

High School CTAE Employability Skills Instruction Booklet



Georgia Employability Skills Task Force Recommendation No. 2 School Goal 1

- ▶ Develop strategies to support instructors in integrating employability skills into classroom instruction.
- ▶ Provide materials and professional development to help Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) teachers incorporate Career and Technical Student Organizations activities into their classroom instruction.

Overview

Ensuring that educators are prepared to integrate employability skills into their instruction is an important objective for districts and schools alike. Through thoughtful integration, teachers can continually reinforce employability skills and provide students the space needed for career and personal development. However, the availability of resources and a variety of ways in which they can be used may leave educators overwhelmed, unsure of where to start, or lead them to use the same resources or lessons repeatedly. The CTAE Department in Hall County Schools met this challenge by creating a High School CTAE Employability Skills Instruction Booklet to support educators in integrating employability skills into their instruction.

The booklet lists options for predeveloped lessons and modules that educators can take into their classrooms and provides teachers with instructions on how to access lessons from the following:

- ▶ Job Ready Career Skills: Online work readiness training program that allows students to earn a local level certificate of completion.
- ▶ GeorgiaBEST Correlated Lessons: Program offers educators access to manuals, lesson plans, and activities focused on preparing students for the workforce and postsecondary opportunities.
- ▶ IDEALS Lessons: Curriculum created by the IDEALS Foundation focused on building up student leadership skills and supplemental materials that allow teachers to incorporate employability skills into daily lesson plans.

The employability skills booklet also provides educators with a list of CTAE Standards addressed through Job Ready Careers and IDEALS lessons and their correlation with the GeorgiaBEST program to facilitate future lesson planning (<http://www.dol.state.ga.us/georgiabest.htm>).

Consolidating Resources and Increasing Access

As the Hall County Schools' CTAE Department fielded a variety of questions around the new lessons and resources they had recently created, they realized that many teachers did not know where and how to access these resources. Furthermore, teachers' lack of access to resources was limiting the assortment of activities they were implementing in the classroom. The county's CTAE director understood that for teachers to focus on employability skills instruction and diversify the types of activities implemented in the classroom, the department would have to ensure that resources were easy to access. Not only is instruction related to employability skills important to students, but access to different and varied material further prepares students to tackle challenging situations in the workplace.

Skills Development

One goal of Hall County Schools' Balanced Scorecard (<https://www.hallco.org/web/balanced-scorecard/>) is by the end of 12th grade, 90% of students will have participated in soft skills training through instructional coursework and/or activities. In support of this goal, the Hall County CTAE/Work-Based Learning Advisory Committee ranked various lessons and topics to determine which were most important. Then, the rankings were compiled to determine which lessons and topics, along with student completion of a work habits journal, would be addressed in Pathway Course 1, Pathway Course 2, and Pathway Course 3. Students complete a minimum of 17 lessons at an 80% proficiency. These areas were matched to the GeorgiaBEST program and integrated into the student portal. In addition to the employability skills resources, career-based activities are held to reinforce employability skills: career days, career fairs, mock interviews, job shadowing, industry case studies developed by business partners, business ethics seminars, lunch & learns, guest speakers, among other activities.

Initiative Impact

The CTAE department's collective goal is to ensure that 90% of high school graduates have taken at least one CTAE course and have demonstrated proficiency in workplace employability skills. Currently, the department reports that 70% of all high school students are enrolled in a CTAE course. The department hopes that as teachers continue to engage with and make use of these resources, employability skills can be effortlessly integrated across a variety of disciplines and courses. One of the secondary benefits of the employability skills booklet has been that it allows principals to provide substitute teachers with a resource to use when a subject teacher's lesson plans aren't readily available. While the department has curated a variety of external employability skills resources, it also has leveraged partnerships with local employers to create case studies highlighting specific employability skills they would like to see students develop and strategies for teachers to integrate into their lesson plans.

School/District: Hall County Schools

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Georgia Employability Skills Task Force Recommendations

1. Integrate employability skills into curriculum and learning experiences from prekindergarten through postsecondary education.
2. Support educators and other stakeholders in developing employability skills instruction.
3. Develop deeper and stronger relationships between industry and education to enhance teacher and mentor roles in quality work-based learning and career development opportunities.

To learn more about college- and career-readiness work in the southeast states, please contact Beth Howard-Brown (bhoward-brown@air.org), Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) director, or visit the SECC website (southeast-cc.org).

7263v5 - 05/19



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