

Employability Skills Standards Implementation Guide

Introduction:

There are many ways to integrate Employability Skills Standards into the daily life of students in your school system. This implementation guide is designed to provide some ideas to help you plan district, school, and classroom-based strategies to infuse employability skills into the daily routine and lessons of students in your community. These are intended to be examples, and districts should feel free to modify strategies based on their local needs.

Background:

Senate Enrolled Act 297 states that not later than July 1, 2019, each school within a school corporation shall include interdisciplinary employability skills standards established by IDOE, in conjunction with the Department of Workforce Development, and approved by the State Board of Education, in the school's curriculum.

Indiana's **Employability Skills Standards** allow students to be prepared for the ever-changing needs of today's workforce. These standards are to be implemented beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. The expectation is for students to work through the standards in multi-subject areas. As students move through grade levels, they will work with and experience the standards at those **grade bands (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12)**.

The standards are based on the National Employability Skill Standards from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's Employability Skills Benchmarks, the Governor's Work Ethic Certificate, and the Indiana Department of Education's Social-Emotional Learning Competencies. The standards are arranged within **four key areas: Mindsets (M), Work Ethic (WE), Learning Strategies (LS), and Social and Emotional Skills (SE)**.

Employability Skills Competencies	05/01/2019	PDF Word
K-2 Employability Skills	05/01/2019	PDF Word
3-5 Employability Skills	05/01/2019	PDF Word
6-8 Employability Skills	05/01/2019	PDF Word
9-10 Employability Skills	05/01/2019	PDF Word
11-12 Employability Skills	05/01/2019	PDF Word

Getting Started:

The following steps should serve as a guideline to begin your journey towards integrating employability skills.

1. Convene a leadership group comprised of K-12 educators, LEA Board member, parents, higher education representatives, and community business and organization leaders to develop a plan to integrate employability skills into the culture of the school and daily practice of educators.
2. Review the [Employability Skills Standards documents](#) as a group.
3. Develop an [Employability Skills Asset and Program Map](#) matching assets and programs to employability skills standards.
4. Use the following questions to drive reflection and discussion:
 - a. Are there specific gaps where employability skills are non-existent?
 - b. Do school-wide initiatives support intentional development of employability skills?
 - c. Do the pedagogical approaches emphasized by administration lend themselves to student application of employability skills?
 - d. Is the associated language used by staff intentional when it comes to connecting activities to employability skills?
 - e. Are there opportunities for students to grapple with real-world topics and scenarios in collaborative learning environments?
 - f. How often do students participate in a project/problem/inquiry-based approach to learning?
 - g. How many teachers are specifically trained in project-based learning?
 - h. Do students have the opportunity to participate in a work-based learning experience (ranging from guest speakers, job-shadowing, jobsite tours, internships, etc.)?
 - i. Do students have consistent opportunities to make connections between classroom learning and potential career opportunities?
 - j. What type of online career exploration tool is available to students? How often do students utilize the tool?
5. Review sample programs, initiatives, and strategies described below under [Culture-Based Implementation](#) and [Instructional Strategies](#) to increase the percentage of students with access to high-quality opportunities that support development of employability skills.
6. Choose 1-2 strategies under [Culture-Based Implementation](#) and [Instructional Strategies](#) and develop a plan to implement and support those strategies.
7. Contact [Ben Carter](#), Director of Workforce and Innovation, for support and assistance.

Using the guide:

The remaining portions of the guide are organized into three different categories: Culture-Based Implementation, Instructional-Based Implementation, and Resources. There is no single roadmap to successfully integrating employability skill standards. Each and every community must engage in a strategic planning process to determine what works best for their context.

Culture-Based Implementation:

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Integrating a school or district-wide PBIS system will help to model and reinforce positive behavioral characteristics that are valued by employers. This culture-based approach is one that can be implemented across all grade levels. Here are some resources that will help you learn more about implementing PBIS in your school district.

- [IDOE Resources](#)
- [PBIS.org School-wide Resources](#)

Governor's Work Ethic Certificate (GWEC)

The GWEC is a form of PBIS and an opportunity for seniors to apply for the GWEC as they demonstrate critical skills needed for the workforce. Some districts have expanded the GWEC program to all grade levels as a PBIS strategy. These schools offer certificates for students in elementary and middle school.

- [Department of Workforce Development GWEC Website](#)
- [GWEC Implementation Guide](#)
- [Participating Schools and Employers](#)

Some examples of schools and districts that have integrated the GWEC across all grade levels are listed below.

- [OptIN - EVSC](#)
- [PRIDE - GCCS](#)
- [Whitley Works - WCCS](#)
- [BCSC](#)
- [Elkhart County](#)
- [New Castle Career Center](#)

Badging Programs

Badging programs provide the opportunity for training on employability skills and/or the opportunity for participants to earn recognition in the form of a digital badge. These are another form of PBIS that are gaining traction and can be adapted in your school system. Below are some examples of badging programs in action.

