

The State Board of Education (SBOE) adopts new §127.15, concerning Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for career development and career and technical education (CTE). The new section is adopted with changes to the proposed text as published in the May 16, 2025 issue of the *Texas Register* (50 TexReg 2887) and will be republished. The new section establishes TEKS in employability skills for effective performance in the workplace. The employability skills standards will be required to be taught as a part of each CTE course in a program of study.

**REASONED JUSTIFICATION:** In accordance with statutory requirements that the SBOE identify by rule the essential knowledge and skills of each subject in the required curriculum, the SBOE follows a board-approved cycle to review and revise the essential knowledge and skills for each subject. A full revision of the CTE TEKS was conducted in 2009 and 2014. As part of the 2014 review, the educator review committees recommended the inclusion in the TEKS for all CTE courses a strand in employability skills for effective performance in the workplace. The SBOE approved CTE TEKS with the employability skills strand for courses in the 16 career clusters that existed at that time to be effective August 28, 2017.

Since the 2014 CTE TEKS review, any revisions to the TEKS for CTE courses have included an employability skills strand; however, the employability skills vary across the current 14 CTE career clusters and in some instances vary among courses within the same career cluster. At the January 2025 SBOE meeting, the board discussed the option to develop a universal set of CTE TEKS in employability skills that would be required to be taught as part of each CTE course. The discussion included establishing one set of employability skills standards for courses identified as Level 1 and 2 in a CTE program of study and a second universal set of advanced employability skills standards for courses identified as Level 3 and 4 in a CTE program of study. Proposed new employability skills were approved for first reading and filing authorization at the April 2025 SBOE meeting.

Adopted new §127.15 identifies standards to be taught as part of each CTE course. At adoption, the section title was changed to remove the phrase "Adopted 2025."

The SBOE approved the new section for first reading and filing authorization at its April 11, 2025 meeting and for second reading and final adoption at its June 27, 2025 meeting.

In accordance with Texas Education Code, §7.102(f), the SBOE approved the new rule for adoption by a vote of two-thirds of its members to specify an effective date earlier than the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year. The earlier effective date will allow districts to implement new TEKS for employability skills beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. The effective date is 20 days after filing as adopted with the *Texas Register*.

**SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES:** The public comment period on the proposal began May 16, 2025, and ended at 5:00 p.m. on June 16, 2025. The SBOE also provided an opportunity for registered oral and written comments at its June 2025 meeting in accordance with the SBOE board operating policies and procedures. Following is a summary of the public comments received and corresponding responses.

**Comment.** One community member stated that the objectives for the two Advanced Placement (AP) courses in CTE programs of study comprehensively address the proposed employability skills.

**Response.** The SBOE disagrees that AP Computer Science A and AP Computer Science Principles comprehensively address the employability skills in new 19 TAC §127.15, Career and Technical Education Employability Skills, and took action to adopt the new TEKS to be offered together with the essential knowledge and skills for all CTE courses.

**Comment.** One community member expressed support for a standard set of employability skills across the board for all CTE courses but asked to maintain the integrity of the current TEKS in agriculture that will be effective August 1, 2025.

**Response.** The SBOE agrees that a standard set of general employability skills for all career clusters is appropriate and took action to adopt new 19 TAC §127.15, Career and Technical Education Employability Skills, as proposed.

Comment. One administrator recommended embedding the following knowledge and skills statement and student expectations from §127.469(d)(11)(A) and (B), Principles of Hospitality and Tourism, into all CTE instruction as follows:

(11) The student understands the importance of customer service. The student is expected to:

(A) determine ways to provide quality customer service;

(B) analyze how guests are affected by employee attitude, appearance, and actions.

Response. The SBOE disagrees that the recommended standards should be included in all CTE courses and took action to adopt new 19 TAC § 127.15, Career and Technical Education Employability Skills, as proposed.

Comment. One administrator recommended embedding the following student expectations from §127.477(d)(6)(C)-(F), Hospitality Services, into all CTE instruction as follows:

(6) The student applies leadership, teamwork, and critical-thinking skills in collaboration with others to accomplish organizational goals or objectives. The student is expected to:

(C) evaluate methods of conflict-management skills to facilitate appropriate solutions;

(D) resolve unexpected situations in customer service;

(E) understand diverse employee cultures and customs;

(F) value cultural diversity of guests.

Response. The SBOE disagrees that the recommended standards should be included in all CTE courses and took action to adopt new 19 TAC §127.15, Career and Technical Education Employability Skills, as proposed.

Comment. One administrator recommended applying the proposed employability skills TEKS in entry-level or senior-level CTE courses only. The commenter stated that employability skills are important but requiring the proposed TEKS to be applied in every CTE course would be redundant.

