

READY^{for} Life

A Model for Success Beyond K-12

WESTERN
School Division
Morden, Manitoba

*"Rooted In Caring;
Committed to Learning"*



Development Team	Stephen Ross, Superintendent Cyndy Kutzner, Assistant Superintendent Marianne Fenn, Principal (Morden Collegiate Institute) Andrew Volk, Principal (Minnewasta School) Garth Shindle, Vice-Principal (École Morden Middle School) Geoffrey Sutton, Vice-Principal (Maple Leaf School) Tyler Sloan, Guidance Counsellor (Morden Collegiate Institute) Dan Muggridge, Guidance Counsellor (École Morden Middle School) Laura Thwaites, Guidance Counsellor (Minnewasta School) John Krahn, Teacher (Morden Collegiate Institute) Charmayne Brook, Teacher (École Morden Middle School)
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INTRODUCTION

Rationale and Philosophy

In Western School Division, we believe that the long-term purpose of K-12 education is to prepare students for life beyond school and to develop healthy citizens who contribute to society in meaningful ways. This means intentionally and deliberately working, throughout K-12, to develop the citizenship and employment skills that will prepare students for the future.

According to *Grade 12 Career Development: Life/Work Transitioning* (Manitoba, 2009), “The economy of the twenty-first century will need workers who can respond and adapt to change and who are lifelong learners” (p. 1). Preparing for life in the 21st Century, means providing students with the knowledge, skills and capacities that will serve them best in a changing world. This requires a commitment to deep, continuous learning that is both academic and practical as well as to citizenship, including responsibility, ethics and cultural competency (Tucker, 2017).

The purpose of the *Ready for Life* model is to provide schools with a framework of expectations and practices that will:

- Improve student learning
- Support individualized learning
- Provide relevant learning experiences for students
- Promote citizenship through the development of employability skills
- Draw explicit connections between curricula and career awareness, exploration and development
- Identify common practices and benchmarks throughout Early Years, Middle Years and High School that support the development of employability skills

The *Ready for Life* model includes the following components:

- *Ready for Life*: A model for success beyond K-12
- The *DEEP* stages of career development (Dream, Explore, Experience, Plan)
- Employability Skills 2000+ (Appendix A)
- Connections to K-12 Curricula (Appendix B)

Ready for Life Framework

The Western School Division *Ready for Life* model places an emphasis on career development and the teaching of employability skills throughout K-12.

While the purpose and vision of the model is the same across K-12, the implementation and the emphasis on certain components of the model varies at early, middle and high school levels.

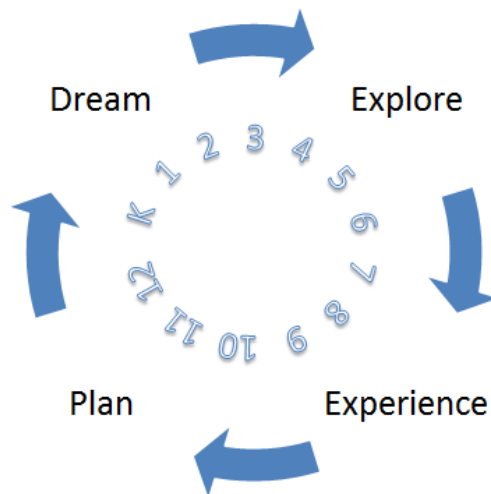
Throughout K-12, the *Ready for Life* model uses the employability skills outlined in The Conference Board of Canada's document "Employability Skills 2000+":

- Fundamental Skills
- Personal Management Skills
- Teamwork skills

The model refers to four stages of career development:

- Dreaming
- Exploring
- Experiencing
- Planning

In theory, an individual can be at any one (or more) of these four stages at any point in their life. As part of the deliberate and intentional development of employability skills we emphasize these four components to varying degrees at different grade levels:



Our goal is for every student to leave Grade 12 with the knowledge of self, knowledge of the world and the skills to effectively plan towards and achieve their dreams in life and career. We will work towards this goal for every child by infusing career development into all levels of curriculum, providing students with rich and relevant learning experiences in and out of the classroom, providing teachers with training and resources, and continuing to provide special programming and elective courses.

