interest in exploring technology as a means to address such concerns.

Program Size

While size can vary, a fully operating Pathways program typically includes 400-500 young people in Grades 9 through 12.

Demography

Using the neighbourhood-focused approach, the Pathways program targets young people from areas with lower income levels and educational attainment rates. Program participation is voluntary and open to any secondary school student within the geographic boundary. Young people choosing to participate in Pathways sign a contract to hold themselves accountable to the program's commitments.

2.6 PROGRAM PARTNERS

This section identifies key partners in the operation of Pathways. It is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive.

Host Organization

The host organization manages the implementation of the Pathways program. The host organization holds the contract with Pathways Canada and has fiduciary responsibility for program delivery. SPSWs, administrative staff, and managerial staff associated with a Pathways site work for the host organization.

The host organization often provides some Pathways components through direct service provision and can refer internally if it is a multi-service agency. In addition to its responsibility for delivering – or coordinating the delivery of – program components, the host organization provides a number of "backbone" functions, including:

- Reaching out to and engaging with the community to build awareness of the program, encourage young people to get involved, and respond to the needs of the community.
- Recruiting and coordinating volunteers for the tutoring program.
- Establishing program delivery partnerships in the community, where appropriate, to avoid duplicating services and foster a sense of community belonging for young people involved in the program.
- Coordinating meeting space and other logistic requirements for delivery of program components.
- Facilitating community advisory groups, comprised of influential stakeholders who provide guidance to the development and implementation of the program.
- Participating in corporate and local fundraising.
- Developing and submitting annual budgets and quarterly financial reports to Pathways Canada.
- Reporting on outcomes using local data generated through Pathways as well as aggregated anonymized data provided by school boards.
- Aligning with branding guidelines.
- Participating in Pathways Canada events and communities of practice.

The Pathways Canada interview respondents shared desirable qualities of a host organization, including the ability to demonstrate strong financial management through the provision of audited financial statements; having established Human Resources practices and structures that will help support staff and ongoing development; using a data-driven management and monitoring approach; using evidence-based practices; and having the capacity to participate in fundraising and donor engagement.

Interview respondents consistently noted that host organizations often provide a range of complementary services to which participants and their families can easily be referred to address identified needs.

Host organizations may include, but are not limited to, community health centres, mental health organizations, economic development associations, and other social service organizations.

The Pathways Canada interview respondents noted the organization is in the early stages of exploring a more distributed model for host organizations; however, a single organization – one with capacity, longevity, credibility, and established relationships within the community – is still the standard for serving as a Pathways host.

Schools And School Boards

As an education-focused program, schools are instrumental partners in Pathways. From the board level to the classroom, schools support Pathways in a number of ways.

Engaging young people in Pathways begins in elementary schools, providing opportunities for young people to learn about the Pathways program, which begins formally in secondary school. The Pathways host organization enters into Memoranda of Understanding and data sharing agreements with school boards to address concerns related to information privacy and enable access to secondary school grade and attendance data for program participants. Additionally, secondary schools may provide space for SPSWs to meet with young people and liaise with SPSWs to discuss upcoming tasks or challenges for which young people need support to navigate.

Post-secondary institutions can be a source of tutoring volunteers and provide programming opportunities related to post-secondary transition support, such as campus visits.

Corporate Partners

Corporate partners often serve on the community advisory body and have been involved in fundraising, programming (e.g. career nights), and providing job opportunities to program participants.

Community Partners

Collaboration between community partners is embedded in the model and is particularly important for the Social Supports program component, linking young people with pro-social engagement, leadership, and skill development opportunities in the community. In some instances, the host organization may provide these opportunities directly, but the host organization is expected to work with community partners to leverage existing opportunities. Government administrators and elected officials at all levels may also play a role through advocacy and resource support, aligning Pathways with broader community strategies and providing programming space and transit voucher supports.

Volunteers

Volunteers play an instrumental role in the Academic Support program component, specifically by providing tutoring supports. Most interview respondents engaged over 100 volunteers in a given year to provide tutoring to program participants, supported by a small number of staff from the host organization. Volunteers are drawn from the community. Some sites have established relationships with post-secondary institutions as a way to recruit volunteers.

2.7 IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

This section describes how a Pathways program is launched and considerations for implementation derived from interviews.

Program Launch

According to the Pathways Canada website, the launch of a new Pathways program is divided into four phases:

1. Prospecting Phase

Initial conversations are held between a prospective host organization and Pathways Canada on community need, community capacity, requirements, and opportunities. Staff from the prospective host organization complete a thorough application, including an initial demonstration of community need, which is vetted by the Pathways Board of Directors before proceeding to the second phase.

2. Community Engagement Phase

Pathways Canada provides funding for the prospective host organization to fully investigate the need and opportunity in the community and the appropriateness of Pathways as a solution. The prospective host organization works with Pathways Canada to develop a full business plan that details how the program will be implemented, budgets, timelines, anticipated outcomes, etc.

The Pathways Canada interview respondents noted the importance of having a strong program lead or developer who could access resources within the community, including “bring[ing] the right people to the table” to establish relationships and partnerships that inform the plan for program delivery.

3. Delivery Phase

In the delivery phase, the host organization signs a contract with Pathways Canada and assumes responsibility for program delivery. The contract outlines the terms of the agreement and the expectations of the host organization.

Pathways Canada provides financial and non-financial start-up supports, including implementation guides and templates developed through experiences at existing sites. Interviews with host organizations suggest that over time, Pathways Canada expects host organizations to work with community partners and local funders to take on a larger share of the financial cost for the program.

The first year of program implementation focuses only on Grade 9. The next year, the scope expands to include Grades 9 and 10. Expansion continues this way until Grades 9 through 12 are included.

4. Evolving Phase

The evolving phase represents ongoing program delivery and participation in evaluation, reporting, and professional events managed by Pathways Canada. Pathways Canada provides a number of ongoing supports during the evolving phase:

- Annual financial resource allocation based on approved budget.
- Access to national Pathways database used to input and track data related to Pathways programs across communities.
- Resources and templates development based on experiences in other Pathways communities, such as strategies for volunteer recruitment, setting up tutoring space, developing program forms, etc.
- Support connecting with and engaging local and national partners to address service gaps or bridge learning.
- Access to targeted post-secondary scholarship programs beyond those provided through the Pathways program.
- Access to Pathways communities of practice to facilitate ongoing learning and knowledge building.

Community Readiness

Interview respondents were asked what assets a community needs to be ready to implement Pathways successfully. Multiple respondents emphasized the need for strong community engagement from both families and other service providers that will be working collaboratively with the host organization to support Pathways. This element of readiness reflects the community engagement, collaboration, and youth-centric principles of Pathways.

Many noted the importance of good community data. The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent emphasized the need to understand “where poverty comes from” in the community, whether generational, situational, related to specific subpopulations, etc. The Pathways Kitchener interview respondents noted a strong community assessment is an expectation from Pathways Canada when evaluating a potential new site.

Multiple respondents emphasized the importance of strong relationships with school boards and schools, but noted these take time to develop and require ongoing attention. In the early days of implementation, roles should be clarified so all partners recognize Pathways is not designed to replace teacher roles, but rather complement the work through mutually beneficial working relationships designed to meet the needs of program participants within and beyond the school walls. The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents suggested data could help prove the value of the program to school staff.

Pathways Canada looks for strong existing partnerships and collaborative assets in the community, the expression of community need (as articulated in statistics and input from families), and the appropriateness of Pathways as a solution. Educational attainment should be identified as a community priority and partners should be able to express their long-term commitments, from programmatic and resource perspectives, to supporting Pathways. The Pathways Canada interview respondents suggested that successful Pathways communities have intentionality about every decision, strong community support, a broad range of aligned partnerships, clarity within the community around programming, and strong advisory councils.

Implementation will need to consider the viability of Pathways with respect to current community dynamics, the political climate, and the ability to navigate school system protocols and potential disruptions (e.g. work stoppages). The level of mobility of the target population and the level of trust and degree of collaboration between organizations will also need to be addressed. To this last point, the Pathways Canada respondents recognized that when community partners work together to plan for Pathways, there might be difficult conversations about who is best suited to serve as the host organization.

Staffing And Logistic Considerations

Staffing requirements are lower at the beginning of implementation. For example, Pathways Halifax-Spryfield began implementation with three staff and now supports approximately 16 FTE positions. The ideal volunteer tutor to student ratio is 1:3. Volunteer recruitment should therefore be emphasized from the beginning.

