



**Comparison of various versions of ‘employability skills’  
The Cradle to Career Continuum of Learning**

Employability skills are defined as “the general skills that are necessary for success in the labor market at all employment levels and in all sectors.” (US Dept. of Education, Employability Skills Framework). In contrast, ‘school readiness’ involves the whole child in the context of the family and the community, including the educational environment. School Readiness skills, within the context of early education are typically defined as those skills needed to support success in kindergarten, i.e. foundational, age-appropriate competence in the development of social-emotional, physical, communication and literacy, cognition and general knowledge.

The table below illustrates the connection between acquired skills needed for success in kindergarten and acquired skills needed for success in the workforce (career). The Kansas Early Learning Standards were utilized as a state-specific example, this column can be adapted for use in other states

**Alignment Table**

Key Soft Skills (Workforce Connections)	Employability Skills (RTI Framework)	Kansas Early Learning Standards—Domains	Head Start Child Outcomes Framework	Career Ready Practices
Higher Order Thinking Skills	Critical thinking Skills	Social-Emotional Development (Responsible Decision Making and Problem Solving)	Approaches to Learning (Reasoning & Problem Solving)	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills
		Mathematics	Mathematics	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
		Science	Science	
		Social Studies		
	System Thinking	Social Studies (Government)	Social & Emotional Development (Knowledge of Families & Communities)	Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions



## NAECS-SDE Cradle to Career – Alignment Document

Key Soft Skills (Workforce Connections)	Employability Skills (RTI Framework)	Kansas Early Learning Standards—Domains	Head Start Child Outcomes Framework	Career Ready Practices
	Applied Academic Skills	Mathematics	Mathematics	Employ valid and reliable research strategies
		Science	Science	
		Social Studies		
		Literacy	Literacy	
Communication	Communication Skills	Communication	Language Development	Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason
		Literacy Skills	Literacy	Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence
Positive Self-Concept	Personal Qualities	Physical Health and Development (personal Hygiene)	Physical Health	Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management
		Approaches to Learning (Initiative; Creativity)	Approaches to Learning (Initiative & Curiosity)	
Self-Control		Social-Emotional Development (Social Development)	Social & Emotional Development (Self-Control)	Attend to personal health and financial well-being
Social skills/interaction	Interpersonal Skills	Social-Emotional Development	Social & Emotional Development (Social relationships; Cooperation)	
		Communication	Language Development	
Hard work Dependability Responsibility Self-Motivation	Resource management	Creative Arts	Creative Arts	Demonstrate creativity and innovation
		Social-Emotional Development (Personal Development)		



## NAECS-SDE Cradle to Career – Alignment Document

Key Soft Skills (Workforce Connections)	Employability Skills (RTI Framework)	Kansas Early Learning Standards—Domains	Head Start Child Outcomes Framework	Career Ready Practices
	Information Use	Approaches to Learning (Persistence and Engagement in Learning)	Approaches to Learning (Engagement & Persistence)	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee
	Technology Use			Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals.
				Use technology to enhance productivity.

### Key Considerations:

1. School Readiness has traditionally been defined as the interaction of family, school/educational environment, community, and child. Success in kindergarten is built upon the foundational skills gained through interaction with educational environments throughout the first five years of a child’s life.
2. There is a clear connection between the skills determined to be necessary for success in kindergarten and those necessary (or seen as necessary) for career success. Educators and other adults who support, promote, teach those skills in the early years need to be aware of this connection and be able to clearly articulate the message to the public and stakeholders.
3. The basis of this work is the understanding that early learning is the foundation of later learning and success. The connection between school readiness/kindergarten readiness skills and employability skills needs to be clearly defined and inclusive of all domains, as well as appropriate for all children.
4. Social-emotional development and Approaches to Learning domains are both essential to a strong continuum of learning and the success of children as they grow and develop necessary skills for successful employment.
5. An essential component of this work is to include guidance and, perhaps, direction for appropriate professional learning and development for early care and education professionals who will be implementing state early learning standards/skills.
6. Educators in the K-12 system and beyond should be provided with opportunities to know and understand about the continuum of learning, as well as their role in supporting that continuous growth and development. One possible recommendation is to create a parallel document of implementation strategies and guidance.
7. States or organizations can substitute individual state early learning standards in the table in place of the Kansas Early Learning Standards.