



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

Title:	Student Presentation	
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Synopsis:	Student presentations allow SBE board members an opportunity to explore the unique perspectives of their younger colleagues. Student Representative Baxter Hershman will speak on career readiness.	

Career and College Readiness

January 2016

College Readiness is...

College readiness is the combination of skills, knowledge, and habits of mind necessary to fully participate in **college-**level courses (courses at the 100 level and above) to completion.

[Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges](#)

Career Readiness is...

Career readiness is a convergence of all of these **definitions** (21st Century Skills). A **career**-ready person effectively navigates pathways that connect education and employment to achieve a fulfilling, financially-secure and successful **career**. A **career** is more than just a job.

[Career Readiness Partner Council](#)

Summary

College Readiness vs. Career Readiness

College has been the main focus of education

Common Core lines up with College Readiness

College Readiness is measurable

Career Readiness is made up of “soft skills”

Not as easy to measure and standardize

Measurable Factors of College Readiness

SAT/ACT

GPA

Standardized Testing (Various Types)

High School Credits

AP Test Scores

“Soft Skills”

Critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, interpretation, synthesizing information

Research skills and practices, interrogative questioning

Creativity, artistry, curiosity, imagination, innovation, personal expression

Perseverance, self-direction, planning, self-discipline, adaptability, initiative

Oral and written communication, public speaking and presenting, listening

Leadership, teamwork, collaboration, cooperation, facility in using virtual workspaces

Information and communication technology (ITC) literacy, media and internet literacy, data interpretation and analysis, computer programming

Civic, ethical, and social-justice literacy

“Soft Skills” Expanded

Critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, interpretation, synthesizing information

“Soft Skills” Expanded

Creativity, artistry, curiosity, imagination,
innovation, personal expression

“Soft Skills” Expanded

Perseverance, self-direction, planning, self-discipline, adaptability, initiative

“Soft Skills” Expanded

Leadership, teamwork, collaboration, cooperation,
facility in using virtual workspaces

“Soft Skills” Expanded

Civic, ethical, and social-justice literacy

Interviews

Who was interviewed (all are in the work force):

One person with a college degree

One person who completed a technical training

Three people with solely a high school diploma

Interview Questions

1. What sort of career preparation did you receive in high school?
 2. What sort of career preparation did you not receive that you wish you would have had in regard to your current occupation or any occupation you considered pursuing?
 3. What have been the most essential knowledge, skills, or abilities that have helped you to achieve your postsecondary goals?
 4. How would you define career readiness?
 5. Additional Comments
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Responses: #1 What sort of career preparation did you receive in high school?

Very little, there were a couple of courses that taught general “how to be an adult” (checkbook, resume, etc.), DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) taught skills (majority of the source of preparedness) [#1]

How to financially prepare yourself [#2]

Taught how to be an employee and take orders, learned Algebra 2 but didn’t find it useful, decisions (a class offered by that school) prepared him because of the real life applicability of what was being taught [#3]

Took business related classes, took oxford entrepreneurship (class on being your own boss) [#4]

Didn’t receive any general life skills and no real career preparation [#5]

Responses: #2 What sort of career preparation did you not receive that you wish you would have had in regard to your current occupation or any occupation you considered pursuing?

There should have been more of a focus on **realistic application of subjects**, wasn't made clear of what the education could have been applied to, more of an applied math way of teaching, show between subjects and work field [#1]

How to deal with the general public, customer service [#2]

Psychology and real world people skills, felt like classes were something you HAD to learn "just because" in comparison to civic classes that tie what you are learning to real life [#3]

Timing (how much time they put into work), management and marketing, classes on finances, skills from marketing class should be taught in core classes [#4]

Classes in a way of teaching **outside (out of high school) skills**, more hands on, more specialized [#5]

Responses: #3 Reflecting on your experiences after graduating high school, how would you strengthen the career readiness preparation in high school?

A course designated on career exploration, make counselors more of a guide to things like career readiness [#1]

Give students different scenarios and how to deal with them [#2]

Hard to have an answer because **that is assuming that “kids” know what they want to do [how to get there and when (a plan)]**, options in career centers were very helpful to have but often not taken advantage of [#3]

Tell someone to go into further education, some education can help, some extra knowledge taught would be helpful [#4]

Résumés (how to make one), meaningful résumés, résumés that are tailored to a job [#5]

Responses: #4 What have been the most essential knowledge, skills, or abilities that have helped you to achieve your postsecondary goals?

That there will be corporate politics and how to work in the system [#1]

Diving into continued education, always continually learning, helped to get into a high end salon (prepared her) [#2]

Willingness to work hard, positive mentality, the ability to network by “being an overall good fella,” **skills that weren’t taught in high school but through the journey of high school**, money management [#3]

Teamwork skills, **how to manage people, dealing with people**, accountability, financial skills, that you have to work [#4]

Money management, algebra that is applied for construction [#5]

Responses: #5 How would you define “career readiness?”

Issue with it: **not knowing what**

career, knowing what you want to do, knowing how to be good at it; there is a practical application for everything [#1]

Understand what happens in the industry, have a broad and deep understanding of the industry, job-shadowing helps to ready people for career (has personal experience of job-shadowing) [#2]

How willing you are to follow your determined path, once you have picked up enough real life experience and gained enough positive traits that you can make a general direction towards your goal [#3]

Depends on the career, having the knowledge about your job in general, how to work in your career, knowing how to work with people, best way to be prepared is to “learn it as you progress” [#4]

Being a good employee, life skills, punctuality, the ability to handle adversity, teamwork skills, common sense [#5]

Responses: Additional Comments

Don't ever pigeon-hole yourself, make sure you can see different perspectives, **find something you love and do it for work**, never get complacent, always aspire for more [#1]

Job shadow helps desk work, trade school is a great alternative to college [#2]

Wealth isn't just measured in money, **it feels like if you stray from a path to college you fail** when in reality not having \$100,000 worth of debt can be just as fruitful [#3]

School system teaches a lot of education but it isn't applicable.

Teach more life skills, how to pay a mortgage/taxes/bills, how the government works, simply how the real world works, prepare students for real life [#4]

Kids do not realize what it is like to work, every day is a new learning experience [#5]

General Consensus

There is very little career preparation in the high school

There is a want for general life and work skills

Students need help exploring their career options and how to get there

Remind students that a 4-year university is not the only path

The list of skills that are valuable to a student is specific to the career in which he/she is pursuing

Career readiness is dependent on the career

Facts and Figures

High School Graduates

Class of 2015 faced with a 37.0% underemployment rate and a 19.5% unemployment rate ([Economic Policy Institute](#))

College Graduates

Class of 2014 faced with a 16.8% underemployment rate and an 8.5% percent unemployment rate ([Slate](#))

Conclusion

High school insufficiently prepares students for career

Education is based around scores and numbers while the need is in life skills

High school must provide options for students to explore career choices and opportunities

College is not the only path to a successful career and life

Educators have to reinforce the idea that postsecondary education is beneficial but there are multiple options to receive it

Thank you for your time