The host organization should identify suitable program space both within and outside the school and anticipate how space needs are likely to change as the program grows. Pathways Kitchener cited the importance of geographic accessibility of space for participants and the desire to pursue a “place-based” approach.

2.8 FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND OPERATIONAL COSTS

Pathways Canada

In 2016, Pathways Canada reported approximately $27.6M in revenue and an equivalent amount in expenditures.

Of these resources, approximately $19M came from government, $8.5M came from grants, and $89K came from investment income. Pathways Canada breaks down its expenditures as follows:

- Tutoring/Mentoring/Advocacy – 64%
- Program Location Operations – 14%
- Short-Term Financial Support for Students – 12%
- Post-secondary Scholarships – 9%

Interviews with staff from Pathways sites revealed that funding arrangements vary from site to site; however, many programs are mostly or entirely funded by Pathways Canada. The Pathways Canada interview respondents noted growing expectations of local investment in and support for Pathways.

Local Pathways Sites

According to Charity Intelligence Canada (2017), the average cost to run a Pathways program in 2016 was $4,305 per student. Given that a typical fully operational Pathways program serves 400-500 students, the ongoing program cost for a Pathways program is estimated at approximately $1.7M-$2.2M annually.

The Pathways Canada interview respondents reported that per-student costs are higher during program launch – approximately $5,000-$6,000 per student in the first two years – until economies of scale are reached, at which time annual costs can reduce to $3,500-$3,800 per student (below the number published by Charity Intelligence Canada).

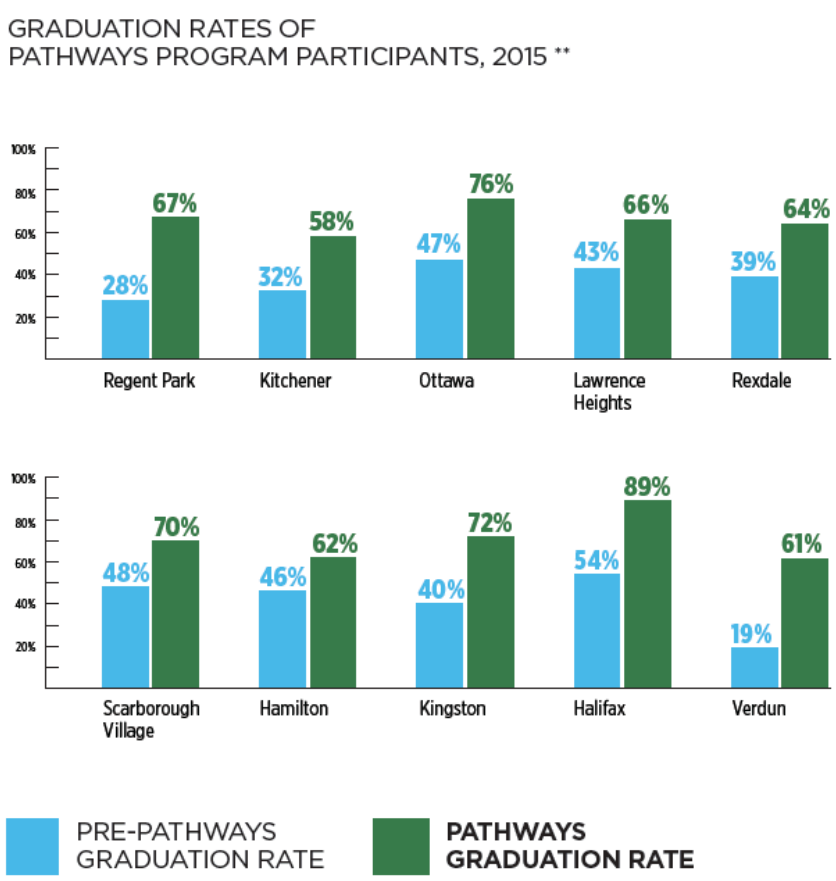
Human resources requirements are smaller at program launch. Pathways Canada suggests that one program director, a small number of SPSWs, and potentially an administrative support will meet needs in the early days of implementation. Over time, program developers and additional SPSWs will be added. Pathways Halifax-Spryfield and Pathways Kitchener reported spending approximately 80% of their budgets on human resources costs. Sites tend to claim between 10% and 13% for administration, leaving between 7% and 10% for financial supports and programming.

Salary and programming space costs are two significant cost drivers and can vary by community. As such, these figures should be considered estimates only.

2.9 IMPACT OF PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION

Pathways compares the pre-intervention graduation rates of the community with the graduation rates of program participants. Programs have demonstrated considerable impact across sites.

Figure 2. Graduation Rates Of Pathways Program Participants, 2015



* This number is calculated by finding the percentage increase from the pre-Pathways graduation rate (the graduation rate in the community prior to the arrival of the Pathways Program) to the actual graduation rate based on provincial standards of Pathways Program participants, then computing the average of this figure across all locations.

Pathways also tracks change in early indicators of graduation rates, including attendance and "on track to graduate" figures, which similarly reflect the positive impacts of the program.

A 2011 assessment of Pathways (Boston Consulting Group, 2011) indicates the program consistently reduces the dropout rate by approximately 70% and improves post-secondary enrolment by 300%. The assessment found Pathways participants enroll in university 10% more than the national average. The assessment also found Pathways delivers a 2,400% social return on investment for every charitable dollar invested, realized chiefly through increased government tax revenue and decreased government spending. The assessment estimates a cumulative societal benefit of $600,000 for each young person enrolled.

SECTION 3.0

PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION IN PRACTICE

This section provides an overview of how four communities are implementing the Pathways program components. The information is derived from an interview with staff from Pathways Canada and interviews with staff from host organizations at Pathways sites recommended by the Pathways Canada staff – Ottawa, Halifax-Spryfield, Winnipeg, and Kitchener. These sites were recommended on the basis of their longevity of operation and associated capacity to provide feedback on their experiences with implementation.

3.1 PATHWAYS OTTAWA

Year Established

2007

Host Organization

Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre (PQCHC) is a multi-service agency providing a variety of services, including access to primary health care, employment, housing, education, community capacity, health promotion, and mental health programming.

Scope

Pathways Ottawa targets six social housing complexes in the west end of Ottawa. These communities include over 4,000 individuals, mostly in single-parent households, with many residents living below the poverty line and almost all residents living below the average income level. Close to 30% of residents are newcomers to Canada. Children and youth comprise about 2/3 of the residents.

Approximately 400-500 young people participate in the Pathways Ottawa program each year.

Programming

Academic Supports

The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents identified academic tutoring as the key programmatic component of Pathways Ottawa. Tutoring supports are offered at two different locations, with one location providing tutoring four nights a week and another location two nights a week. Tutoring focuses primarily on subjects within math, sciences, and languages.

Volunteers provide tutoring services, supported by three host organization staff: two facilitators and one site support to manage attendance. Program participants commit to three hours of tutoring per week, which can be broken up over multiple days. Tutors receive initial training when they begin and then access ongoing specialized training, such as mental health support and first aid.

Social Supports

Implementation of social supports in Ottawa includes engagement, leadership, volunteer, and employment opportunities. In Grades 9 and 10, the program focuses on providing a suite of opportunities to engage program participants and build relationships – to "hook" them into programming – based on their interests, such as cooking classes, recreation at the local gym, and music production. In Grades 11 and 12, the focus on social supports shifts to leadership, volunteer, and employment opportunities. For participants in Grade 12, PQCHC brings in university representatives to share information (as a post-secondary transition support), and SPSWs help participants apply for post-secondary schools, OSAP funding, and external scholarships.

Participants are expected to attend 20 hours of social/mentoring supports over a one-year period and therefore do not need to attend every social/mentoring support opportunity.

Financial Supports

Ongoing financial supports – food vouchers and transit tickets – are provided by SPSWs to program participants at regular one-to-one meetings. On average, SPSWs provide $60 per month per student in ongoing financial supports for ten months of the year (these supports are not provided during the summer school break).

Participants who successfully meet their program commitments have $500 deposited in a scholarship fund annually. This scholarship can accrue up to $2,000 for successful participation over the four years of secondary school.

One-to-One Supports

Youth-centred planning and advocacy are provided by SPSWs, who work at an individual level with program participants to plan and set goals, troubleshoot, and connect to services and opportunities. While SPSWs work directly with students, they also liaise with parents and school staff and are part of broader networks that focus on educational success. Program participants and SPSWs often meet over the lunch break in secondary schools, where space is provided by school administrators.

