

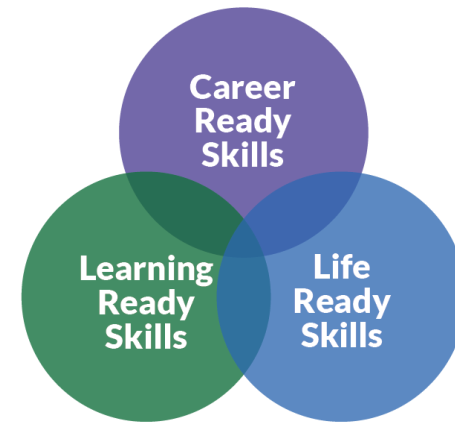
Section II

Wisconsin Standards for Career Readiness

Building a Foundation of Career Readiness in K-12 Education

As noted in Section I, the Wisconsin Career Readiness Standards (WCRS) capture the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students need to be successful in the workplace of their chosen career pathway.

The earlier Wisconsin Common Career Technical Standards (WCCTS) were developed in 2013 as a common set of standards that would become a part of all CTE standards as a way to reflect the skills and competencies, often referred to as “soft skills” or employability skills, that are required across all industries. These standards have been re-envisioned to capture how K-12 education can prepare students for an ever-changing world of work and lifelong learning. Career readiness includes more than the traditional “employability skills.” It also intersects with the skills required to be ready for life and lifelong learning. Therefore, the WCRS are comprised of three strands of skills: Career-ready, learning-ready, and life-ready. We recognize that not ALL learning-ready and life-ready skills are required for career readiness. However, significant overlap is reflected in this set of standards.



Career-ready strand: Students develop a plan for their future education, training, and career goals based on research and exploration of their options. This strand focuses on the academic and career planning (ACP) process. It includes career awareness (KNOW), career exploration (EXPLORE), career planning (PLAN), and career preparation (GO).

Learning-ready strand: Students understand how K-12 classroom learning will prepare them for careers and lifelong learning. This strand focuses on how classroom learning prepares students for their future careers and lifelong learning. It includes academic skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation mindset, and technology skills.

Life-ready strand: Students develop a positive identity and act with an awareness of self and others to collaborate, advocate, and lead effectively across various contexts. This strand focuses on the interpersonal skills needed in just about every career area. It includes self-awareness, management and responsibility, interpersonal communication and collaboration, global competence, and responsive leadership.

It is also important to note that the WCRS brings together, under the context of career readiness, many other separate sets of standards, competencies, and skills from Wisconsin as well as national and international sources. These include:

Wisconsin	National and International
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wisconsin Redefining Ready • Education for Employment and Academic and Career Planning requirements • Social and Emotional Learning Competencies • Wisconsin Standards for Information and Technology Literacy • Personal Financial Literacy • Wisconsin Entrepreneurship Education Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Career Technical Core: Career Ready Practices • ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors • Asia Society Center for Global Education: Global Leadership Performance Outcomes • Fundamental STEM Skills • Decision Education Standards

The WCRS are designed to be integrated into all courses, career pathways, and the Academic and Career Planning process. When executed with fidelity, career readiness is truly a K-12 initiative. All students, including students with an IEP, should have the opportunity to build skills in the WCRS across all content areas and at every grade level.

Career Readiness Standards in the Classroom

When an educator integrates career readiness into their content area, they help students understand the connection between what they are learning and how it can be applied to various careers. This career-connected learning can significantly increase student engagement leading to higher levels of achievement as students make personal connections to their learning. In addition, when school districts intentionally integrate career readiness across content areas and grade levels, they help ensure that all students have access and support in their own career success.

WCRS Example for English Language Arts Classroom

This WCRS learning priority:

Students develop job-seeking skills, including interviewing, resume-writing, and completing job applications.

Could be integrated by:

Having students practice interview skills as a part of the curriculum in their communications class.

Integrating WCRS in elementary classrooms is critical to building a culture of career readiness. We encourage elementary educators to intentionally weave appropriate WCRS standards into subject areas such as math, science, social studies, and English. Educators will be able to learn more about how to implement the Wisconsin Career Readiness and other CTE standards in elementary grades in a future publication, "Wisconsin's Guide to K-5 Career Readiness."

WCRS Example for an Elementary Classroom

This WCRS learning priority:

Students ask questions related to global events and gather information from national and international sources to understand the impact on their lives, community, and the world.

Could be integrated by:

Having students in a third-grade science unit look at daily temperature graphs from the past 50 years in several different countries. Students then formulate questions related to the impact that changes in the earth's temperature may have on the lives of people living in those countries.

