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Florida Department of Education

Media Room

PRESS RELEASE

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Lt. Governor Kottkamp Announces Ready To Work Credential Program

TALLAHASSEE – Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp today announced Florida's Ready to Work Program, which creates a job skill assessment-based training and credential program for students and adult learners. The program is administered by the Florida Department of Education and the Agency for Workforce Innovation. Following a competitive process, a contract was awarded to Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) to provide the program's instructional components and assessments.

"Florida must continue to cultivate a well-prepared workforce to respond to the needs of our state's growing business community," said Lt. Governor Kottkamp. "This program will enable students of all ages to earn a credential that tells prospective employers they are equipped with the skills needed to enter the workforce and hit the ground running."

Free-of-charge and completely voluntary, the Ready to Work Program provides participants with an opportunity to earn a credential that demonstrates his or her ability to enter the workforce with the skills necessary for success. The program begins with a pre-instructional assessment to determine an applicant's mastery of basic workforce skills. Applicants meeting the designated mastery levels will earn the Ready to Work credential. Those in need of additional preparation will enroll in self-paced, tutorial coursework for the areas in which they were not proficient, followed by a post-instructional assessment. A certificate is issued upon successful completion of all WorkKeys® assessments.

"I believe that the Ready to Work Program will prove to be the most significant workforce development initiative in the state's history because it focuses on real-world issues of both students and employers with respect to workforce readiness and training," said Representative Joe Pickens.

The Ready to Work Credential Program consists of the nationally recognized ACT WorkKeys® system, which measures cognitive abilities such as applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information. Assessments measuring these abilities may be either paper-and-pencil or web-based, and take about an hour each to complete. Each assessment is scored on a scale from three to seven.

To earn Florida's Ready to Work Credential, applicants must score a three or above on all three of the WorkKeys® assessments. Applicants can earn the Ready to Work Credential at one of three

levels: Bronze (minimum score of three or above on all three assessments), Silver (minimum score of four or above on all three assessments) or Gold (minimum score of five or above on all three assessments).

“This program brings together the entire spectrum of the education community from K-12 public education to community colleges to career-technical education centers to help Florida job seekers – whether they are looking for their first job or a new job – obtain the skills employers are looking for in an employee,” said Education Commissioner Jeanine Blomberg.

In addition to the three WorkKeys® assessments, Florida’s Ready to Work Credential will by this fall include a work-readiness component, which measures applicants’ personal qualities (dependability, assertiveness, self-management, honesty/integrity) and interpersonal skills (communications, customer service, teamwork and leadership skills).

"Through the Ready to Work program, we are working to ensure that people throughout the state are truly ‘ready to work’,” said Agency for Workforce Innovation Director Monesia Brown. “We view education and workforce skills development at all levels as an investment in the future of Florida’s economy, and we could not be more thrilled with our partnership with DOE or the support we have received from Gov. Crist and Lt. Gov. Kottkamp." The program will be available at participating public schools, community colleges, area technical centers, one-stop career centers, vocational rehabilitation centers, Department of Juvenile Justice programs and regional education consortia. Currently, there are 20 sites throughout the state where applicants can take the WorkKeys® assessments. Nearly 10,000 Floridians who have already taken the WorkKeys® assessments and achieved scores of three or above on each assessment will be “grandfathered” into the Ready to Work Credential Program, and will receive a certificate of completion this month.

“Manufacturers have thousands of jobs open in Florida at all levels. We desperately need workers who can quickly be assimilated into our manufacturing careers to produce the products that today's market place demands,” said Manufacturers Association of Florida Executive Director Nancy Stephens. “WorkKeys® will help us qualify incoming workers and upgrade existing workers' skills. The ‘win-win’ is that workers will make higher salaries, they will perform at higher levels, and Florida will increase its competitive manufacturing position.”

Lt. Governor Kottkamp was joined today by Representative Joe Pickens, Representative Thad Altman, Representative Trey Traviesa, Education Commissioner Jeanine Blomberg, Agency for Workforce Innovation Director Monesia Brown, Manufacturers Association of Florida Executive Director Nancy Stephens, and other Florida education, business and industry leaders.

For more information, and to participate in the Ready to Work Credential Program, visit www.fldoe.org, call toll-free at 1-866-429-2334 or send an e-mail to ReadytoWork@fldoe.org.

[Florida Ready to Work Overview \(pdf\)](#)

[Current Ready to Work Assessment Sites \(pdf\)](#)

[Florida Ready to Work Bronze Credential \(pdf\)](#)

[User's Guide to Florida's Ready to Work Credential \(pdf\)](#)