



Florida Ready to Work in Duval County Schools

Case Study for Answering Employers' Needs

After surveying their business community, Duval County Public Schools learned that local employers, much like employers across the nation, were demanding talent be equipped with essential soft skills. Responding to employer demand, Duval County Public Schools identified the **Florida Ready to Work** program as the solution.

The Plan

In April 2021, the Duval County Public School Board adopted their Achieve '26 five-year strategic plan. These goals and guidelines now represent the highest achievement priorities for the leadership, faculty, and staff of Duval County Public Schools. The nationally recognized plan was developed with voices of community stakeholders at the forefront.

The plan includes four high-level academic goals with guiding principles that frame the strategic priorities of the district through 2026. Most specifically, goal number 3 was developed with students' post-secondary plans in mind.

Goal 3:

Improve the post-secondary readiness of graduates by increasing the percentage of students earning soft skills credentials from the baseline in August 23 to August 26.

Which Soft Skills?

Through community stakeholder feedback meetings and national research data, Duval County Schools defined Soft Skills as:

SOFT SKILLS DEFINED

Based on the research from data, focus groups and interviews.

1	PROFESSIONALISM	Dependable/trustworthy Detail oriented/attentive Ability to accept constructive criticism
2	COMMUNICATION	Interpersonal skills Customer service Verbal & written communication
3	TEAMWORK	Emotional Maturity & Team Player Self Motivated/Self Leadership Teamwork
4	SOLVING PROBLEMS	Organization Adaptability/Flexibility/Fast-paced Problem-solving

Why Florida Ready to Work?

When utilizing the Guiding Principles of the Achieve '26 plan, Duval County sought to find resources that were fiscally responsible and assisted in developing high-quality partnerships. Additionally, the Board wanted to ensure that the curriculum and the assessment chosen were:

- Measurable completion and skills mastery
- Intuitive and accessible for students
- Easy for teachers to utilize
- Low-or-no cost to district
- Valued/validated by employers

One program stuck out to Duval County Public School Board.

Florida Ready to Work is a research-based career readiness program created by Florida law. The program focuses on developing a work ready talent pipeline with the essential employability skills required for individual, business, and whole community economic well-being and economic growth.

The program is FREE to Florida students and school districts. Florida Ready to Work is endorsed by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, CareerSource Florida, Florida Council of 100, Florida MAKES, HR Florida, and other statewide business stakeholders.

"We found that Florida Ready to Work was directly aligned to what the community and employee stakeholders found to be their definition of soft skills. This program helps us answer what the community was asking for.

By prioritizing the essential soft skills, we are preparing students for both college and careers when completing high school. The Florida Ready to Work modules prepare students for real-world scenarios that they will encounter upon graduating.

Our business partners are excited that we are implementing a no-cost solution that provides a credential showing students' mastery of the essential soft skills."

-Corey Wright, Assistant Superintendent,
Accountability and Assessment
Duval County Schools

Contact us!

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About Duval County:

- One of Florida's seven major metropolitan school districts
- Total High Schools: 21
- Average Graduation Rate: 89.6%

2021-22 Results

The Class of 2022 served as a pilot class to help teachers familiarize themselves with the curriculum and assessment.

Four high schools conducted a successful implementation of Florida Soft Skills and experienced a 96.5% success rate. Of the 202 students who participated in the program, 195 earned their Florida Soft Skills Credential.

Initial feedback from teachers and students was positive, indicating the modules were easy to navigate and lessons were easily embed within current classes. The Duval Ready Diploma will have full utilization when the rising 8th grade students of 2022-23 reach 12th grade, with the baseline year for results being the Class of 2023.



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