Pathways Ottawa interview respondents indicated many participants are newcomers or immigrant students. There is a focus on helping these students navigate services and helping families understand the role parents play in their children's education.

Partners

The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents identified their partnership with the school as critical: data is provided at the board level, teachers assist with recruitment and information sharing (such as identifying eligible students and providing them with an information package about the program), and the school provides opportunity and space for SPSWs to meet with program participants in the school.

Pathways Ottawa works with community partners as needed to be responsive to the interests of program participants and avoid duplication of service. Corporate partners assist programmatically with social supports. The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents cited RBC's provision of a financial literacy workshop and employment programming as examples.

A Pathways Ottawa advisory group meets four times annually to plan and troubleshoot. This group helped organize the provision of programming materials when they could not be supplied due to budget constraints.

Administration

Human Resources

PQCHC employs approximately 20 staff (18-19 FTEs) to implement Pathways Ottawa, including three supervisors, two administrative staff, and 12 frontline staff, which includes 8.5 SPSWs. An individual SPSW caseload is approximately 50 students.

Approximately 60-100 volunteers annually are recruited to provide the tutoring component of the program.

The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents noted that management and administration of the program "works well when everyone is under the same roof" because everyone can talk to each other, privacy policies are less of an issue, and multiple organizations are not "fighting over turf." They identified that communication may be an issue if multiple organizations are responsible for coordinating service delivery.

Funding

Funding for Pathways Ottawa comes almost entirely from Pathways Canada. Pathways Ottawa has committed to work with local organizations, including United Way Ottawa and Ottawa Community Foundation, to help with funding.

Other Notes

- While the four core components of Pathways are stable, the implementation of them in Ottawa can vary according to program participants' strengths and challenges. Flexibility is required and desirable.
- Pathways Ottawa is investigating a Collective Impact model to connect the program with work of other aligned partners and work happening in the community focused on increasing secondary school graduation rates for priority demographics. The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents stated that while academic, mentoring, and extracurricular supports are well established, a missing component in the broader community is the SPSW role – a dedicated support to help young people navigate and connect to opportunities, connect with parents, develop relationships with schools, and provide overall wraparound support.
- As part of the Collective Impact approach, the Pathways Ottawa interview respondents discussed conducting mapping existing community resources, facilitating conversations to identify gaps and needs in service delivery, and helping build research and evaluation capacity within community organizations.
- The Pathways Ottawa interview respondents suggested seeking partners who recognize both the shifting needs of young people and that commitment to Pathways is a long-term proposition.
- Privacy concerns from school boards related to data sharing are important to address, particularly where there are concerns about anonymity of student data and publicizing graduation rates for different school boards.
- Participation in Pathways Canada allowed relationship development with other Pathways sites across Canada, facilitating knowledge exchange and capacity building for practitioners.

3.2 PATHWAYS HALIFAX-SPRYFIELD

Year Established

2010

Host Organization

Chebucto Connections is a community agency that provides "hub" services that support collaborative planning between organizations, community engagement, and connecting families with a variety of local services.

Scope

The program focuses on a neighbourhood in Halifax's eastern Chebucto Peninsula, a community of more than 4,000 residents with high community engagement, but challenging statistics related to poverty, high unemployment, and low education attainment. Local research indicates young people in the area also struggle with lack of access to transportation, lack of afterschool programming, and higher than average secondary school dropout rates.

The program has approximately 300 participants annually.

In Nova Scotia, Grade 9 is considered junior high school; however, Pathways Halifax-Spryfield still works with Grade 9 students to establish a link to the formal Pathways program in secondary school.

Programming

Academic Supports

Academic tutoring is provided on Tuesday evenings for participants in Grade 9, who must attend at least one hour weekly. For participants in Grades 10 to 12, tutoring is provided three to four nights per week, and participants must attend at least two hours weekly. Tutoring may be provided either at the Pathways Halifax-Spryfield programming space or at a secondary school. A maximum of 50 program participants can attend a tutoring session, and approximately eight volunteers provide tutoring at each session. Volunteers have provided one-on-one tutoring supports, however the Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent has suggested this is an infrequent occurrence, happening two to three times per year.

Pathways Halifax-Spryfield includes a specialized academic support initiative called "Not a Lot of Homework Club" for students with developmental disabilities. This initiative allows these students to participate in Pathways by removing the academic tutoring obligation and focusing instead on life skills and transitioning to community. The initiative runs two times per week.

Pathways Halifax-Spryfield hosts a coordinator focused on post-secondary transition support. Programming in this area includes workshops related to education and career planning. These workshops are available to all grades to help them engage in their education and think about their future after school. Specific workshops include three "get to know you" workshops; how to get a summer job; resume building; student loan workshops, in partnership with the provincial Department of Labour and Advanced Education; trades workshops, in partnership with the local trades hall; and career week, which is implemented instead of tutoring for a week in April to provide program participants with insight about different careers from visiting professionals.

The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent emphasized the importance of post-secondary transition support because they "discovered they're graduating, but not doing well. Even those who have good grades and great academic report cards go to university and flunk out in two months."

Social Supports

For junior high participants in Grade 9, Pathways Halifax-Spryfield has established an 18-week initiative in which SPSWs take over from health teachers in the classroom to provide a "healthy living" class designed to share information on health, but also promote Pathways and build relationships. The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent cited this initiative as an effective way to attract young people to the program.

Program participants in Grades 10 to 12 are able to access a variety of opportunities related to engagement, leadership, education, and employment. Participation in these opportunities can count toward the two hour per week commitment required for academic tutoring.

Financial Supports

Ongoing financial supports are provided every two weeks and include gift cards for grocery stores (3 x $10) and bus tickets. Participants may also choose to use ongoing financial supports to defray costs associated with school field trips. Pathways Halifax-Spryfield has established an approach in which participation in tutoring and attendance at school can impact provision of the Sobeys gift cards and bus tickets. Program participants are entitled to three grocery store gift cards every week and bus tickets. If they miss one hour of tutoring out of the four, they lose one gift card. If they miss two hours of tutoring, they lose two gift cards. The third card is attached to attendance at school.

The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent noted the use of ongoing financial supports as incentives for program participation can lead to challenging dynamics, including an increasing sense of entitlement on behalf of program participants or SPSWs feeling they are withholding basic needs if program participants are not meeting their commitments.

In addition to the $500 scholarship contribution provided annually, three local universities have committed to providing an additional $1,000 for Pathways graduates attending those universities. The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent suggested the scholarship support is of particular interest to parents and can help address barriers to post-secondary school related to concerns of incurring debt.

One-to-One Supports

One-to-one supports for Pathways Halifax-Spryfield are provided by SPSWs, who are regarded as "the glue" that elevates the Pathways approach beyond promoting programs to young people.

SPSWs provide individualized planning, problem solving, and advocacy for program participants, serving as positive mentors and, in the case of Pathways Halifax-Spryfield, often offering tutoring services directly. According to the Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent:

"SPSWs do everything. They don't have different roles. They are facilitating health classes, tutoring, helping facilitate career workshops...it's a catchall role. That's why their caseloads are only 30. They are responsible for nudging, supporting, and checking in with those 30 kids. They have work cellphones and so text and use Facebook [to connect with the program participants]. SPSWs help them get through crises, get referrals, think about school, the future, and set goals. It's a dynamic role because the focus is changing based on the student."

Partners

The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent identified buy-in from school boards and schools as important. Through sustained relationship-building efforts, Pathways Halifax-Spryfield established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and associated data sharing agreement with area secondary schools and school boards. The MOU provided the mechanism for Pathways Halifax-Spryfield staff to use school space. Further, the MOU allowed Pathways Halifax-Spryfield staff to access information related to attendance, grades, and upcoming assignments for Pathways participants.

Local universities were also identified as key partners that not only provide additional financial supports to program alumni, as noted above, but also serve as a source of volunteers for the tutoring program. Local universities have served in resource development and fundraising roles.

Corporate partners have contributed to fundraising initiatives and have also provided career workshops to program participants, coming to career week and sometimes offering to host a group of students in their office to conduct workshops. A fundraising group comprised of a small number of local business people help with resource development.

Pathways Halifax-Spryfield engages community partners to provide a variety of mentorship opportunities. SPSWs will also refer program participants to community partners based on the individualized needs of the program participants. Community partners change over time as programming availability and program participants' interests change.

Administration

Human Resources

Chebucto Connections employs approximately 16 FTEs to manage Pathways Halifax-Spryfield, including ten SPSWs, an administrator, a bookkeeper, a post-secondary employment coordinator, a small number of program facilitators, and a program director.

