

# Pathways Handbook

## Policies & Procedures

2021-2022



SCOTTSDALE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

# SCA PATHWAYS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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# **SCA PATHWAYS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

## Mission Statement, Overview, and Purpose of Pathways

### Pathways Mission Statement

The Pathways program at Scottsdale Christian Academy aligns with our school mission, “To maximize the God given potential of each student, preparing them to live lives of distinction by impacting the world for Christ.”

***Pathways strives to empower all students to achieve their unique God given strengths and talents by creating a program of advocacy, specialized instruction, and intervention specific to the needs of each child.***

### The Pathways Vision

The vision of the Pathways Program at Scottsdale Christian Academy is to identify, develop, and strengthen a student’s skills for achievement in a positive, academically enriched environment by providing indicated, appropriate educational *accommodations* which assist students to become independent learners who can facilitate their educational goals.

Our students will learn to understand and embrace their differences while respecting the differences of others in our world.

Psalm 139:13-16 says “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

We respect the learning of each child, so we are honest in our feedback with families as to whether we have the resources to partner with them to serve their child. If we do not have the resources at this time, we encourage and will assist families to find the best fit that does. It is important parents understand and acknowledge that they are not covered by the procedural safeguards of the US Department of Education’s Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) while at a private Christian school.

### Purpose

Scottsdale Christian Academy’s Pathways program believes that God has gifted each of His children with talents and abilities to impact the world for Jesus Christ and that how each child learns can enhance their preparation to live lives of Christ-centered distinction.

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To SCA, this is a Biblical mandate – We believe all students are God’s image bearers, and each one has purpose and significance. Regardless of disability or limitations, each student deserves a classroom environment filled with love and acceptance. During His time on Earth, Jesus demonstrated a deep compassion for the needs of others. God wants us to embrace our Pathways students with the same concern and commitment, remembering always that each one has been “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

## **Our Approach**

Pathways offers services to students with identified mild disabilities, which may include, but are not limited to students with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Specific Learning Disorder (SLD), Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, and/or mild Developmental Delays (DD) within the elementary, middle, and high school. Screening new applicants and requiring full disclosure of a disability or an academic concern will assist us in making informed choices. With *early* identification and intervention, we see more academic success in our students with disabilities, and thus it is essential for parents provide all information relative to their child’s needs.

Pathways can provide various levels of classroom and testing accommodations, as well as occasional resource room instruction. Pathways will focus on offering a limited yet appropriate range of services. We may invite the professionals who administer the psycho-educational testing and those who are working with the student to be a part of our *Child Study Team*.

Pathways acts as a valuable resource to the teaching team and administrative staff. It provides a necessary advocate between parents, teachers, outside professionals and administration.

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## Admissions, Application and Consideration Process

### Student Identification

If a concern is suspected by the parent, teachers and/or the academic advisor, a student *may* be eligible to receive services through the Pathways program. The student's current teacher(s) will complete a *Child Study Team Referral* to collect the student's data. The decision for a Pathways placement may include information about the student's current grades and/or test scores. Scores utilized for determining Pathways placement will be used from assessments and/or existing psycho-educational evaluations. Final determination for a Pathways placement is at SCA's discretion. Availability of space is also a consideration. A new Pathways placement will always begin with a 45-day observation period, to determine how we can best meet the needs of the student.

### Application Process and Consideration Committee

After the Child Study Team Referral is returned, the data including, the student's needs, learning challenges, grades, test scores, and other variables will be reviewed by the Pathways team to determine if placement is warranted. If the team decides the program will benefit the student, a Child Study Team meeting will take place with the Pathways team, classroom teacher(s), administration, and parent(s) to determine which tier will be utilized and what accommodations will be put in place to best meet the needs of the student.

### Providing Previous Information including 504 Plans and/or IEPs

Parents must provide full disclosure including a history and all documentation related to their child's needs. If a new student applies to Scottsdale Christian Academy with an existing IEP or 504, the Pathways team will meet to determine if a Pathways placement would be appropriate. If it is decided that a Pathways placement would benefit the child, a Child Study Team meeting will take place and an Accommodative Educational Plan (AEP) will be written and implemented.

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## Development of the Accommodative Education Plans (AEP)

### Accommodations

The Pathways Accommodative Educational Plan (AEP) is documentation created to implement accommodations within the classroom to meet the needs of the student. An AEP is *not* an IEP or 504 Plan. The document is meant to guide us in our accommodations to serve the student's needs. At this time, Pathways will *not* be providing *medical or therapeutic intervention*. We will remain focused on providing educational accommodations.

