



U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Vocational and Adult Education  
Division of Academic and Technical Education

# Support for States' Employability Standards in Career Technical and Adult Education

NASDCTEc Spring Meeting | Career Clusters Institute

June 18-20, 2012

Washington, DC

# Agenda

- Introduction from OVAE
- Description of *Support for States' Employability Standards in Career and Technical and Adult Education*
- Draft employability skills framework
- Summary of upcoming assessment work and next steps

# Project Objectives

- Create a common framework for employability skills
- Help policymakers and practitioners make informed decisions about assessing employability skills
- Provide a portal for cross-governmental work on employability skills

# Key Activities/Products

- Convene a technical work group
- Create an interactive employability skills framework
- Develop criteria for assessment selection
- Obtain buy-in from federal and other stakeholders
- Create other web-based content to support the use and application of these products

# Underlying Assumptions

- Considerable work has already been done to identify employability skills
- Existing employability standards overlap on many dimensions, although key terminology differs
- The project contribution lies in developing and disseminating an online framework based on existing employability skills, rather than developing new skills
- The criteria for selecting an assessment will provide practical information to assist educators in locating and selecting an assessment for employability skills

# Working Definition

“Employability skills are the general skills that are required for success in the labor market at all employment levels that can be taught throughout the education and workforce systems. They include broad applied knowledge, workplace skills, and effective relationships skills that encompass more specific skills such as resources management, information literacy, systems thinking, technology use, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, communication skills, applied academic skills, and personal qualities. With academic and technical skills, employability skills are essential to college and career readiness”

# TWVG Composition

- Adult education and CTE organizations
  - Association for Career and Technical Education
  - Chicago Public Schools
  - Kentucky Adult Education
  - National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium
  - Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills
- Employers and business groups
  - IBM
  - Boeing
  - Human Resources Policy Administration
  - The Conference Board

# TWG Composition, cont'd.

- Researchers
  - Jobs for the Future
  - Aspen Institute
  - National Research Council
  - Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce



# Federal Stakeholders

- First meeting held on January 6, 2012
- Representatives attended from 12 agencies:

Appalachian Regional Commission	Department of Housing and Urban Development
Department of Agriculture	Department of Labor
Department of Defense	Department of Transportation
Department of Energy	Department of the Treasury
Department of Health and Human Services	National Institute for Standards and Technology
Department of Homeland Security	National Science Foundation

# AE, CTE, and Workforce Stakeholders

- First meeting held on January 6, 2012
- Representatives attended from 16 adult education, career technical education, and workforce organizations:

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education	National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium
American Youth Policy Forum	National Association of Manufacturers
Center for Energy Workforce Development	National Association of Workforce Boards
Center for Law and Social Policy	National Governors Association
Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy	National League of Cities
Correctional Education Association	National Research Center for Career and Technical Education
GED Testing Service, American Council on Education	ProLiteracy
National Academy Foundation	U.S. Chamber of Commerce

# Draft Employability Skills Framework

- Purpose

- Identify the general employability skills needed at all employment levels that can be taught throughout the education and workforce systems
- Disseminate information to state adult education and CTE policymakers, program administrators, instructors, and employers

# Framework Development

- Inventoried existing employability skill standards:
  - American School Counselor Association's National Standards
  - ATC21S (Microsoft, Intel, and Cisco)
  - Assessment of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (BOTA)
  - Career Clusters™
  - Department of Agriculture's Soft Skills
  - Department of Labor initiatives (O\*NET, Competency Models, Job Corps)
  - Employability Skills 2000+ (Conference Board of Canada)
  - Equipped for the Future Content Standards
  - Manufacturing Skills Certification System (NAM)
  - Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills
  - SCANS
  - State and local standards: Maryland's Skills for Success, Arizona's CTE Standards, and Chicago Public School's Employability Standards

# Framework Development

- **Employability assessments:**
  - NOCTI
  - Soft Skills Assessment Programs (LRI)
  - SkillsUSA
  - National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT WorkKeys)
  - Workforce Skills Certification System (CASAS)
  - Work Readiness Credential

# Framework Development, cont'd.

- Nine sets of skills emerged:
  1. Resources management
  2. Information literacy
  3. Systems thinking
  4. Technology use
  5. Interpersonal skills
  6. Critical thinking skills
  7. Communication skills
  8. Applied academic skills
  9. Personal qualities

# Framework Development, cont'd.

- Consolidated skill sets into three categories:
  1. Applied knowledge
  2. Workplace skills
  3. Effective relationships
- Sorted skills into the three framework categories and developed draft visual representation

# Employability Skills Framework

Prototype:

[http://review.mprinc.com/employability\\_mockup/framework.html](http://review.mprinc.com/employability_mockup/framework.html)



# Draft Website

- Home page
- Background
- Framework
- Assessment Selection
- Profiles
- Resources

# Next Steps: Assessment

- Create assessment selection tool
  - Provide criteria for selecting an assessment to measure employability skills
  - Focus on the alignment between the framework and assessment content
  - Product will not be a new assessment nor will it endorse a particular assessment

# Timeline

## June–September:

- Finalize framework and develop website
- Create assessment selection tool
- Convene TWG and stakeholders to review products
- Launch website with final framework and assessment selection tool (by the end of September 2012, if not sooner!)

# Coming Soon

Resources available by September 2012 from  
the Perkins Collaborative Resource Network:  
<http://cte.ed.gov>

# Thank You!

For more information:

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