The average SPSW caseload is 30 program participants. SPSWs may be involved in facilitating health classes and direct tutoring in addition to their planning and advocacy roles.

Pathways Halifax-Spryfield engages approximately 100 tutoring volunteers annually, drawn largely from local universities. Program facilitators support the tutoring sessions.

Funding

When Pathways Halifax-Spryfield began, Pathways Canada was the funder. Currently, approximately 70% of Pathways Halifax-Spryfield funding comes from Pathways Canada, with the remaining 30% provided through local fund development. The agreement with Pathways Canada for the Halifax-Spryfield site outlines expectations for local funding to take on an increasing share of program costs over time.

The largest cost for delivery of the Pathways program is for human resources, estimated at approximately 80% of the annual operating budget.

Other Notes

- As highlighted by the Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent, the view of poverty needs to go beyond statistics to an understanding of where and how "poverty was born" in the community.
- The transition from elementary to secondary school can be difficult for many young people due to increased expectations and workload.
- Transportation is critical – program participants need to be able to easily access programming locations in order to participate.
- Sustaining parent engagement is challenging, as some parents do not know how or do not have the capacity to support their children in their education.
- Two SPSWs focus specifically on supporting only Grade 9 participants and as these program participants enter secondary school, they will be assigned new SPSWs.
- Chebucto Connections cited its longtime presence in the community as the reason it had the trust and support to serve as the host organization.
- Low-income neighbourhoods can get "program fatigue" when programs come and go.

3.3 PATHWAYS WINNIPEG

Year Established

2010

Host Organization

Community Education Development Association (CEDA) Winnipeg is a community development organization that provides training and workshops for non-profit groups and works to enhance collective problem-solving and link communities with available resources.

Scope

The Pathways Winnipeg approach focuses on a number of neighbourhoods reporting higher incidences of low income and lower educational attainment rates. In the northern section of Winnipeg, where these neighbourhoods are located, over 70% of families with secondary school students are of Indigenous descent. This demographic trend influences the program approach in Winnipeg.

The catchment area of Pathways Winnipeg is larger than many other sites. This approach was used to reflect the relatively high mobility of the target population and avoid having program participants "fall through the cracks."

Pathways Winnipeg serves 300 Grade 8 to 12 students in six secondary schools and two additional off-campus sites.

Programming

Academic Supports

Tutoring is at the core of the Pathways Winnipeg approach. In addition to providing volunteer-driven academic support, tutoring can be a place to provide other program offerings and supports, including advocacy and post-secondary transition supports. Additionally, the Pathways Winnipeg tutoring sessions include a meal component with a strong cultural aspect with protocols and purpose. These meals are held every evening and are considered equivalent to academic supports in importance. The peak time for tutoring is 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., so dinner is prepared for 5:30 p.m. Pathways Winnipeg is the only site with a budgeted nutrition component.

Tutoring is provided every night of the week and program participants are expected to attend at least 12 hours of tutoring per month. Tutors have had to be hired due to volunteer recruitment challenges.

Post-secondary transition support is embedded in the role of the SPSW, as there are few, if any, partner programs available in the community to help program participants navigate the transition from secondary school to post-secondary school.

Social Supports

Social supports are important for program participants who may be dealing with mental health issues, bullying, difficult relationships, and the crisis of suicide in the community. Program participants are expected to attend at least four hours per month of social support activities.

The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent described mentoring as the "unspoken engine" of the program. Opportunities provided to program participants help to build relationships with SPSWs, who serve as trusted mentors. SPSWs try to extend relationship building to parents and families as best they can, though it was noted that it could be challenging.

Financial Supports

Ongoing financial supports include grocery vouchers and transit passes. The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent said when the program design began, due to program scheduling and availability of tutoring times, it was not easy for marginalized and low-income young people to access the program when they had other obligations and expectations. Further, knowing consistent financial support was available engendered trust in the program. Therefore, in the early days of implementation, program participants received ongoing financial supports regardless of participation levels. Now, the program schedule has been adjusted to be more accessible and distribution of financial supports is tied to successfully meeting expected participation levels.

Program participants accumulate hours over the year to receive the scholarship. The timing and pacing of how these hours accumulate varies by participant.

Transit passes take on increased importance for Pathways Winnipeg due to the wider geography of the program and its offerings.

One-to-One Supports

The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent characterized the SPSW as the "Swiss army knife" of the program, performing multiple different functions to help program participants navigate the program successfully and achieve positive educational outcomes. Because of the dispersed geography of the program and relative mobility of the participants, the SPSW plays an important role maintaining contact with program participants through any housing changes they may experience.

Partners

Though initially the program was meant to be autonomous from schools, Pathways Winnipeg maintains a close relationship with the schools and cited the relationship as critical to program success. In addition to data sharing (attendance and report cards), school staff communicate with SPSWs regarding assignments, general progress, and any potential concerns. This relationship provides school staff some assurance that even if students are not in class, someone is supporting them and linking them to supports.

SPSWs used to be physically in school spaces; however, the dispersed geography and program size made this approach untenable as the program grew. Notably, school board staff members sit on the program advisory body.

The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent emphasized the importance of engaging partners in the program, noting relationship-driven collaborations have facilitated great capacity, resilience, and innovation in a number of organizations. The collaborations work because all organizations are centred on supporting the young person.

The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent articulated the value of association with Pathways Canada, stating:

"Having the national footprint and presence, and having this partnership with a local agency, allows students to have a sense that there is a way out. It opens a door where if you grew up with a lot of restriction and reduction in choice, avenues start to close and you don't see yourself going anywhere. Partnering with a local agency that is well-respected, with 30 years of community development work…allows students to feel locally supported by a national outcome."

Administration

Human Resources

To operate Pathways Winnipeg, CEDA Winnipeg employs approximately 20 FTEs, including ten SPSWs, five program facilitators, three managers, and one nutritionist with an additional support staff. The nutritionist and support staff prepare the nightly meal for the tutoring program. The average caseload for SPSWs is 30 program participants.

Pathways Winnipeg uses paid tutors – usually university students – to provide tutoring due to challenges finding volunteers able to make long-term commitments to the program.

Funding

Core funding from Pathways Canada is supplemented by financial support from the Province of Manitoba and the local United Way.

These additional sources allow Pathways Winnipeg to engage young people in Grade 8, supporting early engagement and successful transition to secondary school.

The provincial government provides support for the annual bursaries, but sets its own criteria for how this financial assistance is earned.

Other Notes

- Pathways Winnipeg uses a trauma-informed approach and incorporates an Indigenous model of youth development called the Circle of Courage (Government of Manitoba 2017), which takes a medicine wheel approach that includes cultivation of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The Circle of Courage model is used in concert with the Pathways model.
- The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent noted SPSWs have a unique challenge – to build relationships and be supportive while constantly preparing program participants for independence at the next stage of their education.
- Some teachers may regard SPSWs as similar to Educational Assistants and defer behaviour challenges to them, highlighting the importance of clarifying the SPSW role with schools.
- The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent noted the importance of understanding the supports available in the community to which parents can be connected.
- When the model is implemented, it needs to grow with the community and take on the form of the community to properly address identified needs.
- It is important for program participants to reflect on growth, not just pass courses and get a diploma.
- The Pathways Winnipeg interview respondent suggested the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the current climate around Indigenous issues present an opportunity for Pathways programs to incorporate an Indigenous lens and ways of knowing into the approach.

3.4 PATHWAYS KITCHENER

Year Established

2007

Host Organization

Carizon is a multi-service organization providing counselling, children's mental heath, and educational and community supports.

Scope

Pathways Kitchener focuses on two neighbourhoods with high levels of diversity in language and culture. These neighbourhoods include a large percentage of families living in public housing and have among the highest dropout rates in the city. Together, the two neighbourhoods are home to five secondary schools. The Pathways Kitchener interview respondents encouraged inclusive approaches to catchment areas to avoid stigmatization.

The number of program participants in Pathways Kitchener is approximately 630 annually.

Programming

Academic Supports

Volunteers and staff provide tutoring four nights per week in a large group setting. Pathways Kitchener provides specialty tutoring programs for English Language Learners and seniors. Program participants receive assistance with their homework, but also learn about time management, study skills, and organizational skills.

Originally, every program participant was expected to attend at least three hours per week. Over time, the SPSWs have tailored expectations to meet program participants' needs and situations. For instance, if school grades and attendance are positive, program participants may be expected to attend fewer hours of tutoring.

