



## Ideas for Work-Readiness Certificates

YCi received a request to run a *YCinfo Search* on the topic of work-readiness certificates for youth. Local Youth Councils and partners responded with ideas, practices, and examples of how their community or organization created and utilizes work-readiness certificates. The following questions were asked:

- What are the requirements of your work-readiness certificate and what skills/achievements do they demonstrate?
- What is the process for youth to achieve requirements (how is each component certified)?
- How does your community handle logistics for students, staff, schools and administrators, etc.?

### **Summary**

Many communities are creating successful tools and materials to support student achievement and preparation for the world of work through work-readiness certificates. Youth Councils have created partnerships with workplace partners and educators in creating a sequence of learning experiences that will help prepare students for the workplace. Central to the Work-Readiness program is the willingness for students to show up for work. Looking at a student's past attendance history is a clear indicator of their willingness and commitment to any endeavors undertaken. Respondents have shared their community strategies below, as well as links to comprehensive websites, and downloadable forms to get your community started.

### ***Work-Readiness Certificates - Supporting Students, Supporting Employers*** **Yolo Youth Opportunity Council**

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

Students must submit an appropriate resume, cover letter and three letters of recommendation. Work ready standards to be verified include: a 90% attendance rate, 2.0 or better Grade Point Average, basic computer skills, basic math and language skills, participation in community activities 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 are met, and the interview committee agrees, they are awarded the Work Ready Certificate.

The Work Ready Certificate *does not* replace a student's diploma, but enhances their personal employment/career portfolios. Students have indicated that the WRC helps them focus on their future. Employers have stated that they have the opportunity to hire students that are focused and have already demonstrated accuracy and initiative.

The Work Ready Certificate is being adopted throughout the state and the country as a certificate of distinction for those students who have proven to be, WORK READY. For more information about the Yolo County WRC, [click here](#).



The Yolo Youth Opportunity Councils has developed extensive resources to support their Work-Readiness Certificate program. Among these are a list of requirements for candidates (summarized below), which can be downloaded in full by [clicking here](#).

## **Youth Opportunity Council Work Ready Certificate Requirements Indicators of Competencies Verified by School Officials:**

1. Has 90% or higher overall attendance in last two complete semesters
2. Passed local district's basic math, reading and writing proficiency tests and or achievement tests and or the High School Exit Exam.
3. 2.0 or Higher Grade Point Average at high school in two previous full semesters.
4. Demonstrated computer literacy through computer class work with a C or higher.
5. Has an overall positive behavioral history.
6. Has been an active member on a team or of an organization or has completed a minimum of 10 hours of community service in the past 12 months.

The components of each requirement are verified and signed off by School Administrative staff, Community Representatives and the Interview Panel. The students complete an application, and submit the documentation through the site liaison. [Click here](#) to download the student application.

In Yolo County, each site has a designated Work Readiness Certificate representative that serves on the Yolo Youth Opportunity Council. In addition, they recruit and make presentations to the students and community organizations. The student applies through the site liaison. The Site Coordinator is responsible for arranging the on-site interviews with community members.

Click the following links to view a copy of the final [Work-Ready Certificate](#) and the [Certificate of Completion](#).

For more information contact, Gayle McLevich at (530)-668-3710 or email [Mclevich@ycoe.org](mailto:Mclevich@ycoe.org) or Michelle Moore at [moore@ycoe.org](mailto:moore@ycoe.org).

### ***Certificates of Employability***

#### **Mid-Willamette Education Consortium (MWEC)**

The Mid-Willamette Education Consortium in Salem, Oregon has established a Certificate of Employability program. Initiated in 1997 by the Western Willamette Professional Technical Consortium (Polk County), the Certificate of Employability has now been adopted and implemented in eleven high schools. The Employer Education Compact in partnership with the Salem Chamber of Commerce, promoted the Certificate to local employers and service organizations. In addition, regional chamber executives supported implementation and recruitment of businesses in Keizer, McMinnville, Dallas, Monmouth-Independence and Woodburn.

#### **Demonstrate Desirable Work Habits**

School officials will issue the Certificate of Employability to all high school students who have applied for the program and have met specific eligibility standards in their classroom performance.



