



Work-Ready Certificates to Support Students and Business Leaders

Youth Council: Yolo County Youth Opportunity Council

Element: Career Preparation, Academic Excellence, Comprehensive Approach

Function: Cross Function

Subject: Work Ready Certificates, Comprehensive Approach, Educational Options

The Challenge: Business leaders in Yolo County were anxious to hire graduates who possess and can demonstrate work-ready skills. Students with proven work-ready skills want to find employment more easily. The Yolo Youth Opportunity Council wanted to help both business leaders and students.

The Practice and Evidence: The Yolo Youth Opportunity Council, Workforce Investment Board, business leaders, agencies, and educators came together to develop the standards and criteria for earning a Work-Ready Certificate (WRC). The Yolo County Work-Ready Certificate indicates the student's readiness for the school-to-work transition. It reflects important skills, attitudes, and values that are essential for success in the workplace. The Work-Ready Certificate does not replace a student's diploma, but enhances their personal employment/career portfolios.

The Work-Ready Certificate has been officially adopted by the Yolo Youth Opportunity Council and provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their work readiness while giving employers an opportunity to provide input on the work readiness of a student.

Students have indicated that the WRC helps them focus on their future. Employers have stated that they have the opportunity to hire students who are focused and have already demonstrated accuracy and initiative.

The Details: Readiness indicators are reviewed and approved by the business and education community. Each participating high school has a process for verifying school indicators required to earn the certificate.

Students must submit an appropriate resume, cover letter and three letters of recommendation. Work ready standards to be verified include a 90 percent attendance rate, 2.0 or better grade point average; basic computer skills and basic math and language skills; participation in community activities, completing a minimum of 10 hours of community service in the past 12 months; and an overall positive behavior history. When this evidence is presented, the student is granted an oral interview from the business/education community. When all of the above criteria are met, and the interview committee agrees, the student is awarded the Work-Ready Certificate signed by the business partner interviewers and the principal.

(continued)



What's Next for this YCidea? The Yolo Youth Opportunity Council and its partners will continue to support the Work-Ready Certificate program. They also are looking to have conversations with other Councils that are using or preparing to use Work-Ready Certification since the work ready certificate idea is being adopted throughout the state and the country as a certificate of distinction for those students who have proven to be work-ready.

Where to Go for More Information

Yolo County Youth Opportunity Council

Gayle McLevich
Yolo Youth Office of Education
ROP/Career Preparation
Coordinator
(530) 668-3710
Mclevich@ycoe.org