Social Supports

Mentoring opportunities are provided four nights per week. When the program began, different types of opportunities were targeted to specific grades. In Grade 9, opportunities focused on recreation and engagement events. In Grades 10 and 11, opportunities focused on building resumes, meeting volunteer hours, and finding a first job. In Grade 12, opportunities focused on career mentoring, helping students meet graduation requirements, and preparation for post-secondary options. While this general approach still holds, some flexibility is allowed as SPSWs respond to the needs and interests of the program participants.

Financial Supports

Originally, all students received full financial supports. Now, provision of financial supports is linked to program participation. Ongoing financial supports are given out every two weeks for successful program participation and include bus tickets, grocery cards, and lunch vouchers.

Ongoing financial supports can also be provided to program participants attending Catholic schools to purchase uniforms. Program participants in Grade 9 receive many financial supports. As they move through secondary school and begin seeking part-time employment, the number of financial supports they receive tapers off. The decision to taper off supports must be responsive to the program participants, who may have employment or other barriers – as one Pathways Kitchener interview respondent framed it, "we can't cookie cutter the approach."

The scholarship can be used for post-secondary tuition costs or can be used to support extra training associated with meaningful employment opportunities.

One-to-One Supports

SPSWs act as a link between the student, the program, and resources available in the community. SPSWs meet with program participants in the school or in community spaces. The average caseload for SPSWs in Pathways Kitchener is 40 students. This is lower than the maximum ratio of 50 because the role has become blended and SPSWs are involved in delivering some program components.

An evaluation of Pathways Kitchener suggests that the SPSW is regarded as the most impactful element of the program and serves a variety of key functions, including the following described by a Pathways Kitchener interview respondent:

"They focus on education, but also have a health and wellbeing focus. They are able to offer resources in the community and are someone to practice with if students need to have difficult conversations. So they add to the support network of students, which is recognized by students as a huge support, which is a great determining factor in their success."

Notably, SPSWs at Pathways Kitchener are called SSWs – Student Support Workers.

Partners

As a children's mental health agency, Carizon had an existing Memorandum of Understanding with the school boards when the program launched, facilitating easier sharing of academic and attendance data and provision of space in schools for SPSWs to meet with program participants.

As a multi-service agency, Carizon provides some program components directly. Pathways Kitchener is often provided in-kind programming space to deliver these components at locations in the community. SPSWs may provide in-house referrals or refer to other community partners to support program participants as required. Pathways Kitchener has engaged community partners to deliver specific workshops, such as financial literacy training. Community partners may shift over time, as students need different supports.

A variety of partners, including schools and community centres, provide in-kind or discounted programming space.

Corporate partners provide some local funding to supplement core funding from Pathways Canada. Google is a supportive local organization that organizes tours of the building as part of the mentoring program. Corporate partners are often engaged to expose program participants to information on different types of careers.

Administration

Human Resources

Pathways Kitchener is supported by approximately 22 FTEs, including 21 SPSWs (some of whom are part-time), two supervisors, an administrative role, and a manager/director. The average caseload for a SPSW is 40 program participants; however, this can vary depending on the needs of the program participants and the specific roles of the SPSWs (e.g. if a SPSW is in a leadership role, she/he may support fewer program participants).

Annually, Pathways Kitchener engages approximately 120 volunteers for its tutoring program.

Funding

Pathways Kitchener is funded almost entirely by Pathways Canada, though local partners augment these resources. As the program looks to expand, local organizations will support expanded financial costs. Pathways Kitchener is able to use 80% of Pathways Canada funding for human resource costs and up to 13% for administrative costs. The Pathways Kitchener interview respondents estimated the program spends $12,000 per month on transit passes for program participants.

Pathways Kitchener seeks additional private sector funding for specific projects when a need is identified. For example, additional programming meant an increased need for bus tickets, for which Pathways Kitchener sought additional donor support.

Other Notes

- Schools need to be supportive at both the board level and school level to avoid potential issues with institutional policies, union protocols, etc.
- It cannot just be about need. The community has to *want* Pathways.
- Over time, the execution of the Pathways program components has become more blended; single opportunities may often meet multiple component areas.
- Program participants can speak with any staff member and connect to all program elements, providing a “no wrong door” approach.

- Pathways Kitchener provides a credit counselling workshop for program participants in lower grades to help them understand budgeting and provides workshops on OSAP and credit cards for program participants in upper grades.

SECTION 4.0

THEMES AND INSIGHTS

This section identifies key themes and insights that emerged from the Pathways literature, interviews with staff from host organizations, and the interview with staff from Pathways Canada. Themes and insights are organized by those related to the program components, those related to program administration, and a hypothetical "typical" Pathways program.

Note that themes and insights generated through interviews draw from a small sample size.

4.1 PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The SPSW is instrumental to the success of the Pathways approach.

While the role of the SPSW is not explicitly identified in the program model, it is the primary mechanism for delivering one-to-one supports and plays a critical role in supporting other program components. Interview respondents characterized the SPSW as "the glue," the "Swiss army knife," and "the secret ingredient" that drives participation in the program and acts as a supportive mentor, providing wraparound supports to program participants. SPSWs work with program participants to plan, connect, advocate, liaise, and troubleshoot. In some cases, SPSWs tutor program participants directly. The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent suggested, "SPSWs do everything. They don't have different roles."

Tutoring is the core academic support activity.

Within the Academic Support program component area, tutoring is the consistent, core activity in which program participants engage. Program participation agreements signed by participants include clear commitments to attend tutoring support for a specified number of hours per week or month. Ongoing financial supports are tied to successfully meeting these commitments. The regularity and intensity of tutoring as a programmatic activity suggest the importance of maintaining a base of volunteers (or paid staff) to provide tutoring regularly.

Mentoring is about engagement as much as skill development.

Host organization interview respondents emphasized the importance of early and continual engagement in the program. To "hook" young people, mentoring activities provided through the Social Supports program component often emphasized opportunities that are attractive to young people regardless of their educational significance, particularly in Grades 9 and 10. These early engagement opportunities facilitate relationship building and trust building between program participants and the SPSWs.

The importance of relationships is embedded in the Pathways approach. A Pathways Canada interview respondent noted, "We do have research on what matters. It's not a specific element of the program that matters more than another, it's the fact that it's based on relationships."

As the program participants reach the upper grades, opportunities can become more intentional about leadership, skill development, and post-secondary preparation with smaller impacts on engagement level.

Program components vary and overlap in their implementation.

Over the past year, Pathways Canada worked with multiple sites to review how the model is delivered, asking "why, how, and what." The Pathways Canada interview respondents suggested this review revealed the "why" and "how" do not change across sites – the core goal remains to help young people graduate from secondary school using the four program components "so they can then go on to achieve success, however they might define that."

While the program components are stable, the implementation can vary by site with respect to what is offered and how it is offered. The Pathways Kitchener interview respondents noted their "strict adherence" to the model has changed over the past ten years. The same site may alter its approach over time as it adapts to changing circumstances and new insights about students' needs and interests. Moreover, the implementation of program components tends to overlap – an initiative or opportunity can be designed to meet multiple program components. All of this can occur without loss of fidelity to the model. In fact, such approaches support the model insofar as it favours a holistic wraparound approach.

4.2 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

A centralized administrative model (i.e. a single host agency) is desirable for managing program implementation.

Multiple interviewed respondents emphasized the value of a single organization being responsible for administration and coordinating program delivery. A Pathways Ottawa interview respondent stated, "We know it works well when everyone is under the same roof." A centralized host agency confers many benefits, including easier data sharing between SPSWs, increased ability to coordinate efforts to provide a holistic, wraparound approach, lack of "turf protection," existing foundation of trust between program staff, single point of contact for program inquiries, and general administrative and reporting ease.

Community partners continue to play important roles in a centralized administrative model. Host agency staff may refer out to community partners or ask community partners to deliver program components to avoid duplication.

As noted earlier, Pathways Canada is thinking through how a distributed administrative model might work, but the general consensus among host agencies interviewed is a centralized administrative model is preferred. The Pathways Canada interview respondents noted that the Quantum Quinte[2] education support program in Belleville, Ontario uses a more distributed approach.

Buy-in from school boards and schools is essential.

Given Pathways' goal of improving secondary school graduation rates, buy-in and participation of the education sector is key to successful implementation of Pathways. At the policy level, school boards need to recognize the mutually beneficial outcome of Pathways for students and be prepared to enter Memoranda of Understanding and data sharing agreements with the Pathways host organization. These agreements are built on trust and relationships, which may vary by board. The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent noted it took time for school boards to engage and also suggested a program might not work if "doors are closed" to the schools.