Response. The SBOE disagrees and has determined that including the proposed new employability skills TEKS in all CTE courses is appropriate and supports college and career readiness.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The new section is adopted under Texas Education Code (TEC), §7.102(c)(4), which requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to establish curriculum and graduation requirements; TEC, §28.002(a), which identifies the subjects of the required curriculum; TEC, §28.002(c), which requires the SBOE to identify by rule the essential knowledge and skills of each subject in the required curriculum that all students should be able to demonstrate and that will be used in evaluating instructional materials and addressed on the state assessment instruments; and TEC, §28.025(a), which requires the SBOE to determine by rule the curriculum requirements for the foundation high school graduation program that are consistent with the required curriculum under TEC, §28.002.

CROSS REFERENCE TO STATUTE. The new section implements Texas Education Code, §§7.102(c)(4); 28.002(a) and (c); and 28.025(a).

<rule>

**§127.15. Career and Technical Education Employability Skills.**

- (a) Implementation. The provisions of this section shall be implemented by school districts beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.
- (b) General requirements. These standards may not be offered as a standalone course. These standards shall be offered together with the essential knowledge and skills for career and technical education (CTE) courses in this chapter.
- (c) Introduction.
  - (1) CTE instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards, industry-relevant technical knowledge, and college and career readiness skills for students to further their education and succeed in current and emerging professions.
  - (2) The goal of the employability skills standards is to ensure that students develop essential skills for effective performance in the workplace, regardless of the occupation.
  - (3) These standards are required to be addressed in their entirety as part of each CTE course based on the level of the course in a CTE program of study.
    - (A) CTE courses identified as Level 1 or Level 2 courses in a CTE program of study must address the employability skills standards identified in subsection (d)(1) of this section.
    - (B) CTE courses identified as Level 3 or Level 4 courses in a CTE program of study must address the employability skills standards identified in subsection (d)(2) of this section.
  - (4) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (d) Knowledge and skills.
  - (1) Employability skills--Levels 1 and 2. In a CTE course identified as a Level 1 or Level 2 course in a CTE program of study, the student demonstrates professional standards/employability skills as required by business and industry. The student is expected to:
    - (A) explain the importance of dressing appropriately, speaking politely, and conducting oneself in a manner appropriate for the profession and work site;
    - (B) describe teamwork, group dynamics, and conflict resolution and how they can impact the collective outcome;
    - (C) present written and oral technical communication in a clear, concise, and effective manner for a variety of purposes and audiences;
    - (D) identify time-management skills such as prioritizing tasks, following schedules, and tending to goal-relevant activities and how these practices optimize efficiency and results;
    - (E) define work ethic and discuss the characteristics of a positive work ethic, including punctuality, dependability, reliability, and responsibility for reporting for duty and performing assigned tasks;
    - (F) demonstrate respect for differences in the workplace;
    - (G) identify the importance and benefits of meritocracy, a hard work ethic, and equal opportunity in the workplace;
    - (H) identify consequences relating to discrimination and harassment;
    - (I) demonstrate knowledge of personal and occupational health and safety practices, including first aid, in the workplace;
    - (J) describe the roles and responsibilities of managers;
    - (K) identify career development and entrepreneurship opportunities in the field;

- (L) identify appropriate training, education, or certification in the field; and
  - (M) identify legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to the field.
- (2) Employability skills--Levels 3 and 4. In a CTE course identified as a Level 3 or Level 4 course in a CTE program of study, the student demonstrates professional standards/employability skills as required by business and industry. The student is expected to:
- (A) demonstrate dressing appropriately, speaking politely, and conducting oneself in a manner appropriate for the profession and work site;
  - (B) analyze how teams can produce better outcomes through cooperation, contribution, and collaboration from members of the team;
  - (C) present written and oral technical communication in a clear, concise, and effective manner for a variety of purposes and audiences, including explaining and justifying decisions;
  - (D) use time-management skills independently and in groups to prioritize tasks, follow schedules, and tend to goal-relevant activities in a way that optimizes efficiency and results;
  - (E) describe the importance of and demonstrate punctuality, dependability, reliability, and responsibility in reporting for duty and performing assigned tasks as directed;
  - (F) demonstrate respect for differences in the workplace;
  - (G) identify the importance and benefits of meritocracy, a hard work ethic, and equal opportunity in the workplace;
  - (H) identify consequences relating to discrimination and harassment;
  - (I) demonstrate knowledge of personal and occupational health and safety, applicable regulations, and first aid in the workplace and discuss why it is critical for employees and employers to maintain a safe work environment;
  - (J) compare skills and characteristics of managers and leaders in the workplace; and
  - (K) identify career development opportunities in the field:
    - (i) education and training;
    - (ii) credentialing;
    - (iii) internships and apprenticeships; and
    - (iv) entrepreneurship opportunities; and
  - (L) demonstrate an understanding of legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to the field.