An accommodation should not alter what the student is expected to learn. An accommodation makes learning accessible to the student and allows the student to demonstrate what they know. Accommodations can be adjustments to the way tasks are presented that allow children with a disability to demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not reduce the content of assignments or change what a test measures.

Accommodations are commonly physical or environmental changes. *Examples* may include:

- Extended time, frequent breaks, varying of activities.
- Change in classroom, preferential seating, physical arrangement of the room, reducing/minimizing distractions, using the testing center, or allowing a cooling off period.
- Varied teaching approaches (visual, auditory, multi-sensory), individual or small group, demonstrating/modeling, visual cues, use of manipulatives, pre-teaching, graphic organizers.
- Highlighting material, note taking assistance, notes provided by teacher, calculator, computer, word processor, Braille, and/or large print, or options for the hearing impaired.
- Directions given in small, sequential steps, copying from book.
- Positive reinforcement, concrete reinforcement, checking for understanding, study guides, before/after school tutoring at parent's expense.
- Reading test verbatim, shortening length of test, test format changed (multiple choice vs. fill in the blank).
- Allow for verbal responses.

### Modifications

An educational modification changes what the student is taught or expected to learn. Modifications differ from accommodations. It is important to note that the SCA Pathways program is designed for students who need accommodations, *not* modifications. If a

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student's learning warrants a level where the curriculum will need to be modified, SCA may assist the family at their request with recommendations for other schools that can modify their learning with a full IEP.

## Pathways in Elementary School

The Pathways program in the SCA elementary school offers a wide range of support, interventions, and accommodations for students. The students may receive:

- Accommodations in the general education classroom which are specialized to meet the need of each student. These accommodations are developed within an SCA Accommodative Educational Plan (AEP)
- A pull-out Pathways class for small group instruction in Language Arts and/or Math
- Testing accommodations:
  - Quiet setting
  - Time-and-a-half for exams (If documented in AEP)
- Support from the Pathways team if a full psycho-educational evaluation is recommended.

## Pathways Tiers in Middle and High School

### Tier One

- Accommodative Educational Plan (AEP)
  - Annual Child Study Team meeting to determine appropriate accommodations
- Daily Content Enrichment *class* with an intentional focus on:
  - Study skills;
  - Executive functioning skills; and
  - Homework help
- Instructional accommodations implemented in the general education classroom
- Testing accommodations:
  - Quiet setting
  - Time-and-a-half for exams (If documented in AEP)
- Student advocacy
- Full psycho-educational evaluation is recommended

### Tier Two

- Accommodative Educational Plan (AEP)
  - Annual Child Study Team meeting to determine appropriate accommodations

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- No Content Enrichment classes
- Meet bi-weekly with the Tier II Coordinator for “check-ins”
- Instructional accommodations
- Testing accommodations
  - Quiet setting
  - Time-and-a-half for exams (If documented in AEP)

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## **Pathways Tuition**

It is Scottsdale Christian Academy's goal to provide excellent, individualized assistance to each child in the Pathways program. Therefore, an additional cost for the Pathways services is added to tuition. Although there are additional costs for the program, there are some wonderful ways for SCA families to fund these programs in the State of Arizona. Families may utilize the Empowerment Scholarship Account Program or School Tuition Organizations.

### **Elementary (grades 1-5)**

Grades K-3: \$650 base fee

Grades 4-5: One class (Language Arts OR Math) \$650, Two classes (Language Arts AND Math) \$900

### **Middle/High (grades 6-12)**

Tier One (Includes a Content Enrichment class): \$1,600 per year

Tier Two (No Content Enrichment class): \$800 per year

### **Empowerment Scholarship Account Program (ESA) or School Tuition Organizations (STOs).**

The State of Arizona currently has options to assist in paying for a student's education. Please see the Arizona School District Resources below for more information. A financial adviser or tax adviser should be consulted by parents on how to take full advantage of these programs.

