

The State Board of Education (SBOE) proposes new §127.15, concerning Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for career development and career and technical education (CTE). The proposed new section would establish TEKS in employability skills for effective performance in the workplace. The employability skills standards would be required to be taught as a part of each CTE course.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND 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 universal 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 §127.15, Career and Technical Education Employability Skills, Adopted 2025, would identify standards to be taught as part of each CTE course.

The SBOE approved the proposed new rule for first reading and filing authorization at its April 11, 2025 meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT: Monica Martinez, associate commissioner for standards and programs, has determined that for the first five years the proposal is in effect, there may be fiscal implications for school districts and charter schools to implement the proposed new employability skills standards, which may include the need for professional development and revisions to district-developed databases, curriculum, and scope and sequence documents. Since curriculum and instruction decisions are made at the local district level, it is difficult to estimate the fiscal impact on any given district.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT IMPACT: The proposal has no effect on local economy; therefore, no local employment impact statement is required under Texas Government Code, §2001.022.

SMALL BUSINESS, MICROBUSINESS, AND RURAL COMMUNITY IMPACT: The proposal has no direct adverse economic impact for small businesses, microbusinesses, or rural communities; therefore, no regulatory flexibility analysis specified in Texas Government Code, §2006.002, is required.

COST INCREASE TO REGULATED PERSONS: The proposal does not impose a cost on regulated persons, another state agency, a special district, or a local government and, therefore, is not subject to Texas Government Code, §2001.0045.

TAKINGS IMPACT ASSESSMENT: The proposal does not impose a burden on private real property and, therefore, does not constitute a taking under Texas Government Code, §2007.043.

GOVERNMENT GROWTH IMPACT: Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff prepared a Government Growth Impact Statement assessment for this proposed rulemaking. During the first five years the proposed rulemaking would be in effect, it would create a new regulation by requiring school districts to include new employability skills into instruction provided for CTE courses.

The proposed rulemaking would not create or eliminate a government program; would not require the creation of new employee positions or elimination of existing employee positions; would not require an increase or decrease in future legislative appropriations to the agency; would not require an increase or decrease in fees paid to the agency;

would not expand, limit, or repeal an existing regulation; would not increase or decrease the number of individuals subject to its applicability; and would not positively or adversely affect the state's economy.

PUBLIC BENEFIT AND COST TO PERSONS: Ms. Martinez has determined that for each year of the first five years the proposal is in effect, the public benefit anticipated as a result of enforcing the proposal would be to support student learning in skills that are needed for effective performance in the workplace. There is no anticipated economic cost to persons who are required to comply with the proposal.

DATA AND REPORTING IMPACT: The proposal would have no data or reporting impact.

PRINCIPAL AND CLASSROOM TEACHER PAPERWORK REQUIREMENTS: TEA has determined that the proposal would not require a written report or other paperwork to be completed by a principal or classroom teacher.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The public comment period on the proposal begins May 16, 2025, and ends at 5:00 p.m. on June 16, 2025. A form for submitting public comments is available on the TEA website at <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/laws-and-rules/sboe-rules-tac/proposed-state-board-of-education-rules>. The SBOE will take registered oral and written comments on the proposal at the appropriate committee meeting in June 2025 in accordance with the SBOE board operating policies and procedures. A request for a public hearing on the proposal submitted under the Administrative Procedure Act must be received by the commissioner of education not more than 14 calendar days after notice of the proposal has been published in the *Texas Register* on May 16, 2025.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The new section is proposed 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, Adopted 2025.

- (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.