

# The City School Model

Researching the Impact of Employer-Designed Career Access Programs in Improving Outcomes for Underserved Communities

A research snapshot by  
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## Research focus

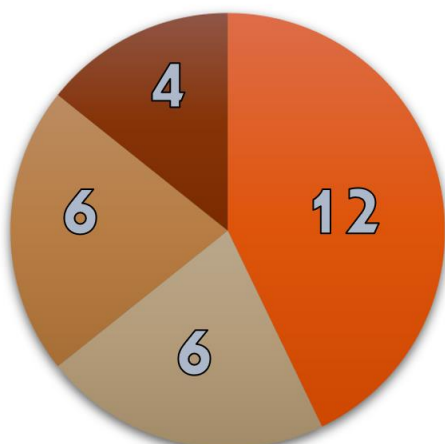
- Explore the perceptions held by employers regarding recruiting individuals from socially-excluded populations
- Evaluate the efficacy of customized City School programming in connecting job-seekers with an employment pathway

## Employment sectors

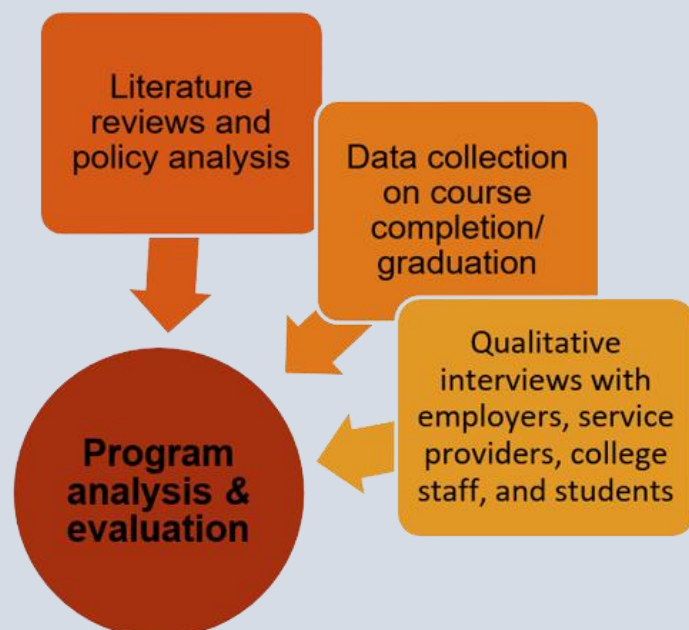
- Long-term care
- Healthcare support work
- Food and beverage processing
- Early childhood education
- Goods movement and transportation
- Hamilton Port and shipyards
- Steel construction



Interview sample to date (Total = 28)



■ Employers ■ Faculty and Support Staff ■ Service Providers ■ Students



## Employer interview themes:

- City School programming delivers industry relevant skills training and is responsive to employer needs
- Wage support incentives have a beneficial impact on recruitment
- Labour shortages and industry succession issues are incentivizing employers to diversify their workforce
- Perceptions of career opportunities in the skilled trades are changing
- Increasing recognition of the global experience offered by immigrants/newcomers
- Pandemic challenges require a flexible workforce/ workplace culture
- Growing interest in micro-credentials

## Job-seeker interview themes:

- City School programming builds confidence and awareness of employment opportunities
- Benefits of resume-building, interview preparation, and placement opportunities
- Recognition of the importance of soft skills



## Social service provider (SSP) interview themes:

- Critical role of SSPs regarding employer engagement and client recruitment
- SSPs prepare clients for labour force participation through advocacy and training support
- SSPs highlight the need for sustainable women-centred programming
- Recognition of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workforce



## College employment consultant / learning support officer themes:

- Crucial role regarding job-seeker advocacy and support
- Bridging the gap between job-seekers and employers
- Shifting job-seeker self-perceptions
- Promoting job-readiness and employment preparation (e.g., resume-building, interview guidance, promoting soft skills awareness)



## Providing job-seekers with employment direction

“I think (what) programs like City school really provide is that people are showing up with a thorough understanding of what they are getting themselves into. They are not (necessarily) going to have a strong foundation in the skills that they need to succeed, but they’ll at least have some understanding of what the skills are and they’ve given those skills a try”  
(Employer)

## Assisting job-seekers to overcome barriers

“I think it is pretty amazing that clients get free training like this. A lot of them are low income and...without programs like this, they do not have a way to stand out...I think it’s really fantastic to be able to assist barriered clients or any client in that way” (Employer)

## Employer engagement

“When there is an employer attached to the programming, there is buy in for clients” (Social Service Provider)

## Shifting job-seeker self-perceptions

“You really have to look at things (through) the lens of the job seeker, and each job seeker brings their own journey. The framework of what it City School is about is to really elicit that relationship and that support system, and really help shift their self perception of themselves and giving them that opportunity”  
(College support)