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## Arizona School District Resources

*The purpose of this section is to explain some of the resources available to SCA families through their public school district.*

AZ Find/Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that requires Public Education Agencies (PEAs) to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21. AZ Find/Child Find applies to children who are:

- Suspected of having a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade
- Highly mobile, such as migrant and homeless
- Wards of the state
- Private school students
- Homeschool students

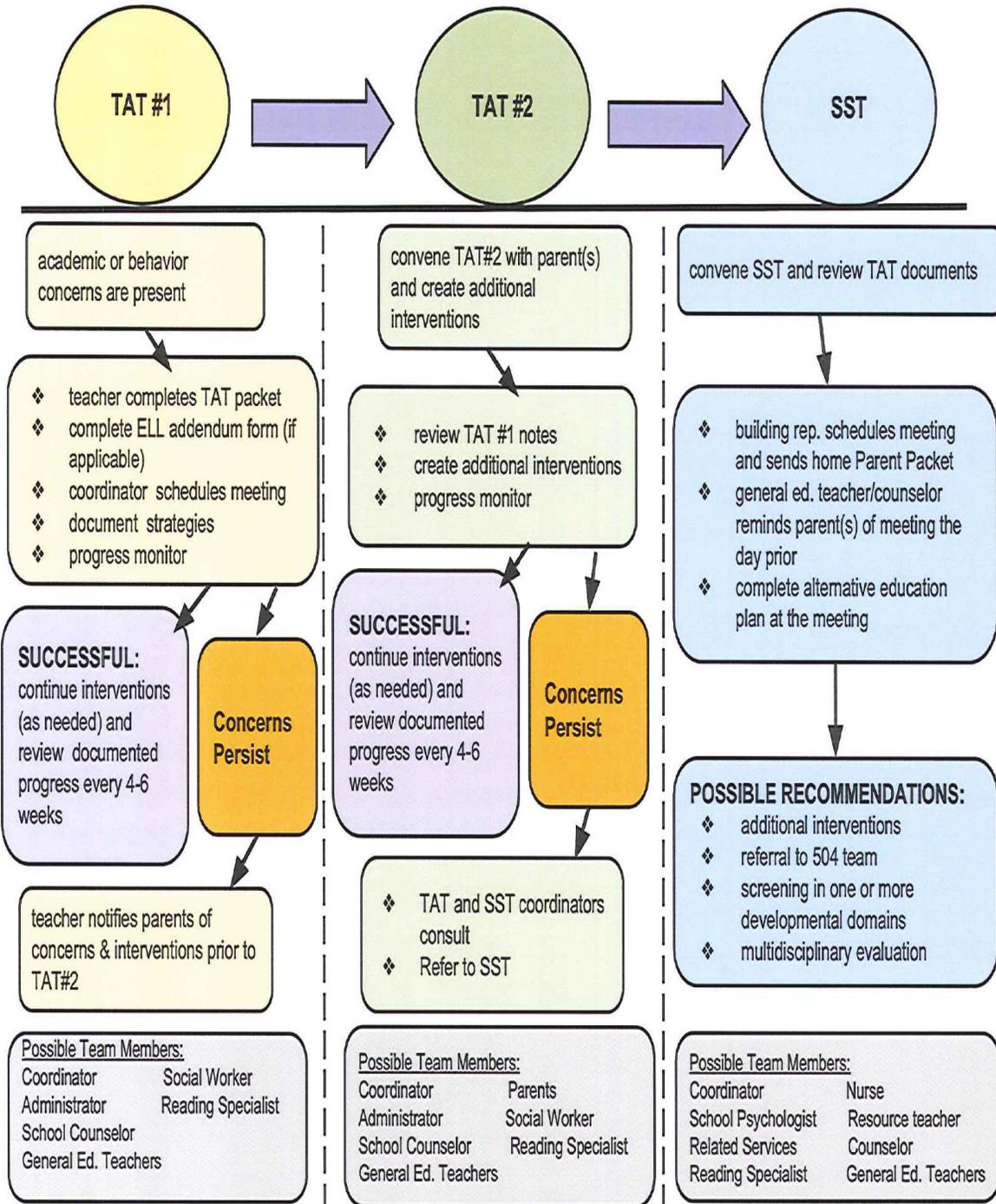
Under AZ Find/Child Find, current students at Scottsdale Christian Academy can receive a full psychological evaluation to determine if a disability is present through a local public school district.

## Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT) Process

The TAT is a process to identify and determine eligibility and services from the public school for special education. Below is a visual representation of the process as depicted by the Arizona

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Department of Education:



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## **Disabled and Displaced**

Students interested in receiving educational scholarships for disabled or displaced students must contact a School Tuition Organization to determine the student's eligibility and to obtain a scholarship application.