Roles and Responsibilities

Accomplishing the goals of the *Ready for Life* model will require the commitment and involvement of stakeholders at all levels.

Western School Division

The primary role and responsibility of Western School Division is to provide an environment that supports career development through:

- Board priorities
- Beliefs and values
- Financial commitment to professional development and programming

School Administrators

It is the primary responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the *Ready for Life* model is implemented in schools. As school leaders, administrators are responsible for understanding the model and facilitating its implementation at all grade levels. Some of the key ways in which this will be achieved include:

- Coordinating and infusing the *Ready for Life* model into the overall school programming
- Identifying and supporting existing practices that align with the model
- Clearly communicating the school expectations around the model
- Allot time for Guidance Counsellors to meet with teachers to facilitate planning around the *Employability Skills and Career Development throughout K-12 Curricula* document (See Appendix).
- Guiding and facilitating everyday instructional practices that directly support the learning of career development and employability skills
- Providing physical facilities, resources and training necessary for teachers to implement the model at the classroom level
- Facilitate the coordination of community partnerships
- Reviewing, evaluating and providing feedback on the model and its implementation
- Ensuring that implementation of the model complies with existing policies and regulations

Teachers

Teachers are primarily responsible for the delivery of the *Ready for Life* model to students through already existing curricula and practices. This is not “more work for teachers”; it is “the work of teachers”. The model is designed to provide an underlying philosophy for much of the work that teachers already do in their classrooms. The key responsibilities of teachers include:

- Understanding the *Ready for Life* model as it applies to their grade level and more broadly in K-12
- Work with Guidance Counsellors to (co)plan and (co) teach around the *Employability Skills and Career Development throughout K-12 Curricula* document (See Appendix).
- The intentional design of learning opportunities that support the development of employability skills
- Making explicit connections between curricular outcomes and career development
- Monitoring the needs and progress of students
- Communicating with parents when necessary
- Planning activities in and outside of the classroom that support career development (lessons, activities, projects, guest speakers, field trips, practical experiences, etc.)
- Establishing connections with community partners
- Participation in relevant training and professional development
- Participation in the ongoing review and evaluation of the model
- Deliver programming in accordance with existing rules, policies and guidelines

Students

The roles and responsibilities of students vary greatly as they advance through K-12. The basic responsibilities of students in relation to the *Ready for Life* model are:

- To take ownership of their learning
- To participate in learning activities inside and outside of the classroom
- To establish and work towards learning goals
- To work in accordance with existing rules, policies and guidelines

Community Partners

Community partners can play an especially important role in the implementation of the *Ready for Life* model. At the core of the model is the belief that students will benefit when they participate in the greater community and when the community enters the classroom. Some of the ways community partners can support the model include:

- Participation in school-based activities
- Educational visits to schools or classrooms
- Unique training or learning activities for school staff and/or students
- Accommodation of field trips
- Providing mentorship opportunities
- Community partners must provide safe and healthy workplaces, specify any special safety considerations or training required and support programming in accordance with school/divisional rules and policies

READY for Life

A Model for Success Beyond K-12

**Classroom/
Curricula
Based**

(All students)



(Some students)

**Electives/
Specialized
Programs**

EARLY YEARS

- Grade Level Curricula
- Classroom Based Activities
- Project Based Learning
- Essential Skills in Literacy and Numeracy
- Self-Awareness Learning
- Field Trips
- Community Visits
- Special Guests

MIDDLE YEARS

- Grade Level Curricula
- Classroom Based Activities
- Project Based Learning
- Multiple Intelligences Learning
- Citizenship Activities
- Field Trips
- Career Cruising
- Exploratory/Option Courses
- Tour RRTVA Programs
- Community Involvement
- Volunteerism
- Career Development Option Course

