

# Teaching 'job readiness' skills

A grant proposal prepared by the Great Falls Public School District



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# What are 'job readiness skills'?

- In order to find a job and do well in that job, it is important to have job skills. They can be broken down into three major categories:
- Informational or data skills - such as being good at math or writing, knowing another language, or being a good organizer
- Interpersonal skills - such as knowing how to manage other people or being able to solve problems among co-workers
- Mechanical skills - such as being good at fixing cars or understanding how to work with machines.



# Why job readiness skills are important



- Educators regularly assess what they do against the “real” world, particularly the workplace.
- Without fail, employers tell educators they want workers who show up on time, who dress presentably, who deal well with customers, who know how to problem-solve, and who have good team work skills.
- These are the so-called “job readiness” work skills.

# Teaching job readiness skills a must



- Employers say that these skills are more important than many technical skills.
- Employers say they want employees who are reliable, responsible workers who can solve problems, have the social skills and attitudes to work together with others, and they can train them in nearly anything.
- Great Falls teachers are not going to abandon teaching the technical skills. However, they need to teach job readiness skills.

# How job readiness skills can be taught

To that end, the Great Falls Public School District has explored various ways to teach job readiness skills and has settled on the WIN **Courseware** that provides basic workplace skills training, based on the ACT, Inc. *WorkKeys*® assessment system. Appropriate for K-12 and post-secondary education, adult education, workforce development and basic skills training, the WIN Courseware prepares citizens in the workforce and students entering the workforce with the skills needed for achievement in their career. WIN is the national leader in Career Readiness Certificate program implementations. CRC programs across the country use the WIN Courseware to help jobseekers build their skills and earn their CRC. The WIN Courseware insures concept mastery, not just test preparation. **This we can get free from the state.**



# A demand for concept mastery

- WIN delivers skill-based training to improve workplace skills for workforce development, adult education, and basic skills training for citizens in the workforce and students entering the workforce across the globe. WIN courseware prepares individuals for WorkKeys assessments. The curriculum includes 20+ hours of instructional material for all levels of WorkKeys . It ensures concept mastery, not just test preparation. [WIN courses currently meeting ACT standards](#)
- <http://montana-mt.wincshost.com/default.php>

# Assessing

- The School District has also settled on an assessment tool --- WorkKeys that is a product of the college ACT test. This has been endorsed by Great Falls Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Initiative representatives.
- The WorkKeys system uses job profiling combined with WorkKeys assessments, instructional guidance, and reporting to help students and workers identify their strengths and weaknesses as they pursue their education and career goals. This enables them to make appropriate decisions about jobs.

## **What skills does WorkKeys measure?**

WorkKeys assessments measure nine foundational workplace skills:

- Applied Mathematics
- Applied Technology
- Business Writing
- Listening
- Locating Information
- Observation
- Reading for Information
- Teamwork
- Writing

The logo for WorkKeys, featuring the word "WorkKeys" in a bold, black, serif font. A red, curved brushstroke underline is positioned below the text.

# What Great Falls proposes

- Assessing 200 students in applied math, reading for information and locating information during the 2010-2011 school year. If the grant is immediate, we'd begin with 60 Paris Gibson Education Center student this spring. Of the 200 students targeted, some 170 can be identified as economically disadvantaged.
- Look for a half credit of transition for Paris Gibson Education Center students
- Seek preferential screening and 25-50 cents an hour pay differential from business community
- Ultimately, workforce readiness certification local, state and national.



# The cost



- Each assessment costs \$5. We propose 3 assessments (Applied Math, Reading for Information, Locating Information) for 200 students at a cost of \$3,000
- An additional Talent assessment for the 60 Paris Gibson students at \$9 per assessment for \$540
- A day of professional development for 12 teachers (four hours X \$20@ hour X 12 teachers = \$960) and cost of Professional Instruction Day instructor @ \$500 to cover travel and expenses

Total: \$5,000