Please direct all questions regarding the disabled/displaced scholarship to the School Tuition Organizations.

School Tuition Organizations that receive corporate contributions can provide educational scholarships for qualified disabled and displaced students to attend a qualified Arizona private school (A.R.S. §43-1505).

A qualified disabled/displaced student is a student who has been either:

- Identified as having a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or identified at any time by a school district as a child with a disability as defined in §15-761 or a child with a disability who is eligible to receive services from a school district under §15-763, OR
- Placed in foster care in Arizona pursuant to A.R.S. Title 8, Chapter 5 at any time before the student graduates from high school or obtains a general equivalency diploma.

Student must meet ONE of the following prerequisites:

- Student has a MET or IEP from an Arizona public school (for preschool and grades K-12), OR
- Student has a 504 plan from an Arizona public school (for grades K-12 only), OR
- Student was placed at one time in the Arizona foster care system (for grades K-12 only and will be verified with the Arizona Department of Economic Security)

## **Empowerment Scholarship Accounts**

For questions regarding Empowerment Scholarship Accounts which are administered by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), please visit the ADE website (<http://www.azed.gov/esa/>).

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## Standardized Testing

### IowaFlex, DIBELS, and WRAT-5 Testing

The IowaFlex (K-8), DIBELS (K-6), and/or WRAT-5 (1-12) testing results may be utilized as part of the eligibility for a Pathways placement. The Child Study Team will review all available data to determine which accommodations may be helpful to put into place for the student's success using these scores and classroom data collected. These scores may also be utilized to determine if an additional evaluation is needed.

### College Entrance Exams

If a student will need accommodations for the PSAT, SAT, AP, PLAN and ACT, contact the SCA Pathways Director. The SCA Pathways Director is the Student with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator for these exams. There are specific deadlines to apply for these accommodations. Please contact the Pathways Director as soon as you know the student will be taking the exam in the current school year. After the initial meeting with the SSD, the appropriate data will be sent to the testing agencies. However, ultimately, the decision of whether accommodations may be used on the assessments is left to the testing agency.

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## Roles

### The Role of the Student

The Pathways students are expected to contribute to their own learning success. A Pathways student's responsibilities include:

- Participating in learning opportunities.
- Completing homework as required by the AEP.
- Attending school regularly and on-time.
- Being a contributor to a safe and positive learning environment.
- Being aware and responsible for their own conduct at school and school-related events.
- Accepting increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- Obeying school policies.

### The Role of the Pathways Instructors

The main role of the Pathways instructor is to provide instruction and support which facilitates the participation of Pathways students in the regular classroom. The Pathways instructor may:

- Request assignments and materials from the student's teacher(s) as needed.
- Provide information to a student's current teacher(s) about the student's AEP and the importance of implementation.
- Carry out the daily implementation of the student-specific AEP outcomes or goals.
- Reinforce a concept or skill that the teacher has taught with a small group of students.
- Help gather materials for individual student(s) as needed.
- Guide students on how to return completed assignments to faculty for grading.
- Provide the teacher with information and/or written documentation about a student's performance, behavior, growth, and needs.
- Schedule periodic review of AEP with the Child Study Team.
- Coordinate with the public-school district speech evals/services and educational evaluations.
- Collaborate on dates and information with the district, parents, and STOs regarding interest in Disabled/Displaced or Empowerment Scholarships (the parents are responsible to lead this process).
- Screen students for possible reading disorders.

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## **The Role of the Classroom Teacher**

The main roles of the classroom teacher are to plan, coordinate, schedule, and evaluate curriculum and instructional outcomes within a secure and positive classroom environment for all students, including those in Pathways. The classroom teacher may:

- Develop and implement weekly lesson plans that facilitate the participation and learning of all students.
- Monitor and evaluate progress of all students.
- Maintain communication with students, parents, or guardians.
- Meet with Pathways instructors as needed and provide information necessary for accommodations to be developed and implemented.
- Attend bi-weekly meetings with the Pathways team to discuss the student's accommodations and to inform them about the academics and behaviors of the Pathways students in their class.
- Implement the accommodations as prescribed in the AEP and support the student in their success as such.