All student records will be checked to determine which students meet the qualifications and are eligible to apply. Teachers will complete a work related performance evaluation for all eligible students. Those who meet an acceptable level in the categories of personal management, teamwork, problem solving, and communication will be issued a Certificate of Employability.

Students can gain a significant advantage in their job search efforts by earning the Certificate of Employability as an endorsement of their work ethic and workplace skills. Employers can benefit by hiring students who have demonstrated desirable work skills at school. Area employers will ask for the certificate when considering students for employment.

## **Cooperation is the Key**

A strong partnership between employers, educators, parents and students requires mutual commitment, high standards and clear expectations. The Chambers of Commerce and School Districts are dedicated to establishing and sustaining such standards in alliance with students, educators, parents and employers.

## **Qualifications**

To be eligible for the Certificate of Employability the students **must** meet the following:

- Have no unexcused absences.
- Average no more than one excused absence per month (excluding school-related activities).
- Average no more than one tardy per month.
- Make adequate academic progress in school.
- Earn an average score of “meets standard” on the evaluation in all categories (see evaluation criteria below).
- Complete the Certificate application process by the deadline.

## **Performance Evaluation**

Students are evaluated on their performance in the following areas:

- **Personal Management:** The student demonstrates readiness for work by being prepared for the class activities: assignments are completed on time, necessary materials are brought to class, and missing or incomplete work is made up promptly.
- **Teamwork:** The student uses interpersonal skills that promote effective teamwork and cooperation. Respect is shown toward the teachers, other students and their property.
- **Problem-Solving:** The student applies decision-making and problem-solving techniques appropriately. The student takes the initiative to find solutions using the available resources.
- **Communication:** The student applies the principles and skills necessary for effective communication in speaking, writing, listening, and reading. The student demonstrates how to acquire, use, organize and transfer information.

## **Student Certificates**

Students will be issued a wallet size certificate similar to the one available for viewing on their website at [www.mwec.org](http://www.mwec.org). Employers are encouraged to ask to view the certificate when interviewing the student.



## **More Information and Next Steps**

Very detailed and specific information about the Certificate of Employability is available on the MWEC website at [www.mwec.org](http://www.mwec.org). Go to the “Regional Investments” on the left side of the page, and click on the first link, Certificate of Employability. There is a lot of downloadable info there.

MWEC staff and partners are optimistic about continuing to use the Certificate of Employability as a credential under the Common Measures after a conversation with Evan Rosenberg at DOL. Because the certificate was created by, and is endorsed by our Regional Chambers of Commerce, it would qualify as an industry recognized credential.

The Certificate of Employability is heavily based on attendance – but this is because it was the number one request from employers. They want youth to show up! Everyday! Even the sunny ones!

For more information about this program, visit their website at [www.mwec.org](http://www.mwec.org) or contact Elaine Crawley at [ecrawley@chemeketa.edu](mailto:ecrawley@chemeketa.edu) or Jim McCartney [jmccartney@cves.org](mailto:jmccartney@cves.org).

## ***Employment Literacy Materials***

### **Verdugo School-to-Career Coalition**

The Verdugo School-to-Career Coalition has created several work-readiness certificate materials which can be requested in hard copy. They have created an employment literacy brochure, employment literacy record card and employability certificate.

For more information, or to request a hard copy of any of their materials, contact Mrs. Josephine R. Haire (Hall) at (818) 241-3111 ext. 570 or email [jhaire@gusd.net](mailto:jhaire@gusd.net).

## ***Work-Readiness Certificates for Career Pathways***

### **Ventura County Workforce Investment Board**

The Ventura County Workforce Investment Board established a W.I.A program curriculum based upon a combination of internship hours and classroom instruction. Youth who successfully completed the program offered through two Career Pathways, were issued a Work Readiness Certificate. They offered different standards for health careers and careers in Information Technology.

For more information contact, Jeff Braucht at (805) 388-4222 or email [jbraucht@vcss.k12.ca.us](mailto:jbraucht@vcss.k12.ca.us)