Schools can support ongoing program implementation by providing space in schools for SPSWs and program participants to meet, communicating with students about the program and sharing upcoming opportunities, and encouraging dialogue between school staff and SPSWs about upcoming assignments, opportunities, and challenges.

Community readiness is a combination of good engagement and good data.

Host organization interview respondents emphasized the importance of early and ongoing community engagement to program success. The Pathways Kitchener interview respondents suggested that families in the community should not only understand the *need* for Pathways, they should also *want* Pathways in their community as a way to address graduation rates. Since community partners play an important role in Pathways, an established culture of trust and collaboration is valuable, as well as broad support for the host agency – a function of its reputation, capacity, and longevity in the community.

Partners involved in Pathways should have a deep understanding of the communities they wish to serve. Neighbourhood-level statistics related to education and income level are important, but they should be supplemented with additional qualitative and quantitative data, such as patterns of mobility and the cultural and linguistic makeup of the community, to provide a more complete picture of the community profile.

Host organizations will want to pay close attention to the availability, accessibility, and costs of potential programming spaces when assessing community readiness.

[2] For more information, see https://www.quantumquinte.ca.

Pathways partners need to be ready to commit to the long term.

Impacting graduation rates is not a short-term proposition. The Pathways research indicates educational success is not a point in time. The host organization and other contributing partners need a clear plan for financial and programmatic sustainability for many years.

The Pathways Halifax-Spryfield interview respondent observed that residents in priority neighbourhoods suffer from "program fatigue" and become wary of pilot programs coming in to the neighbourhood and leaving after one or two years. A Pathways Kitchener interview respondent echoed this sentiment, stating, "You can't start and then think it's too much and take it away."

Association with the Pathways brand can help offset concerns about longevity, as Pathways is a national program that has been in place since 2001.

4.3 A "TYPICAL" PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Recognizing the limits of the interview sample size, this section outlines what a "typical" fully operational (i.e. participants in Grades 9 to 12) Pathways program might look like.

Scope

- Targeted to one or two neighbourhoods with higher rates of low income and lower rates of education attainment.
- Participation eligibility for secondary school students within these neighbourhoods is universal and program participation is voluntary.
- Approximately 500 participants in Grades 9 through 12.

Programming

Academic Supports

- Volunteers provide tutoring four nights per week with support from a small number of host organization staff.
- Program participants are expected to attend tutoring at least three hours weekly.
- Post-secondary transition workshops are provided by post-secondary school staff (focusing on academic life in post-secondary school) or SPSWs (focusing on applications, funding, study skills, etc.).

Social Supports

- Host organization staff members, including SPSWs, coordinate a variety of interest-based engagement opportunities for program participants in Grades 9 and 10, working with community partners as appropriate.
- Host organization staff members, including SPSWs, coordinate mentoring opportunities for skill building and preparation for post-secondary school or meaningful work for program participants in Grades 11 and 12.

Financial Supports

- SPSWs provide program participants up to $30 in grocery store gift cards and/or transit passes for meeting program commitments.
- Program participants receive an annual $500 scholarship for successful program participation. The scholarship can be accessed following graduation from secondary school and can be used to offset post-secondary tuition costs or costs associated with preparation for meaningful employment.

One-to-One Supports

- SPSWs meet regularly with program participants to plan, connect, advocate, liaise, and troubleshoot.
- SPSWs provide wraparound supports to program participants and establish appropriate referrals and connections to additional services and supports.

Partners

- School boards and the host organization sign Memoranda of Understanding and data sharing agreements outlining roles and responsibilities of each.
- Schools provide meeting space for SPSWs to meet with program participants.
- School staff are engaged with SPSWs, sharing information and collectively troubleshooting, as appropriate.
- Community partners provide some mentoring programming opportunities and are referred to by SPSWs, as required.
- University students are recruited as tutoring volunteers.
- Private sector partners provide career-focused workshops and may serve on fundraising bodies associated with the local Pathways site.

Administration

Human Resources

- The Pathways program is supported by 15 SPSWs with a caseload of 30-40 program participants each, one manager, four supervisors/facilitators, one administrative staff, and 100 tutoring volunteers.

Funding

- The annual program cost is roughly $2M.
- Pathways Canada provides most of the operational funding associated with the program, particularly in the first few years of implementation.
- A fundraising body coordinated by the host organization is tasked with increasing local investment in the Pathways program.

SECTION 5.0

LONDON'S SERVICE DELIVERY CONTEXT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

This section of the report provides an overview of existing assets and initiatives in London that support positive educational outcomes for young people. This research was undertaken to determine whether London organizations could leverage and align available resources to implement a local version of Pathways. The research informs two options for implementation outlined in Section 6.0: Options for Consideration.

5.1 LONDON'S CHILD AND YOUTH NETWORK

London's Child and Youth Network (CYN) is comprised of service providers working collaboratively to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families in London, united by a shared vision: "Happy, healthy children and youth today; caring, creative, responsible adults tomorrow." The CYN has served as a platform for collective action for more than a decade. In this time, CYN partners have developed a deeply embedded culture of collaboration. The CYN's third collective plan for community change, *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*, articulates key elements of the CYN approach, including, among others, community development, open membership, collaborative planning, consensus decision-making, and targeted universalism, the principle of targeting efforts to specific populations to achieve universal goals.

CYN Priorities

- Ending Poverty
- Making Literacy a Way of Life
- Healthy Eating & Healthy Physical Activity
- Creating a Family-Centred Service System

CYN partners have undertaken many collaborative initiatives focused on helping young people achieve positive educational outcomes, including:

- Grade 7 & 8 Wraparound Demonstration Project – a holistic, collaborative initiative that connects young people to supports and opportunities to help them transition successfully to secondary school.
- thisisliteracy.ca – a website that includes resources for young people to support acquisition of literacy skills.
- Matched Savings Program – provides matched RESP contributions to eligible families
- Real Voice – an arts-based initiative that engages young people to develop leadership skills and self-expression.

- Literacy resources and tools – various literacy resources and tools are promoted and shared at community events throughout London.
- Youth research – literacy programming and youth transitions literature reviews developed to facilitate evidence-informed approaches to supporting young people in future CYN initiatives (Child and Youth Network, 2008; Child and Youth Network, 2012; Child and Youth Network, 2017).

Because of the holistic and interdependent nature of the CYN approach, many other CYN initiatives generate positive impacts for young people. This section calls attention to a few notable examples that are particularly relevant to the aims of the research.

In *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*, CYN partners have articulated commitments to influence outcomes related to educational success, school preparedness, and availability of resources in neighbourhoods, among others. Beyond the commitment to exploring the implementation of Pathways, the agenda also includes two initiatives built on the youth-focused research noted above – Youth Project Design and the Youth Framework.

Youth Project Design

Youth Project Design is an inter-priority initiative designed to address the shared outcome of increasing secondary school graduation rates in London. The Literacy and Ending Poverty priorities are working with young people to generate youth-driven initiatives focused on increasing graduation rates in which young people act in leadership roles, supported by CYN partners. The approach is built on the feedback of more than 680 young people, who provided insight on challenges that impact graduating from secondary school.

Through this engagement, young people identified the importance of caring, engaged, knowledgeable adults to support them; access to leadership and professional opportunities; access to community resources; self-motivation; and gaining skills required to navigate and access resources (Child and Youth Network, 2015b). These dimensions of support align well with the Pathways approach articulated in Section 3.0: Pathways to Education in Practice and informed the decision to investigate Pathways' utility for London.

CYN Youth Framework

Built on research and direct engagement with hundreds of young people in London, the CYN Youth Framework (2015a) serves as a guide for decision-making and planning. It provides a menu of outcomes and indicators that can be referenced in the design, implementation, and evaluation of activities, programs, and services that help young people thrive. While specific activities, programs, and services may vary, the CYN has designed the framework as a consistent, collective way for partners to design and measure strategies that support young people.

The CYN Youth Framework is built on six guiding principles for working with young people:

1. Strengths-Based
2. Youth Voice
3. Impact
4. Inclusivity
5. Accountability
6. Neighbourhood-Based

The focus on youth-centred, neighbourhood-based approaches aligns well with the Pathways program model articulated in Section 3.0: Pathways to Education in Practice. As an established community-informed strategy for collaboratively and consistently serving young people, the CYN Youth Framework provides support for coordination of efforts across organizations, an important feature of a potential made-in-London approach.