Career Readiness Standards in Career Pathways

Because career and technical education (CTE) prepares all students for their future career, education, and ultimately life success, the WCRS are a natural fit for any CTE course. CTE in Wisconsin is both a collection of educational programs or content areas as well as a system of preparing students to be career- and college-ready. CTE programs are delivered primarily through six specific content areas. These include:

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Business and Information Technology
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Health Science
- Marketing, Management, and Entrepreneurship
- Technology and Engineering

Through CTE, learners not only gain awareness of various careers, but also have opportunities to engage in deeper exploration and preparation through a career pathway. Each pathway—whether health science, agriculture, business, construction, or engineering, to name a few—includes elements of CTE that help students develop the knowledge and skills to be successful in the career of their choice.

Elements of CTE that create a career pathway include:

- A sequence of CTE courses that build from introductory to more advanced levels
- Work-based learning experiences
- Opportunities to demonstrate academic, technical, and leadership skills through career and technical student organizations (CTSOs)
- Dual enrollment and college credit opportunities
- Authentic ways to earn industry-recognized credentials

Career pathways enable students to embark on a plan that outlines the education and training opportunities that will help them move to a career goal. Wisconsin schools use the above elements as a framework to engage with stakeholders to provide rich and authentic opportunities and experiences that help students gain knowledge and skills that go beyond the classroom experience.

While schools may independently build their own career pathways, [Wisconsin's Regional Career Pathways](#) (RCP) approach makes the process easier for individual school districts by vetting some of the career pathway components on a regional basis and tailoring pathways to address regional employment needs. Wisconsin's regional career pathway network [covers seven regions](#)—each with its own advisory group of local employers, educational organizations, and economic and workforce development interests.

Partnerships that bring business and educational organizations together are an effective way to ensure that students are gaining practical and up-to-date knowledge and skills necessary to get a jump-start on a career in the industries. Leading employers share direct input on the latest tools, practices, and processes in an industry, while K-12 schools and other educational organizations offer the professional expertise to engage and teach young learners using standards within this document.



A Career Pathway Consists of Five Elements:

A sequence of CTE courses that build from introductory to more advanced levels

Academic standards define what students should know and be able to do in an area of study. In career and technical education, standards are integrated with technical skill development based on industry standards.

WCRS Example for a Business and Information Technology Classroom	
<p>This WCRS learning priority:</p> <p>Students understand entrepreneurial processes, basic business functions, and how entrepreneurship applies to various industries.</p>	<p>Could be integrated by:</p> <p>Having students develop and create a product that could be sold as a business venture. Invite a local entrepreneur to talk with students about being a small business owner.</p>

Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning (WBL) opportunities are employer-connected experiences that allow K-12 students to participate in career awareness, career exploration, and career development. Academic standards serve as the foundation of WBL and allow students to apply knowledge and technical skills to real-world projects and problems alongside professionals. Having students participate in work-based learning is a priority in Wisconsin and is reflected on DPI’s School Report Cards and federal (Perkins V) accountability reports. Participation in work-based learning is only calculated if the program meets the following criteria:

1. Involves sustained interactions, either paid or unpaid, with industry or community professionals
 - Sustained = minimum of 90 hours, which can be rotated among employers or positions. The employer is engaged throughout the experience. It can take place in one semester, an entire year, the summer, or even a six-week period.
 - Interactions must be more than just observing and include direct communication and involvement with industry or community professionals
2. Takes place in real workplace settings (as practicable) or simulated environments at an educational institution,
3. Fosters in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career.

4. Aligns with a course (generally speaking should be a minimum of one semester). It is highly encouraged to provide credit for the work-based learning experience as well as credit for the school-based course.
5. Must include a training agreement between the student, employer/business, and school that defines the roles and responsibilities of the student, the employer, and the school.
6. Business and education partners work together to evaluate and supervise the experiences, which must be documented with training or learning plans and evaluation forms.

There are numerous work-based learning programs designed to support student mastery of competencies and also count towards accountability measures. These programs are all outlined in the Wisconsin Guide to Implementing Career-Based Learning Experiences.

WCRS Example for a Work-based Learning Program	
<p>This WCRS learning priority:</p> <p>Students learn how to create a professional network and understand the impact that one’s professional brand and social media footprint has on future employability.</p>	<p>Could be integrated by:</p> <p>Having a student intern participate in a networking event with their supervisor. The supervisor spends time coaching the student on proper attire and etiquette in advance.</p>

Career and Technical Student Organizations

Career and technical student organizations (CTSOs) develop citizenship, technical, leadership, and teamwork skills essential for students who are preparing for the workforce and further education. They enhance students' civic awareness and provide opportunities for developing social competencies and a wholesome attitude about living and working. Wisconsin's CTSOs include:



Wisconsin has six state and nationally recognized CTSOs that are intracurricular. In other words, they connect directly to the classroom through curriculum, activities, and community resources. All CTSOs include leadership development elements and competitive events where students demonstrate technical and leadership skills. CTSOs prepare young people to become productive citizens and leaders in their communities and their careers. This is done through school activities as well as regional, state, and national leadership conferences and competitions. Students grow and develop through these events and receive recognition for the work they have done and the skills they have developed. CTSOs provide an exceptional extension of CTE instruction.