## **The Role of the Parent**

Parents are valued partners of the Pathways team. They know their child's strengths, abilities, needs, and challenges. As a result, they have a vital role in the education of their child. The parents' participation in planning for education and their ongoing involvement and support will make a positive and meaningful contribution to a successful educational experience.

The parent(s) will be responsible for providing any information on medical, psychological, or therapeutic services that the student is receiving or may require. They will also be asked to share all documentation and past evaluations of their child. With this information, The Pathways team can assess and address the services and the recommendations for the student and plan appropriate accommodations.

The role of the parent will also include:

- Being fully informed of school policies and practices.
- Collaborating with the Pathways team to create the best accommodations for the student.
- Reviewing reports on the child's progress with the teacher(s) at regular intervals throughout the school year.
- Reporting on whether the skills the child is learning at school are being used at home.
- At the secondary level, allowing the child to take on more responsibility for his/her academic progress.

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## **The Role of the Pathways Director**

The role of the Pathways Director is to provide organization and direction in the development, implementation, and coordination of the SCA Pathways program. The Pathways Director will:

- Coordinate all extra assistance given in and outside the classrooms to address individual students with specific needs in all areas; academic, social, emotional, and physical.
- Oversee the AEP coordination, implementation, and communication.
- Supervise and monitor all members of the Pathways program.
- Coordinate and communicate with the classroom teachers, academic and social counseling and guidance teams, principals, and parents.
- Work closely with classroom teachers and parents to enable each student to reach their full potential.

## **The Role of the Administration**

The Administration at Scottsdale Christian Academy will partner with the Pathways team to ensure that the students' teachers receive the information necessary to provide the appropriate accommodations for all Pathways students. They will also ensure that the school can provide support in the areas of staff development, problem solving, and appropriate resources to further the purpose of the Pathways program.

The Administrative leadership role includes the following duties:

- Selecting highly qualified Pathways staff members who embrace the purpose of the program.
- Recognizing and communicating the need for the program and staff.
- Supporting the school's responsibility for the education of all students.
- Recognizing the extra support needed for the program and advocating for the appropriate resources.

## **The Role of the Academic Advisor**

The academic advisor's role includes:

- Helping students define and develop realistic educational career plans through schedule planning for each school year, including an academic schedule plan through graduation.
- Assisting students in planning a program consistent with their abilities and interests.
- Monitoring progress toward educational/career goals and meeting throughout the year to review the progress toward completing the proposed academic program.

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## The Role of the School Counselor

School counselors can advocate for Pathways students through active involvement in the appropriateness of educational planning during the AEP process. They can also give these students a voice and work to facilitate an understanding of Pathways students' accommodations among school personnel. Additionally, school counselors can directly support and advocate for Pathways students by providing individual and group counseling, as well as classroom-based lessons and interventions.

Counselors also work with the Pathways families. They can serve as an intermediary, helping families understand school policies and procedures, to help families improve their ability to meet their child's needs at home, and by offering parents insight into effective strategies for improving their child's learning and overall well-being.

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## Document of Understanding

Scottsdale Christian Academy is a private, Christian school that offers accommodated educational services to eligible students with disabilities through the Pathways Program. Although we follow the best practices and procedures regarding evaluation and AEP development, we do not provide a “free and appropriate public education (FAPE)” as guaranteed by law in a public school. Therefore, the procedural safeguards that are provided students with disabilities and their parents through IDEA do not apply. We do, however, commit to providing a quality educational experience for your child. The Pathways Program staff will:

Obtain and review all pertinent previous data regarding your child’s educational history, evaluations and services provided.

Perform academic achievement assessments.

Request and support you in obtaining further evaluation, if needed, through the Paradise Valley School District.

Assist you in arranging necessary related service through the Paradise Valley School District.

Provide academic and other necessary interventions and supports for your child as determined in the AEP, in the Pathways classroom, and in the regular classroom.

Appropriately advocate for your child with his/her teachers.

Communicate with you regarding progress.

Develop an AEP with the Scottsdale Christian Academy Child Study Team.

Partner with you and relevant agencies to help your child achieve his/her goals.

Follow Pathways policies and procedures.

Pray with and for your child.

I understand that my special education rights and safeguards under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) do not apply at a private school. I acknowledge that my child will receive an Accommodated Educational Plan (AEP) and related services as described above. I am a part of the Scottsdale Christian Academy Child Study Team and will participate in all meetings to help develop the a plan for my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent #1                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent #2                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pathways Representative                      Date