For more information on the CYN Youth Framework, visit https://www.cynyouthframework.com.

5.2 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN LONDON

London has many service providers supporting young people in programming and initiatives beyond those listed in *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*. Research for this report included a concise scan of services in London that align with the components of the Pathways program model. The intention of the scan was to provide an indication of whether existing services could be drawn upon to mirror the Pathways program components, rather than a comprehensive list of services for young people.

A summary of London's service delivery availability with respect to Pathways program components is provided in the table below.

Pathways Program Component	Availability of Services	Notes
Academic Supports • *Tutoring* • *Post-secondary transition*	Tutoring services are available from multiple community-based service providers. Resources are also available through the school boards.	Community organizations and resource centres provide academic tutoring services and homework help through one-on-one or small group support.
Social Supports • *Group mentoring* • *Career exploration and mentoring*	Social supports that focus on engagement, mentoring, and leadership development are available from a wide variety of service providers in London.	Depending on how "mentoring" is understood by the community, this category can include a large breadth of services.

Financial Supports • *Transit and lunch vouchers* • *Scholarships and internships*	Scholarships and apprenticeship supports are available from a limited number of service providers and the Government of Ontario. Food and transit vouchers are provided through multiple service providers, often on an as-needed basis.	Requirements to access some existing scholarships, apprenticeship supports, and vouchers may not match the inclusive approach taken by Pathways wherein each program participant receives regular financial supports if the participant's commitments to the program are met.
One-to-One Supports • *Youth-centred planning* • *Advocacy*	Some service providers deliver the type of individualized, case management approach to one-to-one supports described in the Pathways model. However, the scan did not reveal any organizations that had dedicated case management roles focused specifically on educational attainment.	Many service providers in London provide individualized, ongoing supports for young people they serve. The Pathways model calls for a dedicated role that is instrumental not only in providing one-to-one supports, but also coordinating opportunities in other program component areas with a specific focus on educational attainment.

The Boys and Girls Club of London also offers an initiative called My Action Plan to Education (MAP), which is designed to help young people achieve positive educational outcomes. The MAP program's components model those of Pathways:

1. Academic
    a. Providing students with tutoring and homework help.
    b. Assisting students to develop academic goals and helping them reach those goals.
2. Social
    a. Providing opportunities to develop relationships with mentors and peers.
    b. Encouraging social engagement through the Boys and Girls Club community.
3. Financial
    a. Providing immediate assistance for transportation, food, clothing, books, and other educational support materials.
    b. Helping students to find and apply for appropriate scholarships, bursaries, and grants.

4. Advocacy
    a. Partnering with parents, students, and community agencies to ensure school attendance, academic, and personal achievements.

(*Boys and Girls Club of London, 2017*)

For more information on the MAP program, visit: http://www.bgclondon.ca/children-youth-programs/learn-with-us-education-career-building/my-action-plan-to-education.

Summary Of London's Position With Respect To Pathways

The philosophy underlying the Pathways approach is well aligned with the approach service providers take in London through the CYN. The focus on evidence-informed, collaborative, holistic, neighbourhood-based, youth-centric practices espoused by Pathways Canada is reflected in the CYN's approach, as articulated in *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*. From an outcome-based perspective, Pathways' goal to increase secondary school graduation rates reflects one of the CYN's outcomes: "More young people will graduate from secondary school (or the equivalent)" (Child and Youth Network, 2017). The CYN Youth Framework and Youth Project Design represent robust examples of the CYN's engagement in the work and capacity to implement these principles in practice.

Programmatically, many service providers in London could be engaged to meet the Academic Support and Social Support components of the Pathways model. However, the program scan revealed a shortage of existing programs that address the Financial and One-to-One Supports program components in the specific way they are conceived in the Pathways program model. Pursuing a made-in-London approach would necessitate identifying organizations able to shift or expand their focus, and identifying stable, sufficient resources associated with these components.

Administratively, London has multiple organizations that meet the "desirable criteria" for a host organization shared by Pathways Canada in Section 2.6: Program Partners. London's collaborative culture and communications processes would facilitate a distributed backbone support; however, some challenges managing administration across organizations would still need to be addressed.

SECTION 6.0

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The literature review and interviews used to generate the data above were designed to inform the CYN's decision on how to proceed with Pathways. This section outlines four potential options for consideration:

1. Status quo.
2. Apply to be a Pathways site.
3. Develop a Pathways-parallel for London.
4. Develop a distributed model of administration and program delivery.

Each option describes the advantages of the approach, considerations, and questions for further exploration.

6.1 OPTION 1: STATUS QUO

The status quo considers the value and impact of the current service delivery context for increasing secondary school graduation rates in London.

Advantages

As noted above, through the CYN, London has a strong network of community partners collaborating on complex social issues. *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021* articulates increasing secondary school graduation rates as one of its outcomes, and partners have planned or implemented multiple initiatives that support positive educational outcomes for young people. Through the development of the Youth Framework, CYN partners are increasing the alignment of their efforts toward shared outcomes young people in London have identified as important, including education.

Currently, the Boys and Girls Club of London operates the MAP program, which mirrors the Pathways program model in its design and delivery.

As the status quo, this option requires no incremental resource investment, allowing CYN partners to direct efforts toward other initiatives.

Considerations

Though the existing service delivery context in London is strong, CYN partners committed to investigating implementing the Pathways model.

The inclusion of this initiative suggests partners have identified an opportunity to do more. The status quo is an inherently viable option; choosing it becomes a question of impact. If partners choose to maintain the status quo, the CYN will need to articulate the supporting rationale for not pursuing the initiative further.

Questions For Further Exploration

If this option is pursued, will the CYN need to pursue other strategies to meet its goal of more young people graduating secondary school?

6.2 OPTION 2: APPLY TO BE A PATHWAYS SITE

In this option, CYN partners identify and support a potential host organization to apply to Pathways Canada to become a Pathways site, following the process outlined in Section 2.7: Implementation Approach.

Advantages

A successful application to become a Pathways site directly addresses the initiative for a "community-wide, coordinated model to increase secondary school graduation rates" identified in *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*. Association with Pathways Canada confers a number of benefits, including:

- An evidence-based, impactful approach to increasing secondary school graduation rates.
- Ties to the established Pathways brand, useful in addressing concerns about longevity.
- Strong financial investment to support what is a resource-intensive initiative.
- Access to programmatic resources and supports to facilitate successful start-up and implementation.

While Pathways Canada has already met its required growth commitments, interview respondents indicated the organization is open to expanding the number of sites it supports across Canada. Future opportunities for growth will need to consider how to reach more students in different ways without access to significant additional investment. Consideration of new Pathways sites will be informed by identified socio-demographic need as well as local opportunity, including strong local partnerships, the ability of local partners to leverage existing community assets, and the presence of a strong, credible partner to serve as host organization.

CYN's strong collaborative culture, understanding of community, and existing shared resource investments are attractive to Pathways Canada. While the outcome of an application relies on a board decision from Pathways Canada, London appears to be well positioned to pursue such an application.

Considerations

Pathways Canada and the CYN share many similarities in approach. It is noted, however, that the initiative outlined in *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021* articulates a "community-wide" intent, while Pathways sites are most often targeted to a small number of neighbourhoods. Further, the emphasis on a single host organization in a leadership role for program delivery may contrast the open collaboration and egalitarian ethos of the CYN. A strong application to Pathways will likely need to include a clear articulation of financial, in-kind, and programmatic resource commitments from community partners, beyond Pathways funding.

The host organization will need to comply with reporting, branding, and participation obligations outlined by Pathways Canada.

Questions For Further Exploration

Is the CYN willing to change the initiative's geographic scope from community-wide to neighbourhood-based if required to become a Pathways site?

Will key partners commit in principle to participation in Pathways for the purposes of the application?

How will a potential host organization be selected through CYN processes?

6.3 OPTION 3: DEVELOP A PATHWAYS-PARALLEL FOR LONDON

This option involves using the Pathways research, program model, and implementation experiences to develop a London-specific initiative that is not tied to Pathways Canada, but mirrors the Pathways program model.

Advantages

The primary advantage of this option is it leverages the substantial research, program design, and evaluation efforts that have gone into the development of the Pathways approach, but allows for local autonomy in implementation. Such autonomy could facilitate modifications and refinements to the model (though this would result in a loss of fidelity to the model) and bypass reporting, branding, and participation obligations with Pathways Canada.

As noted in Section 2.0: Pathways to Education Program Model, London is well served programmatically with respect to the Academic Support and Social Support program components.