WCRS Example for a Career and Technical Student Organization:

This WCRS learning priority:

Students demonstrate openness to providing and accepting feedback.

Could be integrated by:

Having students participate in a state HOSA-Future Health Professionals competition in which judges provide feedback on their performance during an event.

Authentic Ways to Earn Industry Credentials

Industry-recognized credentials (IRCs) are certifications, credentials, or licenses that are vetted by employers and recognize skill attainment needed for recruitment, screening, hiring, retention, advancement, or to mitigate workforce shortages. Earning industry credentials while in high school helps students prove their competence and improve their employment prospects, sometimes immediately after graduation. CTE courses are designed to improve career-based learning, and many IRCs fit perfectly into the curriculum and can be added to the student’s resume following certification.

WCRS Example for an Industry-Recognized Credential	
This WCRS learning priority: Students use digital presentation applications to create and deliver a presentation.	Could be integrated by: Having students complete a digital literacy certification that is designed to enable them to express themselves through digital means.

Dual Enrollment and College Credit Opportunities

Dual enrollment includes a variety of programs through which high school students are enrolled simultaneously in both high school and college to earn both high school and college credit. A dual enrollment course can take place at the high school, at a college or university, or through an online or distance course.

WCRS Example in a Dual Enrollment Course	
This WCRS learning priority: Students develop the habits, skills, and mindsets that set them up for academic and career success, including the use of digital tools.	Could be integrated by: Providing students who participate in a dual-credit course with a mentor or coach who can help them develop the study and time-management skills to be successful in a more rigorous course.

Career Readiness Standards in Academic and Career Planning

All school districts in Wisconsin are required to provide an academic and career planning (ACP) process whose stages are associated with the terms: Know. Explore. Plan. Go.



This process should include a scope and sequence of ACP activities that can be delivered in a homeroom or advisory in addition to embedding them directly into classroom instruction. The WCRS provides a roadmap that can help educators build this scope and sequence of ACP activities across grade levels.

School counselors also will find the WCRS valuable as they provide individualized ACP support for their students. In particular, as they connect students to career-based learning experiences and during ACP conferences or advising sessions.

WCRS Examples for an ACP Advisory or School Counselor		
An ACP Advisory	This WCRS learning priority: Students know the financial resources available to them that support postsecondary education goals.	Could be integrated by: Having students use the knowledge hub in ACP software such as Xello to learn about FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), grants, work-study, loans, and scholarships.
A School Counselor	This WCRS learning priority: Students learn how academic skills and content can be applied in various careers and workplace settings.	Could be integrated by: Having students predict which academic skills they think they might see in action during their upcoming job shadow.

Discipline Standards Structure

The Wisconsin Standards for Career Readiness follow a specific structure:

Standards Formatting

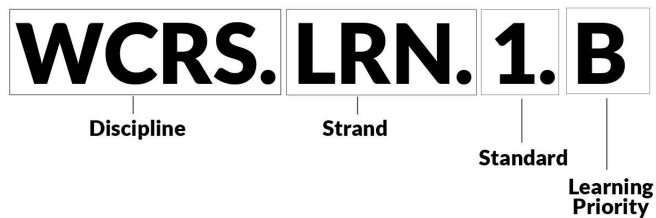
- **Discipline:** CTE program area
- **Strand:** Instructional topic within the discipline
- **Standard:** Broad statement that tells what students are expected to know or be able to do
- **Learning Priority:** Breaks down the broad statement into manageable learning pieces

Standard Coding

Strands for Career Readiness in this code structure include:

- CAR – Career-Ready
- LRN – Learning-Ready
- LIF – Life-Ready

Key to Standards Coding



Sample of Standards Table

Strand: Learning Ready (LRN)
 Students will understand how K-12 classroom learning will prepare them for careers and lifelong learning.

Standard	Learning Priority
WCRS.LRN.1: Academic Skills Acquire academic skills and real-life experiences to prepare for future education and a career.	WCRS.LRN.1.A: Engage in challenging courses and opportunities that align with academic and career goals.
	WCRS.LRN.1.B: Recognize academic strengths and challenges, and utilize digital tools in order to create, track, and manage academic goals.
	WCRS.LRN.1.C: Learn how academic skills and content can be applied in various careers and workplace settings.
	WCRS.LRN.1.D: Be eager and willing to learn new knowledge and skills.