HIGH SCHOOL

- Grade Level Curricula
- Classroom Based Activities
- Project Based Learning
- Course Selections
- Guidance Counsellor Consultations
- Career Symposium
- Career Development Courses
- Business Courses
- College/University Visits
- Tour/Enroll in RRTVA Programs
- Safe Workers of Tomorrow Training
- Intern/Work/Volunteer for Credit

DREAM

EXPLORE

EXPERIENCE

PLAN

K

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Fundamental Skills

Personal Management Skills

Teamwork Skills



DEEP Stages of Career Development

In Western School Division, we view career development as an ongoing process, inseparable from life-long learning. Students start to develop employability skills as early as infancy and continue to build and refine them throughout their time in school. DEEP is an acronym for “Dream, Explore, Experience & Plan”, four stages that we believe students must progress through to be prepared for life beyond school.

Dream

“Play is the work of the young; in their play children begin the acquisition of skills that will last a lifetime” (Magnuson & Starr, 2000).

As soon as students start to learn about themselves and their community in Kindergarten, they should be encouraged to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity about their world and their future. In the early years, students should be encouraged to dream big and be exposed to a wide variety of careers through field trips, guest speakers, explorations, research and direct instruction.

Explore

Throughout the early and into the middle years, students should have many opportunities to explore a wide variety of careers and professions relevant to their world and interests.

“The active and strategic inclusion of career development concepts and life/work exploration in classroom learning activities can foster motivation, achievement, and student engagement. Career development can also influence students’ perceived value of completing high school... students who are exposed to a structured approach to career development in the school system become self-reliant, making informed choices about their lives” (Manitoba, 2014)

Experience

Career exploration should naturally evolve to include experiential learning. “Experiential learning involves structured, “hands-on” learning opportunities that help students discover and develop their career-related strengths and interests” (Manitoba, 2014). Experiences can involve but are not limited to presentations by professionals, site visits, job shadowing and project based learning.

Plan

The goal of career development in K-12 is not to stream students or have them decide on a career by the time of graduation. Rather, we aim to produce citizens with strong employability skills, who have the ability to plan their career paths and take the necessary steps to reach their goals. Much of this planning begins and is developed throughout high school as students make course selections, become more engaged in the community and join the workforce. Our goal is for every student in WSD to graduate, confident in the knowledge that they have the skills to determine their own path to success

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS 2000+



Fundamental Skills

The skills needed as a basis for further development

You will be better prepared to progress in the world of work when you can:

COMMUNICATE

- read and understand information presented in a variety of forms (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams)
- write and speak so others pay attention and understand
- listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others
- share information using a range of information and communications technologies (e.g., voice, e-mail, computers)
- use relevant scientific, technological, and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas

MANAGE INFORMATION

- locate, gather, and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems
- access, analyze, and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (e.g., the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities)

USE NUMBERS

- decide what needs to be measured or calculated
- observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools, and technology
- make estimates and verify calculations

THINK AND SOLVE PROBLEMS

- assess situations and identify problems
- seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts
- recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific, and mathematical dimensions of a problem
- identify the root cause of a problem
- be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions
- readily use science, technology, and mathematics as ways to think, gain, and share knowledge, solve problems, and make decisions
- evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions
- implement solutions
- check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement



Personal Management Skills

The personal skills, attitudes, and behaviours that drive one's potential for growth

You will be able to offer yourself greater possibilities for achievement when you can:

DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

- feel good about yourself and be confident
- deal with people, problems, and situations with honesty, integrity, and personal ethics
- recognize your own and other people's good efforts
- take care of your personal health
- show interest, initiative, and effort

BE RESPONSIBLE

- set goals and priorities balancing work and personal life
- plan and manage time, money, and other resources to achieve goals
- assess, weigh, and manage risk
- be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group
- be socially responsible and contribute to your community

BE ADAPTABLE

- work independently or as part of a team
- carry out multiple tasks or projects
- be innovative and resourceful: identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done
- be open and respond constructively to change
- learn from your mistakes and accept feedback
- cope with uncertainty