- [JobReadyIndy](#)
- [LaunchPath](#)
- [Open Badges](#)

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

WBL is the set of experiences provided to students in K-12 providing opportunities in career awareness, career exploration, career preparation, and career training. These experiences are connected to employer and community partners and vary in duration and rigor. An Indiana WBL Manual was developed to provide an in-depth explanation of the 11 WBL Program Criteria, providing definitions, examples, and sample templates for use by school coordinators.

- Benefits of WBL:
 - Exposes students to career opportunities
 - Gives students opportunities to observe professionals in action
 - Helps students network with potential employers
 - Enhances student employability skills
 - Provides a potential talent development pipeline for local companies
 - Connects classroom learning to real-world experiences
- [Indiana Work-Based Learning Manual](#)

School or District Model

Transforming teaching and learning, leadership and organization, and community partnerships and engagement to better prepare students with the skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow. These models of integrating academics with career skills and community partnerships allow for an intentional focus on developing portable skills. The following examples show how schools were transformed to integrate academics, careers, and high-quality instructional practices supporting student development of employability skills.

- [Expeditionary Learning - Horizon Education Alliance](#)
- [Career Academies - Greater Clark County Schools](#)
- [Integrated PBL - New Tech Network Columbus Signature Academy](#)
- [Integrated STEM and Design Thinking - Purdue University Polytechnic High School](#)
- [Career Development Program - Garrett-Keyser-Butler Community School District](#)

After-school or extracurricular programs

Student participation in extracurricular activities including sports, marching band, robotics, career and technical student organizations, or other clubs help develop key skills needed for future career opportunities. Here are some examples of extracurricular programs supporting the development of employability skills.

- Robotics
- Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs): FFA, Skills USA, FCCLA, Educators Rising, FBLA, DECA, BPA, HOSA, TSA
- Architecture, Construction, Engineering (ACE) Mentors
- 4-H

Instructional Strategies:

The following section provides examples and resources for integrating employability skills into daily lessons. This list is not a comprehensive list, rather, it serves as an example or starting point.

- **Vertical Articulation Document** - This document shows the vertical articulation between the indicators and also shows the alignment of the standards to Social-Emotional Learning Competencies, the Governor's Work Ethic Certificate, Preparing for College and Careers, Exploring College and Careers, ELA learning outcomes, Math process standards, Science and Engineering Process standards, and to the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success.
 - [Employability Skills Continuum](#)
- **Integration Framework** - This document from the American Institutes for Research provides activities to support integration within a lesson by helping teachers make direct connections to specific instructional techniques that support employability skill development. This resource also includes a lesson planning tool that can be adapted to Indiana's Employability Skill Standards to support integration.
 - [Integrating Employability Skills: A Framework for All Educators](#)
- **Sample Lessons** - Nebraska developed "Career Readiness Standards" that align well to the Indiana Employability Skills Standards. They have also developed intentional "stand-alone" lessons that teachers can use. When reviewing the plans, notice a close alignment between their terminology and the terminology used in the Indiana standards.
 - [Nebraska Department of Education Sample Lesson Plans](#)

- **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** - According to the Buck Institute for Education, “Project Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge.” Using a PBL approach puts students in situations requiring the use of employability skills to achieve success. These situations often mirror the collaboration, critical thinking, and communication required in future career settings.
 - [What is Project-Based Learning?](#)
 - [Seven essential design elements for PBL](#)
 - [Buck Institute for Education Project Design Rubric](#)
 - [Sample projects and resources](#)

- **Inquiry-Based Learning** - GradePowerLearning.com says, “Inquiry-based learning is an approach to learning that emphasizes the student’s role in the learning process. Rather than the teacher telling students what they need to know, students are encouraged to explore the material, ask questions, and share ideas.” Inquiry-Based Learning allows students to investigate different topics, research answers, present on their findings, and then reflect on the process to make improvements for the next time.
 - [What is Inquiry-Based Learning?](#)
 - [What the Heck is Inquiry-Based Learning?](#)
 - [Inquiry-Based Learning Resources](#)

- **Service-Based Learning (SBL)** - Service-based learning integrates meaningful service to enrich and apply academic knowledge, teach civic and personal responsibility (and other employability skills), and strengthen communities.
 - [K-12 Service Learning Standards](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Career Connections and Talent](#)
- [Career and Technical Education](#)
- [Career and Technical Education Funding](#)
- [Chamber of Commerce Statewide List](#)
- [Civic Lab Stakeholder Engagement](#)
- [Employability Skills Standards](#)
- [Graduation Pathways](#)
- [Indiana Department of Education](#)
- [Indiana Department of Education WBL Webpage](#)
- [Indiana Department of Workforce Development](#)
- [Industry-Developed Team Challenge PBL \(PTECH Guide\)](#)
- [Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship](#)
- [Supervised Agricultural Experience](#)