Considerations

Of the four key benefits outlined in Option 2, Option 3 retains one – "Evidence-based, impactful approach to increasing secondary school graduation rates" – and loses three:

- Ties to the established Pathways brand, useful in addressing concerns about longevity;
- Strong financial investment to support what is a resource-intensive initiative; and
- Access to programmatic resources and supports to facilitate successful start-up and implementation.

If this option is pursued, CYN partners will need to determine which organization can serve as host and identify stable sources for long-term investment in the program. As noted in Option 2, the emphasis on a single host organization in a leadership role for program delivery may contrast the open collaboration and egalitarian ethos of the CYN.

The SPSWs represent a significant proportion of program costs; however, they are instrumental in the delivery of all Pathways program components, and the One-to-One Supports program component in particular.

Questions For Further Exploration

Are there stable, viable sources of support that can meet the expected $1.7M to $2.2M annual cost of a typical Pathways program?

Is there an organization that has capacity to align existing resources to support a Pathways program?

6.4 OPTION 4: DEVELOP A DISTRIBUTED MODEL OF ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM DELIVERY

This option considers how existing partners and programs might be brought together in a distributed model of administration and program delivery – one in which programs and staff across multiple organizations work together to implement the program components and administer the program.

Advantages

This option maximizes responsiveness to existing community assets and the CYN approach. Through collaborative planning and use of existing infrastructure, such as the CYN Youth Framework, partners can design and coordinate mechanisms to deliver program components to a neighbourhood or neighbourhoods of interest in a way that maximizes community assets and interests.

Such an approach could intentionally aim for a community-wide lens, as proposed in *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*, though this adaptation would position the approach that much further from the original Pathways program model.

A distributed model of administration and program delivery also distributes the resource effort across multiple organizations. Given the resource intensity of Pathways, the distribution of effort is advantageous in the absence of additional funding sources.

Considerations

London has a number of service providers that align with two program component areas – Academic Supports and Social Supports – and fewer providers that align with the remaining two program component areas – Financial Supports and One-to-One Supports.[3] One-to-One Supports in particular are driven by the SPSW role. The SPSW role is the largest single operational cost in the Pathways model. At the same time, host organizations confirmed the importance of the role in Pathways' success and cautioned that a distributed approach to SPSWs would lead to administrative and operational complexities (e.g. related to data sharing, turf protection, resourcing, etc.). If this option is pursued, CYN partners will need to determine how to resource the SPSW role and how it will work operationally across organizations.

Coordinating programmatic and administrative activities across multiple organizations will likely require substantial additional resource costs to manage initial model design, ongoing planning, logistics, communications, and reporting. While there may be no single host organization, a coordinating mechanism, such as a backbone organization, should still be considered.

More broadly, the Pathways program model is rooted in evidence and its approach has been refined over 16 years of implementation, evaluation, and reflection. Certain kinds of local adaptations or reconfigurations will result in a loss of fidelity to the Pathways model. As more adaptations or reconfigurations are introduced, there will come a point at which CYN partners should consider investigating other models that better reflect the aims of the CYN and London's service delivery context.

Questions For Further Exploration

If a backbone organization is required, is a CYN partner able to serve in this role?

Are CYN partners able to draw from existing resources to emulate the Financial Supports and One-to-One Supports component areas? If not, how will these be resourced in the long term?

[3] As a reminder, this does not suggest a lack of service in these broad topic areas, but rather in the specific way in which Pathways conceives these components (i.e. it is about more than just providing some kind of financial support).

SECTION 7.0

THE PATH FORWARD

London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021 identifies increasing secondary school graduation rates as a community priority for London. Pathways is an evidence-driven, impactful approach that has been proven to increase secondary school graduation rates in communities across Canada. Pathways is also a resource-intensive program that requires deep community investment and leadership for the long term.

7.1 PROPOSED PATHS

Bringing together the aims of *London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021*, an understanding of London's service delivery context, research on the Pathways program model, and interviews with staff from host organizations and Pathways Canada, the following steps are proposed:

1. Review research findings with appropriate stakeholders.
2. Discuss, select, and endorse an option at the Literacy working group table, and subsequently seek endorsement from the CYN membership.
3. Address considerations for the selected option identified in this report and any additional considerations that have emerged through discussion.
4. Option-specific next steps:
    a. Option 1: Status quo
        i. Develop a summary document articulating the reasons for not pursuing Pathways and include in the next CYN progress report.
        ii. Research alternative approaches that increase secondary school graduation rates and align with the CYN approach and London's service delivery context.
    b. Option 2: Apply to be a Pathways site
        i. Identify and endorse a viable host organization.
        ii. Engage Pathways Canada in intentional conversation on London's application to become a Pathways site.
    c. Option 3: Develop a Pathways-parallel for London
        i. Conduct conversations to identify and confirm organizations interested in contributing existing services that align with the Pathways model and organizations interested in developing/realigning services to address gaps in program component areas.
        ii. Where continued gaps exist, seek out and secure funding sources to address gaps before proceeding further.

iii. Develop a full program plan modeled after Pathways that articulates all programmatic, administrative, and financial plans for start-up and ongoing implementation.
iv. Identify and endorse a viable host organization.
v. Begin implementation of start-up plan.

d. Option 4: Develop distributed model of administration and program delivery
i. Conduct conversations to identify and confirm organizations interested in contributing existing services that align with the Pathways model and organizations interested in developing/realigning services to address gaps in program component areas.
ii. Where continued programmatic gaps exist, determine if gaps are acceptable or can be addressed in other ways. If they are not acceptable and cannot be addressed in other ways, seek out and secure funding sources to address gaps before proceeding further.
iii. Investigate the administration model of Belleville's Quantum Quinte program to determine if it meets administrative needs in London.
iv. Develop a full program plan rooted in Pathways, but adapted to the local approach, that articulates all programmatic, administrative, and financial plans for start-up and ongoing implementation.
v. Identify and endorse a viable backbone organization, if required.
vi. Begin implementation of start-up plan.

The CYN has options for pursuing, or not pursuing, a Pathways model in London. The community is in a position to pursue a formal relationship with Pathways Canada, but also has capacity to implement made-in-London solutions that build on existing community assets. Many doors are open, but one must be chosen. This report has sought to provide the information needed for CYN partners to make this decision.

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

Boston Consulting Group. (2011). BCG assessment of Pathways to Education. Retrieved from https://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/sites/default/files/editor_uploads/pdf/BCG%20Assessment%20of%20Pathways.pdf

Boys and Girls Club of London. (2017). My Action Plan to Education. Retrieved from http://www.bgclondon.ca/children-youth-programs/learn-with-us-education-career-building/my-action-plan-to-education

Charity Intelligence Canada. (2017). Pathways to Education. Retrieved from https://www.charityintelligence.ca/charity-details/111-pathways-to-education

Child and Youth Network. (2008). The best for our children, youth and families: The first three years of London's Child and Youth Agenda to 2015. Retrieved from http://londoncyn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Child-and-Youth-Agenda.pdf

Child and Youth Network. (2012). The best for our children, youth and families: The next three years of London's Child and Youth Agenda to 2015. Retrieved from http://londoncyn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CYA-to-2015-CYA-II-2012-12-13_-final2.pdf

Child and Youth Network. (2015a). CYN Youth Framework. Retrieved from http://londoncyn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CYN-Youth-Framework-FINAL-June-2014.pdf

Child and Youth Network. (2015b). Youth insights: Barriers and solutions to leadership and high school graduation.

Child and Youth Network. (2017). London's Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021. Retrieved from http://londoncyn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/5.-CYA3-MAY-12-w-Letters.pdf

Government of Manitoba. (2017). Circle of Courage philosophy. Retrieved from https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/cardev/gr9_found/courage_poster.pdf

Oreopoulous, P. & Brown, R.S. (2017). Pathways to Education: An integrated approach to helping at-risk high school students. *Journal of Political Economy, 125(4)*, 947-984.

Pathways to Education. (2015). What works in dropout prevention: Research evidence, Pathways to Education program design, and practitioner knowledge. Retrieved from http://blog.pathwaystoeducation.ca/wp-content/uploads/Mar2015_What_Works_Dropout_Prevention_EN.pdf

Pathways to Education. (2016a). Results summary 2016. Retrieved from https://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/sites/default/files/editor_uploads/pdf/Pathways_Results%20Summary%202016.pdf

Pathways to Education. (2016b). Stakeholder report 2016. Retrieved from https://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/sites/default/files/editor_uploads/pdf/Pathways-StakeholderReport2016-EN.PDF