LEARN CONTINUOUSLY

- be willing to continuously learn and grow
- assess personal strengths and areas for development
- set your own learning goals
- identify and access learning sources and opportunities
- plan for and achieve your learning goals

WORK SAFELY

- be aware of personal and group health and safety practices and procedures, and act in accordance with them



Teamwork Skills

The skills and attributes needed to contribute productively

You will be better prepared to add value to the outcomes of a task, project, or team when you can:

WORK WITH OTHERS

- understand and work within the dynamics of a group
- ensure that a team's purpose and objectives are clear
- be flexible: respect, and be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others in a group
- recognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences, and perspectives
- accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner
- contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise
- lead or support when appropriate, motivating a group for high performance
- understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions
- manage and resolve conflict when appropriate

PARTICIPATE IN PROJECTS AND TASKS

- plan, design, or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined objectives and outcomes
- develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise, and implement
- work to agreed-upon quality standards and specifications
- select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or project
- adapt to changing requirements and information
- continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS 2000+ (Kid Friendly)



Fundamental Skills

The skills needed to keep growing

You will be better prepared for work when you can:

COMMUNICATE

- read different types of writing (words, graphs, charts, etc.)
- speak to others and groups of people respectfully
- listen well to the ideas of everyone
- ask questions to other's kindly
- share ideas with others
- follow the rules when using computers, iPads, and technology

MANAGE INFORMATION

- find and organize important pieces of work, projects, and belongings
- show pieces of learning in all subject areas

USE NUMBERS

- find out what math problems need to be solved and how to solve them
- show number learnings in different ways (strategies, technology, etc.)
- make predictions about numbers and check over work

THINK AND SOLVE PROBLEMS

- find problems that need to be solved
- ask what others think and listen to what they say
- look for facts
- look for the cause of a problem
- find different ways to solve a problem
- choose the best solution to a problem
- check to see if your solution worked



Personal Management Skills

The skills, attitudes and behaviours that will help you grow

You can achieve more when you can:

DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

- feel good about yourself
- be honest and do the right thing
- recognize the effort of yourself and others
- make healthy choices
- try new things

BE RESPONSIBLE

- set goals
- be on time
- think about risks when you make choices
- be responsible for your actions
- make choices that are good for the community

BE ADAPTABLE

- work by yourself or with others
- look for new ways to do things
- deal with change and the unexpected
- learn from your mistakes
- listen to feedback

LEARN CONTINUOUSLY

- keep learning and growing
- think about your strengths and what you need to work on
- set learning goals
- choose the best ways to learn
- make plans to meet your goals

WORK SAFELY

- practice safe and healthy routines
- follow safety rules



Teamwork Skills

The skills need to work together effectively

You will be better at working as part of a team when you can:

WORK WITH OTHERS

- work in a group to finish a job
- talk about what the job is
- listen to everyone's idea and be respectful
- share your ideas
- help others when needed
- talk about all of the ideas

PARTICIPATE IN PROJECTS AND TASKS

- make a plan and follow it
- make changes to the plan if it doesn't work
- choose a way to do the job (technology, paper, etc.)
- go back and fix something if it doesn't work the first time

APPENDIX B

Employability Skills and Career Development throughout K-12 Curricula

K-12 curricular outcomes related to career development can be found in the Manitoba Education document [*Guidance Education: Connections to Compulsory Curriculum Areas Kindergarten to Grade 12*](#). This is not an exhaustive list of curricular outcomes that might be connected to career development, but may serve as a starting point. In Western School Division, staff are required and encouraged to link learning to career development across curricular areas whenever possible and reasonable. Use the links below to go directly to the corresponding section of the document:

- Early Years
http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/mb_sourcebook/outcomes/early_car.pdf
- Middle Years
http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/mb_sourcebook/outcomes/middle_car.pdf
- Senior Years
http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/mb_sourcebook/outcomes/senior_car.pdf

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